Practical Points.

Cooking and Tuberculosis.

In the cooking of meat, says Miss Todd, we must not have our joints so large that the outside is sufficiently done before the temperature at its centre rises high enough to destroy the bacillus. To ensure this, a piece of meat should not weigh more than about 10 lbs. in its raw condition. Pork must always be especially well cooked, as pigs are peculiarly liable to tuberculosis.

The Domestic Ice-box.

One hears much in these days about the public health. Lawmakers, social reformers, and food commissioners indulge chiefly in such talk. Just how earnest they are or how well qualified to express an opinion is another matter. In the search for the deadly microbe and the relentless bacillus the guardians of public health have overlooked one fatal spot—the domestic ice-box. It is mostly found in an unsanitary state. Throw it open and see if the odour which escapes from it is of the hygienic sort. From that den of microbe and bacillic vice the food goes direct into the human stomach, and does to it more real harm than all of the so-called preservative agents ever invented. The ice question is a serious one, because ice is but another medium for carting refrigerated germs into the home and into the human system. Any sort of ice is good enough for the home ice-box. It melts there, and the same heat which melts it lets loose its terrors into the meats, butter, and other food substances which form the contents of the refrigerator. Half the time the ice-box is never scalded or sterilised. Boards of health which permit the sale to the home of impure ice are more guilty of crime than are the vendors of healthful borax or the makers of palatable margarine. Food commissioners might do a little analysing in this direction in their spare moments.

An Ambulance Service for London.

The crying need of an ambulance service in London is the subject of an interesting article in a recent number of *Our Hospitals and Charities Illustrated*. Every year, it is estimated, some 8,000 to 10,000 accidents are taken to home or hospital in cabs or other unsuitable conveyances at the cost of much suffering and sometimes fatal injury from the cramped, half-raised attitude which is unavoidable. Yet, as a rule, a hand-litter trundled slowly for a mile or more to the nearest hospital is the only alternative. In Liverpool, it seems, they manage things better. As soon as an accident occurs, the policeman, who is trained in first-aid, renders what assistance is possible, having first rung from a signal-box (there is one in each important street) for an ambulance. Within a few minutes of the call a comfortable ambulance drawn by a fast horse appears, and the case is taken to the hospital. In New York the hospitals have charge of the ambulances, which are sent out within two minutes after a call has been received, and are always accompanied by a medical man. Paris, again, has an excellent ambulance service, which is worked in connection with the leading chemists' shops throughout the city. The writer of the article, however, suggests that in London the fire brigade would be the most convenient body to deal with ambulance calls.

Disinfection by Hot Soda Solutions.

Under the heading "Progress in Public Hygiene" (*Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*), Dr. Abbot, of Boston, gives an epitome of the advances made in this branch during the last year. Whilst on the subject of disinfectants, the author says that he thought it might be expedient to ascertain how far the common washing soda used in nearly every household was capable of being employed for disinfecting the dwelling-house. The tests were mainly directed to ascertain the action of hot solutions of soda of various degrees of concentration on the pathogenic organisms likely to be encountered in dwelling-houses. Bouillon cultures of the diphtheria bacillus, the different kinds of cocci, and tuberculous sputum were dried on to silk threads and exposed to the action of 2, 5, 10 and 20 per cent. solutions, raised to various temperatures from 22° C. to 62° C. for periods from one minute to sixty minutes. Tests were also made by infecting furniture, leather-work, linoleum, &c., which were then treated with a 5 per cent. solution of soda at 60° C.; in a similar way experiments were conducted with tooth-brushes, combs, kitchen utensils, &c. The author states that even in diluted hot solutions (60-62° C., such as are employed in the kitchen and laundry) soda is a safe and reliable disinfectant, besides being also extremely cheap.

How a Pullman Car is Cleaned.

The management of the Pullman Company, in controversion of the recent criticisms of the sanitary condition of their cars, has sent out this statement of just what the process of cleaning a Pullman car is:—As soon as a Pullman car arrives at its destination it is entirely stripped, the carpets are beaten and aired, and the interior of the car is thoroughly scrubbed with soap and water. The blankets are taken out of the car and are thoroughly blown out with compressed air at a 90 lb. pressure. It is impracticable to wash them after every trip, but they go to the laundry several times a year, which is oftener than is the case with hotel blankets. All linen is renewed each trip. Every case of sickness in a car, however trivial, is followed by the antiseptic cleansing of the section occupied by the sick person, and the entire car is sprayed with formaldehyde. As a further sanitary precaution, in the newer cars of the company purely decorative draperies are being omitted, and the necessary ones, such as berth curtains, are being made of a lighter material which does not hold dust or odours.

For the Disinfection of Stools.

Revue Française de Médecine et de Chirurgie recently recommended a teaspoonful (5 grammes, or 75 grains) of the following mixture to be put into the commode:—Zinc sulphate, 100 grammes (3 oz.); sulphuric acid, 5 to 10 grammes (75 to 150 minims); essential oil of mirbane, 0·02 gramme (one-third minim); indigo blue, 0·15 gramme (one-sixth grain). The blue is merely a distinctive mark to prevent errors. This mixture effectually destroys the unpleasant odour of stools and urine.

previous page next page