

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORT OF COLONIAL ANALYST, CHRISTCHURCH,

FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MAY, 1879.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly, in accordance with Section 10 of "The Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1877."

REPORT.

IN connection with the office of Colonial Analyst for the City of Christchurch, fifty-two analyses have been made during the past year, comprising the following articles:—

	Samples.
Bread	32
Milk	10
Water	3
Alum	1
Sherry	1
Spirit	1
Beer	1
Examinations for blood	3

The detailed results of these analyses are shown in the appended reports. Two prosecutions have been instituted with regard to bread found to be adulterated with alum, resulting in one conviction, the other case being dismissed, owing to proof having been adduced that the alum was introduced without the defendant's knowledge. One conviction has also been obtained for having alum in possession.

These informations were laid under the Bakers and Millers Act, in consequence of the samples having been purchased by the police, and not by the Inspectors, as required by the terms of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act. No samples for analysis whatever have been received from the Inspectors of Nuisances and Weights and Measures.

I would take this opportunity of drawing the attention of the Government to the great difficulty experienced in the successful working of the Act in its present form, with regard to the collection of samples.

Clauses 9 and 12 state that it is necessary that the article to be analyzed should be either purchased or received by the Inspector of Nuisances or by the Inspector of Weights and Measures, and then only provided reasonable cause be had to suspect that such articles are adulterated.

No provision whatever is made in the Act by which the sale of any article might be demanded for the purpose of analysis. In the working of "The Adulteration of Food Act, 1866," samples were collected by the police by a system of raids; and I believe, judging from the diminution of the number of adulterated articles received, that this system almost entirely suppressed the practice of adulteration in Christchurch, or, at any rate, to a very great extent. That such is not the case at present might be inferred from the evidence brought forward at the last meeting of the Licensing Commissioners, and which is referred to in the following slip, taken from the *Press* of 3rd June, 1879:—

"Adulteration of Liquor.—During the hearing of an application for the renewal of an hotel license yesterday, in the Licensing Court, the Commissioners took the opportunity of expressing a very decided opinion on the urgent necessity of the police having the power of causing an analysis to be made of the beverages sold in some of the city hotels. In the case in question both the Chairman and the Inspector of Police cited more than one instance in which a glass of ale sold was of so deleterious a nature as to show that it must, accidentally or otherwise, have been adulterated with some noxious drug. The Chairman regretted that no steps could have been taken at the time to test the purity of the beer, and Inspector Hickson said the police were powerless to interfere for the public good. A very severe caution was administered by the Bench to the applicant, and they trusted that the publicity which would be given by the local press to the case would have a beneficial effect for the public good."