

Index and Analysis of Evidence.

WATKINS, JOHN A.—*Continued.*

compounding are carried on in Montreal, and undoubtedly very deleterious substances are used (29027-28); more strict supervision is necessary (29029); there are three licensed compounders in Montreal, and witness acts as inspector over these establishments; is aware that almost three out of every five of the corner groceries compound liquor and use false labels which they purchase (29030). Witness produced samples of labels containing fictitious names (29032); labels produced had been purchased from George Bishop & Co., and contained the names either of leading European firms or of firms that had ceased to exist (29033-39); such labels were purchased by keepers of corner groceries or by any person, and their use led to great frauds on the public (29040-42). Licensed compounders are compelled to use labels provided by the Inland Revenue Department; the word "compound" is on the face of all legitimate labels (29041-48; had made several seizures of illicit stills throughout Quebec (29049-51); the department has appointed a preventive officer to devote his whole time to discovering illicit stills (29052); during the last twelve months thirteen or fourteen illicit stills have been seized in Montreal and the parties heavily fined (29053-55); energetic measures are adopted to prevent illicit distilling (29063); they are to a certain extent not successful, but they reduce the evil to a large extent (29063-66).

WEIR, W., Montreal, President Ville Marie Bank.....Page **682**

The moderate use of liquor is injurious to the general business of the country; the people are taken from active pursuits and become impoverished (29756-57); the over indulgence in intoxicating liquors is one of the greatest obstacles to the moral and material welfare of this and other communities; had constantly aided and encouraged the advocacy of abstinence, but had hesitated either to support or oppose the movement of those who proposed prohibitive legislation to remedy the evils of intemperance; there are grave objections to restricting the liberties of the people in matters of food, drink or clothing, even should a large majority favour such an enactment; if a prohibitory law were put in force by a large majority in Parliament and in sympathy with only a bare majority of the people, the result would be demoralizing in the extreme; extensive smuggling would be carried on with the border States; the minority who broke the prohibitory law would soon come to disregard other laws; a prohibitory law, moreover, would deter European emigrants, accustomed to use alcoholic liquors, from making their home in Canada; any falling off in Dominion revenues would be largely made up by an increase in other importations, but it would be necessary to impose duties on tea and coffee now admitted free; the decline in provincial revenues would be a serious matter, especially in Quebec; favours a law to have habitual drunkards tried by jury and if convicted sent to reformatories; favours the taking of a plebiscite from time to time, and on a three-fourths vote in favour of prohibition would approve of the trial of a prohibitory law, although still not without doubts as to its success (29758). If a prohibitory law were enacted and enforced, the prosperity of the country would be so much greater that the revenue derived from other articles would make up the deficiency owing to loss of revenue from the abolition of the liquor trade; tea and coffee would however have to pay duty (29761-62). No doubt prohibition would drain the Provincial Government's revenue for a long time (29765); it would be difficult for the province to make up the deficiency (29767); it could be done by an income tax, but that would be a very unpopular and heavy tax (29770-71). The farmers would be compelled to raise other crops instead of barley (29773-78). Money expended on liquor is a waste, and so far as people are impoverished by it and rendered unable to purchase articles of necessity and luxury, it is injurious (29783-84). Other branches of business suffer from it; in the case of poor people every dollar spent on liquor is an abuse, because it is not necessary to their welfare, health and comfort; but when you come