

A GOUTY COURTSHIP.

HIS DIARY.

Royat, July 4th.—Arrived here to-day from London, condemned by doctor to twenty-one days without the option of a fine! In other words, I have to swill tepid water at a bubbling fountain, soak myself daily in a running bath and undergo a gentle massage treatment at the hands of an expert Swede for three consecutive weeks, and all because my forefathers drank too much port, and left me as a heritage the most unmistakable signs of gout. Yes, in the flower of my youth (I am only thirty-three) I find myself extremely "dicky" on one leg, and my hitherto angelic temper is rapidly changing to chronic irascibility. Gout at thirty-three! It is sickening, disgusting, absolutely ridiculous. I was told that I should find Royat delightful. Two casinos, two theatres, bands playing all day, baccarat and *petits chevaux*, health restored—in fact, a perfect little Paradise on earth. I have already seen all the former attractions. I have lost a few louis at the "little horses," I have been politely invited to become a member of the Baccarat Club, but I experienced a shock on hearing a lady, who was dining at the next table to mine, say, "It is my seventh season here—the waters are so good for gout!" But why seven years if the waters are any good? Shall I have to come here seven years? I who already grumble at the prospect of twenty-one days? I must make this lady's acquaintance, and find out what she means. Surely she must have been talking nonsense, or perhaps she has gout on the brain. It seems to me that you ought either to be cured, or not, in your first year. Why persevere seven years?

Royat is empty; the bands play to rows of unoccupied chairs, a few sepulchral looking *cocottes* walk listlessly round the *petits chevaux*, and you can inscribe yourself for any hour you like at the baths. The hotel proprietors say, "*Les Anglais nous manquent cette année!*" I should think so! France has been so inviting to English people lately.

I have noticed one pretty girl here, and she is staying at this hotel. But what is the good of thinking of pretty girls when you have gout, and a prospect of spending seven seasons at Royat? I close my Diary with renewed feelings of despair.

HER DIARY.

Royat, July 4th.—This is papa's tenth day here, and he is no better. Our excellent doctor, the type of the courtly English physician, tells him that the waters show no beneficial signs at first. Papa asks him, with a sarcasm even more suppressed than his gout, at what period they *do* begin to show beneficial signs, and our dear old doctor smiles goodnaturedly and tells him not to be impatient. All the same, Mamma says Papa's temper has certainly improved within the last few days. His grumbling, which he feared was becoming chronic, is certainly less violent and the intervals between the outbursts of fury are becoming longer. I hope he will really be cured soon. Royat is so dull, and every second person one meets is an invalid. By the way, we have got a new man at the hotel. He is rather nice-looking; but he, too, looks delicate. He is too young to have gout, although he certainly walks a little lame. Perhaps he has been wounded in the Transvaal. That would make him rather interesting. We want interesting people in the hotel—there are only about six men all told, and they are all what the shops call "damaged goods." I wonder what a dance would be like here. There is a lawn-tennis club, but I never hear of anyone playing. Perhaps it is kept up by charitable contributions, like the hospital. I went to one little *soirée dansante* at the Casino, but there were only the shopkeepers from Clermont who danced, and Mamma was so afraid that one of them would ask me to dance that she hurried me away after the first valse. Ah, well, we have fifteen days more to spend here. Ordinarily the "cure" is twenty-one days, but it appears that Papa's case being an obstinate one requires

four days more. "Your father always was obstinate in everything," Mamma said when she heard this prescription. And to think that gout is hereditary!

HIS DIARY.

July 5th.—Took my waters, my bath and my massage; feeling worse—furious.

July 6th.—The same as yesterday. Decidedly that English girl is pretty. Her name is SOMERVILLE—MAUD SOMERVILLE. She has red hair, her father has gout. She looks sad and devoted. Poor girl! What an existence!

July 7th.—She dresses well and has a pretty figure. There is a mother, a faded, nearly obliterated portrait of the girl. I should like to make their acquaintance; but they seem to know no one, and not to care to. After dinner they take their coffee on the terrace of the hotel and then go to their rooms. I am not allowed coffee. Took my treatment as usual.

July 8th.—Am I overwhelmed with vanity, or do I fancy that she looks at me sometimes? Perhaps she pities my lonely condition. I wonder if she knows what I have the matter with me. I sat very near them at the band this afternoon, but with no result. Treatment as usual.

July 9th.—My masseur masses her father's stomach, to aid his digestion. Scarcely a sufficient introduction. I could not very well say: "I think we have a mutual friend, who masses your father's stomach." I must find some other means. Of course, the usual treatment—which is doing me no good.

July 10th.—Did not see her all day. Masseur said she had gone for an excursion with her mother. What silly things excursions are, and how I hate Royat!

July 11th.—It appears they have gone to Vichy for two days. Royat is perfectly loathsome.

July 12th.—She has come back, looking more charming than ever. She almost seemed to recognise me, and appear pleased when she saw me at luncheon. It is fine and the place is looking brighter, people arriving every day. Fancy my knee is a little better.

HER DIARY.

July 5th.—Papa is certainly better. Mamma says he swears with less volubility, and experiences a difficulty in finding fresh oaths which she has never known before. It really looks as if the waters were doing him good. The new invalid looks very dull, and as if he was boring himself to death. Perhaps he is longing to be back again at the war.

July 6th.—I rather fancy the new invalid would like to make my—I mean, our acquaintance. Naturally it is very dull for him, but Papa won't know anyone. He says it is quite enough to be bored with people at home, without coming abroad to have fresh inflictions thrust upon one.

July 7th.—His name is GORING—PERCY GORING. He is not in the army. He has gout! What a disillusion. Still, I can't help pitying him. He is so young to suffer. I hope the waters will do him good.

July 8th.—We have had an invitation from the DENTONS to spend a couple of days at Vichy. Neither Mamma nor I wanted to go, but Papa insisted on our going. He said it might do him good not to see us for two days. A new kind of cure! He has tried almost every other one. Mr. GORING looks very ill and sad. I hope he will be looking better when I come back.

July 9th.—He looked so piteously at me to-day. I wish he was going to Vichy. Mamma says perhaps he drinks—it is very unusual for a man of his age to have gout. Papa went further, and said of course he was a confirmed drunkard. He could see dissipation written in every line of his face. I can't—I can only see resigned suffering.

July 10th, Vichy.—Arrived here this morning. It is very like Royat, only ten times bigger and more crowded. I don't think I should like to stay here.

July 11th.—Decidedly, I hate Vichy! Thank goodness, we go back to Royat to-morrow!



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Royat, July 12th.—It seemed almost like seeing an old friend when I saw him coming in to luncheon. He limps a little less, but not much. I fancied he looked reproachfully at me, as much as to say, "Why did you go away?" I tried to look as if it wasn't my fault, as if I would have given *anything* to stay here. But all that was rather difficult to get into one look, and I am not at all sure that I succeeded. Papa is still making improvement. I think he ought certainly to prolong his stay, as it is doing him so much good. I have told Mamma to tell the doctor so. She seemed surprised, and said she thought I disliked Royat. I said I thought it better to make the sacrifice a complete and unique one, instead of having to return here year after year. She agreed with me.

HIS DIARY.

July 13th.—What rotten things introductions are, and to what a corrupt state Society must have arrived to require them! Why can't I speak to her without being introduced? I think she would like to know me and sympathise with my miserable condition. She has a very sweet voice. I am sure she would soothe me, and I want soothing very badly. If I don't make her acquaintance in two days, I shall finish my treatment at one gulp and go away. I shall sit in a bath for twelve hours at a stretch, and drink thirty glasses of water.

July 14th.—She has gone to Clermont to see the National fête. I shall go to Clermont to see the National fête. Hang the treatment!

July 15th.—No good! They got lost in the crowd, and I never saw them. At dinner the waiter brought her father the wrong water—St. Victor instead of Cesar.

Old man furious; let loose choice Billingsgate. I jumped up and promptly offered my bottle of Cesar, which waiter had just brought me. Old man still more furious. "I was not speaking to you, Sir; I was addressing the waiter." Tears of mortified humiliation in *her* eyes, apologies from mother; but I had to retire defeated. I shall certainly finish my treatment tomorrow. I shall order a bath for the day!

HER DIARY.

July 13th.—It seems very hard that we can't talk to each other without being properly introduced. I am sure he is *dying* to know me, and that we should have a lot to say to each other. He has lovely eyes, and they look at me so reproachfully sometimes. But what can I do?

July 14th.—We went to Clermont to see the sports, and the

review, and all the stupid things of a National fête. In the morning, I said in a very loud voice as he passed us: "I think it will be very hot at Clermont," with a strong accent on Clermont; but he never came, or if he did he must have been lost in the crowd.

July 15th.—When I have written my day's diary I am going to bed and have a good cry. We had such a terrible scene at dinner. Papa was very thirsty, and ordered a bottle of Cesar water. The waiter brought it and poured some out, and Papa

took a gulp, and suddenly sent it flying in every direction, accompanied by the most horrible language, partly French and partly English. Papa's French is very elementary; he can't get much beyond *Sacre!* and *Imbecile!* "Vous voulez poisoner moi?" he yelled at the waiter. "Vous savez que l'eau St. Victor il est plein d'arsenic et moi je dois pas prendre ça!" And then English came to his relief, and he sank back in his chair purple in the face, and emitting verbal fireworks of a very fiery nature. Then my angelic martyr came to the rescue with a bottle of Cesar, which he promptly and graciously placed at Papa's disposal. But this only made him worse—he curtly refused it, and glared at Mr. GORING as if the bottle he had offered him was really a deadly poison. So poor Mr. GORING retired, followed by pleasant little mutterings such as "D—d check!" "Infernal snob!" "Mind his own blank business," etc., etc., and so now I am going to bed to cry. The DENTONS are coming over to spend the day tomorrow. Such a nuisance!



'CHAOS IS COME AGAIN!'

Or, Things very much Up in the City.

[“The following streets were ‘up’ on July 3:—Old Broad Street, Threadneedle Street, Lothbury, Princes Street, Bishopsgate Street, Gracechurch Street, Leadenhall Street, Cornhill, Lombard Street, Fenchurch Street, Cannon Street, Cheapside, St. Swithin's Lane, and Queen Victoria Street.”—*Times*, July 4.]

HIS DIARY.

July 16th.—Hooray! I have made her acquaintance! She is adorable, perfectly bewitching, and she gains tremendously on acquaintance—even the acquaintance of a few hours. It appears that the DENTONS—excellent angels of mercy!—are staying at Vichy. I have known them all my life, and they actually came here to spend the day with the SOMERVILLES. It was not an opportunity to let slip; so the moment they came and spoke to me, I whispered, in hurried, tragic accents, "You must introduce me to the girl with the red hair—I mean the SOMERVILLES." "Is it as bad as that?" laughed Mrs. DENTON. "Of course we will, in good time. But you might ask us how we are, and what we are doing here. JACK has had awful dyspepsia. He can't digest a simple biscuit, so we are at

Vichy." "How sad!" I answered. "But don't let's talk about symptoms. I am much worse than Jack. Tell me about the SOMERVILLES." So then I quickly learnt that she was an only child, adored by her parents, rich, attractive, gifted, and very hard to please. "I don't know how many men she has already refused," concluded Mrs. DENTON. "It is either morbid, or a mania with her." This, of course, is discouraging, but after the introduction had been made I felt less disheartened. I sat at the band with them in the afternoon, and I was quite charmed with her easy, unaffected conversation. We carefully avoided the waters, the baths, and other usual topics of conversation here. She asked me once if I drank the waters, and I replied with evasive lightness that I had had a slight accident to my knee and took them occasionally. Then I adroitly got her back to safer topics. The DENTONS went back in the evening. I was rather glad—they had served a very useful purpose, and I would rather have her to myself. Mrs. DENTON is loud and cheery, and horribly energetic. Even her husband's incurable indigestion doesn't seem to have damped her spirits. I am looking forward to tomorrow and every day until she goes, which, alas! is to be very soon. I counter-ordered the all-day bath, and resumed rational treatment. F. C. PH.

(To be continued.)



FANCY.

The kind of figure you see on Posters inviting you to the French seaside resorts.

RÉCLAME A LA RÉJANE.

DURING Madame RÉJANE'S stay in London everyone must have seen her pair of very handsome mules drawing a carriage of a form sometimes seen in Paris, and resembling, according to one London newspaper, a hansom cab. Seeing that it has four wheels, the box in front, and a pole for a pair of animals there-semblance is not very apparent. It is, in fact, a victoria with a fixed wooden hood instead of a movable leather one. It is extremely unlikely that this eccentricity of genius on the part of Madame RÉJANE will pass unnoticed or unimitated by the other leaders of the theatrical world. Next summer we may expect to read the following amongst the "Society" paragraphs.

Madame SARAH BERNHARDT was in the Park yesterday, in a yellow barouche drawn by four superb zebras, with postillions in amber silk liveries and gilt hats.

Mrs. LANGTRY was at Hurlingham in the afternoon. She had come down in her miniature green cabriolet drawn by two large antelopes of matchless beauty driven tandem. A negro page, wearing a green satin turban and green dress studded with emeralds, stood as "tiger" behind.

Mons. COQUELIN (the Society paragraphist would certainly write "Mons." instead of "M.") was noticed in Piccadilly in his scarlet *charrette anglaise*, drawn by a remarkably fine ostrich.

Mr. TREE drove through the Park. The dashing dromedary in his elegant pink Irish car excited general admiration.

Mlle. LIANE DE POUGY was shopping in Bond Street. Her palanquin, painted pure white, and lined with white velvet and pearls, was suspended on the backs of two white sacred bulls from India, led by Hindoos entirely clothed in white garments with pearl ornaments.

Mr. DAN LENO was riding in the Row on his hippopotamus. An unexpected incident occurred. The animal suddenly dashed over the footpath and rushed into the Serpentine. Mr. LENO scrambled off, and struggled out of the water with some difficulty. He was at once charged by the police with having a horse not under proper control, with riding on the footpath, with sending an animal into the water, with bathing in the Serpentine during prohibited hours, and with other breaches of the Park regulations. As he explained, however, that the animal was a river horse, and therefore ought to be in the river, and that he had not bathed in the Serpentine but had only stepped in with his clothes on by mistake, his name and address were taken and he was allowed to go home. The Royal Humane Society's men, after two hours of fruitless efforts, desisted from their attempts to rescue the hippopotamus, which left the water later on and trotted quietly home to Mr. JAMRACH'S stable. H. D. B.

THE POINT OF VIEW.

["It is just in the south that the mists of the north get their full effect on the northern imagination."—*St. James's Gazette.*]

OH, folk on distant journeys bent
In search of Nature's rich delights,
Who seek earth's rarest spots, intent
To view her fairest sights,
Come, since your aim is beauty's quest,
And spare your pains, and save the
cost,
Which, experts say who know the best,
Are useless waste and labour lost.

He to the highest who aspires
Humbly his object best attains,
He who the mountain's charm admires
Should view it from the plains;
The ocean's spell he best can prize
Who inland gives his fancy scope;
The sun is brightest in his eyes
Who in a dismal fog must grope.

Ah! then, why squander wealth and time
In costly visits to the sea?
Why perilously mountains climb
In quest of scenery?
Nay, beauty's lover, rather go
Among surroundings poor and mean,
And learn fair Italy to know
In Bermondsey or Bethnal Green.

"IFS."

HAPPY the child "who takes after his father," IF the child isn't thirsty, and IF his father is a teetotaler.



FACT.

The kind of figure which comes nearest to the ideal you have formed.