A Botanical Materia Medica, consisting of the generic and specific characters of the Plants used in Medicine and Diet, with Synonyms, and references to Medical authors. By Jonathan Stokes, M. D. in 4 Vols. Vol. I. pp. lxviii and 503. Vol. II. pp. 567. Vol. III. p. 549. Vol. IV. 701. 8vo. London 1812.

In acknowledging that the present publication disappointed us, we are conscious that we are in fault, more than its learned and industrious author. From the leading part of the title, we expected an account, at least, of the virtues and uses of medical plants, or something of the science usually meant by materia medica; but the explanatory part of the title, which correctly describes the nature of the work, should have undeceived us. Woodville's publication was really a "Botanical Materia Medica;" the work before us is better entitled to the denomination of "Medical Botany."

As such it scarcely comes within the scope of this Journal; yet our esteem for its author induces us to notice its general plan. We shall give some idea of the excessive industry of Dr. Stokes, when we state, that the list of works consulted and quoted by him occupies no less than 32 closely-printed pages, and comprehends nearly 1200 publications. The rest of the introduction consists of a synopsis of the classes and orders. The arrangement of this synopsis does not accord with that of Linnaeus, nor with the plan followed in the work itself, but is peculiar. It serves, however, as a table of contents, by a reference being affixed to each order, indicating the page and volume where it is to be found. The following abstract will give an idea of Dr. Stokes's classification.

"I. Flowers if existing either not found, or so minute as not to be distinguishable without highly magnifying microscopes.

Class 23. Cryptogamia. Orders, 1. Monoecia, 2. Dioecia, 3. Gynoecia.

II. Flowers with stamina on one plant, and flowers with pistils on another.

Class 22. Dioecia.
1. Male flowers, stamina united. Order 14. Syngenesia, 13. Monadelphia.
2. Male flowers, stamina distinct. Orders, 1.—12. Monandria—Polyandria.
3. Female flowers. Orders, 1.—7. Monogyny—Polygyny."
III. Stamina and pistils on the same plant, but not in the same flower.
   Class 21. Monoecia.
   1. Male flowers, stamina united. Orders, 12. Syngenesia, 11. Monadelphia.
   2. Male flowers, stamina distinct. Orders, 1.—10. Monandria—Polyandria.
   3. Female flowers. Orders, 1.—4. Monogynia—Polygynia.
IV. Stamina and pistils in the same flower. Stamina inserted into the pistil.
   Class 20. Gynandria.
V. Stamina and pistils in the same flower. Antherae united by their margins, forming a kind of cylinder.
   Class 19. Syngenesia. Order 1. Monogamia, 2. Polyg. superf.
   3. Polyg. Frust. 4. Polyg. Necess.
VI. Stamina and pistils in the same flower. Filaments united.
   Class 16. Monadelphia. Orders, 1.—9. Monandria—Polyandria.
   Class 17. Diadelphia. Order 1. Hexandria. Order 2. Decandria.
   Class 18 Polyadelphia. Order 1. Decand. 2. Dodecand. 3. Icosand. 4. Polyand.
VII. Stamina and pistils in the same flower. Stamina distinct.
   Class 1. Monandria.
   2. Diandria.
   3. Triandria.
   4. Tetrandria.
   14. Didynamia
   5. Pentandria.
   6. Hexandria.
   15. Tetradyndia.

Besides the characters of the classes and orders, the synopsis contains the characters of individual genera, whenever Dr Stokes has seen occasion to make any alteration upon them, as inserted in the body of the work; and also the characters of the genera, whenever these are established upon principles different from those followed in the body of the work. Thus, in the latter, the characters of the genera of the classes Monoecia and Dioecia are, as usual, derived from the male flowers; but, in the synopsis, Dr Stokes has also given their characters, as established from an examination of the female flower. This we consider a very essential improvement upon botanical systems, because, although it undoubtedly gives two distinct places to each of these genera, still there is not any real disadvantage in this kind of repetition, and, without it, we cannot proceed one step in analyzing and classing a plant, of which we have only specimens of female flowers before us. Besides, by examining a plant under the varied relations under which it appears in this double arrangement, our knowledge of it cannot but be confirmed and extended.
Dr Stokes has given the utmost extent to his Botanical Materia Medica, and has included in it all the genera 1021, species, varieties and variations which have ever been mentioned as affording articles of medicine or nourishment. In establishing his genera and species, as well as in describing their characters, Dr Stokes does not adhere slavishly to Linnaeus, or any of his editors, but adopts improvements wherever he has been able to find or make them. It may seem strange to doubt the propriety of introducing these improvements, but we are convinced our doubts are not unfounded. It is not in a Botanical Materia Medica, however extended, that botany will be studied, and, by deviating from the established systems of botany, however right in point of fact, such a work becomes, in a certain degree, less useful, and certainly less easily consulted. The following quotations from the dedication, will explain the grounds upon which Dr Stokes has made some of the alterations, while they, at the same time, shew, that he does not intend his work as a mere application of botany to another science, but of a higher order, and calculated to improve the science of botany itself.

"The terms made use of are generally those of Linnaeus, or formed on his principles; but in the grasses it may be necessary to observe, that what Linnaeus calls the calyx I consider as bracteae, and what he terms corolla I regard as the calyx. In describing the calyx I have also substituted the word phyllum for foliolum, confining the use of foliolum to the subdivisions of leaves. The compound flowers, as they are generally termed, contained in the class Synge-nesia I have called anthodia, considering them as collections of flowers analogous to those of Scabiosa and Jasione. And instead of calix communis and squamae I employ the terms involucrum and bracteeae.

"I make no apology for these or other deviations from common usage, holding it to be the duty of every writer who publishes, to communicate all he knows on the subject of which he treats. If convinced by others, or my own reflections, that such deviations are errors, I trust I shall have courage to retrace my steps.

"Since I wrote the advertisement prefixed to the 2d edition of the Botanical arrangement, my opinions respecting trivial names have almost entirely changed. Improvements in nomenclature will keep pace with increasing knowledge, and where a name is susceptible of amendment, every botanist should be as ready to suggest a better, as to communicate an improved specific character or description. I do not approve of altering every name which is not good, thinking it better to use the bad one till we discover one which is characteristic. In some genera the difficulty of finding good names is so great, that we must be content with their having names at all. In adopting one of two or more names given to the same plant by contemporary
contemporary authors we ought always to give a preference to that which is most characteristic.

"When I have referred a species to a distinct genus and only one species is found in that genus, I have not followed Linneus in endeavouring to discover a characteristic name, but have judged it more advisable to give it a name expressive of its being the only known species, and a name which must inevitably be changed whenever another shall be referred to the same genus.

"In the course of this work I have been led to distinguish between a variety and what I have sometimes called a variation. When plants are so much alike that one entertains no doubt of their specific sameness, and yet differ in colour, size, or mode of growth, I am inclined to call those that assume the form or colour which is least usual a variation. When plants are so little alike that we almost begin to suspect them to be specifically different, and yet on a careful examination are not able to fix on sufficient marks of specific distinction, I call that form which is least usual, a variety."

It only remains to state in what manner Dr Stokes treats each article. He gives 1. The generic character.—2. The specific character, with references to authorities and plates.—3. Botanical synonyms and references.—4. His own observations, if he has examined it.—5. Its pharmaceutic synonyms, with references to pharmacopoeias, and medical and pharmaceutical writers who have spoken of it, and, for facility of reference, the authorities are always arranged in alphabetical order. All these are uncommonly full and correct, so far as even to state what figures are impressions of others, that when we have seen one, we may be spared the trouble of consulting others. In regard to our author's own observations, the following note is worthy of quotation, and the practice described in it, of imitation.

"The figures subjoined to botanical observations refer to the numbers of a journal which I have kept ever since I began to investigate plants, my specimens having corresponding numbers affixed to them. The benefit I have experienced from this method induces me to recommend it to all students of natural history, advising them to incorporate all other observations which they may commit to writing into the same series, affixing corresponding numbers to specimens of all kinds, and to plants growing in their gardens, numbers stamped on plates of lead by means of steel dies, as practised by florists. To these observations I have an index, which, consisting of separate papers arranged in a book, admits of occasional additions without the labour of transcription."

From what we have already said, our opinion of this work may be easily anticipated. We wish that the author had extended his plan a little, so far, at least, as to have communicated his researches and opinions more fully, in regard to the plants producing gums, barks, &c. about which botanists are not agreed.
and pharmacopoeias differ; but in justice to our respectable author, we must say, that what he intended to do, he has performed with great ability and infinite industry. He has put us in possession of a complete system of medical botany, with the synonimes of each plant, and copious references to the botanical, pharmaceutical, and medical authors, by whom it has been noticed.

VI.

Nosographie Philosophique, ou la Methode de l'Analyse appliquée à la Medicine. Par Ph. Pinel, Médecin consultant de Sa Majesté l'Empereur et Roi, Membre de l’Institut national et de la Légion d’honneur, professeur à l’Ecole de Médecine de Paris, et Médecin en chef de l’Hospice de la Salpêtrière. Paris, 1810.

"Une maladie étant donnée, determiner son vrai caractère, et le rang qu'elle doit occuper dans un tableau nosologique." Such is the truly important question which M. Pinel has proposed for investigation. And were we to be determined by the title and general tone of his performance, we should be induced to suppose, that he had accomplished his undertaking to entire satisfaction. We have not indeed in express words, "non dubito me solvisse noble problema," but we find their import implied in every page. It is by no means our wish to detract from the real merit of M. Pinel, for a novel and ingenious attempt to improve a part of medical science, at once the most important, difficult, and defective. But we are constrained to confess, that we are overcome by his constant censure of others, and commendation of himself; his incessant digressions to expose the hypotheses, dogmas, and follies of the schools, and to display the noble substitution of his own analytic method and philosophy. In the very commencement of his work, we read, "que d'efforts laborieux et multipliés n'ont point faits Sauvages, Linné, Vogel, Cullen, Sagar, Nietzki, Selle, Ven-Denheuvel, etc. pour distribuer toutes les maladies connues en classes, en ordres, en genres, en espèces, à l'exemple des botanistes! et quel résultat ont-ils obtenu? une extrême surcharge du tableau, une classification arbitraire et vacillante, des affections symptomatiques prises pour des maladies primitives, une multiplication excessive des unes et des autres par des complications sans nombre des maladies, &c."

With what degree of patience or forbearance can we regard the production