ART. VI.—*A Short Account of the Baths of Leuk.* By JAMES LITTLE, M.D. Edin. ; M.D. Dubl. (*Honoris Causâ*) ; F. & Ex.-Pres., R.C.P.I. ; President of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland ; Senior Physician to the Adelaide Hospital.

TOURISTS crossing the Gemmi, that most wonderful of Swiss passes, from Interlaken or Thun to the Rhone Valley, come to the bottom of the pass at the Baths of Leuk, and many of them are tempted to go in and look at the bathers in the curious piscines which constitute the specialty of Loèche-les-Bains, but for curative purposes the baths are little known to English people. I believe, however, that, at all events, next year they will attract no inconsiderable number of visitors; and even during the present season, which will continue until the middle of September, some in search of health would do well to select Loèche-les-Bains. The situation of the town is very peculiar: it is surrounded almost entirely by mountains; on one side rises the perpendicular wall of the Gemmi, with its bare and apparently inaccessible cliffs, while on the other stand pine-clad hills; the upper end of the valley is closed in by the junction of these, and even towards the Rhone the valley is shut in and the road to the town of Leuk creeps along the mountain side.

The springs which arise in the upper end of the valley are numerous, and vary in temperature from 102° to 124° F., and their principal mineral ingredients are the sulphates and carbonates of lime and magnesia. They are used exclusively for bathing, and for at least half a century, and probably for a longer period, the special feature which has distinguished the Baths of Leuk from other bathing establishments has been the mode in which the waters were used. Sometimes, as at other places, the invalids remain in their baths only fifteen or thirty minutes, but as a rule the bath lasts two or three hours, the bathers occupying themselves during their prolonged immersion reading and chatting. Some, indeed, take their bath in a private room, but the majority bathe in the piscines—large baths capable of accommodating fifteen or twenty persons. Each bather has a little table, which he pushes before him; on several of these, when I visited the

baths early in the morning, lay a tray with bread, butter, and coffee, and the bathers seemed to be enjoying their breakfasts as thoroughly as if they were in their hotels.

During the past year, however, a new life has come upon the Baths of Leuk. A wealthy syndicate has taken up the place; M. Heller, who is a German gentleman, but who speaks French and English fluently, is the Director. He has brought to the development of Leuk a thorough knowledge of the requirements of such a place, and being familiar with the arrangements of the best German and French baths, has determined that nothing shall be wanting which capital and energy can supply to make Leuk one of the foremost European health-resorts.

There are numerous private bath-rooms for those who prefer, as no doubt most British visitors would, to have their baths alone. Douches have been put up, and a male and a female rubber from Aix-les-Bains have been engaged to introduce the Aix system of rubbing. There are several excellent hotels. I went to the hotel which was placed first in Baedeker, the Hotel des Alpes, and found the furniture and appointments new, the table good, and everything comfortable.

Dr. de la Harpe, who speaks English perfectly, very kindly took me over the place and showed me everything, and not only gave me the results of his experience as to the cases in which the waters of Leuk are useful, but very candidly warned me regarding the cases in which the climate and waters may prove injurious, especially cases of chronic heart disease. Forming a theoretical opinion as to the kind of cases in which British physicians might find the climate and baths of Leuk beneficial to their patients, I would place first functional disturbances of the nervous system, those cases seen in women, and sometimes also in men, which we are compelled to describe as neurotic or neurasthenic; secondly, chronic articular and muscular pains; and thirdly, chronic eczema and psoriasis. In uterine and ovarian diseases, such as are usually sent to Ems, I can also well understand that the prolonged baths may prove very beneficial.

The Baths of Leuk are easily reached from Lausanne, the trains from which stop at Loèche-la-Ville, where carriages can always be had to drive to the Baths.