

moment if they hear confession or give absolution without authorization of the police. No there is no fear of a Polish revolution. All we ask now is leave to live."

"And what do you think of the present state of Russia, Prince?"

"Bad enough," was the reply. "The Czar trembles in his palace. He is in the hands of three men—enemies of western civilization—the abhorred Pobodonezow, his tutor, Kathow and Count Tolstorf. He has no conservative elements at his back. The nobles are both indifferent and disaffected. The peasantry are wretched, and may at any moment turn on their landlords and burn, rob or murder. Russia is Asiatic yet in many respects. The country is so vast and the people so scattered that no revolution, as the French understand it, is possible in Russia. We may see murder, and wholesale carnage, but revolutions can only occur in the palace or in the army. I believe the Nihilists now direct their efforts to sapping the loyalty of the army. But Russia is a strange country, and things may go on as they are heaven knows how long."

A MEDICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE CURES BY THE LOURDES WATER.

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CHAPTER XIV.

CASES OF RHEUMATISM AND RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS — OR RHEUMATIC GOUT.

THESE cases do not admit of the positive proofs which we can obtain in cases where the disease itself is visible to others. We can, in chronic cases of rheumatism, only see the deformity produced by the disease. In rheumatoid arthritis, or as it is often called rheumatic gout, the nodular masses of chalk-stones and the enlargements of the joints are, in old cases, very conspicuous. In such cases, of which several are narrated, an immediate or instantaneous cure is as clearly supernatural as if the disease were an open ulcer, or a cancerous tumour. But in such cases as No. 98, for example, we must rely on the testimony of the patient and others. A few of the kind have been inserted, selected out of large numbers, for the encouragement of those who are suffering from a most painful, obstinate, and often incurable affection.

No 84. CHRONIC RHEUMATISM (Vol. ii., p. 13).—Guillaume Jaffard, employed on the Lesponney Laaslades station of the Midi Railway; cottage No. 149 (Hautes Pyrénées), gives the following narrative (April 23rd, 1869) "I was always robust, but prolonged work in bad weather produced, 7 months ago, pains which prevented me from doing anything. The doctor said it was chronic rheumatism. I remained in bed, incapable of moving for three whole months. When I wished to move a limb I called my wife or one of my children, who got on the bed. My sufferings were dreadful. I could at last rise and move with the help of crutches, but it was with great pain. I dragged myself along, making my feet slide along the ground." [He then describes the destitution to which the family was reduced, their want of food etc., and intimates that he himself had not been a practising Catholic. He was at length induced by the persuasion of his comrades to go to Lourdes. He bathed there and felt only a little better, some relief, but hardly any].

"I took away a bottle of the Lourdes water. Before going to bed my wife bathed my feet with it again. I prayed, you may believe. When it was finished I tried to raise myself. I stood upright. Then I dart forward to walk; I walk easily; I cry "Wife! I am cured!" [He then immediately started off to a neighbour's who lived 200 yards off to show him he was cured]. "The next day I arrived without a stick at the station of Lesponney; I had walked two kilometers (about 1½ miles). Everyone was astonished. My colleague said to me "You have done well to go to Lourdes, Jaffard; they may say what they like, there is a Supreme Being.""

France.
"I promised to take back the crutches, and I have come to-day to do so. . . . I suffer still a little; I am not very nimble, but I hope. My feet were enormous—now they have ceased to be swollen; I could not bend my back at all, I was as stiff as a stake, now I can stoop to the earth—see."

Remarks.—Although the cure here is not so complete as in most of the cases, I have inserted it for the freshness and candour of the narrative. The extreme rapidity of the amelioration appears to me inexplicable on any natural grounds.

No. 85. RHEUMATISM OF LEFT ARM (Vol. i., p. 128).—Marie Condon, who was present when the cure of Labbes was effected, had been suffering for six weeks from an atrocious rheumatism, which so impeded the movement of the left arm that she could not lift the hand to the face, and was obliged to wash herself with the right hand alone.

She dipped the diseased limb in the fountain. There was no more pain, and the suppleness of the limb was completely restored. She could lift her hand to her face without the slightest difficulty, moved her fingers, and grasped and held a large bottle of the Lourdes water.

Remarks.—This case does not rigidly fulfil all the conditions requisite for deciding as to the supernatural nature of the cure; but, admitting the existence of the disease as described, would a single dip in cold water cure it? Several cases like these have been inserted, as they are short and do not take up much room, and may encourage those persons who have already tried the usual remedies and failed to effect a cure to have recourse to the Lourdes water.

* A curious side-light is thrown by this remark on the state of religion in

No. 86. CHRONIC ARTHRITIS OF THE SHOULDER JOINT (Vol. xv., p. 114).—Sister Marie du Rosaire, of Mirecourt (Vosges), suffering, according to the medical certificate, "from gastralgia and anæmia, and besides from chronic scapulo-humeral arthritis"—i.e., from stomach-ache and poverty of blood, and from chronic inflammation of the shoulder joint. The shoulder was extremely sensitive; she could not move the left arm, and the fingers had by degrees become bent, and remained so. Various kinds of treatment had been tried without result. Towards the last the actual cautery had been applied. The swelling and pain always remained.

Arrived at Lourdes, on Saturday (August 29, 1882), she was taken at once to the piscina, and came out completely cured. The pain and swelling had disappeared; she shook the left arm and could strike herself heavy blows on the diseased shoulder.

On the 12th of September she remained well.

No. 87. CHRONIC RHEUMATISM (Vol. xvi., p. 190).—Mlle. Adèle Nannick, of St. Omer, aged 25 years, is stated in the medical certificate to have been suffering from "chronic rheumatism of the left arm," which had occasioned loss of feeling and of motion. Her disease had resisted the most energetic treatment, including electricity [galvanism?], etc. For two years she had been unable to do anything. Her hand was immensely swollen. Continual pain deprived her of sleep. Arrived at the Grotto, all alone, her fingers, which had been contracted, opened. A warm current passed through the arm, which recovered sensation and motion.

On the 8th of September (the cure having taken place between the 21st and 24th of August, 1882), the account given was: "Since her return Adèle is perfectly well. She is able every day to sew, wash, rub, etc. The physician who attended her acknowledges the cure to those who ask him." She used to receive 4 francs a day from a benevolent society, but the physician having seen her arm since her return from Lourdes, has struck her name off the list of persons receiving assistance, saying "she has no need of it; she is cured."

Remarks.—The cure in this case of a case of chronic rheumatism (if it were chronic rheumatism) of two years' standing is unquestionably supernatural. It seems to me probable that there might have been some tumour on the nerve, causing the loss of motion and sensation; but as the medical certificate gives chronic rheumatism as the disease, I have accepted the diagnosis. In either case the cure would be miraculous, occurring instantaneously.

No. 88. TUMOUR OF LIP AND ARTICULAR RHEUMATISM (Vol. xi., p. 89).—Mme. Anna Castet, *née* Candonat, of Andouins, near Morlaas (Basses Pyrénées), had obtained at the Grotto, in 1873, the sudden and complete disappearance of a tumour which she had on the lower lip, and which had resisted all treatment.

Having suffered for three months from articular rheumatism, which prevented her from walking, she found herself cured on the 7th of July, 1878, after a bath taken in the piscina.

No. 89. CHRONIC RHEUMATISM; ANKYLOSIS OF KNEE (Vol. x., p. 37).—Marie Palisse, wife of Raymond Herisson, residing at Briat, in the diocese of Montauban, aged 43, was attacked in May, 1873, consequent on being exposed to a heavy downfall of rain which she had to bear for several hours, with a weakness in the left leg, so that she could only move with the help of a pair of crutches. This weakness was soon accompanied by very acute pains in the joints. The seat of the pain was the left knee. The leg swelled in an extraordinary manner; the joints were attacked; it was impossible for her to bend the knee; the least movement caused her the most cruel pain, and the slightest friction on the limb almost made her faint.

This state continued three years. Often she passed several months in bed. When she could get up she dragged herself along painfully, by the help of crutches. She could do no work.

She made a pilgrimage to Lourdes in June, 1876, and at her first communion there, although she was obliged to use the crutches in going to the church, she was able to ascend the altar steps and kneel, which she had not been able to do for three years. On returning to her place she felt a happy change had taken place in her.

From the Basilica she went to the bath, into which she plunged, although she was in a state of perspiration. Some minutes afterwards in going out of the water, she felt her limbs free and unloosened [*dégagées*] and she was able to walk without help. She gave her crutches to one of her companions, and during the rest of the day she walked about, ascended to the church, and went twice round it.

From this time Marie Palisse took to field work, carried heavy burdens, and enjoys perfect health, which atmospheric changes have never altered.

This is certified by the curé of the parish, and by the signatures of sixteen witnesses.

No. 90. CHRONIC RHEUMATISM (Vol. x., p. 124).—M. Fernand St. Elme of Autry (Loire), aged 30, had suffered cruelly for 16 months from chronic rheumatism which paralysed the left side and which resisted all remedies. Drawn by his mule and by a charitable neighbour and plunged in the piscina, he experienced a kind of forcible tightening in the diseased side, immediately followed by a pleasant warmth. He was astonished to find himself able to carry the hand which just before was paralysed to his head; he came out of the piscina by himself, and the next day he was able, without support, to follow the procession from Sancerre, and take a second bath, which completed his cure.

No. 91. RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS (vol. x., p. 104).—Justine Lepelletier, of Lille, aged 34 years, has suffered for ten years from rheumatoid arthritis [*rhumatisme goutteux*] which had attacked her feet, her legs, and her hands. The carious bones [? chalk stones] were ready to come out and form sores. A doctor here [at Lourdes] after having questioned the patient as to her former conditions, had declared the case incurable.

She took three baths, feeling herself better each time. To-day (August 20, 1877) her legs and feet are perfectly cured and the swelling has entirely disappeared. The fingers of the hand, and the toes of the right foot, stiffened by the disease, have nearly regained their mobility but the hand remains a little deformed. She followed without fatigue a long torchlight procession,