

**THE ISLE OF MAN. A GUIDE TO
THE ISLE OF MAN WITH THE
MEANS OF ACCESS THERETO
AND AN INTRODUCTION TO ITS
SCENERY**

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The Isle of Man. A Guide to the Isle of Man with the Means of Access Thereto and an Introduction to Its Scenery by Joseph George Cumming

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A GUIDE

TO THE

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THE MEANS OF ACCESS THERETO

AND AN INTRODUCTION TO

ITS SCENERY

CONTAINING ALSO A GENERAL SYNOPSIS OF ITS
CONSTITUTION—CLIMATE—LANGUAGE—POPULATION—MANNERS
AND CUSTOMS—TOPOGRAPHY—CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY—
AGRICULTURE—FISHERIES—MINES—MINERALS—MANUFACTURES—
ANTIQUITIES—BOTANY—GEOLOGY—AND ZOOLOGY

BY THE

REV. JOSEPH GEORGE CUMMING, M.A., F.G.S.

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FORMERLY VICE-PRINCIPAL OF KING WILLIAM'S COLLEGE, ISLE OF MAN

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PREFACE.

POLYDORÉ VERGIL, writing in 1470, says: "There are manie isles adjacent to Britaigne, and two of indifferent fame: the one called the Isle of Wighte, beinge against the south bancke of Englonde; the other ilond, beinge somewhat famous, is the Ile of Mone or Man."

The proximity of the former island to the English coast, the easy access to it from London, and the peculiar loveliness of its scenery, have rendered it a favourite resort of valetudinarians and pleasure-seekers. The latter island, on account of its greater distance, is comparatively strange to the inhabitants of the south of England, and to the majority of Englishmen its remarkable history and many attractions are not as well known as they deserve to be.

To remove in some measure this ignorance of a spot which really does offer to the home tourist the strongest inducements to a visit, the following account has been drawn up, not without the hope also that it may assist those who are desirous of selecting some new pleasure-field for the summer months, and who have not as yet had their attention directed to the Isle of Man.

The plan of the book is simply this. The 1st chapter is taken up with the consideration, preliminary in the mind of the intending tourist, of the means and cost of reaching the island from the different ports of Great Britain and Ireland.

The next chapter is devoted to a general description of the island, its situation, extent, population, and language; and information is added respecting the climate and the cost of living. Most persons who have heard anything of the Isle of Man are aware that, owing to the absence of the higher duties on imports, the luxuries of life may there be obtained at a much cheaper rate than in England. The advantages in this respect are greater to residents than to the visitor in the summer months, when the influx of strangers raises the price of many articles of consumption, more especially fish and poultry. Even in wines it is usual at the first-class hotels to charge higher in summer than in winter.

The information respecting the climate is of a more precise character, in order to correct the very erroneous opinions which are entertained by most people as to its adaptation to the wants of those who seek health as well as relaxation in their visit to the island. All that has been said of the benefit to be derived by the invalid from a visit to, or a residence in, the Isle of Wight, applies with equal force to the Isle of Man.

Tables are given in this work of the result of observations on the thermometer at three different stations in the Isle of Man, two of them being the very much exposed points of the Calf of Man and Point of Ayre Lighthouses, the third being Ballasalla, near Castletown, a more inland situation, and one which affords a more correct indication of the general climate. For the table belonging to this last station I am indebted to the kindness of my friend J. Burman, Esq., F.R.A.S., who has made laborious observations, with very accurate and well-tested instruments, four times daily for the last seven years. From this table it will be seen that the mean summer temperature

of the Isle of Man is $56^{\circ} 17'$, and the mean winter temperature $40^{\circ} 9'$; thus the difference between summer and winter is only $15^{\circ} 27'$. The temperature of the hottest month (August) is $57^{\circ} 7'$, and of the coldest (February) $39^{\circ} 7'$, so that the difference between the hottest and coldest months is not more than 18° . According to the tables of Professor Dove, of Berlin, printed in the Report of the British Association for 1847, the January temperature of the Isle of Wight is 37° (*i. e.* more than two degrees lower than that of the Isle of Man), and the difference between the hottest and coldest months is 28° , giving therefore 10° of equability of temperature in favour of the Isle of Man as against the Isle of Wight.

The myrtle and fuchsia flourish at all times, unprotected except from the winds, and shrubs from the Morea have stood for years in the gardens of Balladoole.

When the altitude of some of the mountains of the Isle of Man, reaching to upwards of 2,000 feet above the sea, the treeless character of the country, and the great force of the winds, are taken into consideration, the observed temperatures will perhaps astonish those who are not previously aware of the effect of the waters of the Gulf Stream on the climate of the western portions of Great Britain and Ireland.

The 3rd chapter in this book gives a condensed account of the singular political constitution of the island, with a statement of the revenue. The more remarkable manners and superstitious practices of the islanders are presented in the 4th chapter, a notice being also added in the 15th chapter of the ecclesiastical customs.

The 5th chapter affords information as to the extent of trade in the island.

The "Itinerary" occupies the 6th and four following

chapters. This has been written out very fully under the conviction that to the majority of visitors it will prove the most useful portion of the book. It is adapted either to a short visit or to a protracted sojourn on the island. The ground has been frequently gone over by myself, primarily with a view of elucidating the geology of the country, during a residence of nearly 14 years in the Isle of Man, and the descriptions of the objects and scenery mentioned are, for the most part, copies from my note-books of records made on the spot. Being an ardent lover of the beauties of nature, I may sometimes have given vent to feelings of admiration where others may not be particularly struck with the scene; but the mind of the geologist is always awake to catch each variation in the form and outline of a country, and to speculate immediately on the causes which may have produced such variations: he is thus led to notice peculiarities which escape the observation of those who are not accustomed to look below the surface. Such peculiarities are frequently adverted to in the following pages. The greater number of tourists, however, are not geologists, antiquarians, or students of natural history; the itinerary, therefore, deals principally with those objects in which all alike are presumed to be interested, and separate very brief chapters are subsequently given on the archæology, botany, geology, and zoology of the island. These are the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 16th; they may suffice to indicate to those who desire such information the different points to which, if so disposed, they should direct their more minute investigations. These chapters, as well as the 14th and 15th, which relate to the civil and ecclesiastical history of the Isle of Man, may be read by the tourist at home, so that he may be prepared at once, on his arrival upon the island, to proceed to those parts in which he feels his interest is especially engaged. The

chapter on the botany was prepared for me many years ago by my lamented friend the late Professor Edward Forbes, by birth a Manxman, and appeared, almost in its present form, in my "Isle of Man, its History, Physical, Ecclesiastical, Civil, and Legendary," published in 1848. To the same authority is due the chief part of the chapter on the zoology of the island. They who desire more extended information will of course consult his work on the "British Starfishes," and the earlier product of his remarkable genius, the "Malacologia Monensis." The chapters on the antiquities and geology are the result of my own labours, and present a summary of what I have previously published on those subjects, with the addition of later discoveries. I am aware that I lay myself open to the charge of egotism in making such a reference to my own works, and in quoting from them as I have done in the present book; but I have been in a measure forced to adopt this course, by observing that others have made use of these works (more particularly the "Runic and other Monumental Remains," and the "Story of Rushen Castle and Rushen Abbey") without acknowledgment, and I might seem in the following pages to be borrowing from them that which they have in reality primarily taken from myself.

I believe that the 14th and 15th chapters afford, though in a very condensed form, the most correct civil and ecclesiastical history of the Isle of Man which has yet appeared. I have availed myself herein of the documents brought to light in the valuable publications of the Manx Society, more especially in their 4th volume (the "Monumenta de Insula Manniæ" of Dr. Oliver), published last year, and the 5th volume (the "Vestigia Insulæ Manniæ Antiquiora," by H. R. Oswald, Esq., H.K.) which has just appeared. The former volume contains a corrected edition