

INSPECTION OF PERUVIAN AND OTHER GUANOS.

I have in all my previous reports spoken of the necessity of a rigid inspection of this article, and although the Legislature has conceded this point in using the very language of my reports, and copied from them the preamble of the Bill for this purpose, yet that Bill in its provisions does not carry out the principles of an inspection capable of showing the true nature of the article inspected. Take one of its provisions as an example, which is that Peruvian guano capable of affording from 15 to 18 per cent. of ammonia shall be marked with the same mark, the letter A. Now we all know that the ammoniacal compounds in Peruvian guano are those which give it its distinctive value. The difference in the value of this guano then, which contains 15 pounds or 18 pounds of these compounds in the hundred pounds, is about 17 per cent., so that Peruvian guano at its present wholesale price of fifty-five dollars per ton, having the same mark, may have actually a difference in its value of nine dollars thirty cents per ton, the 18 per cent. of it being worth fifty-five dollars per ton, the fifteen per cent. is only worth \$46 65 per ton or 17 per cent. less. The importance of the difference is much greater in other guanos.

There should be marked on each bag the name of the ship and the merchant be required to keep a certified analysis of its cargo.

With a few words for the truth of history on this subject and I am done. In a report to the Senate at January Session, 1854, in answer to a call of that body, the present Inspector (Dr. Wm. S. Reese) states that the present law was drawn up with great care by Dr. Washington Finley, of Queen Ann's county. This is an error, the same bill almost word for word was presented to the House of Delegates several years before, and was drawn up by Joseph Weathers, then chairman of committee on inspections, and revised by Hon. Otho Scott, and though it is true that the present bill as it stands did pass both houses unanimously, its friends only at first defeated the Senate "bill for the regulation of the inspection of guano" by four votes in the House of Delegates. This bill had passed the Senate by a vote of eighteen to two. It provided for an accurate inspection, the inspector to give \$15,000 bond for faithful performance of duty, and required the State chemist to be the inspector, or responsible for its faithful performance. It was defeated in the House by the want of four votes. It could have been passed there had I, the State Chemist, acceded to a proposition giving the power of appointment of my assistant to a particular individual who made the proposition to me. This for obvious reasons I declined doing, and being opposed by strong outside influence and supported by none, the bill