

MARTINEAU, Harriet. 1851. "Malvern Water".  
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was his real name, but, on account of his vast wealth, he was usually distinguished by an appellation synonymous with the term "Millionaire." One day this merchant was visited by an Affghan chief, who offered to sell him some costly jewels. Among them was the lost "Moon of the Mountain." The price demanded for it, though great, was far below its value. Nevertheless the cautious Shafrat was unwilling to disburse so large a sum without due consideration. He requested to be allowed time to think the matter over. At this proposition the Affghan appeared uneasy and suspicious; but after some hesitation he acceded to the delay. The merchant having maturely weighed the expediency of the purchase, came to the determination of possessing himself of the diamond, and he went in quest of the stranger. Great was his astonishment on learning that the Affghan chief had left Bassora, and that no one knew, with any certainty, whither he had gone. Mortified at his disappointment, Shafrat made diligent search for the holder of the diamond, and, after very great difficulty, he traced him to Bagdad. The bargain was now struck, without further delay, and the diamond became the property of the wealthy merchant of Bassora.

There arose a new difficulty. How was Shafrat to dispose of this jewel? He prudently resolved to conceal it for a time, or to keep his transaction with the Affghan chief a profound secret. He continued to live quietly in Bassora; being afraid to stir out of the city, for ever so short a time, lest his absence should create suspicion.

At length, after the lapse of twelve years, Shafrat ventured on a journey into Europe. He visited Amsterdam, and there offered his jewel for sale. An agent from the Court of England had nearly concluded an arrangement for the purchase, when an offer made by Count Gregory Orloff, on the part of the Crown of Russia, was too tempting to be resisted. Four hundred thousand rubles, together with letters of nobility, were the price paid for the jewel. The merchant, well satisfied with his augmented wealth, removed from Bassora, and settled in Bagdad, where his descendants yet live; and "Moon of the Mountain," after its many adventurous journeys, was conveyed to St. Petersburg, and found a resting-place in the sceptre of the Empress Elizabeth.

### MALVERN WATER.

To spend two days out of the smoke, after having lived for five years in it, is a memorable event. It does not follow that there was no holiday in all those five years. There might have been visits to London, and visits to Manchester, and to Newcastle; but such trips were merely from one density of smoke to another. What a sensation it is now—on

a brilliant September day—to look back on the even, brownish cloud which occupies, below a straight line, the sky, on the side where Birmingham lies! What a sensation it is to perceive, from the noisy railroad, the lanes stealing away under the trees, hiding here, and peeping out there, behind the villages, and among the corn-fields! And to see the gleaners in the upland wheat-grounds; and the geese waddling in the stubbles; and the partridges, in their aristocratic "family compact," perking up their heads here and there, or skirring together over the yellow field! There is still one band of reapers at work—a numerous band on the highest arable ground—whence they look down upon our train, all stopping at once, and all turning at once to their work, as we are swallowed up by the tunnel. And then comes quiet Worcester, with the lights and shadows of its cathedral architecture, cut sharp by the strong sunlight. Even the central streets are quiet, in comparison with Birmingham;—much more so the clean, old-fashioned, red-brick houses within the precincts, where the very pavement seems to be never soiled by the tread of less dainty feet than those of clergy and ladies. In the cloisters, how the shady side contrasts with that which is sun-flecked; and how brilliant is the square carpet of green in the middle! And when Worcester is left behind, and we are wondering at the sensation of coach-traveling, after years of railroads, how beautiful is the first hop-ground, with its tossing clusters, and waving streamers of the freshest green; and little avenues opening between the poles, to quench the thirst of the eye and mind, long parched in the town-desert! Then, there are pear trees, where the pears cluster, and head the topmost boughs of trees fifty feet high. Those are the pears of which the famous Barlam perry is made. As for the apples, the imagination aches with the question—What is to become of so many? Behind these, however, there is something much better than them—the clear outline of the Malvern Hills. First, the blue mass, growing browner and greener with every mile; then, the black surface of rich woods, rising from the skirts; then, the long, straight row of dwellings, with their white walls shining in the sun. By this time the brown smoke-cloud is almost out of sight; and here is the play-ground of our three-days' holiday.

And what a holiday air there is about the place! We meet invalids among the pleasure-seekers; but even they look merrier than most people elsewhere. The paralytic gentleman, pursuing his infirm walk between his wife's arm and his stick, looks anything but sad;—so does the ashy-pale lady coming briskly down from St. Ann's Well;—so does the emaciated girl who is resting, with her cheerful mother, under the tree in the churchyard. In fact, it is notorious that the patients at Malvern are generally given to intoxica-



tion—sure to be tipsy with water, after a few days' trial of the sparkling luxury. Whatever may be the woes of the world in general, Malvern is always merry—that is, the water patients are; and when we speak of Malvern now, we mean water patients.

The conditions of life in England—and, we may add, in America—are much changed within this century; much changed since the beloved Andrew Combe gave us familiar books, to show us something of the laws of health, and teach us, among other truths, the nature and business of the human skin. It is within the period of steam-boat travelling that American ladies were wont to emerge from their berths in the morning, ready dressed, and to dip the corner of a towel in water, wipe their eyes and mouth, and consider themselves finished for the day. It is within the memory of middle-aged English women, that when at school,—at an expensive and eminent school,—the pupils had one foot-bath for the whole number, and only on Saturday nights. It is within the memory of middle-aged men that they were struck with astonishment and amusement on first hearing of such a thing as washing all over every day. And, perhaps, it is too much within the observation of us all, (as Mr. Tremeneere tells us of the pitmen in collieries), that, for years together, the clean shirt goes on every Sunday, over an unwashed skin. It is not long since a clergyman, finding an old woman of his flock very ill, met with a shocking answer to the advice he gave. "I will send the doctor to you," said he; "and I can tell you what to do meantime. Put your feet in warm water, and go to bed."

"Put *my* feet in water!" exclaimed the patient; "why, not a drop of water has touched my feet for thirty years." Moreover, she vowed that not a drop of water should ever touch her feet; and, thinking it proper to render a reason to the clergyman, she told him that she had had a daughter who had once been persuaded to wash her feet, and that that daughter had died before she was twenty-five. It is not longer ago than some months, that a decent woman, too ill after her confinement to dress her infant, interfered to prevent its arms being washed, saying that if a child's arms felt the water before it was six months old, it would become a thief; and, she added pathetically, "I wouldn't like that!"

Till lately, the gentle knew as little as the simple now do, what they suffered from neglect of the skin, nor how it was that they suffered as they did. They did not know how, when the pores of the skin are loaded, and its action checked, an undue burden is thrown on the interior organs. When, in this state of chronic fever, the interior organs flagged in their work, and the sufferer was oppressed by sensations of sinking and languor, he was apt to resort to stimulants, which, affording relief for the moment, aggravated the mischief. And when, at last,

the weakest organ gave way, and some attack of illness occurred, the treatment was for the immediate symptoms alone, and the false system of management went on, till occasion was ripe for another fit of sickness. All the while the portion of the brain appropriate to the performance of the bodily functions was suffering. By day, there was oppression, languor, and dull pain somewhere; by night, disturbed sleep, and bad dreams; and always, night and day, and from month to month, liability to low spirits, and all the moral mischiefs which attend unhappiness. Wordsworth used to say, to the last, that times were changed for the better, in homes and in society, since he was young. In his early days, everybody was understood to have a temper; and the admission in the abstract did not much help the endurance of such peculiarities by neighbours, in daily life. But now, it was considered the rule that people should be amiable, and it has become a sin to be otherwise. No doubt, the bodily state of bad washers,—that is, of the vast majority—subject, as they were, to low spirits—must have had an incalculable amount of influence on the domestic temper; however gay may be the traditions that have come down to us of the mirth of society in the last and preceding centuries. If we would see the difference now, let us look round for (not the bad washers, for that is disagreeable—and the good ones will answer every purpose) the most healthy and cheerful households we know. Is there a house where the doctor seldom enters, but as a guest,—where the lads are brisk in shop or warehouse, and the lasses merry at home? It is pretty certain that early hours are found there, and plenty of cold water. The fever patient finds inexpressible relief from the sponging with vinegar and water; and the same kind of relief is given by ablution, under the lesser fever of toil. The anxious merchant or statesman is haunted in his bed by images of terror, or wearied with galling cares: his morning draught and his morning bath restore all things to their true aspect and their right proportion. The author—the most sensitive of human beings—has gone to Græfenberg, or Beurhydding, or Malvern, burdened with care and dread, trembling at the arrival of the mail, recoiling from the sight of reviews and newspapers—and, in a week or two, has omitted to speculate on the fate of his own book. So one of the fraternity bears witness to his friends in private; and, if one of the *genus irritabile* is thus made serene by cold water, what wonder is there in any effect that it may have had on the tempers of men in general?

The slipperiness of the grass on these slopes seems really worse than ice. As we sit under a bank, eating our dinner, we see two young ladies on an opposite slope in a most helpless position. They have poles, with spikes at the end, and they hold each others' hands; but they can make no way, upwards or sideways,



with feet, knees, or hands. There is nothing to grasp; and the grass is shiny as satin. If they join hands, they go down only the faster. They drive their toes into the ground, and rest on their poles. Now they try again. Worse and worse! Now they scramble, using all their resources, and achieve two or three feet of ascent; only to slide down half-a-dozen. Their shoe-soles must be like satin by this time. They must take their chance of getting safe to the bottom, and make one slide of it. So we think; but they do not. By the time we have dined, one of them has sidled to a patch of gravel, whence she can extend aid to her companion. When they are on the stony path, how they step on, enjoying the security, and roughening their shoe-soles as they go!

How happy every body looks! the elderly lady with her newspaper under the tree; the pretty girl in the riding-habit, with her pocket-handkerchief tied about her throat, as, heated by her ride, she comes up into the wind; the pale gentleman, who takes the short cuts up the hill, instead of following the zigzag. He brought the pale face with him, no doubt; but hardly that springy step. And there is a cheerful granny, knitting in the sunshine, while that unparalleled creature, her first grandchild, tottles and topples on a safe piece of level grass. How many women, young and old, are sewing or knitting in the open air! And in the cool chamber at St. Ann's Well, where the water is trickling into the marble basin, sits another, plying her needle, while enjoying pious conversation with a lady who has some tracts in her hand. They are saying, how very "andsome" the clergyman was that preached last Sunday. We leave these sedentary people behind us, and rove where we shall meet the rovers. While dining, we surveyed the vast expanse through which the Severn winds to the south-west, and where we can descry Worcester in one direction, and see in another the smoke which indicates Gloucester, and some glittering appearance, which we are told is Cheltenham. Now we turn our backs on this, and walk a mile through the serpentine valley, to see what the other side of the range will show.

When we come out upon that glorious view, we find a little party of Scotch ladies, pleasant and kind, who show us the Bristol Channel, a bright line issuing from behind far-away hills; and Welsh mountains, cloudlike, but well-defined, through an atmosphere reeking with heat. While we sit, picking out churches and gentlemen's seats, and tracing roads, and envying the dwellers in nestling farm-houses, and counting ponds (because the complaint of the fastidious is of want of water in the landscape), and laughing at the ploughing (four bullocks, two horses, and four men and boys to a plough), the Scotch party think "it is very warm, certainly," but that they must "just go over the hill." They

will not stop short of the beacon, we think. It is only half-a-mile off; steep, certainly, but only half-a-mile. At all events, *we go*.

When there, and leaning against the pole, and remembering how many hats have been blown either into Herefordshire or Worcestershire, we inquire for a wind. See there! there is a little girl actually weighing snuff in her tiny scales of gourd-skin, balanced upon a forked stick stuck in the ground. Not a grain flies off to set anybody sneezing. Who comes here for snuff? The mother, sitting with her face to the north, to make a shadow to sew in, may sell cakes and fruit; but who would come one thousand three hundred feet above the level of the sea for snuff?—this being, moreover, the most windy point in the county. It cannot be snuff that these very small bees have come hither for; these little, dusty-looking, fawn-coloured bees; and these tiny red-and-black butterflies. Why are they here? We have left the blossoming gorse far below; and the foxgloves are lower still; yet there are bees resting on my companion's bonnet, and butterflies flapping their wings on the stones of the crumbling mound.

There go the swallows, sending specks of shadow skimming down the slopes. We shall see more of them, no doubt, in the dewy morning, to-morrow. And look, what a noble pair of hawks! Their brown plumage and the outline of head and beak are wonderfully distinct against the sky, in such a light as this. Now they quiver in one spot of air for a minute together; and then they swoop majestically, and rise to quiver again. Where is the doomed mouse that the nearest seems to have fixed its eye on? Will it not have the sense to run in under the gorse, as I saw one do, as we came up the hill? There are many mice here, I see; and that is why we are treated with this show of balancing and wheeling hawks.

Those who want shade here must bring umbrellas. There are only scraps of shade anywhere about, and those are taken possession of by the sheep; except one, where I saw a baby laid, for its noon-day nap. The sheep huddle in, and coil themselves up like dogs. They look so sleepy, that we are sorry to disturb them. We say so, in the civilest manner, but they will not trust us, but go leaping and trotting away into the sun. Perhaps they will come back to their sofas when our backs are turned.

For some time, as we walk southwards along the ridge, the grass has been growing thinner; and now we have really rough walking on broken rock. This is an adventurous lady on her donkey, at such a height, on such a ridge, among these *débris*. What is her child asking, that toddling two-year-old? "Who made all this mess?" My dear little fellow, what an irreverent question! He will not find that out; for his mother cannot answer him for laughing. His father informs him that we cannot always tell how



messes are made. Here is another kind of mess; chaff scattered about. We soon see why. On this sharp edge of the ridge, the very narrowest, whence it seems as if we could leap into Wales on the one hand, and England on the other, is a man threshing his little crop of wheat on the bare ground. No doubt, he brings it up here to be winnowed by the wind; for it is a strange threshing-floor enough. If so, he is disappointed; for not a speck of chaff rises in the air. It lies as dead as the grain. In answer to our question, he says he brings it from his field on the hill-side, below.

One more glance down upon Great Malvern, before we turn towards the Wyche. The old church looks well, though the square top, the roof, of the tower is the most conspicuous part of it to us: and how gay the white houses look, with their gardens! The parterres, one rose-colour with verbenas, another scarlet with geraniums, are bright to the eye, even here. That white road looks terribly dusty. This is decidedly the best way to the Wells to those who are not in a hurry.

We pass the chasm of the Wyche, turning our heads away from the tobacco and snuff shop, and the handbills which are stuck on the rocky walls. We lose sight of Welsh mountains and Herefordshire orchards for to-day, and descend gradually, by broad, easy paths, to the great ash, under whose hospitable shade we rest. Then, down and down, till we are under great oaks, loaded with acorns, and beeches rich with mast, and chestnuts with their prickly green fruit, and mountain-ash with berries of brilliant scarlet, bright beyond all precedent. We enter the back-door of the Well's House, and find ourselves on the third story. We go down to the up-stairs drawing-room, where friends and coffee are awaiting us. O! what a view it is from that window! How the shadows are spreading over that vast champaign, swallowing up a pool here, a range of corn-ricks there, and beyond, nook after nook of the reaches of the Severn! We cannot stay within. If a carriage is to be had, we must be off, and see Eastnor-park and Ledbury church—never mind how far it is! Don't count the miles! It is full moon to-night, the harvest moon, and we shall be on high ground, far above the mists of the champaign.

Into that wide champaign we must not now set foot, in description, or we shall lose sight of all bounds. We have to do with the hills alone.

The early morning is, after all we have said, the time for the hills. Then the trees have shaken down dew enough to lay the dust on the lower paths; and on the uplands, the grass is glistening with the tiny drops. Then the sheep come running up the shaded side to meet the sun, instead of crouching into dark nooks. Then the lark springs up from some grassy crevice, and the swallows are innumerable. The hawks are not abroad yet, and

every other creature is. It is pleasant to see the water-patients running about already, with all the vigour of the healthy. We know that they have had the balmy sleep which creeps over them from the folds of the wet sheet, and the animating stimulus of the cold bath, and of the draught of water at St. Ann's Well; and here they are,—a few of the bravest, on the ridge. Those who remain below see but little of the prospect; for on the east, the mists still shroud the landscape; but on the Herefordshire side all is clear and bright, both within the shadow of the hills and beyond it. What a vast shadow it is! and how cool lie the farmsteads and orchards and dark pools within it! Brilliant as the sunshine is, to us all looks cool, while the pure breeze searches out every pore of the skin, and refreshes the whole frame. There is one, however, who does not enjoy this like the rest. That young lady is heated and panting, as if she had raced all the way up the hill, instead of being brought on a donkey. No wonder! Look at her waist! Compare that pinched waist with the unlaced human form, and say if it can be true and good. Compare it with the Venus de Medici, and say if it can be beautiful. As for the beauty, can she not see, by examples before her eyes, and by her own looking-glass, that she has to pay in complexion for any fancied gain in form by tight-lacing? As for the rashness, we could take her to a school where two or three of the girls cannot write an exercise without palpitation of the heart, and seem doomed to the fate of a companion who lately died suddenly from tight-lacing. This young lady can hardly be a water patient; for no physician would surely undertake the case. Any physician would tell her that nothing can be done while the trunk is compressed, the circulation impeded; too much work thrown upon the lungs, too little play allowed to the heart, and no action to a considerable portion of the skin. The tightness is not the only, though it is the greatest, mischief. There should be free access of air allowed to every part of the external frame, and that cannot be while the trunk is closely cased in double or treble jean. The bath and the draught of water can be of little use, if the skin is immediately after stopped in its action. The bringing of the blood to the surface by the water treatment, and the impulse to the circulation by this morning exercise, are of no use—of less than none—if the heart and lungs are to labour as we see them labouring in this panting girl, whose life may, any day, go out under the effort. Is there no one who will show her a few illustrations of what she is about, in thus dressing herself?—no one who will show her examples (or plates, as more striking) of the bent spine, the contracted heart, the congested liver and lungs, the impure complexion, the starved or gorged brain, which come of tight-lacing?

See how the shadow is drawing in! It is well we are so hungry, or it would be too



hard to leave this breezy summit, and the sunny bench which somebody has been kind enough to set up for us. The shadowy circles on Camp Hill look tempting; and, in this clear light, the summit seems very near. If we were not so hungry, we could not but go—almost as straight as the bird flies. We will be there before the noon haze veils the prospect—will not we?

"Yes; but if so, we must go down now to breakfast." "So be it. Will you engage to be in the house within ten minutes?—Is it impossible? Let us try."

### THIRTY DAYS OF PLEASURE FOR FIFTEEN FRANCS.

SUCH is the marvellous announcement that—paragraphed in newspapers, posted upon walls, and sent forth on the wings of handbills—has been astonishing Paris for several weeks past;—a miraculous project to provide pleasure for thirty consecutive days to some two hundred thousand persons. But pleasure of what kind? To many, barricades are pleasures, and thirty days not too long for their enjoyment. Could it be the object of the prospectus to get up a revolution by subscription; to provide each subscriber with fifteen francs worth of freedom, according to the particular taste? As may be supposed, there were not wanting alarmists, who, taking that view, had settled the veriest minutiae of the meditated rising—down a list of prices to be submitted to the public, at fixed prices, as—"Enfranchisement for one, two francs; open and advised speaking, one franc, fifty centimes; ditto, with sarcasms, or sauce piquante, two francs; ditto, with libels, two francs, fifty centimes. General violence à discrétion. Bloodshed and infamous excesses to be charged as supplements."

A short time elapsed, however, and the united sagacity of at least six journals, about six hundred *café* politicians, and no end of the mob, was found to be miserably at fault, and the credulous and superficial were in a "blaze of triumph." The design was discovered to be a mere harmless attempt to apply the principles of association and co-operation in a new manner; to secure to the people—not their political rights, which they somehow manage to do without—but their favourite pleasures; which, to Frenchmen, are something like a necessity. Benefit societies, in England of all descriptions, had done much to teach "the people" to be provident; the Great Exhibition had done more in encouraging them to be industrious; but it was reserved for the French to point what is, to Frenchmen, an equally useful moral, by showing them how they may combine to make the most of the result, both of their providence and their industry. Accordingly, France has her "*Trente Jours de Plaisir pour quinze Francs.*"

The nature of the design being no longer

doubtful, the ways and means had to be discussed. How was it possible for the projectors to give two hundred thousand persons, in the short space of thirty days, free admission to the opera, the theatres, the public gardens of Paris; to Mabilly; to the Chaumière; to the Château Rouge; and to the fêtes of the surrounding country—Asnières, St. Cloud, Versailles, Meudon? In the first place, the speculation could never "pay;" ten sous per head per diem being the only return for an expenditure involving at least, as was calculated, ten times that amount. Physical impossibility was also set up as another slight objection:—Suppose the two hundred thousand persons should take it into their heads to visit the same place on the same identical evening—How could the requisite amount of accommodation be provided for them? What would be the fate of the opera, with two hundred thousand determined sight-seers besieging its doors? What could be expected of the most yielding and expansive of public gardens?

The financial part of the matter was soon answered. It was not a question between the projectors and the public, but between the projectors and *themselves*. Their great and undisguised object being the acquisition of money, they had of course made all due calculations. If these calculations failed, they were prepared to take the consequences. With regard to the second difficulty, the solution was equally simple. If the two hundred thousand subscribers desired anything so unnatural as a simultaneous visit to the same place of amusement, they could not be gratified. In fact, according to the arrangements, they could not select their own particular amusement for any particular evening, but must submit to take their turn, as general convenience might dictate. Thus, the two hundred thousand would be distributed every evening over *all* the places of amusement, every man seeing everything by degrees in due course.

The projectors calculated that the theatres, spectacles, balls, concerts, and public gardens in and around Paris, afforded daily accommodation for three hundred thousand persons; and they guaranteed to make arrangements with the directors of these amusements for places for their two hundred thousand subscribers. They further supported their case by citing the opinions of such men as Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas, who expressed their warm belief, both in the commercial practicability and social advantages of the scheme. The principal theatres, to be sure, announced, publicly, their refusal to make any "arrangements" for the reception of this wholesale visitation on any but the usual terms; a "reduction on taking a quantity" was out of the question. This decision would, of course, involve extra expenditure on the part of the projectors; but, nevertheless, could not prove fatal to the project, which was soon understood to be in a fair way of realisation.