

Mellin's wrappers a statement that his own food was better. His Lordship did not recollect having seen a similar step taken before. But he did not see on what ground a tradesman had not a right to send a puff of his own goods with similar goods of another trader, either in a separate envelope or on a separate piece of paper in the same envelope; and if he could do that, why could he not attach a label to the cover of the goods themselves? However, the latter point was one on which there might be a question of law for the trial of the action. His Lordship would have been glad to hear an offer from the defendant's counsel to discontinue the practice until the trial; but he did not see his way to grant an injunction now.

That is to say, until his case is finally settled, and perhaps afterwards, if Mr. Mellin is beaten (I hope he may not be, but fear he will), any substituter may not only do all he can to get purchasers to take his substitute in place of the advertised article, but he may even stick a recommendation of it on the very package that the advertised goods are put up in, when he does sell them. This seems to be a very hard case, and one would like to see it redressed: but "hard cases make bad law," and one trembles for the result.

Messrs. Macdonald, Sons & Co., limited (a stock company trading in medicated wines and foods), came to liquidation, in the course of which the following remarkable facts were revealed: Nine medical men at the formation of the company received each a £25 fully paid-up share in the concern, conditioned on their prescribing and recommending the goods of the company. By some clerical error these paid-up shares were not registered as such according to law, and the liquidator therefore placed the names of the nine luckless medicos on the list of contributors to the estate of the company. Considering the position of these doctors, one would have thought they had better pay and say nothing, but they preferred to resist, even at the expense of publicity, and so far as getting out of paying the £25 a head goes, they have succeeded, but no costs were given. The ruling of the court concluded with some strong remarks—not a bit too strong for the circumstances, in the opinion of the present chronicler. The learned judge said:—

I cannot, I think, leave this case without saying one word about the facts. It is, to say the least of it, a very sad thing that members of a learned profession should have condescended to accept these fully-paid shares on these terms. It may be that an individual doctor thought well of the wares of this company, and in prescribing or recommending them he acted according to his convictions. But it is not the less a fact that these shares were taken by these doctors as bribes. For my own part, a great deal of the difficulty that I have had in considering the case has arisen from a strong feeling that if these doctors were put on the list of contributors it would serve them right. But it is not my duty by my judgment to arrive at a conclusion of law contrary to what I believe to be the principles of law merely because I disapprove of the conduct of the litigants. I have only to administer the law as I believe it to exist, and I have done so. I do not think I shall give the applicants any costs.

ARE CANNED GOODS WHOLESOME?

A paragraph is going the rounds of the press, attributed to a European trade paper, which is calculated to allay fears of copper poisoning, stating that two German chemists had found copper in grain, beans, cocoa, bullock's liver and other articles of food; that preserves containing 25 milligrammes of copper per kilogramme were harmless; that 20 to 30 milligrammes of copper in the form of acetate or sulphate might be taken daily with impunity, and that the French and Italian law tolerated copper in preserves up to the extent of 40 milligrammes per kilogramme.

A little different version of this last is given in a report on canned vegetables, just issued by the chemical division of the United States Department of Agriculture, a report which the canners of food and the grocery trade are likely to receive with much disfavor. Prof. Wiley looks with decided aversion upon the presence of copper and lead in food, even in minute quantities, and as to the French toleration of copper in canned goods, he says the question has been in agitation for twenty-five

years, and for some time French packers were not allowed to sell their copper-treated goods at home, though they were permitted to export them. The French Government did not deem it its duty to protect foreigners. Prof. Wiley says that in 1875 some Bordeaux packers marked their goods, "Green peas greened with sulphate of copper. Made specially for exportation to America and England, and not sold for French use." It would be interesting to know whether this label was still on the goods when they were exposed for sale in the retail groceries of England and the United States. After some years, the home demand for this variety of green goods became so strong that the Government yielded and permitted the use of copper-greened vegetables, provided that they should bear some definite mark. The canners, however, were not required to state the facts on their goods, and they complied with the law by putting on some such vague phrase as "à l'Anglaise."

Of American canned peas Prof. Wiley found that one-third of the samples contained no copper; of the rest scarcely any had over 50 milligrammes of copper per kilogramme. But of the 36 samples of French peas, 35 were colored with copper and one with zinc; 60 per cent. contained over 50 milligrammes, 31 per cent. over 75 milligrammes, and 11 per cent. over 100 milligrammes per kilo. "The occasional use," says Prof. Wiley, "of a small quantity of a copper or zinc salt, it must be allowed, can be practiced without practical danger to health. On the other hand, the regular and continual consumption of even the small quantities of these materials present in canned vegetables must be regarded as at least prejudicial to health."

Lead gets into canned vegetables from two sources; one is an excess of lead in the material of the can, and the other is the lead cap often used, or the rubber pad containing sulphate of lead. It doesn't seem possible that a dangerous amount of lead can be extracted from the rubber pads. Lead caps are often used on glass jars, and if the goods are not kept right side up, all the advantage of using glass is destroyed by the contact of the contents with the cap. In Germany the law requires that the tin used in making the cans shall not contain more than one per cent. of lead; here there is no restriction, and the tin plate sometimes contains as much as 12 per cent. of lead.

Originally goods were thoroughly boiled before canning, and heat destroyed the micro-organisms that produce decay. But the prolonged boiling impaired the appearance of fruit and vegetables, and less cooking and the use of preservatives were substituted. These preservatives are generally salicylic acid and sulphurous acid, and Prof. Wiley believes them to be unwholesome in themselves and objectionable on the ground that whatever retards decay retards digestion. Tin is often found in canned goods, but it is less objectionable than copper. Prof. Wiley thinks it is dangerous if taken frequently. He thinks some canned goods contain an injurious amount of common salt.

All this is alarming, but canned goods are in very extensive use, and they have been used freely after being in the cans two or three years. There is good reason for believing that the very few cases of poisoning from their use are generally due to the fact that decay had begun in the food, or that the acid contents had been left in the can after opening and exposure to the air. Canned goods have been used so much by armies and navies here and abroad, and by travelers and exploring expeditions absent for long periods from their bases of supplies, that if they were deleterious the fact would be shown by something more palpable than chemical analysis. Perhaps Prof. Wiley is right in saying that the cost of them protects us from a too cupric and galenic diet. Canned vegetables and fruit contain so much water that Prof. Wiley estimates the price of the solid contents at about five dollars a pound. When fresh vegetables can be obtained canned vegetables are not likely to be used, and when there are no fresh vegetables it is just possible that it is more wholesome to eat canned ones with traces of copper and lead than not to eat any. The finer varieties of canned fruits and vegetables are, as Prof. Wiley says, too expensive to use as freely as one uses potatoes. At any rate, with all respect to the chemists, any serious production of disease by the use of canned goods is yet to be proved.—*Bulletin 7th*

STAND PIPES AND HOSE.

The Board of Fire Underwriters of Richmond, Va., recently petitioned the City Council to allow manufacturers and others to place stand pipes with hose connections in their buildings, for the purpose of protecting them from fire, without paying additional water tax and putting in water meters. The reasons the Board gave for making this request were ingenious. They recited:

1. The improvement, if made, will tend to reduce the fire loss by providing facilities for the immediate extinction of any fire that may occur. The city is thus benefited by saving the cost of putting out a large fire, and by retaining on its tax books property that, if destroyed, might not be rebuilt.

2. The water rents would be increased by having an additional hydrant on each floor to charge for, while the amount of water used would not increase, because these pipes would not be used except in case of fire. No one wanting to draw water would uncoil fifty feet of hose to get it, when there was another hydrant on the same floor that was open.

3. The cost of putting in a meter for a supply that might not be used in a year adds very much to the expense of such protection, and the property owners respectfully ask through their committee that they may be spared such expense. In some instances, rather than pay for a meter, we are under the impression that parties will go without their insurance, thereby depriving the city and state of the tax on such premiums, and the agents of their commissions.

The city fathers of Richmond, however, thought this only a scheme to cut off the revenue which they delight in expending, and they, therefore, filed the petition and ordered the water works superintendent to charge full rates for stand pipes.

THE BARLEY MARKET IN BRITAIN.

The Canadian Department of Trade and Commerce has received a report from Mr. Thos. Connolly, formerly agent for Canada at Dublin, in which he states that the barley crop in Britain will be at least 80 per cent. short this year, and the long drought on the continent will diminish the supply of foreign barley. About 50,000 or 60,000 bushels of Canadian barley were sold on the Dublin market last season. The demand is increasing, especially from the large maltsters, who find it very suitable for the "crystal malt," which they ship in large quantities to the English brewers, who use it to color English ales and give them a head. Canadian barley is purchased chiefly by the Dublin men through Liverpool houses, and at the date of Mr. Connolly's report (29th August), he learned from a leading broker that a large order for Canadian barley had been received at 12s. 6d. per bbl. of 224 lbs.

A GRAND TRUNK INSPECTION.

Sir Henry Tyler, president of the Grand Trunk Railway, accompanied by Messrs. Sergeant and Wainwright, Mr. Stevenson, and other officials of the road, returned to Montreal on Saturday last, from an inspection tour of the eastern division of the road. The president says the reason for the failure of the Grand Trunk to pay better dividends is excessive competition. Rates in Canada are only about a third of what the United States roads are getting. Although agreement after agreement has been made by representatives of different roads not to cut rates, they have always been broken by some one. In England such agreements were obligatory by act of Parliament. On this account the Canadian directorate of the Grand Trunk would be useless. The Canadian directors could not stop competition any more than directors in England can. He ridicules the idea that the G. T. R. could be controlled by any syndicate such as was talked of some time ago. The party inspect the western division early next week, and Sir Henry will leave for England at the end of the present month.

—The city treasurer of Toronto has received a cheque for \$571.88 taxes on the Jarvis street Baptist Church property. The remittance is accompanied by the congregation's usual protest against exemptions.