

his rifle and patted her cheek, as he remarked, "The sea has put new life into you, lassie."

After pouring all her story into the sympathetic heart of her mother, Elsie said—"Ah! mother, dear, you were wiser than I. I little

thought when I left home that God was going to give me as much—nay more (for I can't help seeing that Fred is a far nobler man than poor Jamie) than what was taken away. I thought I should never recover from that loss, and yet

I am happy and content to feel that whatever God does is best."

"He brings blessing out of sorrow; gain out of loss, my dear," said the mother.

JESSIE M. E. SAXBY.



AMONGST the numbers of English people who spend some of the summer months in Norway, not many have made the experiment of living at a "sanatorium," or bath, in that country, and it may interest some of the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER to hear our experiences at St. Olaf's Bad at Modum, near Christiania.

On the 1st of July of last summer, my friend L. and I sailed from Tilbury, on board the Albano, for Norway. There were not very many passengers, and L. and I were the only Englishwomen of the party, the other three ladies on board being Norwegians. We felt quite adventurous when my husband left us, and we started on our journey alone. We had a comfortable cabin to ourselves, in which, however, we did not spend much of our waking hours, preferring to remain on deck, as the weather was fine, though rather cool most of the time. The captain was very kind and attentive, and we soon felt quite at home, and had our favourite seats on the deck, where we read and chatted together, sometimes joined by some of our fellow-passengers, with whom we soon became acquainted.

On Sunday we had Divine service in the saloon, which was conducted by a gentleman, a lay reader, who was one of our fellow-passengers, and who kindly offered his services, as we had no clergyman on board to officiate. In the evening a fog came on, and the early part of the night was disturbed by the melancholy fog signals, and several times we stopped altogether, losing about an hour's time, and rendering some of our number sadly anxious and alarmed.

The next morning was unfortunately gloomy and threatening as we sailed up the fjord. We were on deck pretty early, watching for the first appearance of the Norwegian coast, and enjoying the fragrance of the pines. A little after 7 a.m. we landed, and L. and I were the first of our number to make our way to the Victoria Hotel, where we were to breakfast, and remain until our train started for Vikersund.

Very much did we enjoy our breakfast of flynder, delicious coffee, rolls and butter; after which we started out to see the sights and post our letters, etc. We were anxious to see the

## AT ST. OLAF'S BAD.

### THE EXPERIENCES OF TWO ENGLISHWOMEN IN NORWAY.

Viking ship which is exhibited near the University. A Norwegian lady whom we spoke to most kindly brought us to the place, and explained that although it was not the time for visitors, we should be admitted on paying a small fee to the caretaker. It was well worth seeing, and we bought some photographs of it, which gave a very good idea of the ship and the wonderful state of preservation it is in.

We sauntered through the town, and bought a few silver ornaments, etc., and then took a drive through some of the best streets, and went up the water tower, from which there is an extensive view over the town and the surrounding neighbourhood.

We then returned to the "Victoria," and after an early dinner we walked to the Vestbanegaard, leaving our luggage to be sent after us. We got seats on the left side of the carriage, on which all the finest views are, and the run to Drammen was through lovely scenery; we had to change there for Vikersund, again passing through beautiful scenery. From Drammen we travelled with a Finland lady, also bound for St. Olaf's Bad; she spoke a little English, but preferred conversing in German, so we had to do our best to make ourselves agreeable in that language.

At Vikersund we were met by comfortable open carriages, in one of which we were soon seated, and, drawn by a pair of fat ponies, started for Modum along heavy sandy roads thick with dust, through a wood or rough park, and at last drew up in front of the "Kontor," or director's office, where we were received in a friendly manner by Herr Möller, whose not too perfect English sounded most musically to our lonely ears.

He had us taken to our rooms in Villa Svea, opposite the Kontor. It seemed to me as if the whole place was a mass of curious eyes watching the two strange Englishwomen, who had made their lonely way to the Norwegian baths. Herr Möller then conducted us to the dining-room, and found seats for us at one of the many tables in the large salon.

After our supper we sauntered through part of the grounds, and, guided by the rushing noise, made our way to a place from which we had a full view of the Kaggefoss, a few minutes' walk from us; it was only a little after 9 p.m., but everyone seemed wending their way to their respective villas, so we followed the general example, and mounting our creaking staircase soon fell fast asleep under our *plumeaux*, being rather tired after our various experiences of the day, which had commenced at such an early hour.

Our first morning at Modum was bright and fine; we breakfasted at half-past eight on coffee, bread and butter, and smoked ham, not venturing too soon on the other novel dishes, not even the mysost, a sort of sweet goat's-milk cheese, which seemed a favourite with most of our neighbours. Then we interviewed Herr Möller, and after waiting for a considerable time for my turn, I was admitted to the senior doctor's sanctum. Our conversation was carried on in German, as I could not speak Norsk and he could not speak English; however, we understood each other very well, and after filling up my bath paper of directions,

he handed me in to the junior doctor's room, where the hour for my bath was arranged, and then my medical interviews were ended.

I was not to begin the baths at once, so for a few days L. and I spent our time as we pleased, sitting out of doors and writing our home letters, and watching the various manners and ways of the patients at the baths.

The Sanatorium of Modum is in the midst of pine woods, and the guests are lodged in wooden villas scattered about through the grounds, one of the villas containing the dining-room, music salon, and reading-room for the whole community.

We were given rooms in Villa Svea, near the Kontor, and facing the approach, up which all the carriages with the new arrivals came, so that from the verandah, which ran round the outside of the villa, and on which our rooms opened, we could see everyone coming and going—the only drawback being that we were exactly opposite to the stables, where all the drivers congregated, and who were sometimes rather too noisy to be pleasant as such near neighbours. The first few days, before beginning my course of baths, we spent most of our time out of doors, in the mornings taking our writing-cases to one of the numerous tables under the trees near the house; and in the afternoons going for a walk, or settling ourselves in a cosy nook near the Kaggefoss, which, strange to say, was seldom visited by the other guests, and where we could sit and read and chat in undisturbed solitude.

Another charming spot within an easy walk of the baths was the "Stille Vand"—a lake above the fos, surrounded by trees, and along the sides of which we walked over a carpet of lovely moss, and oak and beech ferns, and where everything was so calm and silent that we felt as if we were many, many miles away from the haunts of men.

We never tired of watching the pine logs rushing down the fos, and making their escape down the river, by which they eventually reached Drammen. They were shot down a slide into the lake, and were carried by the force of this push down the fos, making a booming sound as they rushed down it, and whirling round and round as they reached the river at its foot; there some got wedged in the rocks, or caught in the wooden supports of the bridge, whilst others cleared all obstacles, and rushed down the river out of sight.

If we had been inclined to moralise we might have compared the course of the pine logs to human lives, some making their way with a will, overcome by no obstacles, and others drifting aimlessly along, turned by every strong current, and finally caught between the rocks of misfortune, where they are dashed and torn to pieces without hope of escape; some, indeed, do at last force their way to freedom, and with torn and shattered bark reach the desired haven of rest. We were the only English people at Modum, and I am sure everyone wondered why we came there, two solitary units amidst the mass of Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes of whom the bath patients were composed.

Once, indeed, I returned from the spring with the exciting intelligence that I had seen

an Englishman, and heard him speak, and we were fortunate enough to sit next him at dinner, as he, like us, was placed at the table with some Norwegian gentlemen who kindly spoke to us in English, and excellent English too.

But this one Briton left the following day, so we did not long enjoy his society, not that he was particularly interesting in any way, but he was an Englishman, and that was, to use the familiar words of Mr. Gilbert, "greatly to his credit," especially amongst a foreign community.

We made the acquaintance of some charming Finland people from Helsingfors, a husband, wife, and only child—a daughter—who although not strictly speaking pretty, had a most attractive, artless manner and fresh sweet face. Her mother was a clever, well-read woman, who spoke English well, and German and French also, with fluency and ease. Her husband was suffering from his throat, a common ailment in Finland, where they have so much damp and such constant cold winds.

We experienced a great deal of kindness from this family, and when we parted it was with the hope that we might meet again at some future time; we also saw a good deal of the lady who had travelled with us to Modum, and who was very friendly and sociable.

I shall give an account of one day, as a patient at the baths, and it will describe most of the other days passed there, as, except for the occasional variety of a drive or walk through the woods, there was a great sameness about the life at Modum, which to me was far from being unpleasant or wearisome. From 7 o'clock till 8 a.m. I alternately drank the iron waters at the spring, and walked about, the band playing most of the time; at half-past eight we breakfasted on coffee, bread and butter, and smoked salmon, ham, or sausage and myosot.

From breakfast time till eleven o'clock we wrote our letters or read, and at 11 p.m. I had my bath. For my readers' benefit I must try and describe it fully.

The bath houses and inhalatoriums were at the end of a separate walk, not very near the rest of the buildings. The first day I brought down my medical bath order, and handed it to some old women, who sat knitting and chatting at the open doorway into the bath premises. They looked at the number on the paper, and the old woman whose bath-room it was at once came forward and took charge of me, and we disappeared together down a long passage with doors along one side of it, through one of which she led me into a small dressing-room, with a stove in it and a sofa, and dressing-table and chairs. My directions for my bath were put with a great many more on a file, and then she left me to undress, whilst she retired into the bath room opening off the dressing-room, and prepared my bath for me.

When all the preparations were completed she threw open the door and beckoned me in. The bath was a fixed wooden one, full of tepid brown water. My "Badkvinde" seized a bundle of green birch leaves, and washed me with it as if it were a piece of soap; it felt pleasant, and made the water quite frothy. My old woman then mounted a wooden ladder, and from the top of it threw a bucket of warm water at me, and then an icy cold one, making me dive down in the bath between the buckets. Next came the hot mud, with which I was rubbed all over (except my face), and which

felt rather pleasant, and was nicer than it looked, as it was a dark brown colour, and lying in the bucket looked like a gigantic linseed poultice mixed with turf; my bath-woman applied this mud with a strong scrubbing-brush, which was rather severe, and was only bearable on account of the thick coating of mud.

Then my attendant slapped me with the bundle of birch leaves, then she pulled back a sort of trap door above my head and gave me a warm douche, and then a painfully cold one; and also gave me douches through a long pipe which she turned on me across the room, and out of which the water came with great force. So ended the bathing process. I was dried with warm, coarse towels; and if the day happened to be cold or wet, the stove was always lighted in the little dressing-room by my attentive attendant, with whom I soon became great friends, notwithstanding the fact that she knew not one word of English, and that my stock of Norwegian was strictly limited. I was soon able to understand all her remarks and directions about the bath, and she was most patient in repeating over and over again the various sentences until I understood them. She very often gave me a bunch of flowers, gathered in the early morning in her own little garden, several miles away. She had a long walk every day to Modum, where her duties began at 7 a.m. Her pay from the baths was a few öre a day (ten öre are equal in value to a penny), her real salary being derived from the patients' fees on the completion of their baths.

She was a bright, cheery old woman, very brown and thin, with a good face, which must have been handsome in its day. Her arms were muscular and strong to a surprising degree, as her patients could testify, after their bath and scrubbing. After the bath a walk was recommended, and then a rest. I used to take a book and lie down on the rather hard sofa in my room until dinner-time, leaving L. to go to the Kontor for our letters.

The arrival of the letters was the great event of the day at Modum. A stream of people—guests and servants—used to pour into the Kontor when the hour came round, and even those who did not expect letters themselves went to see Herr Möller distributing them to the waiting multitude. He stood behind his desk and called out the name and address on each letter, so that it was a long time before they were all disposed of, and the Kontor was empty again.

After our two o'clock dinner we used to go to our room and write or read, and then prepare our afternoon tea, and after that enjoyable meal we used to start off for a walk, getting back in time for eight o'clock supper, after which we sat out of doors if it was fine, and in the salon if it was wet.

Very often some of the guests played or sang, and there was one Danish lady who sang with exquisite taste and expression, in a very sweet, well-trained voice, although not a strong one; she was most kind in singing and playing any special favourite of her listeners, and, thanks to her, many an enjoyable hour was spent in the salon.

About 9.30 everyone prepared to retire for the night, and by ten p.m. the grounds were deserted, and only the night watchman was to be seen strolling about, to guard against any outbreak of fire, a not unlikely occurrence where all the buildings are of wood.

So ends a day at the baths. Various odd

moments are filled up by going to the spring, drinking the prescribed number of glasses of iron water, and strolling about between times, which is considered part of the cure; the most tiresome thing about it is walking up and down for an hour or so before breakfast.

When L. left me, to join the rest of our party on their trip northward, I felt very forlorn, and should have been more lonely, except for the kindness of my Finland friends, with whom I spent most of my spare time during the few days which elapsed between L.'s departure and the arrival of some friends from London.

The latter were most kind to me, and the remainder of my stay at Modum was very pleasantly spent in their congenial society. We made several pleasant excursions together in the vicinity of the baths, and their friendly faces were the last I saw as my train left Vikersund, on my way to join my husband.

The day I left Modum, when I was dressing in the morning, someone knocked so very energetically (or pushed, not knocked) at my door that it burst open, and in hurried my old bath-woman with a sweet bunch of flowers in her hand as a farewell gift for me. I was already provided with her photograph, and we bade each other quite a touching farewell. Next came the housemaid in charge of our rooms, who was made happy by the valuable gift of some old silk handkerchiefs, and some tea remaining from L.'s store, for our private five o'clock tea; and also a tiny blue china teapot, in addition to her fees, which are regulated according to the length of one's stay at the baths.

My visit to Modum, lasting a little over three weeks, passed very pleasantly, amongst kindly people and lovely scenery, most of our time being spent out of doors, surrounded by the pines, whose fragrance filled the air; and wandering along by the river and listening to the rush of the Kagefos, the way of living in every way forming a complete contrast to our life at home.

Pleased as I was on leaving Modum to rejoin my husband, still I felt sorry to leave the friends I had made there, and the tokens of whose kindly thought and regard I carried away with me, as I drove off to the station, in pretty bouquets of sweet flowers, with which my hands were filled as I turned for a last and farewell glance at St. Olaf's Baths.

I should think English people will not go much to Modum until English is more spoken there, especially by the medical staff, as in case of any complication requiring special attendance it would be very unpleasant for the patient.

Herr Möller has a fair command of the English tongue, and is indefatigable in his efforts to please and amuse the guests; but he cannot do everything, however anxious he may be to render each individual's stay as enjoyable as possible; I have actually seen him take part in *tableaux vivants* for the amusement of a delighted audience.

As I made my adieu to him he expressed his hopes that I should return the following year, and induce many other English people to cross the sea, and spend a few weeks at that charming and health-restoring summer resort "St. Olaf's Bad." If I ever pay it a second visit, perhaps some of my readers may like to hear something more of life at Modum.

FLORENCE WILLSON.

