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THE BATHS OF SIDMOVTH



A
DESCRIPTION
OF THEIR
PROPERTIES

&
PARTICVLARS
OF THEIR
PRICES ETC



H. S.

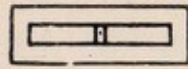
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THE BATHS OF SIDMOUTH,

By a LONDON CONSULTANT.



THE value of baths and other methods of using water for the treatment of disease has been dimly appreciated since the earliest times. It was, however, reserved for Priessnitz, a small farmer of Graefenberg, in Silesia, to be the apostle of this form of cure. Soon after 1820, he commenced treating almost every form of disease and complaint, both acute and chronic, on lines which modern science has christened hydro-therapeutic. He considered that all disease, of whatever nature, was due to an "acid humour" in the blood, which could only be effectually eliminated through the skin. To appreciate the value of his practice, it is not necessary to subscribe to his theories. The success which attended

**Hydro-
therapy.**

his methods led, about 30 years later, to the establishment of various institutions all over Europe, under the direction of properly educated physicians, with the result that bathing processes and the uses of water, both pure and mineral, are now taking that place in the sphere of rational medicine to which their great value, in a large number of morbid conditions, undoubtedly entitles them.

The mode of using baths has varied considerably since the time of Priessnitz. In the light of a fuller knowledge of disease, and of the results of careful and extended observation, the physician of to-day can estimate, with considerable accuracy, not only what diseases he may expect to benefit by hydrotherapy, but also the particular method of application which is best suited to an individual case.

**Mode of
Application.**

The manner in which water, both hot and cold, should be applied to the human body, is a matter which would appear to have exhausted the ingenuity of successive balneologists. In the prospectus of one noted bathing establishment, there are no less than 15 different methods of using the same kind of water for purposes of treatment.

Whether this multiplicity is necessary or even desirable, is open to some doubt. That it is exceedingly impressive no one will deny. For practical purposes, however, an establishment may be said to be fully equipped if it contain, in addition to ordinary swimming facilities, reclining baths, fitted with appliances for douches, vapour baths, needle baths, and an Aix Massage bath. The addition of some others may be convenient; they are not, however, essential.

The exact nature of the water used in bathing has been, and, unfortunately, still is, the subject of much bitterness between rival Spas. A great deal is annually written on this question which savours strongly of special pleading, and it is much to be deplored that one of the results of competition should be to surround so simple a matter with an air of mystery.

Waters used for external application in the treat-
ment of disease may conveniently be divided into
two classes, namely :—Soft water characterised by
an absence of dissolved salts and low specific gravity,
and mineral or saline waters, containing mineral
salts in variable quantities. In general terms it

**Kinds of
Water.**

may be said that when used under similar conditions the soft waters are sedative, and that the saline waters are stimulating in their effects, but it is to be remembered that the temperature of the water, and the manner in which it is applied, are the factors which really determine the effects of a bath.

It is a mistake to suppose, as too many people do, that the beneficial effects produced by bathing in a natural mineral water are due to some particular ingredient, or combination of ingredients, to be found in such a water. These effects are produced mechanically by the presence of the salt in the water, and they vary, not so much with the nature, as with the quantity of the saline ingredient.

The healthy unbroken skin has but a limited power of absorption, which is, at most, insufficient to permit of the assimilation, during a bath, of any of the ingredients of a natural mineral water.

Soft waters are useful on account of their solvent action, and persons who are much exercised on the subject of their complexions repair regularly to soft-water Spas, the better to retain their youthful appearance. Soft waters are also useful for the

administration of composite liquid baths. These are usually prepared by the addition of certain substances to the bath, and it is therefore an advantage to have the water as pure as possible. Almost every conceivable substance has at one time or another been utilized in this way, and the more nauseous the substance the more elaborate the name given to the bath, presumably with a view of consoling the victim. The composite baths now chiefly employed are the sulphide of potassium bath, useful in some forms of skin disease; the nitro-muriatic acid bath, which is often prescribed in affections of the liver; pine baths, which are now being largely employed for various affections, and the fucus, or sea-weed bath. The last is frequently dignified with the name of oceanic ozone bath, probably because it has no special advantage over a bath containing ordinary sea water and has nothing whatever to do with ozone.

**Composite
Baths.**

There are a great many different kinds of mineral water used for purposes of bathing, both in this country and on the Continent, and a great number of these are also used for internal administration. In this latter capacity the exact composition of the water is, of course, of the highest importance.

Mineral Waters.

For bathing purposes, however, mineral waters are estimated chiefly according to the amount and activity of the saline ingredient. The action of such waters, thus used, is to excite the vessels and nerves in the skin, to the extent, in the case of the more highly mineralised waters, of causing decided redness of the surface. This excitation is transmitted inwards by the nerves and gives rise to the internal changes which the treatment is designed to produce. The most constant constituent in highly mineralised waters of all kinds, and one that is responsible for a large proportion of the bathing effects of these waters, is chloride of sodium or common salt. It is a very active ingredient, the quantity of which, especially in hot baths, it is desirable to be able to regulate according to the state of the patient.

Temperature.

Of paramount importance in the consideration of this subject is the question of the temperature at which water should be applied to the body when certain effects are desired. Even a very soft water at a high temperature is a much more powerful stimulant, in many ways, than a highly mineralised water at an indifferent temperature, and it is to be remembered that the bath thermometer is not the only guide as

to the suitability of the application, but that consideration must also be given to the surface temperature of the bather. A cold bath will have a very different effect upon a man who is comfortably cool to that which it will produce upon one whose skin is all aglow after active exercise. The application of the principles of thermal treatment is a matter of the greatest importance and frequently taxes the resources of the most skilful physicians.

The temperature and exact mode of administration of the same water may be so regulated and varied as to produce a great variety of effects. Sea water, for example, when used in one bath at a certain temperature is sedative to a degree which is surprising; in another bath, and at a different temperature, it can be so stimulating as to produce very alarming symptoms. It cannot, therefore, be too often repeated, that the indiscriminate and careless employment of bathing processes is fraught with considerable danger, and that even such innocent **Danger.** looking things as douches and sprays should only be used under skilled supervision.

There is probably no disease which has not, at one time or another, been said to have been perfectly

cured by some form of hydrotherapy. In a book published shortly after the death of Priessnitz, by an English medical man, there is given a list of complaints which have been cured either at Graefenberg or in this country by Priessnitz's methods. The assortment is indeed a strange one. Surgical ailments of the most uncompromising nature, paralyses of all sorts, and the acute specific fevers, are gravely classified for purposes of treatment with baldness, boils, and constipation. The exact measure of credibility which this kind of thing achieved, it is difficult now to estimate. Every new form of treatment passes through three successive stages. That of blind unreasoning faith in its universal applicability is more or less rapidly succeeded by an equally blind and unreasoning contempt for any powers which it may really possess, until at length it succeeds in obtaining such a place in rational therapeutics as may be allotted to it by sober, scientific examination. It may reasonably be claimed that this final stage has now been reached by the various kinds of water-cure embraced by the term balneology, and it may be affirmed, that neglect of its employment in many forms of disease has led to a sacrifice of many useful lives.

Extremes.

Treatment by baths, especially in conjunction with massage and electricity has now an ascertained value in a large number of complaints. An attempt to enumerate these would serve no good purpose and might possibly be misleading. It may, nevertheless, be useful to mention some which are better treated by the above methods than by any other, some in which their employment is contra-indicated, and others in which they constitute an additional weapon which no thoughtful person can afford to despise.

The first place among diseases in which massage and electricity in conjunction with bathing are more important than drugs, must be given to those chronic rheumatic and gouty conditions which are evidenced by deposits in the joints and other tissues. To this class also belong many other less easily detected manifestations of rheumatism and gout, those forms namely, which for some curious reason are often called "suppressed." Some affections of the nervous system, especially neuralgiæ, may also be classed here, as may some of the diseases both of the liver and kidneys, and a good many of the diseases peculiar to women. In the light of what has recently appeared in the medical journals, both in this country and abroad, emanating from those best

Diseases.

Gout and others.

**Heart
Disease.**

qualified to give an opinion on the subject, an important, if not the most conspicuous place, in this class, must be assigned to every form of chronic disease of the heart. The success which has attended the treatment of these otherwise peculiarly hopeless cases, by the brine-baths and other concomitant methods of the Drs. Schott, at Nauheim, is nothing short of marvellous. An English physician of the first rank, who studied these methods and examined the patients at Nauheim, is of opinion that "the system presents a rational treatment, by means of which results can be secured such as have never been obtained by pharmaceutical remedies, even when their influence has been assisted by the most enlightened hygienic and other general precautions," an opinion which is abundantly borne out by every one who is at all qualified to judge.

Caution.

It may be said that of acute diseases, or of diseases in their acute form, few, if any, are properly treated by bathing processes. It is true that cold baths are sometimes employed for reducing high temperatures, but that is a matter beyond the scope of this notice. People with primary affections of the air-passages, or with any consumptive ten-

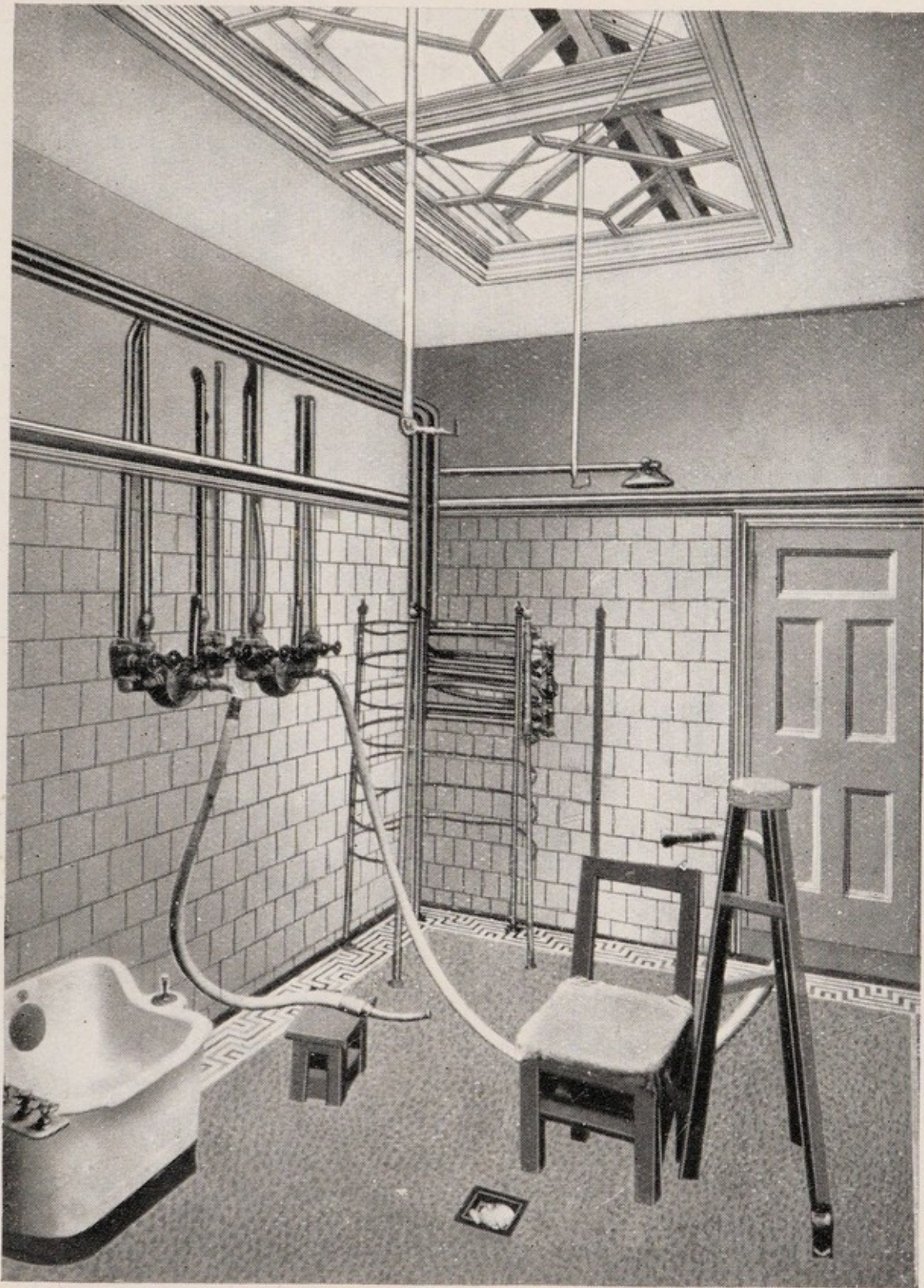
dency, should employ baths with more than ordinary caution, as should those who are much debilitated from any cause. For the rest it is now generally admitted that the study of balneology has placed in the hands of those whose mission is the relief and cure of disease, an additional resource which, when skilfully applied, yields, in potency, to no other weapon in their armamentarium.



THE SIDMOUTH BATHS.

A BATHING Establishment at Sidmouth had been loosely projected for many years. The absence of one had been commented upon and deplored, by resident and visitor alike. It was not until 1893 that anything definite was proposed. In the autumn of that year a limited Company was formed to supply the demand. The Sidmouth Club being in want of new premises, it was decided to include this in the scheme. The result has fully justified all expectations. The Club is now provided with premises which will bear comparison with the very best provincial clubs, and the town can boast of Baths which, for their size, are as complete as any in Europe.

The establishment is situated in the centre of the Esplanade, close to two of the principal hotels, and within easy reach of everywhere.

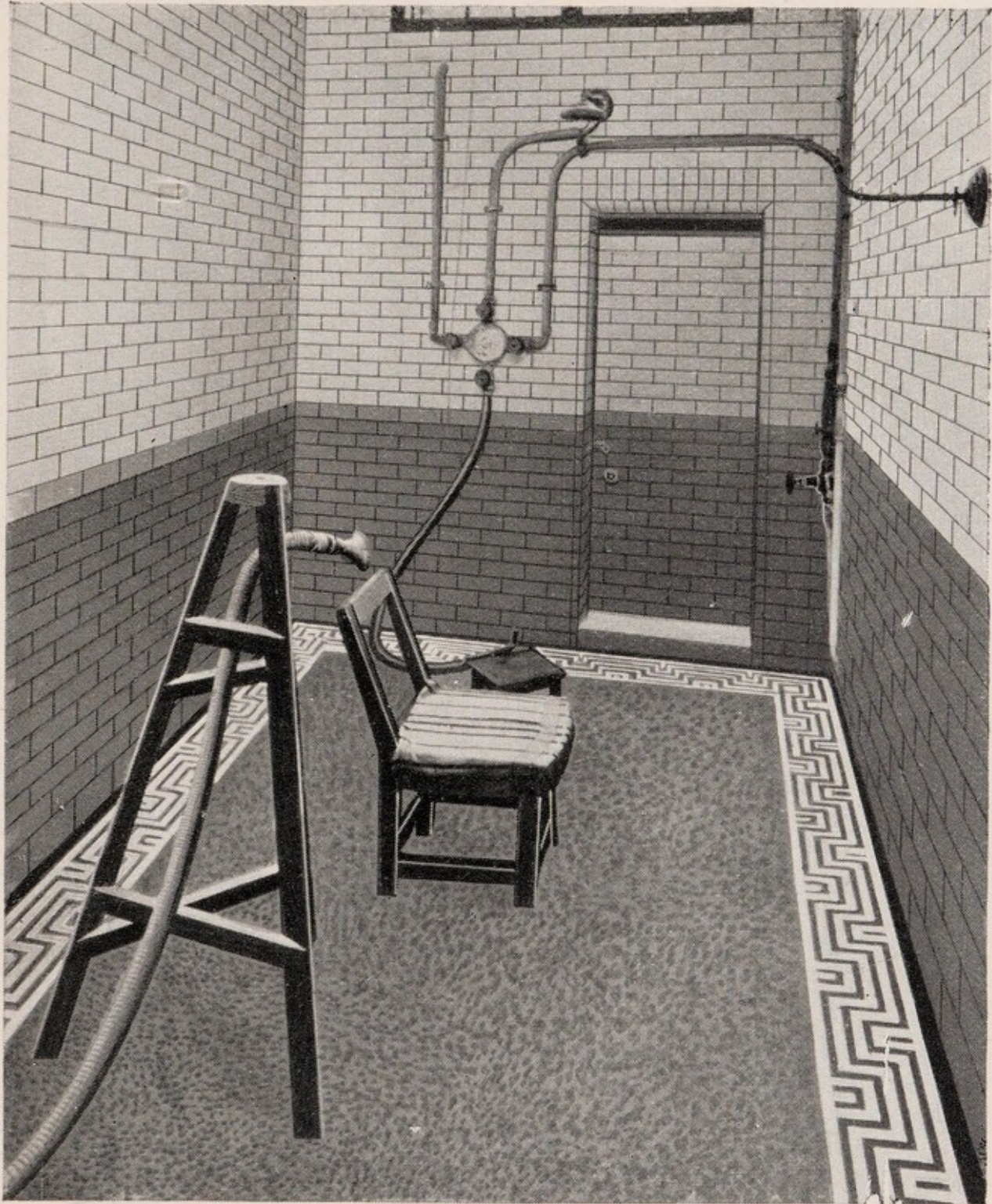


A MASSAGE BATH-ROOM.

No effort was spared to render the establishment complete. Similar institutions were visited and the advice of experts obtained, and it is confidently believed that nothing essential has been omitted, and nothing superfluous introduced. In selecting the style of the baths and the nature of the fittings, etc., the directors were guided solely by the results of the most recent researches on the subject. The Reclining Baths, for example, are entered by two descending steps, and their shape is such as to render unnecessary the unsightly and uncomfortable wooden props so often seen, even in good establishments. The dressing rooms are comfortably furnished, and their temperature can be regulated to a nicety, while their ventilation is amply provided for. The drains, wastes and general sanitation of the institution have been designed according to the latest principles, and the construction carefully overlooked.

**Soft
Water.**

Matters are so arranged that fresh or sea water can be employed in any bath at any desired temperature. The fresh water is remarkably soft. It is obtained from the Sidmouth Water Company's mains, through which there is a constant supply. The subjoined analysis will shew, not only that it



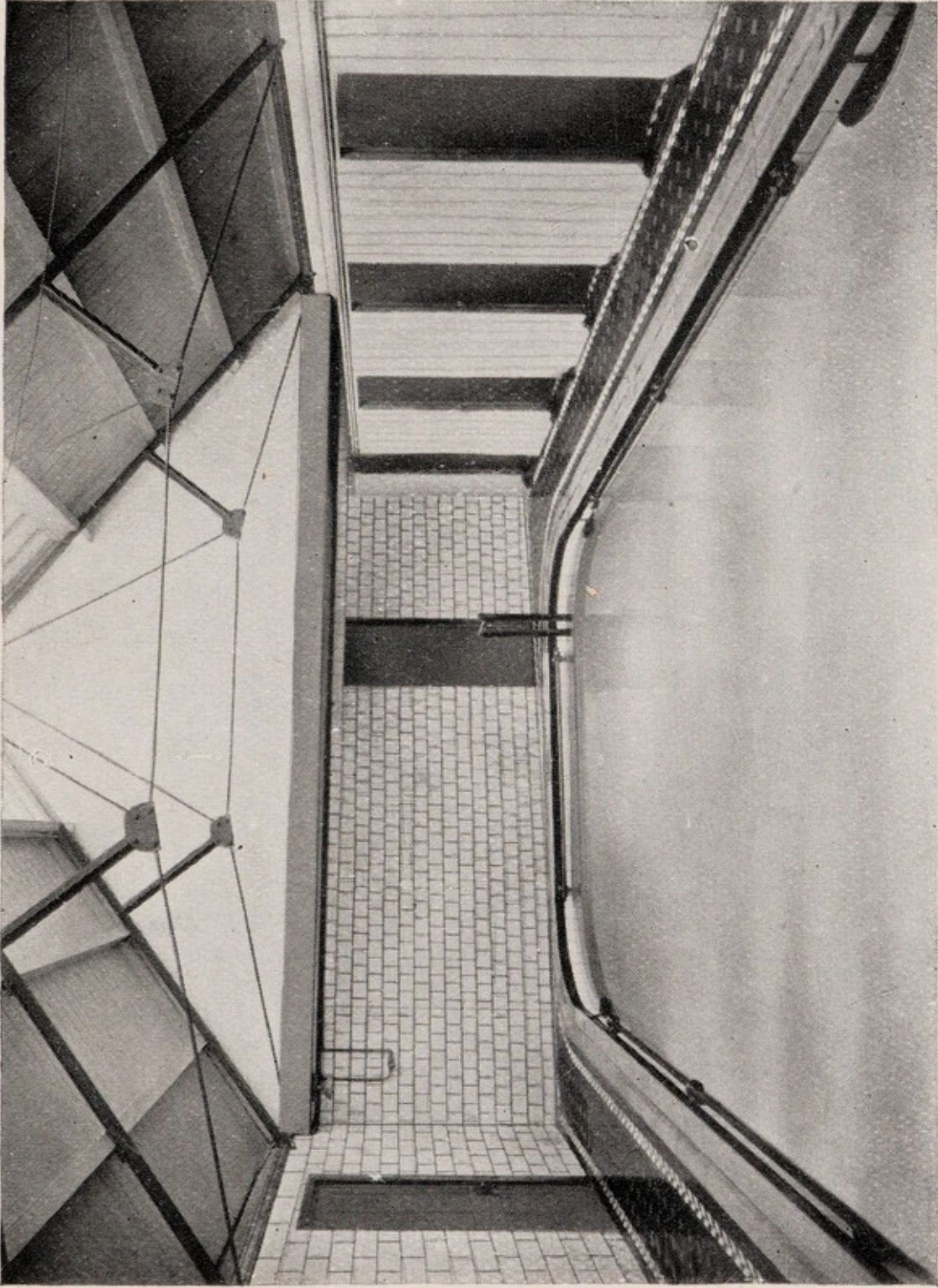
A MASSAGE BATH-ROOM.

is as soft as that supplied to any town in Britain, but also that it would be difficult to improve upon its qualities as a drinking water. This water is distributed throughout the institution in separate hot and cold services.

Smell when heated.	Ammonia.	Albuminoid Ammonia,	Nitrogen as Nitrates and Nitrites = Nitric Acid,	Chlorine as Chlorides = Common Salt,	Hardness.		Total Solid Matter.	Poisonous Metals.	Microscopic Examinations.
					Before Boiling.	After Boiling.			
Odourless.	·000	·004	·055 = ·24	1·8 = 2·9	1·4	1·4	14·0	None.	Clear

Sea Water. The Sea Water is collected into tanks by gravitation at high tides, and there is provision for pumping into these tanks any additional quantity which occasion may demand. A carefully elaborated scheme provides for its distribution through the building as two distinct services of hot and cold sea water.

Advantages. Each bath has thus four services, hot and cold fresh water, and hot and cold sea water, which meet in mixing boxes, and can therefore be supplied in any combination. This fact, which is a special



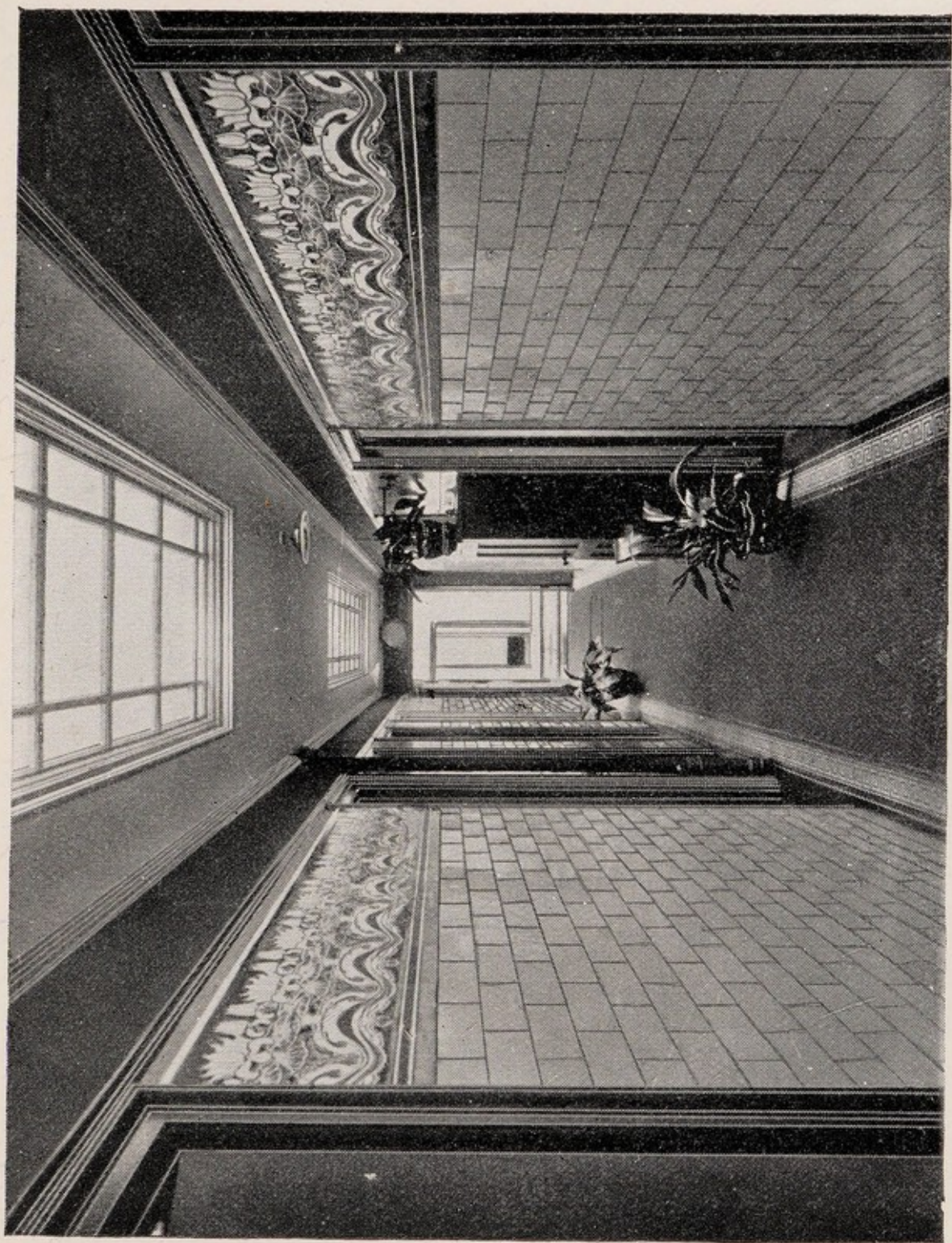
THE PLUNGE OR SWIMMING BATH.

feature of the Baths of Sidmouth, is one of great importance. A glance at the subjoined table will shew that Sea Water is one of the strongest natural mineral waters, whose component parts are very similar to most other mineral waters. By diluting sea water, therefore, in certain proportions, it can be made to simulate very closely other well-known waters; while, if used undiluted, it can produce effects to which few of the others could lay claim.

Nauheim. The constitution of the Nauheim Water does not appear in the above table, but it contains about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of common salt; that is rather less than the quantity found in Sea Water. By diluting the latter, therefore, the essential conditions of the Nauheim Water can be reproduced, and the treatment of diseases of the heart, according to the Schott method, be successfully undertaken. With two such waters as above described to be had in abundance, there is practically no form of treatment which is not available at these baths.

Sulphur. The Sulphur Waters can be imitated in the deep and reclining baths by the addition of a solution prepared for the purpose, and the effervescent baths can be produced by a simple chemical expedient.

Aix. The Aix Massage Bath is becoming increasingly popular with those



THE CORRIDOR.

	Chloride of Sodium.	Chloride of Potassium.	Chloride of Magnesium.	Chloride of Calcium.	Carbonate of Lime.	Carbonate of Magnesia.	Carbonate of Iron.	Carbonate of Soda.	Sulphate of Lime.	Sulphate of Alumina.	Sulphate of Soda.	Sulphate of Magnesia.	Total Salts per Gallon.
SEA WATER (Channel) Schweitzer	1946'029	55'089	263'651	..	2'372	165'123	..	..	101'116	..	..	2'085	2536'000
BUXTON— Dr. Lyon Playfair	2'420	2'500	'114	..	7'773	4'543	..	..	2'323	'240	..	..	20'579
BATH— Sir C. Scudamore	15'	..	16'000	12'000	..	..	..	5'801	95'00	..	9'000	..	140'000
CHELTENHAM— Dr. Faraday	970'00	..	..	..	16'00	..	..	..	145'00	..	37'00	124'00	1292'000
HARROGATE (West)	'236	..	17'75	16'75	..	..	..	11'	..	..	6'50	..	288'00
LEAMINGTON (West)	407'700	..	32'660	205'610	..	..	..	..	..	..	103'080	..	1059'950
SCARBORO'— Dr. Thompson	25'360	..	3'880	..	9'970	..	..	..	147'12	..	..	22'410	209'740
MOUNT D'OR—Lee	25'720	..	..	..	24'150	8'220	..	35'00	..	6'820	8'500	..	114'360
CARLSBAD—Berzelius	79'750	..	..	..	100'500	..	'278	96'950	..	..	198'690	..	496'071
MARIENBAD— Berzelius	127'160	..	..	..	36'860	25'480	1'650	96'160	..	..	350'730	..	649'750
BADEN—Loweg	130'000	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	100'000	..	25'000	25'550	340'000
ISCHL—Lee	2223'000	..	71'100	7'800	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	66'700	2368'000
KISSENGEN (West) ..	645'6	..	34'3	174'7	..	..	..	6'4	..	..	19'9	..	884'00



A WAITING-ROOM.

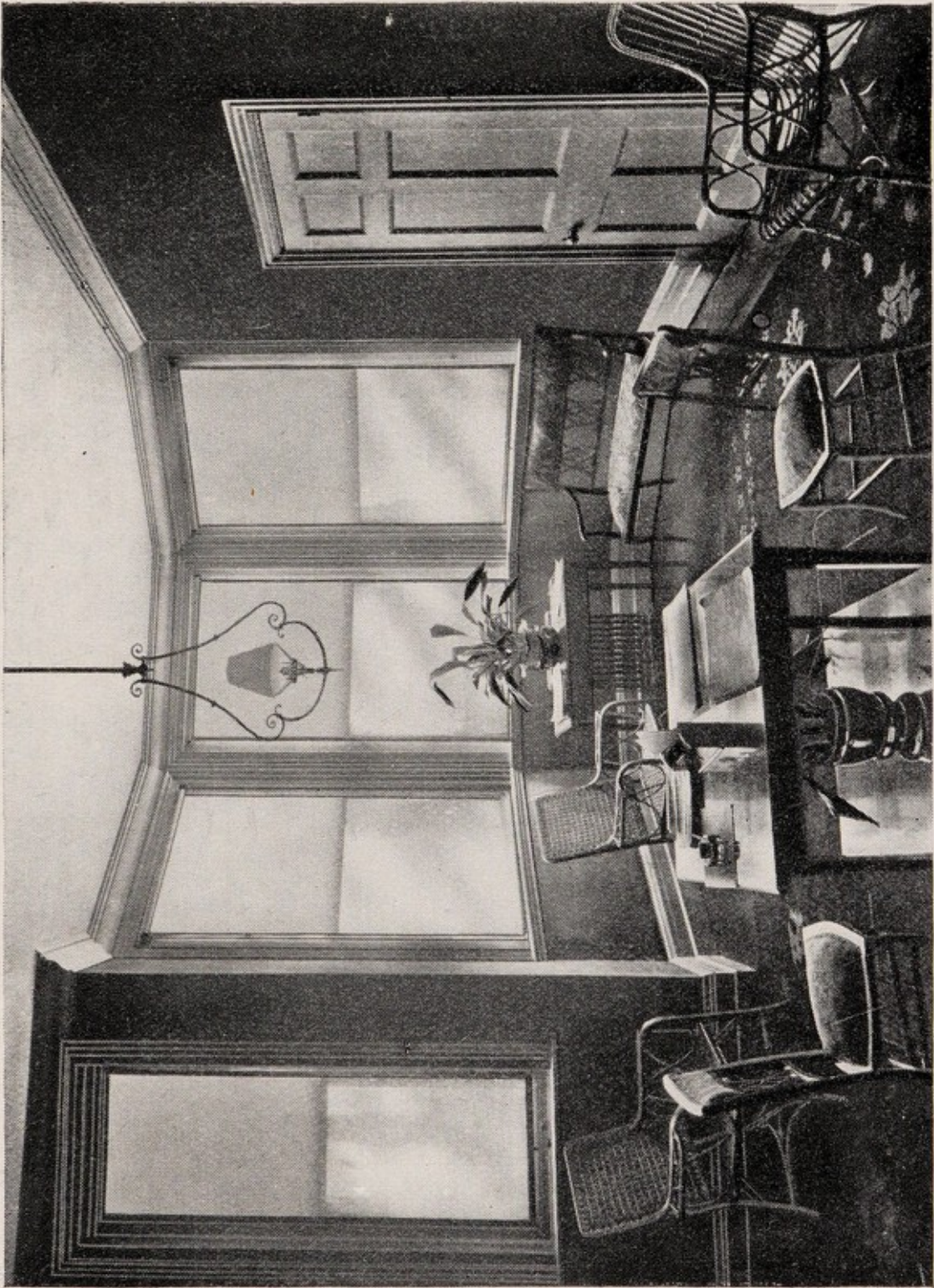
who frequent Bathing Establishments, and the importance and convenience of being able to select not only the temperature of the water, but practically also its composition, will be appreciated by those who prescribe and use these baths medicinally.

Massage.

The staff of the Establishment includes those skilled in the art of massage. By this is meant, not the mere "shampooing" which takes place in the Aix Massage Bath, but the art which demands a considerable knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and whose successful practice entails years of patient and intelligent apprenticeship. Useful as certain baths undoubtedly are, in the treatment of neuralgias and stiffness of joints, the full advantage to be derived from them, in these and other complaints, is never obtained unless they are supplemented by skilful massage. The services of the masseurs or masseuses can also be obtained without having a bath at all, either at the Institution or, under special circumstances, outside it.

Electricity.

What has been said of massage refers equally to electricity. This is often advantageously combined with bathing processes, while its value when used alone is too well known to need comment. Both

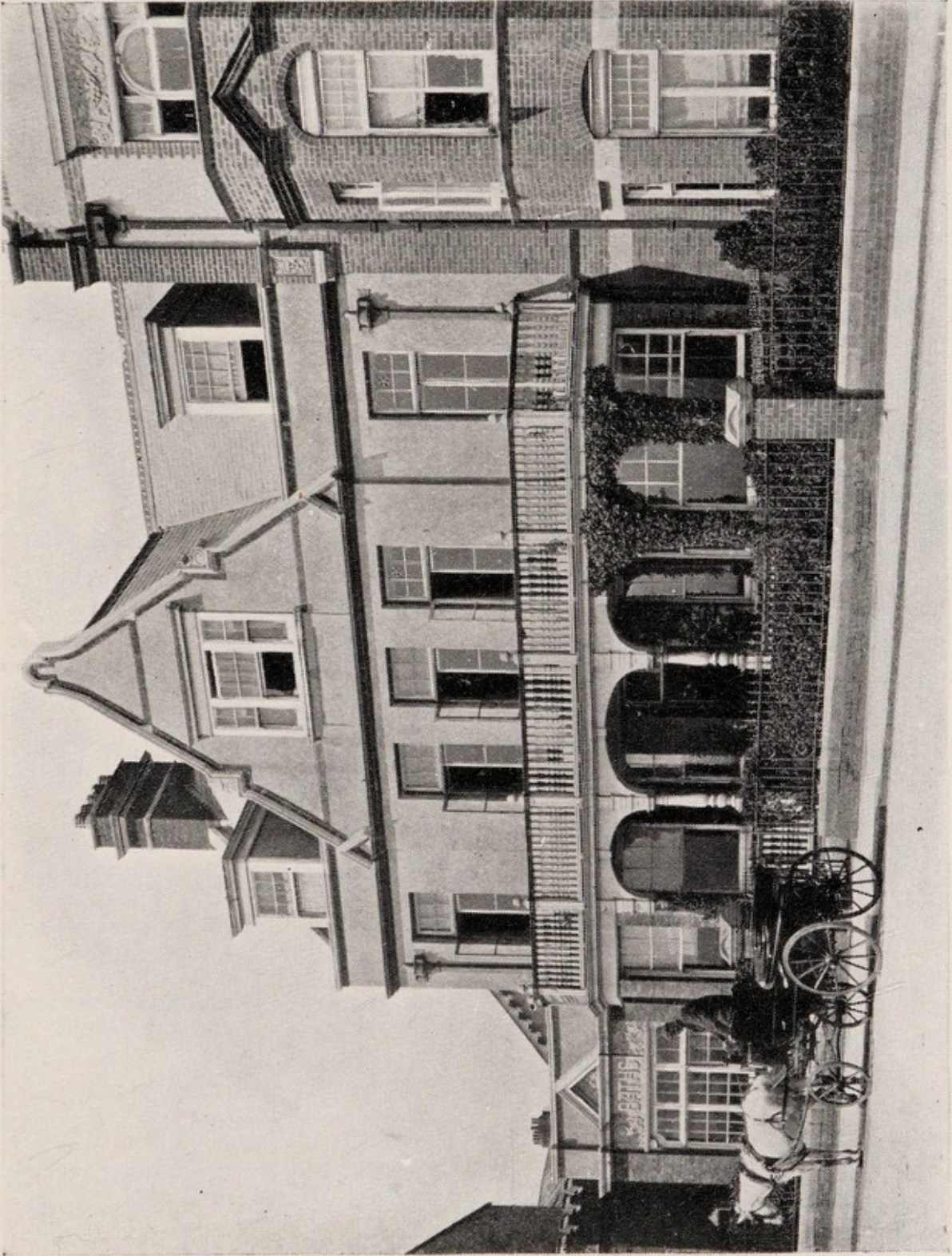


A WAITING-ROOM.

galvanism and Faradism can be obtained at the Institution, but it is applied only on prescription by a medical man, and then in strict accordance with instructions. The instructions should therefore be so explicit as to exclude the possibility of mistake.

The accompanying sketches give a better idea of the bathrooms, &c., than could be obtained by any detailed description. The immersion baths, both reclining and deep, and also the Aix-les-Bains room, have each two dressing rooms attached. This was designed with a view of ensuring expedition in attending to bathers. It is nevertheless desirable, to avoid disappointment, that baths should be booked in advance. Those desirous of having seaweed, pine, sulphur, or other composite bath, are requested to give if possible 24 hours' notice of their intention.





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The Baths of Sidmouth.

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(Winter Months 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.).

LIST OF PRICES.

Immersion Baths,

With Hot or Cold, Salt or Fresh Water, or both, in any proportion.

Reclining.

With a capacity of 200 galls. of water.	
Plain	1/6
With Douche	2/-
Books of 6	7/6

Reclining, with Sea Water Shower.

2/-

Pine or Sulphur Bath, 1/- extra per Bath.

Local Electricity or Massage in addition, 1/- per Bath.

A Course of Baths on the NAUHEIM or SCHOTT Principle 4/6 per Bath.

Aix-Les-Bains Room.

Aix Massage Baths.

Fresh or Sea Water, or both, in any proportion and at any temperature, 3/6 per Bath.

Combination with Plunge, Needle, or Sitz Bath: 4/6 per Bath.

Aix Rose Douche, Local or Dry Douche, Douche Ascendante, Lumbar Douche, Scottish Douche, & Needle Bath.

2/- per Bath.

With Massage in addition, 2/- per 1st $\frac{1}{4}$ hour extra; 1/6 the 2nd $\frac{1}{4}$ hour.

Russian Vapour Bath.

Followed by Plunge, Shower, Douche, or Spray: 2/6 per Bath.

With Massage in addition: 2/6 per 1st $\frac{1}{4}$ hour extra; 1/6 the 2nd $\frac{1}{4}$ hour.

Sitz Bath.

2/- per Bath.

If followed by Plunge, Shower or Spray, 2/6 per Bath.

With Massage in addition: 2/- per 1st $\frac{1}{4}$ hour 1/6 the 2nd $\frac{1}{4}$ hour.

Swimming Bath.

Open Week-days from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Supplied daily with Fresh Sea Water.

Temperature 66 to 70 degs. Fahr. Reserved for Ladies daily, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Open to Gentlemen when not thus reserved.

Admission (including Towels, &c.) 6d.
 Books of Tickets :—of 6, 2/6; of 12, 4/-

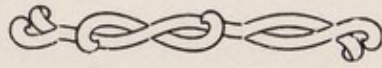
Ladies' Bathing Dresses 2d. extra.
 Swimming Lessons by arrangement,
 Ladies or Gentlemen.

Massage and Electricity

Massage (general or local)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3/6 to 5/- per application.
Electricity	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3/6
Electro Massage	5/-
Hot Moist Pack	2/6
Seaweed Bath	4/-

G. ELKINS, Manager.

W. S. Wilson



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CROSS, Mrs., Clifton House.

CROSS, Miss, 3, Marine Place.

DOWNE, Mrs., Oakleigh House.

DIMOND, Mrs., 2, Marlborough Place.

FINCH, Mrs., Gloucester House.

HERON, Mrs., 5, York Terrace.

HOOK, Mrs., Ulverstone House.

LAKE, Mrs., 2, Fortfield Terrace.

PILE, Mrs., 8, Fortfield Terrace.

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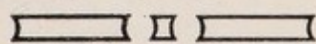
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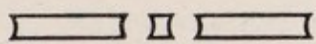
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FORE STREET, Sidmouth.

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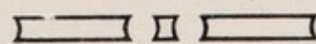
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