

most dangerous. Those who are most to be feared are the patients who have still strength enough to work in factories or offices, or who can still travel from place to place. These are the real distributors of the disease germ.

In sanatoria and hospitals of course are seen the most complete methods for the handling and disposal of the germ bearing sputum. Paste board sputum cups (Fig. 1) held in metal containers, (Fig. 2) covered with a spring lid designed to prevent flies and other insects gaining access to the contents are in use. Once or twice a day these paper refills as they are called are removed from the container, carefully wrapped in four thicknesses of paper, tied with a string (Fig 3) and placed right side up in a receptacle provided for the purpose, so that they may be subsequently cremated. These containers are frequently cleaned and disinfected, and are carried constantly by every patient when in residence. When away from the hospital of course patients meet changed conditions for it is scarcely practicable to walk around the street carrying a sanatorium sputum cup. For this reason pocket flasks (Fig. 4) are used. At home if nothing better is at hand an ordinary cup with a wide base, such as a shaving mug, may be used if a five per cent. solution of carbolic acid is kept in it. Cuspidors on the floor should not on any account be used no matter what disinfectant is placed in them.

Linen handkerchiefs should not and need not ever be used. In hospitals small squares of butter cloth which can be burned as soon as soiled are found to be very satisfactory. At table, paper napkins should be used entirely and at the close of each meal they should be burned.

So that for the protection of families in which there is a member suffering from tuberculosis a few simple directions carefully followed are all that is necessary. In addition to what has been already said the following might be sufficient :

(1) The first care which the tuberculous patient must exercise is *never to spit about a room in halls or passages or in fact anywhere except into the receptacle provided for that purpose.*

(2) Care must be exercised to avoid soiling pillow covers and bed clothing with expectoration, and men should shave the face to prevent the germs of the disease from clinging to the hair. During cough a piece of moist rag or cheese cloth should be held before the mouth to prevent the germs of the disease, which are then expelled as a fine spray, from infecting the room.

(3) A separate bedroom should, if possible, be occupied by the tuberculous patient, and under no circumstances should the bed be shared by another sleeper. The room should be bright and

well aired, and the habit of sleeping with an open window should be cultivated. Provided there is no draught and plenty of warm bed clothing, there is no danger of catching cold, even in winter.

(4) Unnecessary carpets or heavy curtains should be removed, and the floor left bare or covered with a piece of oil-cloth. In cleaning the room a damp floor cloth must be used to avoid scattering the germs through the air of the room.

(5) Bed linen, etc., should be disinfected by boiling. Such articles when soiled by sputum readily infect a room.

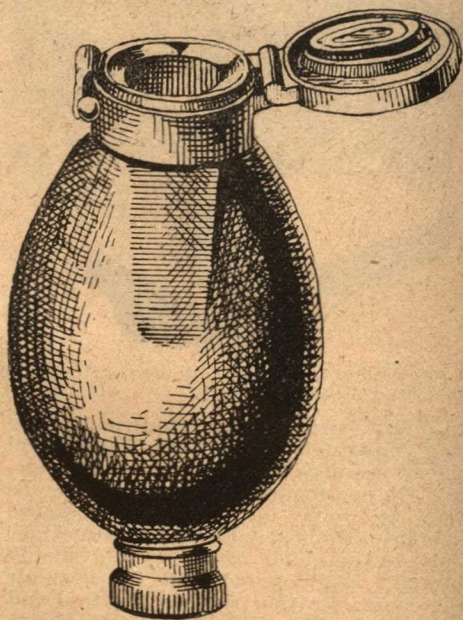


FIG. 4

(6) Be careful not to use the same dishes as a consumptive, unless they have been first thoroughly boiled. In handling articles that have been used by consumptives or that have been in general circulation by the public, you should take particular care to wash your hands afterwards.

In the case of the consumptive patient who is able to walk about the problem of prevention is, however, more difficult, unless he is under careful supervision and has received adequate instruction as to the best means to be adopted to prevent his being a source of danger to the community. Usually it is the case that a consumptive of this class is either unaware of his condition or has no desire that the fact should become known to those with whom he has to associate. In either event no methods are put into execution to properly disinfect or destroy the dangerous expectoration.