

HEALTH HAZARDS, DISEASES, HOSPITALS & PHYSICIANS IN EAST INDIES
AND CEYLON, IN XVII CENTURY.
BASED ON TRAVELS OF CHRISTOPHER SCHWEITZER

by

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The Portuguese Colonial Empire founded in the East by Albuquerque, extending from Persian gulf to Moluccas, collapsed towards the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century, like a house of cards, as a result of the combined attacks of the Dutch and the English. By 1615, the Dutch drove away the Portuguese from Moluccas and by the middle of the 17th century, from Persian Gulf and Ceylon. In the last quarter of the 17th century, the Dutch East India Company, controlled the entire route to the East securing their line of communications, with their settlements in Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius and Moluccas etc.

The Dutch exercised great influence and Military power over Indian Ocean and Far East. Their capital at Batavia was a strong fortress, a great seaport and *entrepot*. They dominated Malay Archipelago and Spice Islands and exercised a sort of suzerainty over native rulers in the East. With a ring of ports around the Coast of Ceylon, they secured monopoly of pearl fisheries and trade in Ceylon and the East and West Coasts of India.

It was at this time, 1676 to 1685, when the Dutch East India Company was at the height of prosperity and power, that Schweitzer, a lay Adventurer and Christopher Fryck, a Surgeon, came out to the Far East as employees of the Dutch East India Company. Between them, they covered practically the entire field of Dutch activities in the East at that period. Both were natives of Germany.

These two travellers published their accounts of East Indies originally in German. Schweitzer's book was printed from Tubingen in 1688 and Fryck's Book from Ulm, 1692. But, in 1694, a Dutch translation of both books by S. de Vries, along with a third book by Elias Hesse on East Indies, was published, in one volume, from Amsterdam. An English translation from the Dutch version was made by S. L. and printed in 1700 from London.

A photo of the title page of the first English edition of 1700 entitled "A relation of two several voyages made into the East Indies by Christopher Fryck, Surgeon and Christopher Schweitzer, the whole containing etc." and also the first page of the account

by Fryck are reproduced, in my article on Fryck,* summarising the medical observations and experiences of this German Surgeon in the services of the Dutch East India Company, printed in the Bulletin of the Department of History of Medicine.

The present article summarises the observations of Soldier-cum-Administrator on Health risks, diseases, medical institutions, Physicians and Surgeons and other interesting accounts of medical interest, during his sojourn in the East, as an employee of the Dutch East India Company in the last quarter of the 17th century.

BRIEF LIFE SKETCH OF SCHWEITZER

Very little is known about the life and fortunes of this traveller, before he volunteered in November 1675 to join Dutch East India Company's Service, except that he came from Wurtemberg nor is anything more known about him after September 1682, when he gave up accounts to the East India Company on his return to Amsterdam. He sailed from Holland on January 14, 1676, as steward of the Ship Asia, the flagship of five vessels bound to East Indies, and after the usual adventures and illhealth on board the ship on the long voyage, arrived safely at Batavia on June 26th, 1676.

After some active service as a soldier in Java, he sailed for Ceylon on 3rd October, 1676. Then he studied Sinhalese and Portuguese languages and obtained promotion and a variety of employment in Ceylon, where he was stationed for the remainder of his five years in the East. In December, 1678, he went on a punitive expedition to Coromandel Coast and in 1680, he sailed in a light squadron, to stop native trade, along the Malabar Coast, where the expedition made a successful cruise of the Coast upto Goa and returned to Columbo. He then became overseer of Clerks at the East India House till he completed his term and sailed home.

During the five years in the company's service, he filled various posts, afloat and ashore, policing in East Indies and engaged in humdrum routine of trade. He presents a more lively picture of everyday life than if he were a Governor or General burdened with heavier responsibilities. He was a shrewd observer interested in everything, new and strange, he saw or heard and records vivid accounts of life on Dutch East Indiamen, of land battles, of Sea fights, Ports, Cities and Towns and of people of various nations and stations. He describes in great detail, the Fauna and Flora of Ceylon, the method

* C. Ernest Fyale, in his introduction and notes to "Voyages to the East Indies" by Christopher Fryke and Schweitzer (The Seafarer's Library, Cassel and Company Ltd., London, 1929), states that Fryck, belonged to a Medical family of Ulm and was himself bred a surgeon and that another member of the same family Melchoir F. Fryck of Ulm published "Tractatus Medicus de virtute venerorum medica", 1693 and other medical works (according to Biographisches Lexicon, 1885). Christopher Fryck had a desire from his early years to travel and see strange countries. When he found an opportunity to go out on a voyage to East Indies, he engaged himself to serve the Dutch East India Company as a Surgeon on 31st May 1681 and sailed from Texel in Holland. During his stay in the East, he visited Moluccas, Bali, Ceylon, Siam, and Japan. He also cruised along the coast of Burma, East Coast of India (Coromandel and Machilipatam), West Coast of India (Surat) and the Island of Ceylon.

of catching Elephants, diving for pearl fisheries and the like. However, he appears to have belief in traveller's tales which he records and also share the superstitions of his times, believing in witchcraft and lovephilters.

THE OUTWARD VOYAGE

"I for my own part, was forced, for want of money, to be some weeks at one of these Jackall's houses for entertainment. I was accepted by the East India Company on 15th November, 1675, as a volunteer and was made the steward of the ship called Asia. My pay was 20 guldens per month of Dutch money and I was to serve them for five years in the Indies."

"Upon these conditions, I with several others went of from Amsterdam to Texel, where the Fleet lay, to go to East Indies." It consisted of 5 ships. He embarked on Asia on 2nd December. In this ship, besides chief merchant, Master Chaplain, four steersmen, one book keeper, there were 5 barbers and surgeons, The Fleet sailed on 14th Jan, 76, from Texel on its voyage to the East.

The first adventure on the voyage, occurred on 3rd & 4th March, when a Turkish pirateship tried to attack and storm the Dutch ships. The fleet had enough force on board and defended themselves so bravely that the enemy was obliged to run with no small loss. "On our side, we had twelve killed and twenty wounded, solidiers and seamen. The wounded were all cured".

On 27th March, the Fleet came under Equinoctial line. The disorders and mortality common to long voyages, made their appearance. "Here, it is extremely unhealthy and a certain distemper, seized most of our men, which made them raving mad. In one day, five persons died, one of which was our Chaplain and other 4 soldiers". According to the custom of Dutch Ships, the dead men were thrown into the sea after sewing a corpse in a sheet. Next day, one of the barbers and two seamen died. The soldiers, in their raving fit (caused by intolerable heat) lept into the Sea. Two of the best Swimmers jumped after them and brought them back but they died later. Sadder still, is the report for 30th & 31st March. "These two days we threw overboard our Chaplains, four children, four Churugeons and barbers, a carpenter aud 10 soldiers." In the first week of April, also there was no breath of wind. More than thirty men died on the ship. They expected every soul would die. But on the 5th April, God delivred them, from the fatal place by a favourable wind. "We had still a great many sick men and not enough in health to be able to brace our main sail, though the mortality ceased; so, we were forced to make shift with our small sail."

Mr. Schweitzer himself fell a victim to illhealth "As I fell ill and was in a swoon, he that looked after the sick took me for dead and fetched a new shirt out of my chest and was putting it on me. The sail maker was also going to sew me up. He handl-

ing me a bit roughly, after all his pushing and tossing of me, I opened my eyes. Those about me were not a little startled and said it was high time for me to open them, for, if I had winked a little longer, over I had gone. Our chief merchant gave me a glass of sack, which refreshed me very much”.

The fleet stopped at Cape of Good Hope, where the men landed for over a week. The writer gives a very good description of the place, the arrangements made by the East India Company for loading provisions to ships (water, food, cattle, refreshments). He also gives accounts of the natives, their appearance, dress speech and customs, diet, houses, etc. Two observations are of some medical interest. (i) “If any woman has two children, at one birth, they kill the weakest, that the other may have the breasts to himself., and grow stronger and lustier”. (ii) “As soon as the boys come to be above twelve years of age, they cut off his right testicle, that he may be better fitter for running.”

In the month of June, when the allowance of diet was cut down, Scheweitzer exhibits his dry humour. “Our usual allowance of flesh, bread and beer was lessened which did not please most of us well. We had nothing remarkable, save that suffered in some measure, both hunger and thirst though that contributed much to our health, according to the proverb which says that *hungry men will not oversleep themselves* and much sleep, being unhealthy, the sharpness of our stomachs, would keep us from any such indisposition”.

The ships completed the voyage from Amsterdam to Batavia, on 26th June, taking 5 months and 12 days, to cover a distance of 3636 miles.

SERVICE IN JAVA

The new comer went round the city of Batavia and described fortifications, the large number of Chinese with their jolly mode of living and the East Indians, and other nationalities, their weapons of war and war music, *sorcery etc.*, He refers to the famous character in fiction: “The Amboyneses are great necromancers and hence it is said *Doctor Faustus* got his master and was carried thither, through the air riding upon a cloak”.

In the city, the new arrivals were daily exercised in the handling of musket and pike etc. After a few days, the best men were picked and two companies were sent, under the command of a major and some captains, on a ship, to Jappara, to quell an insurrection, against the local ruler. These men were landed at the destination to attack the enemy. But the enemy fell on the attackers “like mad dogs in vast numbers and from all sides”. “The opium that they use to take always before they engage had made them stark mad, so that they killed the flower of our officers and 150 soldiers.” “The rest of the party were forced to flee and swim to their ships. Next day, all the sick and wounded, were put into a ship and sent to *Hospital in Batavia*”.

The book relates the story how some decades earlier, the Dutch, by a trick, got possession of the Fort of Batavia, from the English, who built it. Some Dutch ships came close to the place. "Their admiral begged the favour of English Governor, that he might be permitted to bring his men who were very *sick*, with their long voyage for the *recovery of their health* and for refreshment, which the English governor generously granted, out of pity and compassion" The Dutch sent two boats, full of stoutest men (fully armed with weapons, like swords, knives and pistols, but in a manner that these cannot be discovered). The men "feigned groans" and were let in, at the watergate. Once inside, they fell upon the English and slew some, took others prisoners, plundered and captured the fort. The Dutch then built strong fortifications, within and without, and made it inaccessible.

One day, in August, the Javans brought "a dead serpent 26 foot long". When the General saw it, "he ordered it to be carried to his *physician*, *Dr. Kleter*, who had it cut open by one *John Otto Helwigh*, a saxon *doctor of Physick*, (that came over with us, as a soldier)." The snake's skin was stuffed up and kept for a show.

During the whole of September, Schweitzer did not stir out of the Fort on account of "a *terrible headache* that seized him and such a terrible one, that it fetched all the hair on head; nor was I able to bear the excessive heat of the water. I used no other *remedies* but bathing and refreshing myself every night and morning, in the water that truns about the Fort, tho' that was very dangerous by reason of the crocodiles there".

VOYAGE TO CEYLON

In the first week of October, three companies of the Garrison, embarked, on three ships, to the Island of Ceylon. Schweitzer was one of party. The writer recorded the changes in the diet, on the ship. Till 9th October, the men had water to drink and enough rice but boiled only in water. From 10th October, the ship was put on rations. "To each person, half a pound of boiled rice every day, half a pint of distilled arrack, half a pint of vinegar, half that quantity of Lisbon oil; Sundays and Thursday three quarters of pound of flesh; on Tuesday a quarter and half bacon, Monday and Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, gray-pease which we eat with oil and vinegar".

WEST COAST OF SUMATRA

As the ship reached the Western coast of Sumatra, there were terrific storms. At night, continual lightning was shooting through clouds, which looked like a mixture of black and red and "the most dismal sight that man ever saw". They wsa neither sun nor moon nor stars "they only saw continual lightning and heard much thunder". He enquired of old sailors and learned that the country (West coast of Sumatra) was very *unhealthy*, "That the European cannot bear the climate long and that unless they are fetched in 3 years, they generally die, to prevent which, fresh men are sent every year. Those that die there are commonly *taken away suddenly*, as they are eating, drinking at

table. Their food is rice instead of bread, buffees flesh, beef, pork and fish in abundance. Their drink is suri that comes from Coco and sugar beer, 3 or 4 years old which they keep underground.”

In November, after the ship passed the Equator, two soldiers and three sailors, died and there were about 20 sick on board. He tells a gruesome story. They caught a large shark, in which they found 4 boys and some bones of men. On 20th November, they sighted land and the Adam’s Peak and next day, the ship reached Road of Columbo. During this long voyage, they had suffered “a great *hunger and thirst*”.

LIFE IN CEYLON

Schweitzer gives in chapter IV a detailed description of Ceylon, its cities, forts, inhabitants, the court of the King of Candy, the customs, manners and religion of the people; their houses, their diet, manner of eating etc.

DIET AND BETEL CHEWING

On 22nd, he went to board, with an old Singalese woman, who kept a house to entertain the 20 or 30 Dutch. She could speak a little Dutch. Here, everyone had his own dish, served up with flesh, fish figs and such like diet twice a day, at 8 in the morning and at 4 in the the afternoon.

His account of the betel chewing and the reason for it, is worth noting. “They chew Betel all day which they prepare after this manner; they take one or two of the leaves, about as broad as ones hand. They take some very fine chalk made of small mussel shells, burnt and of it, they scatter about as much as will lie on top of the knife, over the leaves and then roll them up and put in the middle, a fourth part of an Arek (Areca nut) which is a fruit like nutmeg. To this composition, they give the name betel, which they keep continually in the mouth. This is to *prevent scurvy*”.

CEYLON, DUTCH SOLDIERS’ “SLAUGHTER HOUSE”

The writer gives a justification for calling Ceylon ‘The Dutch Soldiers’ slaughter-house’. “When they are commanded hither, they reckon themselves going to execution”. The Simhalese soldiers or inhabitants are not the only enemies they have there. There are blood-suckers or hedgehogs, which cover the ground after a shower of rain and suck the blood out of them. There are other dangers like being often pinched with hunger; unwholesomeness of air, by which those that are not accustomed to the climate fall into *many distempers*”.

DISEASES OF THE NEWCOMERS

Then, he gives a list of diseases. “Some are seized with *stiffness in their limbs*, others with a *dizziness and swimming of the head* and cannot endure to look at the light. Others are killed by *bloody Flux*”

“With these distempers, I have seen more soldiers in the *Hospital* than in the Garrison. Besides, many others who in pursuit of their lustful desires, destroy themselves by *venereal distempers*”.

TREATMENT OF SERPENT POISON

In the account of serpents, some very poisonous, others harmless, he adds a few words about the remedies. “Here are two sorts of remedies against the poison of those animals. The one which the inhabitants use frequently is *witchcraft*. The other which I have often used is *serpent stone*. The stone is laid upon the wound and it sticks to it, till it hath drawn to itself all the venom out of it. When it comes off, it is thrown into new milk, which fetcheth all the poison out of the stone and grows black and blue with it. Then, the stone is applied afresh to the wound and if there be any poison, remaining, sticks on; if not, it falls of and the poison is secure”.

INSECTS

Then he refers to insects; “I have seen many scorpions here as big as a common crab but their stings are not dangerous and cause only a smarting for two days and never prove mortal.” He does not seem to have come across fatal cases of scorpion stings often seen in India. Then, he refers to the “hundred feet” called *Centipede*, half a yard long, with two horns, with which it pinches. “It is so full of venom that it is all over blue and yellow colour with it. If one is pinched by them, it may prove very dangerous, besides the cruel smart it causes, unless the place is annointed quickly with *oil of Cocos*”.

After talking of ants, fleas, gnats which are all troublesome, he dilates on *leeches*, “Blood-suckers, the worst vermin on the Island. Of the two sorts, the larger ones plague the Buffaloes while the smaller ones, about 3 inches in length, attach themselves to men They hang upon men till they have sucked their fill and swell 3 times as big and then they fall off”. “If one goes to strike them off immediately they break off and leave the head in the flesh which makes the *wound more dangerous*. But the best way to deal with them is to have some green lemons with one or good vinegar and salt or salt petre and wet them with it and they fall off immediately”. The account is concluded with the story how a sister of the king of Candy brought these leeches to plague the Portuguese who had abducted her brother.

He describes a large variety of fish, “sea fish, freshwater fish, but one is dangerous. It has a tail like an arrow “If it wounds a man, with it, it is mortal to, him, wherefore great care is taken to cut that off, as soon as they catch it.”

* * * *

Some time later, the writer was promoted as Master of the Stores and Paymaster of Forces at a new station Anguratot. He gives an account of the pleasant living of Europeans there. One curious custom is recorded: “If a man design to go out of the country, he must keep it exceeding private, for if his bed fellow knows anything of it

beforehand, she certainly poisons him or bewitches him, as several have been served that have gone away". At the end of October, he went back to Columbo where they stayed in the old town in which he refers to an "Old Hospital" near which the old prince of Candy was kept, out of the city, under a guard.

JAFNAPATAM, ITS HOSPITAL AND PHYSICIAN

The next adventure was the expedition to Cormandel. Two companies, of 80 men each, were selected and started in vessels, passed through some upcountry with scarcity of water and they travelled by boats to Jafnapatam. Two companies of soldiers came from Fort Pulicat (Pallicatte) and Nagapatam, and another company came from Battacala, Trincomale. They had a general muster and with 7 companies, 8 field pieces drawn by elephants, marched out of the Fort of Jafnapatam.

The writer then describes the city, its garden, market places one for fish and the other for all sorts of commodities including spices, herbs, all a man can desire. In this city, Schweitzer met with an old acquaintance, "a Physician who was chief Surgeon to the Dutch Hospital and Physician to Min Heer Laurent Pill, the Governor and was much esteemed among the natives of the country for his abilities and the great cures he performed". The army was to march to strike fear and threaten the people who wanted to free themselves. But, as soon as the people saw the mighty force, they came to terms.

WOUNDED BY AN ARROW AND TREATED BY A PHYSICIAN

Then, on the return trip from Cormandel, they all started from Nagapatam to Dutch Fort, called *Punto de Pedre*, a very pleasant place with plenty of provisions and from there, marched on foot to Jafnapatam. In this march, the writer had a misfortune. "I was very dry in the march and coming to a Malabarian village I slipped into a little hut to get me some milk to drink. I found an old woman there, with her daughter. I desired a pint of milk and they gave it to me, asking me two pence. I drank it off and having paid the money, went away to overtake the rest of the Company, and not thinking of any thing, I was immediately shot in the leg, with one arrow and with another in the thigh. I pulled them out". He looked around but could not see anybody. "I dare not complain of it because it was done by stealth, and contrary to orders, I stopped there. So, I went out of the village as fast as I could and stopped my wounds with an old rag that I used to wrap on the lock of my Fusilin and went on to Jafnapatam, in great pain. There, I immediately went to my countrymen *Lutz, the Physician*, who cured me but was forced to cut open my wounds, because the arrows were poisoned".

SITTAWACK

At that stage, he gives a detailed account of Pearls-how they are fished. After the party reached Columbo, Schweitzer was given a further promotion with the title and office of captain and ordered to go along with others, carrying a present to the King of Candy. The party spent some time at the Fort of Sittawaka, destroyed temples, on high ground, cut in a rock and which contained many images, statues of wood and stone.

RIVER BEDS WITH PRECIOUS STONES AND RISKS TO HEALTH

The writer refers to the precious stones that lie in and upon the ground near Sittawack. He also adds that they are washed by the rains into the water when rubies are found—small ones and occasionally large ones too. Then he adds about a rivulet between two hills, in which Sapphires, Emeralds, Topaz and Lazuli stones are found. The writer and his companion went into the river with basket nets to catch precious stones. This was not without risks “Red blue, yellow, black and white crystal are to be found everywhere and is very troublesome to men upon their march, when they go barefoot, as all our men did, but they find a *herb very common here* which they call *horse-foot* in that cures them two or three days time.” Some of the company used to frequent these rivers everyday and at last all of them *contracted some distemper* and that was all that some got by it. The authorities had to prohibit men going into these tracts.

PLASTIC SURGERY TO CLIP LONG EARS

He was then offered a post which was more advantageous and not exposed to much fatigue, namely Overseer of 12 clerks belonging to East India Company. He accepted the office. Here, he relates his adventure with the long-eared widow, with whom he was boarding and who was pressing him to marry her. He told her that he would marry if she would leave off oiling the hair and let her ears be clipped into shape. But she said she would die first. The writer narrates the story of a woman, who was more reasonable and successful. A Jew, lived in the house of a Singalese nobleman, who had an unmarried daughter. He had a grievous fit of sickness, during which she was so faithful and serviceable to him, that he promised to marry her as soon he should be recovered. When he was all right, she asked him to fulfil the promise. “But the Jew refused it out of mere shame of being seen at Church with such long-eared creature”. He told her, *that* was the only reason for his going back on the promise. “She, to remedy that, consented to have *her ears cut, into better fashion* and had it done accordingly”. After this, the Jew married her. But a little later, “he fell *lame* both in his hands and feet and misfortunes befell him” which were imputed to his turning Christian.

DARK INFANTS OF BLACK MOTHERS

There is another interesting but unscientific observation that needs to be noted. Talking of black women, who have great inclination and love for a white man, than for her own countrymen, he says that “he knew many instances where women have been brought to bed, with black children, which never happens, if a woman keeps constantly to European”. (laws of heredity were not known and many women must have been suspected, whipped and punished for adultery).

WELL STAFFED HOSPITAL AT COLOMBO

Towards the end of the book, in the description of Columbo, the writer gives an account of the *Hospital and its doctors*. “There is a hospital for the Dutch” very well

provided with *able surgeons* and they have *very good medicines* and slaves allowed to them. *The Chief doctor* that had the care of it in my time was in very illrepute for his ill-management that came under his hands and for several ill-actions he was accused of and amongst others, of having been a pretty while familiar with a slave of his and then killing her and burying her in his garden. (This was not such a uncommon thing in that age in a colonial settlement).

HOSPITAL FOR ORPHANS

Not far from that, was an Hospital for Dutch Orphans. “The boys are taught to read and write; after that, they are made drummers or soldiers. The girls, besides reading and writing are taught to sew or any other employment proper to their sex and they are kept at work till somebody comes to marry them (at 12 or 13 years of age)”.

[Though Schweitzer went once along with the Dutch ships cruising, along the Comandel Coast of India, on a punitive expedition upto Porto Novo and stopped for a while at Nagapattam and on another occasion sailed along the Malabar Coast upto Goa to stop the native trading in pepper, and stayed at Cochin, for a while, he does not give any account of health conditions or of any medical establishments, in their factories along East Coast or West Coast of India.]

FAREWELL PRESENTS FROM FRIENDS

Towards the end of 1681, having finished over 5 years in the service of the Company, he decided to return home. There were a number of farewell parties. The General entertained him at dinner and presented him “with 200 preserved citrons for his voyage”.

His landlady also invited and entertained and presented him “with abundance of fruits and spices”. Schweitzer, however, had his own suspicions. When he came to the sea, he threw them all overboard “for fear of some trick or philter” which was usual there.

RETURN TO AMSTERDAM

The ship into which he got in at first, struck on the rock and sank. He was one of 15 that saved themselves by swimming and reached the town, Punt de Galle. Here, he was given passage in another ship, *Wcster Ametal*, an old small slow ship, which he did not like. The *Cartegene* being the biggest ship was the Admiral. *Africa* was the other big ship. Even in his small ship, “we had in our ship, the Master, 3 *surgeons* (one of which always read prayers), some officers, 12 soldiers, 24 seamen—all together 56”. The other two ships had 150 each. They carried plenty of provisions, many strange animals, birds etc.

HOMEWARD JOURNEY

The ships sailed on 14th January. They fasted and prayed and had consultations among the masters of the ships. They touched Cape on 1st May, and found ships

from Batavia. The ships took in fresh water, wood, turnips, herbs, cabbage, sheep and goats. On 9th May, they sailed from the Cape of Good Hope homeward.

After many adventures, hurricanes, ship wrecks, sufferings, like hunger and thirst, pursuit by enemies, various types of dangers, his ship reached Europe. On 1st September, the East India Fleet returning home came in sight of Dutch coast. Pilots came to guide each of the ships, safely into the harbour. There, two of the Chief men of East India Company also came to welcome and thank the sailors and soldiers for faithful services done. They took as many as would go to Amsterdam, which they reached on 2nd September 1682. Their chests and beds were also brought to East India Houses the same day and searched by men for that purpose. On 3rd, Schweitzer gave up the accounts to the East India Company. The account of the travel also ends, there and then, abruptly.

S U M M A R Y

This is an article giving glimpses of Health and state of medicine in the East Indies and Ceylon, based on a travel account by Christopher Schweitzer of Dutch East India Company in the last quarter of the 17th century, when the Dutch Nation was the greatest power in the Eastern Seas. It is in continuation of another earlier article, summarising the medical observations and experiences of a German Surgeon, Christo-Fryck, in the East Indies, about the same period. Schweitzer, sailed to Java in the beginning of 1676 and served as a soldier for some months there. He describes the city of Batavia, refers to the hospital there and to some Dutch physicians like Dr. Kleter, and another Saxon doctor, John Otto Helwigh. Then, he went to Ceylon where he spent the rest of his 5 years, filling various posts in a supervisory capacity. He refers to the unhealthiness of the West Coast of Sumatra. He gives a detailed account of diet and life of the soldiers in Ceylon, which he calls Dutch soldiers' "Slaughter-house" on account of its bad climate and various diseases suffered by the newcomers. He refers to poisonous serpents and insects, and the treatment for their bites and to the common practice of poisoning or bewitching by women. During his visit to Jafnapatnam, he refers to an old acquaintance, a physician who was Chief Surgeon at the Dutch hospital and physician to the Dutch Governor, much esteemed among the natives of the country. Schweitzer himself once suffered from severe headache and later from a wound by a poisoned arrow which was treated by his countrymen Lutz, the physician. He refers to some river-beds where precious stones were found, but the Dutch Adventurists going in search of these, suffered from sorefeet and other distempers, by going into these forbiddern tracts. The hospital at Columbo was provided with able surgeons and good medicines. The traveller returned to Amsterdam in September 1682.

Though Schweitzer went once along with the Dutch ships cruising, along the Cormandel Coast of India on a punitive expedition upto Porto Novo and stopped for a while at Nagapatnam and on another occasion, sailed along the Malabar

Coast, upto to Goa to stop the native trading in pepper, and stayed at Cochin for a while, he does not give any account of health conditions or of any medical establishments, in their factories, along East Coast or West Coast of India.

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सरांश

"क्रिस्टोफ़र स्विट्जर की 'ईस्ट-इण्डीस' और 'सिलोन' की यात्रा"

डी. वी. सुब्बा रेड्डी

सत्रहवीं शताब्दी के उत्तरार्ध में जब डच पूर्वी समुद्री तट पर एक महान् शक्तिशाली देश था, उस समय के क्रिस्टोफ़र स्विट्जर नामक एक यात्री के भ्रमण-वृत्तान्त पर आधारित ईस्ट इण्डीस और लड्डा के उष्णकटिबन्धीय आयुर्विज्ञान का विवरण इस लेख में दिया गया है। यह पूर्व प्रकाशित एक अन्य लेख से क्रमबद्ध है जिसमें ईस्ट इण्डीस के लगभग उसी समय के क्रिस्टोफ़र फ़िक नामक एक जर्मन शल्यविद् के चिकित्सा सम्बन्धि अनुभवों और परीक्षणों का व्यौरा था। स्विट्जर ने सन् १६७६ के मध्य में जावा की समुद्री यात्रा की थी और वहाँ कुछ महीनों के लिये सैनिक के रूप में कार्य भी किया था। उन्होंने बटविया नामक शहर का वर्णन किया है, वहाँ के अस्पताल और कतिपय डच चिकित्सकों का भी उल्लेख किया है। इसके बाद वो लड्डा चले गये जहाँ उन्होंने शेष पांच वर्ष विभिन्न महत्वपूर्ण पदों पर कार्य करते हुअे बिताये। सुमात्रा के पश्चिमी तटके अस्वास्थ्यकर वातावरण का जिक्र करते हुअे उन्होंने लड्डा में सैनिकों के भोजन और जीवन का भी उल्लेख किया है, जहाँ के हानिप्रद वायुमण्डल और नित नूतन रोगों के जन्मने के कारण उसे डच सैनिकों के लिये "वधिक ग्रह" का नाम दिया गया है। विषैले सांपों तथा अन्य जहरीले कीड़ों का तथा उनके सामान्य दंशोपचार का वर्णन वो करते हैं। विषचिकित्सा के अतिरिक्त महिलाओं द्वारा किये जानेवाले जादूटोने का उन्होंने उल्लेख किया है। स्विट्जर के एक बार शिरोवेदना से तथा बाद में एक विषैले तीर से धावग्रस्त होने पर उनका उपचार उनके देशवासी चिकित्सक लुड्ड ने किया। उन्होंने कुछ नदियों का जिक्र किया है, जिनमें से बहुमूल्य रत्न आदि प्राप्त होते हैं। किन्तु डच-साहसिक-योद्धों को उनकी प्राप्ति के प्रयास में अपने पांवों को जल्मी करना पड़ा। कोलम्बो के अस्पताल में कुशल शल्यविदों की सेवा तथा उत्तम औषधियाँ उपलब्ध थी। सेप्टेम्बर १६८२ में प्रवासी अम्स्टर्डम को लौट गया। डच जहाजों में स्विट्जर ने भारत के तटवर्ती भागों की यात्रा की तथा कुछ समय के लिये वो नागपट्टम पर रहे भी। एक अन्य अवसर पर मलाबार तटसे उन्होंने गोआ तक की समुद्री-यात्रा भी की, किन्तु उन्होंने वहाँ की स्वास्थ्यसम्बन्धी स्थिति का या अस्पतालों आदि का कोई विवरण नहीं दिया।