

lime,) is that which every one seeks to buy when purchasing a thing under that name, the State should so order its inspection, that each barrel should show how much of this substance was in it, so that its price thereby might be regulated. No reasonable seller should object to such regulations; and every buyer ought to insist upon them. By them, the owner of a good article would get the value of his good commodity, and he who wished to buy, would not be deceived in the purchase of that which might be of little worth. While it would deprive the seller of no right, it would give great benefits to the buyer. The seller would get the value of his article,—the buyer the worth of his money. The fact is familiar to all who use plaster, that it acts much more favorably in some years than others. This has been attributed exclusively to the seasons, but very often the difference is owing to a difference in the article used.

The smallest per cent of gypsum in the specimens which I have examined, was 59.40; the highest was 89.60 per cent, a difference of more than thirty per cent. If only one half of that sold was of an average quality, a fair way of judging, then fifteen per cent of the money spent for gypsum is thrown away. The cost to the farmers of Maryland of this article, (freight and labor included,) as near as I can judge, is \$700,000, so that considerably more than \$100,000 is lost to the citizens of the State annually, in the attempt to buy what they do not get. They buy gypsum, and only obtain sand and common air-slaked lime.

I have thus called the attention of those interested to a subject to them of the deepest interest. I have shown the defects of the present laws. It remains for them to have those defects remedied. I can assure all interested, that these differences do exist in the manures spoken of above, which are not shown by the present form of inspection. In making your honorable body acquainted with this fact, I am only performing a part of my duty to the farmers of the State. Let them provide a law which, while it will do wrong to none, will do justice to themselves.

I do not know how the inspection of lime is performed, but its constituents should also be determined in the same manner.

This, however, is not practicable in every instance, as a large quantity of that used in the State comes from beyond its jurisdiction. I have obviated this difficulty as far as I could, by publishing analyses of the various limes used by the farmers of Maryland. It is, therefore, a useless office, serves no good purpose, and should be abolished. It is my further intention, during the present year, to procure a number of specimens from each of the quarries, both within and without the State, which supply lime to our farmers, and subject them to a more minute, rigid, and elaborate analysis than has been yet made of them. I have not done so during the present season, because of the impossibility of procuring the specimens.