

**An enquiry into the causes which render Ilfracombe the healthiest
Devonshire watering-place / by Edwyn J. Slade-King.**

Contributors

Slade-King, Edwyn J.
Royal College of Surgeons of England

Publication/Creation

[Ilfracombe] : [Printed by W. Stewart], [1875]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/hsmd5jvk>

Provider

Royal College of Surgeons

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by The Royal College of Surgeons of England. The original may be consulted at The Royal College of Surgeons of England. where the originals may be consulted. This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

2
“Aër nimirum purus et bonus, quo nihil ad vitam retinendam,
et sanitatem conservandam, magis necessarium est, nec
quicquam ad multos morbos sanandos utilius.”

AN

ENQUIRY INTO THE CAUSES

WHICH RENDER

ILFRACOMBE

THE HEALTHIEST

Devonshire Watering-Place :

BY

EDWYN J. SLADE-KING,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Le San. Science Ed 1876

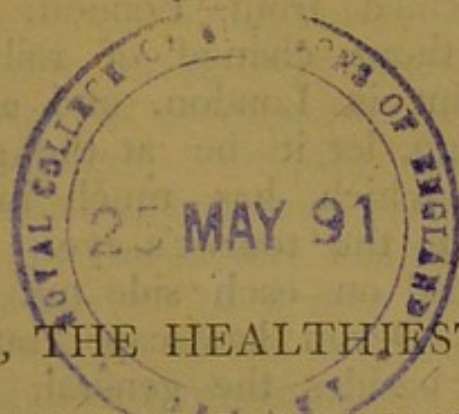
Doctor of Medicine of the University of Edinburgh; Member of the Royal College of Physicians of London; Member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England; Extraordinary Member of the Royal Medical Society; District Medical Officer to the London and South Western Railway Company; sometime Physician Plymouth Dispensary; House-Surgeon to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary; Assistant at the Clinical Obstetric Hospital at Paris; and Surgeon H.M.S.; Author of various Pamphlets and Contributions to Medical Periodicals; “The Medical Staff of the Militia;” “Rheumatic Ophthalmia;” “A Case of Poisoning by Verbascum Nigrum;” “A Remarkable Case of Suicide;” “The Chrono-Thermal Treatment of Disease;” “Phosphorus in Neuralgia;” etc., etc. *Sanit. Waker*

English Watering places 1897.

This Pamphlet is in no sense intended as a guide book, but the first edition having "sold out" a slight sketch of the Town and neighbourhood has been added in the present Edition. The Sanitary and Meteorological information has been corrected up to the present date.

Ilfracombe,

February 1875.



ILFRACOMBE, THE HEALTHIEST WATERING PLACE OF THE WEST!

How can we spend our summer holiday better than by paying a visit to a place boasting of such distinction as the above?

But to us, with every kindly feeling towards our friends in the west, with every wish to do them justice, with every desire to spend our summer holiday amongst them, yea perhaps "even a score of sweet little summers or so," to us, eager to prove those merits which the Queen of Western Watering Places offers, there arises in the North and in the East, in the Midland, and even in the Southland too, (though the nearest to the main routes) the question, How shall we get there? How long will it take us? What will it cost us? And that question follows on the remark some friend or acquaintance who has been there perhaps long ago, is sure to make on your proposal to visit Ilfracombe or Lynton, or Westward Ho! Why my dear fellow, or dear lady, "it is as remote as the Scottish Highlands, and will cost I should say quite as much; it is a dreadful way off, quite a fatiguing journey—you must break it to render it a comfortable one at all."

To get to Ilfracombe! Well, we have now a choice of several routes. The main route and the shortest, must be mentioned first, and to particularize it we may call it the through rail-route by the new line uniting Ilfracombe and London *via* Salisbury, Exeter, and Barnstaple. The Waterloo Station of the London and South Western Railway, is the great gate-way of this route, and Portsmouth and Southampton are porches to the same on the southern Coast.

This route is the shortest and easiest, considering that it may be performed from London, and all intermediate stations, without change of railway carriage. If your starting point is London, and a break of journey is considered fitting, let it be at the good old Cathedral City of Exeter, which has much including its choice Minster to delight the tourist's eye. From this city to Barnstaple, the road on each side not only affords a fair sample of North Devon landscape, but it abounds with singular beauties besides the general, which improve on acquaintance, if sought out by the diligent tourist and sightseer. The Exe is crossed, Crediton, with its red tinted soil dear to the Devonshire cyder grower is soon passed, and long, lovely, winding vales are traversed, interspersed with white Hamlets and sequestered Bartons, mantled by hanging woods, with a free mountain-born river, the Taw, full of life, beauty, and music, and what is more to our fellow traveller Piscator's purpose full of salmon and trout, delighting our progress as it washes the bank of the rails, till that stream expanding wider and wider, finds us at Barnstaple, where it forms a magnificent estuary, along which, as by an enclosed lake, we skirt, till nearly at the picturesque village of Braunton. Passing through this station, and ascending a fertile orchard-clothed vale the watershed is crossed, and thence perhaps, no railway in the kingdom exhibits, until reaching Ilfracombe, a stranger course. Peeps of the sea are caught over the neighbouring heights, and delicious openings beheld adown the Combes, which head in and about the village of Lee. Of Morthoe, the last station before reaching Ilfracombe, more anon. Descending a semi-Welsh valley, we reach the top of the small hill on the summit of which, is situated the new station of Ilfracombe. A trifle bleak in winter, but mostly pleasant enough is the station, commanding a magnificent view of the Town and the Torrs, Rocks and Ocean. A winding path affords a short access to the Town for the pedestrian, and a four-horse omnibus conveys us fast down the hill, and through some preliminary crooked streets, till we reach the main artery of the town, the High Street itself.

Should our friend, however, hail from the northern districts, and have decided to go to Devonshire, he can reach the Llandiloes and Central Welsh Road from Manchester, Chester,

Crewe, or Shrewsbury, a line whose beauties want not our praise. The watershed of the Welsh Mountains is twice crossed, and the course of the early Wye offers most tempting pictures, and the adjacent valley scenes of romance but little suspected by the stranger. Smokey, money-making, dirt-grimed Swansea is soon reached, and a short sail of two hours, lands the tourist on the Devonshire side of the Severn Sea.

Suppose him, however, to be a man from the Midlands, he must make for Bristol, and his enjoyment of the Portishead route, open only from Whitsuntide to October, depends on his sea-worthiness, his sea-stomach, and his sea-legs. Capital steamers are the Ely and Taff, and if we do not care to tarry in Bristol City or in fair Clifton, a convenient train speeds us away to Portishead Pier, under the magic bridge, which hangs in fairy traces from rock to rock, by the not too pellucid stream of the Somersetshire Avon, with wondrous miniature Rhine-like peeps from the carriage windows, ever and anon; and onward we glide till we are halted on the pier, beside the white steam blowing from the double funnels of the Ilfracombe packet. The luggage being stowed on board, we start, and as that start is generally contrived at high noon-day, it is well to replenish the inner-man by a lunch in the cabin. Regaining the deck, we find that Portishead Pier has probably vanished, and with exhilarating feeling, "the goodly hills of Somerset and white sails flying o'er the yellow sea, are descried from our hastening vessel." Yonder are the peaks of the Glamorgan Mountains to the north of us, shrouding many a gorgeous valley cloven into the hills midst, and now we pass, between the sentinel islands, the Steep and Flat Holmes.

Crowds of shipping next attract our attention, marking the Penarth road-stead, and that young Liverpool of the Severn, Cardiff. Far away, there are clusters of blue hills, half-veiled in hazy cloud. They shew the place of Exmoor, and of Devon's rocky cliffs, and to gain them, we cross the basin of Bridgewater bay, twinkling with a myriad sun-lights. We hail coasters and homeward bound craft, or vessels seeking distant Africa, or the forest shores of the Brazils, as we drive swiftly along. The distant blue has become a fair revelation of high mountainous coast, woods as far as the eye can upward gaze, fairy coves, secluded bays, and wondrous headlands. We round the grandest of these promontories, splendid in colour and fantastic in outline, we slacken speed,

spare steam is blown off, boats appear from a snug white harbour, houses here and there peep from woods along the stairways of the hill. We have before us Lynton, and its port Lynmouth, where the Lyn streams pour their white waves of ceaseless murmur adown through glens of surpassing beauty, to meet the sea. Here we lose some of our human freight, and many of our passengers exhibit a nervousness, that shall we shame to say it, is rather amusing than otherwise to us, as they step into the landing boat and set their willing feet on the Devon shore. But our stay is not long here, again our paddles smite the now green and ever greener sea, shot over with wondrous lights of blue, red, and purple, we coast along the land. If beautiful before, here the shore-prospect is more changing and more lovely. Such variety of scene, such boldness of form and colour, is exhibited by the coast-line of but few Highland lakes. The light of the Western Sun now adds a charm to the entire landscape and marine. The waves roll and tumble in golden light. A delicious azure veils the distance, the shores of southern Wales shew up fairy-like over the white crests of the sea. The Great Hangman by Combmartin, with its roseate crags, o'erhangs the masts of our dwarfed ship, and the cliffs look ever fearfully down into the confined deep. We seem as if we must run on those rocks, but there, we have rounded another file-like promontory with the creeping waves scattering snow along its sides, and fresh and ever fresher blows the evening wind from the cliffs of Lundy's Isle. The islet beacon shews a fiery gleam like an evening star amid the faded glories of the heavens; and now, sitting sequestered among rocks, and guarding a perfectly beautiful natural harbour, the pile of Hillsborough keeping faithful watch upon the town to the east, Ilfracombe, Queen of the West, lies before us. Lights already twinkle in many a window. The pier is alive with those eager to welcome their friends, and without confusion, owing to most excellent arrangements, we are soon run in along the landing stage, where the disembarkation takes place, and we find ourselves on shore, and it is to be hoped, soon comfortably housed—ready early the next morning, to enjoy our first sea-bath and explore the country we have awhile chosen to call our own. We have described our voyage in the August month, later in the season, "The halcyon broods,

not on the Severn Sea," and alas, then for the tyro in voyages and in steam-boats. To the pedestrian, we highly recommend his approaching Ilfracombe, by a route which in some parts runs parallel with the one just described; leaving the rail at Minehead, he must make his way to Dunster, celebrated for its castle, viewing as he does, the Quantock hills and the sweet villages nestling at their foot. Porlock is soon reached; let us commend to his notice its hospitable vine-clothed inn, its magnificent wooded bay, and the loved haunts of the wild red deer—Cloudsham Woods, and Dunkery's heather-clad summit. Next, he will skirt the Exmoor Range; if he has just finished reading "Lorna Doone," all the better, and by a wild road, rising in places 1,300 feet, he will easily get through to Lynmouth. By a slight divergence, the entire length of the Lyn Valley may be visited, and the culminating beauties of Watersmeet. Our pedestrian has now the choice of two roads, both conduct him to Ilfracombe through Watersmouth, his guide-book and ordnance map will afford him ample information, and he will not regret the choice of either path; all we suggest is, that when Trentishoe Beacon comes in a direct line, he should make for the summit of the Great Hangman—pause a time to enjoy the coast-line views thence disclosed up and down channel, and onwards by a rough and tumble pathway to the mile long village of Combmartin, a unique spot. All we care to say of it is, that its church reminds us of some of the best in the sister county of Somerset.

Thus have we landed the traveller, tourist, or pedestrian, paterfamilias, spinster, or bachelor, whichever, or whatever he or she happens to be, by several and many routes at Ilfracombe.

The town boasts good hostelries (some of them first-class establishments) and capital and cheap lodgings.

Ilfracombe consists chiefly of a main street running down to the harbour, and side-streets diverging from this, some up the hill to Terraces, Bella-vistas, Belle-views, Montpeliers, *et id genus omne* without number, others down the hill to the Ilfracombe Hotel, the Baths, and the Capstone Parade, supposed to be the finest marine walk in the kingdom. Many of these latter streets are winding and narrow drang-ways, and the houses exhibit great irregularity of disposition.

The best class of lodging houses are either grouped in the

terraces or scattered here and there where the vantage point of a view can be obtained. Supposing now the stranger to have become settled in his lodgings or in one or other of the hotels, his first object should be to ascend to some of the roads above the town, and he will there behold Ilfracombe in possession of a position and character, most unlike what he has seen at other watering places he may chance to have resorted to. The greatest want will perhaps be found in the partial absence of a sand-beach, but we think on the whole the want is compensated for in more ways than one, and but little will be found lacking, save for the children's amusement, who must substitute pebbles for sand in their toy spades, though even the wish for softest sand can be gratified by a visit to Woollacombe, close to Morthoe station—a clear, sandy beach of three miles, without rock or stone. Nowhere are found such beautiful rock terraces, such charming, secluded Naiad coves, such pretty bathing places, such lovely lanes ramifying southward and eastward, down which to catch on each retrospect, “the many twinkling smile of ocean,” as at Ilfracombe, but perhaps the best way of initiating the reader into an idea of Coombe, will be to place before him one of our last summer days, how it was spent, and what we saw. We will, then, attempt to describe a few effects of the varied year and its seasons upon the Devon landscape and climate, and briefly to conclude this section, note the neighbourhood and the excursions that may make us acquainted with the best places to be seen in it.

We rise early, who does not, who is aught of a valitudinarian, at a watering place? The morning is beautiful, and our first impulse is to speedily indulge, while yet the early sun glitters on the wave, in that great refresher, that panacea for a hundred ills, and restorer of depressed spirits, a sea-bath. We have a choice of bathing places. Either we make our way through the tunnels by Crewkhorne Cave, and there if it be low water, manage indifferently well, if high tide, we enjoy a splendid bath. If we are swimmers we can take a header from the rocks or the attendant boat, so deep is the water close in shore, and this perhaps accounts for so many of the juvenile swimmers being such good performers in the open sea. The tunnels might be much improved as bathing places, as they are handy to the centre of the town, but the little bathing houses are scrupulously clean, and the attendants

ever most civil. If we care not for the tunnels and dislike its entrances and its exits, we may walk to the pier, often a lively spot for a morning stroll, and there take a boat for Rapparee. This is a cove very secluded under Hillsborough, the great half-mountain cliff to the east. A small boat ferries us across the mouth of the harbour free of charge. The bathing at Rapparee is very good, at all states of the tide. Owing to its position and the sweet influence of the Gulf Stream, bathing at Ilfracombe may be indulged in, and especially at this cove, when it has long ceased in the more open sea-way at most of the other watering places of Great Britain. This is a fact we can establish by personal proof. A quick turn or two on the Pier after bathing, or if the ablution be performed uncommonly early, a walk up Hillsborough affording a grand *coup d' œil* of the whole town and surrounding elevations, or to the terraces above-mentioned, or on the Torrs Walks, the walk *par excellence* of Ilfracombe, or a turn around the Capstone, the fashionable parade, a half-a-dozen times, will of course, add greatly to the zest of the matter and insure us a good appetite for our breakfast, at which be it public or private, a dish of Exmoor trout may not be found wanting. The social meal is oftentimes enlivened by the strains of wandering minstrels, who play about the streets of the town—though alas, the strains are somewhat discordant.

After breakfast, until lunch or early dinner time, we chat and read the papers at the Town Hall Club, or idle about the Harbour, or by the old Lantern Hill, crowned with a lighthouse, once the chapel of St. Nicholas, patron saint of sailors, and watch the passing steamers, or the shipping entering and leaving the harbour at our feet, or take tickets for one of the packets making daily trips on the Channel to Lundy's Isle, remote in ocean's realm, or to fair Clovelly, perched in its woody nest over the heaving sea, or on to Lynton and Lynmouth, by the Bristol steamers, which will leave us there in the morning and pick us up on their return voyage in the evening; or we paddle about the shore in a boat, or fish from the new harbour works. If walking suits us better than strolling or boating, then handy or distant walks are as varied as they are numerous, or we may use a convenient train to carry us to Morthoe, to Braunton, or Barum, and from either of these places the guide books will point out how we can arrange a morning, afternoon, or long day's ramble, or if we would rather

drive in the cheap and light pony carriages, which seem ever at hand, we may soon suit our taste in variety and abundance of inland excursions.

Anyhow, we manage to thoroughly enjoy the day, happy and full of life and sunshine as a summer day should be. If we feel inclined not to venture far from home, the High Street of the town gives a picture of bustle, animation, and gaiety, and an aspect of joyous faces and merry crowds, which may prove contagious to our own souls. If it chances to be a Wednesday or a Saturday, there is still more life, for these are market days, and in respect of busy market scenes, and abundant supplies of provisions, and buyers and sellers thereof, Ilfracombe is not a wit behind any town in the county. A large number of country folk make their way to town in carts of a peculiar local construction from near and distant villages or lonely bartons, and the richness of the full Devonian tongue, with its quaint old Saxon idioms, will strike not unpleasantly on the stranger's ear. Then there is the omnibus bringing more visitors from the railway, or the Great Western *char a bancs* and four, their drivers or conductors making the streets echo with their lively tunes evoked from the bugle's mouth on their way to Barnstaple. Private carriages of departing and arriving tourists, or a score or two of Welsh excursionists who, if their stock of English is limited, soon learn the meaning of Devonshire cream or ripe strawberries. Joyous children, laughing girls, vainly urging their stubborn donkeys, and all else that gives a watering place animation and stir, so that we have no excuse for gloom if we allow a little of the brightness of life around us to infuse itself into our bosoms. Dinner is an important event in the sea-side day. From the open hotel doors, fragrant odours stream forth at the appointed time, and we shall find that our meal will not cost us less or more, but perhaps may be a little better, certainly not worse than at similar places of resort. We will make a good one, for the blessed evening cometh on, time to digest, ruminate, and chew the cud of sweet or bitter fancies. Quiet as a river, with a brilliant sun-track far-spread upon the western waters, how beautiful is now the view from the far point of the Capstone walk, or from the lonely Torrs, where the waves softly heave in floods of gold, and all the canopy of heaven and plain of earth beneath is

irradiated with the glorious rays of the sun god as he descends from his triumphant chariot. The music of the Rhine band tempts us to stroll amidst all that is fair and comely in Ilfracombe. To observe and be observed, to see and be seen, one and all come for this purpose. The study of human life may here, at this portion of the day, be carried on to advantage. Though the promenaders be not so dressy as at some inland spas we wot of, there is a traditional degree of freedom more agreeable than the stiffness of many resorts similar though less select.

Now comes some little stir on the promenade for the Bristol boat is descried nigh her arrival, and many hurry to meet her at the Pier head, and amidst blowing off of steam and bustle, yet orderly animation, welcome their friends, or greet the excursionists from Lynton for the day, on their safe return.

This steam-boat arrival is always a great event in the Ilfracombe day, and since the improvements in the harbour, is deprived of all the unpleasant little adventures of bye-gone times. But the sun has gone down, the delicious twilight hastens on apace—

“Lo! Hesperus rises, we light our cigars,
So fresh is the breeze that comes up with the stars,
Each lamp of the ether, that silently burns,
Perchance may be one of humanity's urns :
Soft earth shrouds the bodies of men when they die,
But each soul that's worth life, has a star in the sky.”

So we may sing to ourselves.

Our meditations by the sad sea waves are not the less sweet now for their more serious tone, till perchance, all have left the cliffs and walks but ourselves and other musing spirits, who with the stars, have come forth to listen to the voice of the sea. What is it saying? What is it telling us? It is speaking ever of a great power in all we behold and know, inviting us to see how calmly the Spirit of the great God moves as of old over the face of the waters, and will move still onward ever and ever, till the sleep of all has past and gone, and men awake to the new heavens and the new earth, and the “no more sea.” Fashion and custom fix our season in August and September, and but few of our visitors know how lovely is the spring-time here, when the orchards in the Coombes are pink with apple blossoms, and the cottage gardens glow

with floral beauty, and the trees and hedge-rows are decked in their tenderest, freshest livery of green, when the meadows attain their loveliest, "when the tall grass waves gracefully by the gold cups, and thousands of silvery daisies glitter beside the blue speedwells, while the scented honeysuckles and briar-roses are unfolding," and the blue sky overhead is flecked with white fleecy cloudlets, or are aware how the genial autumn on these western shores narrows the limits of winter's icy reign. We never average more than five frosts in the twelve months, some years, escaping them altogether, and our meadows are green, and our wild flowers blossom in succession all the year round.

It remains that we should, in the conclusion of this section, call to note the neighbourhood, and some of those excursions that may make us acquainted with the best places to be seen in it. The vicinity of Ilfracombe and that portion of the North Devon coast represented by it, exhibits a peculiarity of scenery, which is unrivalled in its character throughout the kingdom. A great part of its charm lies in the extraordinary contrast, which exists between the immediate inland country, and the coast itself. The former presents us with those points of landscape which we are most familiar with in the higher Yorkshire and Scottish scenery, viz., a considerable amount of barrenness and wide, open, half-tilled ground, mixed with strips of gorse-clothed rockland, with here and there the vast humps of some of the more elevated portions, revealing themselves brown with heather or dim blue on the far horizon's bound. The latter, the margin of the sea itself, is a realm of grandeur and beauty, where grey hill-tops give place to vast rounded mountain forms, against whose base the sea is ever beating, and between whose heights, the Coombes, their natural accompanying valleys, exhibit almost to the strand, perfect miracles of foliage from the hazel coverts below, through the elms and ashes, to the spiry pines and larches above, and down whose bottoms, clear, dashing streams hasten to throw themselves into the sea, crossing from one hill base to the other, till they reach the "mouth," where between "banks of green furze, and weird black cliffs," their puny voice is drowned in the roar of ocean.

With regard to general excursions, and particularly carriage routes around Ilfracombe, the reader is directed to the excellent guide books of the place; all we propose to do is to

ask his attention to some things and places, and scenes he ought to visit in certain directions, and of these excursions it may as well be mentioned that to the pedestrian or equestrian alone, we can offer the capability of seeing all we could wish him to see, and let him take note that many of the field-paths and bye-ways in Devon require summer days or very stout boots to render them agreeable. Good boats are at hand in the harbour, and are available in the direction of Lee, Combmartin, or Lynmouth.

In roads, taking first that to Combmartin, before alluded to as forming the last stage in one of our routes to Ilfracombe, we proceed to Rillage Point, the next promontory after Hillsborough; this is visible from the road, the waves perhaps stealing quietly over its wedge-like shelf of rocks, or clashing against them in clouds of spray. A gate on the left hand side of the road, near a lime kiln, leads us to a point from which a wonderfully fine view of Ilfracombe is obtained and gives entrance to some grand rock scenery, called the Caves of Sampson. Regaining the road, we proceed to the pretty land-locked harbour of Watermouth. A path nearly opposite the Castle takes us through fields to the Briar Cave, a fantastic arched grotto. Then come a succession of shrubbed and ivied rocks, fairy coves, with tiny beaches, wizard forms in peak and pinnacle, and wonderful variations of tint and colour, till we get down to the entrance of Combmartin village—noticing as we pass, some singular geological forms exposed in a section made by a quarry on the left side of the road. The return may be varied by taking our way through the interesting village of Berrynarbor, with its fine church and wooded slopes. The second walk we would propose, is by the cliff road to Lee. After a glance at its pretty bay, we ascend the hill, and make for Morthoe village and church, by the pathway, passing through Damage farm. Here Johannes de Rupecissa (Cutcliffe), a writer of credit, in the 14th century, was born. Thoroughly North Devonian in its character is the little sheltering wood, the rapidly falling stream, the uncouth linhay, the grey stone boundary walls, the *pomaria mobililus rivis* and the snug ancient dwelling-house facing to the south.

If this walk is too long, we can take the train to Morthoe station and enter the village from the other side. It is wild, desolate, and lone, with a touch of the antique about it. An

old man, not long since dead, told us that he well remembered the first time a conveyance on wheels ever entered Morte Town, pack horses having been the only means of communication in his childhood. Now there is a railway station, a life-boat, and a school-board! The church contains a tomb of historical interest, and some rich carving. By all means push on to the extreme promontory of Morte, gained by a walk through rocky pastures, leaving the descent to the sands on the left. The rocks at the extreme point and all around, are toothed, upright, jaggy saws, and at low tide, you may clearly see the fatal Morte Stone, the ruin of many a brave ship. Morthoe attracts a fair number of quiet-loving visitors as lodgers in the summer, and is close to that splendid track of sand, Woollacombe Beach. A pathway down a gorse-bordered, ash-wooded Combe, beset with lively rills, conducts direct from the railway station to this spot. The searcher for the picturesque may cross this track of sand and its rock-strewn boundary, and pick a rough road for himself round Baggy point, another fatal scene of shipwreck, one of the most famous of North Devon headlands, and a conspicuous object in all views near Morte. The walk round it well repays you. There is a fine cave at the extreme edge, but difficult of access. Rounding the head, the pathway is very romantic, and leads to the small bay and sands of Croyde. Then opposite to us rises the rounded swelling form of Santon Down; we may go either round it, or over it—both ways are somewhat rough. The top of the Down affords one of the finest prospects in all Devon. From the distant Forest of Dartmoor, the whole intervening landscape is visible, the junction of the rivers Taw and Torridge, Appledore, the Hubba Stone, marking that grim old pagan's overthrow; Bideford, the country west of Clovelly, even to the Promontarium Herculis, (Hartland Point) and all the region of Kingsley's "Westward Ho!" At our feet, lies in full view, intersected with large and small lagoons of fresh water—the eccentric and wonderful expanse of Braunton Burrows—the wild surf, veiling in mist their sea-ward bound; and the green marshes and low cultivated slopes of Santon and Braunton marking their landward limit. Where the down subsides towards this wilderness, in a sheltered recess, is Santon Court, a quaint old house, which looks as if it had a history of its own, and near this on the cliffs edge,

that breaks away from the down, is the object of a geological Mecca, an erratic block of red granite, a vast boulder stone, the terrestrial and glacial travels of which have had the honour of forming the subject of many words and many questions among the savants—*ergo verbum sap.*, go to Ilfracombe on purpose to pay it a visit, it is sure to be at home when you call.

Crossing the Burrows (alluded to by the way in that book of extremely pleasant reading, the "Maid of Sker") is easier said than done—we may ramble all over them, if we are enthusiastic collectors of birds, insects, shells, or flowers, and be well recompensed. Here grow many botanical treasures, (*e. g. Scirpus holoschoenus and Matthiola sinuata*) and in winter the sportsman may chance on finding rare birds.

A half-traced road in sand and over turf, and by the water-side, conducts us to a low point, where the lighthouse stands at the entrance to Bideford harbour, in line with the mouths of the two rivers. This haven is dangerous and difficult of access in stormy weather. The lighthouse-keeper is intelligent and civil—he was once employed on the Eddystone, and exhibits a capital model of that lonely beacon, constructed by himself. From this point we can in moderate weather, hail a boat, and ferrying over the strait, gain Appledore on the opposite side, distinguished by masts of vessels and tiers of low white buildings. Close to the trackway, over the Burrows, which we have just crossed, once stood the Chapel of St. Anne, marked in old maps of the district, but long since buried in the sand drifts. It was hung round in bye-gone days with the votive offerings of the sailor, an humble shrine whence ascended his prayers and vows for a successful voyage and prosperous return. Appledore should by no means be neglected by the north Devon tourists—'tis a quaint little sea-port, most of its houses are old-fashioned and curious, and are linked with many an old sea yarn. It does a considerable direct trade with the Dominion of Canada. From Appledore we soon reach Northam Burrows, where the northern game of Golf seems to flourish well in its southern seat. Thence to Westward Ho! and the far-famed Pebble Ridge, a natural curiosity, resembling Chesil Beach near Weymouth, alone worth a journey into North Devon to behold, and so on by Abbotsham and a coast growing each mile into the "beautiful exceedingly," to Clovelly and Hart-

land, where S. Nectan's Abbey once flourished, and chapels and chantries were thickly scattered. From Appledore, passing another ferry, we can gain the train either for Bideford or Torrington. The latter place, one of the most picturesque of the inland Devonshire towns, approached by a newly opened branch of the South Western Railway, which ascends the valley of the swift, rushing Torridge, passes the smiling lawns and timbered slopes, where Weir Gifford—

“Through green leaves lifts its walls of grey,”

till it terminates for the present under the Castle Rocks of Torrington. But as regards this part of the country, as well as Bideford and Barnstaple, and other portions, which we have run over too hastily, suffice it to say that they are all now opened up by the South Western Railway, and that their beauties and characteristics are written in the pages of Kingsley, Scougall, Besley, and Blackmore. From the Burrows, where we crossed before to Appledore, Branton village can be conveniently visited. It is a picturesque affair, with its irregular streets and white houses and cottages of every description. The church is generally the bourne of the pilgrim's desire—enter there by all means through one of the loveliest of churchyards, and behold the interior, “carved with carvings, quaint and sweet, all made out of the carver's brain,” observe the eccentric reading desk depending from the wall, containing pulpit, desk, and clerk's seat all in one—you will notice too, opera-box pews, for select sinners to worship in, fitted into the rood-loft, pitying the conservatism that forbids its despoliation into worthy fragments to enliven the cottage, instead of remaining an eyesore, and blotting out fair perspectives. The spire of the church is covered with angle crossed sheets of lead. The sparkling trout stream coursing through Branton gives a great charm to the place, till the tide reaches it, where it becomes lazy, sluggish, and deep-banked, and is known as the Pill (British Pwll). There are many pretty bits up stream, in the valley of Branton, worth an artist's notice. On a hill above stands a ruined chapel, concerning which strange legends are told, and the strangest legend of all is that which relates to Good Saint Brannock himself, the founder of the ecclesiastical establishment here, and thence the village or town Brannock's Town, Branton. Guided by a vision of a sow and a litter of pigs, the holy man came and found where by the confluence

of two streams, "such things were," and so, as he understood God-guided and God-aided, built a monastery, of which this is the modernised church. He disdained the use of horses, says another legend, to draw his timber, but cutting it on the forest, where the sand of the Burrows is now heaped high he harnessed wild stags and compelled them to drag the pious load.

The old high road from Braunton to Barnstaple affords many a lovely peep of the estuary of the Taw, the meeting rivers and the harbour bar ; the pleasant sunshine falling upon silver waters, golden sands and mottled banks and braes on either side. Many a smart craft or slow creeping barge falls happily into the picture, and the lighthouse on the Burrows shines like a column of light, giving with a dismantled tower on the further bank, a sort of finish to the landscape. This road soon falls through deep cuttings into leafy hollows, and stately groves of Scottish fir, with large pink stems and dark foliage, until the entrance to Pilton, a suburb of Barum is reached. All these latter scenes are a complete contrast to the coast at Ilfracombe, and affording such a contrast, give accordingly pleasure in contemplation and comparison. Mention of the church at Braunton calls to mind that we have not spoken of the principal sacred edifice of Ilfracombe, which is now admirably restored and well worth a visit. There are many pleasing home walks around the church hill and onward to the Torrs Park, the site of numerous houses scattered on the southern slopes of the Torrs. These latter are rounded hill-tops conspicuous from all parts of Ilfracombe and the surrounding coasts, and along them on the seaward slope, rising by an easy gradient to the summit are the "Torrs Walks," which offer to the invalid a good sample on a smaller scale, of the grander coast we have endeavoured to pourtray. Another charming afternoon stroll is through Chambercombe Valley, past its haunted farm house, and so on to Train. From a rounded hill named "The Look-out," a fine distant sea view is obtained with a fore-ground of orchards, meadows, and farm houses, the line of sight being bounded on either side by the green mantled slopes of Chambercombe, especially beautiful in Spring and Autumn—crossing the upland grounds in the direction of Berrynarbor, along a field path, we may look back on the town, the Lantern and Capstone hills, contrasting the smiling valley at our feet and

the cultivated side of the vast mass of Hillsborough (447 feet), with its bleak and cruel sea front. If we can so order our time as to witness a summer sunset, the view will live for ever in our memory.

And now we must spare a few concluding words for that brightest gem of all Devonshire scenery, Lynton, which is better reached from Ilfracombe than from any other station. Guide books descant largely on this favoured scenery, and photographers' shops afford a picture gallery of the many points of rocky beauty. We devoutly pray the gods that once more they may place us on a summer noon within the shadow of the mighty rock castle of the Wizard King, gazing down far below upon the purple flood of ocean, and feeling our senses as delightfully free of all corporeal restraints as the wheeling sea bird's wing, that is circling the battlements of those enchanted walls—crisp is the turf, perfumed with the wild thyme on which we are resting, till greatly refreshed, we push onward to the breezy heights of Exmoor, looking deliciously dreamy in the tempered sunlight. There we may visit the Valley of the Doons, those wild robbers of the waste, who have found in Mr. Blackmore so faithful and good a chronicler. It would be a day well spent if we looked for and found the romantic waterfall and glen where Jan Ridd first found Lorna, *his* Lorna asleep in the fairy cave—or if we traverse, sheltered from the sun's ray, each and all of the bowery upper walks where through peeps, we catch the Lyn stream's wanderings, and hear their soothing murmurs as sweet and as gladsome as those of the waters, which hasten to mingle their waves in the far famed vale of Avoca. There too we may reciprocate the genial poet's wish that—

“ Friends, the dear friends of our bosom may be near,
To make each dear scene of enchantment more dear,
And shew how the best works of nature improve,
When reflected from glances of those that we love.”

or should a sterner mood be ours, let it find us watching the billows, freshened by the west wind's breath, beating far below us on the rocky buttresses of the Foreland, or musing in the lonely churchyard of Countisbury, where the “rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.”

The London and South Western Railway have, by their new Okehampton line added a magnificent tourist's country to

their previous district, uniting Ilfracombe with Lydford, Chagford, the grand Forest of Dartmoor and its cloud-capped Torrs, and the castle-crowned moor-town of Okehampton—but enough! We can but conclude with the words of him who uttering nothing base expressed thus the regrets of a true nature lover and poet, and in which we must too often feel with him—

“ Ah that such beauty, varying as the light
Of living nature, cannot be pourtrayed
By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill,
But is the property of him alone
Who hath beheld it, noticed it with care,
And on his mind recorded it with love.”

GEOLOGY.

Geologists group the rocks of this district in the old Red Sandstone system, which embraces a whole series of strata lying between the Silurian on the one hand, and the Carboniferous system on the other.

The upper and middle Devonian subdivisions will probably be found to include the greater portion of them, as far as they have any practical relation to the matter under consideration, here well maintaining, subject to local modification, the attributed characteristics of forming districts which present great diversity of scenery; “here rising in rounded heights, there sinking in easy undulations, now swelling in sunny slopes, and anon retiring in winding glens or rounded valley-basins of great beauty and fertility.” More immediately around the town of Ilfracombe the superficial rocks overlying the harder sandstones are very liable to foliation, separating easily into thin Lamina, hence the generic name Shales.

They are tilted up at all angles to the horizon, and are so constituted as to permit a free passage to moisture, and afford a thorough natural drainage to all surface water. From these shales a debris is easily produced, constituting the light and friable soil of the neighbourhood, abundantly radiating heat thirsty in its nature, and absorbent of all undue humidity permitting of but little evaporation, and consequently preventing the formation of those dense and cold land mists peculiarly prevalent in all districts possessing a subsoil of a dense clayey nature, from which the surface evaporation is considerable.

That great variety of geological formation, so strikingly characteristic of the Southern division of the county, is not a feature of North Devon, and the neighbourhood of Ilfracombe presents no exception in this particular. The "Combmartin limestones" occur generally in lenticular masses of variable size, running in irregular bands from Ilfracombe through Combmartin, and onwards to Exmoor. The most westerly beds are found between Alderbush Bay and Capstone, one of them has been recently worked near the Torrs. "An olive-coloured one, full of encrinital fragments crops out here and there, especially at the Ladies' Cove, where it appears in the form of thin sheets on the surface of the slate, a singular arrangement of which may be seen under the tunnels, where in small plates set in a zigzag, it forms an arched cornice on the side of the cliff." At Hillsborough, limestone is more abundant and fossiliferous. Passing on to the summit of Haggington Hill, the limestone is thickly bedded and contains small pockets of umber, and manganese, and in the refuse of the quarries, quartzose, sandstone, umber, ochre, and mundic are intermixed. The organic remains are mostly Brachiopoda, more or less perfect. The shale embedding limestones at Haggington, is mottled with brown or claret, and is permeated with quartz veins. Arragonite is not uncommon, and Wavellite, a hydrated phosphate of alumina, named after its discoverer, Dr. Wavell, of Barnstaple, occurs sparingly. There are in various parts of the parish specimens of red hematite, white pyrites, lead, and copper ores. "The calcareous slate system of Ilfracombe, though interrupted by some violent contortions, dips, on the whole, to a point a few degrees west of south; and is succeeded, in the ascending order, by a great formation of rocks in which a slaty character predominates more decidedly than in any of the preceding systems. This slate group generally dips at a high angle, and is of very great thickness; less, however, than might at first be supposed from its breadth, which is not less than four or five miles, inasmuch as many of its beds are repeated again and again by a succession of anticlinal and synclinal planes, ranging exactly with the strike of the country. It may be separated into two natural divisions, the *lower* abounding in a greenish chloritic schist, much intersected by quartz veins, and is generally too soft and shivery to be used for roofing slate; the *upper* containing also many soft fissile

beds, resembling those just mentioned, but abounding also in thick, arenaceous beds, some of which are red and variegated, like the hard arenaceous bands east of Combmartin, while others are grey and greenish grey." This fact is one that hitherto appears to have been overlooked by meteorologists in their attempts to account for peculiar and varied conditions of humidity or dryness over limited areas. We have frequently observed during even short excursions, a marked change in the hygrometric condition of the atmosphere, and have found this to be dependant on the argillaceous or arenaceous character of the subjacent rocks.

It has long been known to practical miners that even a vein of clay an inch or two in thickness (see Thomas' Survey of the Mining District of Cornwall, p. 24,) will completely keep back the water of an adjoining mine; and in the same publication this observant writer has pointed out the fact that whilst in the hollows of the granite districts abounding in clay (the result of the decomposition of felspar) water accumulates, the adjoining "killas" (slate) ground is comparatively dry.

At Morte Point, Rockham Bay, and Lee, the "terrible Morte slates are well seen with their remarkable and somewhat ghastly dressing of white quartz veins," broken near Lee by two greenstone dykes. As we proceed in an easterly direction along the coast-line the slaty cleavage of the rock is lost to a considerable extent, and partakes mostly of the character of a yellow brown shale, soon followed by soft argillaceous slate with lenticular beds of limestone, the characteristic of the Ilfracombe group. This stratification is little altered along the coast line of the cliffs near Wildersmouth, Capstone Hill, Compass Hill, and Hillsborough, till we reach Rillage Point, where the soft slate diminishes much in quantity, and gives place to micaceous shales and sandstones embedding a harder quality of limestone.

To describe the inland portion of the strip of sea board, which for a depth of some two or three miles constitutes the Ilfracombe district, is useless, as the sections approachable from the quarries and even from the great railway cutting of the Watershed repeat but imperfectly what nature has so grandly opened up for us along the sea-washed cliffs. "Torrs," or conical hills as the Seven Torrs, the Carn Top, and Train Hill, are noteworthy objects, which give a charac-

ter of their own to the scenery, and the water-worn spar found on their summits is a subject of curious interest. Sir H. T. De la Beche's Report on the Geology of Devon, Davidson's Monograph of British Brachiopoda—Sedgwick's and Murchison's reports on the Stratified Deposits of Devonshire, and Mr. Etheridge's work (1867), are the best references on the geology of this neighbourhood.

HISTORY.

North Devon is and always has been a thinly populated district. Ilfracombe is situated at its northern extremity, bounded on one side by the Bristol Channel, and separated from neighbouring towns by a track of high uncultivated land. Bridle roads and pack horses were up to a late period the only means of inland communication between Ilfracombe and the more southern district. Its port, however, on the direct line to Bristol, opposite to Wales, safe and convenient for the small ships of older days, ever maintained a considerable traffic, and connects it with the history of the past. The name has been variously spelt, Ilfordscombe, Alfredscombe, Ilfar Combe, Ilfridcombe, Alfrincombe, Ilfracumbe, Ilferdcombe. The earliest mention we have found of Ilfracombe is the grant of the market to Henry Champernowne, (De Campo Arnulphi, still written Campernulph, Temp. K. Henry VIII,) in the year 1278, to be held on a Monday, *Cart. Rot.* 7, Ed. I, 33. In the reign of Edward the Confessor, the manor of Lincome, now Lincombe, was held by one Brisman. The possessor of the same manor, when the Survey of Domesday was taken, was Robert, under the sheriff Baldwin and Laierde was appendant to Lincombe. Dunkerswell Abbey held lands at Lyngecombe, confirmed by grants of K. John and K. Henry III., up to its dissolution at the Reformation. Molecot (Mullicot) was a Tything held by Paganus de Molecot. Ilfracombe is described as a Borough. *Willis Not. Parliament.*—In the "Taxatio Ecclesiastica Pape Nicholai IV.," begun 1288, finished 1291, we find Decand. de Syreville, Ecclia. de Ilfracumbe, Taxatio 26, 13, 4, Decima 2, 12, 4, and under a list of Chantries, "Ilfracumbe, a Chantyre in ye Parysh Church there, ye yerelye value of ye lands, xxvj s. vj d.

It is, however, as a port that the name of Ilfracombe

occurs in connection with English history. In the year 1344, Ilfracombe was one of forty four ports, sending representatives "to a council of shipping." In 1346, it furnished K. Edward III. with 82 sailors and 6 ships, for an expedition against France. In the already published vols. of the Calendar of State Papers, Ilfracombe is frequently mentioned. In the reign of Q. Elizabeth, May 11th, 1585, the town is ordered to supply victuals and shipping to transport 800 men to Ireland.

1585.—The farmer of customs complains of the landing of wines by one Sacheffield, in a creek of the harbour.

1587.—Evangelista Lombardo writes to the Privy Council concerning the spoil of a ship of Venice, the "Gallion Lombardo," which is at Ilfordscombe.

1591.—A barque of Barnstaple, which had been a reprising, called the White Hart, puts into Ilfordcombe, 12th October, and brought home some Elifants' teth.

1593.—The Gifte, a reprisal ship, belonging to W. Morcomb, carried a rich prize into Ilfordcombe.

1602—Sept. 17th.—A letter from Ilfracombe is forwarded to Sec. Cecil, stating that a bark has come into that port reporting the landing of 1500 Spaniards in Ireland. On 21st February, same year, Scotch and French ships at Ilfracombe had given information of this intended invasion.

1622-3.—Many prizes are brought in here, and there is a great dispute about Spanish corn, captured in Dutch bottoms, and stored at Ilfracombe.

1625.—Three Turkish pirates, capture Lundy, and destroy the trade of Ilfracombe, and threaten to burn it.

1627.—A petition of Robert Bishop to Buckingham, sets forth that for two years Ilfracombe hath been blessed with a great number of herrings, but abuses of the fishermen have driven those fish away, and prays that enquiry may be made. Same year a ship the St. Peter of Calais, is released from embargo here, her owner being a Protestant of Rochelle.

1631.—Arthur Cowper, takes 2 ships on his way to Cadiz, and brings them into Ilfracombe.

1666.—The Militia are under arms, and Lord John Butler, son of the D. of Ormond comes to Ilfracombe in command of the "Harp" frigate.

1674.—The Water Bailiff of Ilfracombe is prosecuted for making a free burgess of Barnstaple pay dues.

1795—May 5th.—Owners of shipping are required to furnish men for the Navy—Bideford, 48; Ilfracombe, 49; Plymouth, 96, and so on.

1800.—In this year there belonged to the port of Ilfracombe, 57 vessels of 2851 tunnage, and 224 men..

The Earls of Bath were styled "Vice-Admirals of Ilfracombe," and are much mixed up with its history. References to this port will probably be found in many other ancient documents, but those quoted sufficiently illustrate its importance in olden times.

In the great French War, the *Triumph* cruised as a privateer, from Ilfracombe successfully, and remains as a hulk here to this day. During the present century the shipping trade of Ilfracombe has much declined, owing to the coal fields on the opposite of the Channel, and the increased size of ships; but since the recent improvements in the harbour, the *S.S. Fingal*, 200 feet long, entered easily and remained here safely for many days.

During the Civil Wars, there was some fighting round Ilfracombe. The Parish Register which dates from the year 1567, records the burial of 11 men on May 21st, 1644, "slain in fight, 20th May." The town was captured for the king, September, 1644, by Sir F. Doddington, together with 20 guns, several barrels of powder, and 200 stand of arms—(Walker's Historical Discourses—Rushworth's Historical Collections.)

In the "*Anglia Redivivia*," we read that in May, 1645, the king had a garrison at Ilfordcombe," but it seems to have fallen into Fairfax's hands soon after the capture of Barnstaple by that general in 1646. Tradition points out the "Bloody Meadow," at the junction of the East and West Wilder, as the spot where one of these encounters took place. In the present year, iron balls, suiting the calibre of artillery of bye-gone days have been dug up there.

On the 20th of February, 1797, four French vessels came to anchor to the west of Ilfracombe. They had troops on board, but made no attempt to land. The North Devon Volunteers were under arms in full force, and occupied a strong defensive position. The Frenchmen soon stood over to the Welsh coast and disembarked near Fishguard, but afterwards surrendered

to the Militia under Lord Cawdor—(for a good account of this invasion see Knight's Pictorial Hist. of Eng.)

Oliver in his Eccl. Antiquities, gives information as to the history of the Parish Church—from him and other sources, we find that there were four oratories in the parish; the only one remaining is that on Lantern Hill, "*Sancti Nicholi supra Portum Maris*," used a lighthouse as far back as 1522. The interior has been turned into a dwelling house, but much of the oak timber and the niche on which was placed the statue of the Patron Saint of Sailors remain in situ. The modern roof has altered the external character of the building, but has prevented its decay.

The Local Government of the town is exercised by a Board of Health, presided over by a Chairman who takes a deep interest in and has an excellent practical knowledge of public and sanitary matters. The older office of Portreeve is from some unexplained cause vacant.

The Harbour Master, who represents the owner of the harbour, and the Lord of the Manor exercises important functions, and has as his badge of office a solid silver oar.

Under the Authority of the Local Board, the town is paved, lighted, drained, supplied with water and sanitary jurisdiction is most efficiently exercised over an extensive area.

The rateable value of the district is upwards of £19,000. The rents of houses are moderate and the rates are low considering that they include the county rate and all other charges. They never exceed 5s. 10d. in the pound, and we must bear in mind that it is the local custom here not to rate houses at their full rent, but only at about two thirds of their annual value.

The markets are large, moderate, and well supplied—vegetables and fruit are abundant. The potatoes are mostly produced in the sandy district near Braunton, and are of a remarkably good quality.

Three local productions are important to the invalid—Devonshire cream, a most delightful and nourishing substitute for cod liver oil; four year-old Exmoor mutton, which is as nutritious and almost as well flavoured as venison; and Laver, (*Porphyra vulgaris*, and *P. lanceolata*.) It grows on the rocks, which are uncovered at low water, and is prepared by the country people for market by being first washed in running water for a long time and then gently simmered over a slow fire

for hours together, when it reaches the consistency of orange marmalade. It is served for table very hot, mixed with vinegar or Worcester sauce and butter. It contains a very small proportion of Iodine and Bromine, which render it a most useful article of diet in cases where alterative treatment is desirable. It is particularly palatable with roasted meat. In other parts of this county a spurious laver is prepared from other sea weeds, but it is indigestible and useless for invalids. Milk is abundant and rich. In the season game and rabbits are plentiful. Black game from Exmoor is occasionally for sale.

The whole of the local ferns, in which this district is unusually rich, and many others may be purchased in the market, as two local growers devote great time and attention to their culture.

Fish is abundant, being procured from both the North and South Devon coasts, and the neighbouring rivers. There are excellent fishing stations within easy reach of Ilfracombe, for those who like to kill their own dish of trout, and even a salmon is no unusual prize in the Taw or Torridge.

DRAINAGE.

The town is drained by extensive public sewers, with which all the houses are connected. These sewers, constructed of Annerly glazed pipe, are well ventilated both at their dead ends, and along their course, by lofty air shafts. They have two outfalls, extended by iron pipes into the tide-way, where the deep and strong current running four knots an hour, and rising 35 feet in this channel, soon sweeps all sewage matter out of sight or smell—indeed so complete and swift is the removal of the sewage, that by the majority of persons the outfalls are passed unnoticed and unsuspected, and so rapid are the gradients of the drains, that sewage matter entering the sewers in the middle of the town, arrives at the outfalls and is swept away to sea, all in the course of a few minutes. In the best houses there are private ventilating shafts, and the drains terminating outside the houses by syphon connection with the public sewers, prevent the possible ingress of sewer gases.

WATER SUPPLY.

The water supply of Ilfracombe is abundant, and collected

from the hills in the direction of Morte. The watershed is pierced by the great railway cutting. The collected water is stored in a deep reservoir, nearly 5 acres in extent, capable of containing 20,000,000 Gallons. It is thence passed on to two beds, where it is filtered through sand and gravel obtained from the Spratt Ridge, in the river Taw. It is a soft and excellent water for all domestic purposes. The following is the result of the analysis made by the Public Analyst for this Local Government Board in the Autumn of 1874.

Ilfracombe Water as sup- plied for domes- tic use.	Solid Residue. Grains per Gallon.			Chlorine Grains per gall.	Free ammonia parts per million.	Albumenised ammonia. parts per million.	Hardness expressed in grains of carbonate of lime or its equivalent.
	Organic Volatile	Saline	Tot.				
No. 1.	0.7	9.8	10.5	1.5	0.02	0.06	5.25
No. 2.	0.8	9.7	10.5	1.65	0.03	0.09	5.25

After passing through the filter-beds, it is retained in a covered service tank capable of holding 250,000 gallons, and thence distributed to the town by a six inch iron main. The height of the service tank above the sea level, is 278.5 feet. The water was formerly distributed to houses partly by direct and partly by indirect service, but as the former was found a wasteful system, in consequence of the great pressure it is generally abolished and indirect service substituted.

The area of the parish is 5583 acres, with 23 miles of roadway. The population 5000, rising in summer to over 7000.

The absence of crime is remarkable, and there is no town in England which in proportion to its size furnishes so few cases for the sessions or assizes. There is no manufacture carried on. The people are employed in agriculture—coasting and fishing—in retail trades or lodging-house keeping.

CLIMATE.

The climate of Ilfracombe is a subject of more interest to many than those which have preceded it. In using the distinctive epithet "North," to that division of the county of Devon, the sea-board of which forms the southern shore of the Bristol Channel, we are apt to forget that it is only relatively applied. So prefixed is the idea connected with the "North," in our minds, that it is seldom considered other than a synonym of cold, and consequently it may be difficult to realize the fact that the winter temperature of a

great portion of the North Devon coast, stands on a level with that of the South Devon coast. In the severe winter of 1864-65, there was scarcely a fractional difference between the temperature of Torquay and Ilfracombe, as reported by Messrs. Lescher and Keil, and a continued series of observation since that date establish the undisputable fact that Ilfracombe is in winter ten degrees warmer than London; two degrees warmer than Exeter, and equally warm with Torquay.

The subjoined tables have been carefully compiled by Mr. Willoughby Clark, chemist, of Ilfracombe, from his observations taken while acting as registrar of the Meteorological Station here, the situation of which certainly does not err on the side of being too sheltered. The instruments employed were made by Pallant & Co., Strand, and are of unexceptionable character.

A SYNOPTICAL TABLE FOR THE YEAR 1871.

Months.	Pressure of the atmosphere in the month.		Temperature of Air in the month.					Mean temperature		Vapour.			Rain.		Mean amount of cloud.	Estimated strength of Wind.	
	Mean.	Range.	Highest.	Lowest.	Range.	Mean.		Air.	Dew Point.	Elastic Force.	In cubic ft. of air.		No. of days it fell.	Amount collected.			
						Of all Highest.	Of all Lowest.				Mean.	Short of Satur.					
1871.	Inch.	Inch.	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	Inch.	Gs.	Gs.	Inch.	Inch.			
January	30.270	1.49	49.0	24.5	21.0	41.7	35.2	38.9	28.6	0.156	1.8	1.0	0.66	15	3.15	4.1	1.4
February	30.005	1.18	55.0	31.0	24.0	48.6	42.0	45.8	41.7	0.265	3.1	0.5	0.86	14	2.28	7.2	1.8
March	30.491	1.10	65.5	34.0	31.5	51.9	42.4	47.9	31.2	0.173	2.0	1.8	0.52	10	2.71	6.1	1.5
April	29.668	1.07	61.0	38.5	22.5	53.6	46.0	50.2	46.9	0.322	3.7	0.3	0.93	17	2.87	7.9	1.2
May	30.135	0.55	73.5	47.0	26.5	59.0	48.8	54.5	50.1	0.361	4.0	0.8	0.84	4	79	4.6	1.2
June	29.993	0.78	70.5	46.0	24.5	61.7	52.6	57.7	50.4	0.367	4.1	1.3	0.76	14	1.84	7.7	0.9
July	30.078	0.71	73.0	51.5	22.5	64.5	56.4	61.0	55.4	0.439	4.9	1.1	0.82	24	5.21	7.3	1.2
August	30.082	1.16	77.5	53.5	24.0	70.0	58.6	64.3	59.5	0.510	5.6	1.2	0.83	10	1.51	4.4	1.0
September	29.926	1.29	70.0	46.0	24.0	62.5	54.2	60.3	49.0	0.347	3.9	2.3	0.62	17	4.21	6.9	1.7
October	29.903	1.17	64.0	44.0	20.0	57.7	50.5	54.8	50.2	0.365	4.1	0.9	0.81	22	5.58	7.0	1.1
November	30.653	0.82	57.0	33.0	24.0	48.1	41.5	45.1	39.6	0.244	2.8	0.8	0.79	12	1.77	6.5	1.8
December	30.086	1.39	52.0	27.5	18.0	48.3	41.1	44.6	37.4	0.223	2.6	0.8	0.75	13	2.33	6.2	1.2
Means of the year	30.101	0.99	64.0	39.7	23.5	55.6	47.4	52.0	45.0	0.314	3.5	1.0	0.76	172 total	34.25	6.3	1.3

A SYNOPTICAL TABLE FOR THE YEAR 1872.

Months.	Pressure of the atmosphere in the month.		Temperature of Air in the month.					Mean temperature		Vapour.			Rain.		Mean amount of cloud.	Estimated strength of Wind.		
	Mean.	Range.	Highest.	Lowest.	Range.	Mean.		Air.	Dew Point.	Elastic Force.	In cubic ft. of air.		No. of days it fell.	Amount collected.				
						Of all Highest.	Of all Lowest.				Daily Range.	Mean.					Short of Satur.	
1872.	Inch.	Inch.	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	Inch.	Gs.	Gs.	Inch.	Inch.				
January	29.530	1.10	54.0	35.0	19.0	49.0	41.5	0	7.6	45.7	41.7	0.264	3.0	0.7	24	7.69	6.6	1.2
February	29.750	0.76	55.0	39.0	16.0	50.8	44.8	0	6.0	48.2	44.8	0.298	3.4	0.6	21	4.37	7.0	1.0
March	29.777	1.04	60.5	35.0	15.0	51.3	43.9	0	7.4	48.3	42.8	0.276	3.1	0.9	20	4.25	6.7	1.2
April	29.964	1.52	63.0	37.0	26.0	53.2	44.3	0	8.9	49.7	44.7	0.290	3.3	0.9	11	1.84	6.3	1.2
May	30.293	1.05	61.0	41.0	20.0	55.5	46.6	0	8.5	51.6	47.0	0.322	3.6	0.9	13	1.43	6.8	1.0
June	29.944	1.04	73.0	45.0	28.0	61.1	53.2	0	7.9	57.5	52.3	0.393	4.4	1.0	17	4.09	7.1	0.9
July	29.987	0.53	79.0	53.0	26.0	67.4	57.2	0	10.2	62.3	58.3	0.487	5.4	0.8	11	4.32	6.0	0.7
August	30.126	0.84	79.0	50.0	29.0	66.5	56.7	0	9.8	62.4	59.4	0.558	5.6	1.0	13	1.59	6.5	1.2
September	29.914	1.02	73.5	43.0	30.5	62.5	55.0	0	7.5	59.2	57.2	0.469	5.2	0.6	22	3.80	7.5	1.5
October	29.709	1.23	61.0	40.0	21.0	54.5	47.7	0	6.8	52.1	46.0	0.311	3.5	1.0	20	5.83	6.8	1.0
November	29.682	1.50	58.0	37.5	20.5	51.8	45.2	0	6.6	48.9	45.8	0.300	3.4	0.7	23	3.27	6.4	1.7
December	29.535	0.97	56.5	33.0	23.5	49.7	43.1	0	6.6	46.9	42.8	0.275	3.2	0.5	24	5.11	7.4	1.5
Means of the year	29.850	1.05	64.4	40.7	22.8	56.1	48.2	0	7.9	52.7	48.5	0.353	3.9	0.8	219 total	47.59 Total.	6.7	1.1

A SYNOPTICAL TABLE FOR THE YEAR 1873.

Months.	Pressure of the atmosphere in the month.		Temperature of Air in the month.					Mean temperature		Vapour.			Rain.		Mean amount of cloud.	Estimated strength of Wind.		
	Mean.	Range.	Highest.	Lowest.	Range.	Mean.		Air.	Dew Point.	Elastic Force.	In cubic ft. of air.		No. of days it fell.	Amount collected.				
						Of all Highest.	Of all Lowest.				Mean.	Short of Satur.						
1873.	Inch.	Inch.	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	Inch.	Gs.	Gs.	Inch.	Inch.				
January	29.618	1.83	55.5	34.0	21.5	49.1	42.1	°	45.8	38.5	0.254	2.9	0.1	0.82	22	4.36	7.6	1.2
February	30.104	1.93	49.5	28.0	21.5	42.6	35.6	°	39.6	35.4	0.207	2.4	0.5	0.84	6	0.73	7.9	1.4
March	29.790	0.97	61.0	33.0	29.0	48.7	40.2	°	46.1	39.6	0.243	2.8	1.0	0.73	16	3.07	6.3	0.8
April	30.225	0.80	64.5	35.0	29.5	52.0	43.7	°	48.4	41.8	0.285	3.2	0.8	0.82	13	0.95	5.3	1.2
May	30.018	1.40	63.5	41.0	22.5	56.6	46.7	°	52.6	47.0	0.322	3.6	0.9	0.80	9	2.77	5.1	0.9
June	30.034	0.83	69.5	48.0	21.5	61.7	53.5	°	58.5	53.3	0.407	4.6	1.0	0.82	15	1.63	7.7	0.8
July	30.085	0.65	86.5	51.0	35.5	68.1	57.0	°	62.9	55.6	0.443	4.9	1.5	0.77	20	4.32	6.1	1.0
August	29.990	0.85	70.0	54.0	15.5	64.7	57.6	°	61.8	56.1	0.462	5.0	1.2	0.88	22	4.12	7.3	1.8
September	29.987	1.36	72.5	48.0	24.5	60.9	53.6	°	58.0	52.3	0.393	4.4	1.0	0.81	20	3.38	6.3	1.1
October	29.890	1.32	69.0	38.0	31.0	56.0	47.8	°	52.6	47.0	0.322	3.6	0.9	0.80	20	4.21	7.5	1.0
November	29.893	1.30	60.0	38.0	22.0	51.8	44.1	°	48.3	42.8	0.274	3.1	0.7	0.82	13	1.64	8.1	1.3
December	30.284	1.09	59.5	32.0	27.5	49.5	46.2	°	46.5	39.2	0.243	2.8	0.9	0.76	12	1.05	6.1	0.5
Means of the year	29.993	1.16	65.1	39.9	25.1	55.1	47.3	°	51.7	45.7	0.321	3.6	0.8	0.80	188 total	32.23 Total.	6.7	1.0

A SYNOPTICAL TABLE FOR THE YEAR 1874.

Months.	Pressure of the atmosphere in the month.		Temperature of Air in the month.					Mean. temperature		Vapour.		Rain.		Mean amount of cloud.	Estimated strength of Wind.			
	Mean.	Range.	Highest.	Lowest.	Range.	Mean.		Air.	Dew Point.	Elastic Force.	In cubic ft. of air	Amount collected.	No. of days it fell.					
						Of all Highest.	Of all Lowest.									Daily Range.		
1874.	Inch.	Inch.	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	Inch.	Gs.	Gs.	Inch.					
January	30.080	1.330	54.0	36.0	18.0	50.0	43.0	7.0	46.1	44.9	0.302	3.5	0.2	0.97	19	3.67	6.8	.80
February	29.971	1.670	53.0	31.0	22.0	48.8	39.7	9.1	44.9	42.8	0.276	3.2	0.4	0.89	14	1.91	6.2	.92
March	30.234	1.130	57.0	30.5	27.5	49.5	42.8	6.7	47.0	41.7	0.263	3.0	0.8	0.79	12	1.63	7.0	.96
April	29.898	1.235	67.0	38.0	29.0	56.5	46.8	9.7	52.7	49.0	0.347	4.0	0.8	0.83	13	1.85	5.8	1.30
May	30.023	0.875	64.0	39.0	25.0	56.9	47.7	9.2	53.3	52.0	0.389	4.3	0.6	0.90	9	0.37	5.8	.96
June	30.153	0.977	68.5	46.0	22.5	63.5	59.2	4.3	60.7	52.5	0.395	4.4	1.4	0.76	5	1.29	5.3	.93
July	30.065	0.764	79.0	50.0	29.0	67.7	57.7	10.0	63.6	58.5	0.492	5.4	1.2	0.82	14	1.77	5.6	.87
August	30.015	1.068	71.0	52.0	19.0	64.6	56.8	7.8	61.5	58.3	0.487	5.4	0.8	0.88	22	5.22	6.1	1.20
September	29.927	0.852	75.0	49.0	26.0	63.6	52.6	11.0	59.5	56.4	0.455	5.0	1.0	0.85	18	3.26	7.1	.86
October	29.886	1.020	68.0	46.0	22.0	58.3	49.6	8.7	59.9	52.1	0.391	4.4	0.6	0.87	19	4.42	7.4	2.00
November	29.978	1.705	61.0	38.0	23.0	53.4	45.3	8.1	50.0	45.9	0.311	3.5	0.7	0.83	13	1.59	5.0	2.40
December	29.808	1.360	54.0	28.0	26.0	45.1	37.5	7.6	41.6	38.6	0.235	2.7	0.4	0.88	16	3.96	6.8	1.50
Means of the year	30.003	1.165	64.2	40.2	24.0	36.4	48.2	8.2	53.3	49.3	0.361	4.0	0.7	0.84	174 total	30.94	6.2	1.23
															Total.			

Mean temperature for the 3 months of November, December, and January, for the last five years, 45.0.

Mean temperature for the 3 months of February, March, and April, for the last five years, 46.5.

Mean temperature for the 6 months, from November to May, for the last five years, 46.8.

These tables present rather a formidable array of figures, but are inserted at length as the subject is of considerable interest to the health seeker, and are well worthy of his perusal; he may there see that to place the result in a popular form, the daily variation of temperature is so small that the mean of the highest and lowest readings all but corresponds with the temperature at 9 a.m., thus ensuring for the invalid that equal as well as soothing climate, which is one of his greatest needs. The air is well saturated with sea moisture another important particular. The atmospheric disturbance by wind is pretty evenly distributed, and as a good example of what we mean by warm winters and cool summers, in the year 1871, there were but $3\frac{1}{2}$ degrees difference in the lowest temperatures of Midsummer and Christmas-day, and again in 73, the minimum temperature of May and December were within 2 degrees of each other.

The fine climate of Devonshire has justly become proverbial. Older writers simply notice the fact; modern Meteorologists have discussed its causes at length.

The high lands of Dartmoor and Exmoor must from their altitude and other circumstances, be considered as occupying an exceptional position. Yet so large is the remaining area of the county, and so undulated its surface, that its climate is subjected to many local modifications, though its characteristics are mainly identical.

These modifications of climate are interesting, bearing as they do on the subject under consideration.

From the Geographical position of Devonshire results a double coast line of great extent, and the subjection of the intervening tract of country to important oceanic influences.

The influence of the sea is, to equalise the temperature of all places in its vicinity: in the words of Mr. Glaisher "it moderates the severity of winter and the heat of summer, though it does not exercise any influence on the mean annual temperature." Hence we perceive that the same annual temperature may be distributed in various ways in different seasons of the year; and this *uniformity of temperature* is the true cause of the loveliness of the Devonshire climate. While its mean annual temperature is only due to its latitude, it is its peninsular situation which renders the yearly, monthly, and daily ranges respectively, so many degrees less than they would be were Devonshire an inland county; and prevents

the sudden chill so common at or just after sunset. The Gulf Stream renders our Ilfracombe winters very unlike the same period of the year in an eastern county. Try a deep inspiration of the cold pungent dry air of the eastern winter, how it irritates the invalid's chest, but here in the west it is "breathing made easy," or in other words the soft air loaded with sea moisture, soothes while it penetrates the lungs. The embers of a fire smoulder long if not roused, and so with tubercle. It may remain quiescent for years, if all causes of irritation are avoided, and of these none so common or so unavoidable as the sudden contact with cold raw air. How close is the connection between cold, bronchitis, and heart disease in the old and delicate; and again, why is it that Ilfracombe has such a reputation for those suffering from disease of the kidney, from gout, from disorders of the liver, and stomach? It is in a great degree because the climate induces by its equality and softness, a regular action of the skin, and the various mucous surfaces. We have had most convincing proof of this in our Special Chromo-thermal treatment of these latter diseases, the climate proving in the west a powerful auxiliary, and placing many advantages at hand which in cold districts the physician seeks in vain.

The effects of the climate on the vegetable kingdom afford evidence at once remarkable and unimpeachable. In addition to all the ordinary evergreens, Camellia, Japonica (all varieties), Myrtles, Salvia Angustifolia, Verbena, Fuschias, Passiflora, Magnolia, Ixia, New Zealand Veronica, and many other exotics flourish all the year round in the open air. The wild Strawberry not rarely bears ripe fruit in the month of January, and what is more noteworthy still, and a more searching test of the equable climate of this region, the seeds of various plants are here perfected and ripened, which become abortive in other parts of England.

In the year 1862, Mr. Burnet, the eminent botanist, gathered the seed of the Laurus Nobilis in Ilfracombe, which germinated in due course; and a correspondent of the *North Devon Journal*, January, 1865, mentions a similar fact regarding the seeds of the White Jessamime, and during this present winter of 1874-5, Primroses were in blossom in the woods at Christmas and were abundant on the 15th day of January. Examples of a like kind might be multiplied did space permit their quotation.

Snow seldom falls in Ilfracombe, and if it chance to do so soon melts. Frost is unfrequent—never on the average of years, exceeding five frosts in the year, and the greatest degree of frost observed was 7·5 deg. in a period of ten years. Thunder and lightning are of rare occurrence, and thus a cause of great disturbance to delicate constitutions is entirely prevented. Mist also is rare at Ilfracombe, and if by the word fog is understood a thick, discoloured state of the atmosphere, it may be said never to occur.

Ozone (ozein to yield an odour) is considered to be a modification of oxygen. As occurring naturally it has a considerable bearing on health : in stagnant air, either in or out of doors, it soon disappears, a hint this of the necessity of ventilation. It is remarkably abundant in the air of Ilfracombe. It is the absence of ozone which produces among other causes the sensation of blight in the air—at least, such is the result of our own observation.

The climate of Ilfracombe may be summarised as essentially oceanic, sharing in full all the advantages derived from that peculiar equability of temperature common to the greater portion of Devonshire. Its summers are comparatively cool ; the air during that season is remarkable for frequent agitation, gently bracing without being keen, and fresh without pungency. It has indeed been objected to Ilfracombe by over-fastidious persons, that it is at times in summer, too windy to be exactly pleasant ; but health surely is far too important not to make it worth while encountering an occasional breeze in its pursuit. These brisk movements of the atmosphere are of the utmost value to the invalid, affording in the hottest days opportunity for restoring the exhausted tone of the system. "The wind" says Mayo, in his *Philosophy of Living*, "which blows over the ocean, imbibes an infinitely minute portion of this element, and certainly acquires a tonic and strengthening character by this means." Malta is said to be suitable for a sanatorium, as being "an island open to every wind that blows," and Dr. Ingenhouz who engaged in some remarkable series of experiments on sea-air, thus concludes his observations on that subject, "It is apparent that the air at sea and close to it, is in general purer and fitter for animal life, than the air far inland, and we may with confidence send patients to places situated close to the sea, provided they have no marshes in their vicinity.

Thus we may feel every reliance in the benefits which arise from the brisk agitation of this element, courting rather than shunning its frolicksome and vigorous embrace.

Among the changes in the composition of the air, which are likely to occur in unhealthy places, many of its natural constituents are diminished, some are increased and some fresh products added. It is impossible to do more than to glance at the subject here, but when we speak of good pure fresh air, an example of what deterioration air in large towns, in one quality alone is subject to, will induce us to value its purity the more. Writing on this subject, Dr. Angus Smith says that oxygen suffers most, and with it the ozone, the latter generally being totally absent, and the former to a certain extent diminished in close, overcrowded districts. In the air of many of our large towns too, oxygen is sometimes as low as 201.72, instead of being 209.6 as in normal air. This difference does not at first sight seem great, but in a large bulk of air it is really enormous—for instance, taking an area of one acre occupied by fifty persons and reckoning the total respirable atmosphere at something under 23 feet in height, a diminution of oxygen to the extent of one part only in the thousand, would cause a loss of more than 1,000 cubic feet of oxygen, or of as much as would be actually consumed by the inhabitants for the purposes of respiration in a day and a half.

In a word, while the air of Ilfracombe is as pure as the purest mountain air, the climate possesses all the advantages of softness, mildness, and equality, which are peculiar to the south western coast of England with this speciality and advantage over Penzance and Torquay, that it is *not relaxing and "muggy."* The learned author of the "Climate of South Devon," says, "it is during the prevalence of these (westerly) winds there occurs that condition of the atmosphere which is understood by the expressive word "muggy," the air being warm, moist, and still, with a grey sky. Doubtless this weather is relaxing, and according to the popular notion, unhealthy." When this condition of the atmosphere occurs, most persons who are not accustomed to it from childhood, suffer much, their spirits are depressed, vital energy is low, every muscle is relaxed and every fibre unstrung; the system seems entirely enervated, active exercise producing copious perspiration.

As Ilfracombe is so fast becoming a favourite winter resort, it would be worth while if more attention were paid to belts of plantation, which would add much to the shelter and natural beauty, while they would occupy little more space than the hedge-rows now do. To expect giant oaks and towering elms on such a soil is vain, but many trees equally desirable would do well, if judgment were used in the selection of the species; while of Evergreens, it is not too much to assert, that there are few spots in England where a greater variety, including many of luxuriant growth, ample proportions, and of elegant form and foliage could be so easily propagated, realising during winter the

“*Amœna vireta,
Fortunatorum nemorum.*”

The Ilfracombe Land Company, indeed, seems to have profited by Evelyn's admonition, that “there is no part of husbandry which men commonly more fail in, neglect, and have cause to repent of, than they did not begin Planting betimes,” and on their beautiful estate of Torrs Park, are setting an example most worthy of imitation, which will soon produce as happy results as planting at Lynton and Lynmouth has already effected.

DEATH RATE.

From the time when some four hundred years prior to the Christian era, Hippocrates composed his world-famed treatise on air, water, and locality, down to the period when seventy years since, Dr. Price, originator of the Equitable Insurance Society, directed attention in a very marked manner to the influence of external circumstances on health, and to the vast disproportion of the duration of human life in cities and country districts, but little progress was made in the collection of vital statistics. There were no data on which to found and from which to furnish information useful alike to patient and physician; no facts recorded with sufficient accuracy to compel the notice of the legislature to their significant though silent warnings. But a great change was at hand; able and earnest men had at length recognised the value and necessity of action in this matter.

In eighteen hundred and thirty-seven appeared M'Culloch's great work on the British Empire, and a section was devoted

to vital statistics; and in eighteen hundred and thirty-nine the Registrar-General issued his first annual report of Births and Deaths. From that year this question, which had long been demanding, began to obtain the attention it so justly claimed. It would be out of place in dealing with a local matter, to enter at greater length into the general history of the subject, suffice it to say that we none of us know how many years of our lives, and how much freedom from sickness we owe to the Health of Towns' Bill, which Viscount Morpeth introduced in 1851, "to put a stop as far as may be that sickness, suffering, and dreadful loss of life brought to light by the Registration Returns." When the first edition of this pamphlet was published, there were few outside the medical profession who interested themselves in questions of what are now termed State Medicine; medical officers of health existed only in some of our large towns, and sanitary details were as carefully shunned as are questions of Indian Finance, and required apology for their mention. The Sanitary Act of 1872, however, marks another vast stride onwards, and if somewhat in advance of public opinion when passed, certainly does not err in that direction now. The Prime Minister of this country has uttered the aphorism, *Sanitas Sanitatum omnia sanitas*, and his saying has been adopted and applauded. Almost every educated man is now an advanced sanitary reformer, and the most intricate questions of Public Health, of sanitary architecture, water supply, drainage, houses for the working classes, the spread of disease, hospital accommodation, and kindred matters are discussed in every newspaper, or are the subject matter of hundreds of books and periodicals with which the press teems. The sanitary column of the *Times* appears as regularly the city article, and towns vindicate their sanitary with as much eagerness as they would their political reputation. Perhaps even too much is expected from health laws, but a reduction of a half of the mortality in the Army, the disappearance of scurvy in the Navy, the fact that jail fever is a thing of the past, lead us to hope that the same good which has attended their operation on selected bodies of men will follow their extension to the nation at large. Amongst the useful and satisfactory information which the continued publication of the Registrar-General's Return affords, is the power of ascertaining with almost positive exactness, the number of deaths which occur

in a given period among a thousand persons living in any given locality,—or in other words, of testing the chance of preserving life which residence in one district affords more than in others. Taking this test then, which is impartial, and the only satisfactory one with which we are acquainted, we apply it to Ilfracombe, and what do we find, that the rate of mortality in Ilfracombe, is so low that *it is the Healthiest of Devonshire Watering Places, and stands fifth on the list of all the English inland or sea-side watering places.* These are forty-six in number. The Registrar-General has most truly pointed out that taken collectively, these places experience a low rate of mortality, and give evidence of salubrity, which is not equalled in the rival continental watering places. He has with great judgment carefully furnished a table of ten years average mortality as a true basis to test the mortality rate of these given districts. The returns of any particular quarter or twelve months, are no grounds on which to make the statement that a place is healthy or the reverse, the fallacy of data founded on short periods is obvious. Long and intricate tables of statistics are out of place here, but so important is the evidence of the Registrar-General, and so impartial is his ten years average that it may be worth while to reproduce his last statements on this matter somewhat at length.

Annual Rate of Mortality per 1000 living, In		Annual Rate of Mortality per 1000 living, In	
WATERING PLACES.	10 Years 1861-70.	WATERING PLACES.	10 Years 1861-70.
37 SEASIDE TOWNS.....	20.2	Exmouth	19.6
9 INLAND TOWNS	20.3	Dawlish and Teignmouth...	18.8
	—	Torquay	18.8
TOTAL	20.2	Dartmouth	19.6
SEASIDE TOWNS.		Penzance	18.1
Whitby	24.2	ILFRACOMBE	17.1
Scarborough	23.4	Weston-super-Mare	18.1
Yarmouth.....	22.5	Tenby.....	18.2
Lowestoft.....	19.2	Aberystwith	22.7
Southend	16.6	Beaumaris	20.7
Herne Bay	20.5	Bangor	22.7
Margate	22.0	Llandudno	19.2
Ramsgate	18.1	Rhyl	21.9
Deal and Walmer	18.6	New Brighton	18.4
Dover	19.2	Southport	23.1
Folkestone	16.4	Blackpool and Fleetwood ...	21.2
Hastings and St. Leonards ..	19.4	INLAND TOWNS.	
Eastbourne	17.0	Tunbridge Wells	17.2

Brighton and Hove.....	22.0	Bath	23.3
Worthing	17.1	Clifton	20.0
Littlehampton	18.6	Cheltenham	19.9
Bognor	15.3	Malvern	20.2
Isle of Wight	17.2	Leamington	19.4
Weymouth	20.3	Buxton	20.8
Lyme Regis	20.2	Matlock	19.6
Sidmouth	18.6	Harrogate	18.4

Thus we may read in a table produced by the best and most independent authority that the average mortality of Ilfracombe is 3.1 below the average rate of mortality in the English watering places. That Ilfracombe takes a good fifth place when they are compared separately—easily distances not only all the Devonshire watering places, but Llandudno, Weymouth, Brighton, Malvern, and Scarborough, and in fact *is the healthiest of all health resorts*, with the four exceptions of Bognor, Folkestone, Eastbourne, and Southend.

The entire county of Devon is remarkable for numerous cases of longevity. In the following table is exhibited a comparison between two counties—Staffordshire and Devonshire—in this respect. The similarity of population is the only reason Staffordshire has been selected, yet in this particular, as also in the rate of wages, it has a considerable advantage over Devonshire.

Deaths at various ages from 70, registered for 1850.							
In the Counties of	Population 1851.	Yrs. 70	Yrs. 75	Yrs. 80	Yrs. 85	Yrs. 90	Yrs. 95†
*Staffordshire ...	630,545	569	442	294	166	55	12
Devonshire ...	572,330	643	658	527	283	104	24

* Staffordshire has a population of 58,215 more than Devonshire.

† All persons dying aged 95 and upwards, are for convenience classed as 95.

The inhabitants of Ilfracombe share to the full the longevity of the rest of the population of the County, in fact, there are few churchyards in which a parallel can be found to the circumstances mentioned in the local guide-books of tombstones, recording the deaths of so many persons who had attained the age of one hundred years.

It may be taken as an objection to the foregoing table that a comparison has been instituted between two counties, the one manufacturing and inland, the other maritime and agricultural, to meet this which is to a certain extent reasonable another table has been constructed, comparing the longevity of the two districts, Barnstaple (containing Ilfracombe) and the Isle of Wight.

Both are maritime and agricultural, and the island has from its low rate of mortality, been selected in a recent mortuary return, prepared for the Privy Council by the Registrar-General, as a standard of comparison for the rest of the kingdom. The easy circumstances too of its inhabitants, the superior character of their dwellings, and many other causes ought to give them a greater chance of longevity than is possessed by the population of the Barnstaple district.

Deaths at various ages from 75 and upwards, registered for 1850.							
In the Districts of	Total Deaths.	Under Five.	Yrs. 75	Yrs. 80	Yrs. 85	Yrs. 90	Yrs. 95
Isle of Wight...	781	248	45	28	22	6	0
Barnstaple . . .	766	240	50	37	17	7	5

The total number of deaths is very nearly the same in the two districts, and the somewhat larger proportion of Infant deaths on the Island renders the comparison as close an one as well can be instituted.

An amusing instance of longevity occurred in a parish adjoining Ilfracombe, a few weeks ago, where at a School Board election, an old lady aged 100 assisted, supported by the presence of her two sons, one eighty, the other seventy-five years of age.

ILFRACOMBE AS HEALTH RESORT.

The development of commerce, and the progress of manufacture, are constantly increasing the proportion of our population compelled to dwell around their densely crowded and too often unhealthy centres. The wealth, however, thereby accumulated, and the unceasing requirement for, and consequent stimulus given to engineering science, have produced a rapidity, cheapness, and facility of locomotion, which to a great extent counterbalances many of the ill consequences of such an unequal distribution of inhabitants.

Districts of the country are now opened to the invalid who seeks the alleviation of disease by a change of climate, from which he was a few years since practically excluded. Those who travelling with a prophylactic intent, either to improve a constitution hereditarily weak, or debilitated by disease, climate, or an undue excess of mental or physical exertion, seek to recruit the forces of exhausted nature, are far more numerous than in times gone by; whilst multitudes of the comparatively healthy inhabitants of our large cities, would soon break down under the daily strain of sedentary duties, did they not by an annual excursion, lay up as it were, a stock of *health capital* sufficient for the year's consumption. This phrase "health capital," involves an apt illustration of how a man's vital forces are really circumstanced. Every day so much of his force is used up, but in a normal state his vital income meets his daily expenditure, and he has like our most prudent traders, a reserve fund or store of strength to meet critical occasions: just as in his banking, so in his bodily account, he may draw from or add to it within certain limits, and the balance though fluctuating, may still be within a given average. Or let him contract disease, his reserve fund of strength in his body's bank will enable him to meet the sudden demand and stand the crash, for as during convalescence he will be so placed as to expend as little vital force as possible—his reserve fund will soon accumulate again to its full amount, or in other words, he will make a perfect recovery. This parallel may be carried a step further. Living fast is a trite but true expression, and whether body or capital is involved, bankruptcy is the end of the last stage—barring accidents every man ought to die of old age—how few do so! The aim of the physician and of sanitary legislation is that all should do so. Fortunately there is a growing amount of faith now-a-days in the good to be derived from those natural restoratives, temperature, pure and fresh air, water, diet, and change of surrounding scenes. Their use is undoubtedly far better understood, and is more combinedly employed as a prophylactic and curative agency in healthy or diseased states of the human system, than ever before in this country. When rightly made available, they now have a foremost place in shortening suffering and restoring health. Many a poor fellow skilfully placed under their influence rapidly mends and retains his recovered strength,

Fortunately for their patients too, this is an article of belief to which professors of Alopathy and Homeopathy, and of all other orthodox or heterodox cures subscribe, and which if not printed in their text books, is one of the pages which they may most usefully study.

When August brings the London season to a close and men who have worked hard at pleasure or business, find by instinct that the druggist's "pick me up," or the steel and phosphorus of the physician, are not the things to do them good, and act merely as props to prevent the bodily structure from falling entirely, Dame Nature plainly says the foundations are unsound and renovation is the thing. In the words of Professor Tyndall, "the fires of life begin to burn low," languor and lassitude, depression and want of appetite affect the student and the loungee alike, the capacity for work no less than for pleasure begins to fail. Then it is we listen to nature's own promptings and obey her, or seek to do so, according to our funds and capabilities. We set off for a holiday, either to climb the Alps, to fish Norwegian rivers, to pilot the canoe on streams and lakes, whose waters have never yet borne the impress of such fairy bark, or with knapsack on our shoulders, we seek to enjoy in truest manner all fresh fields and pastures new—to traverse mountain paths, the lake's shore, or the yellow sand, seeking each step we take change for body and mind, which will result in our laying up a fresh stock of health and restoring the houses we inhabit, our bodies, to their pristine condition and strength. Now these means of restoration above alluded to, are well enough for those who have a good constitution at the bottom, or in other words, where the foundation to be built on is really sound, and where the tastes are by such manner of improvement gratified; but how do such trips often result with regard to the inexperienced, and those who possess not the stamina and foundation, the soundness of wind and limb to carry out, what may indeed, in the first instance, seem to be prompted by nature, as the true step to the renovation of their system. Why a want of judgment in selecting how he ought to spend his holiday, often entails much after misery on a weakly constituted man, or on one entirely out of training. This line of argument is well handled by Andrew Combe, in his *Physiology applied to Health and Education*. After months of continued sedentary work, a man decides on starting for

some Alpine district of Europe, joining a party of equally sanguine and enthusiastic friends. "After a hurried journey, they proceed at once to undertake exertions which would fairly tax even experienced pedestrians, and day after day they go through their enforced measure of toil. Fagged and worn out, unable perhaps to get or take enough food to compensate for the destructive metamorphosis of their tissues, they grow thin and irritable with troubled sleep and gradually diminished enjoyment in all they see and do, and finally they return to their work unrefreshed, and perhaps even less fit for sustained mental exertion than when they gave it up six weeks ago.

Many a man who would never take a dose of quinine unless he consulted a medical friend, ventures without consultation or consideration, to prescribe for himself those most potent tonics, air and strong exercise, in some far off region, under circumstances the most opposite to those of his daily life. It is far otherwise with convalescent or chronic invalids, their movements from home are generally governed by medical direction; some are despatched to the warm districts of South Europe, or to the Nile, others with equal judgment seek Alpine regions where the breezes which blow over the glaciers are invigorating and reviving, and the tissues of the body are renewed by rapid destruction and reconstruction. For the largest proportion, English Sanitary Resorts are decided on, and for the majority of cases, it may be boldly stated that there is no district superior, few equal to North Devonshire. This magnificent track of country, which forms the sea-board of the southern shore of the Bristol Channel, extends practically from Bude Haven in the west, eastward to Porlock and is further bounded by the natural watershed, separating the sources of those rivers pouring into the Bristol Channel, from those which fall into the English Channel. Of this district, Ilfracombe is the tourist's and health-seeker's capital, alone uniting easy access, and those comforts and ample accommodations with which advanced civilization now surrounds the invalid. East and west extends a coastline varied and majestic. The Taw and the Torridge abounding in salmon and trout, either glide past the pleasant pastures of North Devon, or dash through ridged valleys, with densely wooded back grounds. The Lyn and the Valley of Rocks have given a peculiarity to the Lynton scenery, which is

almost proverbial. Exmoor, where the red deer still roam wild, might claim a volume in itself, to describe the bold hills, high moorlands, deep hanging woods, and sparkling streamlets, which form its excellencies. Okehampton and Torrington afford inland scenery, where rivers, woods, rocks, ruins, rugged ravines, and gentle pastoral vales are blended in a prodigal wealth of picturesque beauty. Lesser points of interest, as the clustered cottages of eccentric Clovelly clinging to the cliff side, Braunton's Sandy Burrows, Northam's Pebble Ridge, Lundy's lonely isle, or that vast prospect extending from the Bristol to the English Channel, which reward him who climbs Dunkery Beacon, tempt the traveller on every side, and are within easy access of Ilfracombe.

As the surface of the country varies and exhibits almost every form of scenery, so also does the climate change with the landscape, passing through every gradation. On gaining the upland districts for instance, the genial sheltered climate of Ilfracombe is exchanged for a more tonic air and a rarer atmosphere, until on reaching its highland elevations, we have the advantage of the true mountain breeze, mingled with the bracing effect of the more distant sea air. By such changes as these, obtained in a short space of time, every phase of disease is suited, and every peculiarity of the sufferer's complaint can be met with the climate, which will be most likely to alleviate it. Moreover Ilfracombe and the country adjacent possess sufficient character and sufficient originality, if we may so use the word, of atmosphere and scenery, as to render a resort to North Devonshire next to special continental travel, the most desirable thing in the world for the invalid and the seeker of direct change—and this change is now gained in the manner before stated over a direct route suited for the most delicate sufferer, by a journey which will cause the slightest possible amount of fatigue, and the length of which can be so agreeably broken. The towns upon the coast and on the adjacent rivers, the distant prospects, and the superb colouring of the North Devon Uplands and coast landscapes, will remind the tourist of many a scene he may have witnessed abroad, and all this is shown to the greatest possible advantage, beneath a sky in summer often of the deepest blue, from which the sun's rays are truly felt, and which finds its faithful mirror in the surrounding waters. What is not

often beheld abroad too, adds to the extreme beauty and picturesqueness of the whole, *i.e.*, the *greenest* of verdure and the *ferniest* of lanes. For these things when a bright day dawns upon us, we must not blame a cloudy heaven at times, nor the useful bounty of the rain, since they add thus such a completeness to the splendour of the landscape, a mantle of emerald and robes of most delicate green. And speaking of the rain reminds us that we have omitted to mention how important to the invalid is the dryness of the Ilfracombe soil—its geological formation is such that all moisture quickly passes off. The roads may be rough at times, but they are never muddy in the true sense of the word. The winding lanes margined with greenery and wild flowers, and the delicious home walks, so special an enjoyment at Ilfracombe, are free from this great drawback to county pleasures—rarely is it necessary for the most delicate to be long home-bound; to be detained indoors from wet underfoot is nearly unknown on such a surface as this, which becomes on the cessation of rain almost immediately dry, while in the warmer seasons of the year, within two or three hours after the heaviest rainfall, a ramble over the uplands, or even a seat on their dry and porous turf, is devoid of risk to constitutions exhibiting a more than ordinary sensibility to cold and damp. And thus we cannot wonder that possessing such splendid scenery and climate, such easy access, such advantages of soil and situation, Ilfracombe, formerly a summer watering place only, has now justly become so favourite a resort for winter residents.

In conclusion it may be affirmed that the clear mild climate of Ilfracombe, the well established reputation of which has of late been submitted to such severe scrutiny, is suited for the most delicate invalid and has rather increased than diminished in celebrity—for its curative agencies rest on a reasonable and satisfactory hypothesis. Still it is no panacea for disease, and like other permanent remedies, it is generally slow and gradual in its action on the human frame. It is true that persons removed here after partial recovery from acute illness find often that the action of the air is direct and rapid in hastening convalescence. But in more chronic cases the invalid must be warned against impatience for speedy results. He must recall to mind the gradual inroad of disease on his

frame, the slow departure from the normal limit of health, the one fresh symptom developing as it were out of another and feel sure that however favourable may be the ultimate result, still that a few short weeks cannot in reason suffice for retracing the up hill pathway of health. The health-seeker, however, may be assured, that leaving the result in the hands of the Almighty Disposer of events, he adopts in selecting Ilfracombe as a sanatorium, a most effectual means for the restoration of his debilitated frame.

The Botanist, the Fisherman, the Geologist, and the Artist will here find peculiar facilities, each for his favourite pursuit. For the Naturalist who would explore the floor of the ocean—

“ In hollows of the tide-worn reef
Left at low water, glistening in the sun,
Pellucid pools and rocks in miniature,
With their small fry of fishes, crusted shells,
Rich mosses, tree-like sea-weed, sparkling pebbles,
Enchant the eye, and tempt his eager hand
To violate the fairy paradise.”

And to the pure lover of Nature, the infinite variety of scenery in the environs of Ilfracombe, the ever changing sea, with wave chasing wave, the pebble beach, the broken cliff, where rocks lie scattered in endless confusion, the brooks, the dells, the crags, all afford endless scope for imagination and delight.

“ For Nature, enchanting Nature, in whose form
And lineaments divine, we trace a hand
That errs not, and find raptures still renew'd,
Is free to all men,—universal prize !
Strange that so fair a creature should yet want admirers.”

