

strict morality, boldly remarks that a certain mineral was expressly created for the purpose of adulterating white lead, being good for nothing else. The utilitarianism of this observation has an unhealthy odour about it, and, it is to be feared, is of the earth, earthy. However this may be, it is certain that our lead grinders have taken every advantage of the supposition.

It is not our province at present to enquire closely into the moral bearing of this so-called adulteration. It may, however, be said that, provided there is no secrecy or misrepresentation practiced the addition of sulphate of baryta to white lead scarcely comes within the acknowledged meaning of the term adulteration, although it is, strictly, a case of foreign admixture. There is an implied concealment—a fraudulent intention—associated with the word which renders it inapplicable. Let us take a parallel case for comparison. Alcohol is sold at prices corresponding with its degree of dilution. If, for certain purposes, a strong spirit is required, it may be obtained by paying therefor a fair price. If a weaker spirit will answer the intended purpose it is obtained at a price proportionately lower. With ground white lead the case is similar, a pure article may be had for a stated price, but if the purchaser cannot afford this, or thinks that a lower grade will do, he obtains it at a lower figure. There are two points in which these instances do not correspond; one is that the water used in the dilution of the spirit is practically worthless, while the baryta used in the *dilution* of the lead possesses a certain value as a pigment. The other point of dissimilarity is that alcohol is sold as containing a stated percentage of spirit, while white lead is graded according to certain commercial terms which have no fixed value. In this case the purchaser must depend on the conscientiousness of the manufacturer, or the reputation which his wares have acquired.

In this, as well as other countries, there are, undoubtedly, some manufacturers in whom implicit confidence might be placed without fear of betrayal; there are, however, many others of whom this cannot be said. In any case it is better for the dealer to satisfy himself that he is being justly dealt with, if only that his own representations may be established on a substantial basis. The writer has frequently been called upon to make examinations of this kind, and it is hoped that a few remarks based on the experience so gained may not prove unacceptable.