

**GLYCERINE—ITS USES AND ABUSES.**

A few years ago glycerine was only known to scientific men; now it is so extensively employed as to be familiar to every body. Scientifically, it appears to be a species of alcohol; popularly, it is the sweet principle of oil. For many years it was thrown away, but now it is saved and converted to numerous uses. Few chemical compounds have increased so rapidly in public estimation as this. From being regarded as a waste product, it has grown to be as valuable as its former proud associates, and appears destined to take a most prominent place in the arts. It exists in oils and fats, and as it was not essential in the process of making soap and candles, and no use could be invented for it, it was either destroyed or allowed to flow away.

Housekeepers will be glad to know that if tubs and pails are saturated in glycerine they will not shrink and dry up, the hoops will not fall off, and there will be no necessity of keeping these articles soaked. Butter tubs keep fresh and sweet, and can be used a second time. Leather treated with it also remains moist, and is not liable to crack and break.

For the extraction of perfume from rose leaves, from scented woods, from bark, from gums, there appears to be nothing better than glycerine, and this use of it is constantly on the increase, as the most delicate odors are perfectly preserved in it.

A soft soap, in which glycerine enters as a constituent, is highly prized in cold weather where the hands become chapped, and can be used for washing in hard water.

For wounds and sores, and bites of venomous insects, glycerine is found to be a most valuable substance, as it either prevents the mortification of the parts, or it can be used to carry the remedies to counteract the effects of poison.

To preserve animal substance from decay, glycerine is now substituted for alcohol in collections of natural history, and it is employed to keep many articles of food from undergoing decomposition.

As it requires an intense cold to freeze it, even when mixed with its own bulk of water, it is largely employed to fill the wet gas meters.

Some kinds of candy, chocolate, confectionery, and fruit, which are preserved in tinfoil, are kept moist by a small quantity of glycerine.

Delicate chronometers, clocks and watches, are lubricated with it. Copying paper and wall paper, for taking fancy colors, are also kept moist by a small amount of glycerine used in this manner.

In pharmacy for the preservation of pills, to mix with many substances, in compounding prescriptions, and in more ways than can be remembered, glycerine now plays an important part.

In the arts it finds its way as the best wash for the interior of molds in the casting of plaster figures, to prevent the gypsum from adhering to the sides of the mold.

In dyeing with some of our beautiful organic colors, glycerine is extensively employed with the best effect.

In chemistry it is used to prevent the precipitation of the heavy metals by the alkalies, and is thus a re-agent in analysis.

The last use of glycerine that we shall mention is, perhaps, the most important of all, its extensive application in the manufacture of nitro-glycerine.

The explosive oil is made by treating glycerine with nitric and sulphuric acids in a peculiar manner. It has been known to chemists for some years, but it is only recently that a Swedish engineer has had the hardihood to propose it as a substitute for blasting powder.

Its introduction has been attended with fatal consequences to many of the pioneer and earliest adventurers who have experimented upon its properties, but it is making rapid progress to public favor, and in a few years will, beyond question, displace the old fashioned blasting powder and reign in its stead.

By mixing the oil with sand, a solid explosive agent has been made, which is called dynamite. This is much less dangerous than the oil, and nearly as destructive in its effects, as it contains seventy-six per cent. of nitro-glycerine. A patent percussion cap and safety fuse is required for the explosion of dynamite, and, according to all accounts, it appears to be less dangerous than gunpowder.

The glycerine which has come into notice within a few years, has become an article of great importance, and, as its conquests are daily increasing, we may expect to become very familiar with it, and learn to appreciate it as another valuable contribution of chemical science to the ordinary wants of man.

A HEBREW BUTCHER.

Among the Jews a broad distinction is made in articles of food, and the greatest importance is attached to its observance. For instance, it is unlawful to eat the flesh of any beast that does not chew the cud and divide the hoof; hence swine are expressly forbidden, the flesh of which is held in the greatest abhorrence, as we all know from the mild jokes that are made upon the subject by those not possessing such scruples. All kinds of poultry are permitted to be eaten, except those prohibited in Leviticus xi. 13-25. Fish having fins and scales are lawful articles of food, but all shellfish are strictly forbidden. All cattle and poultry must be slaughtered by a Jew, according to prescribed rules; and, as these rules are exceedingly numerous, the killer must be duly qualified for his profession. The killer is called shochet. His office is divided into two departments—that for poultry and that for cattle. The candidate for this office has to be examined by three rabbis before receiving his diploma. The shochet kills in a different way to all other butchers. With a peculiar knife he cuts the windpipe of the animal about three quarters through. No more than three cuts are to be made, and no fewer than two. Should he cut a little of the throat, then stop and cut again, and continue this until the beast is killed, the killing is irregular, and the meat is unlawful. Should the cutting be effected by pressure only, or the knife is used as a hatchet, the meat is unlawful. Should the knife be covered with a cloth or hidden by the wool of the animal during the slaughter, the meat is unlawful. As soon as the animal has done bleeding, it is opened, the shochet examines the heart and liver to see if they be healthy after which he pronounces the meat to be kosher, or fit for use; if the contrary, trephah, or unfit for use. The meat is then sealed and ready for sale. This plan of killing is adopted so that the blood may be entirely drained from the animal, as it is an article of Jewish faith not to eat the life of any creature.

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