

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK ENDING SATURDAY,  
JANUARY 14, 1871.

SUNDAY,	JAN. 8.—	First Sunday after Epiphany. St. Lucian, P. and M. Galileo died, 1642. Prince Albert Victor of Wales born, 1864.
MONDAY,	" 9.—	Expedition against the Mohawks, under De Courcelles, 1666. The Canadas united, 1841.
TUESDAY,	" 10.—	Royal Exchange burned, 1838. Penny Post established in England, 1849. Loss of the "London," 1868.
WEDNESDAY,	" 11.—	First Lottery in England, 1569. Sir Hans Sloane died, 1753. Earthquake at Martinique, 900 lives lost, 1839.
THURSDAY,	" 12.—	St. Bennet. Bonaparte Family banished from France, 1816. Sir Charles Bagot, Gov. Gen., 1842.
FRIDAY,	" 13.—	St. Hilary Bp. The London Times established, 1785.
SATURDAY,	" 14.—	Battle of Corunna, 1814. Great Fire at St. John, N. B., 1837.

THE CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1871.

AMONG the questions discussed at the late meeting of the Montreal Board of Trade, held on Tuesday last, next perhaps to that of the "twenty feet channel," about which it seems that Messrs. Hugh Allan and John Young are fated to go down to the grave at variance, no more important subject was brought up than that of the inspection of certain commercial articles. It is exceedingly advisable that leather, of which our shoes are made, should be inspected; that fish—though we all know "stinking fish," without the old woman's crying them, should be submitted to official scrutiny—and that butter—another article that can scarcely get "high" without revealing its elevation to the most indelicate of noses, should undergo a like ordeal. These proposals are all eminently in the interests of commerce, and we unhesitatingly approve the excellent suggestions of the President of the Board of Trade. But are there not other things that require inspection? The merchant, for his own safety, wants his flour, his fish, his butter, &c., to be in the very best condition for market. But anybody knows rotten leather; few can be deceived with stale butter; and not a great many with putrid fish. There are, however, many articles that enter into the daily consumption of the public, in which the common taste is not half so judicially critical; yet these articles not only form an important element of daily use in almost every household but many of them are taxed for the benefit of the national revenue.

It is at this point, if anywhere where the obligation of the Government to protect its subjects is made manifest. An article, no matter what, be it spirits, a perfume, or patent medicine, is subjected to a tax; the vendors profess that it has such or such properties; and in every case where the article fails to be what it is represented, the Government as well as the manufacturers and vendors are guilty as public swindlers. Much of the Government's sin in this matter comes by neglect; but there is undoubtedly a great deal of it by connivance. In our issue of to-day we publish another paper from Dr. J. B. Edwards in continuation of those that have already appeared in our columns, and which we hope have awakened public attention to the death-dealing ingredients that corporations and private individuals are continually vending to the public. But we must say that the "permissive bill" suggested by our contributor is an exceedingly lame and impotent remedy for the gross adulterations of liquor he has so ably exposed. Already the Dunkin Bill has been virtually a dead-letter on the Statute Book for many years; and even had it not been so the principle is utterly wrong. There can be no possible excuse for a Municipality or a State permitting the selling of a noxious compound to the people merely because the person who dispenses it pays for the privilege. By the licensing system the State and the Municipality become in some measure partners with the liquor dealer, and as they give him, so to speak, his permit to supply the public, they ought to take the proper precautions to see that the public are not imposed upon.

Now, the Chairman of the Montreal Board of Trade proposes a general inspection law, and he instances hides, fish, wheat, flour, &c., as among the things that, in the interests of commerce, should come into market with an official brand. Might not the system be extended? Why should not the consumers of tea, coffee, liquors, meat, &c., be equally guarded against imposture? And is there any more reason that a corporation should be permitted to supply a whole city with impure corrupting water, than that a simple private dealer should try to palm off upon his customers a hundred weight or two of rotten fish? It is hard indeed to define the limits at which legislative restraint, when once invoked, should stop. But there cannot be any hesitation in applying to corporations those

checks which society has found from experience that it is necessary to enforce against individuals. The Inland Revenue system has now grown to such proportions, and brings in to the Government so large an amount of money every year, that we think the time has come when, in conjunction with the Customs Department, it should establish a Board of Chemical Analysis, composed of men of acknowledged scientific ability, to whom any citizen might be at liberty to transmit duly certified samples for examination; and upon whose certificate appropriate penalties might be awarded to offenders. The American Government, remiss in so many things, has an admirable system for the testing of the purity of imported drugs. The same careful scrutiny might be extended to other things. Since it appears to be the confirmed fashion that articles of consumption shall bear the chief burthen of taxation, those who use them surely have the right to ask Government that every reasonable precaution be taken to let them reach the public in a state of purity. Usually, however, the case is quite the reverse. It is only when the price of an article is fictitiously enhanced by taxation that the temptation to adulterate it becomes the strongest; and it is in this direction that we should counsel the Board of Trade to push its general inspection law. At the meeting of the Dominion Board of Trade, which takes place at Ottawa on the 18th inst., it is promised that the question will be brought up and discussed with a view to legislative action; and we take this occasion to urge upon the members the propriety of considering whether the principle of inspection might not be carried further than merely to determine the class or commercial brand of the few "simples" alluded to by the chairman of the Montreal Board; whether, in fact, it might not be made to include some general system for the analysis of compounds as well as a scientific examination of "simples," and be sustained by some provision for the signal punishment of adulterators whenever detected. Let them remember that the question is one which affects the "lives of men," and they will surely agree with us that a reform in the direction indicated is very much more important than any general law for the inspection of leather and hides, or even of fish and butter. Against imposture in the purchase of natural products, or simple articles, the public are, as a rule, pretty safe, because each individual purchase is small, and the buyer knows in what he is investing; whereas, in the matter of compounds, comparatively few people have much skill. Yet the trader seeks protection in the "simples," because he buys them in enormous quantities, and has not the time to inspect every bag, firkin, or barrel, whereas, in the matter of compounds, it is suspected that generally the trader is the adulterator. We hope the latter suspicion is calumnious, and should be all the more confirmed in this hope were the Dominion Board of Trade to press upon the Legislature the urgent necessity for instituting searching means to discover all adulterations in food and drink, and to punish the perpetrators.

ON THE ADULTERATION OF FOOD AND DRINK.

By J. BAKER EDWARDS, Ph. D., F.C.S.

(Continued from Vol. II., Page 282.)

Although the question of the adulteration of food generally, and the evils to be dreaded from an impure condition of simple diet, such as bread and water, milk and butter, &c., are of considerable importance to the community, and demand active measures on the part of civic rulers for the protection of a helpless public—yet it must be confessed that the subject sinks into comparative insignificance by the side of the colossal evil of intemperance and disease, madness and death, which result from the sale to the public as beverages of the most noxious poisons under the name of "drink." The wilful ignorance of the public in demanding such maddening liquors, and the stolid indifference of public authorities, who profit directly as individuals, and indirectly as communities, by their sale, indicate a condition of society far removed from enlightened Christian nationality!

The evil is so gigantic that I doubt if any remedy short of self-destruction can eradicate it from society. I do not speak from a teetotal point of view, for I regard some simple fermented beverages as wholesome and valuable both as diet and medicine—but I do know, as a matter of observation and experience, that these simple, nutritious beverages are, as a rule, difficult to obtain, and that the public prefer mixtures of fiery and potent spirits which most strictly deserve the name of "poison."

Good German Lager Beer is, for example, taken in moderation, a cup which cheers and warms without intoxication, but the Englishman and the American are not content with this simple beverage. The Londoner wants his "stout" or his "porter" "doctored with licorice, sulphate of iron, cocculus indicus, sweet flag root, quassia, coriander seed, capsicum, caraway seeds, grains of paradise, ginger, roasted beans, burnt sugar, oyster shells, and alum." "This," says Mr. Morris, in his work on "Brewing Malt Liquors," "gives a good face to the beer, and enables you to gratify the sight of

your customers." To detail the adulteration of ale and porter would fill many books.

Mr. P. L. Simmond, in evidence before the Committee of the British House of Commons, says, "at least 250 tons of cocculus indicus are annually imported, chiefly for the use of brewers." Mr. Gay says, "I have ground many cwts. of cocculus indicus, to go into poor men's drink." Mr. Rodgers says it is obtained from the brewer's druggists under the name of "multum." There is no legitimate use for cocculus indicus. It is not used in medicine. It is a stupefying poison. It is illegally employed by poachers to kill fish, but why should its importation continue? and what becomes of it?

Beer may be brewed so as to be a light, wholesome tonic, but such beer does not meet the demand of the tavern-keeper's customers, who desire a strong, heavy liquor, and who get quassia, cocculus indicus, and heavily hopped beer accordingly. But the adulteration of wine is still more extensive, and not less injurious. The "blending" of sherry and port wines is, probably, about the most profitable trade in London. To some extent, the practise of mingling wines of different vintages is legitimate, and tends to improve the average, but it is also largely used for the purpose of covering adulteration. Much port, sherry, and champagne are quite innocent of the juice of the grape, and we should not be far wrong in estimating the amount of genuine wine consumed in Canada under these three names at one per cent., that is, for one bottle of genuine vintage, ninety-nine are manufactured wines, more or less adulterated.

The discovery of the chemical principles which give the characteristic flavours to wines and spirits, has unfortunately assisted the distiller in manufacturing factitious wines and spirits, and this unwholesome trade is assuming very large proportions in this country. It is true that the demand for genuine wines so largely exceeds the supply that the value would rise to a prohibitory price, were not the supply augmented by these mixed and factitious compounds. The result of this would be, as in many of the States, the practical abandonment of wine and the adoption of malt liquors and spirits with the extended use of what are called "fancy drinks." Now the use of "fancy drinks" appears to me to be the last stage of folly. It is a practical abandonment of individual responsibility and places a man as a willing slave at the mercy of the liquor dealer.

It may be an open question whether he be entitled to expect any consideration from this quarter.

The compounder may mix so-called sherry, brandy or gin with lemon and sugar, or egg flip, nutmeg or cinnamon with something which he calls "rum"—but so long as the palate is confused and the sense of flavour harmoniously blended the consumer knows little what he has been taking until to-morrow's headache—or a week's congestion of the liver calls him to account; probably, he then blames "the weather." This is a case in which ignorance is not "bliss," and it is not folly to be wise!

The manufacturers of these potent but toxic beverages are amongst the number of those who make haste to be rich at the expense of the bodies and souls of their fellow-men. They and the vendors of their products are numerous and influential in the community, but if they are not warned by the revelations of fraud which have been exposed in the metropolitan cities of London, New York and Chicago; and if the public authorities in the cities of Canada make no effort to detect and expose their malpractices, they may over-reach themselves by driving that well-abused class of respectable and temperate "moderate drinkers" into the ranks of the "total abstinence" advocates.

If there exists in this country no protection against the treacherous system of adulteration which prevails so extensively and drives so many to madness and death—the alternative of all lovers of good order and temperance in the community must be "fiat justitia ruat cælum!"

Of course the argument of liberty of the subject will be raised—"let a man drink" or "let a man abstain;" the argument is good if we admit equal information and equal intelligence. But I say let a man know what he is drinking and what are its effects. Let him not slide from lager or Johannisberg or vin ordinaire to porter, to cocculus beer, to sham-champagne, to sham-sherry, and to sugar of lead port; or to cayenne whiskey, to butyric brandy, to bag oil rum, and to juniper gin: (which are poisonous drugs falsely sold under a false name, all containing fatal doses of Fusel oil, which destroys the nervous tissue and produces "delirium tremens")—WITHOUT FAIR WARNING.

And I think this warning may fairly come from me, one who does not consider all fermented liquors indiscriminately as poisonous, one who advocates temperance and intelligence in their selection as diet.

At the same time I am so vividly impressed with the evils inflicted on humanity by our present licentious license, that I should, if no system of examination by analytical commission can reach or effectually check the evil, be an advocate for a permissive bill, to restrain their sale; and would willingly resign my wholesome enjoyment of "a glass of good beer" for the benefit of the whole community, which by the present customs of what is considered respectable society, is now being insidiously poisoned by bad liquor. "Magna est veritas et prevalebit."