SUMMER MOUNTAIN-STATIONS IN SWITZERLAND: THE DISTRICT OF LAKES BRIENZ AND THUN.

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III.

BEING aware that there were several mountain sanatoria in the vicinity of these lakes much esteemed by Swiss and German physicians, I determined to visit them. I, therefore, crossed the Brunig Alps by the pass of that name, leaving the lake of Lucerne at Stansstad, and passing by Alpnach, Sarnen, and Lunzen. At the summit of the Brunig, there is a homely, tolerably sheltered mountain pension, *Hôtel Brunigkultm* (3,340 feet), which would offer a picturesque, cheap, healthy mountain retreat. The stations which I subsequently visited are: The Giesbach, 2,400 feet; Interlaken, 1,863; Grindelwald, 3,468; Murren, 5,348; St. Beatenberg, 3,767; Weissenberg, 2,940; and Gurnigel, 3,783 feet. The Brunig road strikes the lake of Brienz (1,857 feet) at the town of that name. Thence the steamer takes the traveller in a few minutes to the landing-place for *Giesbach*. The road ascends for 500 feet through a fir forest, to terminate on the terrace of a splendid hotel, recently built, that of *Giesbach* (2,400 feet). There is an older building in the background, which now constitutes the pension or boarding-house, the palatial hotel not receiving boarders. The chief attraction to *Giesbach* is its succession of beautiful waterfalls; and a constant stream of tourists fill the hotel, remaining one, two, or more days. The level walk in the fir-forest, the picturesque views, the beautiful terrace and garden, and the numerous mountain-excursions, combined with the comforts of an elegant well-appointed hotel, and the charm of good music, make *Giesbach* a delightful place. Invalids who appreciate luxury, even in the mountains, may safely spend the early summer here, merely leaving to ascend to a higher elevation when the heat becomes too great.

Interlaken (1,863 feet), between lakes Brienz and Thun, is now a good-sized town, with many comfortable first-class hotels. It is a great centre for tourists intending to ascend the neighbouring mountains and glaciers, but scarcely a desirable residence for chest-invalids. They had better avoid all agglomerations of mankind, and seek the mountain wilderness, with town comforts, now to be met with in every part of Switzerland.

Grindelwald (3,468 feet), from its elevation and consequent coolness in early summer, and from the existence of several comfortable hotels, offers conditions favourable to invalids seeking for mountain air. But there is a great objection: the hundreds and thousands of tourists going and coming, and the dust and commotion connected therewith. Such being the case, I cannot recommend *Grindelwald* as a residence for invalids of any kind. I was there on the 18th of July, and found the weather disagreeably hot. The thermometer, at 6 A.M., was 58 deg. Fahr.; at mid-day, 76 deg.; at 2, 84 deg. Twenty years ago, I was here early in September, and noted a temperature of 84 deg. at the foot of the glacier at mid-day.

Lauterbrunnen (2,615 feet), two hours' drive from Interlaken, separated from *Grindelwald* by the *Wengernalp*, is situated at a rather lower elevation, in a pretty valley, with picturesque walks and comfortable hotels; but it is open to the same objection as *Grindelwald*. A stream of tourists is constantly arriving and departing, as the mountain-pass between the localities is perhaps the most frequented one in Switzerland. It is also the point of departure for the ascent to *Murren*.

Murren (5,348 feet) is situated on an uneven terrace or ledge, three thousand feet above *Lauterbrunnen*, and exactly opposite the magnificent expanse of glaciers and snow-covered mountains formed by the *Eiger*, the *Monck*, the *Jungfrau*, the *Matterhorn*, etc., from which it is separated by the deep *Lauterbrunnen* valley. There are two really good comfortable hotels, and the locality is becoming a favourite mountain residence. I do not, however, hesitate to say that, although suitable for anemic debilitated persons, it is altogether unfitted for chest-invalids. The ascent from *Lauterbrunnen* is all but precipitous, and the descent can only be made on foot or in a sledge for the greater part of the distance. The extremes of temperature, as in all the higher elevations, are very great. On the 4th of July of this year (1878), there were three inches of snow on the verandah of the hotel; and on the 20th, the date of my visit, at 2 o'clock P.M., the temperature was 80 deg. Fahr. in the shade.

St. Beatenberg (3,767 feet) is reached in three hours from Interlaken. The road winds through fir forests, on the side of the mountains which

skirt the north side of the lake of Thun, until it reaches the village of *St. Beatenberg*. It is a favourite summer retreat for both German and Swiss, is sheltered from the north by higher mountains, and is open to the south towards the lake. There are several hotels and pensions; and the principal one is the *Kurhaus St. Beatenberg*, kept by a Swiss doctor about a mile further on. The views of the lake and of the snow-covered mountains that surround the *Jungfrau* are entrancing. The altitude is sufficient to secure cool nights, even if the days are hot. It is principally recommended to nervous patients. The hotels and pensions are generally very full of Swiss and German invalids, so that application must be made beforehand.

Weissenberg (2,940 feet) is one of the most celebrated and most frequented watering-places in Switzerland for diseases of the lungs, phthisis, chronic bronchitis, and asthma. It is situated in a narrow, deep, fir-clothed, picturesque gorge or ravine, which opens out into the *Simmenthal* valley, about three hours' drive from Thun, and the same from Berne. The wild wooded ravine has to be ascended for about a mile and a half from the village in the *Simmenthal* valley, before the bath buildings are reached. They are composed of a new *établissement* or bath hotel, a comfortable, well-built, well-appointed house, and the old bath house, ten minutes' walk higher up. This is a more humble building in appearance, and is reserved for the poorer patients, called second and third class. A wild torrent falls in cascades down the bottom of the valley below the hotel, carrying off the whole drainage of the place, and a jet of water, nearly a hundred feet high, rises in front of it, falling in a wide-spread spray. The situation realises the ideal of a narrow, wood-clothed mountain gorge, and is very picturesque. The far-famed waters contain a considerable amount of sulphate of calcium, and a smaller amount of sulphate of magnesium, just enough to counteract the astringent effects of the first-named salt. I found this establishment crammed with consumptive and bronchitic patients (above four hundred) from all parts of Switzerland and Germany. The night I was there, twenty slept in the public drawing-room, and I only found refuge in the consulting-room of the amiable and learned physician, Dr. Schudyer.

The faith that every one had in the curative properties of the mineral water in these chronic constitutional diseases struck me with amazement. Every one in the place—physician, patients, administrators—all seemed conscientiously to believe that a few tumblersful a day of this mere gypsum-impregnated water, for three or four weeks, would effect a cure in any of the chronic diseases named. The poor sufferers all but fought for admission to this modern fountain of *juvence*, crowding the village below. One feature in the medical history of the place struck me forcibly—viz., that with all it was a matter of creed that the moister the atmosphere was, the better it was for the patients. The Doctor told me with exultation that constantly at sunrise the hygrometer marked saturation, just the condition, he said, required for chronic lung-diseases such as phthisis and bronchitis. At many places previously visited I had been told, with equal exultation, that the extreme dryness of the air at from 3,000 to 5,000 feet elevation was the prominent feature in the climate, the one that rendered it the right place for the same class of patients! The truth probably lies between the two. I presume lung-sufferers find relief in the mild moist air of *Weissenberg*, or they would not crowd there. Nevertheless, I should prefer a drier atmosphere, a higher elevation in warm weather, and a less crowded place.

Gurnigel (3,783 feet) is a well-known sulphur-bath establishment, about three hours' drive from Thun, and four from Berne. It is situated at a considerable elevation, on the sloping side of the mountain of that name. The hotel, built on a very large scale—inasmuch as it affords shelter to between four and five hundred patients—is under the intelligent management of the owners, the *Frères Hauser*, also the proprietors of the *Schweizerhof* at Lucerne, of the *Giesbach*, and of several other first-rate hotels. They showed me over their vast establishment, always full to overflowing in summer, and I was much struck by their liberal and intelligent direction of this great populous ship in the mountains, far from all ordinary sources of supply. The grounds and woods are most extensive, covering several square miles of the mountain side, and traversed by good roads and paths in every direction. The views are lovely and open, extending far away over mountain and valley. The waters are valuable, containing, in addition to sulphate and carbonate of lime, sulphuretted hydrogen in considerable quantity. There are two sulphur springs—one mild, the other strong, temperature 52 deg. Fahr.—and a chalybeate spring. Thus, a sulphur or iron treatment can be carried out at these baths at midsummer under favourable conditions of coolness from mountain elevation, with all the comforts and luxuries of a first-class hotel. I left *Gurnigel* with the impression that it is one of the best and most enjoyable mountain residences for invalids that I have found in Switzerland. But day heat is

not escaped, even at this elevation (3,783 feet). On the 22nd of July, the heat was 80 deg. Fahr. at 8 P.M.; at 10 it was still 78 deg. Next morning, July 23rd, it was 74 deg. Fahr., at 7.30 A.M.; 78 deg. Fahr. at 2 P.M.

A singular feature in therapeutics of phthisis on the continent, especially in France and Germany, is the belief in the curative powers of sulphur mineral waters. In France, the favourite springs are those of the Pyrenees, of Eaux Bonnes, Eaux Chaudes, Bagnères de Luchon, Cauterets. French phthisical patients belonging to the better classes are all but invariably sent in summer to these or to other sulphur springs under the conscientious belief that taking the waters, a few tablespoonfuls, or a tumblerful or two daily, for three or four weeks, will arrest a constitutional disease that has lasted months or years, secure the retrogression of all morbid conditions, and lead to the recovery of health. There is not even a trace, in our English medical literature respecting phthisis, of this belief, which I am convinced, from clinical observation, is totally unfounded.

These views appear to me to be in a great measure the result of the peculiar discipline and organisation of mineral watering places in France and on the Continent. One or more medical inspectors are named to each spring by the Government, and usually all but monopolise the practice. Their medical lives are thus spent in administering the waters of their springs to all comers, and by degrees the concentration of thought on the virtues and curative powers of the spring, and on the traditions connected therewith, warps their judgment. Thence they attribute all the favourable changes that accrue to their patients at the time of treatment, and afterwards, to the curative powers of the mineral water they have taken during a few weeks. Nearly every physician at a mineral spring writes a pamphlet or a book on his waters, so that there are tons of printed matter in existence on the mineral springs of France and Germany, and each spring is presented in the light of a curative power of the highest character for special diseases. A very remarkable fact is that none of these writers admit that sulphur, iodine, soda, or potash waters, taken alone, medicinally, can produce the same marvellous effects. They must be taken at the spring itself, the "alchemy of nature" giving to them at the source a virtue, a mysterious curative essence, which it is impossible to imitate. Even the waters themselves, bottled and taken away from the spring, are said to be immeasurably inferior, less curative.

It must be well understood that I am only speaking of the exaggerated belief in the powers of these mineral waters. There is great and undeniable advantage to be derived in cutaneous and mucous membrane diseases, and in rheumatic affections, from sulphur waters; in gout and kidney-diseases from alkaline waters; as also in the treatment of many other forms of chronic disease. Indeed, whilst Continental practitioners exaggerate the power and virtues of mineral waters, most British practitioners all but entirely ignore their real merits, and the great assistance they are capable of giving in intractable chronic maladies.

One reason for the great reliance of those who inhabit Central Europe in mineral waters, from the emperor to the peasant, is that it has become the habit, the fashion, for the annual holiday to be taken at some spring or other, just as we take it at the seaside, in Wales, or in the Highlands of Scotland. The universal desire is, to combine profit with pleasure, and to go to some spring that will, as if by magic, cure disease and renew life. The wishes and desires of the public chime in with the blind confidence of the spring physicians in the virtues of their waters, and thus the public and the faculty harmoniously join in fostering a therapeutical delusion.

With Gurnigel I concluded my examination of the mountain sanatoria of the Geneva, Lucerne, Brienz, and Thun lake districts. The convictions based on former summer travels in mountain regions, and contained in the body of this work, were confirmed.

After carefully exploring and studying the mountain sanatoria of this part of Switzerland, I fail to see any meteorological or climatic conditions which impart any peculiar virtue to them in the treatment of chronic disease of the respiratory organs. On the sea-coast and on the downs and plains of the British Isles, and on the shores of Northern France, of Belgium, and of Holland, the same conditions of medium temperature and of purity of air are obtained, without the drawbacks pertaining to the Swiss mountains. These drawbacks are: the distance, the fatigue of travelling, the heat of the plains, the changeability of the weather in the higher regions, and the extreme variations in the thermometer from heat to cold, and *vice versa*, and of the hygro-meter from dryness to moisture.

As regards invalids generally, the higher mountain elevation in Europe may be beneficial for a short residence; but the deductions recently published by Dr. Lombard are against the desirability of prolonged residence. At p. 387 of the first volume of his work on *Me-*

dical Climatology, he says: "The facts which we have quoted on the development of the human stature show that, with certain exceptions, the stature becomes lower as the higher elevations of the Alps and Pyrenees are attained; as also in Savoy and Piedmont where, without exception, the diminution of stature was in direct ratio to altitude."

As to infirmities other than stature which may exempt from military service, we have seen that they increase with altitude in the Pyrenees, as also in the French Alps; and that this result was more especially striking on comparing different parts of Savoy and Piedmont, where the number of exemptions increases in direct ratio to the altitude. We have also seen that, if it was difficult to establish with some probability the comparative duration of life in the plains and in the mountains, it was, on the contrary, very positive that mortality increases with the elevation of the soil. Is it the same in the higher regions of the temperate zone? This is what we cannot affirm, in the absence of precise documents; but what appears infinitely probable is, that the weakening of life recognised for medium elevations must be the more pronounced the higher the altitude.

There is a class of sufferers to whom I feel very sympathetic, and to whom I cordially recommend the mountain-stations I have described. It is my overworked, overstrained fellow-practitioners. A few weeks spent at any of the mountain-stations I have described, wandering among the fir-forests, the mountain-peaks, and the glaciers, would do them a world of good, and be a source of intense satisfaction. Every one of these Alpine hotels and sanatoria is surrounded by Alpine walks, excursions, and ascensions, which constitute the principal charm of residence to those who are well enough and strong enough to enjoy them. Any of the lake districts I have described—Geneva, Lucerne, Brienz, and Thun—would be quite enough for one tour; the more so, as there are in each many interesting places to visit besides those I have described, should there be the will and the leisure.

In my opinion, the mountain regions of Switzerland and of Central Europe in general are more suited to this class of visitors—to townspeople overworked but physically well, and to athletic young men seeking for kingdoms to conquer in the glaciers of the high Alps—than to invalids of any description. I always, however, except the inhabitants of the plains and cities of these regions and those of Central Europe; for they have often no other means of escaping from heat and of attaining thorough atmospheric purity in midsummer.

I would remark that nearly everywhere in proximity to the new luxurious hotels which are rising up in the remotest parts of Switzerland, and at which expense is much the same as at hotels elsewhere, there are still the small humble wood-built pensions and inns of former days, the prices at which are still pretty much what they were—from five to seven *francs* a day (four to six shillings). The general complaint, that travelling in Switzerland has become much more expensive, is only partially true. The real reason is, that the British public will go to the grand expensive hotels, leaving the reasonable ones to continental people. Generally speaking, to be accepted *en pension*, the stay must be a week; whereas most of my countrymen travel as I did; they stay twenty-four or forty-eight hours, go to the best hotels, and pay hotel prices.

OBSTETRIC MEMORANDA.

ANOMALOUS TWIN PREGNANCY.

THE following case being of some rarity in its details and occurrence, I venture to submit it to the readers of this JOURNAL, thinking it might interest those more especially engaged in obstetric practice.

In twin pregnancy, the development of the children does not always advance *pari passu*, as the following case will illustrate. On October 28th, I attended a Mrs. P., aged 26, in her first parturition, the labour being tedious and the head remaining a long time in the cavity of the pelvis. There being inertia from exhaustion, I applied Ziegler's forceps and delivered without laceration or difficulty. Five minutes afterwards, I removed the placenta by traction on the funis. There was no hæmorrhage of importance. The following day, the patient seemed very comfortable, with the exception of a sensation of weight in the region of the bladder, whereupon I introduced a female catheter and drew off a pint and a quarter of urine. On the 30th, the patient complained of nothing and felt tolerably well; so likewise on the morning of the 31st. During the afternoon of this day, I was sent for to see a shrivelled wasted foetus, with funis and placenta all complete, which was expelled four days after the extraction of the full-grown living male healthy child. The hæmorrhage was but slight, and there was scarcely any pain.

This foetus was evidently a twin, conceived no doubt at the time of