

menstruum of the tincture. As one of the objects of this research was to conserve alcohol it was particularly gratifying to note that a tincture made with a menstruum of 650 parts of alcohol and 350 parts of water produced a preparation that was all that could be desired both from a pharmaceutical and a therapeutic standpoint. The alkaloidal content was as required by the Pharmacopoeia. That this menstruum was sufficient to extract all the alkaloids of this drug was shown by the failure of the marc to give any reaction with Mayer's reagent after further extraction.

Depriving the drug of its oil in no way depreciates its activity, as the oil therefrom gave no evidence of containing any alkaloid.

THE ANALYSIS OF MERCURIAL OINTMENT.*

BY JOSEPH L. MAYER.

The official method for the assay of Mercurial Ointment being too inaccurate and time consuming, I devised the following simpler and more accurate procedure.

Accurately weigh about 0.500 gramme of the ointment into a tared 100-Cc. beaker, warm gently; add about 50 Cc. of gasoline, stir with a glass rod to dissolve the fat, allow the mercury to subside, then carefully decant the liquid through a small filter paper and reject filtrate. Now place funnel and filter paper over the beaker containing the mercury; add 10 Cc. nitric acid through the paper, employing a pipette; wash with a small amount of water, and then place the beaker containing the mercury and nitric acid on a hot plate and heat gently until red fumes cease to be evolved; wash the contents into a large Erlenmeyer flask, dilute to about 150 Cc. with water, add 2 Cc. ferric ammonium sulphate test solution and titrate with tenth-normal KCNS V. S. until the appearance of a permanent, yellowish-red color.

Each Cc. of tenth-normal KCNS V. S. consumed corresponds to 0.01003 gramme of mercury.

Three assays made of a sample of blue ointment by this process yielded the following results: 30.034, 30.234 and 30.157 percent of mercury.

The accuracy, simplicity, and rapidity of this method commend it for inclusion in the Pharmacopoeia.

RESEARCH AND ANALYTICAL LABORATORIES,
OF THE
LOUIS K. LIGGETT Co.

TINCTURE OF VANILLA.¹

BY K. A. BARTLETT.

While tincture of vanilla is a preparation that has been in use for a great many years, there has never been a satisfactory official formula for it. At the time of the last revision of the U. S. P. the formula therein was not satisfactory. A new formula was devised and included in the N. F. IV.

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¹ Presented before Section on Practical Pharmacy and Dispensing, A. Ph. A., City of Washington meeting, 1920.