

## FAIR KILLERS OF MEN.

POISON A FAVORITE WEAPON OF WOMEN WHO MURDER.

Borgias Found in the Annals of the Race in Past Centuries—Some Famous Modern Cases where a High Degree of Artistic Skill Has Been Displayed.

Poison has been a favorite weapon of the murderers for as many centuries as the world is old, says a recent writer.

It is the most cruel and diabolical method of making away with an enemy and ferocious criminals who would not hesitate to use a knife or pistol on a fellow man, shrink from a poisoner. This was clearly shown at the time Carlyle Harris was awaiting his death day in Sing Sing prison for poisoning his wife. On the night when Pallister and Roehl made their famous escape from the death-house, they opened the cells of the other two men, but they refused to give Harris a chance for liberty. In fact it was said afterwards that Pallister wanted to kill Harris before leaving, but the others persuaded him not to do so, as it would take too much time. These four murderers detested Harris, and let no small opportunity pass to make his last days more miserable. He was a poisoner, and hence a monster to his fellow murderers.

New York at the present time has a poison case on its hands which will go down in criminal history. The death of Mrs. Evelina M. Bliss, for which her daughter, Mrs. Mary Alice L. Fleming, was arrested on the charge of giving her mother some clam chowder containing arsenic and antimony, presents many curious features. The case has attracted attention in all parts of the country, and is so well known that no extended reference of it is required here.

A glance at the history of woman as a criminal shows that poison has largely figured in their murders. Psychologists who have studied the criminal woman assert that she is more cruel than the criminal man. Writers of all ages give reason for this.

Euripides says: "The violence of the ocean waves or of devouring flames is terrible. Terrible is poverty, but woman is more terrible than all else."

Caro says: "The perversity of woman is so great as to be incredible, even to its victims."

Cello, an author of the fifteenth century, says: "No possible punishments can deter women from heaping up crime upon crime. Their perversity of mind is more fertile in new crimes than the imagination of a judge in new punishments."

Rykere says: "Feminine criminality is more cynical, more depraved, and more terrible than the criminality of the male. Rarely is a woman wicked, but when she is, she surpasses the man."

Remote history tells of the fair and elegant Greek parasites, who, when they tired of their lives, invited them with others to a sumptuous feast, and carving some dainty dish with a knife, the blade of which was poisoned on one side only, helped them to the fatal portion and saw them die before the banquet was over while the remaining guests escaped unharmed.

Cleopatra belongs to the ranks of the women poisoners. In fact, she excelled in all varieties of crime, but everything was done with a delicacy that bespoke the artist. She lightly dropped poisoned rose leaves into the wine cups of the enemies she had doomed and with a playful smile languidly watched them expire in fearful agony.

The ancients, while knowing more about poisonous drugs than the experts of today, were always opposed to their use. Even in the frightful wars of the Carthaginians, when one of the lesser generals proposed the use of poison to do away with the enemy, he barely escaped violence at the hands of his own soldiers.

Lucretia Borgia, it is believed, used an arsenical powder closely resembling sugar in her many crimes, but her preparations did not possess the diabolical potency of the drugs employed by the earlier poisoners.

In the middle ages the female poisoners operated on different systems, but always in a graceful and elegant fashion. Catherine de Medici sent death in dainty perfumed gloves, and Diane de Meridor in juicy golden oranges. In the seventeenth century, an epoch when poisons were freely used, they were currently called by the cynical and ironical appellation of "poudre a succession." Mme. de Brinvilliers and la Visin used an immense quantity of this "inheritance powder," which placed many a fortune within their grasp. The trial of the former caused great scandal, although she persistently refused to give any explanation or to betray her accomplices. "If I spoke," she repeatedly declared, "the whole town would be compromised."

The woman Visin was less reticent, admitting that to her trade in poisons she had added the profession of witchcraft, and that "on stormy nights she summoned the devil to St. Denis." Mme. de Sevigne in her "Letters," alludes to her trial and sentence. She was burnt alive on the Place de Greve, struggling with extraordinary fierceness against the executioners till the flames suffocated her.

This Mme. de Brinvilliers, in addition to poisoning numerous persons, tried to

poison her 16-year-old daughter. The latter was very beautiful, and her mother became insanely jealous of her. Gaikema a contemporary of de Brinvilliers, poisoned her young daughter, in order to inherit a fortune of 20,000 francs. When a woman displays a want of maternal feeling like these two, she is deemed the most horrible type of criminal.

A more modern type of the woman poisoner was Mme. Lafarge, nee Marie Capelle; she was the daughter of an officer of the Imperial Guard, well married, happy at first, then tired of her husband and fell madly in love with another man. She had by letters warned her husband that he had become distasteful to her, and that she would get rid of him at any price. She made him eat a piece of cake thickly powdered with arsenic, was tried, found guilty, and condemned to prison for life. However, in 1852, she was pardoned by the Prince President Louis Napoleon, and died a few months after her liberation, leaving a book of Memoirs called "Prison Hours." After reading it, Alexander Dumas the elder wrote: "Was Marie Capelle guilty or not? The secret lies between her judges and God. She eternally said 'No! The law once said 'Yes, and before this sole affirmation all her denials went for nothing. Guilty or innocent, Marie Capelle is dead, with the atonement of the prison and the rehabilitation of the tomb."

The case of Mme. Lacoste about the same time attracted world-wide attention, but she was more fortunate than Marie Capelle. Another was that of Lydie Fougines, Countess de Bocarme, arrested under suspicion of having assisted her husband in the murder of his brother-in-law, was found not guilty. Her self-command was prodigious. When told that the count had ascended the scaffold in dress trousers, a cambric shirt and patent leather shoes, she remarked coldly: "He had done well; it will be a good example for our people."

Baltimore had a famous poisoning case in 1871. Mrs. Wharton, the widow of an army officer, was accused of the murder of Gen. W. S. Ketchum, of the United States army, and an old friend of her husband. Mrs. Wharton at the time was 50 years old and was heavily indebted to the general. On June 23, 1871, the general, accompanied by a Mr. Van Ness, who was fully acquainted with the business affairs of the two, called upon the widow to wish her farewell, as she was about to sail on a European trip. The general was expected to collect the money due him, and had the widow note in his waistcoat pocket.

Some light refreshments were offered the two gentlemen, and shortly afterwards the general died in great agony, while Mr. Van Ness narrowly escaped death. Over one hundred experts testified at the subsequent trial and the widow was finally acquitted of the charge of poisoning Gen. Ketchum. Mr. Van Ness never pushed his side of the case against her.

The Maybrick case in England is again being brought to notice, by a fresh effort on the part of the American friends of Mrs. Maybrick to secure her pardon. She was accused of poisoning her husband, James Maybrick, at Liverpool, in 1889, by administering arsenical waters. Her relations with a Mr. Brierley furnished the motive for the crime. When the jury brought in a verdict of guilty Mrs. Maybrick addressed the court, saying: "My Lord, everything has been against me. I wish to say that, although evidence has been given as to a great many circumstances in connection with Mr. Brierley, much has been withheld which might have influenced the jury had it been told. I am not guilty of this crime."

England had another famous poisoning case at the beginning of the present century. Eliza Fanning, an 18-year-old girl, of extraordinary beauty, was convicted of poisoning the entire family in which she was the governess. She was hanged with a note criminal on each side of her. The day after the execution it was discovered that the poison had been given by a maniac who had been sheltered in the house of the poisoned family.

Emporia, Kan., some seven years ago was the scene of an unique crime. Mrs. Walkup, formerly a famous belle of New Orleans, was charged with poisoning her husband, Judge Walkup. She was a beautiful woman and her loveliness had some effect on the jury as the case against her was strong. She was acquitted after a sensational trial.

The most remarkable poisoner of the year was Mme. Joniaux, called "The Antwerp Brinvilliers." She poisoned for money and the death of a dozen of her friends (and relatives was attributed to her. She was a remarkable woman, finely educated and allied to the best families of Belgium and her calm self-possession at her trial last January was wonderful in face of the hurricane of incriminating evidence against her. She is now serving a life sentence.

Mrs. Henry Meyer's fate for alleged complicity in the many murders by poison charged to her husband is still unsettled. Insurance money, like in the Joniaux case was the motive of these crimes.

## History Repeats Itself.

Gaswell—What picture is that?  
Dukane—That is "Venus Rising from the Sea."

"Some society woman, I suppose?"  
"Society woman nothing! Have you never heard of the deity of the ancient Greeks?"

"You are sure that she belonged to the ancient Greeks, are you?"  
"Yes; why?"

"Just this: A great deal of fuss is made about the smallness of the modern bathing suit, and it is some satisfaction to know that they were just as small many years ago as they are now."—Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

## SOME HINTS ON HEALTH.

VERY MUCH DEPENDS ON HOW OUR BREAD IS PREPARED.

Other Points on Sanitation Which Escape the Attention of Many People—There is Danger in Opening the Doors of Too Public Places With the Hands.

Shirley Dare quotes the following opinions of matters of everyday life in relation to the health:

"We must have a different race of men for leaders and supporters in war and business. But before we have such men we must have another race of women. The one thing wanting in modern men and women is staying power, not strength for feats of an hour or two, but the sustained force which carries on tedious work from day to day. It is curious that this staying power is associated with great freshness and lasting, enduring attractiveness in women, provided they have a moiety of the care which should be bestowed on them."

"If women knew how closely their health, their looks, and lives were dependent on healthy conditions of living, food, sanitary houses and streets, pure air, pure water, and incessant guard over these conditions, we would see a prompt and decisive change in society. But they don't see it, and they can't, so that it will in a few generations more be sacrificed to disease, deformity, and death, before women know what is good for them and theirs."

"Now you are not to give the names of the men who subscribe to these sentiments," said the doctor, at whose name all hats would come off, as he closed the MS. book in his private study, where the signed engravings of Nelaton, Virchow, Lassar, and Fothergill looked down on walls lined with goodly books bindings and rich contents. "You hit it pretty close when you said once that doctors only told the truth to each other in medical meetings. I remembered that it struck me as I read it that I never quite realized the fact before that doctors like other men, instinctively withhold the truth where it is no use. If we did not say it to each other at society meetings I fear some of us would suffer for a chance. I used when a young man, to feel as if I would like to say to a patient, 'My dear woman, your husband is dying of the miserable food you give him. You can get up a very pretty spread for company tea, or lunch, and your ice creams are the envy of your friends. But I know that your daily living is scrappy in the extreme. You don't know how to make broths and rich stews, for your only idea of either is a boiled dinner, of hard corned beef or pork, with all sorts of rank, indigestible vegetables served with it. Your leg of mutton, as you serve it is three-fifths waste as far as nourishment goes, and not one woman in fifty knows how to cook a vegetable.'"

"Your 'bread'—well—the bread of the present day keeps us doctors in business, so I had better not say anything more. Making good wholesome bread is one of the lost arts. The young men of the day must be very much in love with the young women, or they couldn't eat the stuff their wives give them. Talk about the weakly women—I have quite as many weakly men on my list, who keep a doctor in pay from year's end to year's end for their indigestions and weak hearts and kidneys, liver and lung troubles. Nine-tenths of them are caused and kept up by poor nutrition and you can't make their wives understand what invalids need or the importance of strictly keeping up the standard of food. They will begin all right, giving rich broths and tender meats and safe bread till a man puts on a layer of flesh and begins to look natural, and then they think all is safe. But some day the bread is out, and they have fresh yeast biscuit and bread for a day or two, thinking it can't much matter, he seems so well, and then it is trouble to select the beef and cook it just right. Next time I meet the man in the street his face shows me he is losing. Six weeks after he had a bad turn, and sends for me, and I know that a succession of these little lapses—bad and cookery have been too much for him. His life afterward is just a battle between his life forces and bad feeding. Sooner or later he goes to the wall. Don't tell me! I have them by the score, heads of wholesale houses, bankers, and so on. Medicine can only save a few of these men into my house, and watch every meal and every condition of their lives as a wife ought to watch, they might be sound, active men till they are 80."

"There are the women! Come to me for something to make them plump and build them up! Or they are stout, abdominal, and their hair gray. Women with executive ability, as they call it. Folks used to call it faculty, I mistake. Executive ability means a gift for wheeling other folks into doing something you get the credit of. Plenty of that going about. Faculty meant doing all your own work and good share of other people's. Now it means getting somebody to do your own work and let you have the profits. The stout women generally get their food at club, lunches, and suppers, and they take enough, bechamel sauce and mayonnaise and creams to give them adipose and rheumatism besides. Your thin, weakly, overdone woman lives on

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bites and snatches, rice and baked apple, thin toast and thinner cocoa. She also has attacks of heart and weak digestion. Says the less she eats the better she feels. That is very true, but she ought not to feel so. That is the danger point. Just let her keep it up a few years more and she will end with chronic neuralgia or heart disease—take grip or pneumonia, and snuff out like the wick of a candle. The disease isn't enough to kill any one with natural reserve of force, but these overdone, underfed folks have no reserves, and if the wind blows too hard. There is such a thing as heart failure, and it is the serious defect of the time. It means nerve starvation, aided by nerve poisoning from bad air. Every one of these nervous women takes up the food that she can't eat meat when it is vegetables and cereals which ferment without digesting which cause her trouble. It she should live on fine juicy meat for a year with just enough fruit and salad to keep her from biliousness she would lose most of her troubles. You can't tell such women anything, however. They have read cheap hygiene and run off with notions in their bill-like young chickens with a scrap of yarn, and you can't take it from them. It looks like a worm and a worm it is to them until they have swallowed it.

"Dr. Cyrus Elson did some good a year or two ago with his tracts against yeast bread only he got the effect by making an advertisement of them for baking powder. People will distrust anything that is bought and paid for; no matter if truth has crept into it and a very saving truth, too. Now yeast is one of the most delicate ferments to use with safety, and bread making with it is one of the nicest chemical experiments in the world, with the difference that one may have a great deal of chemistry at the tongue's end without being able to make good bread. It takes knowledge, experience, and the instinct that grows out of practice. You want home-made yeast and home-made bread, watched with as much care as a nurse gives medicine at every step from the soil to the table. I buy my wheat and have it ground by a miller out on the Erie who has an old fashioned run of stone for grinding. This impalpable dust they call flour nowadays might do for toilet powder but it loses its vitality, its life sustaining principle by being ground so fine and bolting so closely. My wheat is select plump, hard winter wheat, washed and dried, ground without any bolting or hulling, and sent down to me in the city. It takes less bread to keep the family ten days than it used to eat in a week and every one feels twice stronger for it. You know Liebig, the great German chemist, said that the grain supply of a country would support half as many human beings again if it were used without bolting. We use as little bread as possible, preferring freshly baked muffins and crackers, which can be made by the bushel and toasted as wanted, or crisp shortcake, which keeps for weeks. Our bread is very much like fruitcake, girls say, it is so dark and sweet and spongy, while it is thoroughly baked, keeping the oven three hours at a time. Of course, I have my tile oven, which keeps heat like the old-fashioned brick oven; in fact it has brick behind the tiles, which are unglazed to hold the heat. We bake once a week or two, and the neighbors send in anything they like to have particularly well done. It is the doctor's fad, they say, but they take to it very kindly themselves."

"Americans suffer for want of good bread. I know people who send ten miles regularly to a bakery where they can be sure of perfectly sweet, well-baked wheat meal bread while dyspeptics have their supplies sent by mail from the Atlantic to

Oregon, not able to secure bread short of this which will not render eating a penalty. One excellent doctor of divinity, prominent in the church, has duties which oblige him to travel a good deal among the smaller towns and he fails not of carrying a box of 'twice baked' bread. The German shrinks back out of self-preservation from the horrors of slack baked, stolid, home-made bread. Good Christians are not always good bread-makers, though they ought to be. Young women—here the doctor forgot himself—"your sex ought to be aware that good cooking is the noblest service they can render to the world. Write it down! Humanity could get along perfectly well if there should not be another squalling imp born into the world for twenty years, but it could not do without having its food cooked, bread baked, and soup kettles boiled for a week without civilization coming to pieces. We have a good cook in our family who has an instinct for her business, and respects it, and we respect her. I take off my hat to that woman in the street whenever I meet her and if a friend is with me I tell him the reason why. She makes perfect bread and cooks plain but various dinners so well that I haven't lost an hour with indigestion or known whether I had a digestion or not in twenty years, unless a way from home. Mistress Martha Jenks, of Oxford County, Maine, is down in my will for enough to make her comfortable for the rest of her life, and I consider she has well earned it. Her skill has kept my brain clear and my nerves steady for a score of years, when a dull mind or unsteady hand might have cost the life of a man or woman over and over. But I talk too much of this. A man must be aware of his favorite topics."

"A host of minor points on sanitation ought to be cared for, which spread disease unawares. It cannot be any better for hands than it is for gloves to take hold of door knobs and catches which the vilest creatures handle an hour in the day. This needs attention in our public buildings. I was up to your town with the rest of our lodge last month and in that handsome public library what do you think caught my eye? Those classic doors into the reading-room, where rich wood and artistic tracery were enmeshed by a smear of grease, where washed and unwashed hands take hold of the swinging leaves to open them. It doesn't go well with vend antique and marble pilasters, and it cannot be safe to touch such defilement. Doors in public places should be made to open with the foot, pressing against the lower molding protected by metal or rubber. It is entirely practicable to hang doors so truly that they open with the touch of a foot. It isn't necessary to kick them any more than it is to bang them. Stores and railway depots especially need to inaugurate this reform. The ladies must see to it, for few things deform more than using them to open doors. In the very high ladies' schools South, early in the '30s, girls were not allowed to open a door for themselves because it would spread their hands. Where gentility and sanitation agree, we might as well give gentility a chance."

"What particular word have I for the benefit of women? Simply this, that if they take to eating whole meal bread properly made and baked, taking care of themselves in other ways, American women may have the most beautiful and most lasting complexions in the world. Acne will be unheard of, coarse pores will refine themselves, and they will not be half so likely to grow stout as they do on milk and made dishes, with hot yeast biscuit to produce permanent dilation of the waist. Nothing like eating fresh yeast bread and biscuit to give one a coarse figure. You are right enough about that."

"It must be a dozen years or more since the English of the better class woke up to the poor quality of the bread supplied them. A doctor went through the country giving lectures on bread and actually teaching people how to make it out of the coarse wheat meal. The coarse bread came into favor so thoroughly that I am told it is the rule to find it on tables, and white bread is decidedly in disfavor. 'It muddies the girls' poor dear complexions so!' an English mamma will tell you or tell

me in the most confiding way. Then the city bakeries underwent rigid inspection with the result that anyone reading the committee's report will not feel inclined to taste bread commonly sold during life."

"The underground fetid dens of baking cellars, where half-naked men, reeking with sweat, work the bread, would give one the nightmare to think of. The London sanitary bakeries are a sight worth visiting—clean, bright, airy quarters, on the upper floors of buildings, with everything—kneading trays, cloths, and baking arrangements—scrupulously white, and the bakers healthy men, neat in person and dress as if they were to be eaten as well as the bread. This, by the way, is mixed and kneaded by machinery, so that hands need not touch it—a pleasant fact to remember, and one which adds very much to the appreciation of good bread."

"Equal importance to women is the use of filtered water. I don't know why I should say so, except that there are always desiring good complexions, and there is no surer way of refining and brightening the skin than by drinking pure, filtered water. Filtering in filtered water is a luxury which becomes indispensable when one compares the ordinary bathtubful with the clear, soft fluid which feels like a toilet lotion, and a very fine one. Just try washing your face for a fortnight in filtered water if you wish to know how aimably your skin behaves when well treated. Filtered or distilled water should always be used for the eyes to soothe and strengthen them. There is small excuse for any respectable house being without its filtered supply when filters are so cheap and good."

"The \$225 common use holds about two quarts, which filters in fifteen minutes when it may be poured into a stone receiver, and the glass filled and set working again. The charcoal cube should be removed and cleansed daily, a fresh one taking its place. The cubes cost 60 cents each, and we keep three in use to each filter. When one seems charged with impurities it is taken out and put in the kitchen fire a few minutes, until it glows red hot, when it is lifted out with the tongs and left to cool. Before putting in the filter again the block is dipped in water to raise off any ashes which adhere, and it is fresh for use again. By this care we can depend on perfectly clear water. And no filter can be relied upon whose filtering purt cannot be taken out and cleansed at will. Are not complexions worth this little trouble? It is very much more certain in its effect than toilet lotions. Permit me to say," added the doctor, with a courtly air, "that the lotions are much more effective when aided by the use of very pure water."

"Will you tell women," he resumed in a graver tone, "to be careful of two things, the drinking cups they use and the people they kiss—or whom they allow to kiss their children. Eruptive disease of the most repulsive nature is communicated by infection through the thin skin of the lips and mouth, sore throats are taken from public drinking cups; even it is possible from the communion cup at the sacrament. Each person should carry his or her own drinking cup for daily use. And I cannot help thinking that each one admitted to the sacrament should have a glass kept sacredly for that occasion, and taken to church when needed. It is too terrible to have a such a rite defiled by the thought of possibilities which lurk in human experience. As for kissing—it seems hard to lay that under the ban. But we teach children that they must not kiss and caress one with sore eyes for fear of taking the disorder, and we must teach them to keep their kisses for their family friends alone, happy if then they escape all dangers. I should not allow servant girls, coming from no one knows where, and going with no one knows how, to kiss an infant or child. It is too easy to take incipient diphtheria or ulcerated sore throat or something worse that way. The kiss on the hand is enough for a cousin, the kiss on the cheek for those entitled to nearer privileges. Trust me, we doctors know what we say, and have sound reasons for saying so. Pure blood and breath are too rare to suffer sweet girls and children to be endangered for a caress."