

the coast as the port becomes more frequented, if favoured by particular dispositions of the climate, may not become common in the valley: for the mean temperature of Caracas is considerable enough to allow the thermometer, in the hottest months, to keep between twenty-two and twenty-six degrees. The situation of Xalapa, on the declivity of the Mexican mountains, promises more security, because that town is less populous, and is five times farther distant from the sea than Caracas, and two hundred and thirty toises higher: its mean temperature being three degrees cooler. In 1696, a bishop of Venezuela, Diego de Baños, dedicated a church (ermita) to Santa Rosalia of Palermo, for having delivered the capital from the scourge of the black vomit (vomito negro), which is said to have raged for the space of sixteen months. A mass celebrated every year in the cathedral, in the beginning of September, perpetuates the remembrance of this epidemic, in the same manner as processions fix, in the Spanish colonies, the date of the great earthquakes. The year 1696 was indeed very remarkable for the yellow fever, which raged with violence in all the West India Islands, where it had only begun to gain an ascendancy in 1688. But how can we give credit to an epidemical black vomit, having lasted sixteen months without interruption, and which may be said to have passed through that very cool season when the thermometer at Caracas falls to twelve or thirteen degrees? Can the typhus be of older date in the elevated valley of Caracas, than in the most frequented ports of Terra Firma. According to Ulloa, it was unknown in Terra Firma before 1729. I doubt, therefore, the epidemic of 1696 having been the yellow fever, or real typhus of America. Some of the symptoms which accompany yellow fever are common to bilious remittent fevers; and are no more characteristic than *hæmatemeses* of that severe disease now known at the Havannah and Vera Cruz by the name of *vomito*. But though no accurate description satisfactorily demonstrates that the typhus of America existed at Caracas as early as the end of the seventeenth century, it is unhappily too certain, that this disease carried off in that capital a great number of European soldiers in 1802. We are filled with dismay when we reflect that, in the centre of the torrid zone, a table-land