

Then they moved slowly and solemnly along, praying without ceasing for the departing soul of the dying man, and at the same time, the awful effect of the scene is heightened by the occasional tolling of the bell. Upon entering the house they formally take their place in the chamber, and candles are held before the sick person's eyes; he is then urged with various interrogatories as to his resignation or fear of death, indeed, all manner of stratagems seem to be devised sufficing absolutely to frighten a man out of the few glimmering sparks of life which remain. It may well be imagined that but few survive this dreadful visitation, almost severe enough to drive a healthy man out of the world. »

Mr. Robinson, the author of this remarkable account of the visitation of the sick, was a surgeon, and a scientific explorer. Whether his account of the fauna and flora of the Orinoco district was as imaginative as his pictures of ecclesiastical functions, I did not think it worth while to inquire. After making my extract, I closed his book, and dreamt that night of priests seated on high amidst blazing lamps and receiving grovelling prostrations, and of sick men driven out of their wits by having lighted candles held before their eyes.

(To be continued)

