

are the most dangerous, being surrounded, as at Vera Cruz and Carthagena, with an arid and sandy soil, which raises the temperature of the ambient air." ¹ On the coast of Peru, however, the temperature is not hot to any excessive degree; and perhaps in consequence the intermittent fevers are not of the most malignant order. In all unhealthy countries the greatest risk is run by sleeping on shore. Is this owing to the state of the body during sleep, or to a greater abundance of miasma at such times? It appears certain that those who stay on board a vessel, though anchored at only a short distance from the coast, generally suffer less than those actually on shore. On the other hand, I have heard of one remarkable case where a fever broke out among the crew of a man-of-war some hundred miles off the coast of Africa, and at the very same time that one of those fearful periods² of death commenced at Sierra Leone.

No State in South America, since the declaration of independence, has suffered more from anarchy than Peru. At the time of our visit, there were four chiefs in arms contending for supremacy in the government: if one succeeded in becoming for a time very powerful, the others coalesced against him; but no sooner were they victorious than they were again hostile to each other. The other day, at the Anniversary of the Independence, high mass was performed, the President partaking of the sacrament: during the *Te Deum laudamus*, instead of each regiment displaying the Peruvian flag, a black one with death's head was unfurled. Imagine a government under which such a scene could be ordered on such an occasion; to be typical of their determination of fighting to death! This state of affairs happened at a time very unfortunately for me, as I was precluded from taking any excursions much beyond the limits of the town.

¹ Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain, vol. iv. p. 199.

² A similar interesting case is recorded in the Madras Medical Quart. Journ. 1839, p. 340. Dr. Ferguson, in his admirable Paper (see 9th vol. of Edinburgh Royal Trans.), shows clearly that the poison is generated in the drying process; and hence that dry hot countries are often the most unhealthy.