

the amount of poisonous substance present is large, and could not well be overlooked. On the other hand, the author suggests the possibility that the production of certain active poisons, which may be naturally present in the system in very small quantity without injury, may be so far increased by the abnormal action of the functions of digestion as to occasion chronic or acute diseases.

---

ART. X.—*Plica Polonica, an Endemic Disease at the Island of "Anno Bom."* By ALEXANDER VEDDER, M. D., Assistant Surgeon U. S. Navy.

DURING a recent voyage to the southwest coast of Africa, in the U. S. Ship "Supply," we stopped at the small island of Anno Bom, for the purpose of obtaining fresh provisions for the crew, who had been deprived of their use for some sixty days preceding. This island is situated about eighty miles south of the equator, and at a distance of two hundred from the nearest land of the African continent. It is of a conical shape, rising towards the centre into numerous lofty peaks, and may be about thirty miles in circumference. From its position, so near to the equator, and the considerable elevation of its highlands, which rapidly condense the atmospheric moisture, the climate, especially of the low land bordering the sea, is necessarily very hot and damp, being enveloped in rain and mist for a large portion of the year. It is here that the only village on the island is placed. We were induced to believe, by the glowing description of this isolated spot, its productions and inhabitants, as given by the English "Sailing Directions," that we were about to visit another Eden, where the vices of civilized communities were unknown, and where man enjoyed the choicest fruits of the earth, without expending the sweat of his brow. How these anticipations were realized will be seen in the sequel.

The inhabitants are all negroes, descendants of a cargo of shipwrecked slaves, and although the island belongs nominally to Portugal, that country exercises no sovereignty over it. Among the numbers who immediately boarded our ships from their canoes, on our dropping anchor, were some very remarkable from the peculiar disposition of their hair, or rather wool, which hung down from the head, in numerous small frizzled curls, resembling the bullion of an epaulette, and attaining a length of six or eight inches. There is a plate in Rayer's "*Atlas des Maladies de la Peau*," which is a capital representation of this affection.

I was at first disposed to think this one of the fanciful arrangements of the hair, so frequently seen among uncivilized races; but a closer examination revealed it to be that form of plica called multiform. On landing, and entering the village, numerous examples of the same disease presented