

ON THE ANALYSIS OF THE TUSCARORA SOUR SPRING, NEAR BRANDTFORD, C. W.

To the Editors of the British American Journal.

I have this morning received your journal, (Vol. ii. No. 2,) in which you have been kind enough to publish my rough notes on the Tuscarora Spring, and in which you state, that M. De Rottermund has announced the presence of antimony in the same spring water.

This, if true, would be a most astonishing discovery, for I cannot remember that this metal has ever been noticed in any spring. Rose and Berzelius certainly do not mention it, nor do I think there is any notice of it in the treatises of Daubeny, Bischoff and Osann. I was so struck with the announcement, that I instantly made an experiment with some of the waters in my possession.

A current of sulphuretted hydrogen was passed through four ounces of the water for a quarter of an hour: a considerable milkiness was produced, arising from the decomposition of the sulphuretted hydrogen by the sesquioxide of iron, which I have shown to exist in the water; the opacity or milkiness is produced by precipitating *sulphur*. Not a trace of any orange coloured precipitate could be observed.

As a proof of the delicacy of the test by sulphuretted hydrogen, I took a quantity of tartar emetic, less than half a grain, (the oxide of antimony must therefore have been less than one-fourth of a grain), this was dissolved in four ounces of water, a little sulphuric acid added, and the solution treated with sulphuretted hydrogen. *A dense orange coloured precipitate was immediately formed.*

I have no hesitation in saying that there is no antimony in the water that I have examined, and although I hear there are several springs differing considerably in their properties, I very much doubt whether that metal will be found in any one of them.

Yours very truly,

HENRY CROFT.

King's College, Toronto, June 12, 1846.

[Professor Croft will excuse the non-appearance of his letter in the previous number. It arose in consequence of the *original department* of that number having been set up before its reception.]

POISONED CONFECTIONERY.

BY DR. VON IFFLAND.

Several years since, I invited the attention of the educated portion of the Province, to the flagrant impositions so frequently practised upon the credulous, by the proprietors, agents, and vendors of Patent, but more generally and properly called, *Quack Medicines*: to many of which, were then, as now, ascribed curative properties to every disease and accident, incidental to

suffering humanity, but, which results shewed, were fraught in their administration; with the most serious and dangerous consequences.

These expositions, although submitted in the cause of reason and science, and strengthened, as well by the purest and most beneficent considerations, as by the justice and candour of those possessing public confidence; were deemed too bold and intrusive by *the interested* to escape the keenest reproaches, malevolence and personal abuse. It cannot, therefore, but be with some apprehension, that I approach a subject, whose importance most sensibly interests the whole human family, while it also involves the speculative gains of an industrious class of citizens, but who, too often, in pampering the luxurious palates and tables of customers, become the cause (sometimes innocent) of much serious evil, from the various metallic poisons in their preparations of confectionery.

Having had occasion to visit Montreal sometime since, my attention was directed to the variegated and attractive colors of numerous specimens of confectionery, tastefully displayed not only in splendid shops, but also exhibited for sale by smaller retailers in the public markets; but sweets always seductive to the child and youthful branch of the community, are rendered more particularly so, from their beauty of color and fantastic shapes, and never fail to incite cravings, which the indulgent parent, not aware of their pernicious properties, too readily gratifies. From these considerations, the demand naturally keeps pace with the cupidity of the manufacturers, who, unscrupulous of the means employed, seldom feels anxiety or apprehension for consequences.

Conscious then of honestly obeying a strong impulse of public duty, I had written thus far; but, with a view of ascertaining, whether an application to a matter of so much importance, might not already have been brought to view by others, whose position and circumstances offered more favorable opportunities of investigation, I searched numerous works of authority and popular periodicals, and I am gratified to discover the publication of Dr. W. O'Shaughnessy, of such distinguished talent, that I cannot better meet the intentions with which I set out, than by submitting extracts from that gentleman's article on Poisoned Confectionery, and although it appeared fourteen years since, may not probably be generally known to the junior members of the profession.

He has evidently taken a deep interest in the subject, devoted to it much time and labor, and pursued the inquiry with all the calmness and caution which its importance required, and I am fully convinced, that the facts he has established, afford irresistible evidence of the deleterious properties of several preparations of confectionery.