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May 3, 1900.

Messrs Elbert & Gardner,

No. 11 Broadway, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

It is a matter of much difficulty to comply with your request of April 25, 1900, for the following reasons:

1--Nobody here handles oils, grease, etc., in mass. Edible oils are handled by one class of merchants, lubricating oils by another and Margarine materials by--I know not who and would not dare say, if I did.

2--You are probably aware that no such thing as Cotton Seed oil for edible purposes, is known in this market. No said oil except "pure olive" and a less esteemed Mustard oil, is to be found here. These are the only ones recognized in the "official returns of the French government," and the only ones mentioned in the Directory.

3--The Department of State having recently denounced me in our "Consular Reports," for having intimated in a Dispatch to the Department itself, that the consumption of wine in France during a certain interval was "diminishing," which opinion it erroneously declared to be in "contravention of the official returns of the French government," I am naturally very cautious about giving an opinion which can by any sort of ingenuity be tortured into an intimation of anything not declared and set out in the "official returns" of the French government. As I am unable to obtain any "official returns" of the manufacture of "Oleo" or "Margarine" in this Consular District I feel constrained to say that no such thing exists.

4--Your list irresistibly suggests the conclusion that some of its articles are to be used for the adulteration or simulation of "Olive Oil" or "Butter." As the Department has expressly held it to be an "unfriendly act" to intimate that some of the French people have an idea that wine is sometimes adulterated, I judge it would be an equally grave international offense to intimate that any food product is adulterated. The adulteration of edibles must surely be as grave a matter as the adulteration of potables. There being no "official returns" of either, I feel bound "officially" to declare that no such thing exists in this consular district--at least to my "official" knowledge.

5--As to the inquiry about a market for "Dried Apples", I find myself in even a worse predicament.

I reported last November, a remarkable increase in the importation of "American Dried Apples" into France, the increase at this port alone being from 400,000 pounds in 1895 to 3,150,000 in 1898. When

you reflect that Bordeaux is but one of the ports of France and not one with which communication is easiest, you will be able to conclude that this trade was, as I foolishly imagined, a matter of some importance to the United States. Having inspected at various times many hundred barrels of these importations, I found them all "low-grade apples, sliced thin, including skins, cores and inhabitants," and was informed that they were used for making "Piquette" or dried apple cider. This information I conveyed to the State Department for the benefit of our shippers as to the grade of fruit required to meet the demand of this market.

As it happened, a French newspaper took fire at the idea that Americans should presume to offer to the French people the means of making a tipple of which dried worms constituted an insignificant part, while they had opportunity to buy fine French cider, made out of apples of a much lower grade and infinitely more numerously inhabited, the only possible difference being that the former were dessicated American worms and the latter live and luscious French worms. The Department accepted the statements of the French editor and sandbagged the consul in its reports for having suggested a thing so degrading to French taste to the unsuspecting officials of the Department, who unwittingly communicated the truth to American shippers.

It had never occurred to me that there was any appreciable difference between the flavor of a dessicated worm extracted by maceration and that of a live worm extracted by compression. I thought the reason the French workman preferred cider made out of dried apples from the United States to cider made out of green apples in France, was because the octroi tax on cider was much more than the tariff and octroi both on dried apples capable of producing an equivalent.

Take for instance Paris. It costs \$6.56, to get 100 gallons of French cider from Normandy or Brittany inside the walls of Paris, that is, to pay the octroi tax. On the other hand 220 pounds of dried apples yields by proper manipulation, instead of 100 gallons of cider the equivalent, alcoholically speaking, of more than 1000 gallons of French cider made from green apples and live worms. I foolishly concluded that this difference in cost somehow affected the Frenchman's stomach and gave him a decided craving for dried apple cider and certain decoctions thereof which it is not permissible even to allude to, despite the fact that the apples were American and the worms dessicated previous to maceration. Of course, I now accept the opinion of my better informed superiors and admit that it was not possible that a difference of 76% in cost should have induced any Frenchman to prefer any decoction of dried American apples, plus dessicated American worms to the expressed juice of the live French worm. It is a question involving the honor of France and the impeccability of the Frenchman's palate.

comes my duty therefore to "officially" declare there is not and never can be any market in France for American dried apples containing any trace of "cores, skins or inhabitants."

The eagerness with which the Department accepted the theory and did the bidding of the French editor in this matter, however, satisfies me that it is a question of taste with which the Department official are familiar. It is evidently an insult well-nigh mortal to accuse a Frenchman of having so degraded a taste as to regard the flavor of a dried American worm as at all comparable with that of a juicy, fat, ripe French one. Under these circumstances it becomes an offense so grave as to demand an elaborate national apology, to inform our American dealers that the only demand in this market is for this grade of dried apples.

To give you such information would be a direct defiance of my superiors, who regarded my offence as of so grave a character as to require an exception be made to all ordinary rules and I be published as guilty of a gross outrage against the dignity, interest and taste of a friendly nation. Of course, I bow to their judgment, having indeed, no other recourse, but--not any more dried apples in mine, if you please!

Indeed, I believe the trade to be fully supplied and that hereafter only dried apples guaranteed to be of "No. 1 Greenings," "All Kings" and a few other select varieties, will be allowed to land in France. It is possible that to avoid further "unfriendly acts", our government may direct each piece to be microscopically examined for "inhabitants" and wrapped in silver tissue paper before shipment. But "skins, cores, worms" and microbes must be rigidly excluded and prices put at the lowest notch in order to avoid international difficulties.

The one thing I am still allowed to advise you in regard to is the form of your Circulars. In my opinion you would greatly improve your chances for selling your goods in this market by using three circulars instead of one, to wit:

1--A circular containing only your edible forms of Cotton-Seed oil and its derivatives.

You understand of course, that if any such thing is used in France for the purpose of improving olive oil, it is not openly done and such circulars should not contain other matter, especially things these men do not handle.

2--A circular containing only Lard, Stearine, Margarine, etc.

3--A circular containing only Soap Material, Grease, etc.

Each of these goes to a separate class of people who might feel insulted at being grouped with the others. Things are not supposed

as with us, and it would be fatal to a manufacturer of Olive Oil, to have any dealings with the other classes.

You may think this is rather hypercritical, but if you wish to sell goods to people with notions you must humor these notions.

Perhaps you may think it also hypercritical for me to say that your circulars for the French Trade should be printed in French. There are a few people in the Wine Trade here who read English. I know of but one house in the Oil-Trade that does, and these people deal in nothing but olive oil, guaranteeing every bottle they sell. Probably none of the other classes of dealers you wish to reach understand English. But whether they do or not, you may be sure they read French and it is worth something to make things easy for a customer.

There is a large trade in cotton-seed oil at this port, and I have noticed for some years that the increased importation of Cotton-Seed Oil corresponded with an increased exportation of Olive Oil. This of course, is a mere coincidence, --I am positive it could have been ~~more~~ ~~more~~ real since it has been officially declared that there is no such thing as adulteration in France.

I am, Gentlemen,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

Abbiouth Tourgee

U.S. Consul, Bordeaux,

United States Consul at Bordeaux, France.