

And that Willy is very, very ill. You can tell her what a sickly baby he was, and that he has never really shaken off a bad attack of scarlet fever he had when he was four, and what the doctor says about getting him away from here before it is too late. You might say I am selling my picture, and, if she will take him, we should like to pay her a little something a week to have him down at Sca-croft a few months."

"Yes," said Betty, "and I'll just write it straight away"—sitting down at the table and rummaging in the drawer for note-paper and envelope. "You might ring for some coal, Meg. The fire is nearly out, and the nights do get chilly."

"And I'll just slip round to Caleb Stretton with my picture before it gets too dark to see it properly," said Meg, rising and proceeding to put on her out-door things.

"Did you ring, miss?"

"Yes, Mrs. Moreton. May we have some more coal? I am afraid we have forgotten the fire and let it get quite low. We were so busy talking."

"Oh, yes, miss," said the landlady meaningly. "Oh, yes, you can have some more coal. But maybe you are aware that the last two lots ain't paid for yet?"

"Yes, I know," began Meg timidly, "but I had meant—"

"You shall have your money to-morrow, Mrs. Moreton," said Betty, scratching away with her pen, "only do hurry up with the coal

now. I'm all shivery"—making a sound of chattering teeth.

The woman called down the stairs to Sarah Ellen to bring another scuttle up.

"An' don't go pilin' it on as if coals was picked up in the streets," she grumbled, as Sarah Ellen made up the fire with generous good-nature, "when the others is owin' for yet."

"Oh, we mean to pay you, Mrs. Moreton. We shan't rob you of a farthing. We shall have plenty of money to-morrow. Meg's going to sell her picture and get a lot for it."

Mrs. Moreton regarded the canvas with evident disfavour.

"Humph," she snapped, "I don't know as 'ow some folks is so much prouder nor others, when they is beggars just the same."

Meg coloured painfully. Betty made a great ink blot trying to contain her feelings.

"Ther' is plenty o' better folk nor you as would ha' turned out an' done some work afore now, instead o' sitting a-twisting their thumbs here, an' puttin' on fine lady airs an' making decent folks believe they is everythink when they is nothink. Call it paintin' pictures, do you? Sorry's the penny you'll get for that daub, I'll be bound; an' I may starve to keep you fine ladies."

"Mrs. Moreton!"

"And ther' is him ther', as is as well as I am, only that you mamby-pamby's him up to nothink. Why don't you prentis him to the green-grocer down the street, as is wantin' a errand-boy?"

"But, Mrs. Moreton, Willy is so ill."

"Ill, does you say? It's lazy he is, an' if he wer' mine I'd thrash him till he hadn't a whole bone left in his body, but he'd work, and hard too."

"Oh, hush, Mrs. Moreton; he will hear you. He sleeps so lightly."

The woman laughed a discordant, mocking laugh.

"Sleeps so lightly, does he? Well, he ought to know 'ow to by now, he's done it long enough, any'ow. No, he'll not die just yet, more's the pity. He knows when he's got a good shop, he do, an' he'll stick in it as long as he can. Die—"

But Betty had sprung between them, with flaming eyes and hot cheeks, her fists tightly clenched.

"Mrs. Moreton, you've said enough—more than enough. Look there."

The door leading into the bed-room was open, and the boy, half-dressed, stood listening.

"We've paid you your rent, and you shall have the money for the coal to-morrow—first thing. You should have had it for the last time if we could help ourselves. It is only a thousand pities we are left to your mercy. You can go now."

"Well, come along with you, Sarah Ellen, and don't go a-stoppin' ther' all day," said Mrs. Moreton doggedly. "As for him," pointing to the boy; "ther's no occasion to take care o' him. He ain't a-goin' to die yet."

(To be continued.)



THE BENEFITS OF A SUMMER HOLIDAY.

By "THE NEW DOCTOR."

OF the six millions of people who inhabit this vast metropolis more than one half remain within it throughout the year, and a very large number have never, in the whole course of their lives, left its suburbs. Yet these people live, many of them to an advanced age, often without ever having suffered illness save such ills as are endured by every one. In other words there are people who live entirely in great cities living long healthy lives. From this it is obvious that a stay in the country during the summer is by no means a necessity. But is it beneficial or only a luxury? Let us see.

For some months before taking the usual summer holiday the thought of the approaching vacation is a great stimulus to mental

energy. When the vacation is over we look back to it as a time of rest and enjoyment and this likewise is a mental stimulant, stimulating us to work well that we may again enjoy a like holiday next year. When the holiday is in progress the worries and anxieties often far outdo the pleasure.

This is especially so in very busy city men and mothers who take their families for the annual fortnight to Margate. But even these look forward and backward to their summer vacation.

To children the idea of a few days at the seaside is ever fraught with delight, and as at this time of life anxiety has no place in the mind, the enjoyment of children when on a holiday is far more genuine than any earthly

pleasure can be to their elders. Perhaps the most interesting and enjoyable part of a seaside holiday is to see children paddling and building sand-castles. Now if you let children paddle in the sea, you must pay attention to certain cautions; first, never let a child paddle for more than two hours a day; secondly, always make them dry their feet on a rough towel before putting on their stockings, and thirdly, let them wear a pair of old shoes or sandals, or best of all, Japanese matted shoes while in the water. The first and the second rule if attended to, will prevent any serious affection following wading. Unfortunately, many mothers allow their children to paddle all day long, and the stay at the seaside, instead of ensuring the health for the coming

year, is too often the starting-point of a serious complaint. Children cannot stand exposure, and is not paddling in cold water all day exposure of the severest kind?

Children often come back from the seaside and a few days afterwards develop some illness. Now in nine cases out of ten the mother will tell the physician, and really believe it herself, that the child caught the illness from the house where they were stopping while at the seaside, when in reality the cause of the sickness was exposure. Few people seem to recognise what a serious accusation it is to bring against a lodging-house, that a disease was caught from it. Illnesses are very rarely caught from lodging-houses, though most people who feel "seedy" after a holiday think that they have caught something from the house where they were staying.

The second caution—to make children dry their feet with a rough towel after paddling—must be observed. Some people think that it is good for the health to let the sea-water dry upon the body. This is a great mistake, for wet feet are always to be avoided.

It may seem a little unusual to suggest that children should wear shoes while in the water, but the very large number of cases of cut feet that occur every year at seaside resorts is a sufficient reason for not entering the sea without some protection from broken bottles and hungry mussels.

The enjoyment and rest given by a holiday would alone be sufficient reason for advising all, to whom it is possible, to take an annual holiday. But from the earliest times it has been recognised that there is a special physical benefit in a holiday.

The good derived from the summer holiday varies considerably with the place chosen. Thus of two persons if one goes to Margate and the other to Bournemouth, they will not be affected in the same way. But the benefit depends not so much on the place itself as upon the person going. Thus, though Margate will agree thoroughly with three people out of four, it will make the fourth feel ill and miserable. Now if these four people go to Torquay, it will make the three of them miserable and depressed, whereas it will just suit the fourth. It is obvious it would be a great blessing if we could tell beforehand what place will suit us. But we do not want to visit the same place every year. We want variety of scenery with a constant form of climate.

We often talk of a "relaxing" or of a bracing climate, and this is the first division we can make. All bracing places are, to a certain extent, alike; and so are all relaxing places. But we must go further than this, for some people can stand one bracing place, whereas they are completely prostrated by another place equally bracing. We can make the following arbitrary divisions of the health resorts in Britain:—

1. Seaside, north aspect.
2. Seaside, east aspect.
3. Seaside, south aspect.
4. Mouths of rivers.
5. Channel Islands.
6. Moors.
7. Mountains.
8. Undulating country.
9. Woodlands.
10. Lakes.
11. Riversides.
12. Baths and hydropathic establishments.

Besides this classification one might divide resorts in a more scientific but less convenient way into the various soils, and so talk about a gravelly, clay, loam, chalk, or alluvial soil.

The first division has been chosen for the following reasons. It can be followed by anyone. Every one knows what a "moor" or a mouth of a river is, but it is not very many of my readers who have a very clear notion

as to what is chalky loam, or "Wealden clay."

Again, the classification I have chosen corresponds in a certain degree to the kind of climate. All woodlands have much the same climate, though one may be on sand and another on clay or chalk. But the soil does have a certain, often a very marked, influence.

Seaside watering-places with a north or eastern aspect are very bracing. Margate, Folkestone, Hunstanton, Cromer are the best known of these, and the order in which they are named is that of their severity. For an ordinary hard-worked Londoner these are the best places for the summer holiday. But it is not all that can stand them. A day at Margate when there is a good wind will take your breath away, and does it not make you hungry? You could stow away twice as much food in Margate as you could in London, and instead of doing harm it does you good.

Seaside places facing south are far less bracing than those with a north aspect. The south coast of Devonshire and part of Cornwall is most enervating. For delicate people the South coast is better than the more vigorous north. People with poor digestions, or who suffer from rheumatism and neuralgia, do better at the south coast than elsewhere. If ever you are compelled through illness to winter at the seaside, it will almost invariably be Brighton or its neighbourhood that you are advised to go to. For Brighton is bracing all the year round, but it never has the rigorous climate of Margate, and is therefore far more suitable for wintering at.

The mouths of rivers are not good places for a holiday. Most towns at the mouth of rivers are liable to have rubbish thrown up on their shores.

The seaside does not agree with everybody. Asthmatics are usually made worse by a seaside holiday. This is said to be due to "ozone," which is always present in sea air, and is a violent irritant to the lungs. Gouty people and very stout people do not, as a rule, feel well at the seaside.

The moors of Yorkshire and Scotland stand second only to Margate in the keen fresh bracing air which is always present there. Personally I believe that a summer holiday on the moors is one of the best of all holidays for health and enjoyment. The Scotch moorlands are very healthy, notwithstanding their mists and chronic foul weather. The Scots that inhabit them are, indeed, among the most healthy people in Europe. For the dyspeptic old alderman a month's grouse shooting, or better still, tramping on the moors is the finest thing going, the air will just suit him, and the scarcity of port wine and other luxuries will help in an astonishing manner to pull him together again.

There are few spots in England more beautiful than the Peak of Derbyshire, but there are few more depressing. If ever you go there you will feel as though you had no energy, hardly sufficient energy to eat. Parts of Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Dorsetshire are also terribly relaxing, and though delightful resorts for the very aged or for those suffering from certain serious incurable diseases, they are bad places for an ordinary mortal to spend her vacation.

The hydropathic stations in England are not so popular as the Continental ones, but there are several that are quite equal in their way to those of Homburg and Aix-la-Chapelle.

Chief among the English baths is Harrogate, with its nauseous and ill-smelling, but withal valuable sulphur baths. Bath, with its indifferent water, is also supposed to be of value in certain diseases.

There can be no doubt that the chief benefits obtained from "hydrotherapy" are

due to the strict regimen in force at the hydropathic establishment and the change of air and scene. The waters themselves play a very secondary part in the treatment. The elaborate ceremonies necessary before drinking the waters and the complex and ingenious methods of bathing and being bathed owe most of the efficacy they possess to the effect on the mind of the sufferer. Personally I do not believe much in the virtues of the waters themselves but that hydropathic institutions do cure certain ailments, especially such as are due to over-eating, there can be no doubt whatever.

The best place at which to spend a vacation of a week or two is undoubtedly the ocean. To be upon the sea in a boat, a mere speck upon the vast sheet of waters, with no land in sight, with nothing but sea and sky and wind is undoubtedly the most healthy position on this earth. There are no microbes here. A small pinch of dust of a London room contains many, many millions of germs, sometimes some so virulent, that if inhaled they might produce the most fearful diseases. But on the sea, were you to examine every particle of air, you would not find one single microbe.

If you are a good sailor a sea voyage is healthful and delightful, but if you suffer from sickness, it is not only not healthful, but it is downright hurtful to go upon the sea, and as all who have suffered know, it is anything but enjoyable. People seem to get stranger ideas every day! I was told last week that sea-sickness actually did you good! Where does this remarkable assertion hail from? For apparently it is very commonly believed, but it is absolutely untrue! Sea-sickness does you harm, and it may do you great harm.

We may, therefore, take it for granted that a holiday away from town is beneficial both for the mind and body. Let us see how it is good for the body.

Undoubtedly the most important item in a holiday is the change of employment and the change of scene. I take this to be true because people feel better even after a stay at an unhealthy place, whereas we do not get much benefit from stopping at a healthy spot if we carry on our professions as we do in London. Besides this, the great cities themselves, thanks to modern sanitary science, are by no means unhealthy places. Many of the suburbs of London are among the most healthy places in England.

The second point is "the air." This is undoubtedly purer in the country or at the seaside than it is in London, and fresh air is the finest necessity of existence.

A third reason why country life is more healthy than London life is the amount of exercise indulged in. We think it a tremendous journey to walk half a mile in London, whereas most of us do our five to twenty or more miles a day when in the country. And here again comes in the vast importance of change of scene, for is not the exploration of unknown regions the chief stimulus to long walks?

At the seaside there is another healthy item, the bath. These baths are of two kinds, sea-baths and sun-baths. Both are very beneficial in moderation, but are liable to be abused.

Take your sea-bath when the sun is on the water, and do not remain in the water for over half an hour. Thoroughly dry yourself when you emerge, dress rapidly, and take a small meal afterwards.

Sun-baths are less troublesome than sea-baths. They consist in lying down on the sand and passively allowing the sun to bake you. That this is absolute idleness is unquestionable, but except that it is conducive to freckles, it is most healthful in moderation, especially to elderly people, who do not care for, or cannot stand the shock of the sea-bath itself.