

shrimping, and their prosperity varies with the season and the weather. Fishing is chiefly carried on with small trawls, and besides shrimps, which are sometimes taken in immense quantities, dabs, plaice, and even soles are caught. The "take" of shrimps varies within wide limits, a boat sometimes taking a hundred gallons in a single day or night, but forty gallons is considered a good haul, and, of course, very often the work is not even remunerative. But the market price of shrimps at Billingsgate is, if possible, of more importance to the Leigh fishermen than the amount of the take, and this will be believed when we add that it fluctuates between four shillings as a maximum and one shilling as a minimum price per gallon. The shrimps are boiled on board boat and then picked over, the brown fetching a much higher price than the red. They are sent up to London at night by goods trains, and sometimes the freight amounts to as much as 2,000 gallons. The Leigh shrimping fleet now consists of about a hundred boats, which are mostly small.

The fishery is a very ancient one, and probably existed in British times. In Roman times there was certainly a colony here, and when a cliff fell some years since, a large number of Roman coins were found. The place was of sufficient importance to be mentioned in "Domesday Book," and it was of some account as a nursery of sailors in the reign of Edward II. But we must pass over its history.

In the seventeenth century it was of some importance as the only port between Gravesend and Harwich. The fishery of Leigh Ray has passed through some curious transformations. Thus, during the eighteenth and the early part of the present century the trade was confined to oysters, whelks, mussels, winkles, and shrimps. The oyster trade was long very profitable. They were laid from Leigh Marsh to Canvey Island, and consisted chiefly of

the deep-sea species, which were brought from Jersey and Cancale Bay. So rich were the beds that in 1724 they were the occasion of an invasion of the men of Sheppey and the Kentish coast, which is known in history as "the Kentish Armada." The poachers carried off some thousand bushels of oysters. The Leigh fishermen were evidently very peaceably disposed men, for they actually resorted to law for a remedy, and the trespassers were tried at the Brentwood assizes, the jury assessing the damages at £2,000. The fishery extended from Leigh Ray all round Canvey Island. Since 1855, in which year about 468 tons of oysters were sent off to London, as against about thirty tons of shrimps, winkles, and mussels, ostriculture has steadily declined here, and in 1864, 705 tons of shrimps and mussels were despatched, and only 34 tons of oysters. Since then the trade in oysters and whelks has been altogether abandoned.

The shrimp trade fluctuates greatly according to the weather. In a stormy season the take is very small, and when too fine the men are often out for days without earning enough to pay expenses. Windy, but not "dirty," weather is the best, and, as we have already pointed out, sometimes a single boat will make £20 in a day, but that is an exceptional sum. Perhaps £5 to £10 may be taken as the average earnings per boat in favourable weather. The fishermen are hardy and honest sailors, and Leigh has for centuries sent numbers of men to the navy and mercantile marine.

In many ways this little village possesses a charm of its own. Inland there are numerous beautiful walks, and during the season many people make excursions here from Southend. But we must advise those who make a trip to Leigh to look to the state of the tide, for at low water the Thames loses more than half its charms.

RAILWAY TRAVELLING IN COMFORT AND SAFETY.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



SOME years ago a discussion took place, chiefly in the medical journals, as to the effects of railway travelling on the health. At this date I do not remember the conclusions generally arrived at. It is little matter, for even if I did, I should form my own independent opinion. Travelling by train may be productive of much pleasure, and the health may be benefited by it when judiciously and comfortably gone about. On the other hand, our railway system is accountable for a good deal of chronic illness, quite apart from those accidents to life and limb against which there can be no real protection.

It certainly is not my intention, however, in this paper to put forward railway travel as a new cure, or

even to recommend it as a curative agent of any kind, but merely to offer a few hints and suggestions, coupled with a word or two of good advice and warning, which may be found useful to those in health as well as to the invalid.

There is a large class of travellers in this country whose duties take them every day to the City, or to cities, and whose homes are in the country or suburbs. They spend, in point of fact, a considerable portion of their lives in railway carriages; and there are many others, notably commercial travellers, who do the same. Now, those belonging to either of these classes may be excused if they sometimes ask themselves the question, "Does constant railway travelling injure the health in any way, and tend to shorten life?"

The answer to this would, I think, be: "It all depends on how one travels." I happen to have

among my acquaintances quite a large number of railway guards, several of whom have been in the company's service for thirty years, and some for a much longer period, and all of these, as far as I can at present recollect, are hale, healthy men, whether old or young, pleasant and good-natured and *calm-minded*, as a rule, amid all the roar and bustle incidental to their occupation.

This, the reader may naturally reply, proves nothing. The sick and infirm, those whom their calling has used up, drop off the line, and are therefore out of count. True; but I also happen to know that most of those who do leave, do so either to better themselves or because they are getting up in years.

I know the case of an old gentleman (he is well-nigh seventy) whose profession—a rather singular one—compels him to live almost constantly in railway carriages, with only intervals of a few hours' toilsome work at the places he visits. He has been leading the same strange life for, I believe, twelve or fifteen years. He eats and sleeps in the train, and abjures Pullman. He takes breakfast one morning at, say, Aberdeen, sups next evening perhaps in Exeter, and next probably at Newcastle, or it may be Glasgow or Perth. Well, I do not know where I could find a healthier man, nor a harder, nor hardier. His secret is this—and it is the secret also of the surprising health which railway guards enjoy—he does his work and travelling systematically: he times himself: he never hurries.

There is as much difference between the method of travelling adopted by these people, and that of most commercial men, as there is between the flight of a hive bee and that of a blue-bottle fly.

Those people who have business in the City, but who go home every night to the country to dine and to sleep, have only themselves to blame if they do not derive more benefit from that mode of life than from staying constantly in town. To one not accustomed to railway journeys, the noise, the rattle, and dust are very fatiguing, but your constant traveller soon gets over this.

"When I have to make a journey of fifty miles by railway," said a well-known author to me the other day, "I always go first-class *for cheapness' sake*." The explanation is this: did this gentleman travel third-class, he would be incapacitated for clear, steady brain-work next day, and would thus be out of pocket far more than the difference between the two fares. The jolting of a railway carriage over the smoothest line tends to concussion the brain, to stupefy, to stultify it, and a period of rest must ensue before it is again fit for brilliant mental labour. Brain-workers like my friend the author, not much used to travelling, would naturally be more cognisant of this than others. And invalids would feel it too; therefore I say that the latter cannot travel over-carefully as regards their comforts, when they travel at all.

It is often, if not always, a matter of moment for the invalid to get over the journey as quickly as possible. Fast trains, however, are certainly the most fatiguing, so if time can be spared, the invalid should adopt the slower method of progression.

Hurry to or from trains should in all cases be avoided. It is dangerous to the healthy habitual traveller as well as the invalid. Many a one has suffered permanent dilatation of the heart in hurrying to catch a train; many a one has dropped down dead from the same cause.

Hurry in catching trains tends to weakness of the nervous system, to indigestion, and to heart disease, to say nothing of the risk of catching cold from sitting down in the carriage heated, in cases where the person has to walk quickly instead of riding.

For a large number of different kinds of complaints change of air and scene is prescribed for patients, and long journeys have to be made in railway carriages; it behoves the invalid, therefore, to look well after his comforts in travelling, and not to neglect the slightest precaution to make the journey easy.

Let him not—or, rather, I should say let *her* not; for ladies are more apt to err in this way than gentlemen—let her not, then, fidget and worry herself a week beforehand, thinking of the dangers of the journey, the perils of the road, including the fatigue. Once on board and started, invalids never fail to be quite astonished at the strength they possess, and at "how well they bear the journey." This is very pleasant, but I am sorry to tell them that their strength, in nine cases out of ten, is more apparent than real, and is due to the concussing action on the brain of which I have already spoken. For railway travelling has a numbing, I had almost said a narcotising, effect upon the senses. From this semi-lethargy the patient awakes next day, but it is very agreeable while it does last.

Long journeys should, if possible, be taken by night. And the patient will do well in this case to be at the station of departure in good time, and to make friends with the guard, or to place herself under the management of the station-master, who will see her into a good compartment.

It is a great mistake to take more luggage into the carriage with one than is actually necessary. There is a van for personal property, and no one has any business to travel who cannot so pack his or her luggage, so label and address it, as to insure safety. People who come lumbering and floundering and fussing into carriages with leather hat-boxes, great portmanteaus, or commercial tin-cases, I look upon as both selfish and disagreeable.

But rugs are essential to comfort, and so also, to the invalid travelling by night, is an india-rubber air-cushion. This is *so* easily carried, *so* easily inflated, and *so* comfortable. Here is a hint, by the way, to some makers of india-rubber goods. While travelling by day in, say, a second-class carriage, tired people often find it a great relief to be able to occupy even one-half of the seat: they can thus get their legs up. Well, in this position there is no other pillow for the head except the hard window-frame; would it not be possible, my dear manufacturer, to have a tiny air-cushion to fit this little window-sill?

The invalid will have a basket of edible provisions: this she would hardly forget. No strong meats, nor ham, nor beef, nor new bread should find a place

herein. Everything should be light and digestible and tasty, but pastry and sweet-stuff should be avoided; while of fruit, grapes and oranges are the best. A bottle of cold tea and a bottle of water should not be omitted. Tea is the best of all stimulants for railway travellers. A cup to drink from should not be forgotten. Spirits in any shape never fail to congest the brain of a travelling invalid, although they appear to give relief at the time.

Well, then, with her rugs, her air-cushion, and lap-basket, a lady invalid will travel with comfort, providing she does not forget books, and a reading-lamp to attach to the cushion beside her. The price charged for these candle-lamps at railway stations is preposterous, while very often, owing to a badly-acting

spring, or a too thick or too thin candle, the thing proves a failure after all.

Invalids in London should avoid travelling by the Underground as long as the present system of ventilation, or rather non-ventilation, is practised. The spectacle presented to the eye of an intelligent foreigner of an underground carriage, full of perspiring, yawning, semi-comatose people on a summer's day must seem pitiable in the extreme. And so it is.

Neither in winter nor in summer should people while travelling by train shut up the windows and ventilators of their compartments. The air soon becomes vile and vitiated, and, I need not add, most debilitating and unwholesome.

GEORGE FENWICK'S SCHOOLFELLOW.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SO BLUE: THE STORY OF A GIRTON GIRL," ETC.



HAVERSTON is one of the many towns of which at once the best and the worst that can be said is that they are within easy reach of London. The advantages of such a position are too obvious to need pointing out; the disadvantages arise mainly from the absence of any sense of self-sufficiency, of corporate unity and integrity. The inhabitants depend for the most part on London for their business and amusement, and there is nothing to counteract the shifting instability which constitutes one of the leading difficulties of life in the suburbs, where society, consisting of heterogeneous uncongenial elements, is split up into sets, cliques, and factions, the edges of which overlap uncomfortably, and where the range of one's acquaintance is determined neither by the well-defined social stratification of an old country town, nor by the wide freedom of choice in the matter of friends which a Londoner prefers even to fresh air, green fields, and a low horizon.

Yet everywhere there are pleasant people to be found, and in Haverston the rule was well illustrated by the set of which the Hallams and Delanes were the most popular members. The Delanes were a large family—all more or less charming, from Mr. Delane, who had given up the bar in favour of the quiet pursuits of literature and botany, and Mrs. Delane, of whose sweet face and sympathetic nature no one could ever speak warmly enough, to the sturdy little boys of four and five, whose inseparable figures, golden-headed and blue-bloused, were familiar to every pair of eyes in the place. But the third girl, Kitty, just turned twenty, was perhaps the greatest favourite of all. She was her mother over again, people said, meaning not only that she had the same delicately refined face and winning manners, but that she was as uniformly gentle, unselfish, and considerate. Her chief friend

was Grace Hallam, whose quicksightedness and rare sagacity made her the best possible companion for a girl of Kitty's diffident, self-contained nature. The two had grown up together, and without much interchange of sentiment had reached that stage of mutual confidence which transcends all uttered confidences as surely as the quality of resolution transcends all defined resolutions.

The Hallams and Delanes lived within a stone's-throw of one another, on opposite sides of a hilly lane. Their nearest neighbours were some people of the name of Fenwick, who sounded a somewhat lower note on the gamut of culture, but with whom they were, almost of necessity, on terms of intimacy. The children from all three houses played together, and it was impossible to drop old habits merely because the divergence of breeding showed more distinctly as they grew up.

George Fenwick, the eldest son, had been a pleasant, handsome boy, and in the old days Kitty Delane had taken to him kindly enough. But a change for the worse came over him as he reached manhood, and now the girl shrank from his clumsy familiarities. Spoilt by his wealthy parents, he had conceived an intense belief in himself, and an overweening confidence in his own good looks, abilities, and powers of fascination, which completely overlaid his one virtue of good-nature with a crust of blind egotism and stupidity. The tall, big young man, with his stout, impassive face and heavy manner, possessed no single quality likely to gain favour in Kitty's fastidious eyes, yet for some time past he had chosen to assume a condescendingly lover-like attitude towards her, and to annoy her with awkward civilities. Her efforts to convince him of the fruitlessness of his attentions remained quite without effect; conscious of his wealth and infinite superiority to any other man in Haverston, he persisted in considering himself a favoured suitor. That he should ever have a rival seemed to him a hardly conceivable possibility.

Yet the day came when the truth flashed upon him