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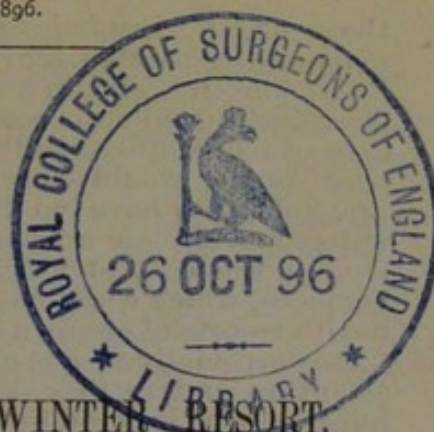
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ON FALMOUTH AS A WINTER RESORT.

PRESENTED TO
THE SECTION OF MEDICINE.

*At the Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association in
Carlisle, July, 1896.*

By SIR JOSEPH FAYRER, BART., K.C.S.I., M.D., F.R.S.,
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the Prince of Wales.

A SEVERE and prolonged attack of bronchitis having, in the opinion of my medical advisers, rendered it necessary that I should leave London during the winter months of 1895-96, and being anxious to avoid foreign travel and residence, I decided to try whether what I wanted could not be found nearer home, and accordingly, on the recommendation of Sir E. Sieveking, selected Falmouth as a winter residence where one might hope to escape the raw damp cold and fogs of London, and at the same time perhaps find immunity from the sudden and violent alternations of temperature which are so dangerous and trying to those who have suffered from, or become liable to, bronchitic affections. The result has been so satisfactory, that I feel it is a duty to record my experience and call attention to a health resort which is perhaps too little known, but which, if appreciated as it deserves to be, might prove of great benefit to many who would gladly avail themselves of the opportunity of obtaining the required change, and of avoiding a journey for which they are physically unfitted, and residence in a foreign country for which they have no inclination.

The chief desideratum in a climate, for those who find it expedient to seek change in the winter, is that it should be equable, sheltered from prevailing winds, and sunshiny, a combination not always to be obtained, at all events within a reasonable distance by land or sea. The south of France and the Riviera are much sought after, but though the climate is genial and bright with sunshine, and the scenery charming, the daily range of temperature is often considerable, and the risks of chill are great, whilst the mistral and bise are very trying.

It seems hardly to be known that the conditions so essential to the invalid exist in our islands; and yet it is so, for the south coast of Cornwall presents them in a marked degree. Why this ignorance should prevail is hard to understand, seeing that since 1816, when Dr. Paris called attention to it,

the peculiar advantages of this part of England have been most clearly pointed out by Clarke, Sieveking, and latterly by Dickinson,¹ who, in a most able and interesting paper, has described the climatic conditions of Cornwall. But, as in the case of many other health resorts, the very fact of being so near home would seem to be an objection; like the prophets, they have no honour in their own country, and waters and climate are sought for in Germany, the Riviera, etc., at the cost of much trouble and considerable inconvenience, which could be found equally well in the neglected health resorts of our own islands.

It is especially to one of these that I now wish to draw attention, and, as I speak from personal experience, others, I hope, may be induced to seek and to find similar advantages to those I derived from a winter spent in Falmouth; though my remarks are limited at present to Falmouth, I believe they apply almost equally to other parts of the southern aspect of Cornwall.

I am glad to find that the claims and advantages of our own health resorts are now engaging the attention of the medical profession, and if a result be to direct public opinion in their favour it would be a great benefit alike to invalids and health resorts.

The county of Cornwall is a promontory, including the most westerly as also the most southerly portion of the mainland; the northern shore is washed by the Atlantic Ocean, the southern by the English Channel. It is about 81 miles in length, about 40 miles wide at the base, diminishing to about 20, the average breadth, and again towards the Land's End becoming much less. The south coast is about 100 miles from France, the north coast about 2,000 miles from North America. It has thus the advantage of an insular climate, which is further modified by the influence of the Gulf Stream, which raises the temperature of the water on both sides to a higher degree than that of the eastern shores of England. A range of hills and high ground runs through its entire length, forming a ridge or plateau of an average height of 600 feet, descending sometimes to 300 feet towards the Land's End. This shelters the southern coast line.

The mildness of the climate of Cornwall is due not only to its southerly but also to its westerly situation, owing to the course of the isothermal lines. The presence of the Gulf Stream tends also to increase the rainfall, which is undoubtedly high compared with that of other parts of England, these physical conditions tending, as in the case of insular climates, to produce mildness and equability not found in other parts of England.

Falmouth is in lat. $50^{\circ} 9' N.$, long. $5^{\circ} 4' W.$, and is situated on an arm of the sea which indents the south coast, forming one of the finest harbours in the world, which, with St. Mawes, Truro, and other creeks occupies an area of about 10 square miles, with a coast line of 71 miles, 58 of which are occupied by cliffs. Many portions of this great harbour are protected by elevations rising several hundred feet. The town of Falmouth lies on the north-western shores of this harbour in a crescentic form, rising in terraces on the hill behind, whilst that portion which is known as Gillingvase, extending on to the headland of Pendennis, has a southern

¹ *Climates and Baths of Great Britain*, being the Report of a Committee of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London.

aspect. The whole coast line is exceedingly beautiful, especially the headland upon which Pendennis Castle is built, and which forms a most charming drive, returning through the town to Penryn at one extremity of the harbour; on the opposite side, round the point of Trefusis, the so-called Fal river extends to the town of Truro, affording most picturesque scenery. On the other side of the harbour are St. Just and the town and castle of St. Mawes, with its creek, terminating ultimately at St. Anthony's Point and lighthouse, which with Pendennis Point facing it forms an entrance of about a mile in width to this magnificent and well-sheltered harbour.

The neighbourhood of Falmouth offers most varied and interesting scenery, undulating and elevated ground, with lovely country seats and richly cultivated gardens. In all of these sheltered places, especially on the southern slopes of the peninsula, trees grow luxuriantly in the valleys, but on the higher, more exposed, and wind-swept portions the trees are stunted and gnarled, their growth evidently being repressed by the prevailing south-westerly winds. Along the south coast sandy beaches alternate with cliffs—beaches upon which an infinite variety of shells are washed up by the sea, and which are composed almost entirely of the detritus of shells.

The equability and mildness of the climate are remarkably illustrated by the numbers of exotic, and even sub-tropical, plants which thrive, many of them flowering even in the winter. The myrtle, fuchsia, hydrangea, escallonia, dracæna chamaerops, citron, azalia, agave, bamboo flourish, whilst the rhododendrons and camellias flower throughout the whole winter in the open air. Many other plants also which would only thrive under shelter in other parts of England live in the open throughout the whole year, whilst the gardens supply vegetables such as broccoli, peas, asparagus, etc., much earlier than any of those of other parts of the United Kingdom.

With all these attributes of climate and scenery, it seems remarkable that greater advantage should not have been taken of Falmouth and other parts of Cornwall, but it is to be hoped that the testimony borne by those who have benefited by them will gradually induce others to avail themselves of them as winter resorts, especially when it is an object to avoid a long and weary journey, and foreign residence far from home and friends. But it may be well to say here that with all its natural advantages, Falmouth has done but little yet to encourage visitors to winter there, for although it possesses some most excellent accommodation in a few hotels and boarding houses, this is sufficient to provide only for a limited number. It has scope for much accommodation, especially along the southern coast, whilst the addition of certain attractions such as are found in other watering places, and certain alterations and improvements of the town facing the harbour would offer further inducements to visitors. There can be little doubt were public opinion but given an impetus in this direction, and were Falmouth prepared to accommodate more visitors, its merits would soon receive general recognition.

The advantages of Falmouth are not merely those of a winter resort, for whilst it is more equable in winter than any other place in England, or even than the south of France, so in summer the mean temperature is lower than it is in many

Meteorological Observations at Falmouth Observatory for the Winter 1893-94.

	November, 1893.	December, 1893.	January, 1894.	February, 1894.	March, 1894.
Mean dry temperature ...	45.9°	45.2°	41.8°	45.3°	47.6°
Mean maximum temperature ...	49.6°	49.9°	46.1°	48.5°	51.8°
Mean minimum temperature ...	41.1°	40.1°	37.6°	41.1°	41.2°
Mean range ...	8.2°	9.8°	8.5°	7.4°	10.6°
Extreme maximum ...	57.8°	55.6°	51.8°	53.1°	58.5°
Extreme minimum ...	32.0°	26.2°	19.4°	30.8°	34.9°
Extreme range ...	25.8°	29.4°	32.4°	22.3°	23.6°
Humidity ...	83.0° per cent.	87.0° per cent.	88.0° per cent.	87.0° per cent.	81.0° per cent.
Mean temperature of sea water ...	—	—	48.1°	48.1°	48.1°
Sunlight—bright (Campbell)	77.4 hours	76.1 hours	67.8 hours	91.2 hours	186.2 hours
Stokes apparatus ...	4.305 inches	5.760 inches	4.595 inches	3.410 inches	2.170 inches
Rainfall ...	(No rain on 15 days) 10 days	(No rain on 16 days) 5 days	(No rain on 4 days) 6 days	(No rain on 10 days) 5 days	(No rain on 18 days) 6 days
North wind ...	4 "	11 "	11 "	10 "	6 "
South wind ...	8 "	3 "	3 "	3 "	7 "
East wind ...	8 "	12 "	11 "	11 "	12 "
West wind ...	...	...	...	...	...

Meteorological Observations at Falmouth Observatory for the Winter 1894-95.

	November, 1894.	December, 1894.	January, 1895.	February, 1895.	March, 1895.
Mean dry temperature ...	49.5°	46.3°	37.9°	34.3°	44.8°
Mean maximum temperature ...	53.5°	50.1°	42.7°	38.6°	50.5°
Mean minimum temperature ...	45.1°	43.0°	33.8°	30.8°	39.4°
Mean range ...	8.4°	7.1°	8.9°	7.8°	11.1°
Extreme maximum ...	56.2°	54.0°	51.7°	49.6°	61.7°
Extreme minimum ...	37.2°	30.8°	23.8°	21.8°	32.2°
Extreme range ...	19.0°	24.1°	28.9°	27.8°	30.5°
Humidity ...	87.0° per cent.	85.0° per cent.	85.0° per cent.	76.0° per cent.	86.0° per cent.
Mean temperature of sea water ...	54.2°	51.1°	46.7°	40.7°	43.4°
Bright sunlight (Campbell Stokes apparatus) ...	62.3 hours	66.6° hours	86.6 hours	83.9 hours	170.7 hours
Rainfall ...	8.555 inches	4.545° inches	6.420 inches	0.085 inches	2.835
North wind ...	(No rain on 10 days)	(No rain on 9 days)	(No rain for 7 days)	(No rain on 25 days)	(No rain on 16 days)
South wind ...	5 days	9 days	11 days	10 days	9 days
East wind ...	10 "	7 "	6 "	4 "	8 "
West wind ...	10 "	3 "	6 "	13 "	3 "
		12 "	8 "	1 "	11 "

Meteorological Observations at Falmouth Observatory for the Winter 1895-96.

	November, 1895.	December, 1895.	January, 1896.	February, 1896.	March, 1896.
Mean dry temperature ...	51.0°	45.9°	44.6°	45.3°	49.2°
Mean maximum temperature ...	52.2°	49.8°	48.5°	50.4°	53.0°
Mean minimum temperature ...	46.7°	42.3°	41.1°	41.2°	43.8°
Mean range ...	8.5°	7.5°	7.4°	9.2°	9.2°
Extreme maximum ...	60.6°	54.5°	55.0°	56.6°	57.3°
Extreme minimum ...	36.9°	31.9°	30.2°	32.3°	34.9°
Extreme range ...	23.7°	22.6°	24.8°	24.3°	22.4°
Humidity ...	88.0° per cent.	91.0° per cent.	89.0° per cent.	80.0° per cent.	84.0° per cent.
Mean temperature of sea water ...	54.8°	51.1°	—	—	—
Bright sunlight (Campbell Stokes apparatus) ...	67.6 hours 6.155 inches (No rain on 6 days)	33.5 hours 9.905 inches (No rain on 2 days)	51.1 hours 1.295 inches (No rain on 18 days)	81.9 hours 0.665 inches (No rain on 20 days)	116.1 hours 3.280 inches (No rain on 8 days)
Rainfall ...	1 day 3 days 1 day 9 days 1 day 11 days 3 " 1 day	3 days 2 " 3 " 4 " 1 day 8 days 7 " 3 "	4 days 6 " 2 " 5 " 1 day 6 days 3 " 4 "	2 days 2 " 5 " 8 " 3 " 5 " — 4 days	3 days — — 1 day 4 days 10 " 8 " 5 "
North wind ...	...	...	...	...	...
North-east wind ...	...	...	...	...	...
East wind ...	...	...	...	...	...
South-east wind ...	...	...	...	...	...
South wind ...	...	...	...	...	...
South-west wind ...	...	...	...	...	...
West wind ...	...	...	...	...	...
North-west wind ...	...	...	...	...	...

other health resorts in England, the range in all these places being much greater than it is in Falmouth. The mean average difference of day and night temperature for the last three winters was 8.6° , and, as Sir E. Sieveking has pointed out in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* of December 14th, 1889, "To those who wish to escape from the summer heat of other localities, and to those who wish for an equable temperature during the winter months, Falmouth offers attractions not readily found elsewhere." It is often urged that, admitting its mildness and equability, the climate of Falmouth is necessarily relaxing and enervating, but from my personal experience, which extends through the winter months, this is not the case as compared with other places on the south coast.

With regard to moisture generally, the very conditions that induce the mildness, that is, the proximity of the Gulf Stream and the condensation resulting from the raised backbone of the peninsula, naturally produce a greater rainfall, but the rain when it does fall rarely continues for long, and the greater part of most days is fine, while the water runs off or is quickly absorbed by the porous and gravelly soil. As to mists, those that occurred during my stay there were rare and were sea mists. On no occasion did snow fall during that winter, only twice was there hoar frost on the ground in the early morning, whilst on only four occasions did the thermometer fall below the freezing point. I am well aware that this winter was a peculiarly mild one all over Great Britain, but the relative equability claimed for the climate of Falmouth will be shown by reference to the statistics of other years of which two are given on the preceding page.

As an illustration of this continuous mildness of the climate throughout the winter, I may say that with few exceptions I was able to spend the greater part of the day out at sea in an open sailing boat. Strong breezes, even amounting to gales of wind, were not infrequent, but they were rarely ever so severe as to prevent my going out, whilst three or four miles from the shore it was quite perceptible that not only was the sea water warmer than the air, but that the air itself was warmer than that on shore. Throughout the whole of this time, notwithstanding frequent exposure to strong winds and to wetting by sea water, my health steadily improved, and by the time I left—early in April—traces of bronchitis had almost entirely disappeared.

Walking down to the boat in the morning, passing gardens in which rhododendrons and camellias were blooming in the depth of winter, one forgot that one was still in England, and it was a subject of congratulation to find that such conditions existed in our own islands.

Amidst all these advantages it must be admitted that the east wind, when it did blow, was not exempt from the evils which generally characterise it, but even these seemed to be somewhat tempered, and, though unpleasant enough, making it sometimes desirable that an invalid should remain in the house, it was by no means the prevalent wind, as will be seen from the preceding tables, which I owe to the kindness of Mr. Kitto, the director of the Observatory, and which also indicate the chief climatic conditions which prove the fitness of Falmouth for a winter residence.

It may be noted that in the winter of 1894-95, a cold year, the lowest point attained by the thermometer was 21.8° in February, and the mean minimum in February, the coldest

month, was 30.8° , and the mean maximum 38.6° ; while in 1895-96, a mild winter, the lowest temperature reached was 30.2° in January, and the mean minimum in January, the coldest month, was 41.1° , and the mean maximum 48.5° .

In the winter of 1894-95 the east wind blew for five days in November, 3 in December, 6 in January, 13 in February, and 3 in March; while in 1895-96 it blew 1 day in November, 3 in December, 2 in January, 5 in February, and not at all in March, the prevalent wind being south-west.

On the basis of 10 years' records, Falmouth is found to be considerably favoured in the matter of sunshine, standing second only to Jersey of all stations of the British Islands where records are kept.

A comparison of the mean temperature of the winter months of Falmouth with Cannes, Mentone, Montpellier, Nice, Pau, and Madeira, shows that it compares not unfavourably with those Continental resorts.

		November.	December.	January.	February.	March.
Falmouth	...	47.8°	44.3°	44.1°	45.1°	44.7°
Penzance	...	47.26°	45.17°	45.21°	45.20°	45.32°
Scilly	...	49.8°	46.7°	46.3°	46.9°	46.4°
Cannes	...	52.6°	46.3°	48.0°	48.8°	57.0°
Montpellier	...	50.7°	45.7°	42.1°	44.8°	48.9°
Mentone	...	54.0°	49.1°	48.7°	49.1°	52.8°
Nice	...	53.8°	48.5°	47.1°	46.2°	51.8°
Pau	...	47.0°	42.8°	41.2°	43.6°	48.8°
Madeira	...	64.96°	62.58°	61.89°	62.70°	64.0°

On the whole, I think it will be found that Falmouth merits the preference assigned by all who know it, whilst the many advantages arising from proximity to the sea, the beautiful and interesting surroundings, the mild and genial atmosphere, bright sunshine, lovely flowers and vegetation, which suggest the geniality of spring in the midst of winter, all combine to confer on it qualities such as are rarely met with, and are not the less valuable that they are easy of access and near home.

I heartily commend Falmouth to those who seek a winter residence, and only hope it may prove as satisfactory to them as it did to me and mine. If the contribution of my personal experience to that of others who have realised its benefits could induce its kindly, hospitable, and genial inhabitants to add to what they have already done for this charming place, by making certain alterations and improvements and by adding to the accommodation, which, however excellent, is all too limited, I feel sure that not only would the interesting old town and suburbs be benefited, but a lasting boon would be conferred on numbers of invalids and delicate persons who would gratefully avail themselves of a health resort which in all respects equals, if it does not surpass, many of those now frequented abroad.