

EHIRICH (L.R.)

HEALTH RESORTS

FOR

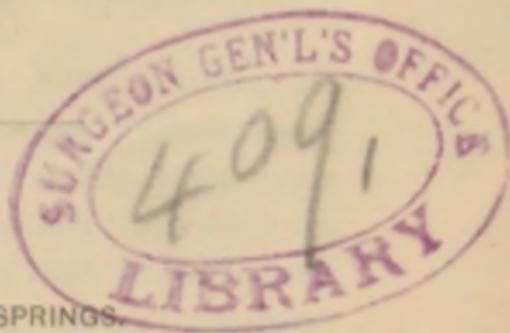
LUNG TROUBLES

A LETTER,

CONTAINING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES, PUBLISHED IN
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BY

LOUIS R. EHRICH.

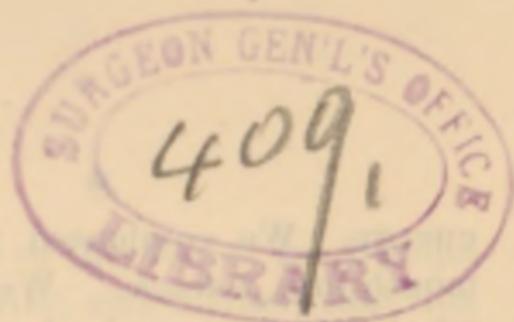


COLORADO SPRINGS,

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would seem to be in the
interest of Colorado Springs



HEALTH RESORTS

FOR

LUNG TROUBLES.

COLORADO SPRINGS, May 8.—The great prevalence of lung disease, my conviction that the disease can be arrested and in many cases cured by the proper climatic influences, and, further, my knowledge of the difficulty of obtaining unprejudiced information as to the character of climates—all these considerations have induced me to publish the following record of my experience as a lung patient.

I was a merchant in New York city. Like my more prominent fellow merchants of that mad metropolis, I was consumed with a wild ambition not only to develop my business to vast proportions, but also to out-distance all competitors. My partners and I worked with intense

energy. We condensed the work of a month into a week. We centered our whole life in our business. We prospered rapidly, but increased prosperity only added fuel to our ambition.

The question of health never entered into my calculation. I allowed myself no vacation—never realized the need of a rest. For several years my face had worn that pale, haggard expression which might be called the New York business man's complexion; but I experienced no indications of weakness or ill health. One morning in August, 1878, I awoke with a strange, warm, soft feeling in my throat. It was a hemorrhage from the right lung. Then the overwork of years declared itself, my nervous force was completely exhausted, and a violent fever robbed me of flesh and strength.

"Complete change," the doctors said, "Europe, a year's rest!" "I asked, "Where shall the year be spent?" My own physician frankly admitted that he knew little about European climates. So we consulted one of the great authorities. The authority advised that I spend the winter in Rome. Let me say right here that, in my opinion, the winter climate

of Rome is one of the worst in Europe for a consumptive, and further, that this first consultation proved to me what many subsequent consultations have proved more strongly, namely, that American physicians (and European physicians, for that matter) know very little about climates. A successful American physician is just as busy in his business as I was in mine. He may read reports of physicians, who naturally are inclined to extol the climate of their own locality, but he knows nothing on the subject from personal experience, and personal experience is the only safe guide in the question of judging climates.

To Europe I went. On the road to Marseilles, whence I intended to take steamer for Rome (via Civita Vecchia), I fell into talk with an Englishman, who informed me that the climate of Nice and Mentone was infinitely preferable to that of Rome. As I was only a few hours' travel from Nice, I resolved to go there as an experiment. Never shall I forget my first day at Nice! Coming from the snow and piercing damp of Paris to the soft, balmy air of the Riviera,

with its semi-tropical vegetation, its lovely walks and drives, its enchanting outlook on to the deep blue Mediterranean, it seemed to me as if I had been transported to paradise. That winter I spent on the Riviera, principally at Mentone. Finally, on March 1, much against the advice of friends, I started for Rome. I spent seven weeks in the Eternal City, subsequently going to Sorrento, Florence and Venice, but at none of these places did I find, even late in the spring, the weather as mild and sunny as it had been at Nice and Mentone in midwinter. About the middle of June I arrived at Munich and consulted Professor Buhl (at that time a great south German medical authority) as to where I should spend the summer. I had heard a great deal of Davos, Switzerland, and wanted to go there. Professor Buhl, however, informed me with an air of wisdom, that the altitude of Davos (5,000 feet) was provocative of hemorrhage, and sent me first to Soden, a pleasant little watering place near Frankfort-on-the-Main, and later to Heiden, an insignificant resort near Lake Constance, where I felt so miserably that I was glad to

leave it. The summer over, physicians pronounced me almost well." Consumptive reader, never let the phrase "almost well" impose upon you! As a Scotch physician, to whom I repeated the expression, truthfully said: "It is like saying that there is only a very small spark still alight in the powder magazine. That tiny spark may produce death and destruction. No rational man ought to be satisfied until that last spark has been thoroughly stamped out."

I returned to New York in October and remained there all winter. Three hours of every morning I gave up to business, and the afternoons I devoted to horse-back riding. I seemed to improve constantly, so that when, the following June, I had my lungs examined by the late Dr. Austin Flint, he pronounced me perfectly well. To make assurance doubly sure, I spent that summer camping out in the Adirondack mountains. I continued to gain in weight and strength. In the middle of August came one of those drenching rains common to the Adirondack region. It rained three successive days, soaked the camp and surroundings, and lowered the temperature very con-

siderably. I caught a severe cold which I could not throw off in the mountains, and which still clung to me when I reached New York in September. Consumptives, give heed! I looked the picture of health, I weighed twenty pounds more than before I was first taken sick, and only three months before Dr. Flint had pronounced me perfectly well. I began to devote more time to business, giving up only part of the afternoon to horse-back riding. Five weeks had scarcely passed when, riding in Central Park, I began to cough violently, expectorated blood, and at once heard in my chest that dreadful crunching sound which betokens a hemorrhage. Scarcely had I reached home and bed before a violent hemorrhage declared itself. The hemorrhages recurred again and again, and it was six months before I left my room. I went to Aiken, South Carolina, for six weeks. It did me no good. The summer I passed at the Mountain house, Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, where my health steadily improved. In the fall I went to Europe. The first three years I spent at the following places: Three winters at Mentone, two spring seasons in Italy,

one spring at Merau in the Tyrol, two summers at Reichenhall, Bavaria, one summer in Engelberg, Switzerland. I improved somewhat all the time, but, altogether, very inconsiderably.

The conviction finally forced itself upon me that there was no curative quality for lung trouble in the air of the Riviera. It is a delightful place to live (barring cholera and earthquakes), and for consumptives whose cases are extreme, who have high fever and little vitality, it probably is a very good place to spend the winter. In my own case, however, it produced no benefits, so I determined, against the advice of several physicians, to try higher altitudes. The summer of 1884 I ventured to spend at Saint Moritz (elevation 6000 feet), and the following winter, from September to April, at Davos, Switzerland. Davos is so peculiar in its climate and surroundings, it has gained so great a reputation as a resort for consumptives, that an extended description of it is warranted.

Davos lies in a well sheltered valley about half a mile wide and two miles long; altitude, 4,800 feet above sea level. It is a village of hotels built on the side

of a mountain, so as to escape the draught of the valley below. The snow generally falls there in October, and the ground remains snow covered until the middle of April. The nights are very cold, the days, so long as the sun shines into the valley, very warm. During the months of January and February I ate my lunch on a veranda in the open air, the awning drawn overhead to shield us from the sun, whereas five feet from where we sat the snow lay three feet deep. Back of the hotels the mountain rises several thousand feet. For a thousand feet up a footpath, leading to an abandoned hut called the Schatz-Alp, is thoroughly kept in order by the municipality and forms the principal walk of the patients.

The motto of Davos as regards climate and mode of life is "Harden yourself!" The more hardy patients walk a great deal, climb up to the Schatz-Alp every day, and are out in all weather. All the invalids sleep with their windows wide open. Many skate and toboggan. Be it remarked that during the winter one seldom takes cold at Davos. Let me sum

up the advantages and disadvantages of this celebrated resort.

Advantages:

1. Altitude of nearly five thousand feet. The lungs get more exercise, and increased exercise gives them increased elasticity and strength.

2. The air is invigorating, dry and cold, and yet warm enough during sunshine to allow delicate patients to sit out of doors.

3. There is no dust. The snow prevents this.

4. There is no cloudy, no foggy weather. Except when snow falls the days are all sunny.

5. There is little wind, very little up where the hotels are situated.

6. The hotels are all very well managed (especially Kurhaus Holsboer), and go far toward supplying home comfort.

Disadvantages:

1. Davos is one great hospital and nothing else. All who go there go for their health only.

2. The patient is penned up in a little snow-covered valley. His walks are limited to the main street or to the climb up the Schatz-Alp. He is natural-

ly compelled to meet the same consumptive acquaintances a hundred times a day. The patient feels imprisoned. He knows that he cannot go beyond the limits of this diminutive valley without imminent danger. Before the winter is half over the daily sight of the same barren, wintry scene, of the same consumptive faces, produces a strong feeling of ennui. One longs for spring as a prisoner longs for the day of his deliverance.

3. The life is all hotel life. There are no furnished cottages for rent, and families would find it difficult to keep house if there were. The crowding together of consumptives in a hotel, the close contact with very sick invalids, the necessity of constantly breathing consumptive exhalations, the shock which a death in a hotel brings, the incessant mutual inquiry and conversation of the guests about their condition, all this is certainly a great injury.

4. The air is too chilly, even when sun warmed, to allow patients to drive with safety. Skating and tobogganing are too violent for the majority. So there is

practically no out-of-door amusements for the very sick.

5. The absence of wind has its objections. Very frequently the smoke rests stationary over the town like a bank of clouds. Wind means natural ventilation, and ventilation is very necessary for a town of consumptives.

6. In the early spring, say from the 15th of March, the snow begins to melt. Sore throats and colds abound. The invalid would like to get away, but he dare not, because it is still too cold in other resorts. The snow melting period is always dangerous in Davos.

7. The topography of Davos is such, and this is a very great disadvantage, that the sun rises very late and sets very early. There are unclouded winter days in Davos when there is barely four and a half hours of sunshine.

8. Hardly any one would think of making Davos a permanent residence. No one could afford to unless he had sufficient means to live without work, or went in the hotel business. There is no other industry.

9. Finally, in case the climate disagrees with a patient it is very difficult

and very dangerous to change. To reach the Riviera requires a five-hour stage coach ride to the nearest railroad station, and a long and circuitous railroad trip through the St. Gotthard to Milan, Genoa, and thence to the Riviera, involving the necessity of spending two to three nights on the road and making five changes of cars.

Now as to results: In my own case Davos had no appreciably beneficial effect, except to make my lungs less sensitive. A very near relative spent three consecutive winters at Davos. He felt better while there, but it effected no cure. Personally I know of no case in which a cure was brought about at Davos. Six of the acquaintances of my Davos winter are dead. None the less, I have no hesitation in saying that, in my opinion, Davos is by far the best curative winter resort in Europe for lung patients.

The spring of 1885 I passed at Baden-Baden. There I received letters from a friend and fellow invalid who had also tried the European climates, but who, being compelled to return to the United States, had spent the winter of 1884-'85 at Colorado Springs, Colorado. He

wrote so warmly in praise of the Colorado climate, and I was so tired of living in Europe that I resolved to follow his example. So after visiting Holland and Belgium during the summer, we returned to New York in the fall. I at once consulted three New York medical celebrities. Number one tried to dissuade me from going to Colorado and endeavored to send me back to Davos. Number two shook his head and seemed to expect dreadful results. Number three very sensibly said: "Go and try it. If it does not agree with you in six weeks go on to Santa Barbara." I must remark that not one of these three celebrities knew anything about the existence of Colorado Springs and that to each of them Colorado meant Denver.

On December 2 I left New York for Colorado. I went with fear and trembling. Chicago gave me a slight taste of its climatic possibilities in the shape of a medley of wind, hail, snow, sleet and rain. So far as the travel went my two days' railroad ride from Chicago was a rest and a pleasure, but when I looked out at the straggling, neglected, desolate looking towns of Nebraska and thought

that possibly Colorado Springs might resemble these, my heart sank within me. I had expected to find Colorado very cold. Judge then of my glad surprise when, at 7 in the morning, I stepped out of the cars at Denver on the 7th of December. The sun was pouring down a flood of warm, bright light. The air was very mild, yet there was a light, bracing tone in it which made it a delight to breathe. Every inhalation was like a draught of nectar. I thought of snow-bound Davos and was happy. Three hours later brought us to Colorado Springs. Our friends had secured a furnished house for us. Our expectations were exceedingly modest, so that our astonishment was great when a short drive through wide, beautiful streets brought us to a comfortably furnished home equipped with all modern improvements—bath-room, running water (cold and warm), gas, open fireplaces and steam heater, telephone connection and all.

From the day of my arrival my health began to improve, and ever since has continued to improve. After now having spent two winters and one summer here, I feel warranted in saying (and my

range of observation includes Old and New Mexico, which I have lately visited) that, taking climate and all other conditions into full consideration, Colorado Springs is the best resort on the face of the globe for an invalid with lung disease.

No climate is absolutely perfect, so I shall first call attention to the only blemish in the climate of Colorado Springs. We have some wind and, at times severe wind, yet the number of days when an invalid is compelled to remain indoors on account of strong wind is not more than the number he is compelled to spend indoors at Davos on account of the falling of snow. Furthermore, if an invalid finds the wind objectionable he can readily escape it by changing to Manitou Springs, (10 minutes by rail), which is even more sheltered than Davos.

Now as to the advantages of Colorado Springs:

1. Its altitude is six thousand feet above sea level. To the north the land rises gradually, thickly wooded, to the height of 7500 feet. Six miles to the west runs a spur of the Rocky mountains

culminating in Pike's Peak, 14,200 feet high. Thus the city is sheltered to the north and west and is open to the south and east.

2. The sunshine is almost uninterrupted. During the winter there is no rain, no cloudy or foggy weather, and hardly any snow. Snow falls very rarely, and when it falls it disappears quickly and almost miraculously, leaving neither mud nor dampness behind.

3. As the city lies open to the east and the higher mountains to the west are at some distance, the daily duration of winter sunshine is very great—fully forty per cent greater than at Davos.

4. The character of the soil is porous. This is a very important advantage. If rain or snow falls in Denver, for example, the result is mud, and mud means continued dampness. There is no mud at Colorado Springs.

5. The invalid is not restricted to hotel life. Boarding houses and furnished houses abound. Housekeeping, owing to the presence of a large number of very superior stores, is made easy. Should the invalid prefer hotel life, he will find the hotels first class, but be it

said that no American hotels are so carefully managed as to comfort nor so particular as to ventilation as are the hotels of the Riviera or of Davos.

6. There is nothing of the hospital character about Colorado Springs. Of its 7000 inhabitants, many never were sick, and many who once were are now perfectly cured. The invalids are scattered to such an extent, there are so many amusements and points of interest to disperse them, that one never feels the depressing influence of being in a great consumptive hotel.

7. Amusements are very plentiful. There are few cities in the world that offer such a variety of beautiful rides and drives. Invalids are out riding or driving nearly every day in the year. Many people of wealth and culture reside here, society is pleasant and clubs of all kinds abound—social clubs, reading clubs, musical clubs, fox hunting clubs, etc., etc. An invalid here has neither time nor disposition to mope.

8. One of the objections I found to Davos and the Riviera was that when spring came the patient was chafing to get away. I do not find this at Colorado

Springs. Nor is it necessary. The summer climate is just as healthful and just as exceptional as the winter climate. In fact, the reputation of Colorado summers brings thousands of tourists here every summer. The days are warm, not uncomfortably so, and the nights are always cool enough to make a heavy blanket necessary. Some invalids go up into the beautiful near-by mountain parks (8,500 to 10,000 feet high), and live at a farm house or camp out. Some change to Manitou Springs and enjoy witnessing the summer gayety. The majority remain here and are equally benefited.

9. If a patient feels disposed to make a change during the winter, he has a large choice of places which he can visit with safety. He may go to Denver or to any of the towns between Colorado Springs and Poncha Springs inclusive. This belt of territory is all favored with an exceptional climate. On the other hand, if an invalid finds that the climate does not agree with him, he can travel hence to Southern California quickly and comfortably.

10. Families will find here all neces-

sary advantages. They will discover that Colorado Springs combines eastern comforts and eastern culture with western sociability and western freedom. There are good public and private schools, and there is a well-conducted college offering all the advantages of a scientific and classical education.

11. Most Americans, whether from choice or necessity, want to have some business interests. Colorado Springs is not a great business city, but, owing to the advent of several important railroad lines during the coming year, it will improve greatly in this respect. None the less, even at present, cattle ranching, sheep ranching and farming of all kinds offer good returns for investments, many enterprises are continually developed here in which capital will win large profits, and merchants in every line of business are making money. Justice compels me to say that the ideal city, so far as the combination of healthful climate and business opportunity is concerned, is Denver. It is not nearly so perfect a health resort as Colorado Springs (it has the objections of being a large busy city, of having an adobe soil, and of being less sheltered), but it is a much better place in which to build up a large business. My advice, therefore, is: "Come here and get well. After you are well, if no

business opportunity presents itself here, go to Denver and you can both make money there and keep well at the same time."

12. Every patient when he first learns that his lungs are affected, thinks as I did, namely, that after sufficient rest and change he can safely return to his old home and old occupation. This is a dreadful mistake, and does not realize itself once in a thousand times. Sooner or later (and alas! very often too late), the consumptive invalid stands face to face with the fact that he must make a life change of climate or of occupation, or of both. If he has tried Colorado Springs and found that the climate suited his case, he knows that, if necessary to change permanently, he can make his home in a beautiful city, offering all comforts and advantages, and peopled by a highly educated community. In the year and a half that I have lived here many acquaintances have gone away. Some went to California, others to Ashville, N. C., others to Europe, and many to their eastern homes. All have come back, and all with the intention of making this their permanent home. The fact is, that when the glory of this climate becomes known, the exceptional beauty and healthfulness of this city, the remarkable scenery of the surrounding country, the character of its society and educational advantages, and its central loca-

tion for excursion or travel, many people of wealth, who are not invalids, but who wish to escape the fog, damp, excessive heat and cold of the east, will make this the home of their choice.

13. A great advantage of this climate is that its effect very soon declares itself. It is not necessary to spend four winters here, as I did at Mentone, in order to learn that the climate is not benefiting your case. You soon discover whether the effect is good or bad, and must act accordingly.

For some types of lung trouble this climate is deadly in its effect. It is difficult to particularize these cases, simply because every case of lung disease varies with the invalid. Speaking broadly, invalids with high fever, with rapid waste of tissue and with low vitality, should not come here. None the less, I am assured by physicians that some of those very types of consumption have done remarkably well here.

A word as to results: The only stranger who has had the courage to make his permanent home at Davos is Mr. J. A. Symonds, the distinguished writer on "The Renaissance." He enjoys fair health, and, if one takes into consideration the gravity of his case when he first went to Switzerland, even remarkable health; but if one compares Mr. Symonds physically with the many hale, hearty, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, red-faced giants of strength whom inquiry

discovers are men who came here several years ago under supposed sentence of death, one acquires tremendous respect for the curative possibilities of this wonderful climate.

I have written strongly and earnestly because I feel so. If I had known the facts as stated above I should have saved over five years of fruitless wandering in Europe and would to-day be far richer in health and richer in purse. To-day Colorado Springs is comparatively little known, but I venture to prophesy that when physicians and invalids shall have fully tested its wonderful resources in climate and all its other favorable conditions, patients will be crowding to it from all parts of Europe and America, and it will become the great sanitarium of the world for curable cases of consumption.

LOUIS R. EHRLICH.

NOTE.—In the fall a large illustrated pamphlet, containing fuller data regarding Colorado Springs, its climate, business, cost of living, etc., will be published and furnished free on application to

W. L. BARTLETT,
Colorado Springs,
Colo.