

The following paper on the climate of the Gulf Coast of Florida so exactly describes that of Palma Sola that it has been included in this pamphlet with many thanks to the author:

A WINTER CLIMATE FOR INVALIDS—

THE GULF COAST OF FLORIDA.

By R. J. LEVIS, M. D.

From The Continent.

The season is at hand when those who, like the birds of summer, take annually their flight southward, will be thinking of running away from winter. There are many who seek genial airs and sunlit waters for pleasure only, others to escape from the chilling discomforts of winter; and the great invalid corps, turning its back on cold and death when the leaves fall, makes its pilgrimage to sunny lands.

In the choice of a climate for invalids in general, there are certain health-giving factors which may be summed up as *equability of temperature, purity of atmosphere and comparative dryness.*

I regard it as essential for most invalids that the temperature shall be such that they may be able to remain for an indefinite time out in the open air without discomfort, and to freely permit it to enter their apartments at all hours of the day and night.

The general prevalence of bright, clear, sunny days, with the rarity of cloudiness and a light rainfall, are essentials of a winter health resort for lung diseases. The physiological, and specially the stimulating and eutrophic effects of sunlight on the human

system, are well recognized; but, owing to the in-door habits of invalids, are too little regarded.

The discomfort and depression produced by the prevalence of violent winds are familiar to most conditions of invalidism, and climates of continuous and moderate air-movements are found to be the most desirable.

An atmosphere of varying electric conditions, with the consequent production of ozone, purifying the air and keeping it free from septic germs, is favorable.

A dry soil of sand or gravel, which quickly absorbs and filters away the rainfall from its surface, and does not keep the air moist by evaporation, is an essential of a winter health resort for pulmonary affections.

The salubrious atmosphere from extensive pine forests, with their ozone and antiseptic influences, should incline invalids to the choice of such proximity.

Facility for sea-bathing, at a tolerable temperature throughout the winter, gives occupation and pleasure, and is an important adjuvant in the treatment of some morbid conditions.

As incipient and developing pulmonary tuberculosis, and in many other diseases prevalent among the dwellers in cities, it is essential that there shall be a change of habits from a sedentary to an out-door life, the region for a health resort should be one in which there are abundant opportunities for amusement or for agreeable and profitable work in the open air. In a region of country where open-air amusements can be varied by riding, hunting and sailing, and where the scenery is an attractive blending of vistas of forests and stretches of water, the conditions most favorable to an out-door life will be most happily presented.

The poorly-nourished victim of tuberculosis should not be banished to a land where his diet may be impoverished by the lack of fresh meat and vegetables. If he is where he can add to his fare by the products of his recreations of hunting and fishing, then will good digestion be most likely to wait on appetite.

Agreeable society is an essential of happiness and a preventive of depression of spirits in that class of invalids who are obliged to seek winter quarters away from home. Their associations should not be in a crowded caravansary, where the halls echo with the

sad sound of coughing, and the corridors seem sepulchral with the hoarse voices of sufferers. Far better is it to find companionship with the woodsman or the fisherman, and be entertained by their woodcraft or simple lore of boats, bays and streams.

The ideal winter climate for invalids, embracing perfectly all the essentials and suited to the fancy and caprice of sufferers, may not be found, but it can be approximated in its most important requisites.

It is evident that in Europe and in this country mild or warm climates have of recent years grown most in favor as winter health resorts. In our own land Florida has become the great winter sanitarium for consumptive invalids, for the nervous and debilitated, and for valetudinarians of all degrees, with the prospect of increasing in repute as the merits of some of its most advantageous localities become more generally known. My personal observations of Florida have extended over the regions usually visited by invalids and tourists, and over a domain of wilderness beyond the ready access of travelers. The greater part of the territory of the entire State still remains inaccessible to invalids, and the tide of travel is mostly confined to the great water-course of the St. John's River and vicinity; but the increased developments of railroads and of the coast and interior navigation are about to speedily spread travel over a most attractive sanitary region. That there are portions of Florida much more suited for winter homes than those generally resorted to it is the object of this article to state.

Florida is a land of many waters. It has a coast line of about twelve hundred miles. Its rivers, lakes, everglades and lagoons are numberless. It is estimated that from a fourth to a third of the entire State, varying with the season of the year, is covered by water. To its extensive and peculiar water containings and surroundings is due its unique and wonderfully mild and equable climate. Florida is our nether land, which, as Sidney Lanier wrote, by "its peninsular curve whimsically terminates our country in an interrogation point." It geographically and climatically resembles Italy, but its air is more bland and healthful, and its soil has even a greater range of productiveness.

No known land is exempt from the liability of its inhabitants to pulmonary consumption, but in this country statistics of the last

two decades show that the disease progressively diminishes from our extreme Northern States southward to Florida. The mortality from consumption, as compared with all other causes of death in Florida, is, by the census, but 58 to the 1,000; whilst in the State of Maine it is 258 to the 1,000; Connecticut, 179; Pennsylvania, 142, and South Carolina, 90.

The low consumption mortality of Florida exists, notwithstanding the number of Northern invalids who seek too late its healthy air, only to end their days and add to the normally very low death rate. The best authority on the subject, Dr. Kenworthy, of Jacksonville, who has given much intelligent attention to climate in the cure of consumption and to sanitary statistics in general, believes that the mortality from consumption among the permanent residents of Florida actually does not exceed thirty deaths to the thousand from all causes.

Of the extended seaboard of Florida the Gulf Coast stretches over seven hundred miles. The climate of this coast has, in my opinion, more of the essentials of a good winter resort for invalids than any other of which I know. I make this statement after some personal experience over a large extent of the coast, from much conference with invalids who have happily tested its merits, and from a comparison with the thermometric and hygrometric records of many of the various popular health resorts of the world. The west, or Gulf coast of Florida has a temperature more mild, equable and dry than that of the corresponding Atlantic border. As compared with that of the much-frequented region of the St. John's River, in the winter season it is free from malarious influences, fogs are unknown, and the opportunities and inducements for an out-door life are far greater. Sidney Lanier, the poet, whose failing days were prolonged by a residence in Florida, says that the air of the Gulf Coast is "milder and dryer than on the eastern coast in midwinter; and it is to be greatly hoped that increased facilities for reaching these favorable regions will soon render them practicable to those who now find the journey too trying."

For the agriculturist and the orange-grower, and for the gardener who raises early vegetables for the Northern markets, this coast offers a fertile soil and a climate freer from destructive frosts than any other part of the peninsula. To the capitalist and the