

unhappily of late years so accustomed us. But it may be that longer winters, tardy springs, and short summers have in a measure helped to acclimatise our eye to naked flower-beds for nearly two-thirds of the year. We forget, however, that the remedy—as we have on a former occasion more fully hinted at—is to some considerable extent in our own hands, if we are willing not to devote the whole of our beds to bedding-out plants only, but to intersperse among them some hardy perennials, or perhaps a few bright, shrubby, and dwarf evergreens. It is quite possible to dare to be eccentric even in a flower garden.

In our kitchen garden, probably a considerable portion of our potato crop is fit to be dug. And the potato, when fully ripe, should not be left for long in the ground, for it will sooner or later in that case become a prey to the vermin that, do what we will, we often find it so hard to keep under. Then there are plenty of crops that have done their work, that now want clearing off the ground to make room for something else. Indeed, this is the case in the kitchen garden often enough; and yet how often do we see whole rows of withered-up peas, or a spinach-bed tall and gaunt and all run to seed, simply because it is a little piece of trouble to remove it, and so there it is left for two or three weeks in this precious time of the year, the last summer month, exhausting the soil, taking up space, and giving a dreadfully untidy and neglected appearance to our whole garden. Then the onions, if not already attended to, must be harvested in the usual way. Our general trenching of the ground hardly begins as yet; but our old cabbage stumps we never waste, but plant them all out close together in some out-of-the-way corner of the garden, where, perhaps, in the winter time they will supply us with a dish or two of greens when greens are scarce. But the young cabbage plants may now be planted out in your beds. Leave plenty of room—not too much—to walk between your rows, and let your plants be some five or six inches from each other. The celery, too, will need from time to time careful earthing up. Do this in dry weather, and always take care

to keep the earth out of the heart of your plant. If you want salads for winter supply, they must be sown now in frames; the winter spinach, too, must be thinned out, and, as before, when you gather from it, gather only the outside leaves.

In our fruit garden, it is hardly time as yet for the full apple-gathering, and yet, as we know, there are some sorts that come in early and are ripe even by August. Their scent in a great measure guides us as to their condition, but if you have a good tree about whose properties you are at all in doubt, take from it one of the apples and cut it open. If you find the pips are turning colour, you can very safely gather your tree within a week or so from that time; but if the pips are quite white, let them hang for some time longer. To most of us this can hardly be called information, but do not our failures and ill-successes very often result as much from thoughtlessness, or it may be from idleness, as from want of knowledge? Your wall-fruit, on the other hand, cannot remain too long on the tree to ripen. It frequently happens, even on a comparatively small tree, that the fruit does not all ripen at once; often a fortnight will elapse between the ripening of two or more peaches upon the same tree. A peach or nectarine or plum if ripe comes off easily when touched. If much resistance is offered to the hand, you may be pretty sure that the fruit might be allowed to remain on the tree some little time longer. And yet it is annoying to find, perhaps, after a squally night, three or four fine peaches and nectarines lying on the ground, and forming alike both table and chair and dinner service to a little company of slugs. To avoid this, then, some careful gardeners contrive a network forming a sort of bag that projects outward from the wall, and thereby the fruit is not bruised by the fall, nor is it so much exposed to be devoured by the slimy interloper, with whom, as with the audacious wasp and the cunning earwig, we have declared war to the knife. But with all our murderous designs, the enemy never appears to decrease much; there seems room for us both, and we are often compelled to be content to have it so.

THE WATERING-PLACES OF ENGLAND AS HEALTH-RESORTS.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



THE amount of information I can supply on the subject of this paper must obviously be limited, but I trust it will be found good of its kind. I must set out by presuming that my reader is either an invalid, or at all events in such delicate health that rest and a change are to be recommended, and that a journey, either by railway or in some of the many excellent steamboats that ply up and down our coast, can be borne with a fair degree of ease. But independent of the blessings of rest and change, obtainable by a residence of a month or two at some

of our beautiful and healthful English watering-places, one of course expects good to accrue from drinking the waters, to say nothing of breathing the air, of the spot chosen; and this leads directly to the question, "Where shall I go?"—a correct answer to which can only be obtained by a consultation with your medical adviser, and a consideration of the state of your balance at the banker's. With the choice of a watering-place I have nothing to do; and as regards the expense, I can only give you general advice. The expense, then, is divisible into that which must be contracted on the journey and that of the sojourn at the wells chosen. Take the wells

first. Having made up your mind as to the place to be visited, you will find it far better, far quieter, and cheaper to go into respectable lodgings than to reside at any of the hotels. The only drawback is the difficulty of securing rooms before you go there, and thus avoiding the necessity of landing at an hotel to live there while you "look round." There is one way of overcoming this difficulty which I have known tried repeatedly with success: it is simply to write directly to the "principal stationer" or "chemist" in the place, and state your requirements frankly, and in nine cases out of ten you will receive a polite answer. It is unlikely that you will be able to put a name on the envelope you send, but an explanatory note to the postmaster will render assurance doubly sure.

What you ought particularly to inquire about, before taking the rooms, are—1, the situation of the house; 2, its soil; 3, its water; 4, size of the rooms; 5, their exposure to sun or otherwise; 6, the class of houses in the neighbourhood; and 7, whether the street is a noisy one or not. You see I am very particular in catering for your comfort. I want you to have plenty of fresh air and pure water in-doors, with sunlight as well, and not to be exposed to the harassing, killing din of a noisy street. If the neighbourhood be not a respectable one, no matter how good the house is, you will be rendered miserable in a thousand ways.

An invalid going on a journey should not only write down on his tablets all information of the route and times of arrivals and departures, but he ought to have everything ready for starting a week beforehand, and a fly hired to take him from the terminus of his journey to his rooms, which latter ought to be in perfect readiness to receive him, with dinner or tea quite ready to serve. This is the acme of comfort, and depend upon it, if bustle and worry take the place of judicious arrangement, if you expose yourself to annoyances that a little foresight might have avoided, neither your holiday nor the drinking of the waters will do you much good.

Much cheaper, and also to my way of thinking much more comfortable than the railway, is it to travel by sea. First-class fare from London to Aberdeen, with a return ticket available for a month, only costs £2 5s. You are thinking about sea-sickness, are you? Well, I had not forgotten that; but during summer and autumn the sea is generally calm, and so there is very little *mal de mer*, and the coast-line all along is so charmingly lovely, that the little voyage makes a most delightful beginning to the short holiday.

When you arrive at your chosen watering-place, it will be as well, if you can afford it, to put yourself under the care of some medical man.

Now, if any good is to accrue from a short residence at any of our watering-places, the invalid must make up his mind to live there by rule: he must get up betimes in the morning, so as to get walking exercise and the benefits of the waters before breakfast, he must live on plain, substantial diet, and beware of intemperance in eating as well as in drinking. At nearly every one of the watering-places

of our country, there are many objects of interest to be seen, and there are also many charming walks and drives; there is no need, therefore, for the invalid to be dull, but he must be careful not to take exercise to the verge of fatigue.

As to the actual drinking of the waters, one or two rules must be observed. For the first few days, only a moderate quantity is to be imbibed, and at no time is a very large amount to be taken, else evil results are sure to follow. Again, the water should be sipped slowly, not gulped down, after each glass a walk of fully ten minutes should be taken, and a considerable time should elapse between the drinking of the last glass and breakfast.

I will now mention, in no classified order, but just as they occur to me, a few of the ailments which a residence at some one or other of the wells might be reasonably supposed either to remove or to alleviate:—Dyspepsia in any form, general debility, chronic bronchitis or winter cough, *some* cases of asthma, constipation and the reverse, chronic dysentery, neuralgia, paralysis, liver complaints, scrofula, skin ailments, hysterical affections, low spirits and ennui, obesity, rheumatism, and gouty affections, &c. &c.

One of the pleasantest places in England at which to spend a short holiday is undoubtedly Tunbridge Wells. I am of opinion that as a residence for a time, for the feeble or debilitated of any age, for dyspepsia, and ennui, its merits are not sufficiently recognised. The place is extremely pretty, the air is dry and bracing, and it has an advantage over many, if I cannot say all, sea-side places—it has lovely tree-shaded walks. Indeed, the want of trees at our sea-side watering-places is one of their chief drawbacks. For young girls who suffer from lassitude and weariness, with headache, palpitations, and pains in the back, I think I do well to recommend Tunbridge Wells. The air probably will do as much good as the waters; but these latter should be taken, and, if the invalid's own physician thinks it right, iron in some form may be taken to increase their chalybeate effect.

Away up in the North of England, in the delightful county of York, and within about thirty miles of the city, if my memory serves me well, are the wonderful wells of Harrogate. There is quite a large number of these wells, and they are divided into the strong and mild sulphurous springs, the pure chalybeate and the saline chalybeate springs; so that what ailment soever of a chronic nature an invalid happens to suffer from, he can hardly go wrong if he goes to Harrogate. He will be sure to find a well to suit him, or it may be two, or he may be advised to use first one and then another, or on the other hand it may be deemed advisable that he drink of the chalybeate while using the sulphur spring as a bath. Again, there are two Harrogates, so to speak—High Harrogate and Low Harrogate—the former being 600 feet above the level of the sea; so the visitor can easily find an elevation to suit him. The place, like Tunbridge Wells, has a pure, bracing air, but not so dry a one. In fact, it has been called a humid place; but the soil

is sandy, and therefore the rain that falls does not lie long about. The season usually lasts until the beginning of November, but much depends upon the weather. The waters of Harrogate are all cold, but I believe are warmed before being partaken of; some of them, too, need to be taken with circumspection and not in too large quantities, or evil results follow. Some people are able to consume more than others: I mean to imply that it is not the quantity of water drunk that does the good, but the proportion of the tonic taken up by the system.

From Tunbridge Wells to Harrogate is a pretty long journey, but here we are south again, in one of the middle counties—Warwick, to wit—and in the beautiful town of Leamington, a very healthy residence for the invalid suffering from debility, whether general or nervous. The air is not unlike that of Harrogate; it is bracing and somewhat humid, but the waters are different. They are principally aperient waters, though some of the wells are chalybeate and sulphurous; they thus agree with people who suffer from inactivity of the liver and consequent dyspepsia.

Cheltenham used to be a place of very great repute as a watering-place, especially with former residents in India. If a mild sheltered winter residence be required, with wells, either alterative, or alterative and tonic, it is to be found at Cheltenham.

Bath is another watering-place, which I dare say a good many of my readers have been taught to look upon as old-fashioned. I have a very good opinion of it. The seasons are autumn and spring; the waters—which are thermal—are drunk twice a day, before breakfast and in the afternoon, and have a good effect in old-standing cases of gout and rheumatism, affections of the joints, and indigestion. The bathing arrangements are well carried out: in fact, they could hardly be better devised to suit all kinds of invalids.

Of Buxton, in Derbyshire, I have no personal knowledge, but as the place itself is high, and there are mountains around it, and as the soil is good and soon absorbs the rainfall, I can easily believe it is an excellent watering-place for any one requiring a bracing air with the perfection of baths. The season is from June to October, but after this the weather, I am told, gets cold and unsettled, and the winds often cutting.

The village of Matlock is, without doubt, a charming place, and so are the romantic drives in the vicinity. It is vaunted as a valuable spa; but if the springs possess no medicinal importance it is difficult to see where the value lies.

Pausing merely for a momentary glance at the bracing village of Purton, in North Wilts, which can be recommended to the rheumatic and dyspeptic as a cheap place, let us to town, and let us jump on board the good steamer *Granton*, at the Irongate Wharf, bound for the "land of the mountain and the flood." Behold we have tickets in our hands—return first-class tickets, that have only cost us thirty-four shillings; and just in about that number of hours we

step on shore in Caledonia's capital. This in itself is no watering-place, albeit it is healthful and beautiful; but there are many charming wells in Scotland; some of which are far too little known, having merely at present a local repute.

Moffat, however, is pretty well known. It is suitable for many of the cases for which the waters of Harrogate are so justly celebrated. Many skin complaints yield to the waters of Moffat. The place is quite a fashionable resort, and no wonder; the scenery is wildly, romantically beautiful; the hills that surround the town are between two and three thousand feet high, and about the Vale of Moffat there are many charming walks. The well, or pump-house, is about a mile and a half from the town, but omnibuses go to it every morning. There are places of interest everywhere around, for at Moffat you are in the very heart of a classic land, where there is something at every turn to remind you of Scott, or Burns, or the Ettrick Shepherd—

"Who taught the wandering winds to sing."

You have doubtless heard that Scotland is a dear place to live in. This is a mistake. There *are* hotels where they charge high during the season, but these are the exception, and apartments and food are frequently much cheaper than they are south of the Tweed.

The Pitkeathley mineral wells, Bridge of Earn, are justly celebrated. Independently of the wells, the village is extremely healthy, and the scenery everywhere near it superb. It is, moreover, a cheap place, and easily reached. Perth is within easy distance; and this sweet town, I need hardly say, is the key to the Highlands.

Another pleasant little watering-place is the village of the Bridge of Allan, a few miles from Dunblane. A quieter or more charmingly picturesque spot you could not find, were you to search the wide world over. It nestles by the side of the winding Allan Water, in the midst of a country so famous in story, that I might almost say that every acre—certainly every hillside and every glen—can point to its battle-field. It has another advantage: it is close to Doune, to Callander, Stirling, and to the famous Trossachs.

Both the last-mentioned wells may be recommended to invalids suffering from debility, torpor of the system, indigestion, or from worry or over-work.

Those who suffer from dyspepsia, from rheumatism, or eczema and allied skin affections, might do well to take a journey still farther north, and visit the wells of Strathpeffer. The journey by rail along the Great Highland Railway is rich in the wildest scenery, while all around Strathpeffer the country is indescribably grand and romantic. I must throw down my pen, else this paper may begin to read like a page from a guide-book. I have brought my reader as far north as I can, and there I must leave him; but if he has not forgotten his favourite poets, his sketch-book and fishing-rod, he cannot think the time long for a month, at all events.

