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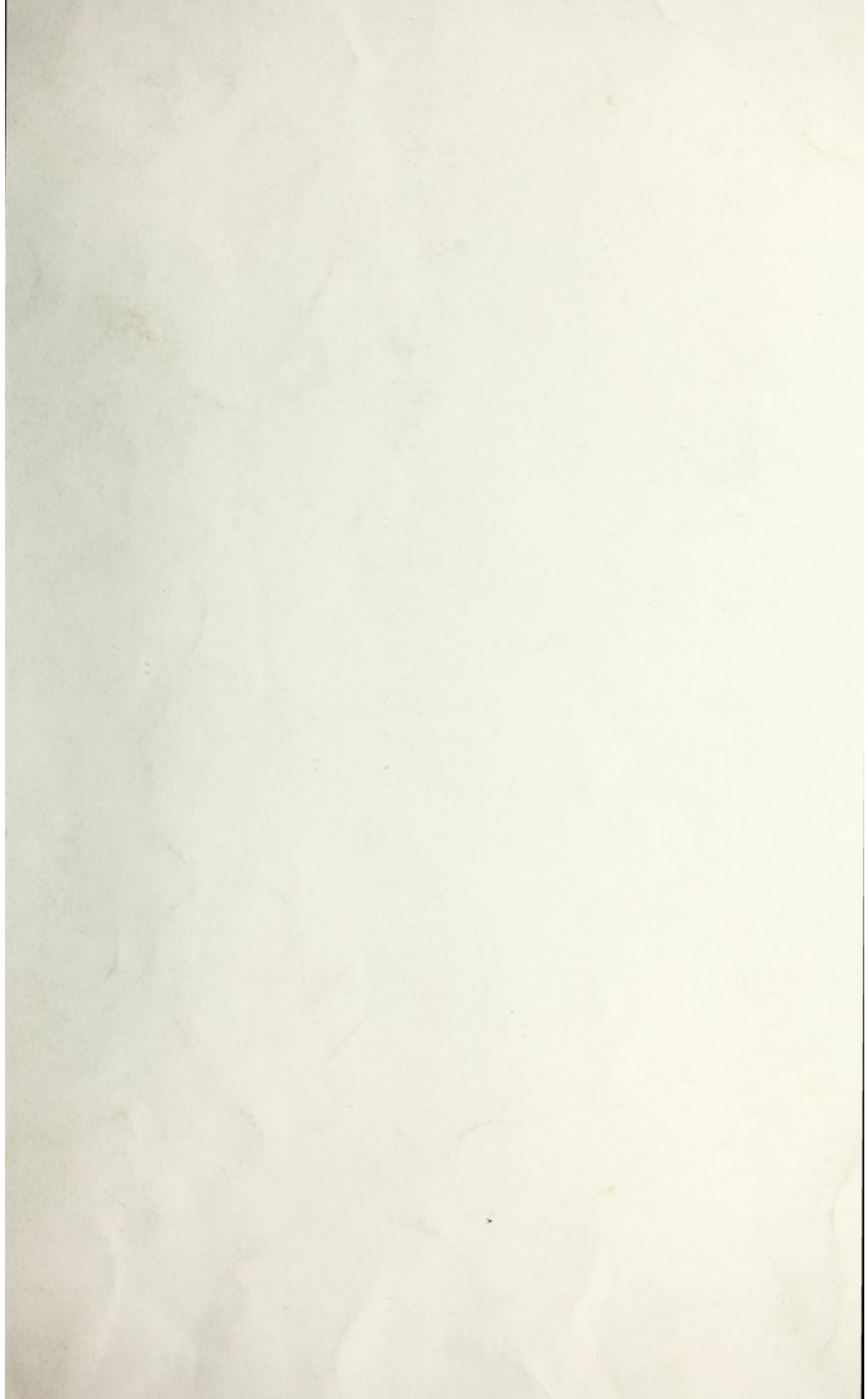
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ON CLIMATE AND ITS INFLUENCES.

By THOMAS INMAN, M.D. (LOND.)

AROUND the word 'climate' an author generally finds that he has to group many other things. For example, if he should affirm that Nice and Madeira possess a fine equable temperature, he is expected to give some information how individuals from a distance are to reach the spot, and how they may expect to live when they get there. For want of such knowledge I have seen many deplorable events occur. In one instance, a youth lost all chance of recovery from phthisis, in consequence of the miseries he endured in travelling from England to Pau; in another case, some poor ladies lost almost half their slender means in reaching the same place; in a third, consumption became rapidly developed during a flight from Nice to Rome. The last two examples which came under my notice were connected with Bad Gastein in the Tyrol. A gentleman suffering from incomplete hemiplegia was sent thither from London. In his case, heat was an essential part of the cure, yet this he never could ensure, except in the water of the hot springs,* for the locality is high, cold, and damp; there is no means for warming bedrooms, and the fare is of the most scanty. Another gentleman, threatened with paralysis, travelled there from the neighbourhood of Liverpool, and found himself so much weaker that he left again in two days, far worse than when he came.

Again, when speaking of climate, one associates with it the means of amusement, for invalids require to be entertained; if they are moped, they become depressed. Indeed, there is

* The baths are mere tubs in small rooms, which are badly closed against the wind or air; and I heard many of the bathers say, that by the time they had reached their hotel they were quite starved except on the few days when the sun shone and there was no breeze.

so much to be said upon the subject that one is embarrassed where to begin.

Judging from the experience of an European tour lasting a trifle over twelve months, and two visits to the South of England, I should say that people travel for simple enjoyment, to escape the rigours of some cold winter, or to seek for that health which has been denied them at home. In some special localities, one finds a large colony of bronchitic and consumptive people established for the winter; whereas those who complain of rheumatism, gout, indigestion, or simple debility are, generally, on the move from one interesting spot on the world's surface to another.

As it is certain that the majority of British invalids who have recourse to "climate" as a means of cure suffer from pulmonary affections, and especially desire to avoid the damp cold of an English winter, it will be well if I refer in the first place to those places which seem to be most suitable for them. In doing so, my observations will be restricted to those spots which I have visited once or oftener.

In the south of France, beginning with the west coast, Biarritz may be mentioned as fit for a winter residence. But only for its seeming cheapness, and its comparatively mild sea air; one may be boarded there and lodged for seven shillings a day in comfortable quarters; but the place is stupid in the extreme; the majority of the houses are only inhabited during the bathing season, the sands are heavy and shingly, and there is not one single interesting walk to be found near. Montpellier, which once was popular, is so no more. Pau still has some adherents, but I have heard of many who consider it inferior to Biarritz for the winter. Its main advantage is, that its air is dry, and that it is free from tempestuous cold winds. But, on the other hand, the range of daily temperature is excessive—the sun being very hot from ten to four, and the nights being extremely cold. Pau is, moreover, a very 'dear' place to live in. If invalids do not board and lodge in an hotel or pension, they have either to hire a villa, or engage a set of rooms, for the whole season of six months; such things as lodgings 'let' by the week or month are unknown. Not only are apartments expensive, but ordinary "living" is so

too; and those who are not masters of the French language sufficiently to bargain have to pay double or treble for everything which they purchase.

The observant traveller, as he makes his way by the excellent railroad which passes along the northern slopes of the Pyrenees to Marseilles, will find, from the general appearance of the country, the absence of fine olive trees, and the rarity of the orange, that there is evidence of severe winters; and if by chance his evil fate should make him travel when a fierce north wind, called the *Mistral*, is blowing, he will feel that this tract of country is not a good climate for consumptives in December or January.

But when once the tourist has left Toulon behind him, his eye begins to dwell upon palm trees, orange groves, and almond trees growing in the open air; whilst the olive, which has hitherto been seen as a stunted shrub, becomes a stately tree. When he reaches Cannes, the Englishman may, in December, imagine that he is walking in Kew gardens in July. He sees around him all sorts of well known flowers; and his eye is ever attracted by oranges and olives, which are quite as common as apples in a Kent orchard. In fact, one who has come from dreary dark November in England, may well think that in Cannes he has reached a terrestrial paradise. Here again, however, there is this drawback, namely, expensiveness. There used to be an old Greek proverb, that "it was not every one who could afford to go to Corinth;" one may say the same of Cannes. But to those who do not care greatly for having to pay dearly for comfort, the place is most attractive as a winter residence.

We may say the same of Nice. This charming spot has been greatly improved since it has been in French hands, and there is everything about it which the most fastidious individual can desire, except boats and boating. An excellent promenade runs close to the sea side, and is abundantly provided with seats, and sheltered from the sun. The beach, it is true, is stony; but the waves seem ever to be companionable. In the vicinity are many delightful drives and walks, with abundance of objects to please the geologist, the botanist, and the gardener. I have twice visited Nice in the winter, and have had experience both of its sunshine

and of its storm, and do not hesitate to praise it highly as a sanatorium. Like other such places which are greatly frequented, it is excessively dear. House rents are enormously high, and hotel accommodation correspondingly expensive. For a sitting-room and three bed-rooms, in the second story of the Hotel des Anglais, the charge was 35s. per day, and every other charge was proportional. In pensions or boarding houses the rates are lower, though still very high. A word, however, must be said in passing about the different localities of Nice. The western part lies almost close to the sea shore, the houses being only separated from it by a garden, the road, and the "walk;" consequently, all those living in that quarter hear the ceaseless splash of the tideless sea. This varies from a rippling sound to a continuous roar. When there is a gale, each billow rolls in with a noise like thunder; and if there is only a breeze, the sound resembles platoon firing. During a whole month, I never became accustomed to the din or slept soundly. Those who do not like this, reside in the town proper, a considerable distance from the shore; and here rents and living are somewhat less than in the "English promenade." But in spring, both these localities are visited frequently by a cold wind from the mountains, which is very trying to delicate people. In consequence of this, a suburb has rapidly sprung up, situated under the hill at the base of which the town stands. This is called the Carabacel quarter, and it would be difficult for an Englishman to imagine a more lovely place than this is in winter. The climate is delicious, and one fond of flowers may potter about his garden all day long, just as he might do in July or August at home. I may add, too, that his winter day is about an hour longer than it is in England. After this, it is a pity to have to add that Nice is badly supplied with eatables; and though the hotel dinners are grandly served, they are not appetising. I cannot give a better proof of this than by saying that, on the steamer which took us to Malta from Naples, we found an English gentleman who seemed in the last stage of consumption. His brother was with him, and informed me that the invalid had been originally ordered to Nice, and had sojourned there for three weeks, but had become so wearied with the fare served up at

his hotel, that he resolved to go to Malta, in search of English comestibles and British comfort. Had he sailed direct from London to Valetta, he might have been benefited by the change; as it was, the long overland journey from Nice to Naples took away almost all his remaining strength, and he died two days after his arrival at his journey's end. Before leaving this spot, let me say that there is a manufactory of perfumery in the town, superintended by an Englishman, whose daughter showed it to us. She told us that, during the respective seasons, their purchases amounted to about three or four tons of orange flowers per day, one ton of roses, and half a ton of sweet violets. This alone will give an idea of the climate during winter and spring.

We now go either by road or rail towards Menton, but we stop about half way to see Monaco, and its suburb Monte Carlo. At the last named locality there is a gambling establishment, and its proprietors have done every thing in their power to make the place perfect. There are, besides the Casino for play, fine houses for residents, a grand hotel, a luxurious restaurant, a ball room, gardens laid out with exquisite taste, and terraces lined by orange trees and sweet-scented plants. A fine band plays for many hours daily, and there are ample attractions around the spot for the pedestrian, and others for those who prefer carriage exercise. At Roquebrun, close by, there is a most interesting geological nut to crack.

We reach Menton at length, a long straggling town built upon the shore, which here has an outline resembling Cupid's bow; the dirty old part is situated at the central point. Almost all the hotels are upon the shore, but a few villas and an hotel or two are distant from the ocean, and out of the noise of its waves. On this place, Dr. J. H. Bennet, of London, who spends every winter there, has written a very readable book, which may be depended upon. I do not think that there is, in climate, any great difference between Menton, Nice, Cannes, and St. Remo. But in certain places there is a variance, owing to locality; for example, at Nice, with a south front, the sun was upon our rooms from its rising to its setting, and the thermometer stood daily 68° by day, and 66°

by night, care being taken 'to bottle up the sunshine,' as a friend said, by closing the windows at half-past two. At Menton, the sun was off our room at three o'clock, and our temperature was 66° by day, and 64° at night. But it is to be remarked that, at the east end of Menton, the houses and shore are sheltered under a steep hill and cliff, and there the warmth is greater than at Nice during the spring time. The hotel in this quarter is called the "Gare à Vent," and its garden is a lovely one. In it, one may see people sitting during every fine winter day, sheltering from the sun, under catalpa, red pepper, mimosa, or other graceful trees. The "abutilon," which with us is a creeper and cultivated in conservatories, is there a standard, and flourishes in the open air. Along the side of the river, too, there is fine shelter; and at all the localities named, the lemon tree flourishes luxuriantly, which it does not either at Nice or Cannes. This indicates with certainty a higher winter temperature at Menton than at the two last named places, for the lemon is killed, I understand, by a temperature of 28° . The orange can bear a lower degree, if the frost is not prolonged. I may mention that, at all these places, the aloe flourishes almost like a weed, and its long flower spikes—which are more curious than beautiful—are a conspicuous feature in the foreground of almost every landscape. All along the Riviera mosquitoes abound, and are quite a curse to some sensitive people, who sleep with masks and gloves on face and hands as a protection.

We did not find Menton so expensive as Nice, and the company frequenting the hotels seemed to me to be of a somewhat lower grade in society; they had evidently come really for health, and not for pleasure. We were at the Hotel des Anglais, which Dr. Bennet and his patients frequent, and paid 20s. a day for a sitting-room and two bed-rooms, and 6s. 8d. a head for board—breakfast, luncheon, dinner, and vin ordinaire—everything moderately good, and abundant. But, as an habitué remarked, it was somewhat painful to stay long at this place, for the faces round the table were very generally cadaverous; and to see persons getting worse day by day interfered greatly with the comfort of those whose complaints were not pulmonary. Around Menton

there are most interesting walks, and the scenery is so picturesque that an artist might pass many a winter there ere he had exhausted his subjects. Close by are some caves, in which have been found bones of the elephant, rhinoceros, and whale, and more recently the skeleton of a man, with the remains of a fur dress and cap. I ought perhaps to add, that, although so recently Italian provinces, French is now universally talked (as far as I could find out) both at Nice and Menton, and localities which had Italian names now bear the same, but clothed in a French guise.

After leaving Menton, we follow the coast line in a northeasterly direction, and seem to have turned a corner, for the vegetation is not so luxuriant. Yet, in every sheltered nook that we pass, we see fine palms, olives, oranges, and sometimes lemons. At St. Remo, we have the same climate as at Cannes or Nice, and the place is sheltered by a near hill from the cutting mountain blasts. This place is not so large as any of the last-named towns, and a smaller set of habitués are to be found there; consequently, it is more dull, and perhaps one may say more select. At Nice and Menton, there are many French and Russians. At St. Remo, I heard nothing in the hotel but English, the frequenters being British or Americans. *A propos* of the great number of United States' travellers to be found in Europe, I may say, that one of the main reasons assigned by them for the fact is, that it is cheaper to cross the Atlantic and travel in Europe, than to visit sanatoriums in their own land. We left St. Remo behind us on November 27th, our last view being of a party of ladies playing croquet on a lawn, both they and the garden looking very summer-like. On the 29th, at Savona, we had rain, and rejoiced to have a fire to sit by. On the 30th, at Genoa, we had frost and snow. At Spezzia, the cold was intense. At Florence, the Arno was frozen over, and the temperature 20° below the freezing point of Fahrenheit, and there was snow on the ground. In rooms with a north aspect, a large wood fire failed to keep us warm. In the picture galleries and museums we were miserable, even though clad in winter attire. On December 18th we reached Rome, the cold being excessive all the way, until we descended to the Valley of the Tiber. The Eternal City had recently been visited by snow, and

there was still a nightly frost, both being rare occurrences. This last was not severe, however, for strawberries were growing in pots outside our windows. In Rome, we miss the fine olives like those we saw at Nice, and the orange, lemon, and palm trees which are so luxuriant at Menton and St. Remo. We stayed, however, for a time, and heard with interest, from those who had been on the Riviera during the frightful time we had just passed through, that they had there the usual warmth and sunshine—no frost and no snow.

We passed the month of January at Naples; but though our rooms had a south aspect, and we had the sun upon them all day, we always required a good fire in the evening. Yet, out of doors, the vegetation resembles that of Nice and Cannes, and flowers equally flourish in its gardens. But though the average temperature of Naples during the winter is the same as that on the Riviera, the town is not generally healthy; visitors suffer from diarrhoea and malaise, both of which are probably due to the bad drainage. On the outskirts, there are many villa houses, where there are both warmth and shelter, without offensive smells. For itself, all I can say of Naples is that it is a stupid place, and few would care to visit it, if it had not in its vicinity Vesuvius, and Pompeii, Puteoli and Baiae.

The month of February we spent in Malta, and found the climate delicious. As no sunshine came upon our sitting-room, we felt obliged to have a small fire in the evening, which raised the temperature from 64° to 66° ; but this measure was mainly necessary, because we wore our summer clothes. We had not been long in the Imperial Hotel at Valetta (where we were boarded and lodged, without wine, for 8s. a day) before we found out how much almost all of us had suffered from the miserable food that we had been obliged to put up with in France and Italy. Our fare now consisted of eggs, or any form of good meat, pork, bacon, ham, sucking pig, &c., for breakfast, with English bread and toast; a hot lunch; and an excellent dinner, very often with turtle soup. Under this we throve amazingly. With my party was an octogenarian, who suffers when in England from asthma and bronchitis; yet he joined us in picnics whenever we went

out in an open carriage, and often in the summer dress of England. Oranges there were as common as blackberries are here, and the fields abounded in lovely and bright-coloured flowers. Anemones grow wild, and the heads of clover are two inches long, and proportionally broad. We had a sirocco for three days, which gave us a proof that the island has some drawbacks.

Amongst these must be reckoned its insular position, for Malta cannot be reached except by a considerable voyage; but to those who can overcome sea sickness, I do not think there is a better winter sanatorium for our countrymen. We left it before the middle of March, and visited Syracuse, Catania, Messina, and Palermo. Sicily impressed me very favourably, and I should praise Palermo highly for winter quarters, were it not for the difficulty in reaching and leaving it. The same may be said of Catania; but Messina and Syracuse are quite too dull for residence. We reached Naples by the end of March, and almost immediately went to visit Castellamare and Sorrento. The first of these places lies low, and is, like Naples, badly drained; the second is situated on a cliff, composed of Volcanic tufa, and is one of the most charming spots in Italy. As a sanatorium in spring, it is in my opinion superior to the places on the Riviera. The vicinity affords most interesting walks, and around it, everywhere that soil can lie upon the rock, one sees luxuriant and lovely vegetation. In its vicinity is Capri, which is much resorted to by patients who suffer from phthisis; its climate is much the same as that of Malta and Palermo. All people wintering at Naples would do well to visit it for a week.

We reached Rome again about the middle of April, near the end of the season, and found the temperature delicious—similar to that of Malta in February, and Palermo in March. At the latter end of April, and the first week in May, we found Florence so hot as to be quite unbearable by the ladies of my party; they could scarcely crawl through its sultry streets. At Venice, between May 7th and 14th, we had all the vicissitudes of an English climate—cold and rain, with wind and storm, a calm sea and a lovely temperature.

I may pass over the most of the rest of our journey, to enable

me to speak a word of the Engadine, and the influence of high localities.

There is no doubt that many have been sent to St. Moritz, Samaden, Pontresina, and other villages in the Engadine valley, under the impression that its great elevation above the sea would prove of service to consumptive patients. It is equally certain that some patients have wintered at one or another locality with greater comfort than elsewhere. When travelling with my party, I certainly noticed, that the ladies were better in the high places than they had been upon the plains. But then, it is to be noticed, that a rise to a great elevation in a balloon leads to dyspnœa or discomfort; that some consumptives are better during a frost; and that there are certain spots in which new-comers feel invariably better, and others in which they feel worse, than usual. It would occupy too much space, were I to enter into a critical dissertation upon the effects of height; perhaps it will suffice to say that my own opinion is, that what is attributed to an elevated position as regards the sea, ought, in reality, to be attributed to "dryness." A few illustrations will suffice. An Anglo-Indian, sent up to the Himalayas to recover health, will get worse if he ascends amongst the clouds, where the air is cold and filled with constant fogs; yet, when he goes lower—below the region of frequent mists—he will find the good he seeks. In like manner, sound, deep drainage has diminished consumption in the localities where it has been adopted. A sandy or gravelly soil, like Southport, Brompton, and Bayswater, is hostile to "decline;" and in England, Clifton, which is probably the best winter resort that we have, has the character of having the driest air. Pau, in the Pyrenees, gained its reputation on a similar ground. So has the Undercliff in the Isle of Wight. Need I say how greatly drainage has influenced health for the better in what once were called the Fenny districts. In all very high valleys, frost and snow generally supersede, even in summer time, warmth and mist. Hence the air of such localities is generally dry.

Let us for a moment apply this conclusion respecting dryness to a few well known localities in Great Britain and Ireland. Cove of Cork, Queenstown, the South-West of Ireland, Cornwall, and

Devon have a great reputation for the generally equable temperature which they enjoy; but they do not prove themselves equal to the ideas formed of them, for they are too damp.

In every locality which I have eulogised in this paper, the air is comparatively dry, except in Malta and Italy, during the sirocco; and then every one, who feels the effect of the moisture-laden wind, complains of debility, relaxed sore throat, and a general feeling of malaise. In every place where there is a rainy season, that period is shunned by the health seeker. On the contrary, every spot which has naturally a dry time is largely visited during the season. This condition is certainly quite as important as a moderately high equable temperature. It is either the non-recognition of this fact, or the want of attention to it, which has so often disappointed those who have resorted to Cornwall, especially Penzance, and to the West of Ireland, in the winter time; for in those localities, the advantages of a comparatively warm temperature are counterbalanced by the moisture produced by frequent rains and fogs.

Now comes the question—If a dry warm air is that which is most profitable to the sufferer from phthisis and bronchitis, cannot such be procured at home? That it can be is unquestionable, provided that landlords or house owners will take the necessary steps to ensure a steady introduction of warm air to feed our winter fires; and thus enable us to have the same abundance of fresh atmospheric air as those enjoy who winter at Madeira or Menton. Into this part of my subject, however, I will not enter, having treated it at considerable length elsewhere.

