

LABORATORY
OF THE
INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT
OTTAWA, CANADA.

BULLETIN No 372

BORAX

OTTAWA, 18th May, 1917

J. U. VINCENT, Esq., K. C.
Deputy Minister of Inland Revenue,

Sir,

I beg to hand you a report upon fifty-five (55) samples of Borax purchased by our inspectors in October and November of last year.

This article is chiefly employed for laundry purposes, and most of the samples herein reported were so used and labelled as intended especially for such use.

Borax is, however, very commonly employed as a food preservative, particularly in meats, meat products, butter and cream. It is also used as a mouth wash, as an eye-lotion, and for general antiseptic purposes. For such use, it should be free from more than traces of arsenic, and should, of course, be true to name.

An Order in Council of 24th Oct. 1912 (published as G. 1048) limits the amount of arsenic permissible in borax for use in foods, to 4 parts per million. Such a degree of purity is perhaps not to be expected in borax as employed for laundry purposes.

The addition of carbonate of soda to borax is only explicable on the assumption that the manufacturer desires to cheapen his product, or to mislead the purchaser with a view to enhanced profit to himself. Unless declaration of the presence of carbonate of soda is made at the time of sale, either by verbal statement or by statement on the label, such admixture must be regarded as adulteration under the Act. (section 3, (b))

Borax is quoted on the New York market on 5th May, 1917, at \$8.00 per 100 lbs; Bicarbonate of Soda, at \$1.95 per 100 lbs and Sal Soda, at \$1.05 per 100 lbs. (Metallurgical & Chemical Engineering, Vol. XVI, No. 10 p. 619)