

**WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.**

Under such attractive names as "Freezine," "Preservative Compound," etc., various preparations containing formalin, salicylic acid or similar substances are being sold. These "preservatives" are represented as harmless and many people are using them innocently. Salicylic acid and some products of formalin may be useful occasionally as medicines when prescribed by a skillful physician, but they are slow poisons and their continued use in food is dangerous. Throw away your canned fruit if put up with a "preservative;" and be thankful that the laws of Wisconsin seek to protect consumers of milk and cream from all such poisons.

We are glad that the agricultural press is raising a cry of alarm. Witness the following clipped from exchanges: "A milkman in Milwaukee has been fined \$75 for using the substance known as Freezine, in milk. It is said that this substance has the same effect upon milk as freezing, hence the name. The compound keeps milk, not by freezing, but by poisoning the bacteria. What may poison bacteria, may poison babies, who are nothing but human bacteria, anyway."

**WARNING AGAINST PRESERVATIVES.**

"E. O. Grosvenor, dairy and food commissioner of Michigan, sends out the following:

We desire to caution dairymen and dealers in milk against the use in their products of the so-called preservatives now upon the market. Many of these mixtures are decidedly dangerous, and the steady absorption of the same, especially by invalids and children, who are generally large consumers of milk, is likely to produce serious if not fatal effects. Aside from the directly injurious character of some of these preservatives, they all tend to retard fermentation, thus at least indirectly preventing digestion. Science has demonstrated that the value of all food depends very

much upon the readiness with which it is assimilated in the process of digestion and scientific authorities agree that whatever prevents decomposition delays digestion. There are legitimate methods of preservation which do not involve the use of noxious drugs and the department will prosecute dealers in milk found using these deleterious mixtures."

### HYDROCYANIC ACID AS AN INSECTICIDE—A WARNING.

TO THE EDITOR OF AMERICAN GARDENING:

I have been interested in reading Dr. Fisher's communication in the last issue of American Gardening on the subject of hydrocyanic acid gas as an insecticide; but think a more serious word of warning should be uttered to your readers in regard to its use than was given in your editorial.

At Willowmead Gardens, we have made probably the most thorough experimentation with this gas, as well as with other insect poisons that have been in glass structures, the commercial necessity of overcoming various forms of insect pests injurious to the contents of our orchid houses being the incentive of the elaborate experimentation. It is true that hydrocyanic acid gas will kill every form of life, animal as well as vegetable, if it is used of sufficient strength and for a long enough time; but there are some insect forms that will not succumb to it unless a sufficiently strong solution of gas is used to have a caustic effect on plants of various kinds. This effect does not at once show itself.

One trouble of the long immersion of plants in even a dilute solution of the gas is that too much is absorbed by the plants and more or less injury to the plants is effected. Plants show remarkably different susceptibilities to its effects; some of the apparently toughest plants being most susceptible. Furthermore, the gas sometimes "banks" up in certain parts of the house.

But outside of this, the use of the gas as prepared by this process is too frightfully dangerous to warrant it being