

Practical Points.

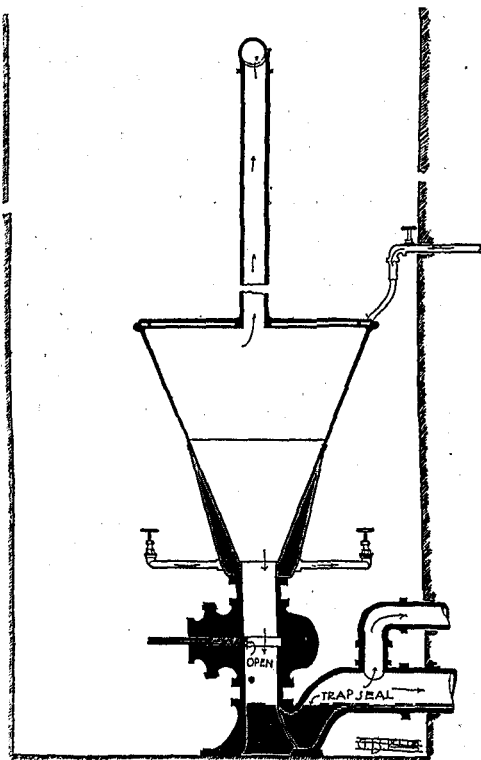
A Sterilising Hopper.

Writing in the *National Hospital Record*, Dr. F. A. Washburn, of Boston, U.S.A., says:—

"The medical profession has recognised the value of disinfecting the stools of patients suffering from typhoid fever, dysentery, and other diseases where the contagion is transmitted by means of the intestinal contents.

"The discharge into the sewer of faeces and urine which contain the contagion of typhoid fever is a menace to the health of the community.

"The disinfection of these stools is usually attempted by means of chemical agents: carbolic acid, formalin, lime, etc. These are very uncertain methods, even when most carefully carried out, as



the agent with difficulty penetrates the interior of the stool. When chemical disinfection is employed it is necessary to keep the stools standing about the service-room of the ward for a prolonged period.

"As we believe that a large general hospital, treating many cases of typhoid fever, has no right to turn into the sewer unsterilised, or partly sterilised, stools and urine, the Massachusetts General Hospital has introduced a piece of apparatus for boiling such contaminated stools and urine before they are discharged into the sewer. The accompanying illustration shows a section of this piece of apparatus. It is our regular copper hopper, double jacketed at the lower part, in the same manner as a kitchen kettle is double jacketed. A gate valve is introduced between the bottom of

the hopper and the trap. The cover is made with a water seal about the edge, and a vapour vent is supplied to carry off the steam and obnoxious odours.

"When it is to be used for sterilising purposes the gate valve is closed, the bed-pan is washed out by means of water through the rubber hose attached to the faucet. Steam is then introduced into the double jacket by opening the valve of the steam pipe inlet, the cover is closed, and, with our 70 lb. pressure of steam, boiling is almost instantaneous. When five minutes have elapsed the gate valve is opened, the cover is raised, and the hopper is flushed out by means of the hose attached to the faucet.

"Bed-pans and urinals are also boiled in a small copper tank with a steam coil in the bottom.

"The following is a copy of the sign which hangs over the sterilising hopper:—

"To use sterilising hopper close valve at bottom by pushing lever toward nopper and fill with water to level of ring painted on outside. Open steam valve and heat for five minutes. Flush hopper thoroughly after using."

"There is no obnoxious odour connected with the use of this apparatus provided the cover is kept shut from the time boiling is started until a short time after the sterilised contents have been discharged into the sewer."

The value of a slight rest before meals is very great—there is no doubt on this point. Indigestion more often arises from eating when tired or excited than is understood. In his regulations for a consumptive patient a very well-known specialist insists upon a full twenty minutes' rest before all meals except breakfast.

THE MEDICAL AID SOCIETY.

By kind permission of Lord and Lady Brassey, the Annual Meeting of the Medical Aid Society was held at 24, Park Lane, on Tuesday afternoon. The object of this Society is to provide necessitous gentlewomen with medical aid and medicines gratuitously during illness. Year by year it does steady, useful work, by quiet unassuming methods, a way best suited to those whom it is intended to benefit. No lot is so sad and difficult as that of women who have known better days, and who, through unforeseen and adverse circumstances are compelled to face the world and earn a living without any previous training or experience to guide them. As shown by the Report, it is a distressing fact, that some of the ladies who apply for treatment are incapacitated, not from disease, but want of food, and a really good meal provided daily would, in many cases, work a better cure than medicine. The work might be considerably enlarged if the support given was more adequate. Unfortunately, the subscription and donation lists for the year were small. Colonel Barrington Foote was in the chair, and the speakers included Mrs. Scharlieb, M.D., Miss Gertrude Kingston, and the Hon. G. W. E. Russell.

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