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In such an uncultivated, swampy country as Guinea, one would hardly expect to hear of a season of health; but what I have asserted is an experienced fact, with respect to newly arrived Europeans. For notwithstanding such, as constantly reside there, retain, through all the seasons of the year, evident marks of the insalubrity of the climate, yet the indispositions, under which they labour, in the dry months, are generally the remains of their former illness, or the consequences of what their constitutions had suffered, during the sickly season.

Upon this occasion I cannot help observing, that there is hardly a physical cause which can be assigned for the production of any disease, that will not admit of some exceptions: thus not only the woods and morasses in Guinea are tolerably healthy in the dry season, if we except Old and New Calabar, Benin, and such like places; but a few instances might be produced, of towns surrounded with marshes and a foggy air, where the inhabitants suffer no inconvenience from their situation, even during the rainy season: as an example, take New Orleans in Louisiana.

Do

Do the impetuous torrents of water poured from the clouds, during the rainy seasons, in tropical countries, contain what is injurious to health? This much is certain, that in Guinea many of the principal negroes, and especially the Molattoe-Portuguese, take the utmost precaution to avoid being wet by those rains, especially by such as fall first. At the setting in of the rainy season, they generally shut themselves up in a close well-thatched hut, where they keep a constant fire, smoke tobacco, and drink brandy, as preservatives against the noxious quality of the air at that time. When wet by accident with the rain, they immediately plunge themselves into salt-water, if near it. Those natives generally bathe once a day, but never in the fresh-water rivers, when they are overflowed with the rains: at such times they prefer for that purpose, the water of springs. The first rains which fall in Guinea, are commonly supposed to be the most unhealthy; they have been known, in forty-eight hours, to render the leather of the shoes quite mouldy and rotten; they stain cloths more than any other rain; and, soon after their commencement, the ground, even in

in places formerly with frogs. At traffic at Senegal, worms, and it which greedily to feed on themselves served, that worms rains, and after sun, have sometimes in a few hours.

Is the sickness ascribed to the insupportable vertical sun, which lasts for two or three hours at noon, its direct beams refreshing coolness most insupportable.

As the season of storms called hurricanes in the West Indies, and in Guinea, partly rains; do these measure contribute prevailing at the one year at Senegal the rainy season, of these tornados.

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in places formerly dry and parched, swarms with frogs. At this time skins, part of the traffic at Senegal, quickly generate large worms, and it is remarked that the fowls, which greedily prey on other insects, refuse to feed on these. It has been farther observed, that woollen cloths, wet in those rains, and afterwards hung up to dry in the sun, have sometimes become full of maggots in a few hours.

Is the sickness of those seasons to be ascribed to the intense heat of the then almost vertical sun, which frequently, for an hour or two at noon, dispels the clouds, and with its direct beams instantly changes the refreshing coolness of the air, into a heat almost insupportable?

As the season of those sudden and terrible storms called hurricanes in the East and West Indies, and tornadoes on the coast of Guinea, partly coincides with that of the rains; do these dreadful tempests in any measure contribute to produce the sickness prevailing at those times? It was remarkable one year at Senegal, that at the beginning of the rainy season, in the night succeeding one of these tornadoes, a great number of the soldiers,

soldiers, and two-thirds of the English women, were taken ill, this garrison having before been uncommonly healthy.

Lastly, Is it not more probable, that, as in some of these countries, the earth, for six or eight months in the year, receives no moisture from the heavens, but what falls in dews, which every night renew the vegetation, and reinstate the delightful verdure of the grass, the surface of the ground in many places becomes hard and incrustated with a dry scurf, which pens up the vapours below, and, by the continuance of the rains for some time, this crust is softened, and the long pent up vapours set free, which thence become the cause of sickness? That these dews do not penetrate deep into the surface of the earth, is evident from the constant dryness and hardness of such spots of ground, in those countries, as are not covered with grass and other vegetables. The large rivers in the dry season being confined within narrow bounds, leaves a great part of their channel uncovered, which having its moisture totally exhaled, becomes a solid hard crust; no sooner the rains fall, than this long parched crust of earth and clay gradually

dually softens, and before had not the least a stench, which comes exceedingly sickness is general.

In the Essay on already given an account of the and fatal vapours of the seasons in which this coast. I have seen who cannot conceive should open crevices the boards shrink on this occasion, I think well attested are the theory. A gentleman sided at Cape Cod that during the time the upper chamber of the floor shrunk discern the candle flames below him the ings used in those he could then even were doing in the seams of the floor an inch, while the