

# DON'T GAMBLE YOUR LIFE

## Our Children are Precious

Our children are our most precious possessions, and most parents would be horrified if they were told they often gambled with their youngsters' lives. And yet this happens in many homes almost every day, for parents who allow their homes to become dirty, who use unclean cooking and eating utensils, who leave uncovered foods to the mercy of filthy germ-carrying flies are, in fact, gambling their youngster's lives.

During recent years several outbreaks of food poisoning, affecting large groups of people, have occurred in New South Wales. When fifty picnickers are suddenly taken ill after a meal the incident is dramatic, yet the same risk exists in every household and restaurant where the standard of food hygiene is not observed.

Poisoning by food may result in vomiting and collapse, sometimes in death, but is experienced in less degree by many persons who simply "feel sick" after eating a particular food. It is mostly caused by germs, of the type called Salmonella. Much less frequently its origin is in chemical products of vegetables or other plants. Potato poisoning for instance is due to a substance solanin, produced by the potato plant. It occurs only when green or sprouting potatoes are eaten. These may contain harmful amounts of solanin, while in the fully-grown vegetable the amount is negligible. Another but rarer example is the absorption by honey of a poisonous substance produced by flowers, including some varieties of azalea, on which the bees have fed.

The foods chiefly affected by Salmonella or other germ poisoning are meat and prepared meat foods, sweet dishes and ice cream, and duck eggs. Such germs get into food in various ways. It may be contaminated by rats or mice, which harbor germs; and meat may come from an animal infected with them. Contamination may be due to lack of cleanliness in those who prepare or process foods. It is possible that the heat of cooking destroys certain bacteria without destroying the toxins or poisons they secrete.

Food poisoning is a variety of gastro-enteritis. Mostly there is nothing in the taste of the food to indicate that it should not be eaten. True ptomaine poisoning is extremely rare, because the substances called ptomaines are produced only in food in such condition that it would be obviously unfit to eat.

Ordinary food poisoning is not due to anything harmful in the food itself, but to the way it is treated—or rather ill-treated. The only safeguard against the germs which cause it is a high standard of hygiene and cleanliness in the handling of foods.

## A LOVELY DEBUTANTE



Penelope Packer, who made her debut at the Presbyterian Ball on the 8th May, at Cootamundra.

There were only two girls presented and they were piped into the hall by eighteen women pipers from Sydney.

Penny never faltered in her training and did everything so well everyone was very proud of her.

Penny is nursing at the District Hospital and is doing very well. She left school at 15 years and after going out to work she studied by correspondence and passed her nurse's entrance examination.