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MOUNT POCONO, PENNSYLVANIA,
AS A HEALTH RESORT.

BY L. D. JUDD, M.D.,
PHILADELPHIA.

IT is true, as our former worthy President, Dr. Solly, remarked in his address on "The Principles of Medical Climatology," that the medical profession as a whole are "lamentably ignorant in their climatology and sadly careless and ignorant in their application." As physicians it is our duty to know, so far as possible, the characteristics of highland and lowland, seashore and mountain, and their effect in health and in disease. It includes the consideration of air and water, trees and plants, soil and drainage. Good advice is good medicine, and he who makes himself familiar with the wonderful resources of his own country adds to his stature in practice, and enables himself to intelligently direct the sufferer to a locality suitable to his condition whereby health may be more rapidly restored, or longer life and greater comfort given.

It is important that we of the eastern portion of this Continent particularly should know something of the climate and climatology of our near-by mountain country, or of localities that should be known as health resorts. Very few health-seekers can afford the strength, time, or money for a trip to the table-lands of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado, New Mexico, and California. It seems to be comparatively unknown by the profession at large that we have here in the East, easily accessible, a region whose sanitary qualities are second only to those of Colorado, the so-called Switzerland of America.

In this paper I desire to direct attention to the region of the

Pocono Mountains, situated in Monroe County, Pa., particularly to that section known to geologists as the Pocono Plateau. The Pocono Mountains constitute a group extending northeast and southwest a distance of thirty miles or more, and presenting an elevated plateau about ten miles in width. The altitude in the neighborhood of Mount Pocono Station is about 1800 to 2000 feet. It is only three and a half hours by rail from New York City and four and a half hours from Philadelphia. At the Delaware Water Gap, where the railroad is about 320 feet above tidewater, you pass through the range of Blue Mountains over a picturesque route. The road at this place leaves the Delaware River to the right. After passing Stroudsburg, the county town of Monroe County, you reach Spragueville, a few miles further on; from this point the road begins to ascend the foot hills of the Pocono Mountains, the rise in the next 15 miles being 1500 feet; this brings you to the top of the eastern declivity of the Pocono Mountains, where is located the railway station. From this point of vantage the whole of the immense valley between the Blue Mountain-range and the Pocono Mountain-range, filled with hill and mountain spurs, lies at your feet. The view shows mostly a wild and wooded country with here and there patches under cultivation, dotted with small settlements far between. To the right are seen eight or ten mountains, near and far; to the left the Pocono Mountains stretching toward Port Jervis; in front of you the Blue Mountains, and in the far distance, through the Delaware Water Gap, are seen the Musconetong Mountains of New Jersey. The view is a perfect realization of mountain scenery. While the forests of Pocono have been devastated in many sections, there are still standing in the Naomi section large tracts of hemlock, spruce, balsam, white and yellow pine. In the immediate vicinity of the Wiscasset and the Pocono Mountain House the trees are mostly pine and spruce, white, red, and pin oak, chestnut, hickory, poplar, maple, and birch. The smaller growth is very thick, including huckelberry, brakes, sweetfern, scrub oak, laurel, and rhododendrons, which abound in profusion.

Geologists declare that this section is as interesting in a geological point of view as it is uninteresting mineralogically. Throughout this romantic district there is rich and abundant material for scientific research, and to the eye of the scholar, if not to that of the capitalist, the rocks of Monroe County must be of profound interest, for here nature has stamped in indelible lines the record of pre-historic operations. The evidences of glacial action are plentiful everywhere.

“The highest peaks of the Pocono Mountains are capped with Mount Pleasant conglomerate in massive grayish-white cliffs. Next in order come the red rocks of the Catskill series, the Mount Pleasant red slate, members of which form the surface over most of the Pocono Plateau. Below this comes a thin stratum (of uncertain thickness, because always partially concealed under drift) of green sandstones and slates, estimated by Professor White at 200 feet in thickness.” The soil is, therefore, light, stony, and absorbent. Taking this into consideration, together with the topography of this section and the consequent free-drainage systems, the deduction may readily be made that dampness of any duration is an impossibility. It is a noticeable fact that in an hour or two after a heavy rainfall the ground, roads, and walks are comparatively dry and in an enjoyable condition. Here we have soil and drainage, par excellence. Too little attention is paid to the soil as a prime factor in the selection of a health resort. I cannot do better than to quote Dr. Solly on this point: “It is not only the material of which the soil is composed that must be considered, but also its natural drainage and the disposition of its watershed. The importance of this consideration, which we all present admit, perhaps we do not sufficiently dwell upon to our clients and our colleagues; often do we find a town in a health-giving air with good surrounding soils, yet situated in a river bottom, recommended for invalids; or a flourishing health resort under benignant skies, built upon a clay-bed, or in a basin which cannot drain.”

As we should naturally look to the character of the soil upon which to build a house, so, too, should we make ourselves ac-

quainted with the soil and the drainage of the locality we select for ourselves or others as a temporary residence for health or recreation.

The climate on this plateau is decidedly tonic, the atmosphere being wonderfully dry and pure the whole year round. It is safe to say that the thermometer registers on an average of from ten to fifteen degrees lower here than in the cities of New York and Philadelphia. Some days in July and August it is hot in the sun, but in the shade the breeze, that always abounds, makes it most comfortable. The nights are cool, the air soft and balmy. There are no mosquitoes. I am informed that the climate here is almost a specific for malarial diseases; being top-mountain air, it is free from all impurities. I subjoin a report of Thomas Shaw, M.E., who has made an analysis of the air captured on the section owned by Ellwood Bonsall, in which he says: "I doubt if it is possible to find air in any part of the globe more free from impurities than the air of the Pocono Mountain." (See Appendix "A.")

The water is of the purest quality. Minerals being scarce in this region the water naturally carries a minimum quantity of these substances, and this I claim is an important factor to consider; for while in some special conditions springs rich in mineral substances may be and often are of the greatest benefit, yet in others they may be and often are extremely harmful. The kind of diseases here benefited on the whole are of that character where purity of water, comparatively free from mineral and organic substances, is of the highest value.

I subjoin a report (see Appendix "B") founded on analysis made of the water from a spring on the estate of Ellwood Bonsall, situated midway between the Wiscasset and the Pocono Mountain House. An analysis also of water taken from the springs on this ridge owned by Howard A. Chase and E. E. Hooker each exhibit a similar purity.

There are a great variety of drives around the country, the roads being fair, and improving. The walks are romantic, especially during the season when the laurel and rhododendrons are in bloom. Amusements during the season are not

wanting, there being several hotels within a radius of five miles. I look forward to the time when large sanitariums for pulmonary troubles will be erected here, open throughout the entire year. It has of late been demonstrated, through observations made in the sanitarium at Falkenstein, Germany, that consumptives should enjoy fresh, healthful air, without regard to the weather. Experience has demonstrated to my entire satisfaction the value of this climate and altitude in the winter months, also on both fibrinous and tubercular phthisis; therefore I do not hesitate to indorse the fact that patients of this class may be perfectly healed in northern climes, and the old idea that they can be successfully treated only in southern climes must be abandoned.

I can from observation and experience recommend this region to those suffering from debility due to overwork or overworry, and nervous cases generally. The altitude is not so great as to increase nervous conditions, as we know to be the case in the higher altitudes, especially with the female sex, although it has occurred to me that their mode of dress—the compression of the chest-walls, and the crowding down of the pelvic viscera by the all-prevailing corset—is in a greater degree to be held responsible than the effect of altitude upon the nervous system. Here all throat and chest troubles are benefited, and weak lungs are made stronger. To hay-fever and asthmatic subjects this locality is a blessing. I have noticed marked increase of vigor in the old as well as the young. In short, I believe this Pocono region to be second to no other eastern locality for all the requirements of a typical health resort.

This, I believe, gentlemen, furnishes as accurate an account of the physical conditions of this mountain region as I can command. Personal experience and long observation from residence not only here, but also in the mountains of Colorado, where I lived for nearly four years, should enable me to judge of the benefit to be derived by the health-seeker in such a country as this I have described. In sending patients to the mountains we should consider not alone the altitude, but quite as

much the specific conditions of soil, trees, air, and water. In addition to this should arise the question of environment; too often this is overlooked. The sick physically are sick mentally, and when there is no variety of scenery for the eye to dwell upon, and only limited, and, perhaps, crowded walks and drives to enjoy, no amusements, and, perhaps, poor dietary, all the other requisites of climato-therapy are of no avail, and the patients return to their homes unimproved, a reproach to the locality as well as to our medical discernment.

APPENDIX "A," No. 1. AIR TEST.

915 RIDGE AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, August 4, 1892.

FRIEND BONSTALL: In reply to your favor of the 3d instant, I will send the application to-morrow with directions how to capture air for the purpose of analysis on a special instrument that I have devised.

I have provided an instrument possessing the highest degree of accuracy which performs work that has heretofore seemed an impossibility, and the personal equation of test is reduced to the $\frac{2}{100000}$ part.

The French and German authorities have heretofore estimated the pure air of the mountains and ocean to carry $\frac{4}{100}$ of a cubic foot of CO₂ (carbonic acid gas) in 1000 feet of air, and that $\frac{6}{100}$ of a foot is the permissible amount for health. You will observe that the fraction of this gas present in the air is so small that it requires the highest skill in chemistry to make a proper determination of the same. I, therefore, conclude to put the instrument I devised to make determinations of this extremely delicate test, and I find in actual practice that the presence of the $\frac{1}{2000}$ of 1 per cent. of CO₂ in the air can be measured as correctly as an ounce weight on a druggist's scale. Any person of ordinary intelligence can be instructed in two hours' time to make this test.

In view of the great accuracy of this instrument (heretofore impossible with any instrument before known), I believe that properly appointed authorities in scientific institutions will review the tests of air heretofore made and reported upon.

Please accept my thanks for your invitation to visit Pocono Mountains, but I cannot see my way clear at this time.

Very truly yours,

THOS. SHAW, M.E.

APPENDIX "A." NO. 2.

915 RIDGE AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, August 10, 1892.

DEAR MR. BONSALE: In reply to favor of the 8th instant, I had the air you sent from Pocono Mountain tested yesterday. I doubt if it is possible to find air in any part of the globe that is more free from impurities than the air of Pocono Mountain. Carbonic acid gas is found in the infantile fraction of the $\frac{1}{10000}$ part of 1 per cent., equaling 1 foot in 100,000 feet; this you will see is the $\frac{1}{100}$ part of 1 foot in 1000 feet.

The air of the city of Philadelphia, taken at an elevation of 35 feet above the street at my office, carries from $\frac{10}{100}$ to $\frac{13}{100}$ of a foot in 1000 feet, whilst the air at Shawmont, 9 miles northwest of the City Hall, 200 feet above tide-water, carries $\frac{7}{100}$ of a foot in 1000 feet, and the permissible amount for health is rated at $\frac{6}{10}$ of a foot in 1000 feet.

I recently tested the air of one of our music halls, capacity of the house about 1200, house one-third full and seated two hours before taking air from the upper gallery, and found the carbonic acid gas present was sixteenfold greater than the air outside of the theatre, and about as bad as the air found in many of the mines.

Very truly yours,

THOMAS SHAW, M.E.

APPENDIX "B." WATER ANALYSIS.

201 SOUTH FIFTH STREET, PHILADELPHIA, October 27, 1896.

MR. W. S. KAISER, 122 North Ninth Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

DEAR SIR: The following are the results of analysis of the sample of mineral water from Mount Pocono, Pa., received from you on the 9th inst.:

	Parts in one million.	Gr. in one U. S. standard gal.
Sulphate of potash	0.63	0.037
Sulphate of soda	0.82	0.048
Chloride of sodium	0.97	0.057
Nitrate of soda	0.09	0.005
Carbonate of lime	7.71	0.449
Carbonate of soda	2.56	0.149
Alumina and oxide of iron	0.51	0.029
Carbonate of magnesia	3.65	0.213
Silica	5.93	0.346
Organic and volatile matter	6.80	0.397
	<u>29.67</u>	<u>1.730</u>
Total solids by evaporation	29.50	1.729

Very respectfully,

REUBEN HAINES.

The water within examined was taken from a large sand spring on grounds of Ellwood Bonsall. The spring flows about 4 inches of

water, and is wholly unprotected from drainage, it being near the base and on the mountain-side. The water examined was taken by putting a 50-foot length of rubber garden hose in the spring and letting it flow through it into a 5-gallon demijohn. Temperature of water at spring about 50 degrees. Temperature in valley was about 70 degrees, on mountain-top, about 325 feet above, 60 degrees.

ELLWOOD BONSTALL.

DISCUSSION.

DR. EUGENE P. BERNARDY : Knowing thoroughly the region of Mt. Pocono, I fully agree with Dr. Judd in regard to its pure and exhilarating atmosphere. For patients convalescent from severe illness, where continued weakness necessitates change; for the pneumonia cases, where resolution is slow in taking place; for cases of persistent cough, without recognizable changes, a visit of several weeks to Mount Pocono is usually followed by good and permanent results.

In cases of phthisis, I have not met with the success of Dr. Judd. While the incipient and early forms of phthisis seem to be somewhat benefited, the hemorrhagic form of phthisis did not seem to do well.

There is no doubt that in the early forms of phthisis a sojourn in this region will be of great benefit.

The snow in winter is dry; the atmosphere in the fall and winter is cold, dry, and exhilarating.

DR. CURTIN : I corroborate fully the remarks of Dr. Judd in reference to this region.

DR. S. A. FRISK : Those of us who practice in the West need to know more of the valuable resorts in the East, for we are compelled at times to send patients away from our mountains to more moderate altitudes in the Eastern States.