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978-1-108-02311-5 - A Letter on Sickness and Mortality in the West Indies

Andrew Halliday

Frontmatter

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It is sobering to realise that as recently as the year in which *On the Origin of Species* was published, learned opinion was that diseases such as typhus and cholera were spread by a 'miasma', and suggestions that doctors should wash their hands before examining patients were greeted with mockery by the profession. The Cambridge Library Collection reissues milestone publications in the history of Western medicine as well as studies of other medical traditions. Its coverage ranges from Galen on anatomical procedures to Florence Nightingale's common-sense advice to nurses, and includes early research into genetics and mental health, colonial reports on tropical diseases, documents on public health and military medicine, and publications on spa culture and medicinal plants.

A Letter on Sickness and Mortality in the West Indies

Sir Andrew Halliday (1782–1839) served as a surgeon in the Peninsular War, and then as a royal physician. In 1832 he was appointed Inspector of Hospitals in the West Indies until ill-health forced his return to Scotland. This 1839 pamphlet contains his recommendations to the Secretary of War, concerning the major losses suffered by the army in the West Indies due to illness. It was written in response to the Tulloch report presented to Parliament on the subject the previous year. This showed that the average death rate for soldiers there was almost six times higher than those in Britain, and in some islands considerably higher, due to dysentery, yellow fever and malaria. Halliday believed that many of these deaths were preventable, if medical advice was consulted on the siting of barracks, the daily regimes within them, and sanitation, and if doctors had the authority to implement changes.

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A Letter
on Sickness and
Mortality in the
West Indies

*Being a Review of Captain Tulloch's
Statistical Report*

SIR ANDREW HALLIDAY



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RIGHT HON^{BLE} THE SECRETARY AT WAR,
ON
SICKNESS AND MORTALITY
IN THE
WEST INDIES;
BEING A REVIEW OF CAPTAIN TULLOCH'S
STATISTICAL REPORT.

BY
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