

REPORT

OF THE

COUNCIL OF THE BOARD OF TRADE

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1865.

THE Council of the Board of Trade beg to submit the following Report :—

The first subject brought under the notice of the Council, on assuming office in April last, was that of the complaints which had been made against the Inspectors of Pot and Pearl Ashes, and it has occupied more or less of their attention during the entire year.

Without entering into all the details, it is considered advisable to give here a short summary of the course of proceeding, and to state the result arrived at.

On the 12th April, a draft of a Bill was submitted to the Council by a member of the Board, having for its object certain changes in the mode of conducting the inspection of Pot and Pearl Ashes, as well as the bestowal upon this Board of greater control over the appointment of Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors.

A committee of three members of the Council was appointed to confer with the gentleman referred to, who, on behalf of others engaged in the trade as well as of himself, urged the proposed changes. After numerous meetings, this committee reported to the Council on the 31st May, and submitted another draft of Bill, a copy of which the Council caused to be sent to the Inspectors, who subsequently intimated their desire for a conference with the Committee.

The subject being one of great importance, it was deemed advisable to bring it before the quarterly meeting of the Board on 12th July; and at that meeting, a committee of five gentlemen,—two of whom were not members of the Board, but extensively engaged in the Ashes trade,—was appointed to co-operate with the Council in endeavoring to arrive at a settlement of the whole question. All the letters and documents bearing on the question were referred to this Committee, who reported to the Council on 29th November to the following effect, namely :—

1. That many of the complaints made against the Inspectors are from the largest consumers and dealers in Great Britain and from manufacturers in this Province, who aver that the negligence complained of, if not speedily remedied, will ultimately result in ruin to the Montreal brand.

2. That an examination of the system of Inspection pursued led the Committee to the conclusion that it might naturally produce the evils complained of; the attention of the Council being drawn to the fact that the contents of the barrels are not turned out, that being in the opinion of the Committee necessary to efficient inspection, and to ascertaining the exact tare.