

we could muster, it was a sore trial after the delights of the Mediterranean coast. We got to Paris at 5 A.M., twenty-four hours from Perpignon; started again by the mail train at 7 A.M., and were in London by 5.30 P.M., just fifty-eight hours from Barcelona, including the eight hours' rest at Perpignon.

THE BANK OF HEALTH.

WHOEVER takes a railway run from London to Matlock will travel during the last hour of his route through some of the most striking and fascinating scenery in England; and arriving at Matlock Bridge, will find himself at the foot of Matlock Bank, which for reasons that may presently appear we have designated the Bank of Health. The site has been well chosen for hydropathic purposes—the air and the water being both of remarkable purity, and the Bank, or steep hill side, being a capital centre or starting point, from whence may be visited all the picturesque wonders of Derbyshire. But we are not going to sing the praises of these agreeable resorts on the present occasion; we are going, for reasons with which we shall not trouble the reader, to try the experiment of the water cure, and see if any good will come of it. We are strangers to the place, and have no introduction; but fortunately that is of no consequence, the whole of the precipitous Bank, which runs up sharply to the height of some seven hundred feet, and, facing the south, stretches some two miles east and west, being a complete colony of hydropaths, whose hospitable doors stand open at all times ready to receive the stranger and wash his ailments out of him. Having no choice beyond a preference for high ground, we select one establishment standing near the summit of the hill, and thither accordingly we are driven along some winding roads of the most abominable description, which at length land us at our destination, just at the moment when the inmates, some three to four score in number, and of various social grades, are sitting down to dinner. We join the company as a matter of course, without the least inkling of ceremony, and the meal over, as we shall not be under regimen till to-morrow, have time to look about us.

Down in the valley beneath us runs the Derwent, sparkling and flashing in places, but not much seen, owing to the trees on its banks, and the intervention of the high grounds among which it winds. Below, a little to the left, is the village of Matlock, and beyond it, in the same direction, we catch sight of a portion of Matlock Bath, the rival of Buxton, and of the old city of Bladud, owing to the possession of certain hot mineral springs. Right opposite to us are the Heights of Abraham, said to be the highest of the Matlock hills, and to the left of them rises the huge mass of Riber, dominated by a heavy castellated building, as yet unfinished. To the right stretches the valley of the Derwent, and in this direction only is there any marked change in the colour or general green tone of the landscape, the distance westward allowing of the introduction of purple and grey. But before we have half examined the landscape we are captured by a press-gang, and find ourselves one of a party driving in an open carriage to Darley Dale, some three miles off, where there is a flower-show this afternoon, and prizes to be distributed to the winners of them by a noble lord. The show is in the grounds of Mr. Whitworth, of rifle reputation; and there we are confronted by some monster products in the way of garden vegetables, reared by cottagers, contrasted by a choice selection of hot-house fruit contributed by the gentry. About five o'clock the prizes are distri-

buted, being heralded by an appropriate speech from an old gentleman, *vice* the noble lord, who forgot to put in an appearance. They consist of very small sums of money, and of sundry articles of cottage furniture and kitchen wares, such as a rush-bottom chair, a couple of flat-irons, or a gridiron—but "*honi soit*," etc., the measure of a man's deserts is not the value of the prize he wins or loses.

We are back again to tea, and after tea we take a stroll among the winding roads, cross-roads, and foot-paths, which intersect the bank-side in every direction. One thing that strikes us is the abundance and clearness of the water: trickling down the hill in small rivulets, it is caught here and there in large cisterns of stone, which, although brimming over and shedding their contents on the road, seem to contain nothing, so absolutely colourless and transparent is the crystal fluid. The village, if Matlock Bank may be called a village, seems to have no centre, but to straggle in the most arbitrary way over the whole hill side—here a single cottage, here two; here a single row of houses, and here a double row—and here a pretentious hydropathic establishment, the property of some company of shareholders, and almost close to it what seems a private villa, but is really another hydropathic speculation, the property of a private individual. We tire of the steep roads and footways, and in search of more practicable ground, mount to the brow of the hill, where an unfrequented lane winds along for a mile or so, and comes to an end in a stubble field, where a few sheaves of wheat are yet standing. The sun is getting low, and the breeze blowing over the distant moors comes laden with the fragrance of the heath; at the same time it comes laden with something else, for dense showers of the honey-laden bees come swarming over the brow of the hill and plunging in mad haste down the steep towards their hives. So thick are the swarms, and so wild in their flight that they dash against one's head and face, and we have to take shelter under a wall until the mass of the multitude has passed on. The Matlock honey is most delicious, and the yield would appear to be abundant—a lump of comb nearly as big as a man's head being taken from the top of a single hive, which top had been fairly emptied twenty-one days before. Not a bee is ever sacrificed when the honey is taken, the hives being so constructed as to render that unnecessary.

We are early to bed and very soon to sleep, and are awoken before six in the morning by the persistent clamour of a bell, which calls us to commence our experience in hydropathy. We find the first essay more novel than gratifying, as we cannot at first relish the icy drenching which concludes the ceremony of the "tepid sheet"; but after it is over the effect is capital, manifesting itself in a feeling of freshness, and vigour, and a craving appetite. We find it impossible to wait an hour or two for breakfast, and, following the example of others, make for the kitchen, where cook compassionately helps us to hunches of bread and butter.

"Dun you like it well o' the butther?" she asks, and distributes her favours to suit our several likings.

There is time for a brisk walk before breakfast, and walking just now seems everyone's business—some promenading the saloon at the quick step, others marching up and down the platform outside, and others again starting off for their morning constitutional. Breakfast comes at eight, followed by the reading of a chapter, singing and prayer. Then comes the postman's interesting wallet and the general delivery of letters and newspapers; after which the company disperse, singly or in groups, in search of such enjoyment as may be

found. Walking seems the order of the day—the strong and convalescent undertaking long distances, and others suiting their excursions to their capacity. But we are warned by a notice on the wall of the saloon not to extend our excursions so far as to interfere with the course of bathing which all have to undergo. At eleven comes the second bath of the day, which may be a parboiling with steam or hot air at a temperature of 170°, a sitz, a mustard fubz, a pocking, a spinal rubbing, a shallow, a douche, or something or anything else, according to the nature of one's ailments, or the hydropath's view of one's case. At this second, or mid-day bath, it is that there is most activity and bustle, because there are no laggards indulging in "a little more sleep," and no very early birds eager to be finished off before the crowding begins; but all being present, or close at hand, all would like to be "put through" at once if that were possible. It is well on towards one before the entire ceremony is finished, and glad enough we are by this time to escape from the bath-house, where the stinging odour of the mustard, the escaping steam, the burning spirits, and the abounding hot and cold spray, make up a composite bath of themselves not over-gratifying to the sense. There is not much time for walking between the midday-bath and dinner, which is laid at two, and over at half-past, and but few care to walk after dinner. The two hours that follow before the afternoon bath are spent in lounging on the easy chairs and sofas, in reading or playing chess, or in answering letters, or perhaps in a quiet stroll about the grounds or the adjoining district. The bath-house has been well aired and ventilated before we enter it again for the concluding ceremony of the day, with regard to which we note that it is of a less heroic and more soothing character than the two previous ones. By the time we have gone through this triple wash, we are heartily sick of the routine of taking off one's clothes and putting them on again, and to say the truth, it is not until some days have elapsed that we are reconciled to the indispensable but tyrannous necessity.

With the afternoon bath the business of the day comes to an end, and its more agreeable recreations begin. About halfway down the hill, on an open plot of ground, is the fly-stand, where a number of open carriages, accommodating four or five persons, may be hired at any time. It is the custom to club together for the hire of these, and to be driven off in parties to some picturesque spot, there to picnic or wander about for an hour or two, and to return home about sun-down. This is by far the most pleasant of all the institutions of the water cure, and, if we are to judge by our own experience, it is the most invigorating and curative. There is abundant variety in the scenery of the neighbourhood, so that one is never tired of viewing it; and indeed, one never returns from one of these expeditions without the desire, at least, if not the intention, of repeating it. The most favoured of these short excursions are the run through Matlock Bath to the Black Rock, whence we have a view over the Matlock valley, looking down upon the High Tor, affording one of the grandest landscapes in England; and the somewhat toilsome and circuitous ascent to the Riber, whence the view is of a totally different kind, but hardly less striking.

In wet weather—and wet weather at Matlock has a special signification—of course there are no excursions, and then the company are driven to their own resources. As no smoking is allowed, and such a thing as a bottle of wine must not even be mentioned, the attempt to inaugurate anything like conviviality on the usual plan cannot be made. There is a certain class of both sexes

that can tide over any emergency of this kind by going to sleep, and this class seems to gravitate, as if by some mysterious natural law, towards hydropathic establishments; at any rate, no sooner does the sky blacken and the rain begin to patter on the skylights, than down they go on the sofa slabs, the railway rugs, the shawls, the top-coats or dressing-gowns are drawn over them, some courteous passer-by volunteers to tuck them in, and off they go at the double-quick to the land of dreams, announcing their arrival in that blissful region by a flourish of trumpets more persistently sonorous than musically clear. Others, who have not this happy faculty, will betake themselves to the discussion of some theological topic, or some political question of the day, in which, if they are at all earnest, they are sure to be joined by more, until at length the friendly discussion grows into something very like a hostile dispute, voices wax high, the gentlemen use "words of heat," as parliamentarians say, and for a minute or two there is something like a row, which, in a minute or two more, has to subside under the ridicule which such an exhibition is sure to excite. When the wet weather is continuous, and the indispensable exercise cannot be taken out of doors—though a trifling shower is not regarded as any hindrance to walking—it has to be taken within, and the dining-saloon becomes the promenade ground, where we march up and down at a vigorous pace until we have had enough of it. Then the chess-boards and draught-boards are brought out, and friendly duels fought over the black and white squares; or perhaps one party will sit down to the game of "twenty questions;" or another will begin romping at "puss in the corner," or "catch who can." For those who prefer to be quiet there are retiring-rooms, whither they can retire to read or write, or enjoy a quiet tête-à-tête. Music is, of course, a favourite recreation when it is to be had, and if there be good voices or skilled performers available their services are gladly accepted; but to bang the piano into fits, or squall a ballad out of tune, is not voted music in mixed assemblies where the polite euphemisms of society are unappreciated, and the very wholesome result is, that at the water establishment we do not get dinned and deafened by too much of that queer product which passes for music in the family circle. After supper we manage to sing a hymn together as part of the family-worship, which winds up the proceedings of the day. Promenading after supper, in the starlight or moonlight, on the platform in front of the saloon, is a very general practice, but it cannot be kept up late, as we have all to be in bed by half-past ten, at which hour the gas is turned off and the lower region of the house left in darkness. The view from the platform on a starlight and moonless night is a singular one. Of the whole of the wide outspread landscape below, we see nothing but the black boundary line which cuts the clear azure above; but in a manner corresponding to the thousand stars glimmering in the upper concave of blue, are almost as many small, red lights gleaming in the lower concave of black. The native of the Bank can read off these nether constellations with ease; to his eye they map out the valley below just as the stars map out the heavens to the eye of the astronomer.

One of the surprises of hydropathic treatment is the course of diet. The following is something like the average routine:—Breakfast begins with a pretty solid mess of oatmeal porridge, and ends with tea or cocoa, and bread and butter, *ad libitum*. If the tea and cocoa are so much alike that one is not to be distinguished from the other, that may be due to the drinker's want of discrimination, and a little inquiry will remove the

doubt. Instead of butter, you can, if you like, season the bread with molasses, or preserved fruits, and you may imbibe any quantity of milk you choose. Dinner consists of mutton, almost invariably roasted, and limited, by recommendation at least, if not by rule, to one serving of about six ounces—of potatoes, with occasionally some green vegetable—and of puddings of a light and digestible kind, made of bread, rice, tapioca, sago, &c. Tea is the same as the breakfast, minus the porridge, but in fine weather this meal is only partaken by a part of the inmates, the majority being at this hour enjoying their distant excursions. Supper is a mere *nominis umbra*, being represented by some small sections of bread and a few cans of milk placed on a table at which no one sits down, but where whoever chooses may help himself. The chief variation in the above simple dietary takes place on the Sunday, when the dinner is a little more generous, and the tea really is distinguishable from the cocoa.

There being no baths administered on the Sunday, we feel it to be a special holiday, and enjoy it accordingly. The peal of the church bell comes sounding along the valley about ten, and we file off in different directions to our several places of worship. All denominations are represented in the Bank, from Episcopalians down (or up, which you will) to Primitive Methodists. If you are an invalid or only half convalescent, you can attend service in the crypt or underground chapel of the chief hydropather's establishment, where you will sit, not on a hard bench made of a nine-inch plank, as in a London chapel, but in a luxurious settee of ample cushioned area, affording ease and repose to every limb.

The dinner table on Sunday is usually the most frequented of the week, and offers a good opportunity of reckoning up the inmates. Our family circle numbers in all between sixty and seventy, about two-thirds being males, and includes all ages, from twenty to threescore and ten. Though they are all here avowedly in search of health, they may yet be divided into three classes—those who have nothing the matter with them; those who are but slightly indisposed either from overwork or free or careless living; and those more or less sadly afflicted with serious and chronic complaints. The first class is made up chiefly of young or more mature men in the middle rank of life, who are out for their annual summer holiday, and who make the bath-house their hotel and temporary home. Many of them are teetotallers by profession, so that the dietary, simple as it is, is just that which they prefer, and they amuse themselves with the baths as much as they like, and no more. The second class are those who really reap a substantial benefit from the institution; they come here prostrated in strength by hard work—or congested and feeble from free living—or nervously depressed through the intricacies of business—or dizzy and giddy through prolonged business excitement; and because they come here in time before any fatal mischief has been done, we see them growing better day by day, and almost hour by hour. It may be that what the system of treatment does for them it does in a negative rather than a positive way—that it acts beneficially rather in removing the causes of disease than in supplying real remedies; but the man who is restored to health does not care a straw about that—the health he had lost is restored, or at least it is so far restored as to invigorate him again for work, and he goes back to his business after a few weeks' experience at the water-cure, endowed with new energies and capacities. Next year he will probably return to the Bank to be recruited once more, and will repeat his visits from year to year, as many

are in the habit of doing, to their manifest advantage. Of the third class one cannot speak so hopefully: many of them are the victims of confirmed disease for which medical aid has been already tried in vain, and which the use of the baths will avail at best to mitigate in a greater or less degree; some have the incurable disorder of old age; some are tortured with rheumatism; some have been stricken with paralysis; and some are manifestly wasting away in decline. One thing is noticeable with regard to all the inmates, and that is that whatever their ailments, whether trifling or serious, they manage to put on a cheerful countenance before company, each one setting an example as it were to the rest in bearing complacently what has to be borne. It is impossible not to be struck at times with the sound pluck and heroism of men, and women too, who, while suffering sadly, will force a good-natured laugh in place of a groan, or translate the complaint that rises naturally to their lips into the language of a joke. Even those who are inwardly sustained by the highest source of strength, by this cheerful outward bearing help one another to put the best possible face on their common affliction.

The result of my short experience at the Bank of Health may be summed up briefly as follows: We who lead a town life, or a business life anywhere, lead an artificial life—we neither eat, drink, breathe, nor sleep in a regular and natural way, and we get out of order through violating the laws of nature. Now the hydropathic doctor will not allow us to commit such violation; he takes the means of self-indulgence from us, compels us to eat simple food, to drink water, to breathe pure air, and to retire early to rest; and to all these restoratives he superadds the invigorating processes of the baths: in other words, he puts his patients back into a natural way of living, and assists nature by the application of her own best remedy. As a curative agent hydropathy need not be expected to work miracles. When disease has not got the upper hand it may, and often does, by strengthening the general health of the patient, enable him to fight with it successfully, and in the end to shake it off. But in order to reap this benefit the patient should resort to it in good time—should, in short, consider it as a first—not a last resource, as too many seem to do.

LIFE IN JAPAN.

VI.

BOOKS, WRITING, ETC.

JAPANESE books are printed from wooden blocks, metal type being unknown, on thin paper, one side of the sheet only being used. The leaf is doubled and the edges uncut; and the letters are arranged in vertical columns, beginning like Hebrew at the right-hand side of the page, and, as we should call it, at the end of the book. The covers are generally very plain, made of dark coloured paper, somewhat thicker than the interior sheets; and the gilding which is put on the outside on the edges of our books, generally adorns the inside of the cover, and what may be termed the fly-leaves, in irregular patches. The origin of the art of printing is lost in the obscurity of distant ages: it has been handed down from one generation to another without any trustworthy record of its discoverer being preserved.

Cheap common books are often badly printed, the characters being indistinct and blurred, a defect frequently arising unless special care is taken when printing from wooden blocks. Mind your stops, an injunction so often enforced on English juveniles, cau-