

LABORATORY
OF THE
INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT
OTTAWA, CANADA

BULLETIN No. 339.

SWEET SPIRIT OF NITRE

OTTAWA, May 3, 1916.

J. P. VINCENT, Esq.,
Deputy Minister of Inland Revenue.

SIR,—I beg to hand you a report upon eighty-five (85) samples of Sweet Spirit of Nitre (*Spiritus Aetheris Nitrosi*) procured by our inspectors during November and December of last year, in the districts of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

This article has been made the subject of inspection under the Adulteration Act, on four different occasions, namely in 1891 (Bulletin 23), in 1908 (Bulletin 167), in 1911 (Bulletin 234), and in 1913 (Bulletin 255).

I may quote, in this connection, as follows from my introductory letter to the last named Bulletin.

"This important drug has on two former occasions been the subject of inspection, and has always been found to show a high percentage of adulteration; consisting not in the addition of foreign matters, but in containing less of the active principle (Ethyl Nitrite) than the standard set by the pharmacopœia requires.

"As has been pointed out in former bulletins, and emphasized by the pharmacopœias, the article is prone to decomposition and, unless kept with special care, will always deteriorate in the hands of the dealer. This fact is so well known to the drug trade that physicians have a right to expect special care on the part of the druggist, who is properly held responsible for the quality of the drugs he dispenses. The following table presents the results of three inspections of Sweet Spirit of Nitre:—

Bulletin.	Year.	Total samples.	Genuine. p. c.	Adulterated. p. c.
167	1908	77	37	63
234	1911	74	57	43
255	1913	73	56	44