

## EDITOR'S SPECIAL DEPARTMENT.

THE question of the inter-communicability of tuberculosis and other specific diseases between mankind and the domestic animals is attracting more attention at the present time in the sanitary world than probably any other subject; while no other subject is perhaps of greater importance. Elsewhere we give notes on recent facts, etc., relating to tuberculosis. We have just received, in the New York Medical Journal of 8th June, a valuable report by the pathologists to the New York City Board of Health, containing the sum of the scientific discoveries and recommendations relating to tuberculosis and its prevention, that have been made during the past year. The same journal, of June 15, gives a lengthy paper recently read before the New York Academy of Medicine, by Dr. F. F. Brush, on the "Relationship between human and bovine tuberculosis." From both of these we propose to give copious extracts in our next issue. Dr. Brush contends that the prevalence of consumption is regulated in a country or locality by the rate of the bovine to the human population and that the disease like small-pox is primarily of bovine origin.

THAT DIPHTHERIA may be conveyed to the human organism from animals there appears to be now no doubt. Dr. Robinson, in a report to the sanitary authorities of the East Kent Joint Committee, writing on the communicability of diphtheria, says: At one isolated farmhouse the disease was concurrent with disease amongst the farm stock, with this further coincidence that, on the occasion of a prior outbreak of the disease at the same house, the cattle were also concurrently affected. The first case in another out-of-the-way hamlet was that of a boy who had been feeding dogs with the carcase of a diseased cow. In one outbreak there was a sudden explosion of the disease confined almost, if not entirely, to the consumers of milk from a particular dairy; and, on inquiry at this dairy, it was found that three cows had been ill, two of which had been disposed of by slaughter. At another locality where the outbreak was limited to two children in the same family, the father of the children had previously had care of a horse suffering from ulceration of the nostrils. Experiment has demonstrated that diphtheria can be communicated to the lower animals, and, if conveyance from the lower

animal to man occasionally takes place, some of the isolated outbreaks, hitherto unaccounted for, many have risen in this way.

IT IS WRITTEN in an old hymn that there are, "Dangers and disease through all the ground," etc., and truly, so common are the causes of accidents and disease that eternal vigilance is the price we must pay for safety. But such vigilance as thus implied, would save many, many valuable lives and would "pay." The Jews made no mistake in that "except they washed they ate not." It was a sanitary ordinance with these ancient people. In handling money, especially of paper, door knobs, banisters, car straps, and a hundred things that everyone must frequently touch, there are chances innumerable of picking up germs of typhoid, scarlatina, diphtheria, smallpox, etc.; and these germs may in many ways be conveyed into the mouth or the blood. In this way too we may account for outbreaks of infectious disease the origin of which is inexplicable in any other way.

THAT LOATHSOME DISEASE syphilis may be communicated through the medium of a spoon, a pencil, a cane, a cigar, a kiss, the dentists' instruments, etc. Nine cases of syphilis of the finger, says Dr. Otis, in the Ohio State Journal, I published several years since as occurring under my own observation, and I have seen others since that time. Besides this, I have seen at least double that number of cases of syphilis where no possible trace of the source of contagion could be ascertained. A tumbler, or any article in common use, defiled with the secretions of a mouth, harboring a mucous patch, coming in contact with a crack or abrasion of the lips of a healthy person, may communicate syphilis through a resulting lesion which may pass away unnoticed. Any similar contact with the blood of a person in the active stage of syphilis will communicate it. Even at the communion table one may receive the infection from the wine goblet.

POISONING from lead and arsenic is probably much more common than is generally supposed. The British Medical Journal says: Dr. Brown, med. officer, Bacup, in his report to the Health Committee, stated that cases of lead poisoning had been very common during the past twelve months, and had been associated with both