
CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editors are not responsible for the opinions of their Correspondents.]

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE ANALYST."

SIR,—Will you allow me to point out that Mr. Young's process for the determination of sulphuric acid in vinegar (*ANALYST*, No. 20) is identical with that described three years ago by Mr. Thresh? (*Pharma. Journ.*, 1875.)

I remain, yours faithfully,

OTTO HEHNER, F.C.S.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE ANALYST."

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Angell's letter in your last issue, permit me to say that in my process for estimating sulphuric acid in vinegar there is an excess of chloride of barium in a neutral solution before estimating the total chloride, and also in estimating the chlorides after ignition, so that it is impossible for alkaline phosphates to be present. Mr. Angell will thus see he has found a mare's nest.

With regard to Mr. Hehner's process, I did not hear of it until after my paper was read, and on looking for *THE ANALYST* for August, 1876, I found it in its postal wrapper; it had been delivered at a time when I was away from home on my holidays, was mislaid, and so escaped my notice. The process no doubt answers its purpose admirably as a quantitative method, but the qualitative test is insufficient, as on account of the frequent presence of sulphate of lime in vinegar, many samples which are free from uncombined mineral acids, give a neutral ash, and in such cases it would be necessary to go on with the quantitative process. With regard to the relative value of the two processes, I think most chemists would prefer making two volumetric estimations of chloride to one of alkali, certainly no more time is required. In Mr. Hehner's process it seems you must guess the quantity of mineral acids present before proceeding, and if you should be below the proper amount it is necessary to repeat the experiment until an alkaline ash is obtained, whereas in my process no repetition is needed.

On reading Mr. Hehner's paper my attention was directed to a method devised by Mr. J. C. Thresh, published in the *Pharmaceutical Journal* for 3rd July, 1875, in which I find he has anticipated me, Mr. Thresh's process is shortly as follows:—After ascertaining the amount of chlorides present, a known quantity of a standard solution of chloride of barium is added to the vinegar, the whole evaporated to dryness, burnt, the ash washed out with water, boiled with a slight excess of bicarbonate of soda, filtered, and the chlorides estimated volumetrically in the filtrate; the loss of Cl being calculated as H_2SO_4 .

It will be seen that the principle of the process is identical with mine, but differs in detail, and I may state that the use of a standard solution of chloride of barium is unnecessary, and that more accurate results are obtained by applying the standard solution of nitrate of silver to the ash *in the presence of the insoluble matter*, and as little water as is necessary to wash the contents of the crucible into a beaker.

I know by repeated experiment that unburnt carbon and sulphate of barium, which has been heated with chloride, will retain considerable quantities of chlorides even after what would be considered excessive washing.

I am, Sir, yours etc.,

Plaistow, E.,

W. C. YOUNG.

11th January, 1878.

Mr. Wynter Blyth, of Barnstaple, reported a sample of milk to be adulterated with water, and on the hearing of the case, a report of which appears on another page, the duplicate sample was referred to the chemists at Somerset House. Mr. Blyth wrote to them, enclosing copies of his duplicate analysis of his portion of the sample in question and requested them to supply him with a copy of their results. The following is a copy of the reply sent to him; it seems to us of sufficient importance to publish it, as showing the views which the Inland Revenue Chemists take with reference to milk standards:—

Laboratory, Somerset House, London, W.C.,

January 3rd, 1878.

DEAR SIR,—I duly received your letter of the 28th ult., and you may rest assured that we will do our utmost to arrive at a just conclusion on the Stonehouse appeal.

We operate with weighed quantities, and all our results are determined by weight. We duplicate the experiments, and we are not satisfied if the results differ by more than a tenth of a grain.

The position which we occupy being entirely a neutral one, you will no doubt agree that we could not supply either side with our results, the Magistrates being the only persons with whom we have to deal.

I have seen Mr. Carter Bell's paper on milk, and the result of our experience differs materially from his. If you should be in town and call, I shall be happy to show you the results of the analyses of upwards of 300 samples obtained from various parts of the country. The cows were milked in the presence of an assistant from this laboratory, and we can vouch for the genuineness of the samples.

I am, yours faithfully,

Dr. Blyth.

J. BELL.

Mr. J. West Knights has been appointed Public Analyst for Cambridge, Cambridge-shire, Huntingdonshire, and the Isle of Ely, in the place of Professor Apjohn, deceased.

Mr. James M. Milne, Public Analyst for Kinning Park and Dunfermline, has been appointed Public Analyst for Fifeshire.

Mr. A. Wynter Blyth, Public Analyst for the County of Devon, has been appointed Public Analyst for the Borough of Totnes, on terms similar to those of the county.

Mr. J. Walker Montgomery has been appointed Public Analyst for the County of Cumberland.

The *Grocer* says that last week, for the fourth time, the Town Council of Dover received a letter from the Local Government Board, urging them to appoint a Public Analyst. The Council ordered the receipt of the letter to be acknowledged, but took no action in the matter.

PUBLIC ANALYST.—The Town Council of Faversham have had under consideration a letter from the Local Government Board, calling their attention to the fact that they had not appointed a public analyst for the borough, under section 10 of the Sale of Food and Drugs' Act, and that it was desirable to give effect to the intentions of the Legislature. It was proposed and seconded by Councillors Wyles and Fagg, two grocers, that an analyst should not be appointed. Alderman Johnson pointed out that town councils which evaded Acts of Parliament lost weight and influence, and that the Council would probably be compelled to appoint an analyst if they did not do so voluntarily. Nevertheless, the resolution referred to was carried by seven votes against two.—*Times*.