preparations containing alcohol and acetic acid, and notably in the officinal tincture of acetate of iron, in which acetic ether is unmistakably formed, much to the detriment of the tincture, not so much from its presence as from the loss of acetic acid, and consequent deposit of a basic salt (which, by the way, may be obviated to a degree by having about 5 per cent. free acetic acid present in the tincture). This ether, we have been told, has more especially been introduced with a view to its use subsequently when the pharmacopœia is more generally altered.

The special objects in its introduction may have been for flavoring certain preparations, and also to have a more perfect solvent of cantharidin when making blistering fluid.

The Pharmacopœia does not pretend in all cases to give minute directions to manufacturers, but general remarks for their guidance, it therefore merely states that this ether may be made from dry acetate of soda, rectified spirit, and sulphuric acid. A better form could hardly have been given, as the more anhydrous the two liquids the more quickly and abundantly do they produce the compound ether.

Chloride of calcium is directed to be used to dry the ether when produced by digestion, with half its weight, and final rectification.

Here I cannot help noticing one omission of great importance, which may lead to confusion, viz., the non-rectification of the product from a solution of carbonated alkali, to remove free acetic acid, of which considerable quantity will always be present.

Under "characters and tests" we have the specific gravity described as 0.910, and the boiling point 166°. In Gmelin's Chemistry we find the specific gravity described as .888, and the boiling point as 165° (74° C.)

Miller also very nearly corroborates this, for he names 890 as the specific gravity, and 164° as the boiling pointr But upon reference to Watt's Dictionary of Chemistry, this

But upon reference to Watt's Dictionary of Chemistry, this ether is described as having a specific gravity at 0° C. of 910 (Kopp) and a boiling point 74.3 (166 Fahr.).

In the face of this conflicting evidence by good authorities, it is difficult to decide at any rate the specific gravity of acetic ether, unless by actually working out the matter for oneself.

I had my suspicions, that if I could find a specimen in pharmacy that would answer to the pharmacopœia tests, I should, in all probability, find free acetic acid as an impurity, I also thought that some specimens might be contaminated with ordinary sulphuric ether.

Accordingly I examined three, with results as under :---

	Specific Gravity.	Boiling point.	Free Acid.
a	·890	160°	none.
b	·889	158°	66
с	•915	164° { 10 p	er cent. of monohydrated acetic acid.