

Every case of typhoid must be considered as a focus for the spread of the disease, either during the period of actual illness or subsequent to recovery as a possible "carrier." If such a case or "carrier" is on a vessel, he is not only a constant menace to his fellow shipmates and passengers on account of the close association which exists on board between individuals, but to the public at large, for his frequent shifting from port to port as a travelling focus of infection renders him an active agent in the spread of the disease. As illustrative of the foregoing, it may be stated that recently a "carrier" aboard one of our coastwise vessels was found to have been responsible for the occurrence of 28 subsequent cases of typhoid among the crew, and during the past summer a cook who performed his duties in the galley while in the early stages of his illness played an important part in a serious outbreak of the disease among the passengers and crew of one of our large inland steamers. Such incidents not only militate against operative efficiency, but by becoming general knowledge may affect prospective passenger traffic and occasion financial loss to the steamship company.

In order to efficiently combat typhoid prevalence, it is necessary either to enforce sanitary measures which will protect individuals from the sources of infection, or to immunize them against the disease.

Though the former provision should be carefully carried out by people on board ship as well as on shore, the nature of a sailor's calling necessarily subjects him to many insanitary dangers over which he has practically no control. On account of his close association with fellow shipmates on board, the great variation in character of food and drinking water, and his roving life from port to port, he is exposed to many more sources of infection than is the average citizen who remains at home surrounded by municipal sanitary safeguards.

For these reasons, there is no class of individuals to whom immunization by typhoid prophylactic is of more value as an insurance against the disease than to sailors. There is no doubt that if the practice of typhoid immunization is encouraged aboard ship, there will be a marked reduction in the yearly typhoid rate among crews.

That this method of prevention has long since passed beyond the theoretical and experimental stages is evidenced by the results obtained in the armies and navies of the United States and Europe.