

cent. of it may be removed by pressure before grinding, so that estimation of the fixed oil in the finished product, affords no trustworthy basis for calculation as to foreign matter added. The fixed oil of mustard is a bland oil, applicable to various dietetic purposes, but quite devoid of such condimental properties as are valued in mustard.

The characteristic pungency of mustard is due to a volatile oil, only traces of which exist in the dry mustard, but which is developed, by the action of a ferment (myrosin) upon potassium myronate, in the presence of water. It is only upon mixing mustard with water that the pungent flavour is developed. Potassium myronate is present to the extent of about 1.5 per cent. in black mustard seed, and is practically absent from white mustard. This latter contains only traces of volatile oil as such, while about half of one per cent. is present in the black seed. It follows, from what has been said, that the better way of valuing mustard, would be by direct estimation of its volatile oil, after a treatment converting potassium myronate into this last.

It is found in practice, that although the white mustard seed contains no potassium myronate, its presence in admixture with the black seed assists in the generation of volatile oil from the latter; and for this reason the two varieties are ground together. This is due to the fact that a ferment (myrosin) whose presence determines the conversion of potassium myronate into volatile oil of mustard, is more largely present in white than in black mustard, although the glucoside (*sinigrin*) upon which it acts, to develop the volatile oil is practically absent from white mustard. A glucoside (Sinalbin) exists in white mustard, which, when acted upon by water in presence of myrosin, yields an oil (Sinalbin mustard oil) which has the pungent, burning taste, and vesicating properties of the volatile oil of black mustard; but this oil is only slightly volatilized with steam, and its presence does not materially interfere with the estimation of volatile mustard oil. (Allylisothiocyanate).

From the work of Piesse and Stansell already quoted, F. Sutton (Allen's Commercial Organic Analysis; vol. III, part 3, p. 116); Schlicht (Zeits. Anal. Chem. XXX. 661), and others, I am of opinion that the determination of volatile oil of mustard is practicable as a means of assaying commercial mustard; and I hope to investigate this matter more fully at an early date.

The following definition of mustard has been adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture (Circular No. 13, Dec. 20, 1904, p. 11):—

"Ground Mustard is a powder made from mustard seed, with or without the removal of the hulls and a portion of the fixed oil, and contains not more than two and five tenths (2.5) per cent. of starch and not more than eight (8) per cent. of total ash."

This definition leaves much to be desired, as it makes no reference to the component (volatile oil) upon which the real value of ground mustard depends, whether considered as a condiment, or as a vesicant.

It will be seen on looking through the tables in this report, that very few samples of mustard found on the Canadian Market are free from starch and turmeric. Nor is it to be understood that the addition of starch and turmeric is made for purposes of fraud. Certain brands of this condiment, which have been on the world's markets for generations, and have received recognition and honours at International Exhibitions, are avowedly mixtures of mustard farina with other materials. The public have approved of these compounds; and other manufacturers have, on this account, been led to imitate them. It may be, as alleged by some makers, that the presence of starchy matters is necessary, to give better keeping quality to the article, which without starch, tends to become lumpy and sticky; that turmeric is desirable to give a pleasing colour to mustard, especially when mixed with water for the table; that the removal of a large percentage of the fixed oil is necessary to permit of satisfactory grinding and sifting. On the other hand, it is claimed that the seeds of white mustard although not possessed of the pungent properties essential to mustard as a condiment, contain the finer and distinctive flavours of mustard, and are as necessary to the production of a desirable condiment as the black mustard. And further that even the same variety of seeds exhibits so great differences in crops of different years that it is impossible to make satisfactory blends except under the guidance of an expert, who is guided rather by the cultivated senses of taste, and smell, than by varietal differences in the seeds themselves. However this may be, it is certain that mustard should be sold for what it is; and that the presence of added matters should be announced on the label.