

The facts required, while they are not very numerous, must be correctly and accurately supplied; temperature, and changes of temperature (whether sudden or gradual), altitude, humidity, dryness, barometric pressure, quality of the air and what is contained in it (dust, smoke, germs, and irritating gases), the quality of the ground and its exhalations, the amount and the intensity of the sunlight, together, when all else has been said, with the moral effect of the surroundings, including the domestic accommodations and amusements. In this connection it may be asked, regarding the moral effect of many popular sanatoria, if it is well to send a neurotic person to a place where he will come in contact with others of his own class. Hypochondriacs rekindle and add to each other's flame. Invalids, considered in any light, are not absorbingly interesting. Indeed, when they are poor and friendless they are not to be endured. When they are wealthy, the amazing stupidity of their physiological predicament is treated with padded consideration, and the law of the Survival of the Fittest so far violated that the process of decadence is fostered as long as the constitution (and funds) of the patient can stand the strain.

The tendency to at once accept as a fact, without further investigation, any statement which is made with a certain degree of positiveness, and to afterwards vehemently defend opinions formed in this extraneous manner, has long been observed as one of the mental peculiarities of the human race; and it is owing to this psychological law that the names of certain regions, both in America and Europe, act almost as Talismans upon the minds of the uninformed. An extensive library could be formed of illustrated pamphlets, magazine sketches and books devoted to the charms of rival resorts, supposed in each particular case to be unusually favored by nature. But these sources of gratuitous information are not authentic, and emanate invariably from an interested source with an object altogether mercenary. There are hotels and there are sanatoria which have been built at a great cost for the purpose of making money. And in each case, too, there are railroads or steamship lines by which one may go thither, and dealers in real estate when one gets there.

Of Florida, of Colorado, of California, and of many other places this may be said; and it is by the individuals who have embarked upon this form of speculation that this exotic literature, thrust so persistently before the notice of the deluded public, has been inspired. The physician must not also be deluded by venial misrepresentation of the sort; and though climatology is at present merely a matter of gossip and advertisement, the intelligent manipulation of climatic conditions by rational medicine will eventually be studied as earnestly as the action of new drugs is now.