out, is not certain, but if it is so in them it is different from what it is in men.

From some very strong proofs, it appears that the disease is capable of going on in women for years, and that unknown to themselves. The venereal matter in women is very apt to run down the perinaeum, and produce chancres about the anus, and claps sometimes. This disease is entirely local in both sexes, but the constitution frequently sympathises with it, causing small rigors. This is most frequent in those who have the suppuration late. When there is pain in making water from an inflammation of the meatus urinarius, and a discharge from that part, it is a pretty certain symptom of infection; but it requires a very nice examination to discover from whence the discharge comes. The carunculae myrtiforma, being very sensible parts, become very painful when inflamed. From some cases which have come under my notice, the disease appears to continue in the vagina for years, without apparently affecting the patient, although capable of infecting another. If so, it is very different from what it is in men, for there it always wears itself out. In my next Lecture I shall speak of the Treatment of Virulent Gonorrhœa.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

CLIMATE, TOPOGRAPHY, AND DISEASES

OF THE

BRITISH COLONIES IN WESTERN AFRICA.

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No. II.

It is a circumstance of the first importance in the selection of situations for the erection of public buildings in tropical countries, to choose, if possible, a location at least three hundred or four hundred feet in altitude. During the dreadful epidemic, which, as far as regards the white inhabitants, nearly depopulated this coast in the year 1837, not a single case of yellow fever appeared amongst the military quartered on Tower Hill, nor indeed did any one case originate in an elevated situation. The temperature of the officers' barracks is also several degrees less than at Freetown; in all countries the atmosphere is much cooler in high situations, a sufficient reason in itself for selecting such elevated places as sites for public buildings or towns in tropical countries. Besides Freetown, there are many villages established in the vicinity of Sierra Leone for the purpose of locating the negroes, snatched from the inhuman grasp of the degenerate dealer in human flesh; it is unnecessary to describe these more minutely, as from their inland situation they are never likely to become mercantile establishments of any extent or importance, and consequently never the seat of government or the residence of any number of military or white inhabitants; it may, however, be observed, that they are much more healthy than Freetown, a circumstance attributable to their more elevated situations, and consequently greater exemption from swamps and damp exhalations. At the village of Kiskey, about four miles from Freetown, are situated the Liberated African Hospitals, buildings of some extent, and capable of containing several hundred patients. These hospitals are under the superintendence of the colonial surgeon and his assistants. The climate of Sierra Leone has hitherto proved itself incomparably more destructive to human life than any of our tropical possessions, and why it is still retained as a British colony, it is certainly not easy to determine, unless, indeed, it be for the purpose of getting rid of our surplus population, and consigning annually to the

grave hundreds of the brave defenders of the "wooden walls" of old England. It is scarcely credible the number of sailors, that yearly fall victims to the excessive unhealthiness of this coast; it is quite a common occurrence to see whole ships' crews swept off by fever. Were it not out of place in a medical journal, it could easily be shown that, in a mercantile point of view, this colony is valueless; as a settlement for the location of liberated Africans, far inferior in every way to many of our colonies requiring African labourers; and as an appendage to Great Britain, worse than useless, and certainly not worth the expense of its retention. From the not inappropriate name of the "white man's grave," which this settlement has so justly acquired, it might be supposed alone prejudicial to the health of the white inhabitants, but this would give a very confined and inadequate idea of the insalubrity of this pestilential place; the black, the coloured, and the white all suffer from it, although not in an equal degree; it may, indeed, be described as a climate unfavourable to the human constitution in general, but more especially and pre-eminently so to the European. Every stranger, of whatever race, country, or climate, must undergo the ordeal of acclimation or "seasoning," as it is familiarly termed on the coast, an unpleasant process, not unfrequently terminating in the grave. This settlement is at present continued from the most benevolent motives, but certainly carried on at such an expense of human life, that it becomes a question of grave consideration, whether the benefits resulting from it are such as to justify so great a sacrifice.

A French medical man, who about 25 years ago published at Paris a pamphlet on Sierra Leone, stated the country to be so unhealthy that even English horses, cows, fowls, dogs, &c., speedily fell a sacrifice to the baneful influence of the climate. Readers in general would feel inclined to suppose the above statement grossly exaggerated, and I must confess that on reading it some years ago, not with very pleasant feelings, when about to sail for Sierra Leone, I was of that opinion myself, until by subsequent observation and experience I found the statement perfectly correct and true. The year may be, and, indeed, invariably on the coast, is, divided into the rainy or unhealthy, and the dry or healthy seasons; the former commencing in the month of May, and the latter in November: there is sometimes some slight variation in the commencement, duration, and ending of the seasons, but nothing of sufficient consequence to militate against the general correctness of the above division. The rainy season is the signal for the commencement of fever, the disease by which most of the Europeans are carried off, and to which not a few of the natives also fall victims. Although fevers abound in the rainy season, they are not confined to it; no such good fortune attends this ill-fated colony; they also appear, though not frequently, during the dry, or as it is misnamed, healthy season.

The wet season is ushered in by a series of tornadoes, sublime, but awful atmospheric convulsions, apparently destined by Providence in some measure to purify the loaded and stagnant air, which before a tornado is extremely close and oppressive. The approach of a tornado is generally marked by an extremely black cloud at the verge of the horizon, at first very small, but gradually increasing in magnitude as the storm approaches; a low rustling sound is then heard, accompanied by gentle claps of thunder, quickly followed by gusts of wind so powerful and irresistible, that the largest forest trees are levelled with the ground; houses not unfrequently unroofed, sometimes knocked down; ships dismasted, sometimes upset or stranded. The peals of thunder are loud, violent, and frequently repeated; the lightning vivid and forked, sometimes spreading itself over the whole canopy of the heavens, and often causing much damage, besides loss of life. The scene is then

closed by rain, falling in such deluging torrents as, I believe, were never witnessed except on the Western Coast of Africa. After a tornado the atmosphere becomes cool and pleasant—all animated nature, which just before appeared on the point of annihilation, now seems vigorous and refreshed. The rains are at their highest at Sierra Leone in the months of July and August, and begin to abate in the month of September, and are generally finally at an end towards the latter part of October. The dry season commences in the month of November, and with it what is termed the healthy season; the most healthy, or more properly speaking, the less sickly months, are December, January, February, and March. The heat at Sierra Leone is not excessive in degree, but, during the absence of the sea breeze, there is a closeness and

oppressiveness almost intolerable. About Christmas an easterly wind springs up, called the *harmatan*;* it is of an exceedingly searching and drying nature, causing furniture, glass, &c., to split and crack in an extraordinary degree; to the person newly arrived in Africa it proves extremely cool and agreeable, but to the “seasoned” European or native African, it is a source of annoyance not only unpleasant, but unwholesome, causing dryness of the skin and mucous membrane of the fauces and lips; it also brings on coughs, colds, and not unfrequently attacks of intermittent fever. The subjoined table, which, if anything, is rather low, shows the usual range of the thermometer at this station; but the heat varies not a little in different years:—

	Fahrenheit Thermometer.			Remarks.
	Max.	Med.	Min.	
January . .	86	80	79	Dry weather, comparatively healthy, harmatan winds.
February . .	87	80	80	Dry weather, comparatively healthy, harmatans, sometimes hazy
March . . .	86	80	79	Dry, comparatively healthy, sometimes foggy weather.
April . . .	84	81	79	Beginning, dry weather, generally healthy, a few showers.
May . . .	85	80	79	Rains commenced, some fine weather, fevers begin.
June . . .	80	80	78	Heavy rains, fevers abound.
July . . .	84	80	78	Ditto Ditto
August . .	82	80	75	Ditto Ditto
September .	83	80	78	Occasionally heavy rain; fevers, chiefly intermittents.
October . .	83	80	78	Very little rain, agues abound.
November .	83	81	79	Dry and fine weather sets in, fevers abate.
December .	85	82	77	Dry, and comparatively healthy.

Sierra Leone was formerly garrisoned by white troops, but such was the dreadful mortality amongst them, that it was found expedient to raise a native force, at first called the Royal African Corps, now termed the 3rd West India Regiment; the duties are now chiefly performed by the latter regiment: there are also stationed there recruiting companies of the 1st and 2nd West India Regiments. The officers of these regiments suffer very much from the fevers and other diseases incidental to the climate, but the mortality amongst them for some years back has not been so great as might be expected, considering the great unhealthiness of the country, and the harrassing nature of the duties they sometimes have to perform. In addition to the officers of the West India Regiments, there are also stationed at Sierra Leone those attached to the commissariat and ordnance departments. There are many civil officers belonging to the several departments of the government, such as the colonial secretary’s office, liberated African departments, mixed commission court, the law officers, &c. &c. The Church and Wesleyan Missionary Societies have many clergymen at Sierra Leone; also in the adjoining villages, and by their exertions many natives have been induced to embrace Christianity. The remainder of the white inhabitants are chiefly employed in mercantile pursuits. In my next I purpose giving a description of the settlement at the river Gambia.

* [The harmatan wind is exceedingly noxious in other parts of the African continent, and is a fertile source of fever. As for example, when it blows from the south-east over the coast of Guinea, being loaded with vegetable exhalations, with which it impregnates itself while sweeping over the immense uninhabitable swamps, and oozy mangrove thickets of the sultry regions of Benin. This destructive poison, in the year 1754, is said to have killed so many, that in several negro towns the living were not sufficient to bury the dead!—EDITORS.]

CASES
OF
LARYNGEAL ASTHMA;
OR,
THE CROWING DISEASE OF INFANTS.

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Anne P—, a healthy infant, ten months old, was suddenly attacked with laryngeal asthma on Monday, Nov. 16, 1841. I was in attendance on the child for some weeks previous to that date, during which period the little patient had several severe fits of convulsions. The mother informed me that, in consequence of pains in her chest and side, which prevented her from turning in the bed, or even stooping, she was obliged to wean the child when it was six months old. From its birth it was remarkably healthy and lively, but very passionate. When eight months old the two lower incisor teeth appeared, without occasioning any untoward symptoms. The child continued in excellent health for five or six weeks subsequent to that event, with the exception of the bowels being slightly constipated. It was fed on “milk sop” from the time of its being weaned up to the date when I first saw it. On Saturday, October 23, the infant was very restless and uneasy all day; towards night the indisposition increased considerably, and symptoms of approaching convulsions became manifest. I saw the child for the first time late in the evening of this day; a convulsive paroxysm ensued immediately on my arrival; the pupils were dilated, the thumbs clenched in the hands, the mouth was contorted, and the whole frame was in a state of rigid spasm. The child was instantly put into a warm bath, containing about two tablespoonfuls of mustard.