Jan. 17, 1961 W. R. THOMAS 2,968,414

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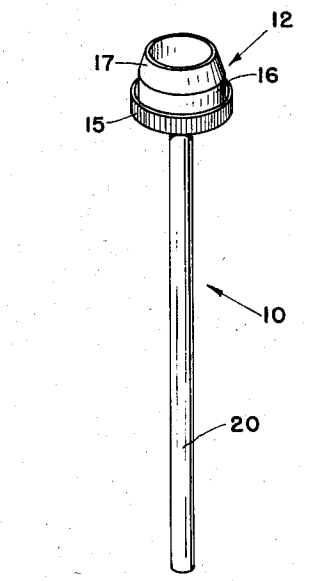

Fig. 1

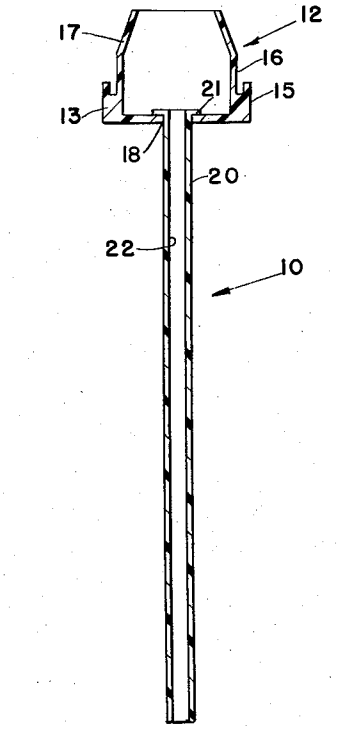

Fig. 2

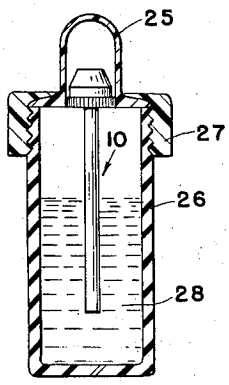

Fig. 3

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This invention relates to feeding devices and more particularly to a feeding device for infants.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an attachment for infant feeding bottles that will enable the child to feed upon the bottle in a sitting up position so as to reduce the amount of air swallowed during feeding and to instruct the infant in proper feeding habits.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an attachment for infant feeding bottles of the above type that enables the bottle to be used as a vessel and the nipple to be used as a straw for drawing liquid upwardly and outwardly therethrough so as to allow the child to feed in a sitting position rather than in a prone position ordinarily used.

Other objects of the invention are to provide an infant feeding device bearing the above objects in mind which is of simple construction, has a minimum number of parts, is inexpensive to manufacture and efficient in operation.

For other objects and for a better understanding of the invention, reference may be had to the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of an infant feeding device made in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 2 is an enlarged longitudinal cross sectional view of the device shown in Figure 1; and

Figure 3 is a longitudinal cross sectional view of an infant feeding bottle embodying a feeding attachment made in accordance with the present invention.

Referring now more in detail to the drawing, an infant feeding attachment **10** made in accordance with the present invention for use with conventional infant feeding bottles, is shown to include a head portion **12** having a base **13**, an upwardly extending annular lip **15**, and a cylindrical side wall **16** terminating in an upwardly tapered portion **17**. This head **12** also includes a central longitudinal cylindrical bore **18** through which a duct **20** in the form of a substantially rigid cylindrical tube having a central longitudinal bore **22** is received. The tube **20** and head portion **12** becoming substantially a rigid single unit. One end of the tube **20** is upset to define a radially outwardly extending flange **21** which overlies the inside of the head **12** and releasably secures the parts together. The flange **21** and cylindrical bore **18** keep the cylindrical tube **20** normal to the base **13**, and the tube parallel to the sides of the bottle **26**. While these elements may be constructed of any desired material, it has been found that an inert plastic material, such as molded or extruded plastic is particularly suited since it is readily cleaned, can be sterilized, and can be manufactured at a relatively low cost.

In actual use, the base **13** is inserted into the interior of a conventional infant feeding nipple **25** and the assembled unit inserted into the infant feeding bottle **26**. The retainer ring **27** is then used to clamp the assembled nipple and attachment in proper position within the bottle **26** with the tube **20** parallel to the side walls thereof which may be filled with any desired fluid, such as water, milk, or the like. Since air ports are conventionally provided between the nipple **25** and the retainer ring **27**, the unit may now be used as a straw, whereby the infant may sit in an upright position and draw upon the nipple **25** to withdraw liquid from the interior of the bottle in much the same manner as an adult would

drink through a drinking straw. The inlet ports between the retainer ring **27** of the nipple **25** allow air to enter into the interior of the bottle to replace the volume of liquid that is withdrawn through the attachment. As a result, the child swallows a minimum amount of air, learns to feed in an upright position, and is thus saved the uncomfortable and painful gas pains that usually result from feeding in a prone position.

While various changes may be made in the detail construction, it shall be understood that such changes shall be within the spirit and scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.

What I claim as new and desire to protect by Letters Patent of the United States is:

1. In an infant feeding bottle having a vessel and a hollow nipple with cylindrical side walls secured in place upon the open end thereof by means of a removable retainer ring, a feeding straw adapter comprising, in combination, a head with a base for removable engagement solely with the side walls of the nipple, and a substantially rigid cylindrical duct extending through a cylindrical bore in said head in the interior of the bottle normal to said base for conducting fluids upwardly into the interior of said nipple, said cylindrical bore and said cylindrical duct being substantially of the same diameter to keep said duct normal to said base.

2. The combination according to claim 1, wherein said head comprises a cylindrical side wall having a terminal portion tapering upwardly and inwardly in a direction away from said duct, and a peripheral vertical lip for snug fit engagement with the interior of the side walls of the nipple.

3. In combination, a nursing bottle provided with a cylindrical open end portion at one end and embodying external threads thereon, and a flexible hollow-nipple with flanged portions at its open end removably secured to said open end of said bottle by a removable retainer ring, said retainer ring having internal threads formed therewith to be received by said external threads on said bottle, said nipple having virtually cylindrical elongated side walls and with an arcuate substantially closed end wall having a small discharge aperture therein opposite its open end, a feeding tube adapter comprising a head portion having a circular base, cylindrical side walls terminating in an inwardly tapered circular end portion forming a hollow chamber with said base, and a central longitudinal cylindrical bore in said base, a substantially rigid cylindrical tube having a longitudinal bore provided with means at one end extending through said bore, the external diameter of the tube being substantially the same diameter as said bore in the base to keep said tube normal to said circular base, said means on said tube arranged in said chamber and adjacent the inside of said base and releasably augmenting the securing of said tube with said base, whereby liquid in said bottle will be drawn therefrom into said nipple and outwardly through said discharge aperture upon application of suction to the substantially closed end of the nipple by the user.

4. The combination according to claim 3, wherein said means on said tube consist of an outwardly extending circular flange, said flange on said tube arranged in clamping engagement between said retainer ring and the top of the said walls at the open end of said bottle.

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