

where it would now be death to remain for a few days in the hot season. I inquired what could have caused so great a change, and found the phenomenon as much a matter of controversy as the origin of the malaria in Italy. The clearing away of the wood from large spaces is the chief alteration in the physical condition of this region in the course of the last sixty years, whereby the damp and swampy grounds undergo annually the process of being dried up by a burning sun. Marshes which are overflowed by the tide twice in every twenty-four hours near the neighbouring coast, both in South Carolina and Georgia, are perfectly healthy. Dr. Arnold remarks, in his Roman History, that Rome was more healthy before the drainage of the Campagna, and when there was more natural wood in Italy and in northern Europe generally. In the southern States of the Union there are no fevers in winter, at a season when there is no large extent of damp and boggy soil exposed to a hot sun, and undergoing desiccation.

On our way home from Charleston, by the railway from Orangeburg, I observed a thin black line of charred vegetable matter exposed in the perpendicular section of the bank. The sand cast out in digging the railway had been thrown up on the original soil, on which the pine forest grew; and farther excavations had laid open the junction of the rubbish and the soil. As geologists, we may learn from this fact how a thin seam of vegetable matter, an inch or two thick, is often the only monument to be looked for of an ancient surface of dry land, on which a luxuriant forest may have grown for thousands of years. Even this seam of friable matter may be washed away when the region is submerged, and, if not, rain-water percolating freely through the