

him from his sufferings. The natives call this disease sometimes *gune-maior*, or the southwest *gune*, from the fact that it was introduced into their islands from that direction: and as the Peacock found it prevailing extensively at the Depeyster Islands, it is but reasonable to suppose that it came from that quarter. It was most prevalent at Taputeouea, the most southern of the Kingsmill Islands, and gradually becomes less so in the northern islands; Wood asserts that he has never seen a single case of it at Makin.

The climate of these islands is equable, and though of high temperature, it is found to be less oppressive than in most tropical countries. For the most part constant breezes prevail, and frequent rain falls, which moderates the great heat, and at the same time confers fertility on the soil. From October to April, the time of the Peacock's visit, is the winter, and is especially distinguished by the frequency of rains. Variable winds from the northward and westward prevail at this season, and they have violent gales from the southwest; these, according to Kirby, are typhoon-like. The natives plant stakes to prop up their houses, and tie them down, to prevent them from being blown away. These storms last for three or four days, veering gradually round to the north. The leeward sides of the islands receive most damage, and both land and trees are swept away. Kirby states, that the lee side of Kuria has worn away during his residence. In these gales the trunks of large trees are thrown on the west side of the island, together with large lumps of resin, similar to that found in the soil at New Zealand, which the natives use to scent their oils with: these trees, sometimes two feet in diameter, were thought to be of the pine species; many stones are found in their roots, from eight to ten inches in diameter; these are a fine basalt, and the natives use them for various purposes.

From May till September the weather is fine, with clear skies, and only occasional showers; and during this time the wind blows constantly from the eastward. This is the season in which the natives make their voyages; they never venture abroad in the winter months, even from island to island, being well aware of the danger of so doing.

Earthquakes are occasionally experienced in these islands. Kirby says he has felt ten or twelve sufficiently severe to shake down a house: the natives exhibit no fear on account of them. The direction of the oscillations seems to be from the southwest.

The population of the group, from the best data which was obtained, is about sixty thousand souls. At Drummond's Island, where there was the best opportunity of a personal examination, the estimates were above ten thousand: this is considered the most populous island