

stantly being sold in this city, and so far as we can ascertain, no steps whatever are being taken to prevent this disgusting and disgraceful state of things. Turn we now to the milk supply of the city. This is far from being up to the proper quality. The tricks and dodges of the milkmen in "faking up" the milk were fully exposed not long ago in one of the city courts, and we have good reason for believing that "the ways that are dark and tricks that are vain," that were then brought to the light of day, are practiced by a goodly number of those who provide milk for Wellington householders. And in this connection, here is a little story. A friend of ours, who has been blessed by providence—and his better half—with a goodly number of youngsters, recently had complaints from his spouse of the poor quality of the milk that was being supplied to the family. Our friend, who is an amateur chemist in his leisure hours, indulged in a series of experiments, by which he discovered that the family milk supply was regularly and systematically adulterated with some foreign whitey compound, which, as far as he could make out, was nothing more nor less than chalk. He also discovered there was an alien colouring matter in the milk. Fortified with the knowledge he had thus acquired of the devious ways of the local dairymen, he "bailed up" the family milk provider on the first opportunity and openly charged him with dishonesty and impudent adulteration. It was beautiful, he says, to observe the pathetic indignation of that worthy tradesman. His milk, he declared, was the pure product of the cow, he "knew nawt about turmeric and chork and all that 'ere stuff," he invoked the Deity to strike him dead if "heweren't tellin' Gawd's terruth," and so on, ad lib. and ad nauseam." Then our friend, who really began to think that after all he had been mistaken in his amateur analyses, said "Well, you just give me a bottle full of to-day's milk and I'll have it analysed by Mr. Paregoric, the chemist down on the Quay." The milkman made a hurried excuse, and rushed off to his cart, and bringing another can to the door filled a bottle with the milk. He was visibly frightened, despite all his bounce, and from that day forth, the quality of the milk supplied to our friend showed a perfectly marvellous im-

provement. But every householder cannot be his own analyst, and complaints are almost daily made to us on the subject, accompanied by requests "to take the matter up." We have not the slightest doubt that one-half of the milk supply of Wellington is shamefully adulterated. Then as to fish: The supply is small and by no means regular, the price often most exorbitant, and the quality far from being what it ought to be. At present the fish supply of the city is in the hands of a selfish, grasping, little ring, the fishermen get but wretched pay for their labour, and the middlemen wax fat upon their toil, whilst the public are vilely served. During the recent hot weather, so we are informed, large quantities of tainted fish came into town and presumably were disposed of to the public. There is no more check upon the selling of bad fish than exists on the vending of diseased meat and adulterated milk. The same remarks apply, but in a less degree, to fruit, large quantities of which, unwholesomely over-ripe, are exposed for sale from time to time, with but very rare action being taken by the proper authorities. It may be said that we have drawn too dark a picture of the state of things which exists in connection with the food supply of the city: That our remarks are far fetched and exaggerated, we can solemnly assure our readers that this is by no means the case, that we have sure and certain information, that nearly every week in the year diseased meat, adulterated milk, bad fish and unwholesome fruit are vended in Wellington. Were we to say all we know on this unpleasant subject, our readers might then put us down as alarmists and dealers in gross exaggeration, but we have purposely understated the case. And the remedy for the state of things to which we have alluded.—What is it, and where is it to come from? Well, we have given the public some information to go upon and the public themselves must move in a matter which concerns every father of a family in Wellington, and which very seriously affects the health of the city. We may, however, point out a few things which are urgently needed. First of all, there should be a rigid inspection at the slaughter-houses of each and every carcase of meat which is destined for the consumption of the public of Wellington.

Whenever and wherever diseased meat is found, it should be at once destroyed and a heavy fine, say £50 at the very least, inflicted upon the person who supplied the meat, evidence of course to be forthcoming that such person was himself aware of the diseased state of the meat he had sold. As to milk, the remedy might for a time be expensive; it would certainly be most effective. Appoint a couple of inspectors and let the milk carts be stopped on their daily rounds, one to-day, another to-morrow, another next week. Never let it be known when they are to be so stopped or where, and let the samples of the milk thus obtained be handed over for the inspection of a competent analyst. The slightest trace of adulteration, either by chalk, turmeric, salicylic acid, or other foreign substance, and the vendor should be fined at least £50, and be forbidden under a further penalty of say, £100, to ply the trade of milkman for six months. Too severe a punishment some may say. Not a bit of it! The purity of the milk upon which so many of our children have mainly to exist, should be a matter of the most serious importance to the community, and no punishment can, so we take it, be too severe for the mean culprits, who, for the sake of the few paltry pounds and extra profit, cozen and cheat the householders into buying what is an adulterated article. As to the fish supply we have written enough on the subject previously. We still hold that a fish market is urgently needed for the city. Pending that institution being established however, stringent steps should be taken by the city authorities to prevent bad fish being sold, and when detected, the offenders should be subject to the most drastic penalties that can be devised. The same remarks apply to unwholesome fruit, of which, however, we do not think there is so much. We have omitted to mention what are known as butchers' "small-goods," sausages, brawn, etc. Many of these comestibles are manufactured out of taintel, if not absolutely bad meat, and a stringent inspection of the manufacture of these articles is also highly necessary. The purity and wholesomeness of our food supply is one of the most important of matters, and yet we fully believe that there is no subject which receives so little attention at the hands of the authorities. We repeat that diseased meat, adulterated milk, bad fish, and unwholesome fruit are regularly vended in this city, and we now call upon the public to insist upon a stringent and effective system of inspection, or the institution of some other means of putting a stop to what is an ever present and most dangerous menace to the health of the community.