

**THE ARSENICAL
SPRINGS AT
LA BOURBOULE**

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The arsenical springs at La Bourboule by G. H. Brandt

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G. H. BRANDT

**THE ARSENICAL
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LA BOURBOULE**

With the Author's Compliments.

THE
ARSENICAL SPRINGS

AT
LA BOURBOULE
AUVERGNE

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LONDON
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CONTENTS.



I. SITUATION AND HISTORY	7
II. SPRINGS	10
III. PHYSICAL PROPERTIES	14
IV. CHEMICAL COMPOSITION	16
V. BATHING ESTABLISHMENTS AND MEDICAL APPLIANCES	21
VI. DISEASES TREATED AT LA BOURBOULE	26
VII. PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS	31
VIII. COUNTER INDICATIONS	41
IX. CLIMATE	43
X. EXCURSIONS	44
XI. ACCOMMODATION AND AMUSEMENTS	44
XII. ALTITUDES OF DIFFERENT PEAKS AND PLACES OF INTEREST	46

THE
ARSENICAL SPRINGS
AT
LA BOURBOULE, AUVERGNE.

SITUATION AND HISTORY.

THE mineral springs of la Bourboule, perhaps the most important in Europe, are situated in the wide and open valley of la Dordogne, in the middle of the Mont Dore group of mountains about four miles from the baths of that name, and on the borders of the Dordogne river; its altitude is about 2,600 feet above the level of the sea, surrounded as it is by undulating hills, and green slopes, full of pure air and light, and protected from the North winds, makes this station a most desirable one for many purposes.

The access to these springs is much easier since the opening of the railway station at Laqueille, on the Paris branch line to Tulle and Bordeaux. The

drive from the station takes about an hour, through some of the most lovely scenery of that region.

These springs were known several centuries ago, as we see by a description in 1540 of a rudimentary bath, in which patients from an infirmary in the hamlet of la Bourboule used to bathe at that time, and for many years after, and even until less than a century ago, the people from the surrounding country used to travel on horse back over almost intractable roads, bringing their beds and food, to seek in these springs relief to their ailments. These patients had to live in miserable huts, and were obliged to endure severe privations, nevertheless, they were thankful for the great benefits received, most of them returning home greatly relieved or cured of their ailments. The reputation of these springs was for a long time limited to the region of Auvergne, and it is only since a comparatively recent date, that new springs were discovered, and better accommodations were supplied. In a few years the humble village was transformed into one of the most flourishing thermal stations in France. In 1865 only 600 patients were treated at la Bourboule;

in 1877 the number increased to 2,800. In 1878 a most unfortunate contention took place between the company and Dr. Chaussy, who had a private bathing establishment of his own, it was a struggle for mineral water, and for life, which fortunately for all parties and the public, concluded by an amicable arrangement, not, however, without serious loss to himself and the company. The springs are now under one administration, in full play, and supply the bathing establishments with an immense quantity of pure mineral waters.

SPRINGS.

THE old springs, which existed formerly, have now been reduced to three, by special works directed towards obtaining a larger supply of mineral water, free from any mixture with infiltrated plain water. Owing to the persevering labour of M. Perrière the great source to which he gave his name was discovered, and supplies the bathing establishment with a large amount of mineral water at a temperature of 140° F. The two other springs, *Sedaiges* and *la Plage*, also afford a supply of one hundred gallons per minute, their temperature being for the first 91·4° F. and 86° F. for the second. The water of these two springs is most valuable, not only for drinking purposes, but also for graduating the temperature of the great Perrière spring. The advantages of reducing the temperature of a hot mineral water with water of the same kind but of a lower temperature, are obvious; nothing is lost by evaporation, and it retains its active principles unaltered.

Strange to say, the extraordinary cures per-

formed by these waters for so many years only attracted the attention of chemists in 1853 when the celebrated chemist Thenard, surprised at their marvellous effects, investigated the cause, and discovered the presence of arsenic in medicinal dose.

The following analysis made by Messrs. Lefort and Bouis in 1878, shows the mineral substances in solution in a litre of water of the three springs.