

It was fortunate that these three gentlemen used steel forks, which instantly disclosed the mischief: if they had chanced to use silver, all three might have fallen victims to these poisonous conserves.

But we are not yet at the worst. When Catherine de Medicis wished to get rid of obnoxious persons in an 'artistic' manner, she was in the habit of presenting them with delicately made sweetmeats, or trinkets, in which death lurked in the most engaging manner; she carried

'Pure death in an earring, a casket,
A signet, a fan-mount, a filigree basket.'

Her poisoned feasts are matters of history, at which people shudder as they read; but we question if the diabolical revenge and cold-blooded wickedness of an Italian woman ever invented much more deadly trifles than our low, cheap confectioners do on the largest scale.

OF SUGAR ORNAMENT.

The painted feast contains, among its highly injurious ingredients, ferrocyanide of iron or Prussian-blue, Antwerp-blue-gamboge, and ultramarine, and among its deadly poisons the three chrome yellows, red lead, white lead, vermilion, the three Brunswick greens, and Scheele's green or arsenite of copper. The wonder is that, considering we set such poison-traps for children, ten times more enticing and quite as deadly as those used to bait rats, that the greater number of youngsters who partake of them are not at once despatched, and so undoubtedly they would be if nurses were not cautious about these coloured parts, which have always enjoyed a bad name under the general denomination of 'trash and messes.' As it is, we are informed by Dr. Letheby that 'no less than seventy cases of poisoning have been traced to this source' within three years!

In France, Belgium, and Switzerland the colouring of confectionery with poisonous pigments is prohibited, and the vendors are held responsible for all accidents which may occur to persons from eating their sugar confectionery.

All kinds of sugar-plums, comfits, and 'kisses,' in addition to being often adulterated with large quantities of plaster of Paris, are always open to the suspicion of being poisoned. Necessity cannot be urged for the continuance of this wicked practice, as there are plenty of vegetable pigments which, if not quite so vivid as the acrid mineral ones, are sufficiently so to please the eye. Of late years a peculiar lozenge has been introduced, in which the flavour of certain fruits is singularly imitated. Thus we have essence of jargonel drops, essence of pine-apple drops, and many others of a most delicate taste. They really are so delicious that we scarcely like to create a prejudice against them; but the truth is great and must prevail: all these delicate essences are made from a preparation of rether and rancid cheese and butter.

If we could possibly eliminate, from the mass of human disease, that occasioned by the constant use of deleterious food, we should find that it amounted to a very considerable percentage on the whole, and that one of the best friends of the doctor would prove to be the adulterator. But even our refuge fails us in our hour of need; the tools of the medical man, like those of the sippers and miners before Selastopol, often turn out to be worthless. Drugs and medical comforts are perhaps adulterated as extensively as any other article. To mention only a few familiar and household medicines for instance:—Epsom salts are adulterated with sulphate of soda; carbonate of soda with sulphate of soda—a very injurious

substitute. Mercury is sometimes falsified with lead, tin, and bismuth; gentian with the poisonous drugs aconite and belladonna; rhubarb with turmeric and gamboge; cantharides with black pepper; and cod-liver and castor oils with common and inferior oils; whilst opium, one of the sheet-anchors of the physician, is adulterated to the greatest extent in a dozen different ways. Medical comforts are equally uncertain. Thus potato-flour forms full half of the so-called arrow-roots of commerce; sago-meal is another very common ingredient in this nourishing substance. Out of fifty samples of so styled arrow-root, Dr. Hassall found twenty-two adulterated, many of them consisting *entirely* of potato-flour and sago-meal. One-half of the common oatmeals to be met with are adulterated with barley meal, a much less nutritious substance—an important fact, which boards of guardians should be acquainted with. Honey is sophisticated with flour-starch and sugar-starch. And lastly, we wish to say something important to mothers. Put no faith in the hundred and one preparations of farinaceous food for infants which are paraded under so many attractive titles. They are all composed of wheat-flour, potato-flour, sago, &c.,—very familiar ingredients, which would not take with anxious parents unless christened with extraordinary names, for which their compounders demand an extraordinary charge. To invalids we would also say, place no reliance on the Revalentas and Ervalentas advertised through the country as cures for all imaginary diseases. They consist almost entirely of lentil-powder, barley-flour, &c., which are charged cent. per cent. above their real value.

Of all the articles we have touched upon, not one is so important as water. It mixes more or less with all our solid food, and forms nine-tenths of all our drinks. Man himself, as a sanitary writer has observed, is in great part made up of this element, and if you were to put him under a press you would squeeze out of him $8\frac{1}{2}$ pailfuls. That it should be furnished pure to the consumer is of the first importance in a sanitary and economic point of view.

The Unity of the Human Race.*

Experience has taught us not too hastily to change any scientific theory with being contradictory to Scripture. Freedom of speculation is rightly privileged. Revealed truth is not endangered by discussion and investigation.

Hence, when a theory is proposed to us like that of the specific difference between the several races of mankind, we shall do well to receive it without anger or contempt, and to enquire whether it may not be possibly consistent with Theological and physiological science.

That the whole human race has sprung from one male and one female at the first, seems, however, to be distinctly taught in Holy Scripture, and to be a matter of the highest antecedent probability from physical considerations.

The doctrine of our oneness of origin, let it be noted, does not depend upon a single text, such as that which affirms that "God hath made of one blood all the nations of men." Though this passage, and others like it, should be explained away, that doctrine could not perish with them. For all Scripture either asserts or else assumes the unity of the human family. Adam by transgression fell; mankind in general were involved in the fall. They have an hereditary taint; their nature is corrupted, because they are his offspring. And their redemption comes

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