

raw cow's udder, ten pounds of raw beef, two pounds of candles, and five bottles of porter. The narrator remarks: "It is also to be observed that the day was hot, and not having his usual exercise in the yard, it may be presumed he would otherwise have had a better appetite." We fancy the custom still exists in some parts of the country of having hasty pudding eating matches, and at a certain college in Oxford the following rite obtains, or used to do twenty years ago. On Mid-Lent Sunday the first lesson in the evening is Genesis xliii., which gives an account of Benjamin's mess, which was five times as great as any of the other's. Furmenty was always served in Hall on that evening, and the junior man at each table was considered as Benjamin and served with an enormous helping. If he ate it all he could "sconce"—*i.e.*, fine the whole table in sherry—if he could not he was himself fined. When this custom originated no one knows, but it is probably like so many other old customs, a remnant of paganism with a veneer of Christianity over it.—*Lancet*.

Serum Diagnosis in Pediatrics.

After a short account of the diagnostic experiments of Gruben-Widal, which produced such favorable results in abdominal typhus, Pfaundler (*Deutsche med. Woch.*, No. 41, 1898) quotes his own experiments in similar cases of intestinal complications by systematic examination of the intestinal bacteria by serum tests, to find the cause of this disease. His researches may be attributed to an endeavor to establish the theory (as yet but little discussed) that in above-mentioned cases an etiological meaning may be more readily ascribed to the agglutination of bacterial species taken from the serum of a patient. A succession of about seven hundred separate reactions furnished the following conclusions: (1) That the saprophytic bacterium coli of the healthy intestine does not react upon the serum; (2) that in certain cases of contagious colitis a specific agglutination of bacterium coli develops; (3) that the same reaction appears in many instances in which the bacterium coli does not result from primary intestinal lesions, although it may proceed from certain conditions caused thereby, as peritonitis or cystitis. Positive results of serum reaction have been obtained from intestinal bacteria other than bacterium coli; for this reason the positive result of examination of serum for streptococci is noteworthy. A second phenomenon is the formation of fibre; a third (though noticed in few cases only) is the entire freeing of bacterial bodies, caused by extreme attenuation of the blood-serum. This refers to those mesenteric forms in the stools. This freeing took the form of dependent drops as in Dr. Pfeiffer's experiments on animals.—*Medical Age*.