

The observations above recorded, it should be borne in mind, were made in the midst of habitation and population, and the indications of temperature have no doubt been considerably affected by the influence of surrounding conditions. Thus the recorded heat of summer, in the thickly planted and freely watered settlements, may be fairly presumed to be less than it is in reality on the bare, arid, sandy wastes around. And similarly the degrees of frost recorded in the former situations may be considered to be considerably less than what prevails on the open plains and desert tracts outside.

The long duration and intensity of the season of frost is indicated by the furs developed by the wild animals, and in a lesser degree by the domestic, as well as by the ordinary clothing of the inhabitants. This subject will be noticed hereafter, but it may be here stated that all the wild animals during winter are protected by a soft warm coat of woolly down growing next the skin at the roots of the coarser fur, and that man during the same seasons envelopes his body in thick felts, or silks, or furs.

*Salubrity.*—The influence of climate upon the health of the inhabitants is in all countries altered and varied in a greater or less degree by the operations of a multitude of diverse agencies associated with the conditions and employments of the people; and, consequently, without long continued and careful study of all the circumstances of each particular case it is impossible to say what is solely the result of climatic agency and what the result of mode of life; or where one begins and the other ends, or how the one cause re-acts upon the other, and to what extent the results are attributable to each, or either, or both, combined with some local peculiarity of soil, or water, or air.

During our stay in the country we had many opportunities of judging of the prevalent diseases amongst the people, and these were extended by the establishment of a charitable dispensary in connection with the Embassy. Subjoined is a classified list of the numbers of each disease treated in the dispensary. It speaks for itself, and needs no special analysis in this place, beyond a few general remarks on its more characteristic indications, as exponents of the health state in western Káshghar during its most rigorous season of cold—a season which with the preceding months of autumn is considered the most healthy portion of the year.

The rarity of febrile diseases is very notable, and so far as I could ascertain the people of Káshghar (my remarks only apply to the western districts) enjoy an uncommon immunity from this class of diseases. The eruptive fevers of childhood are certainly known, but rarely prevail as epidemics, and small-pox is deprived of much of its destructive violence, owing to the free exposure to air and the isolation of the sick. The people have a greater dread of this disease than any other, and on its appearance amongst them immediately vacate the house or camp, leaving the afflicted with a single attendant, and do not return till forty days have elapsed. Malarious fevers it would appear are hardly known, though a form of typhoid or enteric fever is said to prevail in the early spring and winter seasons. Cholera is unknown in the country, but a fatal epidemic, which by some is described as that disease, and by others as a malignant form of typhoid, is said to have visited Khutan in 1872 as an importation from Kashmir. It did not spread beyond the city, and since its cessation has not again re-appeared. The scattered tenements of a settlement are usually so isolated by a surrounding of fields and orchards and plantations that the spread of infectious diseases from one to the other is reduced to a minimum, whilst the separation of each settlement from the next by an intervening strip of arid desert secures it an almost complete immunity from invasion by disease from its neighbour.

The frequency of diseases of the eye, and particularly of the internal humours, is very remarkable, and is mostly attributable to the combined effects of climate and soil. The extreme dryness of the atmosphere, which in April shows a difference of 26 degrees between the indications of the wet and dry bulbs of the hygrometer, coupled with the intense glare of the sun from a white sandy saline soil, and the particles of dust constantly set afloat in the air, must be a prolific source of discomfort, and a severe trial of the powers of so delicate an organ.

Another set of diseases whose origin is due to effects of climate are those of the respiratory system, and the frequency of their prevalence in a chronic form is a fair index of the severity of the winter season. With this category too may be included the muscular forms of rheumatism.