

ASHES INSPECTION.

In another column will be found a letter addressed to us by Mr. Henshaw, in reply to an article which appeared in the "Review" of February 10th, relative to the proposed Ashes Inspection Law. The article referred to was written, as we then stated, upon the information contained in a letter of Mr. Henshaw's which appeared in an evening paper, and on the presumption that his information was correct. The letter was addressed to "Manufacturers of Pot and Pearl Ashes of Canada," and purported to be an epitomization of the proposed Bill. After carefully reading this letter, we drew such conclusions therefrom as we considered fair, and in good keeping with common sense. To these, however, Mr. Henshaw is pleased to object, and, in doing so, he goes out of his way to prove (?) that the definition we then gave of inspecting and branding, was erroneous. We said that "no matter what we mark on a barrel of ashes, the consumer will only pay what it is really worth;" and it will certainly require more logic than Mr. Henshaw has yet displayed to convince us that this is not true. A consumer may be once deceived by a false brand; but we believe the maxim "once bit, twice shy," will hold good in this as in other cases. Indeed, we are not a little surprised to find one of a committee appointed by the Board of Trade to compile a law, preaching such a narrow-minded doctrine as is contained in Mr. Henshaw's letter. "Surely it does not require a prophet to foresee that if the 'careless' mode of inspection and branding already spoken of is systematically pursued, even for one season, consumers must lose all faith in it, and the price of the ash must materially decrease; because no sensible man will pay as much for the 'chance' of getting a good article, as he will for the certainty;" hence our assertion that the "consumer will only pay what the article is really worth." Mr. Henshaw, in his letter of February 1st, made use of the expressions: "Canada Ash deservedly ranks high in the markets of Great Britain and the United States," and "this pre-eminence is due to the maintenance of a standard which was found perfectly attainable." Now he says: "The complaints, which for the past three or four years have been made, indicate too clearly that the character of our brand is injured, and that, unless a thorough change in the system of inspection is insisted upon, we shall before long look upon our brand as lost in public estimation;" and "we want the present system of guess work abolished, and one of absolute, ascertained facts substituted; then, and not till then, may we hope or expect to see our old brand resume its old place in public confidence."

We before confessed our inability to reconcile Mr. Henshaw's statements; now we despair of ever being able to do so. Perhaps, however, the perceptive powers are better developed in some of our readers, who may be able to reconcile those, to us, apparently contradictory statements. That the character of an article which *deservedly stands high and has been well maintained*, is, through a course of conduct which has been systematically pursued for a number of years, in great danger of being lost in public estimation, and that not until a certain thing has been done, may we expect to see the said article resume its old place—the place it has well maintained—in public confidence, are statements which we certainly cannot understand.

We oppose the contemplated law, not because we believe the present system of inspection perfect, on the contrary, we are satisfied that there have been many complaints from both manufacturers and consumers, but, first, because we consider it impolitic and childlike to ask for a new law before the old one has been put in operation, or even a legal opinion obtained defining the powers which it confers; and secondly, because we believe that some of the provisions of the proposed bill will be found wholly impracticable, and that the cure will prove to be far worse than the disease. So long as the bills or certificates issued by the Inspectors command a ready market at good prices, there is little danger of the character of the Montreal brand being injured in public estimation; and we think that the differences which have arisen between the Inspectors and Brokers might have been amicably adjusted, without resorting to the extreme measure of introducing a bill into the Legislature on the subject, and thus endangering the interests of a class engaged in the manufacture of so important a product.

At a Special Meeting of the Board of Trade, held yesterday evening (since the above was written), Mr. Henshaw's motion to accept the report of the Committee, who prepared the new Bill, was withdrawn

and a resolution was adopted requesting the Council to prepare and submit to Parliament a short Act, placing the Inspection under the more immediate control of the Board, in a similar position to Flour Inspection.

THE DRY GOODS TRADE.

Wm. Benjamin & Co.
John Dougall & Co.
Gilmour, White & Co.
Lewis, Kay & Co.
Thomas May.
Munderloh & Stecken.

Ogilvy & Co.
Ringland, Ewart & Co.
A. Robertson & Co.
William Stephen & Co.
Thomson, Claxton & Co.
Alexander Walker.

CANADIAN CLOTHES.

To the Editor of the "TRADE REVIEW."

Canada West, Feb. 16, 1865.
SIR,—In reading the second number of your excellent paper, I notice some remarks touching the matter of Home Manufacture and the disposal of the same. You remark "that too often Canadian goods are sold at too small a profit, and neither manufacturer nor merchant is willing to take the blame." As a manufacturer, I beg the privilege of offering a few words on the subject. And I would remark, at starting, that the manufacturer is not to blame.

When visiting your market some few years ago, for the disposal of my goods, I found no difficulty in disposing of my entire manufacture, from samples, for delivery. The goods gave satisfaction, and holders experienced no difficulty in securing proper and satisfactory profits. This continued up to the past two years, since which time a complete change has taken possession of the trade.

At the time I first allude to, but a few houses were disposed to buy largely, and the majority refused to purchase altogether. Latterly Canadian goods have become popular, and they are found to suit the requirements of the trade better than any thing of the same class that can be imported. The consequence has been that nearly all the wholesale trade find it requisite to keep more or less stock of this class. Unfortunately, the popularity of the article has not improved the position of the manufacturer. Each season he finds it harder and still harder work to get fair value; and often he is offered prices, to accept which, would entail ruinous loss. In fact, there has been no money made at manufacturing for the past two years. And why is this the case? It is true the manufacture is largely increased, but this is not the reason, as there is no surplus stock of goods in the market; they are all, or nearly all, consumed in season.

I think, Mr. Editor, the conclusion is inevitable, as you express it, that "Canadian goods are made a bait for the sale of imported goods," and the sooner the manufacturer takes a stand against it, the better. As it is, he is working hard year after year, to no purpose looking up a large amount of capital which yields him a poor return, and does the community no actual benefit. Yes, Sir, I have found out the secret; and, acting on the information, I have learned for myself that Canadian goods are often sold at actual cost in order to facilitate the sale of imported goods; and in nine cases out of ten, but a slight margin of profit is calculated on.

I see no reason why goods of Canadian manufacture should not bear as large a proportion of profits as any other class of goods. As it is, I leave the trade generally, to judge who is to blame, the merchant or the manufacturer.

Yours, &c.,

MANUFACTURER.

In reply to the above, we think that the manufacturer is in some sense to blame. He is one of the contracting parties, and, if a business man, should not allow himself to be imposed upon. Perhaps in his case he may know more about the manufacturing of goods than he does of the disposal of them. In that case he should place himself in the hands of a third party, one fully conversant with the state of the market and its requirements. He finds this a hard market, and thinks it a changed one. We are aware that a few years ago anything in the shape of Canadian tweeds would sell. It was not unusual for a wholesale house to give an order for say one thousand pieces, covering any pattern the manufacturer chose to turn out. The goods were received, and a host of discrepancies and imperfections overlooked:—they sold readily; that was all the purchaser required. Those were palmy days for the manufacturer; several of them grew suddenly rich: but those days are past. Competition has completely changed this state of things, and success can only follow at the present day from close and careful calculations, and an attentive watch as to the requirements of the market.

How often does it happen that the Canadian manufacturer continues, season after season, to make cloths and produce styles quite unsuited for the market, or perhaps such as he has been turning out for years? We have ourselves seen patterns that would shock any taste; a man blindfold ought to produce better. If this is the class of men who complain of the change in this market, they are asleep, behind the times, and must of course lose money.

We wish to aid, all in our power, in the progress of home manufacture, and we have before hinted that we thought the manufacturer, in some cases, harshly dealt with; but enquiry has revealed to us many discrepancies of his own. More than this, the fact is

established that first-class goods are seldom an overstock. While some of the manufacturers are going behind, and, as our friend states, losing, we know of others who are preparing for more extensive operations, and who are of a certainty making money.

The wholesale merchant is quite right in purchasing his goods at as close a price as possible, and it cannot be supposed that he will be dictated to in the matter of his profits. If he chooses to sell at cost, the loss is his own: this cannot be a common occurrence, and we think "Manufacturer" is in error.

There are some points it would be well for manufacturers to pay attention to, and the principal one is in the matter of Design. In the old country Designing is an art,—an art to which large sums of money are paid,—and which aids the manufacturer materially in the disposal of his goods. Instead of the same old worn-out pattern being again and again produced, let an effort be made, each season, to produce something positively new, and thereby avoid the possibility of being brought into competition with a former season's patterns, a balance of which may have remained unsold in the market, and which are certain to be sacrificed.

A proper calculation should be made of the probable demand of goods of a certain class and price; and the orders once obtained, let the goods be manufactured and delivered in good season, taking every precaution against overplus stock. We have not exhausted this subject, but space forbids our entering more fully into the question. Perhaps more light may follow from some other quarter. We solicit any new views, or any remarks on this subject that would be useful to the trade.

Enough has been said in reply to "Manufacturer" to show him that possibly some of his troubles arise from his own bad calculations or mismanagement.

THE GROCERY TRADE.

James Austin & Co.
I. Buchanan, Harris & Co.
H. Chapman & Co.
Converse, Colson & Lamb.
Jas. Douglas & Co.
Fitzpatrick & Moore.
Gillespie, Moffat & Co.
Jeffrey, Brothers & Co.
R. Hutchins.
Law, Young & Co.
E. Macdonald Tyles & Co.

J. A. & H. Mathewson.
H. J. Gear.
Mitchell, Kinnear & Co.
William Nivn & Co.
Rimmer, Gunn & Co.
David Robertson.
Harland, Routh & Co.
Sinclair, Jack & Co.
Jos. Tiffin & Sons.
David Torrance & Co.
Thompson, Murray & Co.

The Grocery Trade has been very limited during the past week, and we have to report no activity in any description of Staple Goods. Some excitement has existed among our merchants respecting the rumored intention of the Government to impose immediately increased Excise and Custom duties; and although no one professes to have any reliable authority for such a report, many of the distillers and merchants have paid large amounts for duty on their stocks in bond—of highwines, spirits, teas, &c.

TEAS—The market has been very dull, the previous activity having subsided. Prices, however, remain firm, and the few sales making have been at previous rates.

SUGARS—Prices continue firm, and the small stock in the hands of importers has been further diminished by the sale of over 200 hhds., principally of inferior Muscovado.

MOLASSES—In somewhat better demand, but without change in prices.

TOBACCOS—In manufacture, there have been some sales of tens and half pounds, ranging at from 23c. net and upwards, according to quality. The anticipation of an additional excise on this article tends to increase the expectation of some holders. No transactions in Leaf Tobacco to report.

In other articles no change to note. For quotations see our Corrected Price Current, on another page.

Leather.

During the past week there has been very little movement in Leather, and prices are by no means firm. There is some enquiry for prime Slaughter; but buyers are unwilling to give any advance. This is the only description of leather that the market is not more than amply supplied with. The shoe manufacturers' requirements are still very limited; they don't seem to be sanguine as to the prospects for a large spring business. Shipments of Spanish sole continue to be made, via Portland, to Liverpool, which prevents any great accumulation of that description: quotations as per Prices Current.

Boots and Shoes.

Manufacturing is being done upon a very moderate scale, and in a great measure for the purpose of keeping the operators employed, rather than to increase stocks, the demand, of course, only being prospective, and that at best not encouraging. Stocks are accumulating to a moderate extent. There is a tendency in most houses to improve the qualities of their manufactures; but prices can scarcely be expected to advance, unless material gets higher.