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VENTILATION OF OCEAN STEAMERS.

Read before the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

BY A. LAPTHORN SMITH, B.A., M.D., M.R.C.S. Eng.

Any one comparing the steamship of twentyfive years ago with that of to-day cannot fail to be impressed with the vast improvements which have earned for the latter the title of "floating palaces."

In some respects, however, there is still room for improvement, and in none more so than in the matter of ventilation.

That the ventilation of ocean steamships is, at the present day, far from perfect, is a fact which will be generally admitted by nearly every one who has crossed the ocean. Were any proof necessary I have the evidence of more than a hundred reliable witnesses, including several captains of steamers, whom I have questioned, as well as my own experience, to testify that this important department of the sanitary arrangements has not kept pace with the other profuse and elaborate provisions for the passengers' health and comfort.

Many have expressed the opinion that the feeling of discomfort and malaise is more often due to ship sickness than to sea-sickness; while I would venture to go a step further and call it by what I think should be its real name,—partial asphyxia or suffocation.

Many have told me that as long as they femained on deck they were perfectly free from

any discomfort, no matter how much the vessel might be rolling; while others, who having succumbed to the first night's deprivation of air, were too weak to get on deck again during the remainder of the voyage, have assured me that weeks, and in some cases months, elapsed, before they had completely recovered from the effects of it.

My own experience was this: I crossed the Atlantic six years ago in the best steamer of one of the best lines, and having my choice of rooms I chose one amidships, on the main deck. It measured about six and a half by seven, by eight feet, and as I had the room all to myself it allowed me 364 cubic feet of space, less the amount occupied by my own body, two beds, a sofa and other furniture, and my valise; leaving about 300 cubic feet of air for myself.

I was obliged to keep my door locked and the regulations forbade the opening of U port hole. I did not notice however until next m rning that the obliging steward had, at the request of the previous chilly occupant of the room, pasted paper over the tiny perforations at the top of the partitions, which were supposed by a flight of fancy to fulfil the purposes of ventilation.

But next morning my aching head and furred ongue made me realize that I was breathing an insufficiently oxygenated atmosphere, rendered poisonous moreover, with carbonic acid gas.

For all authorities on sanitary science are tagreed that the smallest quantity of fresh air consistent with health is 3000 cubic feet per hour for each adult human being; which would suppose that the air in my above mentioned 300