

LABORATORY
OF THE
INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT
OTTAWA, CANADA

BULLETIN No. 349.

MACE

OTTAWA, October 18, 1916.

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

SIR,—I beg to hand you herein a report upon the spice known as Mace. This is the first occasion upon which we have dealt with the article named, and owing to the facts that comparatively little investigatory work is on record regarding this spice; that no accepted standards for it exist, and that even importers of the article are imperfectly informed as to its source and character, the report now placed in your hands must be considered rather as a study of the subject, than as a record of official inspection.

The attention of the Department has been called to the matter by several interested parties, from one of whose letters I quote the following:

"Has your Department ever made a collection of this spice? The reason we ask is this. A good Amboyna or Penang costs at the present time (April, 1914) about 61½ cents per pound, while Bombay, which is a wild mace, can be purchased for 24 cents a pound. In order to reduce the cost per pound, the spice-grinders generally blend either of the first two with the latter. While Bombay is truly mace, yet it does not contain any essential oil, and has no flavouring power, and therefore really acts as a filler."

Mace is the arillus, or outer coating of the nutmeg, the seed of *Myristica fragrans* (British Pharmacopocia.) "This tree is indigenous to the Molucca Islands, and is cultivated in Penang, Sumatra, the West Indies, etc. Penang nutmegs, which are the most esteemed, are very aromatic. Singapore nutmegs closely resemble them. Wild nutmegs are longer, narrower, and less aromatic. Bombay nutmegs, (*M. Malabarica*) are devoid of aroma. Of species of *Myristica* other than *M. fragrans*, only one, viz.: *M. Argentea*, the Papua nutmeg, yields aromatic seeds. Mace is the dried arillus. Considerable quantities of valueless Bombay mace are imported." B. P. Codex, p. 652.

Mace, like the nutmeg, owes its value as a spice to its content of volatile oil, and according to Allen (Com. Org. Analysis, IV, 359) this oil is practically identical in nutmeg and mace. The *Oleum Myristicæ* of the pharmacopocia is stated by Allen