

**HOMBURG-SPA, AN
INTRODUCTION TO ITS
WATERS AND THEIR USE**

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Homburg-Spa, an Introduction to Its Waters and Their Use by Arnold Schetelig

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ARNOLD SCHETELIG

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Geschenk vom Verfasser

HOMBURG-SPA

AN INTRODUCTION

TO ITS WATERS AND THEIR USE

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Preface.

This little volume is made up of notes penned during the course of 14 years and owes its appearance to the suggestion of friends across the Channel. It was originally intended for the medical reader alone. The author however has been led to revise it; and on mature consideration, though greatly reducing its size, prefers addressing himself to a somewhat more extended circle of readers, who might wish to acquaint themselves with a subject of wide and popular interest. In spite of his desire that the style of his writing should tally with this enlarged scope, he has found himself unable to forego entirely the use of technical terms. These he leaves, for the reason given above, to the kindly indulgence of the non-professional reader. He

further trusts that a careful perusal of this pamphlet will show that, though it takes its name from one watering place, it covers some part of the vast field of general hydrology and dietetic hygiene for invalids at watering places generally.

Finally, the author hopes to meet with the approval of the reader for having suppressed, with a few exceptions, quotations from other writers, and for not having particularized his own investigations on the subjects here presented.

Outlines of Geology.

The geological character of the Taunus*) range on the right bank of the Rhine generally coincides with that on the left. Both are parts of a very considerable stretch of the Lower Devonian, its strata striking very nearly from E by N to W by S and falling in mostly from the N, but always at rather sharp angles and even vertically in places. River courses of a smaller order follow the length of these strata and lie in synclinal troughs, the drainage at right angles being the exception. This direction, strangely enough, is reversed in the case of the great river courses, the Rhine, the Saar, the Nahe and the Moselle. It must be supposed that the primary origin of these

*) *Taunus* is the latinized form of an original German word *taun*, or in modern speech *taun*, corresponding to the English *town* and perhaps the Keltic *dun*, i. e. a walled or fenced in place on high.

consisted in rents and fissures which later on yielded to the eroding action of the waters themselves. Even to this day the hard task imposed, in a work like this, on a great water-course is visible in the Rhine from Bingen downwards, where as far as a village called Trechtingshausen for a run of about 4 miles the drop is nearly zero, and from Trechtingshausen for an equal distance the river falls 15 feet; the former corresponding to a direction of the Rhine rectangular to the fundamental strata, whilst in the latter locality it follows the striking of them or very nearly so. The stretch below Bingen is particularly adapted to show the various strata of the hills on either side exposed to view in almost vertical sections (e. g. the well known rock of the Lurley).

Turning to our own part of the Taunus as between the Rhine and the railway-line from Frankfurt to Cassel, we shall find it composed of parallel layers of slatelike Lower Devonian of different nature and hardness, the two central and highest ones being at the same time the hardest in substance and in their name of 'Quarzite' showing their composition. This, so called Taunus Quarzite does not wholly

consist of compact genuine quartzite material, but includes manifold layers and nuggets of friable sandstone, which, in many instances, are washed away by underground water and then, indeed, may leave the quartzite the sole representative.

Quartzite being more subject to transversal rents and faults is also more apt to help the formation of valleys running at right angles, such as we have at Oberursel and between this and Wiesbaden. Parallelism of strata, however, partially disappears, as we proceed to the eastern outlying portions of the Taunus. Here we observe irregularity in stratification and some very bewildering bending and folding, such as has hitherto baffled all attempts at correct mapping.

Of organic life very little is to be said. The few specimens found can be summarized under the palaeozoic order, a chief representative of which is a brachiopode called *Spirifer*, with many varieties.

The Origin of the Waters.

Many and varied have been the hypotheses as to the geological origin of the class of

mineral sources which are met with at Homburg. I shall not discuss them at length, but merely state my reasons for endorsing one of them that was put forward as early as 50 years ago, but since then has been nearly abandoned. According to this view the breaking forth of basaltic rocks in a line, as it were, from Gonzenheim to a point close to the Elisabeth spring must have been making a way for the row of Homburg mineral sources to appear; its opponents pointing out that the line claimed for these basaltic upheavals was erroneously supposed to be running in the direction given above, but is rather at almost right angles to it. The latter evidence, however, in no wise invalidates the theory of the general connection of basalt outbreaks with mineral springs which thus still remains applicable to Homburg. It is easily understood how successive shrinking and warping of the earth's crust may bring about faults of uncommon magnitude, even to a distance of several miles. We do not require such distances, since a fault of a couple of hundred feet may bring to the surface waters which chemical analysis proves to have sprung from rocks differing