NOTES ON HEALTH RESORTS.

XII.—SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

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TOPOGRAPHY.

THE western part of Southern California is traversed by low ranges of mountains, having an average altitude of 3,500 feet to 6,000 feet. The culminating peak, Mount San Bernardino, reaches to a height of 11,800 feet above sea level. These ranges enclose a number of small but fertile valleys. A tolerably level and arid desert lies to the east of the ranges, while towards the west the slope of the coast range of mountains widens from a narrow strip in the north to a broad plain in the south. The largest centres of populations are Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Riverside.

DRYNESS.

The mean relative humidity as recorded at Los Angeles is 69 per cent., San Diego 74.7 per cent., and Santa Barbara 73 per cent. saturation, while the rainfall in these respective districts is 18.16 in., 16.65 in., 13.26 in., and in Riverside 10.89 in. An appreciable amount of rain falls on an average about forty-two days each year. As the soil is chiefly sandy or rich sandy loam, the water soon disappears and outdoor life can be resumed as soon as the rain ceases. No records have been kept to show the number of hours of sunshine for a given period, but in Riverside there are 208 clear, 105 fair, and 52 cloudy days. (Fair days are those which have sunshine throughout the greater portion but fogs or clouds prevail during the night, or it may be some short period of the day.) The territory on and near the coast has somewhat fewer clear days.

TEMPERATURE.

The average annual temperature is 60.6° F. The coldest weather occurs in January, with a gradual rise in each succeeding month until August, when there is a steady fall to the end of the year. The annual range is lowest at San Diego and highest at Riverside, being 63° F. at the former and 82.5° F. at the latter. The daily range runs from 5° to 50° F. With such a variation of temperature no claim can be laid to equability. The change from heat to cold—or coolness, rather—is gradual, and commences at noon, when the western sea breeze begins to travel towards the hot desert. The cool breeze is exhilarating, but treacherous to one who may have a susceptible mucous membrane, making it imperative that a good wrap should always be near. The nights are always cool.

WINDS.

The prevailing direction of the wind is west, with a daily velocity of about 124 miles. As more elevated ground is reached and the desert is approached, the winds sometimes attain considerable velocity, and may be disagreeable on account of the dust carried by them. The susceptible phthisical subject, in choosing a residence, must exercise special care in the selection of a well sheltered spot either along the foot hills or in nooks at the base or up the mountain sides.

CLOTHING.

Flannel should cover the entire body at all seasons, though lighter texture may be worn from June to September; but for eight months of the year as heavy clothing is necessary as in Great Britain.

This section of country on and near the coast must be classed as moderately moist. Tuberculous persons should only spend enough time in the cities to enable them to find out the location best suited for their individual requirements. Many recoveries have taken place on and near the coast, but three years' residence in Los Angeles has decidedly made me feel strongly against the coast of the Pacific. Inland, the consumptive improves rapidly either on the plains or foot hills.

ADVANTAGES OF SUMMER RESIDENCE.

Southern California is usually looked on as a winter resort only, and while it is true that our winters are beneficial to the invalid, it is yet more true of our summers. On the approach of June, when a change of location becomes necessary, a few hours' ride will place one at any altitude that may be desired among ancient pines on the mountains, or if for any

reason high altitude is contraindicated comfort and amusement can be had at the sea shore. These changes are all found at comparatively short distances, and by taking advantage of such changes the life of the consumptive can be prolonged in many cases and cured in many more.

OWEN MEMORIAL.

It has been considered desirable that the eminent services of the late Sir Richard Owen in the advancement of the knowledge of the sciences of anatomy, zoology, and palæontology should be commemorated by some suitable memorial. To carry out this object a committee is being formed, and His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has graciously consented to become Chairman of the Committee. Sir James Paget (1, Harewood Place, Harewood Square, W.), Sir William H. Flower (Natural History Museum, S.W.), and Mr. W. Percy Sladen (13, Hyde Park Gate, S.W.), have signified their willingness to act respectively as vice-chairman, treasurer, and secretary. A meeting to further this object, to take into consideration the most appropriate form of memorial, and to appoint a committee and officers, will be held in the rooms of the Royal Society, Burlington House, on Saturday, January 21st, at 11.30 A.M., His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in the chair. The first list of committee include the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Teck, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor; the Presidents of the Royal Society, of the Royal College of Physicians, of the Royal College of Surgeons, of the Linnean Society, and of the Zoological Society; Sir H. W. D. Acland, Professor G. J. Allman, M.D., John Anderson, M.D., Professor Van Beneden (Louvain), Professor J. Cleland, Professor T. Clifford Allbutt, Professor J. Cossar Ewart, Sir Joseph Fayer, Professor Michael Foster, M.D., A. G. Gunther, M.D., Mr. Ernest Hart, W. Hicks, M.D., Mr. J. W. Hulke, Sir G. M. Humphry, M.D., The Right Hon. T. H. Huxley, Sir J. Lister, Bart., Professor A. Macalister, M.D., Professor W. C. McIntosh, M.D., Sir James Paget, Bart., Sir R. Quain, Bart., Sir Edwin Saunders, Sir W. S. Savory, Bart., Sir William Turner, and Professor E. Percival Wright.

"HOSPITAL REFORM."

OUR attention has been called to an article in the *Birmingham Daily Post* for January 16th, referring to proposed reforms at the General and Queen's Hospitals. With the change at the former, which merely contemplates the supplying of in-patients with all that they require, instead of allowing certain articles to be brought in by their friends, we need not concern ourselves further. It is an essential condition of good hospital management. The proposed change, however, at the Queen's Hospital is of a much more doubtful nature. It is "that all out-patients, after having been once in the out-patient casualty room, shall be required to pass through the registration office, and to pay a registration fee of one shilling each." We would most earnestly deprecate the proposed regulation. Like all other forms of exacting a small remuneration in payment for a great service, it has an inevitable tendency to increase the evil which it is (honestly enough, we are ready to admit) intended to mitigate, namely, the abuse of the hospital by persons able to pay for their treatment. Say what you will, nothing can and nothing ought to eradicate from the minds of the public that services for which they pay are worth what is charged for them. If they are not given as charity they ought to be charged an honest price. This pitiful expedient for increasing the receipts, though it can, unfortunately, plead the example of some great metropolitan hospitals, only makes the present confusion more confounded, aggravates the injustice which the out-patient system now inflicts on the medical men of the neighbourhood, and spreads the sweating system further in the community. To advertise that a long period of treatment is on sale for a shilling is really only a fresh attempt to undersell the practitioners and paying institutions of the town. Why cannot some rational attempt be made to test the cases which apply as out-patients, not only as to their pecuniary condition—whether they can afford to pay—but as to their medical condition—whether they are likely to derive benefit from hospital treatment, which we must recollect differs materially from home treatment? At any rate, rough-and-ready experiments in cheap doctoring can do nothing but harm.