

Contraband.

BY W. G. STIRLING.

Whenever the Revenue laws expressly forbid the doing of certain things, one is sure to find some persons with the desire of adventure, and others more readily from the desire of gain, to break them.

From all the ingenious examples brought to notice, smuggling to-day would appear to be reduced to a fine art, and one can safely say that one has never learnt all that there is to be learnt about smuggling.

Such drugs as morphia and cocaine are very easy to handle, as the fine white powder is light and easily compressed, and might well pass as salt or alum; one comes across bottles of it in barrels of cement, bags of rice, in the double bottoms of a bird cage, the lining of coats, and the soles of shoes, etc.

Raw opium, and chandu, *i.e.* opium prepared for smoking, is not half so easy to manipulate, having its peculiar smell and the weight which so often leads to its discovery.

Big "jobs" are usually run by wealthy persons who rarely appear, but pay people ready to run the risk ensuring them a sum of money should they get caught!

Big smugglers will even go the length of purposely allowing the capture of a consignment and by so drawing this "herring" across the track sometimes ensure the safe passage of a very much more valuable lot.

The following few examples demonstrate some of the more ingenious methods resorted to and one cannot help but admiring the clever mind which has thought out and patiently worked on these methods in the attempt to defy the laws of the Colony.

EXPLANATION OF THE DIAGRAMS.

1. This ingenious device consists of a kerosine oil tin and a triangular receptacle soldered to the bottom of the tin which, when filled with liquid, makes it difficult to detect at sight the triangular tin at the bottom.

2. This shows a well constructed drawer with a double bottom which slides out at A.

3. The diagram A shows an opium pipe of bamboo (hollow from the mouthpiece to B, as indicated by the shaded portion); a metal tube A is inserted at the mouthpiece up to the hole at B. This allows the smoker to use his pipe with perfect ease and at the same time smuggle his supply.

Weight would not be an indication that there was any chandu or opium in the pipe as some pipes are ordinarily very heavy and acquire weight through constant use.

C. A walking stick; a common method for the Dope fiend to carry about his supply. Unscrewed at *D* a hypodermic syringe and needles are disclosed, while the lower portion contains the morphia or cocaine.

4. The Chinese wear padded clothes in winter time and the diagram A shows an ordinary coat, into which are sewn thin slabs of opium. This is rather dangerous as the Revenue officers in the course of their searching duties often pass their hands over a person. The more ingenious way however is to take out the lining, soak it in liquid opium or chandu, dry it in the wind and repad the coat. The lining is afterwards taken out, immersed in boiling water and the drug is extracted. The same method is employed with towels and clothes used to stuff mattresses and pillows.

It is a common sight to see a Chinese carrying about his mat and pillow, and no uncommon thing to find bladders of chandu concealed in the stuffing.

B. Shows the ordinary Chinese shoe, the soft cloth sides lined with packets of morphia and the sole has a slab of opium inside.

C. The soles of European shoes have often been used to conceal slabs of opium.

D. The heel of the wooden clog or trompak hollowed out to contain morphia; there is nothing uncommon or suspicious in seeing Chinese carrying their clogs when not in use.

5. On examining some barrels of dried walnuts A and dates B it was found that the shells of the walnuts and husks of the dates had been all carefully prized open, the dried fruit extracted and a small quantity of opium wrapped up in paper in their place.

The preparation must have taken a considerable time and shows how profitable the smuggling of opium is, as well as an example of celestial patience.

6. A is meant to represent three ordinary ducks one of which was found to be dead and very heavy, its inside had been extracted and live bladders of chandu "b" placed there instead.

The live ducks were to do the quacking and thus allay suspicion.

B. shows a fish treated in the same fashion with bladders of chandu at "b."

7. The diagram represents a book which one expects to see in the hands or with the luggage of most travellers; a certain portion of the reading matter is treated as shewn.

A similar device is used to conceal an outfit for injecting morphia or cocaine.

8. A represents a Chinese saw; the centre piece (shaded) is hollowed out and filled with opium.

B is a chisel; the wooden handle filled with opium.

9. A shows one of the most laborious and ingenious methods of smuggling I have yet seen. Deep holes were drilled in between the dovetailing of a cabinet and tubes containing chandu were inserted. B shews a section of the dovetailing and X the position of the tubes as they lay on the top and sides of the cabinet.

10. Another well constructed piece of work entailing much time and patience was disclosed in some barrels of fruit. The staves were all carefully hollowed out to take a tin made to size, the bottom of the barrel was treated in a similar manner, and the whole carefully fitted together. The ends of the staves were planed down so that on looking down into the barrel the thickness at the centre would not be so noticeable.

11. Saucers would hardly be expected to be of use to the smuggler, but when one has the Chinese saucer or cup stand to deal with it becomes quite another matter; the method of packing is simple.

Take half a dozen or so of European saucers and place them at the top and bottom of a stack of Chinese saucers (which have a hole in the centre into which the cup fits); the space made by the saucers is filled up with bladders of chandu and the whole carefully done up with straw packing.

A shows the stack, B a European saucer and C a Chinese saucer.

12. All bamboo furniture is highly suspicious; it is usually cheap to buy and one wonders why some people bother to move old tables and chairs; however the bamboo legs tell their tale.

13. Chinese go in for poultry a great deal and make a great success of it. One man had a sitting hen, which he must have prized, and it was not surprising as her eggs were found to be worth their weight in gold, for these eggs were pots of chandu worth \$12 each. He depended on the reluctance of the sitting hen leaving her eggs, or of letting any one touch them.

B represents a pail of rice. Fowls are usually kept in pens on a ship for the use of the larder and they naturally require food, but an inquisitive Revenue Officer interfered with their meal just before the ship was leaving port and found a valuable lot of chandu concealed at the bottom of the pail under the cooked rice.

14. The Chinese employed in packing the chandu for sale to the public resort to every means to steal it. The Chinese say of any one who has anything to do with opium that some of it is bound to stick to the fingers. (Therein lies a double meaning).

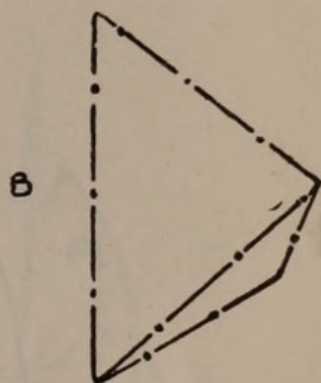
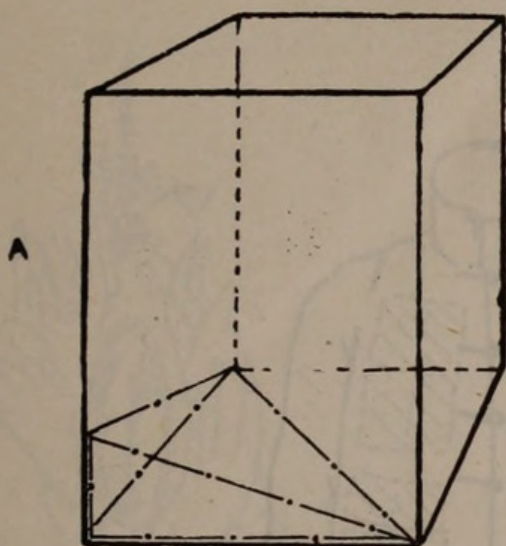
What easier than to put a plaster on the leg, and chance being asked to show the sore place?

15. A shows a strainer with a double side.

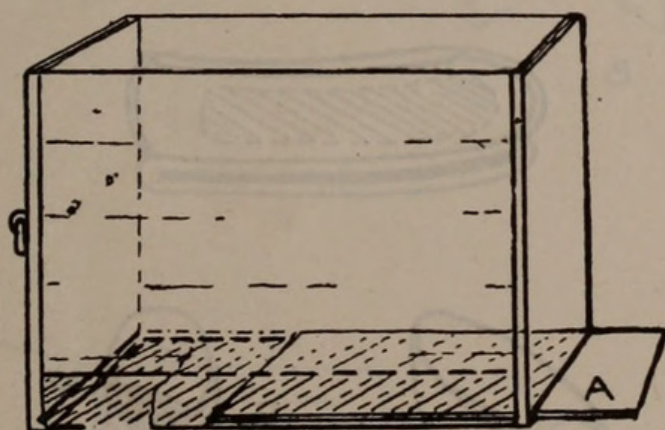
B the handle of an old kerosine oil tin converted into a tin for water carrying. Chinese travelling about often use such tins for packing up their odds and ends. This handle was detachable, so that it could be used on several occasions.



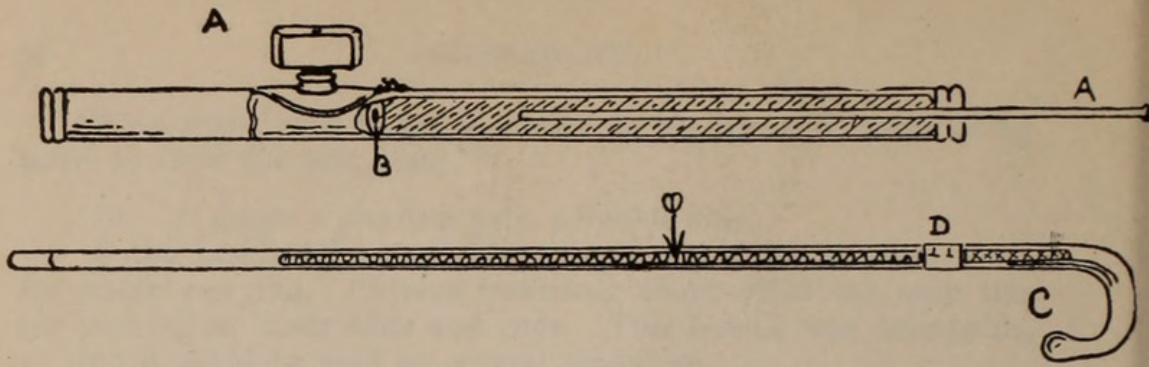
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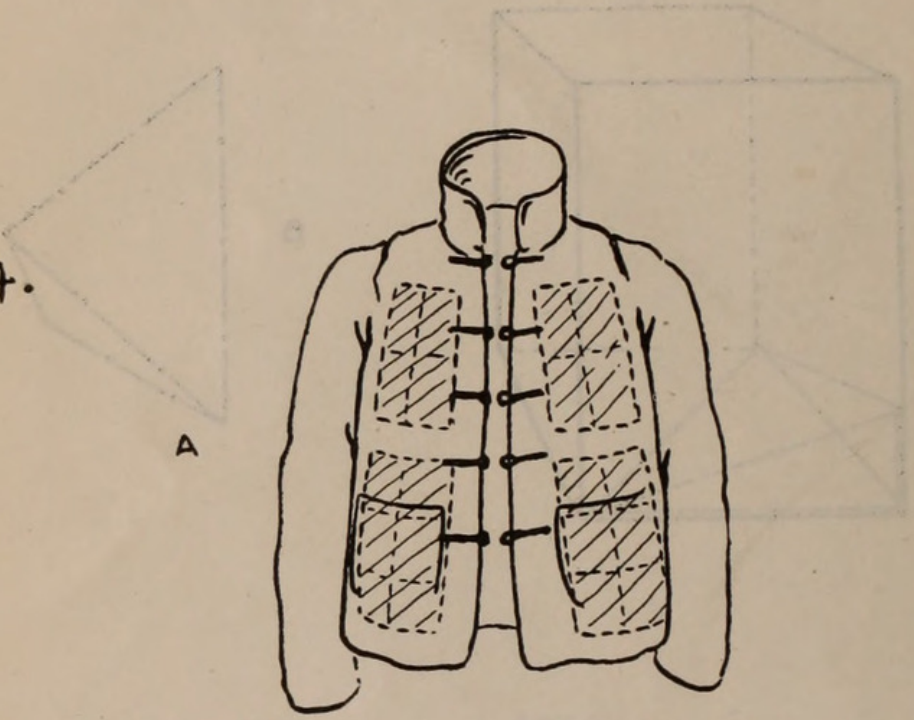
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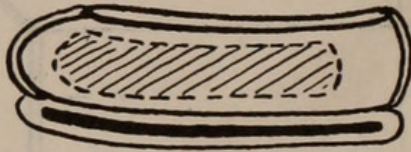
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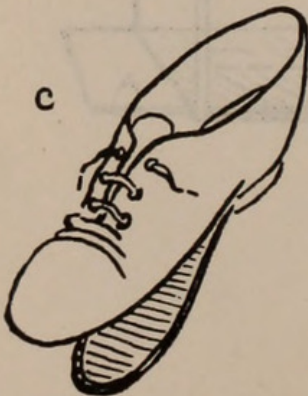
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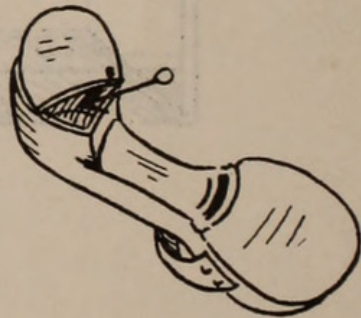
B



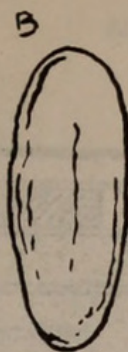
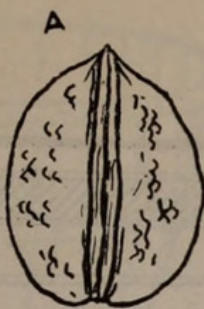
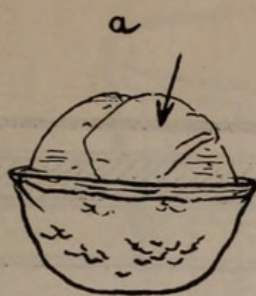
C



D



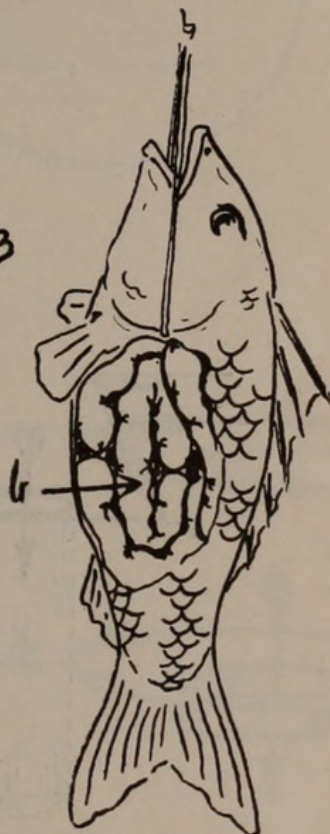
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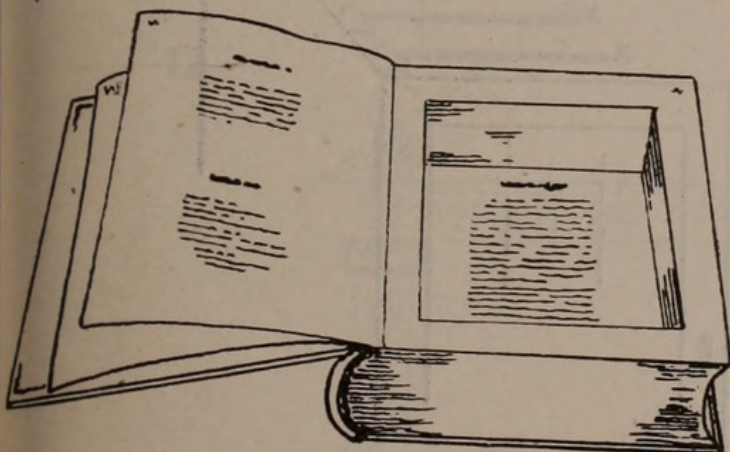
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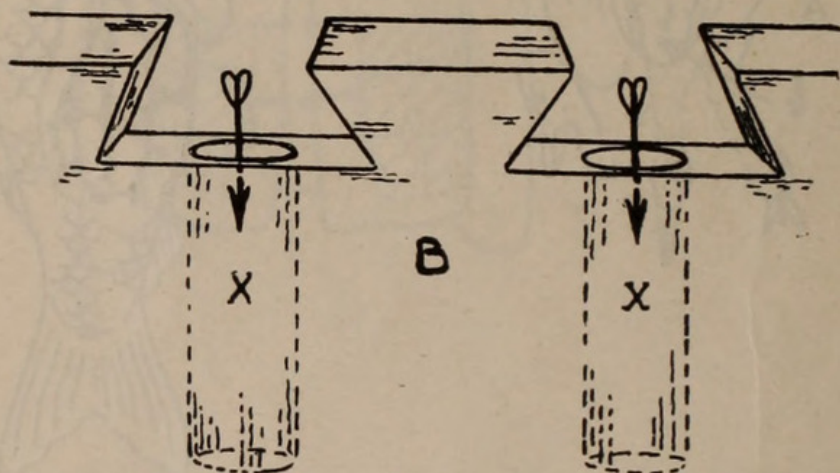
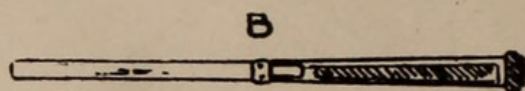
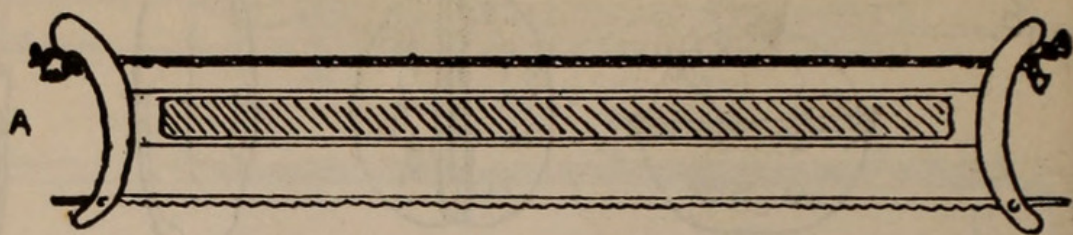
B



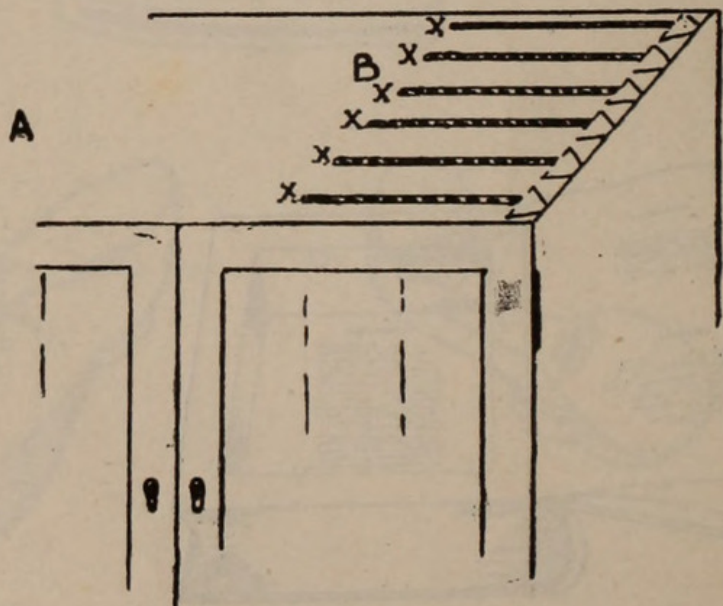
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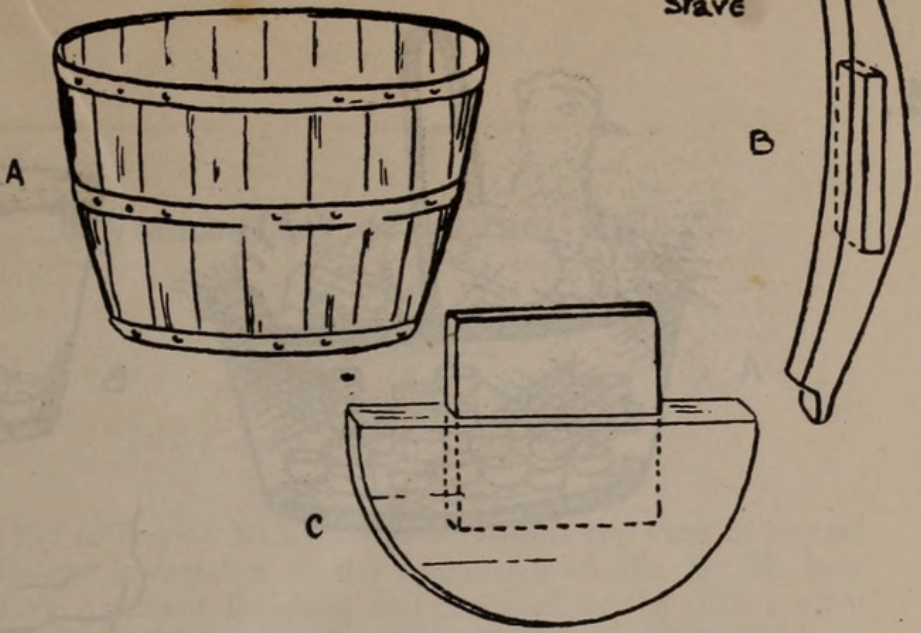
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10.

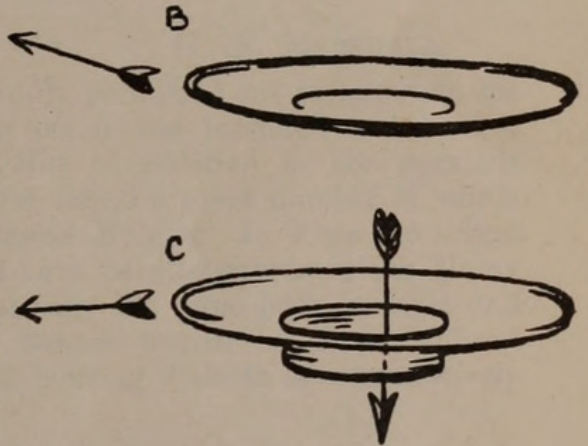
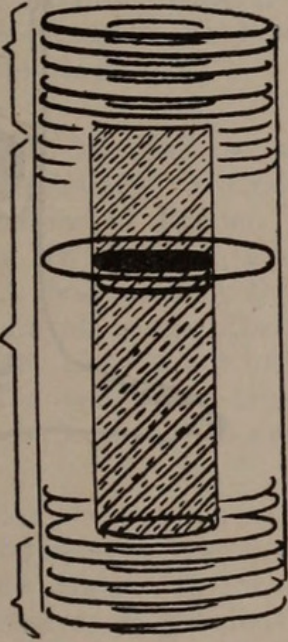


European
saucer

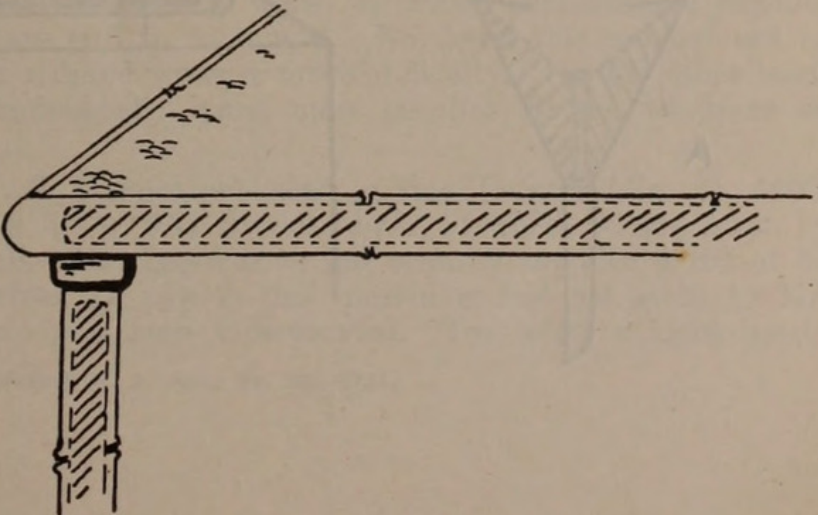
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A

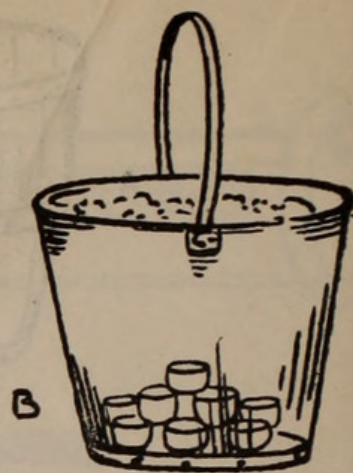
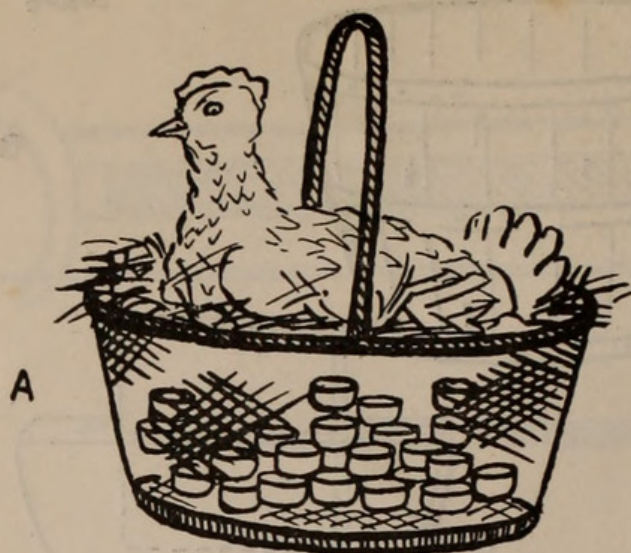
Chinese
cup stand



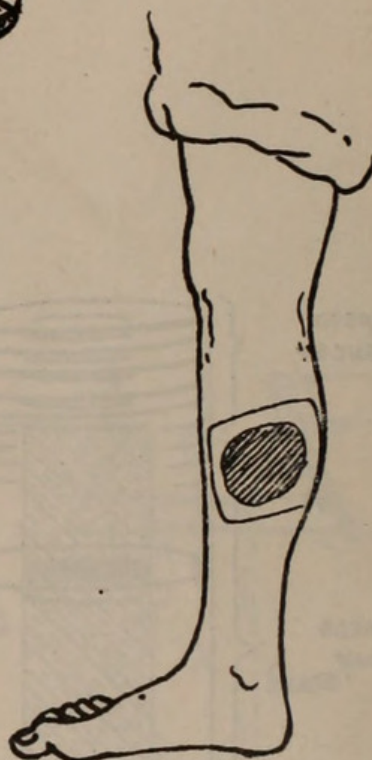
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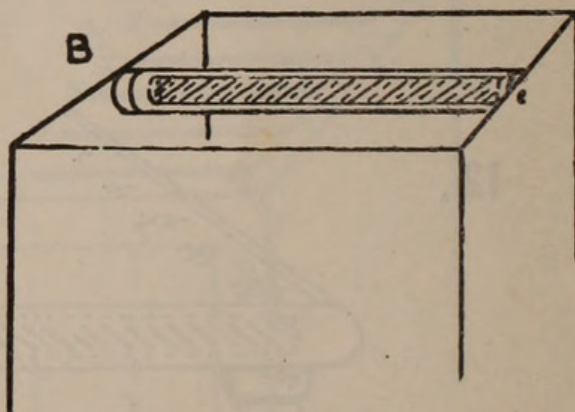
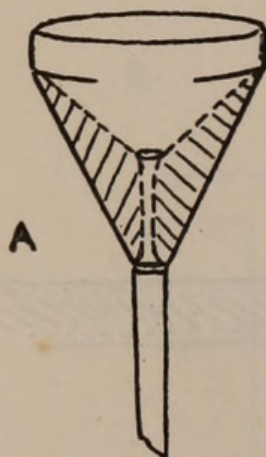
13.



14.



15.





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