

Adulterated Drugs.

We have received from the Inland Revenue Department at Ottawa the Chief Analyst's report of analysis of drugs made by Mr. F. T. Harrison, public Analyst, London, Ont., and Dr. W. H. Ellis, public Analyst, Toronto.

These reports are the result of the examination of twenty-two samples collected in various parts of Ontario. Of these fifteen were of tincture of opium, of which but eight were found to be up to the standard required by the B. P. In five the amount of morphine was below the B. P. standard and in two the Alcohol was below the standard. Seven samples of citrate of iron and quinine were examined, of which three were found to be of proper strength and unadulterated, the remaining four being deficient in the amount of quinine.

It is to be regretted that such a large proportion, or, in fact, that any of the samples examined should be found below the official strength. The samples of tincture of opium which were purchased (and these were all in one pound lots except one, which was 10 oz.) were all made by the vendors themselves, with the exception of one, which was purchased from a wholesale house and which was found to be of proper strength. Although we do not think the blame can in every case be laid solely on the retail druggist who prepared the tincture, as the opium itself may not have been the proper standard, still we find that in four cases the tincture was deficient in the amount of alcohol which it contained; for this there certainly can be no excuse.

The result of this analysis showed conclusively that in the first place druggists for their own protection as well as for the general protection of the public, should see to it that the crude material used in a preparation made, according to the B. P., should be pure and a test made as to the strength of the active principle which it contains.

The chief analyst in the report of the department says: "It appears to me that it would be unwise for the present to institute any proceedings against the vendors of the defective drugs, as some of them may have been unaware of the inferior quality of the material employed in preparing them."

It certainly is of the utmost importance that druggists everywhere should make it their first consideration to have all preparations conform to the Pharmacopœial standard,

The Quebec Pharmacy Act.

The proposed legislation in the Quebec Legislature, where it is sought to amend the Pharmacy Act of that province, in the interests of the grocers and general dealers, has occasioned a considerable stir, not only amongst the druggists of the province, but others, notably the physicians and wholesale trade. The amendment which it is sought to make to the present act consists of two clauses, the first of which provides that, in future, instead of the Pharmaceutical Association deciding what substances were poisons, that power should be held by the Lieut. Governor-in-Council, who shall make such declaration on the recommendation of the association and on that of an expert to be paid by it.

The second clause provides that grocers and others may sell Paris Green, London Purple, and all patent medicines, substances, and drugs other than those mentioned in Schedule A of the present Act.

In reference to the first clause, the Pharmaceutical Association oppose it on the ground that it would greatly limit their power of naming poisons, and they contend that the second clause is undesirable on the ground that many patent medicines, drugs, etc., which are not poisons according to Schedule A, are equally as dangerous in the hands of unexperienced and unscientific vendors and consumers.

The amendment created considerable discussion in the House, but it received its first and second readings, and was referred to the Committee on Legislation. Up to the time of going to press this committee had the bill under consideration, and on the 10th inst. reported to the House, recommending "in view of the great importance of the evidence adduced before the committee on the subject of this bill, that such evidence be printed from day to day for the convenience of members." Thus the bill stands, the delay probably being caused by the strong opposition brought to bear against the placing of any such amendment, although the Grocers' Association and other interests are fighting hard for its final passage.

Should the amendment pass the Legislature, and receive its third reading, we believe that the good sense of the Legislative Council will prevent it becoming law.

The reasons for the retention of the bill, as it is at present, being to our

mind sufficient evidence that it is more in the interests of the general public, than to admit any possibility of danger, such as must inevitably result from the concession which it is proposed to grant to others than qualified druggists. A numerous signed petition has been presented against the measure from the physicians and surgeons of the province, which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned physicians and surgeons of the Province of Quebec, knowing that a bill infringing seriously upon the rights and privileges of the druggists, has been presented to the House, humbly submit to your consideration that the Pharmacy Act now in force gives full and entire satisfaction. The rights and privileges of the said Act are not accorded to those who have not followed the course of study specified in it. In our opinion it will be not only an injustice but an invasion of the rights guaranteed to the druggists by the Legislature in recognition of their course of study and of the long practice exacted from them. We believe further that the sale without distinction of drug and chemical products by incompetent dealers will be a great danger to the public health; and, seeing the large number of licensed druggists under the Pharmacy Act, we see no necessity to ask the Legislature to sanction the clauses presented by Mr. Gouin and we humbly ask that such amendment should not be granted."

Amongst the signers of this petition are Doctors Catellier, Savard, Parke, Brouseau, Sewell, Groudin, Brochin, Turcot, Vallee, Fiset, Elliott, Verge Fortier, Pelleau, Boisvert, Drouin, Boulanger, Lessard, Giasson, Gauthier, Cinqmars Label, Martineau, Matte, Clark, Laberge, Larue, Rinfret Bolduc, Bedard, Robitaille, Paquin, Walters, Jolicœur, Cote and others.

The following statement from the wholesale druggists of Montreal has also been sent to the press showing the stand taken by them in this matter:

"We, the undersigned wholesale druggists of the city of Montreal, having heard that it has been stated at a recent meeting of the retail grocery trade, as well as reported in the press, that many of the wholesale druggists have signed a petition approving of the proposed amendments to the Pharmacy Act, now before the Legislature of this province, hereby declare that,

"We have never signed any such docu-