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"A SEA CHANGE."

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It is known to many of the profession that, since returning from the last five of thus far nearly eight years in Europe, I have been studying the adaptability of Newport, Rhode Island, as a general health-station for invalids, similar to those abroad which are recognized as such by American as well as by foreign physicians. Evidence upon this subject I foreshadowed in the *Virginia Medical Monthly* for April, 1879, and have already given in the *Sanitarian* (New York) for January 11, 18, and 25, and February 8, 1883, the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* for March 22 and 26, and the *New York Medical Record* for December 22 of the same year. In accordance, however, with a restriction that I had placed upon myself three years previously to the last of these dates, in 1880, I have refrained till now from any decided action towards developing in a professional direction the remarkable hygienic influences of the island.

At the time mentioned I stated, in a communication to

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the American Public Health Association, that "though the natural conditions of the place are favorable for health and longevity, I should decline to recommend it (for delicate persons) until there existed a proper system of sewerage; until the soil-water (raised by an artificial public supply) was reduced to at least its natural level; until there were hydrants for fire and general sanitary purposes; until the old cesspools were filled in or removed; until the real estate agents furnished evidence that the houses they offer to strangers are safe to live in; and, over and above all, until there was a board of health-officials who would care for these and other sanitary matters systematically" ("Transactions of the American Public Health Association," vol. vi. p. 216).

During the intervening period the measures thus indicated as essentials have been almost all attained. Newport has now an efficient Board of Health, three members of which are physicians. It has adopted a general plan of sewerage, the main features of which are being rapidly carried out. In proportion as this is done, the level of the ground-water is being lowered and damp cellars made dry. Public hydrants are everywhere. The cesspools and privy-vaults are disappearing. One of the leading real estate firms refuses to lease houses of the better class unless possessing the certificate of the Sanitary Protection Association; and, most recent of all, a mayor and city government have just been elected who are in sympathy with the advances insisted upon by the Association named and by the Newport Medical Society.

Being accordingly free again to express my candid opinion regarding the intrinsic hygienic features of this "American Isle of Wight," I have no hesitation in saying to my medical friends, and the profession generally, that it is worth their while to investigate, personally, if possible, the advantages of Newport as the temporary or prolonged residence of invalids (both medical and surgical, even "hopeless" cases) and convalescents. In doing this I am not merely seeking a selfish end, for, having been appointed by the

American Medical Association at its session at St. Louis in 1873 to investigate European health-stations in their relations to American invalids (my report having been rendered at the session in Louisville in 1875), I have felt since my return, a convalescent myself, that, in accordance with the true spirit of my instructions, I am now but pursuing their general subject still further. I will say, in addition, that there are a number of other physicians resident in Newport, members of its Medical Society and personal friends of my own, to whom I shall as gladly see patients from a distance intrusted as though they were sent to my own care. It is needless to add that immediate members of the families of physicians, as always hitherto, will be welcome to our best services without professional charge. Good board can be obtained at Newport outside the fashionable season, say from September to July, inclusive, at from six to twenty dollars per week.

The conditions at Newport may be thus briefly stated. Its climate is distinctly insular, to a great extent oceanic, being materially affected by the Gulf Stream, and milder than that of the coast-line, even where this is but a very few miles distant. The seasons are markedly prolonged into each other. The atmosphere, though moist, is decidedly saline. Rheumatism and the various nervous hyperasthenias are rare as here originating, and when brought are almost always relieved. Pneumonia, and even phthisis, save as here for treatment, are exceptional. The winters are comparatively mild, and though snow and ice are of course present for portions of each winter, it is to a much less extent and for a shorter period than upon the mainland. There are many patients who could be made comfortable here during winter who are now carried South, to their own inconvenience and that of their friends, or remain at home in much less favorable local climates.

I can only add that, should chronic cases of any kind, or convalescents, be confided to my charge, I will endeavor to carry out the wishes of the medical men to whom I may owe them. To accomplish this the more satisfactorily, I

have associated with myself in practice W. Thornton Parker, M.D. (Munich), late A. A. Surgeon U. S. Army, and together we shall do what we can to make Newport generally recognized, aside from all its social attractions, as a valuable therapeutic aid to the American medical profession.