

THE BATHS OF RHENISH GERMANY

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The Baths of Rhenish Germany by Edwin Lee

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EDWIN LEE

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RHENISH GERMANY**

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RHENISH GERMANY.

BY
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ASSOCIATION OF PRUSSIA, ETC.

Third Edition, Enlarged and Improved.

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PREFACE.

IN order to accommodate those persons who might wish for an account of the baths near the Rhine, without being particularly interested in the other German and French baths, I deemed it advisable to publish this portion of my work separately. In the present edition, the notices of the towns near the baths have been omitted, as coming more especially within the province of the guide-books; and the accounts of the various places, while serving to convey a general idea of their peculiar features and characteristics, have reference more exclusively to the remedial application of the waters: on which point I have found no occasion to make any material alteration in the opinions which I formerly expressed; the general accuracy of the "Baths of Germany," which was admitted by the most competent authorities, being confirmed by my subsequent personal observation during the periods of my annual sojourn in the duchy of Nassau.

I have adverted to several of the local publications, quoting passages which might be useful in conveying information; but these works can seldom be considered as the best guides by which the practitioner may determine the choice of a spring in a given case, on account of the

glaring partialities and circumscribed views by which most of them are characterised. Now and then a reliable work, affording information of a practical kind, is published by a physician of experience; but a large proportion of the productions of bath-physicians emanates from younger practitioners, as a means of bringing their names more prominently beneath the public eye, and for the most part do but repeat, in different language, what had previously been said by others upon the properties of the waters. As respects Ems, an important admission is now made by one or two of the resident physicians, that its waters, in cases of pulmonary disease, have been too indiscriminately praised; which opinion I have long entertained, and have elsewhere expressed.*

52, Lower Belgrave-place, July, 1856.

* The writer of a notice on the works of Dr. Spengler, on Ems, and Dr. Eisenmann, on Friedrichshall (in the January number of the "British and Foreign Medical Review"), considers it a curious circumstance that the authors should think it desirable to publish their works in a foreign language. "We trust," he adds, "that it is not owing to a disregard for the power and beauty of the language of Fichte and Schiller." If the writer were more conversant with the state of foreign bath-literature, he would be aware that the majority of the *brochures* appearing in the German language are but little in request, and that the English and French versions are intended for circulation among the visitors who resort to the baths; as also to make known the authors, as well as the waters themselves, to the public and physicians of Great Britain.

BATHS OF RHENISH GERMANY.

PART I.

NASSAU BATHS.

WIESBADEN.

THE Duchy of Nassau, though small, comprises a great variety of beautiful scenery; while the fertility of its soil in many parts, its extensive woods its vineyards, producing some of the most esteemed wines, and its mineral springs, to which thousands annually resort for health, are never-failing sources of richness. The most beautiful parts are in the north, about Limburg, the banks of the Lahn, the Rheingau, and some of the valleys of the Taunus mountains. The air is light and bracing; the inhabitants are generally healthy, industrious, and obliging; the labouring classes hard-working and sober, intoxication being rarely met with. Education being compulsory, all are able to read and write. Begging is strictly prohibited.

No part of the world contains within so small a space so many valuable medicinal springs, differing in their nature, as this Duchy; they rise, for the most part, at the foot of the Taunus range of hills, and are consequently but a short distance

from each other. Thus, within a drive of a few hours, one may pass the sulphur springs of Weilbach, the cold, saline ones of Soden, the acidulous and chalybeate of Kronthal, the hot saline of Wiesbaden, the warm of Schlangenbad, the chalybeate of Schwalbach, the hot alkaline of Ems, besides many others, either within the territory or in its neighbourhood, from some of which, as Selters, Fachingen, &c., the water is largely exported. Of these places, Wiesbaden claims the first notice, both on account of its being the capital, and also as one of the oldest and most frequented of the baths of Germany.

Wiesbaden is two miles and a half distant from the Rhine. Visitors arriving by the steamers land at Biberich, a small town, with two or three good hotels, near the river, and the summer residence of the Duke, whose chateau forms a conspicuous object on approaching. The extensive grounds, agreeably laid out in the English style, and intersected by a magnificent avenue of trees, are liberally open to pedestrians. From the intervening rising ground the valley of Wiesbaden presents itself, encircled by low hills covered with fruit trees and corn-fields, behind which on the north and north-east rises the range of the Taunus, the dark hue of its pine-woods strikingly contrasting with the lighter verdure of the meadows and the white buildings of the town.* On descending the hill the visitor's attention is first attracted by an

* Wiesbaden—Meadow-bath.