

that it will somewhat expedite the solution of the problem.

There are two parts to this paper. In the first we shall treat of pocket spittoons. In the second, of those that must be placed wherever two persons are congregated.

*Pocket Spittoons.*—Hygienists and inventors have devised many patterns, and it is impracticable critically to examine them all. Although all embody the great principle of abolishing the bad habit of spitting on the handkerchief, all have the common defect of accumulating the sputum. The disposal of this latter by means of washing in running water, not always at hand, and the fresh risk of carrying the sputum into the streets, warrants the conclusion that not one of them fulfils the claims of hygiene and prophylaxis.

Bearing in mind that in the solution of this problem, no provision that is not at once cheap, practical, effective and easily obtainable by all, can be a true solution, we venture to propose a remedy, which in our opinion fulfils, if not all, the greater part of the proposed conditions.

Every one, no matter what may be his social position, knows the simple economical and clean toilet paper used for the w.c. in all civilised countries. If we extend the use of this paper, employing it as a pocket spittoon, we shall reach the hygienic desideratum.

It will be sufficient if all people use hygienic paper instead of the traditional handkerchief, which we carry permanently in our pocket, dirty with mucus, sweat and saliva. The sputum which it contains transforms the pocket into a veritable microbe centre, in which the bacilli dry and retain their vitality for long periods. The destruction of this hygienic paper is so easy that a match only is necessary to incinerate it, together with the sputum it contains. If, from an hygienic point of view, the "hygienic paper" is better in its economic aspect, it is cheaper than any handkerchief, however low in price. A cheap handkerchief is really the dearest on account of its short life, and when a handkerchief costs more than—say—fifty centimes in the currency of any European country, there is nothing regarding the economic advantage of paper over handkerchiefs.

Moreover, in considering the economic aspect of the question, we must take into account the great number of handkerchiefs we lose, and the great incentive that an expensive mouchoir gives to a thief bent on exploring the contents of our pockets. We must also reckon the three centimes one has to pay (one penny or two-pence in England, I believe) for washing and ironing, so that, after all is taken into account, the paper article, especially having in view the

total destruction by fire of the sputum, mucus, and saliva, is a good investment from an economical point of view.

Another consideration which we must urge on behalf of "hygienic paper" is the difficulty of exchanging the handkerchief when it is dirty, and the necessity of carrying it in that condition—even in the town in which one lives—a sufficient time to infect the pocket. The difficulty increases in offices, chambers, or when on a journey, and even by carrying several we do not get over it, the dirty ones must remain in the pocket with their attendant inconvenience.

The chief advantages of the paper are its cheapness, ease of destruction, and aseptic cleanliness of the pocket and nails, which, in the case of the handkerchief are infected at the moment of taking it between the hands. But, if in common use it is essentially clean and hygienic, its employment in cases of tuberculosis is of inestimable hygienic value, because in analysing the various products found on dirty handkerchiefs, one encounters all kinds of microbes, including bacillus of Koch, which, as is well known, preserves its pathogenic conditions notwithstanding the washing and drying processes, since it requires special means, to which a handkerchief is never subjected, to destroy it.

Finally, I will briefly refer to the use of the handkerchief by tuberculous patients in the advanced stages of the disease. All of us have seen these unhappy victims surrounded by their relatives and friends, and the solicitude which the latter display in assisting expectoration; putting before their mouths a handkerchief, sometimes that of the patient, but sometimes their own, wiping the sweat from the face and hands, and passing the dirty and infected article from one to another. How much cleaner is it for any one to use a piece of paper, if necessary, afterwards impregnated with petroleum or alcohol, and immediately burnt.

So much, then, with regard to portable spittoons: it is hardly necessary to point out that these arguments are equally strong with regard to spittoons placed in houses or in public places. They should also be constructed of a substance easily destructible by fire, and of a material sufficiently cheap to admit of their being replaced every day.

The excessive price of the apparatus necessary to properly disinfect the spittoons at present in use, the upkeep of the same, and the necessity of employing a steam engine and machinist, together with the danger to which the latter is exposed, from infection and from poisons by the sublimate, are strong arguments against their use. Moreover, the danger that domestic animals

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