

be followed in a few weeks by the apple and pear bloom. Then the proprietor often indulges in speculations as to the kind of crop he is likely to have, providing the trees do not get a "smit." But oftentimes, when the fruit is in its earlier stages of development, there comes a "nipping eager" east wind, and then—woe to the "plooms!" One half of the prospective crop may be, and frequently is, blasted in a single night.

There is no help for it, however; and so the grower turns for consolation to his gooseberry-trees. These are usually planted midway between the rows of plum-trees. Currant-bushes are treated in like manner. By the time the longest day has arrived, the green sorts of gooseberries are ready for picking, and then work commences in real earnest. "Berry-pulling" being the order of the day, bebies of women commence robbing the prickly trees of their fruit. Soon the "rasps" will be ready, and the strawberries and cherries too. Then all the youngsters who can be got are pressed into the service as "bird-tenters." Armed with a set of clappers, supplemented by stentorian lungs, they make daylight hideous in their discordant efforts to scare away the fruit-loving birds. But the feathered pilferers mind the boys and their clappers very little, persevering in their efforts to secure a deliciously

juicy meal, to be perhaps ruthlessly shot down by the irate grower himself.

Towards the end of August plum-gathering commences, quickly followed by the apple and pear harvest. Such plums are surely never grown anywhere else in this "tight little island" as those in the district that I have been writing about. Great fleshy fellows they are, often weighing three or four ounces each. And then the strawberries! I really am afraid to say how many inches in circumference some are. The apples, too, include all kinds: summer apples and autumn apples, dessert apples and sauce apples, apples that require immediate consumption and apples that will keep till apples come again.

I must now, however, draw my paper to a close; but I hope I have said sufficient to show the denizens of our great cities that even country people (whom they are apt to look down upon as clownish) have a very useful work to perform; and that the honest labours of these humble ones contribute in no small degree to the comfort and happiness of those whose lives are passed amid the bustle and turmoil of town life.

At some future time I hope to speak of another industry carried on in the East Markham district—viz., flower-gathering.

H. I.

AMERICA AS A HEALTH-RESORT.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



MOR a certain class of invalids, the continent of North America possesses many advantages as a health-resort over other places, and I often wonder that so few people, comparatively speaking, cross the Atlantic with the hope of recruiting in the new country the health and strength they have lost in the old. But by the majority of health-seekers the Continent of Europe is still preferred, and the reasons for this are probably not very far to seek. The Continent lies handy; one has only to cross that wicked wee strip of water that separates England from sunny France, only to take the train to Dover or Folkestone, only to be buffeted for a bit—worse, by the way, at times than poor Sancho Panza was in his blanket—in the chops of the Channel, mildly bullied by officious custom-house men, and then—why, then Europe lies all before one.

Without wishing for a moment to disparage the benefits that in many cases accrue from Continental travel, or residence in the health-resorts of the Riviera, I must be allowed to say that the nervous invalid cannot help rubbing shoulders with a good many little worries, which he had never dreamt of before he left his island home and journeyed eastwards. People with abundance of money do not feel these so much; it is the traveller with just enough but

nothing to spare that does. As soon as you step on board an Atlantic steamer, you can dive down to your cabin and see that all your things are right, then you at once feel at home, and your cabin becomes your castle, your *sanctum sanctorum*, across the threshold of which only perhaps a companion voyager, or the steward who has been told off to attend on you, dares come.

But am I going to laud and praise the American continent, as a kind of terrestrial paradise for the English invalid? Nothing of the kind. America has drawbacks in the shape of climate as well as every other country in the world, but as a health-resort for portions of the year it compares most favourably with any place it has ever been my good fortune to visit; and, speaking personally, I can look back to the time I spent in the United States as one of the pleasantest in my life.

And now the question may be asked, what class of invalids would I recommend to cross the Atlantic, and sojourn for a few weeks among the wonders of the New World? That class, I reply, which is unfortunately a very large one in England, and probably getting every day more so. I allude to the men of shattered nervous or muscular energy, people who have already borne much of the brunt of the battle of life, who have yet much more to bear, and who need a breathing-spell of complete rest and change of scene,

to enable them to re-enter the ranks with renewal of health and strength. Add to these, if you like, people who have partaken too unsparingly of the pleasures of the world, and who are beginning to feel jaded and tired of existence; and also dyspeptics and melancholics of every description.

The autumn and the spring are the best months for visiting the States, Liverpool and London the best ports to sail from, and New York undoubtedly the best place to take passage to.

Before making up his mind to try America for health's sake, an invalid naturally asks himself the questions: "Can I spare the time? and spare the money?" As to the time—call it two months, or three at the farthest—if it can possibly be spared, it will doubtless be well spent; and this answer is equally applicable to the question about money. But about the latter I can give more information. Some addition to the wardrobe, then, would be necessary; this would entail an outlay of, say, eight or ten pounds, money "well-wared;" everything in the shape of clothes is expensive in the States. Add to this a supply of the medicines likely to be needed, or better still, a small medicine-case, also plenty of paper, pens, and even ink; for if you purchase even a pin in New York you will have to pay five cents, if not ten, for it. Indeed, an American shopkeeper's mind never sinks beneath the level of a five-cent piece, when selling.

Before leaving home for America, the intending voyager would do well to procure a copy of the part of the FAMILY MAGAZINE for August, 1881, containing my paper entitled "The Sea as a Physician." He will therein read many valuable hints which I have not space to-day to re-write.

Everything on board the Atlantic liners is the quintessence of comfort. The whole expense of the voyages out and home—all food, save spirits, beer, and wines—is only thirty guineas first-class, and I believe it can be done for ten guineas less than this, by taking a deck-cabin and having meals in the saloon. A few shillings extra are expected to be donated at the end of the voyage to the stewards, bathmen, and hair-dressers. The bill of fare is unexceptionable, and the *cuisine* as good as that of a first-class English hotel. The cabins are most comfortable, and everything connected with bed and berth all that can be wished. There are seldom more than two passengers in one cabin, although there are berths for four, so there is little fear of any over-crowding.

The passage out takes from ten to thirteen days, and I believe it is sometimes completed in nine. Arrived in New York, although there are the usual custom-house formalities to be gone through, the officers are just as speedy and obliging as those in England.

Sea-sickness is generally got over about the second or third day, so that, what with the absence of all worry and business and care, the invalid's cure may be said to commence from the very moment the ship strikes her prow into blue water, and the *mal de mer* just as often does good as not.

The first thing probably that will strike the stranger

on leaving the custom-house is the roughness of the streets. Roads are, so far as my experience goes, only in embryo yet in America. There are no hansoms and no cabs, and you find your way to your hotel—you have, of course, taken the precaution to get recommended to a good one—in a large, lumbering, patriarchal kind of carriage, which takes the mind away back to the Middle Ages.

You have hardly set out on your first ramble through the great squares or parks about the city, ere you feel that you are indeed in a new world, and a spirit of buoyancy steals over you, to which you have probably been a stranger for months or even years.

Your life in the hotels of America will be a very pleasant one, and this applies to every portion of the great Republic which is worth visiting. The bills of fare are liberal even to extravagance, the cooking excellent, the waiters most obliging. Breakfast is served from seven to eleven o'clock, luncheon from one to three, dinner from five to eight, and supper from eight to twelve. Everything included, with the exception of wines, costs but about twelve and sixpence of English money. I ought to add that American hotels are palatial as to get-up and furnishing, but there is a homely comfort about them, which is unknown in the great hostelries of the mother-land.

There is a deal for the invalid to see in New York itself, but he will not stay there. On the sideboards of the large lounging-rooms, he will find beautifully illustrated time-tables of the different railways, and there are guide-books by the score to be purchased, so that he can make up his mind quietly in his own room where to go to, take the train to the station, and start. No need to ask questions of any one.

Railway travelling in America is most luxurious and cheap as well, a little slower perhaps than it is in this country, but a person in search of health will hardly grumble at this. Dinner and refreshments of all kinds can be had on board, and at whatsoever town or city he halts the invalid will find the hotel system all that heart can desire. The hotel porter, too, awaits the arrival of all trains, and into his hands you hand your "baggage checks," and the next you see of your luggage will be in your own bed-room. This system of checking the baggage is a very good one, especially for long journeys, as the passenger has no care or worry about anything except the hand-bag he may take into the car with him. Travelling by train is as cheap if not more so than it is with us, and there are no fees to porters, *expected* at all events. There are sleeping-cars on all long routes; in a word, railway travelling in America has been reduced to a system, and the comfort of the traveller is considered paramount to all other considerations.

Where the invalid should go, and what places he should visit—with the exception of the Falls of Niagara, which every one pays his respects to—will depend very much on how he feels physically, and on what his peculiar tastes are. There is one thing I feel pretty certain about, and that is that the voyage out will do him so much good, that it will indeed be curious if he does not feel himself strong enough to

travel anywhere, even across the great continent to the distant plains of Utah, or beyond the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific slope itself and the wonderful city of San Francisco.

He may spend all his time, and spend it well too, in lounging from city to city, visiting such towns as Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Chicago, &c. In doing so he will lead a kind of *dolce far niente* life, a lazy lotus-eating sort of feeling may steal over him, and this is to be encouraged rather than the reverse, for if there be anything more deleterious to the health of the travelling invalid than another, it is hurry and excitement, and trying to do too much and see everything. Let him study his comfort then in every way, and live quietly and regularly; let him conform to the customs of the people in the matter of diet, whether in the North or in the South; and, above all, let him avoid late hours and study moderately early rising. At most of the hotels, bed-rooms with bath-rooms adjoined can be got; this is a very great comfort.

The cities of America cover a vast deal of ground, but the tram system is superb, the public buildings are beautiful, the streets and squares spacious and tree-

lined, and the parks, once seen, will not be easily forgotten.

Every invalid should take a trip up the Hudson; the scenery of that grand river is worth going all the way to America to see. He can take his time about it, there are so many charming places where he will do well to stay for a night or two. If he wants sport, fishing or shooting, he can go farther afield, but there is one thing in his favour—he can sleep every night in a comfortable house.

In travelling the invalid should not forget to wear warm underclothing, and, if he can bear it, fortify himself every morning by taking a cold bath.

On the whole, then, the reader will gather from this paper, that I do not wish to recommend any particular town, village, watering or bathing-place on the great continent. I do not advise the health-seeker to settle down anywhere, but to keep quietly moving; the absence of care and worry, the ever-varying scenery, the purity of the atmosphere, and the newness of life of every kind which he sees around him, these are the things to banish *ennui*, and restore blood and brain and nerve to health, however much they have lowered in vitality by sickness, hard work, or carking care.

THE COOLIN HILLS.

ICCADILLY is not exactly the place where one would expect to receive one's first impressions of the Isle of Skye. Yet it is there that observant passers-by, as they gaze into Mr. Vernon Heath's windows, may become aware of a certain weird and misty glen, with a wide boulder-strewn watercourse in the foreground, and strange isolated mountains looming darkly in the rear. Very mysterious and impressive is this picture of Glen Sligachan, but far more powerful is the reality of the scene itself to one who stands at evening on the bridge at Sligachan, when the glen and its surrounding mountains and moors are lit up by the glow of the setting sun. On the left he sees the strange pyramid of Glamaig, and the Red Hills, now still ruddier in the fiery light; and beyond them Mars-cow, their more graceful outlier, advancing an arm across the glen towards the black mass of the Coolins on the right, where Scur-na-Gillean itself rises into a graceful spire, with its sharp outline clearly defined against the evening sky. In other directions the moors stretch away dreary and silent, except where one sees the waters of Loch Sligachan, and hears the monotonous piping of its gulls and curlews. Above the rocky shore, on the lower slopes of moorland, one may see herds of Highland cattle reclining peacefully on the turf; while a few peat-gatherers—women with scarcely human forms, bent double under their heavy burden—are toiling slowly homewards to the village of huts which lies hidden beyond the distant headland.

Very different is the scene at Sligachan Inn, where all is bustle and activity—discussion of the adventures of to-day, and preparation for the expedition of to-morrow. In the case of most tourists there is not room for much variety of route, for, as the guide-books inform us, the usual time spent in Skye is only three days. The shortness of this stay may probably be accounted for by the fact that it is difficult to obtain much choice of easy and pleasant walks in Skye. Hotels are few and far between, and, splendid as the carries are, the paths are in general so rough and tedious as to preclude all but very indefatigable walkers from undertaking such expeditions. Then, again, the parts of Skye that are open to tourists are not the best of places for those who care only for a quiet stroll or a lounge by the seaside. The shore is mostly bleak and rocky, and offers few advantages to bathers; and if you attempt to sit and read on some heathery bank, the chances are ten to one that you are presently driven in hot haste to your hotel by the myriad swarms of midges that are the plague of the west coast of Scotland. At any rate, from some cause or other, visitors seldom spend more than a day or two in the neighbourhood of the Coolin Hills, and then rush on to see the Storr Rock and Quiraing before taking boat for Gairloch and Loch Maree, the next stage on the orthodox holiday tour. Even these few days are often days of difficulties and disappointment, either owing to the weather, or the nature of Glen Sligachan, or the inherent inability of the tourist to find the right way. But if disappointments are great and numerous, great also is the