

may be sown to draw when quite young. Our main crop of those, that by this time is ripe perhaps, should now be drawn. Leave the onions on the ground for awhile to harden and ripen. Sow a crop of turnips—an early kind is preferable. And then there is the winter spinach to be sown; this when it comes up should be thinned—some even advise planting it

out. Cabbage seed, too, on good ground and in an open situation should now be got in. Indeed we may say this month that it is "seed-time and harvest." Let us hope that the latter will be prolific, for do we not know that when "the valleys stand thick with corn" there will probably be less "complaining in our streets"?

THE SEA AS A PHYSICIAN.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



Y SHOULD be loth indeed to waste even a line of my valuable space by way of preface to this paper, but it is perhaps as well that the reader should know it is the outcome of a by no means limited experience of sea-life, in all its

varied phases. The intending traveller, whether invalid, convalescent, or simply pleasure-seeker, will find herein a few hints that he will do well to lay to mind, and take advantage of before embarking.

Now the first question one naturally puts to one's self, before making up his or her mind to try an ocean-voyage for the re-establishment of health, is a very natural and highly practical one: "Is it likely to do me any good?" This depends entirely, as a matter of course, upon what your symptoms and sufferings are and have been. The cases that are improved by a sea-voyage are far too numerous to individualise, but they are chiefly those of an atonic character. No physician would think of ordering a patient to sea, who was suffering from any acute or sub-acute disorder. In the earliest stages of consumption—in other words, in cases of threatened consumption—the long quiet sea-voyage round the Cape to Australia often acts as a charm. On his arrival in that country, supposing he has so timed it that this will be about the latter end of January, the balmy bracing ozoniferous air, the bright sky above, the constant sunshine, and the strangeness of everything around, will cause the patient to think he has got a new lease of life; nor, if he takes ordinary precautions, if he avoids all excess of every kind, and lives for a time by rule, will his thoughts have deceived him.

Cases of chronic gout and rheumatism are benefited by the air of the ocean, only great care must be taken in avoiding draughts; however pleasant and grateful they may feel at the time, there is danger in them.

Bronchitis, or rather *winter-cough*, is similarly benefited, but I have my doubts about *asthma*. Few seamen, however, if my memory serves me aright, suffer from this disease; on the other hand, many people who are subject to asthma find benefit by residing in a smoky town. Before, therefore, any asthmatical patient makes up his mind to go on a long voyage, I should advise him to reside for a short time at some bracing seaside watering-place; if he finds himself better by so doing, he may reasonably hope to derive advantage and improvement by taking a trip to sea.

In convalescence from tedious ailments of almost any kind, one's family physician would, as a rule, approve of a voyage to sea.

Cases of *dyspepsia* and slow digestion often receive marked benefit, and that too in a very short time, from a sea-voyage.

In addition to these special complaints, hundreds of others which may all be included under the general headings of *debility* and *nervous exhaustion*, are literally thrown to the winds during a voyage of even moderate length. In a word, wherever change of scene, bracing air, an equable temperature, balmy breezes, ozone-laden and impregnated with substances of an alterative and tonic nature, and perfect rest are needed to reinvigorate a constitution lowered or worn down—I do not say worn out—by over-work or worry, or by excess of any kind, a sea-voyage is just the thing to do the greatest of good.

Another consideration, which will obtain with many of my readers, is that of expense. I am happy to be able to say that in the very finest liners now-a-days, with the best possible accommodation, and an excellently-found table, you can live as cheaply as you can in a hotel at home. Take just one example, and I could give a dozen: a first-class return ticket between Liverpool or London and New York costs only thirty guineas; and this includes everything except wine; and I hope you don't need that—or imagine that you need it.

"There is the danger of a sea-voyage to be considered, as well as the expense, doctor," I fancy I hear some nervous lady saying. Admitting that we do hear of terrible things at times, of collisions and shipwrecks, and vessels going to sea and never being any more heard tell of, I believe I am right in saying that at sea danger to life is not greater than on land; and

ships, especially those that carry passengers, are so well built, so strong, and so well manned, that all risk of accident is reduced to a minimum. Having made up your mind at length to trust yourself for a time to the care of that wonderful physician, the sea, you will of course have to decide first upon the place to go to, and secondly on the class of ship that shall convey you thither. As to the choice of the place or country you ought to visit, much will depend upon the time at your command. If there is plenty of time on your hands, and nothing likely to occur to hurry you home, I should say by all means take a long voyage, say to the Cape of Good Hope, to the East Indies, or to Australia itself. Probably the latter is to be preferred by the ordinary invalid, going by way of the Cape and returning by the Pacific, crossing the American continent, and thence to Europe from New York. This is indeed a delightful "round," though for that matter there is no real occasion to make a round of it, for, having gone to Australia by the Cape, the patient — a patient he will hardly be by this time though — may return the same way.

As to the class of ship chosen for the voyage, the steamers that voyage between this country and the United States are, as a rule, exceedingly clean and comfortable. The P. and O. boats going by way of Suez to the East Indies are large, roomy, and at least as elegantly fitted as any of the Atlantic liners, so that if an invalid decided on visiting either of these lands, he would go by steamer. But if Australia be his destination, some one or other of the large sailing vessels is undoubtedly to be preferred, and this for many reasons. On the sailing ship you have more room, and consequently more comfort; you have more cleanliness too. I do not mean to say that steamers are not kept as clean as they can be, but when the wind is blowing aft, or even in a calm, there is a constant shower of coal-grit from the funnel, which is very far indeed from being pleasant. Again, in a sailing ship you have more peace and quiet; in a steamer, if your cabin is aft, the rattling of the screw under your head at night is a source of great annoyance, and if your cabin be amidships you are even worse off, for here is the everlasting thump, thump, and rattle, rattle of the engines, combined every now and then with the clang and noise of the men with buckets removing the ashes. There is, too, more heat in a steamer, to say nothing of the disagreeable odour of the engines. To these drawbacks you get used in time, but by going in a sailing vessel they are avoided entirely.

A wooden vessel is to be preferred to an iron ship the temperature of the between-decks therein being less easily affected by that of the external air. Composite ships, *i.e.* vessels composed of wood and iron, are also good. Many people prefer a flush-deck ship; I think there is nothing so nice as a poop deck; here your cabin will be placed, and you will be able to carry your port open in ordinary weather, and thus enjoy all the advantages of thorough ventilation.

Having chosen your ship, you must next secure your berth, which ought to be the best you can get; a poop cabin, for example, if in a sailing ship; and if you

go early you will have a better choice. If going to Australia, it is unlikely there will be more than two berths in each cabin. If possible, take that one which is next to the port, and over rather than under another berth. You will thus have command of the port as it were; you will be port admiral, and secure plenty of light, and plenty of fresh air.

It will be necessary for me now to say a few words about the invalid's outfit. As to wearing apparel, then, you will require clothing for cold as well as hot weather, with under-clothing suitable for every variation of temperature. A pilot-jacket should not be forgotten, with warm gloves, mufflers, plaids or shawls, and easy head-coverings, not likely to be blown overboard by the first puff of wind. Rugs and shawls are very desirable *vade-mecums*. If you think of wearing linen under-clothing, take Punch's advice to people about to marry, and "don't." They get damp so soon and have to be changed every day, and it must be remembered that there is no laundress on board. Find out beforehand what accommodation for stowage you will be allowed in your cabin, and take therein only enough clothing or necessaries of any kind to last you until you can have access to your heavy baggage, which is always struck below; for many boxes in a cabin, and coats and dresses hung behind doors or against the bulk-heads, not only look extremely untidy, but they take up the room that would be far better occupied by fresh air.

Be careful to find out what fittings the cabins are allowed by the companies, and if water is supplied to the basins through pipes; if not, a broad-bottomed water-can should be procured. Whether the company supplies towels or not, have your own bath-towels and your own large sponge in a waterproof bag, to take to the bath-room with you every morning. A prettily ornamented cabin pocket for toilet requisites should hang at each end of the basin-stand; the looking-glass should be above, the larger it is the better; and alongside this, and not far from your berth pillow, your swing reading-lamp should be fixed. Everything should be of small dimensions and neat and tidy in a cabin, which indeed should resemble a small boudoir afloat. You will want some small editions of your favourite authors, and a little bookshelf properly constructed for ship's use.

The bed in your cabin will be a narrow one, but not, I think, uncomfortable on this account, if only well found. See to this before you start. Do not forget to buy a lounge-chair for deck use. They are made of wood and fold up. A little pillow should be strapped on behind for the neck to rest upon, and the chair should have your name written distinctly and indelibly on the back. Have everything so arranged in your cabin that it is impossible for it to shift; otherwise, if the ship begins to roll you will be in sad confusion. But do even more than this; have everything so arranged in your boxes, as well, that there may be no shifting there. Sailors kick about the passengers' traps below in a marvellous fashion, so not only should the boxes be the strongest of the strong, but the contents should be so fixed that any amount of capsizing won't affect them. Take any

medicines with you that your doctor thinks you need, especially some nice cooling effervescents. Take also an apparatus for heating water with spirits of wine—be very careful how you use it—a jar or two of extract of meat, a few bottles of essence of coffee (a teaspoonful of this mixed in cold water makes a very refreshing drink), and a tin or two of well-baked Bath Oliver biscuits. If you care for it, eating-chocolate is very nourishing. Now you may ask me, why should you take these little articles if you sail in a well-found ship. I have the answer ready at hand. There will be occasions when you may desire a slight refectation, in order to stem what I may call a hunger-wave, that is apt to come over one at all sorts of odd times when the berth-steward is not at hand. They are commonest just before you go to bed, but they may actually wake one up at night; and this hunger-wave, if not stemmed, will effectually banish sleep; and so forewarned is forearmed.

The best time for leaving this country should, if possible, be considered; your object should be to arrive and spend a few weeks at the port of your destination in the cool season; and summer and winter, as the reader no doubt knows, occur at diametrically opposite times in Southern and Northern hemispheres. At the Cape, for example, it is summer in January and winter in June. If you mean to visit either the Cape of Good Hope, then, or more distant Australia, you ought to leave this country in September. In the West Indies, on the other hand, the seasons are the same as with ourselves, and the best time for an invalid to cruise in that direction would be very late in autumn; and the same might be said with regard to a visit to the East Indies by way of Suez. The best time to leave this country on a visit to North America is the latter end of March; you will arrive in the States just when the most pleasant season of the year is commencing, and when the heat is not disagreeable. A run through the Southern and Western States is, in my opinion, such a pleasant way of reinvigorating one's health, that I wonder why the voyage out to and back from America is not more often had recourse to by invalids.

I must conclude with a few general hints for the invalid's guidance and comfort while at sea. If he has never been on a voyage before, he will very naturally dread the coming on of *sea-sickness*. An article has already appeared in this Magazine on this disagreeable complaint, and some very good advice was therein given. I will only say here, then, that sea-sickness is made too much of a bugbear of. Many people never get sick at all, others are sick only for a day or two at the most, and even in the worst cases it seldom lasts a week, and is very speedily forgotten for the simple reason that the patient generally feels all the better

for his illness. It is better to keep quiet in the berth for the first day of the illness. However, keep the strength up with beef-tea and light, easily-digested nourishment; and get up on deck every morning if you possibly can, and keep all you can in the fresh air. Fight the illness boldly, and you will soon get over it, and by the time you are a day or two south of Biscay Bay, if you are going in that direction, you will begin to enjoy life at sea. It will be a dreamy sort of enjoyment at first, you will be inclined to lounge or loll on deck, with the balmy breath of ocean blowing in your face and a book in your hand, which you imagine you are reading, than to take any kind of exercise, unless it be to hurry down below when the pangs of hunger send you there.

Moderation in eating is absolutely necessary if you would reap the fullest amount of benefit from a sea-voyage, and stimulants are hardly required; indeed, they are much better avoided *in toto*. After awhile, the invalid must make a bold attempt to get rid of the inclination to sit about all day. He must take exercise. A short brisk walk on deck, say for a quarter of an hour before the second breakfast bell, is very beneficial. I will presume you have had your bath before now. It is a salt-water bath you have at sea, an enormous marble tub that you may go heels over head in if you choose. Be regular to a minute in going every morning to the bath-room; every one has a specified time, which is written against his name on a slate; do not stop above a quarter of an hour in the room, for others are doubtless waiting. Walking exercise is that most commonly taken, and although no landsman likes this deck-pacing at first, it comes to be quite enjoyable after a time. Try to have a pleasant companion with you in these rambles, and if you take an interest in the doings of the ship, her rates of sailing, the canvas she carries, the setting of the sails, the appearance of the sky, the clouds, and the sea itself, you will add very much to your enjoyment, and this means that you will be hastening the return of health. There are many kinds of amusement at sea—deck games, &c.—and these, I am glad to say, are nearly all of such a kind that even ladies can enter into the spirit of them.

Choose companions according to your taste—people very soon settle down into groups on board ship—but be kindly and pleasant with every one. Avoid arguments and heated discussions of all kinds, retire early to rest, and do not play cards.

Be on deck all you can; you must never forget that fresh air is half the battle, and you can only get it pure on deck. Carry your port open whenever possible, and in the tropics have your door open all night, with your curtain drawn of course, so that there may be a current of air through the cabin.

