

In the instance which gave rise to his investigation, the master of a family purchased a ham-pie at a pastry-cook's in Paris; and the whole family ate the meat of the pie the same day, and the crust on the following day. Three hours after dinner the master of the house was seized with general uneasiness, followed by cold sweats, shivering, violent pain in the stomach, and frequent vomiting, then with burning thirst, extreme tenderness of the belly, so that the weight of the bed-clothes could scarcely be borne, profuse purging, and choleric of extreme violence. His daughter, twenty-seven years of age, and a child nine years old, were similarly attacked. A physician, who was called to their assistance soon after they were taken ill, drew a minute report of the symptoms in each of his patients, and declared that they had a violent inflammation of the stomach, which he was inclined to ascribe to natural verdigris, or the carbonate of copper having been communicated by the pastry-cook's moulds. In a few days all three individuals recovered under an antiphlogistic treatment. About the same period several accidents of the like nature occurred among the customers of this pastry-cook; and in consequence a judicial investigation was ordered. The shop being properly inspected, it was found that every operation was conducted with due attention to cleanliness. MM. Olivier and Barruel were appointed to analyze the remains of the meat which produced the cases first mentioned, as well as the alvine discharges of the child. The alvine discharges had a leek-green colour, and were not fetid, neither was any change of colour produced by the same reagent after the fluid was filtered. The remains of the pie had become mouldy. The meat and paste were separately examined. The contact of sulphuretted-hydrogen did not produce any change of colour in either. When they were incinerated in a crucible, and the residue treated with diluted nitric acid, the filtered liquid on being neutralized with ammonia, did not give any precipitate with ferrocyanate of potass, or with sulphuretted-hydrogen, and did not become blue with ammonia. Another portion of the remains of the pie was treated with alcohol and a few drops of acetic acid, and the alcoholic solutions were evaporated to the volume of half-a-drachm. The residue was agitated with four times its volume of distilled water, filtered and evaporated, and dissolved again in water. This solution was not affected by sulphuretted-hydrogen or by nitric acid. These experiments furnish ample proof that the pie did not contain a trace of arsenic, copper, antimony, or lead. The only conclusion, therefore, which M. Olivier conceived it possible to draw, was, that the ham had in some way or another acquired the poisonous properties sometimes remarked in German sausages, cheese, and ham.

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