valve closure members, is capable of being sealed from the surrounding environment, by means of an O ring and/or inflatable seal.

18. A valve as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the sterilising medium comprises a fluid, vapour and/or gas.

19. A valve as claimed in claim 18 wherein the medium is vaporised hydrogen peroxide, filtered nitrogen, filtered air and/or water.

20. A valve as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the outlet is connected to filter means and/or a catalyst to treat any waste stream from the chamber.

21. A method of moving a material from one vessel to another without exposing the material to the surrounding environment comprising the use of ~~a~~the valve assembly ~~as described hereinabove~~of claim 1, the method comprising the steps of:

a) Engaging the valve portions such that the assembly conforms to its first configuration;
b) optionally cleaning the chamber;
c) sterilising or decontaminating the chamber;
d) displacing the valve portions such that the assembly conforms to its second configuration; and
e) opening the valve to allow the movement of material therethrough.

22. A method as claimed in claim 21 wherein once the requisite quantity of material has been transferred, the method also comprises the subsequent steps of:

f) displacing the valve portions such that the assembly conforms to its first configuration;

g) optionally cleaning the chamber;

h) optionally sterilising or decontaminating the chamber; and

i) disengaging the valve portions.

23. A coupling assembly comprising two coupling portions complementarily shaped such that the first can sealingly engage with and co-operate with the second to allow the movement of material therethrough, each coupling portion comprising a housing, a coupling seat and a coupling closure member moveable between a first position in which the coupling closure member is displaced from the coupling seat and the coupling is open, and a second position in which the coupling closure member co-operates with the coupling seat and the coupling is closed, a sealing surface formed therebetween, wherein the assembly has a first configuration in which the first and second coupling portions engage with one another, the coupling closure members being closed, and the coupling closure members being disposed a distance apart defining, with the housing, a chamber therebetween, which is capable of being sealed from the surrounding environment, having an inlet and an outlet through which sterilising medium may pass, and a second configuration in which the coupling closure members engage with one another and are movable from their first to their second position, and a third configuration in which the two valve portions are disengaged from one another, and wherein each coupling portion has means for cleaning the sealing surface between said coupling seat and coupling closure member.