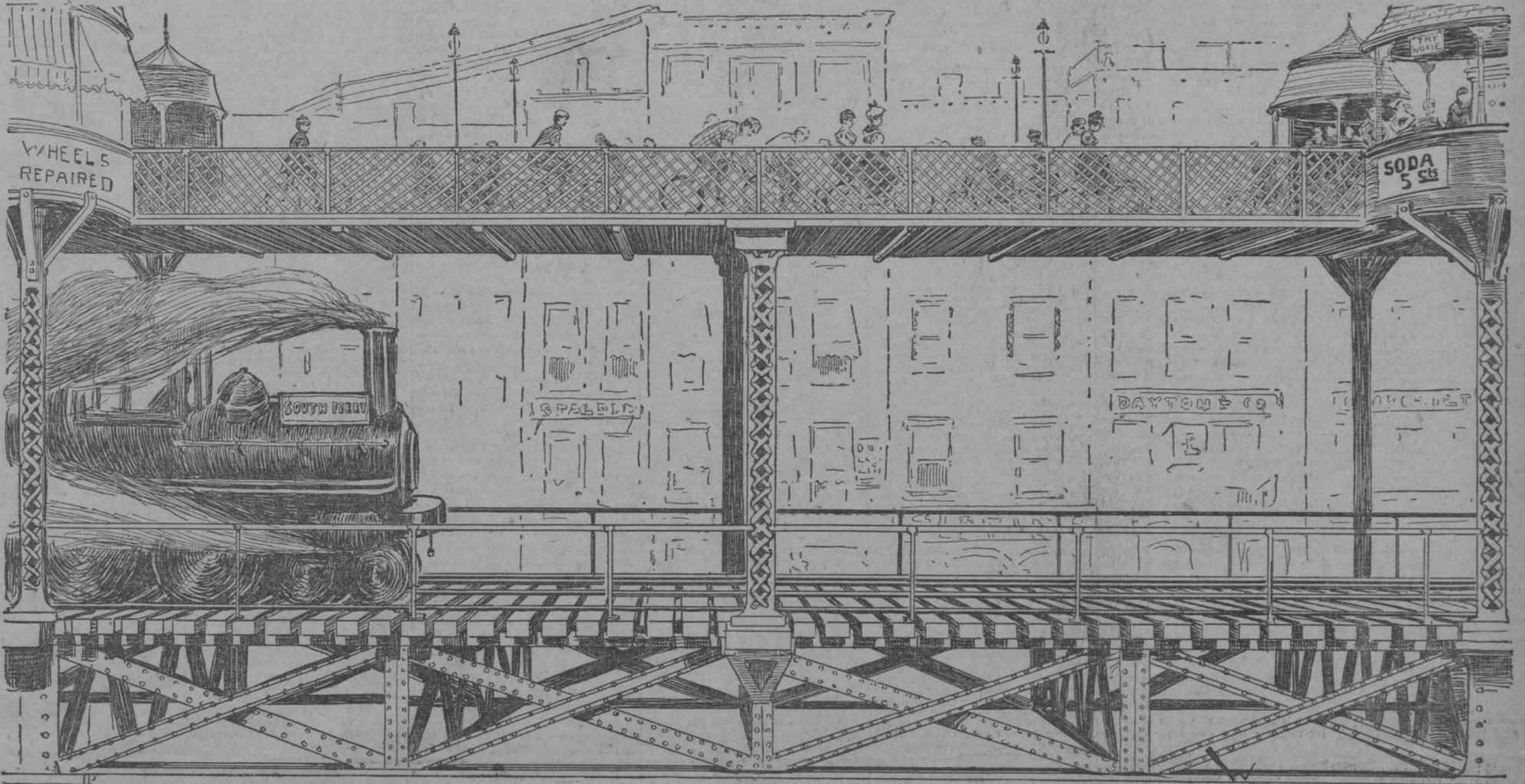


A GRAND BICYCLE BOULEVARD OVER OUR ELEVATED ROADS.

If the Sunday Journal's Suggestion Is Carried Out New Yorkers Will Go Up and Down Town to Business on Their Wheels and the Rapid Transit Problem Is Solved for Most of Us.



"BRANDY DROPS" MAKE CHILD DRUNKARDS.

Poisonous Chocolate Candies Sold in the Public Schools.

Tempting Sweets Filled with the Rankest and Cheapest Fusel Oil.

The Sunday Journal Points Out Many Stores Where They Are on Sale.

THE HEALTH BOARD WILL ACT.

Shocking Traffic to Catch the Youngsters' Pennies Openly Carried On in Violation of the Excise Laws.

Now that the Excise law is attracting so much attention from reformers, and efforts are being made to make it more difficult for a man to slake his thirst, it is an astonishing fact that children can buy the worst kind of liquor at many small notion and candy stores.

These tempting chocolate drops, manufactured especially for children, contain a most abominable liquid compound, the basis of which is amylic alcohol, or what is generally known as fusel oil.

days last week in company with a nine-year-old lad investigating the sale of brandy drops to minors. The boy attempted to buy them at over one hundred stores. At many stores he was refused, but at others he found that he could buy all he cared for at the rate of two for a cent and three for a cent.

The Board of Health co-operated with the Sunday Journal and had the samples secured by the reporter and his juvenile assistant analyzed. All the officers of the Health Board, from President Wilson down, appreciated to the fullest extent the danger to the health of the children of New York by this illegal and pernicious business, and the Board will undoubtedly take immediate action in regard to the matter.

The first store the boy entered was at No. 2107 Eighth avenue. His request for brandy drops was quickly complied with at the rate of two for a cent. This store is much like all the others where brandy drops are sold, a little combination establishment such as are seen on most of the side streets of New York. It is within two blocks of the new public school at St. Nicholas avenue and One Hundred and Seventeenth street.

Another shop is at No. 211 West One Hundred and Seventeenth street, just opposite this school. Here the boy bought brandy drops at the rate of three for a cent, but they were a trifle smaller than the others.

In the vicinity of the big public school at One Hundred and Fourth street and Amsterdam avenue the boy bought brandy drops at two places.

In the vicinity of Ninety-third street and Amsterdam avenue, where there is another large school, brandy drops were bought at two places.

In the vicinity of the East Sixty-third street school, between Second and Third avenues, there are a large number of small stores where the lad bought brandy drops. These stores are in East Sixty-third street and on Second avenue.

At none of the many places where purchases were made was there the slightest hesitation on the part of the dealers in accepting the lad's money for the drops. It was apparent that in the majority of cases where the boy was unable to buy he was refused on account of the fact that he was a stranger.

At other places the man or the woman in charge said: "We don't sell brandy drops because the Board of Health has forbidden it."

POISONOUS INGREDIENTS.

From the forty-seven different lots of brandy drops purchased, samples from those bought at the following places were analyzed by the Health Board: No. 1170 Second avenue, No. 211 West One Hundred and Seventeenth street and No. 2107 Eighth avenue, a small store without a number or name on Amsterdam avenue, between One Hundred and Second and One Hundred and Third streets, and a small store without a number or name between Ninety-third and Ninety-fourth streets, on Amsterdam avenue.

These samples were all very much alike. Indeed, from the appearance and taste of all of the forty-seven different lots of brandy drops that were purchased, there appeared to be but two varieties. The drops have every appearance of being ordinary harmless chocolate drops, but when they are broken they are found to contain say, perhaps fifteen or twenty

drops of a sweetish liquid, in which the flavor of alcohol is plainly apparent.

The result of the analysis showed that the liquid was composed of water, the cheapest possible sweetening, and the basis was amylic alcohol, or fusel oil, as it is commonly known. Amylic alcohol is a poisonous compound that can be bought at retail for 80 cents a gallon.

HEALTH BOARD WILL ACT.

President Wilson, of the Health Board, showed great interest in the matter and said: "The selling of brandy drops must be stopped at once. It is a menace to public health, and really is a far more serious matter than appears at first thought."

President Wilson referred the reporter to Dr. Roberts, Sanitary Superintendent of the Health Board, and also to the chemist. "The basis of these so-called brandy drops," said Dr. Roberts, "is fusel oil. Candy of this kind has been manufactured all over the country for the past forty years. From time to time the sale has been stopped, or partially so, in this city and in other cities, but in a little while it revives again. There was never a time, I believe, when the poisonous stuff was sold so generally and openly, judging from the report the Sunday Journal makes, and I am surprised at the extent of the business. Two or three years ago the Health Board stopped the sale of brandy drops, or 'whiskey drops,' as they were then called, and we have heard but little of any sales until now."

It is possible for a child to become intoxicated from eating brandy drops? "It certainly is possible, and more than that, children who eat them are likely to become severely ill. A number of diseases are possible, but gastritis is the most common."

"What are the chances of a child's acquiring gastritis—say, a child six or seven years old and of ordinary constitution?" "Well, that would of course depend upon the child; but if a seven-year-old child should eat, say, five cents' worth of these brandy drops a day for two or three weeks gastritis would probably result."

"And if a smaller quantity was eaten each day for a longer time the result would probably be the same?" "Precisely."

The reporter next interviewed the chemist.

"Amylic alcohol, which is the same thing as fusel oil," he said, "is much heavier than ordinary alcohol. As small a quantity as four or five drops even could create all the effects of a heavy drink."

"A dime would enable a man to get pretty drunk?" "A dime! I should say it would. Why, for a dime a man can acquire a jag that will last a thousand years."

"What effect does amylic alcohol have on the system?"

"You have seen the effect of the use of a stimulant containing a small proportion of amylic alcohol when you have seen a man in the slums lying dead drunk in the gutter. You have noticed, too, how quickly some men get drunk when they drink pink whiskey—notably, the five-cent brand of the Bowery. This is not because they cannot 'stand much,' but because of the fusel oil in the stuff they drink. The same men could drink five times as much pure

whiskey without feeling it perceptibly. Amylic alcohol is a thin, colorless, oily liquid, and has an oppressive odor and a burning, acrid taste. If you placed a drop on your hand and then smelled it you could not prevent coughing. Try it."

The chemist produced a bottle of the stuff and the reporter placed a tiny drop on the palm of his hand from the glass stopper. It was barely sufficient to moisten the skin. He then rubbed it well between his two palms and sniffed it. The result was, as the chemist predicted, a violent coughing and a burning irritation of the throat which lasted fully half an hour.

A policeman who was standing by tried the experiment himself in a half sceptical manner, but with similar results.

"Well," said he, "if that's the stuff they put in candy they sell kids they had better make them of pure whiskey and charge more money."

The policeman was right. The fact that children are likely to acquire a craving for liquor by eating brandy drops is less important than the fact that they are taking rank poison into their stomachs every time they swallow one of them.

"The manufacture of this kind of candy has been going on for a long time," continued the chemist. "There have been brandy drops, whiskey drops, and even champagne drops, but in all the various kinds I have seen fusel oil has been the basis of the liquid."

"Ten years ago the Health Board broke up a similar business among the smaller candy stores. The kind of drops that were being sold then contained no liquid, as they do at present; instead, the amylic alcohol and other ingredients were impregnated in the candy. The present manner of having the brandy in a liquid condition inside the drops is much more, for obvious reasons."

The sale of the drops, however, interests the Board of Excise and the Police Department. The reporter called on Police Commissioner Andrews and briefly related the condition of affairs. Mr. Andrews was acquainted, in a small way, with the sale of brandy drops, but he was surprised when he was informed of the quantity sold, the ease with which they could be bought and the nature of the vile compound they contained. He ate two of them and exclaimed:

"Well, I should say they were brandy drops with a vengeance. I can taste the alcohol plainly, and would not wish a child of mine to acquire the 'brandy drop habit.'"

Commissioner Andrews stated that any one who sold brandy drops violated the Excise law and that he intended taking prompt steps to suppress the evil.

Meanwhile, those gentlemen who go out between the acts to transact business can lay in supplies of brandy drops and imbibe while enjoying the progress of the play.

GREAT SCHEME FOR THE CYCLISTS.

Why Not Make a Wheelman's Boulevard Over "L" Tracks?

This Is What a New York Bicyclist Suggests.

The Proposed Highway to Be of Steel, and Above the Present Structure.

CHANCE FOR BANKERS AND BLOOMERS

The Trip from the Earth to Be Made by Elevators on an Inclined Plane That Would Be Lined with Shops of All Sorts.

A bicycle track over the structure of New York's "L" roads is the latest suggestion of the cyclists. The proposition is the result of the problem which so persistently confronts both wheelmen and authorities. Both want a highway for cyclists where neither traffic will be obstructed nor pedestrians endangered, where there are no horses and where an unlighted lamp does not mean arrest.

The idea of an elevated track of high way for the cyclist was evolved by a wheelman who is rich in experience, and is the result of a careful study of the situation. The structure would be of steel, built with the dual idea of superlative strength and minimum weight.

At each "L" road station it is intended to have an elevator, which would place the cyclist on a level with the track with hardly a moment's delay. The expense of maintaining these elevators would be met by the exaction of a trifling fee from each passenger—probably 2 cents.

New York cyclists seen by a Journal reporter were a unit in favor of the plan. A member of the Manhattan Athletic Club and an enthusiastic wheelman spoke enthusiastically. He said: "You may say that we are the most persecuted set of men under the sun. The amusement is a harmless one, but, like Cain, every man's hand is against us. I believe that my brother bicyclists exercise all due caution in riding on 'bikes.' Accidents, of course, are unavoidable. Other persons—horsemen, for example—run over people, smash their vehicles and so endanger life and limb. Let a bicyclist knock down an unwary pedestrian, however, and in a moment every one is up in arms against him."

Several "L" road men who were seen indulged the idea of a superstructure for bicyclists. The bicyclists of this and adjoining cities are to hold a meeting shortly, and an effort will be made to bring the matter before the authorities controlling transit facilities in such a manner as to insure a respectful consideration.

The cyclists declare the value of such a structure to the thousands of New Yorkers wheelmen and women—can hardly be over-estimated. The track would, of course, run from the most remote section of New York to the very heart of the business district—just what every bicycle rider longs for.

If this unique bicycle track were to be open to the public, the dream of rapid transit communication would be realized by a considerable portion of the population of the city. The banker, might, for instance, find the roof over the Sixth avenue "L" a much more delightful way to travel from his uptown mansion down to Wall street than by means of a carriage ride over the uneven pavement. Then, of course, there are or would be others—the bloomer girl, for example. The track would outdo the Harlem Boulevard every day in the array of bicycle costumes which would, with the charming wearers, be on view.

Regarding methods of reaching the proposed highway, one of the cyclists made the suggestion that a gently inclined plane from street to structure would be an excellent idea. He argues it would be superior to the elevator plan, because the cyclist would not be forced to submit to vexatious delays. He would have these inclines constructed at the terminal of the various roads and at all important cross streets.

Such a thoroughfare would, it is suggested, not be complete without a plentiful supply of booths and shops scattered along at frequent intervals. These novel sites for business establishments might be rented at a high figure, and would materially aid in meeting the expense of building and maintaining the track.

Soda fountains would prove popular, not to mention dispensaries of liquids which do not come under the head of soda water. Bicycle blacksmiths, emergency dress-makers, surgeons and medical attendants would be compelled to practise here. Photograph galleries would also find excellent opportunities for business, and in time one might expect to see an elevated street high above the avenues lined with shops after the same fashion as the street below.

SPONGE SUPPLY IN DANGER

Carelessness of Cuban Fishermen in Gathering the Smaller Growth Threatens the Beds with Total Extinction.

The sponge supply of the United States is seriously threatened by the wanton carelessness of the Cuban sponge fishermen. For several years they have been gathering the small or infant sponges with those of larger growth. The inevitable result is that the Cuban sponge beds, from which the greater portion of sponges used in the United States come, are threatened with total extinction.

Already prices have advanced, and a still further increase is probable in a very short time. The shipments of sponges to dealers, vary greatly in size and time of receipt. To gather them it is necessary that the water should be absolutely clear, and if for any reason the ocean is disturbed in more than ordinary degree over the sponge beds, the fishermen must wait for clear water—perhaps a week, or even a month.

The sponges which come from Cuba are known as medium grade; the variety in general use, Florida and Nassau furnish a proportion of the supply of this grade, but nothing like the amount that comes from Cuba. The best sponges are known as the Mediterranean variety, as they come from beds in the sea of that name. They are the heavy, white sponges, and are always high-priced. Even the supply of these, however, is much smaller than usual. So people can make up their minds that this is not a year of cheap sponges.

TAUGHT CUBAN LEADERS.

An Ex-Union Soldier Who Established a School in Maine, Where Insurgent Leaders Were His Pupils.

A large number of the insurgent leaders who are fighting the battles of liberty in the United States, with the education which they obtained here. Many of these rebel leaders are not Cubans, but are Spaniards by birth and blood.

The fortunes of many of the better class families of Spain have for generations consisted of sugar and tobacco plantations in Cuba, and it has been customary among them to send one of the sons to the island to manage the estates. The close commercial relations which have grown up between Cuba and the United States have rendered it desirable that the future manager of the estates should be trained in American business methods. Spanish and Cuban families have made it a practice, especially since the close of the Civil War, to send at least one son to this country to be educated.

Late in the sixties Hamlin F. Eaton, an ex-Union soldier, with a good war record, and more than one battle scar, established a school for young men and women at Northridge, in the Kennebec Valley, Maine. His local success was pronounced from the first, and his reputation was spread through the Union by Maine people who emigrated. Eaton was especially successful in his management of young men. It was not long before the fame of "Eaton School" was spread abroad, and boys came to the Maine teacher from England, Greece and even Turkey.

By far the largest foreign contingent at "Eaton School," however, came from Spain and Cuba. For many years the education of the future leading men of Cuba was in Eaton's hands. Many of these boys remained at the school five and six years, securing not only a thorough education, but a decided respect and admiration for American institutions. The idea of national liberty was thoroughly instilled into them by the patriotic Maine pedagogue. Many of the young men after leaving the school went to Cuba to take charge of the family property there. Some stayed here in New York as the American representatives of Cuban interests. There are numerous men now connected with Spanish-American firms in this city whose educations were largely obtained in Maine, among them being two of the Garcia family, of Cuba, a member of which was the father of the ill-fated John W. Hawkins Cuban filibuster expedition. As to Eaton himself, he saw possibilities in Dakota several years ago, and with his family, a few friends and several pupils, settled in the Jim River Valley there. The town of Eaton is now a smart little place, just north of the boundary line between North and South Dakota.