

and from the opposite quarter, the dry, following closely the order of the monsoons in the China seas. As to the temperature, the climate is very equable, the thermometer seldom rising above 90° or falling below 70°.

Diseases are few, and those that prevail arise from the manner in which the natives live. They are from that cause an unhealthy-looking race. The small-pox has at various times raged with great violence throughout the group, and they speak of it with great dread. Few of the natives appeared to be marked with it, which may have been owing, perhaps, to their escaping this disorder for some years. Vaccination has not yet been introduced among them, nor have they practised inoculation.

Notwithstanding Soung was once the Mecca of the East, its people have but little zeal for the Mahomedan faith. It was thought at one time that they had almost forgotten its tenets, in consequence of the neglect of all their religious observances. The precepts which they seem to regard most are that of abstaining from swine's flesh, and that of being circumcised. Although polygamy is not interdicted, few even of the datus have more than one wife.

Soung Road offers good anchorage; and supplies of all kinds may be had in abundance. Beef is cheap, and vegetables and fruits at all seasons plenty.

Our observations placed the town in latitude 6° 01' N., longitude 120° 55' 51" E.

On the 6th, having concluded the treaty (a copy of which will be found in Appendix XIII.) and the other business that had taken me to Sooloo, we took our departure for the Straits of Balabac, the western entrance into this sea, with a fine breeze to the eastward. By noon we had reached the group of Pangootaaraang, consisting of five small islands. All of these are low, covered with trees, and without lagoons. They presented a great contrast to Sooloo, which was seen behind us in the distance. The absence of the swell of the ocean in sailing through this sea is striking, and gives the idea of navigating an extensive bay, on whose luxuriant islands no surf breaks. There are, however, sources of danger that incite the navigator to watchfulness and constant anxiety; the hidden shoals and reefs, and the sweep of the tide, which leave him no control over his vessel.

Through the night, which was exceedingly dark, we sounded every twenty minutes, but found no bottom; and at daylight on the 7th, we made the islands of Cagayan Sooloo, in latitude 7° 03' 30" N., longitude 118° 37' E. The tide or current was passing the islands to the west-southwest, three quarters of a mile per hour; we had