

Adulteration of Food.

Although the patient public has heard much about the adulteration of food, it would amaze them, did they know the full extent to which this nefarious business is carried on at present. Take an illustration or two.

Mr. Armour, of Chicago, and his associates, own the largest establishment in the world, it is said, for the manufacture and sale of lard and other hog products. In a recent interview with a correspondent of the press, Mr. A. made some frank admissions in connection with their business, which are of decided interest to the consumers of lard, and go to show how great an evil the adulteration of food in this country has become. Rumor said the object of his recent visit to the South was to form a company with \$10,000,000 capital for the manufacture of cotton-seed oil.

"Mr. Armour stated that the use of cotton-seed oil in manufactures of lard and hog products had grown to such an extent, in late years, that his establishments alone consumed one-fifth of the total cotton oil product of the United States. Hence the cotton-seed oil was an important item to his firm."

He also said that the American Cotton Oil Trust, which now controls almost the entire business of making oil from cotton-seed, had purchased a large packing house in Chicago, in order to become a lard producer, and thus a formidable competitor in the product of sham lard.

Armour & Co. do not sell cotton-seed oil; O, no, they make and sell lard, and by their own showing use as an adulterant one-fifth of the oil made from cotton-seed in this country. And how much is that? It is said that a ton of the seed yields from thirty-five to forty gallons of oil. Persons familiar with the business affirm that 500,000 tons of seed were crushed in the mills in 1886. The oil product from this would, therefore, be from 17,500,000 to 20,000,000 gallons. If Mr. Armour's statement is true, he used in his lard factory one-fifth of this, or from 3,500,000 to 4,000,000 gallons.

The newspapers inform us that a new syndicate has just been formed with an immense capital, which proposes to build and operate a hundred new mills to produce cotton-seed oil, so that the produce in the immediate future will be much larger than in the past. Only one-sixth of the seed crop of 1886 was crushed in the factories.

But this is only one of a thousand forms of adulteration. A single glucose company has a capital of over \$13,000,000. It was testified, in Washington, some years ago, that \$20,000,000 capital was invested, and 50,000 persons were engaged, in the work of making this product. But is it not a fraud equally with the other adulterants?

This sham lard is very much cheaper than the genuine article, and goes twenty-five per cent. further. In 1886, there was exported 6,572,000 gallons of this oil, valued at about forty cents a gallon. A large part of this exported oil comes back, labeled and sold as olive oil. It is also affirmed that this cotton-seed oil is largely used at present in the manufacture of *cheese*, and merchants in the cheese trade declare that this adulteration is injuriously affecting our export cheese trade, which had grown to be very large. The export in 1881 amounted to 147,995,614 pounds, and in 1886 had fallen to 86,363,685 pounds.

We do not know as lard or cheese thus adulterated is injurious to health. But it is as much a swindle to sell cotton-seed oil for lard or cheese as to sell oleomargarine for butter.

"Glucose serves as an adulterant in sugar, syrups, candies, preserved fruits, honey, and many other articles of food. It is sold for honey to persons who believe they are buying real honey. It is sold for sugar to consumers who pay for cane sugar. It is exported for purposes of adulteration at the rate of more than 3,000,000 pounds a year. And so it is with oleomargarine, as everybody knows. Enormous quantities are still palmed off on swindled consumers in this country, and the exports of oleo oil have risen to 35,279,363 pounds, while the quantity of butter exported has fallen from 39,236,000 pounds in 1880 to only 14,404,000 in 1886. Does the gain in the foreign sales of shams compensate for the loss in the sales of honest products?"