

patient. The clothing of visitors is liable to carry away infection, and all should be rigorously excluded except for very special reasons. If obliged to enter they should prevent their clothes coming in contact with the patient or the bed upon which he is resting, and before entering another house it is always prudent to walk some distance in the open air.

In a majority of cases of infectious disease the greatest danger is derived from the excreta. Everything which passes from the sick person should be put into vessels containing a solution of sulphate of iron—green copperas it is commonly called. It acts most decidedly and most certainly in deodorising and disinfecting organic matter. A pound of copperas, which costs a few pence, should be dissolved in a gallon of water, and all discharges which come from the patient and all washings should be at once mixed with some of the solution. Some of it should be put into vessels into which they are received, and some more cast over them before they are thrown down the water-closet, and every closet, or sink, or privy, into which discharges of any kind are thrown, should have a quantity of the copperas solution poured down it daily so long as it is used by the patient or the nurses. It is highly important that this rule be specially adhered to. It is sometimes the custom for the excreta to be buried in the garden; this is not always sufficient unless much care is used, for fowls and other birds may disturb it, or rats or other vermin carry it away before its danger is destroyed. It is far safer to act upon it at once with a solution of sulphate of iron, and then no danger can arise. These are all matters which are fairly within your province to enquire about, and to give instruction to those whose duty it is to take care of the sick.

There is also another point of some importance to nurses and the friends of a sick person. All cups, glasses, spoons, and other articles used by the patient should be washed in a solution of carbolic acid; no food or drink which has been tasted by the sick person or that has been kept in the sick room should ever be taken by any one else. It is unwise to keep food there at all, except such as is required for immediate use. This applies especially to milk. There is no kind of food more useful than milk. There is no kind which absorbs infectious matters more certainly. If vessels containing milk are kept in a room in which there is a scarlet or typhoid fever patient, or if the gases from a sewer into which the excreta of such patients have been discharged without having been disinfected find their way into a dairy, the disease in question will be distributed by the milk, and a severe epidemic may be produced. I have known several instances of outbreak of disease which could only be fairly explained on this theory. It is all but impossible to prove it by absolute experiment, because the cause is generally removed during the stage of incubation, and when the disease appears has ceased to be in operation.

Nurses and all attendants upon persons who are sick, should be careful to wash their hands before taking food themselves. The