

Dr. Pulteney in tracing the history of Botanic science quotes Pliny for an account of the veneration in which this plant was held by the Druids, who attributed almost divine efficacy to it, and ordained the collecting it with rites and ceremonies not short of the religious strictness which was countenanced by the superstition of the age. It was cut with a golden knife, and when the moon was six days old gathered by the priest, who was clothed with white for the occasion, and the plant received on a white napkin, and two white bulls sacrificed. Thus consecrated, Mistletoe was held to be an antidote to poison, and prevented sterility. Query, Has not the custom of hanging up Mistletoe at merry-makings, and the ceremony so well known among our belles, some relation to the above sacrifice?

156. *ULEX europæus*. COMMON FURZE.—The culture of this shrub is given in the Agricultural Plants, being good for feeding cattle; its principal use however is for fuel, and it is frequently grown for such purposes. It is common on most of our waste lands. It also forms good fences, but should always be kept short and young, otherwise it becomes thin, especially in good land where it grows up and makes large bushes.

157. *ULMUS campestris*. THE ELM.—We have a number of varieties of the Elm; the most esteemed is that with the smooth bark. The timber has been long in request for water-pipes, and for boards, which are converted into various uses in domestic economy.

158. *ULMUS montana*. BROAD-LEAVED ELM.—This has not been considered of so great value as the common sort, but it is of much more free growth; and I have been informed that in the West of England the timber has been found to be good and lasting.

SECT. VII.—PLANTS USEFUL IN MEDICINE.

The initial letters in this class distinguish the Pharmacopœia in which each plant is inserted.

“By the wise and unchangeable laws of Nature established by a Being infinitely good and infinitely powerful,—not only man, the lord of the creation, ‘fair form who wears sweet smiles, and looks erect on heaven,’ but every subordinate being becomes subject to decay and death: pain and disease, the inheritance of mortality, usually accelerate his dissolution. To combat these, to alleviate when it has not the power to avert, Medicine, honoured art! comes to our assistance.

“It will not be expected that we should here give a history of this

ancient practice, or draw a parallel betwixt the success of former physicians and those of modern times: all that concerns us to remark is, that the ancients were infinitely more indebted to the vegetable kingdom for the materials of their art than the moderns. Not so well acquainted with the economy of nature, which teaches us that plants were chiefly destined for the food of various animals, they sought in every herb some latent healing virtue, and frequently endeavoured to make up the want of efficacy in one by the combination of numbers: hence the extreme length of their farraginous prescriptions. More enlightened ideas of the operations of medicine have taught the moderns greater simplicity and conciseness in practice. Perhaps there is a danger that this simplicity may be carried too far, and become finally detrimental to the practice."

The above is quoted from the Preface to a Catalogue of Medicinal Plants published by my predecessor in 1783: and it may be observed, that the medical student has, at the present season, a still less number of plants to store up in memory, owing, probably, to the great advances that chemistry has made in the mean time, through which mineral articles in many instances have superseded those of the vegetable kingdom. But, nevertheless, as Dr. Woodville has justly observed, "it would be difficult to show that this preference is supported by any conclusive reasoning drawn from a comparative superiority of the former;" or that the more general use of them has led to greater success in the practice of the healing art. It is however evident, that we have much to regret the almost total neglect of the study of medical botany by the younger branches of the professors of physic, when we are credibly informed that Cow-parsley has been administered for Hemlock, and Foxglove has been substituted for Coltsfoot*, from which circumstance, some valuable lives have been sacrificed. It is therefore high time that those persons who are engaged in the business of pharmacy should be obliged to become so far acquainted with plants, as to be able to distinguish at sight all such as are useful in diet or medicine, and more particularly such as are of poisonous qualities.

The medical student has so many subjects for his consideration, that it is not desirable he should have a greater number of vegetables to consult than are necessary. And we cannot help lamenting the difficulty he has to struggle with in consequence of the great difference of names which the Pharmacopœias of the present day exhibit. The London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, in many instances, enforce the necessity of learning a different term in each for the same thing, and none of which are called by the same they were twenty years ago. Surely it would be the means of forwarding the knowledge of drugs, if each could be distinguished by one general term.

The candidate for medical knowledge, however, is not the only one who has at times to regret this confusion of names. The Linnæan system is an easy and delightful path to the knowledge of plants;

* See the account of a dreadful accident of this nature, in *Gent. Mag.* for Sept. 1815.

but, like all other human structures, it has its imperfections, and some of which have been modified by judicious alterations. Yet the teachers of this science, as well as the students, have often to deprecate the unnecessary change in names which has been made by many writers, though, in many cases, no more reason appears for it than there generally would be to change the Christian and surnames of persons.

In the following section, I shall enumerate and describe those plants which are contained in the lists of the three colleges; and afterwards a separate list of those which, although they have been expunged, are still sometimes in use by medical men.

I shall also endeavour to give such descriptions as are concise, at the same time sufficient for general knowledge, and for which reason I have taken Lewis's *Materia Medica* for my text, unless where improvements have been made in certain subjects I have consulted more modern authorities. It should be observed, that writers on medical plants, with few exceptions, have copied one from another: or with a little alteration as to words only.

And as some vegetables, from their affinity, may be confounded with others, whereby those possessing medical qualities may be substituted for others having none, or even by poisonous ones, I shall in some instances enumerate a list of *similar plants*, which, with attention to their botanical characters, it is hoped will prevent those dangerous errors we have lately witnessed. As it is our business, in demonstrating plants, to guard the student against such confusion, it will be proper that specimens of such as come under this head be preserved, as a work for reference and contrast wherever doubts may arise.

158. *ACONITUM Napellus*. COMMON BLUE MONKSHOOD. *The Leaves. L. E.*—Every part of the fresh plant is strongly poisonous, but the root is unquestionably the most powerful, and when chewed at first imparts a slight sensation of acrimony, and a pungent heat of the lips, gums, palate and fauces, which is succeeded by a general tremor and sensation of chilliness.

This plant has been generally prepared as an extract or inspissated juice, after the manner directed in the Edinburgh and many of the foreign Pharmacopœias, and, like all virulent medicines, it should be first administered in small doses. Stoerck recommends two grains of the extract to be rubbed into a powder with two drams of sugar, and as a dose to begin with ten grains of this powder two or three times a-day.

Similar Plants.—*Aconitum japonicum*; *A. pyrenaicum*; *Delphinium elatum*; *D. exaltatum*.

Instead of the extract, a tincture has been made of the dried leaves macerated in six times their weight of spirit of wine, and forty drops given for a dose.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* 965.

The Dublin College has ordered the *Aconitum Neomontanum*, which is not common in this country*.

* In plants of so very poisonous a nature as the Aconite, it is the duty of every one who describes them to be particular. Here seems to have

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160. *ACORUS Calamus*. SWEET RUSH. *The Root. L.*—It is generally looked upon as a carminative and stomachic medicine, and as such is sometimes made use of in practice. It is said by some to be superior in aromatic flavour to any other vegetable that is produced in these northern climates; but such as I have had an opportunity of examining, fell short, in this respect, of several of our common plants. It is, nevertheless, a sufficiently elegant aromatic. It used to be an ingredient in the Mithridate and Theriaca of the London Pharmacopœia, and in the aromatic and stomachic tinctures and compound arum powder of the Edinburgh. The fresh root candied after the manner directed in our Dispensatory for candying eryngo root, is said to be employed at Constantinople as a preservative against epidemic diseases. The leaves of this plant have a sweet fragrant smell, more agreeable, though weaker, than that of the roots.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

161. *ÆSCULUS Hippocastanum*. HORSE-CHESNUT. *The Bark and Seed. E. D.*—With a view to its errhine power, the Edinburgh College has introduced the seeds into the *Materia Medica*, as a small portion of the powder snuffed up the nostrils readily excites sneezing; even the infusion or decoction of this fruit produces this effect: it has therefore been recommended for the purpose of producing a discharge from the nose, which, in some complaints of the head and eyes, is found to be of considerable benefit.

On the continent, the Bark of the Horse Chesnut-tree is held in great estimation as a febrifuge; and, upon the credit of several respectable authors, appears to be a medicine of great efficacy.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* 615.

162. *AGRIMONIA Eupatoria*. COMMON AGRIMONY. *The Herb. D.*—The leaves have an herbaceous, somewhat acrid, roughish taste, accompanied with an aromatic flavour. Agrimony is said to be aperient, detergent, and to strengthen the tone of the viscera: hence it is recommended in scorbutic disorders, in debility and laxity of the intestines, &c. Digested in whey, it affords an useful diet-drink for the spring season, not ungrateful to the palate or stomach.

163. *ALLIUM Porrum*. LEEK. *The Root. L.*—This participates of the virtues of garlic, from which it differs chiefly in being much weaker. See the article *ALLIUM*.

been a confusion. The *A. Neomontanum* is figured in Jacquin's *Fl. Austriaca*, fasc. 4. p. 381; and the first edition of *Hortus Kewensis* under *A. Napellus* erroneously quotes that figure: but both Gmelin in *Syst. Vegetabilium*, p. 838, and Willdenow in *Spec. Plant.* p. 1236, quote it under its proper name, *A. Neomontanum*. Now the fact is, that the *Napellus* is the *Common Blue Monkshood*; and the *Neomontanum* is altogether left out of the second edition of the *Hortus Kewensis*—for the best of all reasons, it is not in this country; or, if it is, it must be very scarce, and, of course, not the plant used in medicine.

164. *ALLIUM sativum*. GARLIC. *The Root. L. E. D.*—This pungent root warms and stimulates the solids, and attenuates tenacious juices. Hence in cold leucophlegmatic habits it proves a powerful expectorant, diuretic, and emmenagogue; and, if the patient is kept warm, sudorific. In humoral asthmas, and catarrhus disorders of the breast, in some scurvy, flatulent colics, hysterical and other diseases proceeding from laxity of the solids, and cold sluggish indisposition of the fluids, it has generally good effects: it has likewise been found serviceable in some hydropic cases. Sydenham relates, that he has known the dropsy cured by the use of garlic alone; he recommends it chiefly as a warm strengthening medicine in the beginning of the disease.

Garlic made into an unguent with oils, &c. and applied externally, is said to resolve and discuss cold tumours, and has been by some greatly esteemed in cutaneous diseases. It has likewise sometimes been employed as a repellent. Sydenham assures us, that among all the substances which occasion a derivation or revulsion from the head, none operate more powerfully than garlic applied to the soles of the feet: hence he was led to make use of it in the confluent small-pox about the eighth day, after the face began to swell; the root cut in pieces, and tied in a linen cloth, was applied to the soles, and renewed once a day till all danger was over.

165. *ALLIUM Ceba*. ONION. *The Root. D.*—These roots are considered rather as articles of food than of medicine: they are supposed to afford little or no nourishment, and when eaten liberally they produce flatulencies, occasion thirst, headaches, and turbulent dreams; in cold phlegmatic habits, where viscid mucus abounds, they doubtless have their use; as by their stimulating quality they tend to excite appetite, attenuate thick juices, and promote their expulsion: by some they are strongly recommended in suppressions of urine and in dropsies. The chief medicinal use of onions in the present practice is in external applications, as a cataplasm for suppurating tumours, &c.

166. *ALTHÆA officinalis*. MARSH-MALLOW. *The Leaves and Root. L.*—This plant has the general virtues of an emollient medicine; and proves serviceable in a thin acrimonious state of the juices, and where the natural mucus of the intestines is abraded. It is chiefly recommended in sharp defluxions upon the lungs, hoarseness, dysenteries, and likewise in nephritic and calculous complaints; not, as some have supposed, that this medicine has any peculiar power of dissolving or expelling the calculus; but as, by lubricating and relaxing the vessels, it procures a more free and easy passage. *Althæa* root is sometimes employed externally for softening and maturing hard tumours: chewed, it is said to give ease in difficult dentition of children.

The official preparations are:—Decoctio *Althææ officinalis*, and Syrupus *Althææ*.

Similar Plants.—*Malva officinalis*; *M. rotundifolia*; *M. mauritanica*; *Lavatera arborescens*.

This root gives name to an officinal syrup [*L. E.*] and ointment [*L.*]

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and is likewise an ingredient in the *compound powder of gum tragacanth* [L.E.] and the *oil and plaster of mucilages* [L.] though it does not appear to communicate any particular virtue to the two last, its mucilaginous matter not being dissoluble in oils.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

167. *AMYGDALUS communis*. SWEET and BITTER ALMONDS. L.E.D.
—The oils obtained by expression from both sorts of almonds are in their sensible qualities the same. The general virtues of these oils are, to blunt acrimonious humours, and to soften and relax the solids: hence their use internally, in tickling coughs, heat of urine, pains and inflammations: and externally in tension and rigidity of particular parts.

168. *ANCHUSA tinctoria*. ALKANET-ROOT. E. D.—Alkanet-root has little or no smell: when recent, it has a bitterish astringent taste, but when dried scarcely any. As to its virtues, the present practice expects not any from it. Its chief use is for colouring oils, unguents, and plasters. As the colour is confined to the cortical part, the small roots are best, these having proportionably more bark than the large.

169. *ANETHUM graveolens*. DILL. *The Seeds*. L.—Their taste is moderately warm and pungent; their smell aromatic, but not of the most agreeable kind. These seeds are recommended as a carminative, in flatulent colics proceeding from a cold cause or a viscosity of the juices. The most efficacious preparations of them are, the distilled oil, and a tincture or extract made with rectified spirit. The oil and simple water distilled from them are kept in the shops.—*Lewis.*

170. *ANETHUM Feniculum*. FENNEL. *Seeds*. E.—These are supposed to be stomachic and carminative; but this, and indeed all the other effects ascribed to them, as depending upon their stimulant and aromatic qualities, must be less considerable than those of Dill, Aniseed, or Caraway, though termed one of the four greater hot seeds.—*Woodville's Med. Bot. p. 129.*

171. *ANGELICA Archangelica*. GARDEN ANGELICA. *The Root, Leaves, and Seeds*. E.—All the parts of Angelica, especially the roots, have a fragrant aromatic smell, and a pleasant bitterish warm taste, glowing upon the lips and palate for a long time after they have been chewed. The flavour of the seeds and leaves is very perishable, particularly that of the latter, which, on being barely dried, lose greatest part of their taste and smell: the roots are more tenacious of their flavour, though even these lose part of it upon keeping. The fresh root, wounded early in the spring, yields an odorous yellow juice, which slowly exsiccated proves an elegant gummy resin, very rich in the virtues of the Angelica. On drying the root, this juice concretes into distinct molecules, which, on cutting it longitudinally, appear distributed in little

veins: in this state they are extracted by pure spirit, but not by watery liquors.

This resin is considered one of the most elegant aromatics of European growth, though little regarded in the present practice, and is rarely met with in prescription; neither does it enter any official composition.

172. *ANTHEMIS nobilis*. CHAMOMILE. *The Flowers*. L.E.D.—These have a strong not ungrateful, aromatic smell, but a very bitter nauseous taste. They are accounted carminative, aperient, emollient, and in some measure anodyne: and stand recommended in flatulent colics, for promoting the uterine purgations, in spasmodic affections, and the pains of women in child-bed: sometimes they have been employed in intermittent fevers, and the nephritis. These flowers are also frequently used externally in discutient and antiseptic fomentations, and in emollient gylsters. The double-flowered variety is usually cultivated for medicine, but the wild kind with single flowers is preferable.

Similar Plants.—*Anthemis arvensis*; *A. Cotula*; *Pyrethrum maritimum*.

173. *ANTHEMIS Pyrethrum*. PELLITORY OF SPAIN. *The Root*. L.—The principal use of *Pyrethrum* in the present practice is as a masticatory, for promoting the salival flux, and evacuating viscid humours from the head and neighbouring parts: by this means it very generally relieves the tooth-ach, pains of the head, and lethargic complaints. If a piece of the root, the size of a pea, be placed against the tooth, it instantly causes the saliva to flow from the surrounding glands, and gives immediate relief in all cases of that malady.

174. *APIUM Petroselinum*. COMMON PARSLEY. *The Root*. E.—Both the roots and seeds of Parsley are directed by the London College for medicinal use: the former have a sweetish taste, accompanied with a slight warmth or flavour somewhat resembling that of a carrot; the latter are in taste warmer and more aromatic than any other part of the plant, and also manifest considerable bitterness.

These roots are said to be aperient and diuretic, and have been employed in apozems to relieve nephritic pains, and obstructions of urine.

Although Parsley is so commonly used at table, it is remarkable that facts have been adduced to prove, that in some constitutions it occasions epilepsy, or at least aggravates the epileptic fit in those who are subject to this disease. It has been supposed also to produce inflammation in the eyes.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 43. A variety which produces larger roots, called *Hamburg Parsley*, is commonly grown for medicinal uses.

175. *ARBUTUS Uva Ursi*. TRAILING ARBUTUS or BEAR-BERRY. *The Leaves*.—This first drew the attention of physicians as an useful remedy in calculous and nephritic affections; and in the years 1763 and 1764, by the concurrent testimonies of different authors, it acquired remark-

able celebrity, not only for its efficacy in gravelly complaints, but in almost every other to which the urinary organs are liable, as ulcers of the kidneys and bladder, cystirrhoea, diabetes, &c. It may be employed either in powder or decoction; the former is most commonly preferred, and given in doses from a scruple to a dram two or three times a-day.—*Woodville's Med. Botany.*

176. *ARNICA montana*. MOUNTAIN ARNICA. *The whole Plant.* *E. D.*—The odour of the fresh plant is rather unpleasant, and the taste acrid, herbaceous, and astringent; and the powdered leaves act as a strong sternutatory.

This plant, according to Bergius, is an emetic, errhine, diuretic, diaphoretic, emmenagogue; and from its supposed power of attenuating the blood, it has been esteemed so peculiarly efficacious in obviating the bad consequences occasioned by falls and bruises, that it obtained the appellation of *Panacea Lapsorum*.—*Woodville's Med. Bot. p. 43.*

177. *ARTEMISIA Absinthium*. WORMWOOD, *The Herb. L.*—Wormwood is a strong bitter; and was formerly much used as such against weakness of the stomach, and the like, in medicated wines and ales. At present it is rarely employed in these intentions, on account of the ill relish and offensive smell which it is accompanied with. These it may be in part freed from by keeping, and totally by long coction, the bitter remaining entire. An extract made by boiling the leaves in a large quantity of water, and evaporating the liquor with a strong fire, proves a bitter sufficiently grateful, without any disgusting flavour.

178. *ARTEMISIA Abrotanum*. SOUTHERNWOOD. *Leaves. D.*—Southernwood has a strong, not very disagreeable smell; and a nauseous, pungent, bitter taste; which is totally extracted by rectified spirit, less perfectly by watery liquors. It is recommended as an anthelmintic; and in cold leucophlegmatic habits, as a stimulant, detergent, aperient, and sudorific. The present practice has almost entirely confined its use to external applications. The leaves are frequently employed in discutient and antiseptic fomentations; and have been recommended also in lotions and unguents for cutaneous eruptions, and the falling off of the hair.

179. *ARTEMISIA maritima*. SEA WORMWOOD. *Tops. D.*—In taste and smell, it is weaker and less unpleasant than the common wormwood. The virtues of both are supposed to be of the same kind, and to differ only in strength.

The tops used to enter three of our distilled waters, and give name to a conserve. They are an ingredient also in the common fomentation and green oil.

180. *ARTEMISIA Santonica*. ROMAN WORMWOOD. *Seeds. E. D.*—It

is a native of the warmer countries, and at present difficultly procurable in this, though as hardy and as easily raised as any of the other sorts. Sea wormwood has long supplied its place in the markets, and been in general mistaken for it.

Roman wormwood is less ungrateful than either of the others: its smell is tolerably pleasant: the taste, though manifestly bitter, scarcely disagreeable. It appears to be the most eligible of the three as a stomachic; and is likewise recommended by some in dropsies.

181. ARUM *maculatum*. BITING ARUM. *Fresh Root. L. E.*—This root is a powerful stimulant and attenuant. It is reckoned a medicine of great efficacy in some cachectic and chlorotic cases; in weakness of the stomach occasioned by a load of viscid phlegm, and in such disorders in general as proceed from a cold sluggish indisposition of the solids and lentor of the fluids. I have experienced great benefit from it in rheumatic pains, particularly those of the fixed kind, and which were seated deep. In these cases I have given from ten grains to a scruple of the fresh root twice or thrice a day, made into a bolus or emulsion with unctuous and mucilaginous substances, which cover its pungency, and prevent its making any painful impression on the tongue. It generally excited a slight tingling sensation through the whole habit, and, when the patient was kept warm in bed, produced a copious sweat.

The only officinal preparation, in which this root was an ingredient, was a compound *powder*; in which form its virtues are very precarious. Some recommend a tincture of it drawn with wine; but neither wine, water, nor spirit, extract its virtues.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

182. ASARUM *Europæum*, ASARABACCA. *The Leaves. L. E. D.*—Both the roots and leaves have a nauseous, bitter, acrimonious, hot taste; their smell is strong, and not very disagreeable. Given in substance from half a dram to a dram, they evacuate powerfully both upwards and downwards. It is said that tinctures made in spirituous menstrua possess both the emetic and cathartic virtues of the plant: that the extract obtained by inspissating these tinctures acts only by vomit, and with great mildness: that an infusion in water proves cathartic, rarely emetic: that aqueous decoctions made by long boiling, and the watery extract, have no purgative or emetic quality, but prove notable diaphoretics, diuretics, and emmenagogues.

Its principal use at present is as a sternutatory. The root of asarum is perhaps the strongest of all the vegetable errhines, white hellebore itself not excepted. Snuffed up the nose, in the quantity of a grain or two, it occasions a large evacuation of mucus, and raises a plentiful spitting. The leaves are considerably milder, and may be used to the quantity of three, four, or five grains. Geoffroy relates, that after snuffing up a dose of this errhine at night, he has frequently observed the discharge from the nose to continue for three days together; and that he has known a paralysis of the mouth and tongue cured by one dose. He recommends this medicine in stubborn disorders of

the head, proceeding from viscid tenacious matter, in palsies, and in soporific distempers. The leaves are an ingredient in the *pulvis sternutatorius* of the shops.

183. *ASPIDIUM Filix-Mas*. Polypodium, Linn. MALE FERN. *The Roots. L.E.D.*—They are said to be aperient and anthelmintic. Simon Paulli tells us, that they have been the grand secret of some empirics against the broad kind of worms called *taenia*; and that the dose is one, two, or three drams of the powder. Two other kinds of Ferns used to be recommended; but this, being the strongest, has therefore been made choice of in preference, though the College of Edinburgh still retain them in their Catalogue of Simples.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

184. *ASTRAGALUS Tragacanthus*. GOATS-THORN. *The Gum. L.E.D.*—This gum is of a strong body, and does not perfectly dissolve in water. A dram will give to a pint of water the consistence of a syrup, which a whole ounce of gum Arabic is scarce sufficient to do. Hence its use for forming troches, and the like purposes, in preference to the other gums. It is used in an officinal powder, and is an ingredient in the compound powders of ceruss and amber.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

185. *ATROPA Belladonna*. DEADLY NIGHTSHADE. *The Leaves, L.E.D.*—Belladonna was first employed as an external application, in the form of fomentation, to scirrhus and cancer. It was afterwards administered internally in the same affections; and numerous cases, in which it had proved successful, were given on the authority of the German practitioners. It has been recommended, too, as a remedy in extensive ulceration, in paralysis, chronic rheumatism, epilepsy, mania, and hydrophobia, but with so little discrimination, that little reliance can be placed on the testimonies in its favour; and, in modern practice, it is little employed. It appears to have a peculiar action on the eye: hence it has been used in amaurosis; and from its power of causing dilatation of the pupil, when topically applied under the form of infusion, it has been used before performing the operation for cataract. A practice which is hazardous, as the pupil, though much dilated by the application, instantly contracts when the instrument is introduced. When given internally, its dose is from one to three grains of the dried leaves, or one grain of the inspissated juice.—*Murray's Mat. Med. p. 174.*

I have had a cancer of the lip entirely cured by it: a scirrhusity in a woman's breast, of such kind as frequently proceeds to cancer, I have found entirely discussed by the use of it. A sore, a little below the eye, which had put on a cancerous appearance, was much mended by the internal use of the Belladonna; but the patient having learned somewhat of the poisonous nature of the medicine, refused to continue the use of it; upon which the sore again spread, and was painful; but, upon a return to the use of the Belladonna, was again mended to

a considerable degree; when the same fears again returning, the use of it was again laid aside, and with the same consequence, the sore becoming worse. Of these alternate states, connected with the alternate use of and abstinence from the Belladonna, there were several of these alterations which fell under my own observation *.—*Cullen's Mat. Med.* vol. ii. p. 270.

186. *CARDAMINE pratensis*. LADIES SMOCK. *The Leaves.* L. E. D. —Long ago it was employed as a diuretic; and, of late, it has been introduced in nervous diseases, as epilepsy, hysteria, choræa, asthma, &c. A dram or two of the powder is given twice or thrice a-day. It has little sensible operation.

187. *CARUM Carui*. CARAWAY. *The Seeds.* L. E. D. —These are in the number of the four greater hot seeds; and frequently employed as a stomachic and carminative in flatulent colics, and the like. Their officinal preparations are an essential oil and a spiritous water; they were used as ingredients also in the compound juniper water, tincture of sena, stomachic tincture, oxymel of garlic, electuary of bayberries and of scammony, and the cummin-seed plaster.

188. *CENTAUREA benedicta*. BLESSED THISTLE. *The Leaves.* E. D. —The herb should be gathered when in flower, great care taken in drying it, and kept in a very dry airy place, to prevent its rotting or growing mouldy, which it is very apt to do. The leaves have a penetrating bitter taste, not very strong or very durable, accompanied with an ungrateful flavour, which they are in great measure freed from by keeping.

The virtues of this plant seem to be little known in the present practice. We have frequently experienced excellent effects from a light infusion of carduus in loss of appetite, where the stomach was injured by irregularities. A stronger infusion made in cold or warm water, if drunk freely, and the patient kept warm, occasions a plentiful sweat, and promotes all the secretions in general.

The seeds of this plant are also considerably bitter, and have been sometimes used for the same purposes as the leaves.

189. *CHIRONIA Centaurium*. LESSER CENTAURY. *The Tops.* L. E. D. —This is justly esteemed to be the most efficacious bitter of all the medicinal plants indigenous to this country. It has been recommended as a substitute for Gentian, and, by several, thought to be a more useful medicine: experiments have also shown it to possess an equal degree of antiseptic power.

Many authors have observed, that, along with the tonic and stomachic qualities of a bitter, Centaury frequently proves cathartic;

* See the *Poisonous Plants*, in a future page.

but it is probable that this seldom happens, unless it be taken in very large doses. The use of this, as well as of the other bitters, was formerly common in febrile disorders previous to the knowledge of Peruvian-bark, which now supersedes them perhaps too generally; for many cases of fever occur which are found to be aggravated by the Cinchona, yet afterwards readily yield to the simple bitters.—Woodville, p. 277.

190. COCHLEARIA *officinalis*. SCURVY-GRASS. *The Herb. E.*—Is antiseptic, attenuant, aperient, and diuretic, and is said to open obstructions of the viscera and remoter glands, without heating or irritating the system. It has long been considered as the most effectual of all the antiscorbutic plants; and its sensible qualities are sufficiently powerful to confirm this opinion. In the *rheumatismus vagus*, called by Sydenham *Rheumatismus scorbuticus*, consisting of wandering pains of long continuance, accompanied with fever, this plant, combined with Arum and Wood-Sorrel, is highly commended both by Sydenham and Lewis.

We have testimony of its great use in scurvy, not only from physicians, but navigators; as Anson, Linschoten, Maartens, Egede, and others. And it has been justly noticed, that this plant grows plentifully in those high latitudes where the scurvy is most obnoxious. Forster found it in great abundance in the islands of the South Seas.—Woodville, p. 395.

191. COCHLEARIA *Armoracia*. HORSE-RADISH. *The Root. E.*—The medical effects of this root are, to stimulate the solids, attenuate the juices, and promote the fluid secretions: it seems to extend its action through the whole habit, and affect the minutest glands. It has frequently done great service in some kinds of scurvy and other chronic disorders proceeding from a viscosity of the juices, or obstructions of the excretory ducts. Sydenham recommends it likewise in dropsies, particularly those which sometimes follow intermittent fevers. Both water and rectified spirit extract the virtues of this root by infusion, and elevate them in distillation: along with the aqueous fluid an essential oil arises, possessing the whole taste and pungency of the horse-radish. The College have given us a very elegant compound water, which takes its name from this root.

192. COLCHICUM *autumnale*. MEADOW-SAFFRON. *The Roots. L. E. D.*—The roots, freed from the outer blackish coat and fibres below, are white, and full of a white juice. In drying they become wrinkled and dark coloured. Applied to the skin, it shows some signs of acrimony; and taken internally, it is said sometimes to excite a sense of burning heat, bloody stools, and other violent symptoms. In the form of syrup, however, it has been given to the extent of two ounces a-day without any bad consequence. It is sometimes employed as a diuretic in dropsy. It is now supposed to be a principal ingredient in the celebrated French goat medicine *L'Eau Medicinale*.

193. *CONIUM maculatum*. HEMLOCK. *The Leaves. L. E. D.*—Physicians seem somewhat in dispute about the best mode of exhibiting this medicine; some recommending the extract, as being most easily taken in the form of pills; others the powder, as not being subject to that variation which the extract is liable to, from being made in different ways. With respect to the period, likewise, at which the plant should be gathered, they seem not perfectly agreed; some recommending it when in its full vigour, and just coming into bloom, and others, when the flowers are going off. An extract of the green plant is ordered by the College in their last list. Dr. Cullen has for many years commended the making it from the unripe seeds; and this mode the College of Physicians at Edinburgh have thought proper to adopt in their late Pharmacopœia.

Similar Plants.—*Aethusa Cynapium*; *Apium Petroselinum*; *Oenanthe crocata*; *Oe. fistulosa*; *Phellandrium aquaticum*.

194. *CORIANDRUM sativum*. CORIANDER. *The Seeds. L. E. D.*—These, when fresh, have a strong disagreeable smell, which improves by drying, and becomes sufficiently grateful. They are recommended as carminative and stomachic.

195. *CROCUS sativus*. TRUE SAFFRON. *The Stigmata. L. E. D.*—There are three sorts of saffron met with in the shops, two of which are brought from abroad, the other is the produce of our own country. This last is greatly superior to the two former.

This medicine is particularly serviceable in hysteric depressions proceeding from a cold cause, or obstruction of the uterine secretions, where other aromatics, even those of the more generous kind, have little effect. Saffron imparts the whole of its virtue and colour to rectified spirit, proof spirit, wine, vinegar, and water: a tincture used to be drawn with vinegar, but it loses greatly its colour in keeping. There can be little use for preparations of saffron, as the drug itself will keep good for any length of time.

196. *CUMINUM Cymini*. CUMMIN. *The Seeds. L.*—Cummin seeds have a bitterish warm taste, accompanied with an aromatic flavour, not of the most agreeable kind. They are accounted good carminatives, but not very often made use of. An essential oil of them used to be kept in the shops, and they gave name to a plaster and cataplasm.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

197. *CYNARA Scolymus*. ARTICHOKE. *The Leaves. E.*—The bitter juice of the leaf, mixed with an equal part of Madeira wine, is recommended in an ounce dose night and morning, as a powerful diuretic in dropsy. An infusion of the leaf may likewise be used.

198. *DAPHNE Mezereum*. THE MEZEREON. *The Roots. L. E. D.*—This plant is extremely acrid, especially when fresh, and, if retained in the

mouth, excites great and long continued heat and inflammation, particularly of the throat and fauces. The bark and berries of Mezereon in different forms have been long externally used to obstinate ulcers and ill conditioned sores. In France, the former is strongly recommended as an application to the skin, which, under certain management, produces a continued serous discharge without blistering, and is thus rendered useful in many chronic diseases of a local nature, answering the purpose of what has been called a perpetual blister, while it occasions less pain and inconvenience.

In this country Mezereon is principally employed for the cure of some siphylitic complaints; and in this way Dr. Donald Monro was the first who gave testimony of its efficacy in the successful use of the Lisbon Diet Drink.

The considerable and long-continued heat and irritation that is produced in the throat when Mezereon is chewed, induced Dr. Withering to think of giving it in a case of difficulty of swallowing, seemingly occasioned by a paralytic affection. The patient was directed to chew a thin slice of the root as often as she could bear it, and in about a month recovered her power of swallowing. This woman had suffered the complaint three years, and was greatly reduced, being totally unable to swallow solids, and liquids but very imperfectly.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 720.

199. *Datura Stramonium*. THORN APPLE. *The whole Plant. E.*—Dr. Woodville informs us, that an extract of this plant has been the preparation usually employed, and from one to ten grains and upwards a-day: but the powdered leaves after the manner of those directed for hemlock would seem, for the reason given, to be a preparation more certain and convenient.

It has been much celebrated as a medicine in epilepsy and convulsions and mania; but it is of a violent narcotic quality, and extremely dangerous in its effects.

Stramonium has been recommended, as being of considerable use in cases of asthma, on the authority of some eminent physicians of the East Indies; and the late Dr. Roxburgh has stated to me many instances wherein it had performed wonders in that dreadful malady.

The *Datura Metal*, Purple-flowered Thorn-Apple, is much like the *Stramonium*, except in the flowers and the stalks being of a purple colour. I have made particular inquiry of Dr. Roxburgh if any particular kind was used in preference, and he said not; that both the above sorts were used; and, in fact, not only these, but the *Datura Tatula*, another species which grows wild there, and is cultivated in our stoves for the sake of its beautiful flowers, is also used for the same purposes.

The mode of using it was by cutting the whole plant up after drying, and smoking it in a common tobacco-pipe; and which, in some cases in this country also, has given great ease in severe attacks; and I know several persons who use it with good effect to this day. In ve-

getables of such powerful effects as this is known to have, great care ought to be taken in their preparation, which, I fear, is not always so much attended to as the nature of this subject requires*.

200. *DAUCUS sylvestris*. WILD CARROT. *The Seeds. L.*—These seeds possess, though not in a very considerable degree, the aromatic qualities common to those of the umbelliferous plants, and hence have long been deemed carminative and emmenagogue; but they are chiefly esteemed for their diuretic powers, and for their utility in calculus and nephritic complaints, in which an infusion of three spoonfuls of the seeds in a pint of boiling water has been recommended; or the seeds may be fermented in malt liquor, which receives from them an agreeable flavour resembling that of lemon-peel.—*Woodville's Med. Bot. p. 132.*

Similar Plants.—*Sison Amomum*; *Daucus Carota*.

201. *DAUCUS Carota*. CULTIVATED CARROT. *The Roots. L. E. D.*—The expressed juice, or a decoction of these roots, has been recommended in calculous complaints, and as a gargle for infants in aphthous affections or excoriations of the mouth; and a poultice of scraped carrot has been found an useful application to phagedenic ulcers, and to cancerous and putrid sores.

202. *DELPHINIUM Staphis Agria*. STAVES AGRIA. *The Seeds. L. D.*—Stavesacre was employed by the ancients as a cathartic; but it operates with so much violence both upwards and downwards, that its internal use has been, among the generality of practitioners, for some time laid aside. It is chiefly employed in external applications for some kinds of cutaneous eruptions, and for destroying lice and other insects; insomuch that it has from this virtue received its name in different languages, *Herba pedicularis*, *Herbe aux pour*, *Lauskraut*, *Lousewort*.

203. *DIANTHUS caryophyllos*. CLOVE-PINK. *The Petals. E.*—These flowers are said to be cardiac and alexipharmac. Simon Paulli relates, that he has cured many malignant fevers by the use of a decoction of them; which he says powerfully promoted sweat and urine without greatly irritating nature, and also raised the spirits and quenched thirst. The flowers are chiefly valued for their pleasant flavour, which is entirely lost even by light coction. Lewis says, the College directed the syrup, which is the only officinal preparation of them, to be made by infusion.

204. *DIGITALIS purpurea*. FOXGLOVE. *The Leaves. L. E. D.*—The leaves of Foxglove have a nauseous taste, but no remarkable smell. They

* See Observations on and Directions for preparing and preserving Herbs in general, at the end of this Section.

have been long used externally to sores and scrophulous tumours with considerable advantage. Its diuretic effects, for which it is now so deservedly received into the *Materia Medica*, were entirely overlooked. To this discovery Dr. Withering has an undoubted claim; and the numerous cures of dropsy related by him and other practitioners of established reputation, afford incontestable proofs of its diuretic powers, and of its practical importance in the cure of those diseases. The dose of dried leaves in powder is from one grain to three twice a-day; but if a liquid medicine be preferred, a dram of the dried leaves is to be infused for four hours in half a pint of boiling water, adding to the strained liquor an ounce of any spiritous water. One ounce of this infusion given twice a-day is a medium dose; it is to be continued in these doses till it either acts upon the kidneys, the stomach, or the pulse, (which it has a remarkable power of lowering,) or the bowels.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 221.

This is now become a very popular medicine, but if used incautiously is attended with danger. Medical practitioners should make themselves perfectly acquainted with this plant, as the leaves are the only part used; and their not being readily discriminated when separated from the flowers, several accidents have occurred. In the *Gent. Mag.* for September 1815 is recorded a very extraordinary mistake, where the life of a child was sacrificed to the ignorance of a person who administered this instead of Coltsfoot; a plant so very dissimilar, that, had it not been well authenticated, I should not have believed the fact.

Similar Plants.—*Verbascum nigrum*; *V. Thapsus*; *Cynoglossum officinale*, or, after the above mistake, any other plant with a lanceolate leaf, we fear, may be confounded with it.

205. *ERYNGIUM maritimum*. SEA-HOLLY. *Roots. D.*—The roots are slender, and very long; of a pleasant sweetish taste, which on chewing for some time is followed by a light degree of aromatic warmth and acrimony. They are accounted aperient and diuretic, and have also been celebrated as aphrodisiac: their virtues, however, are too weak to admit them under the head of medicines. The candied root is ordered to be kept in the shops.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

206. *FERULA assafetida*. ASSAFÆTIDA. *Gum. L. E. D.*—This drug has a strong fetid smell, somewhat like that of garlick; and a bitter, acrid, biting taste. It loses with age of its smell and strength, a circumstance to be particularly regarded in its exhibition. It consists of about one-third part pure resin, and two-thirds of gummy matter; the former soluble in rectified spirit, the other in water. Proof-spirit dissolves almost the whole into a turbid liquor; the tincture in rectified spirit is transparent.

Assafetida is the strongest of the fetid gums, and of frequent use in hysteric and different kinds of nervous complaints. It is likewise of considerable efficacy in flatulent colics; and for promoting all the fluid

secretions in either sex. The ancients attributed to this medicine many other virtues which are at present not expected from it.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

207. *FICUS Carica*. COMMON FIG. *Fruit, L. D.*—The recent fruit completely ripe is soft, succulent, and easily digested, unless eaten in immoderate quantities, when it is apt to occasion flatulency, pain of the bowels, and diarrhoea. The dried fruit is pleasanter to the taste, and is more wholesome and nutritive. Figs are supposed to be more nutritious by having their sugar united with a large portion of mucilaginous matter, which, from being thought to be of an oily nature, has been long esteemed an useful demulcent and pectoral; and it is chiefly with a view to these effects that they have been medicinally employed.

208. *FRAXINUS Ornus*. MANNA. *L. E. D.*—There are several sorts of Manna in the shops. The larger pieces, called Flake Manna, are usually preferred; though the smaller grains are equally as good, provided they are white, or of a pale yellow colour, very light, of a sweet not unpleasant taste, and free from any visible impurities.

Manna is a mild agreeable laxative, and may be given with safety to children and pregnant women: nevertheless, in some particular constitutions it acts very unkindly, producing flatulencies and distension of the viscera.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

209. *GENTIANA lutea*. YELLOW GENTIAN. *Root, L. D.*—This root is a strong bitter, and, as such, very frequently made use of in practice: in taste it is less exceptionable than most of the other substances of this class: infusions of it, flavoured with orange-peel, are sufficiently grateful. It is the capital ingredient in the bitter wine; and a tincture and infusion of it are kept in the shops.

Lewis mentions a poisonous root being mixed among some of the Gentian brought to London; the use of which occasioned in some instances death. This was internally of a white colour, and void of bitterness. There is no doubt but this was the root of the *Veratrum album*, a poisonous plant so similar, that it might readily be mistaken for it.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

210. *GEUM urbanum*. COMMON AVENS. *Root, D.*—This has a warm, bitterish, astringent taste, and a pleasant smell, somewhat of the clove kind, especially in the spring, and when produced in dry warm soils. Parkinson observes, that such as is the growth of moist soils has nothing of this flavour. This root has been employed as a stomachic, and for strengthening the tone of the viscera in general: it is still in some esteem in foreign countries, though not taken notice of among us. It yields, on distillation, an elegant odoriferous essential oil, which concretes into a flaky form.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

Similar Plants.—*Geum rivale*; *G. intermedium*.

211. GLYCYRRHIZA *glabra*. LIQUORICE. Root. *L. D.*—This is produced plentifully in all the countries of Europe: that which is the growth of our own is preferable to such as comes from abroad; this last being generally mouldy, which this root is very apt to become, unless kept in a dry place.

The powder of liquorice usually sold is often mingled with flower, and, I fear, too often with substances not quite so wholesome. The best sort is of a brownish yellow colour (the fine pale yellow being generally sophisticated) and of a very rich sweet taste, much more agreeable than that of the fresh root. Liquorice is almost the only sweet that quenches thirst.

This root is a very useful pectoral, and excellently softens acrimonious humours, at the same time that it proves gently detergent: and this account is warranted by experience. It is an ingredient in the pectoral syrup, pectoral troches, the compound lime waters, decoction of the woods, compound powder of gum tragacanth, lenitive electuary, and theriaca. An extract is directed to be made from it in the shops; but this preparation is brought chiefly from abroad, though the foreign extract is not equal to such as is made with proper care among ourselves.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

212. GRATIOLA *officinalis*. HEDGE-HYSSOP. *Herb. E. D.*—The leaves have a very bitter disagreeable taste: an infusion of a handful of them when fresh, or a dram when dried, is said to operate strongly as a cathartic. Kramer reports that he has found the root of this plant a medicine similar in virtue to Ipecacuanha.

Similar Plants.—*Lythrum Salicaria*; *Scutellaria galericulata*.

213. HELLEBORUS *niger*. BLACK HELLEBORE. Root. *L.*—The taste of Hellebore is acrid and bitter. Its acrimony, as Dr. Grew observes, is first felt on the tip of the tongue, and then spreads immediately to the middle, without being much perceived on the intermediate part: on chewing it for a few minutes, the tongue seems benumbed, and affected with a kind of paralytic stupor, as when burnt by eating any thing too hot.

Our Hellebore is at present looked upon principally as an alterative, and in this light is frequently employed, in small doses, for attenuating viscid humours, promoting the uterine and urinary discharges, and opening inveterate obstructions of the remoter glands: it often proves a very powerful emmenagogue in plethoric habits, where steel is ineffectual or improper. An extract made from this root with water, is one of the mildest, and for the purposes of a cathartic the most effectual preparation of it: this operates sufficiently, without occasioning the irritation which the pure resin is accompanied with. A tincture drawn with proof-spirit contains the whole virtue of the Hellebore, and seems to be one of the best preparations of it: this tincture, and the extract, used to be kept in the shops. The College of Edinburgh

used to make this root an ingredient in the purging cephalic tincture, and compound tincture of jalap; and its extract, in the purging deobstruent pills, gamboge pills, the laxative mercurial pills, and the compound cathartic extract.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

Similar Plant.—*Helleborus viridis.*

214. *HELLEBORUS foetidus.* BEARSFOOT. *Leaves. L.*—The root is a strong cathartic; it destroys worms, and is recommended in different species of mania. It is commonly substituted for that of the *Helleborus viridis*, which is a more dangerous medicine. *Hill's Herbal*, p. 32. Great care ought to be used in the administering this plant: many instances of its dreadful effects are related. (See *Poisonous Plants.*)

Similar Plant.—*Helleborus viridis.*

215. *HORDEUM distichon.* PEARL BARLEY. *Seeds. L. E.*—Barley, in its several states, is more cooling, less glutinous, and less nutritious than wheat or oats; among the ancients, decoctions of it were the principal aliment, and medicine, in acute diseases. The London College direct a decoction of pearl barley; and both the London and Edinburgh make common barley an ingredient in the pectoral decoction.

216. *HUMULUS Lupulus.* THE HOP.—The flowers and seed-vessels are used in gout and rheumatism, under the form of infusion in boiling-water. The powder formed into an ointment with lard, is said to ease the pain of open cancer. A pillow stuffed with hops is an old and successful mode of procuring sleep in the watchfulness of delirious fever.

217. *HYOSCYAMUS niger.* HENBANE. *Leaves and Seeds. L. E.*—Henbane is a strong narcotic poison, and many instances of its deleterious effects are recorded by different authors; from which it appears, that any part of the plant, when taken in sufficient quantity, is capable of producing very dangerous and terrible symptoms. It is however much employed in the present day as an anodyne. Dr. Withering found it of great advantage in a case of difficult deglutition. Stoerck and some others recommend this extract in the dose of one grain or two; but Dr. Cullen observes, that he seldom discovered its anodyne effects till he had proceeded to doses of eight or ten grains, and sometimes to fifteen and even to twenty. The leaves of Henbane are said to have been applied externally with advantage, in the way of poultice, to resolve scirrhus tumours, and to remove some pains of the rheumatic and arthritic kind.

Similar Plants.—*Verbascum Lychnites*; *V. nigrum.*

The roots of the Henbane are to be distinguished by their very powerful and narcotic scent.

218. *HYSSOPUS officinalis.* HYSSOP. *The Herb. L. E. D.*—The

leaves of Hyssop have an aromatic smell, and a warm pungent taste. Besides the general virtues of aromatics, they are particularly recommended in humoural asthmas, coughs, and other disorders of the breast and lungs; and said to notably promote expectoration.

219. *INULA Helenium*. ELECAMPAINE. *Root*. D.—Elecampane root possesses the general virtues of alexipharmics: it is principally recommended for promoting expectoration in humoural asthmas and coughs; in which intention, it used to be employed in the Edinburgh Pharmacopœia: liberally taken, it is said to excite urine, and loosen the belly. In some parts of Germany, large quantities of this root are candied, and used as a stomachic, for strengthening the tone of the viscera in general, and for attenuating tenacious juices. Spirituous liquors extract its virtues in greater perfection than watery ones: the former scarce elevate any thing in distillation: with the latter, an essential oil arises, which concretes into white flakes; this possesses at first the flavour of the elecampane, but is very apt to lose it in keeping.

220. *JUNIPERUS Sabina*. SAVINE. *The Tops*. L. E. D.—Savine is a warm irritating aperient medicine, capable of promoting all the glandular secretions. The distilled oil is one of the most powerful emmenagogues; and is found of good service in obstructions of the uterus, or other viscera, proceeding from a laxity and weakness of the vessels, or a cold sluggish indisposition of the juices.

Similar Plants.—*Juniperus oxycedrus*; *J. Phœnicea*. These should be particularly distinguished, as Savine is attended with danger when taken immoderately.

221. *JUNIPERUS communis*. JUNIPER. *Berries*. L. E. D.—Juniper berries have a strong, not disagreeable smell; and a warm, pungent sweet taste, which, if they are long chewed, or previously well bruised, is followed by a bitterish one. The pungency seems to reside in the bark; the sweet in the juice; the aromatic flavour in oily vesicles, spread through the substance of the pulp, and distinguishable even by the eye; and the bitter in the seeds: the fresh berries yield, on expression, a rich, sweet, honey-like, aromatic juice; if previously pounded so as to break the seeds, the juice proves tart and bitter.

222. *LACTUCA virosa*. WILD LETTUCE. *Leaves*. E.—Dr. Collin at Vienna first brought the *Lactuca virosa* into medical repute; and its character has lately induced the College of Physicians at Edinburgh to insert it in the Catalogue of the *Materia Medica*. More than twenty-four cases of dropsy are said by Collin to have been successfully treated, by employing an extract prepared from the expressed juice of this plant, which is stated not only to be powerfully diuretic, but, by attenuating the viscid humours, to promote all the secretions, and to remove visceral obstructions. In the more simple cases proceeding

from debility, the extract in doses of eighteen to thirty grains a-day, proved sufficient to accomplish a cure; but when the disease was inveterate, and accompanied with visceral obstructions, the quantity of extract was increased to three drams; nor did larger doses, though they excited nausea, ever produce any other bad effect; and the patients continued so strong under the use of this remedy, that it was seldom necessary to employ any tonic medicines.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 76.

Similar Plants.—*Sonchus arvensis*; *Lactuca Scariola*.

223. *LAVANDULA Spica*. LAVENDER. *Flowers. L.D.*—Lavender has been an officinal plant for a considerable time, though we have no certain accounts of it given by the ancients. Its medical virtue resides in the essential oil, which is supposed to be a gentle corroborant and stimulant of the aromatic kind; and is recommended in nervous debilities, and various affections proceeding from a want of energy in the animal functions.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 323.

224. *LAURUS nobilis*. BAY-TREE. *Leaves and Berries. L.*—In distillation with water, the leaves of bay yield a small quantity of very fragrant essential oil; with rectified spirit, they afford a moderately warm pungent extract. The berries yield a larger quantity of essential oil: they discover likewise a degree of unctuousity in the mouth; give out to the press an almost insipid fluid oil; and on being boiled in water, a thicker butyraceous one of a yellowish-green colour, impregnated with the flavour of the berry. An infusion of the leaves is sometimes drunk as tea; and the essential oil of the berries may be given from one to five or six drops on sugar, or dissolved by means of mucilages, or in spirit of wine.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 680, 681.

225. *LAURUS Sassafras*. SASSAFRASS-TREE. *Bark. L. E. D.*—Its medical character was formerly held in great estimation; and its sensible qualities, which are stronger than any of the woods, may have probably contributed to establish the opinion so generally entertained of its utility in many inveterate diseases; for, soon after its introduction into Europe, it was sold at a very high price, and its virtues were extolled in publications professedly written on the subject. It is now, however, thought to be of very little importance, and seldom employed but in conjunction with other medicines of a more powerful nature.

Dr. Cullen found that a watery infusion of it taken warm and pretty largely, was very effectual in promoting sweat; but he adds, "to what particular purpose this sweating was applicable, I have not been able to determine." In some constitutions sassafras, by its extreme fragrance, is said to produce headache: to deprive it of this effect, the decoction ought to be employed.—*Woodville's Mat. Med.* p. 677.

226. *LEONTODON Taraxicum*. N BISON. *Root. L.*—The roots

contain a bitter milky juice; they promise to be of use as aperient and detergent medicines; and have sometimes been directed in this intention with good success. Boerhaave esteems them capable, if duly continued, of resolving almost all kinds of coagulations, and opening very obstinate obstructions of the viscera.

227. *LINUM usitatissimum*. FLAX. *The Seeds*. L. E. — Linseed yields to the press a considerable quantity of oil; and boiled in water, a strong mucilage: these are occasionally made use of for the same purposes as other substances of that class; and sometimes the seeds themselves in emollient and maturing cataplasms. They have also been employed in Asia, and, in times of scarcity, in Europe, as food: but are not agreeable, or in general wholesome.

228. *LINUM catharticum*. PURGING-FLAX. *The Herb*. L. D. — This is a very small plant, not above four or five inches high, found wild upon chalky hills, and in dry pasture-grounds. Its virtue is expressed in its title: an infusion in water or whey of a handful of the fresh leaves, or a dram of them in substance when dried, is said to purge without inconvenience.

229. *LOBELIA siphylitica*. BLUE CARDINAL FLOWER. *The Root*. E. — Every part of the plant abounds with a milky juice, and has a rank smell. The root, which is the part directed for medicinal use, in taste resembles tobacco, and is apt to excite vomiting. It derived its name, Siphylitica, from its efficacy in the cure of Siphylis, as experienced by the North American Indians, who considered it a specific in that disease.

A decoction was made of a handful of the roots in three measures of water. Of this, half a measure is taken in the morning fasting, and repeated in the evening; and the dose is gradually increased till its purgative effects become too violent, when the decoction is to be intermitted for a day or two, and then renewed till a perfect cure is effected. But it does not appear that the antisiphylitic powers of Lobelia have been confirmed by any instances of European practice.—Woodville's *Med. Bot.* p. 251.

230. *LYTHRUM Salicaria*. WILLOW HERB. *The Herb*. D. — This is used internally in dropsies, obstinate gleets, and leucorrhœa.

Similar Plants.—*Epilobium palustre*; *Epilob. angustifolium*; *Epilob. hirsutum*.

231. *MALVA sylvestris*. COMMON MALLOW. *Herb*. L. E. — The leaves are ranked the first of the four emollient herbs: they were formerly of some esteem, in food, for loosening the belly; at present, decoctions of them are sometimes employed in dysenteries, heat and sharpness of urine, and in general for obtunding acrimonious humours:

their principal use is in emollient glysters, cataplasms, and fomentations.

232. *MARRUBIUM vulgare*. HOREHOUND. *Herb. E. D.*—It is greatly extolled for its efficacy in removing obstructions of the lungs and other viscera. It has chiefly been employed in humoral asthmas. Mention is made of its successful use in scirrhus affections of the liver, jaundice, cachexies, and menstrual suppressions.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 333.

Similar Plants.—*Ballota nigra*; *B. alba*.

233. *MELISSA officinalis*. BALM. *Herb. L. E.*—This herb, in its recent state, has a weak roughish aromatic taste, and a pleasant smell, somewhat of the lemon kind. On distilling the fresh herb with water, it impregnates the first runnings pretty strongly with its grateful flavour. Prepared as tea, however, it makes a grateful diluent drink in fevers; and in this way it is commonly used, either by itself, or acidulated with the juice of lemons.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 335, 336.

234. *MENTHA viridis*. SPEAR-MINT. *Leaves. L. D.*—The virtues of Mint are those of a warm stomachic and carminative: in loss of appetite, nausea, continual retchings to vomit, and (as Boerhaave expresses it) almost paralytic weaknesses of the stomach, there are few simples perhaps of equal efficacy. In colicky pains, the gripes to which children are subject, henteries, and other kinds of immoderate fluxes, this plant frequently does good service. It likewise proves beneficial in sundry hysteric cases, and affords an useful cordial in languors and other weaknesses consequent upon delivery. The best preparations for these purposes are, a strong infusion made from the dry leaves in water (which is much superior to one from the green herb) or rather a tincture or extract prepared with rectified spirit.

The essential oil, a simple and spirituous water, and a conserve, are kept in the shops: the Edinburgh College directs an infusion of the leaves in the distilled water. This herb is an ingredient also in the three alexiteral waters; and its essential oil in the stomach plaster and stomachic pills.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

235. *MENTHA Piperita*. PEPPER-MINT. *Herb. L. E. D.*—The leaves have a more penetrating smell than any of the other mints, and a much warmer, pungent, glowing taste like pepper, sinking as it were into the tongue. The principal use of this herb is in flatulent colics, languors, and other like disorders; it seems to act as soon as taken, and extends its effects through the whole system, instantly communicating a glowing warmth. Water extracts the whole of the pungency of this herb by infusion, and elevates it in distillation. Its officinal preparations are an essential oil, and a simple and spirituous water.

236. *MENTHA Pulegium*. PENNYROYAL. *Herb. L. E. D.*—Pennyroyal is a warm pungent herb of the aromatic kind, similar to mint, but more acrid and less agreeable. It has long been held in great esteem, and not undeservedly, as an aperient and deobstruent, particularly in hysteric complaints, and suppressions of the uterine purgations. For these purposes, the distilled water is generally made use of, or, what is of equal efficacy, an infusion of the leaves. It is observable, that both water and rectified spirit extract the virtues of this herb by infusion, and likewise elevate greatest part of them in distillation.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

237. *MENYANTHES trifoliata*. BUCK-BEAN. *Leaves. L. E. D.*—This is an efficacious aperient and deobstruent; it promotes the fluid secretions, and, if liberally taken, gently loosens the belly. It has of late gained great reputation in scorbutic and scrophulous disorders; and its good effects in these cases have been warranted by experience: inveterate cutaneous diseases have been removed by an infusion of the leaves, drunk to the quantity of a pint a-day, at proper intervals, and continued some weeks. Boerhaave relates, that he was relieved of the gout by drinking the juice mixed with whey.

238. *MOMORDICA Elaterium*. SPIRTING CUCUMBER. *Fruit. L. E. D.*—*Elaterium* is a strong cathartic, and very often operates also upwards. Two or three grains are accounted in most cases a sufficient dose. Simon Paulli relates some instances of the good effects of this purgative in dropsies: but cautions practitioners not to have recourse to it till after milder medicines have proved ineffectual; to which caution we heartily subscribe. Medicines indeed in general, which act with violence in a small dose, require the utmost skill to manage them with any tolerable degree of safety: to which may be added, that the various manners of making these kinds of preparations, as practised by different hands, must needs vary their power.

239. *MORUS nigra*. MULBERRY. *Fruit. L.*—It has the common qualities of the other sweet fruits, abating heat, quenching thirst, and promoting the grosser secretions; an agreeable syrup made from the juice is kept in the shops. The bark of the roots has been in considerable esteem as a vermifuge; its taste is bitter, and somewhat astringent.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

240. *NICOTIANA Tabacum*. TOBACCO. *Leaves. L. E. D.*—Tobacco is sometimes used externally in unguents for destroying cutaneous insects, cleansing old ulcers, &c. Beaten into a mash with vinegar or brandy, it has sometimes proved serviceable for removing hard tumours of the hypochondres.

241. *ORIGANUM Majorana*. SWEET MARJORAM. *Herb. L. B.*—It is a moderately warm aromatic, yielding its virtues both to aqueous
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and spirituous liquors by infusion, and to water in distillation. It is principally celebrated in disorders of the head and nerves, and in the humoral asthmas and catarrhs of old people. An essential oil of the herb is kept in the shops. The powder of the leaves proves an agreeable errhine.

242. *ORIGANUM vulgare*. POT MARJORAM. *Herb. L. D.*—It has an agreeable aromatic smell approaching to that of marjoram, and a pungent taste much resembling thyme, to which it is likewise thought to be more nearly allied in its medicinal qualities than to any of the other verticillatæ, and therefore deemed to be emmenagogue, tonic, stomachic, &c.

The dried leaves used instead of tea are said to be extremely grateful. They are also employed in medicated baths and fomentations.—*Woodville's Med. Bot. p. 345.*

243. *OXALIS Acetosella*. WOOD SORREL. *Herb. L.*—In taste and medical qualities it is similar to the common sorrel, but considerably more grateful, and hence is preferred by the London College. Boiled with milk, it forms an agreeable whey; and beaten with sugar, a very elegant conserve.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

244. *PAPAVER Rhæas*. RED POPPY. *Petals. L. E. D.*—The flowers of this plant yield upon expression a deep red juice, and impart the same colour by infusion to aqueous liquors. A syrup of them is kept in the shops: this is valued chiefly for its colour; though some expect from it a lightly anodyne virtue.

245. *PAPAVER somniferum*. OPIUM POPPY. *Gum. L. E. D.*—Poppy heads, boiled in water, impart to the menstruum their narcotic juice, together with the other juices which they have in common with vegetable matters in general. The liquor strongly pressed out, suffered to settle, clarified with whites of eggs, and evaporated to a due consistence, yields about one-fifth or one-sixth the weight of the heads, of extract. This possesses the virtues of opium; but requires to be given in double its dose to answer the same intention, which it is said to perform without occasioning nausea and giddiness, the usual consequences of the other.

The general effects of this medicine are, to relax the solids, and render them less sensible of irritation, to cheer the spirits, ease pain, procure sleep, promote perspiration, but restrain all other evacuations. When its operation is over, the pain, and other symptoms which it had for a time abated, return; and generally with greater violence than before, unless the cause has been removed by the diaphoresis or relaxation which it occasioned.

The operation of opium is generally attended with a slow, but strong and full pulse, a dryness of the mouth, a redness and light itching of

the skin : and followed by a degree of nausea, a difficulty of respiration, lowness of the spirits, and a weak languid pulse.

With regard to the dose of opium, one grain is generally a sufficient, and often too large a one ; maniacal persons, and those who have been long accustomed to take it, require three or more grains to have the due effect. Among the eastern nations, who are habituated to opium, a dram is but a moderate dose : Garcias relates, that he knew one who every day took ten drams. Those who have been long accustomed to its use, upon leaving it off, are seized with great lowness, languor, and anxiety ; which are relieved by having again recourse to opium, and, in some measure, by wine or spirituous liquors.

Similar Plants.—*Papaver hybridum* ; *P. Argemone*.

246. *PASTINACA Opoponax*. *OPOPONAX*, or CANDY CARROT. *Gum Opoponax*. *L.*—The juice is brought from Turkey and the East Indies, sometimes in round drops or tears, but more commonly in irregular lumps, of a reddish-yellow colour on the outside, with specks of white, inwardly of a paler colour, and frequently variegated with large white pieces.

Boerhaave frequently employed it, along with ammoniacum and galbanum, in hypochondriacal disorders, obstructions of the abdominal viscera from a sluggishness of mucous humours, and a want of due elasticity of the solids.

247. *PIMPINELLA Anisum*. *ANISEED*. *The Seeds*. *L. E. D.*—These seeds are in the number of the four greater hot seeds : their principal use is in cold flatulent disorders, where tenacious phlegm abounds, and in the gripes to which young children are subject. Frederick Hoffman strongly recommends them in weakness of the stomach, diarrheas, and for strengthening the tone of the viscera in general ; and thinks they well deserve the appellation given them by Helmont, *intestinorum solamen*.

248. *PINUS sylvestris*. *SCOTCH FIR*. *Tar, yellow Resin, and Turpentine*. *L. D.*—Tar, which is well known from its æconomical uses, is properly an empyreumatic oil of turpentine, and has been much used as a medicine, both internally and externally. Tar-water, or water as impregnated with the more soluble parts of tar, was some time ago a very popular remedy in various obstinate disorders, both acute and chronic, especially in small-pox, scurvy, ulcers, fistulas, rheumatisms, &c.

Turpentine is an extract also from the same tree, which is used for various purposes of medicine and the arts.

249. *PINUS Abies*. *SPRUCE-FIR*. *Burgundy Pitch*. *L. E. D.*—This is entirely confined to external use, and was formerly an ingredient in several ointments and plasters. In inveterate coughs, affections of the lungs, and other internal complaints, plasters of this resin, by acting

as a tropical stimulus, are frequently found of considerable service.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.*

250. *POLYGONUM Bistorta*. BISTORT. *The Roots.* L. E. D.—All the parts of bistort have a rough austere taste, particularly the root, which is one of the strongest of the vegetable astringents. It is employed in all kinds of immoderate hæmorrhages and other fluxes, both internally and externally, where astringency is the only intention. It is certainly a very powerful styptic, and is to be looked on simply as such; the sudorific, antipestilential, and other like virtues attributed to it, it has no other claim to, than in consequence of this property, and of the antiseptic power which it has in common with other vegetable styptics. The largest dose of the root in powder is one dram.

251. *PRUNUS domestica*. FRENCH PRUNES. *The Fruit.* L. E. D.—The medical effects of the damson and common prunes are, to abate heat, and gently loosen the belly: which they perform by lubricating the passage, and softening the excrement. They are of considerable service in costiveness accompanied with heat or irritation, which the more stimulating cathartics would tend to aggravate: where prunes are not of themselves sufficient, their effects may be promoted by joining with them a little rhubarb or the like; to which may be added some carminative ingredient, to prevent their occasioning flatulencies. Pruneloes have scarce any laxative quality: these are mild grateful refrigerants, and, by being occasionally kept in the mouth, usefully allay the thirst of hydropic persons.

252. *PUNICA Granatum*. POMEGRANATE. *Rind of the Fruit.* L. E. D.—This fruit has the general qualities of the other sweet summer fruits, allaying heat, quenching thirst, and gently loosening the belly. The rind is a strong astringent, and as such is occasionally made use of.

253. *PYRUS Cydonia*. QUINCE. *The Kernels.* L.—The seeds abound with a mucilaginous substance, of no particular taste, which they readily impart to watery liquors: an ounce will render three pints of water thick and ropy like the white of an egg. A syrup and jelly of the fruit, and mucilage of the seeds, used to be kept in the shops.

254. *QUEROUS pedunculata*. OAK. *Bark.* L. E. D.—This bark is a strong astringent; and hence stands recommended in hæmorrhages, alvine fluxes, and other preternatural or immoderate secretions.

255. *RHAMNUS catharticus*. BUCKTHORN. *Berries.* L. E.—Buckthorn-berries have a faint disagreeable smell, and a nauseous bitter taste. They have long been in considerable esteem as cathartics; and celebrated in dropsies, rheumatismis, and even in the gout; though in these cases they have no advantage above other purgatives, and are more offensive, and operate more churlishly, than many which the

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shops are furnished with: they generally occasion gripes, sickness, dry the mouth and throat, and leave a thirst of long duration. The dose is about twenty of the fresh berries in substance, and twice or thrice this number in decoction, an ounce of the expressed juice, or a dram of the dried berries.

256. *RHEUM palmatum*. TURKEY RHUBARB. *Roots. L. E. D.*—Rhubarb is a mild cathartic, which operates without violence or irritation, and may be given with safety even to pregnant women and to children. In some people, however, it always occasions severe griping. Besides its purgative quality, it is celebrated for an astringent one, by which it strengthens the tone of the stomach and intestines, and proves useful in diarrhoea and disorders proceeding from a laxity of the fibres. Rhubarb in substance operates more powerfully as a cathartic than any of the preparations of it. Watery tinctures purge more than the spirituous ones; whilst the latter contain in greater perfection the aromatic, astringent, and corroborating virtues of the rhubarb. The dose, when intended as a purgative, is from a scruple to a dram or more.

The Turkey rhubarb is, among us, universally preferred to the East India sort.

The plant is common in our gardens, but their medicinal powers are much weaker than in those from abroad.

RHODODENDRON Chrysanthemum. YELLOW-FLOWERED RHODODENDRON. See No. 290, p. 76.

257. *RHUS Toxicodendron*. POISON-OAK. *Leaves. L. E.*—Of considerable use in paralytic affections, and is much used in the present day.

It is, however, often substituted by the *Rhus radicans*, which has not the medical properties that this plant has; and it is to be regretted that the leaves of both species are so much alike, that, when gathered, they are not to be distinguished.

258. *RICINUS communis*. PALMA CHRISTI. *Seeds and Oil. L. E. D.*—The oil, commonly called nut or castor oil, is got by expression, retains somewhat of the mawkishness and acrimony of the nut; but is, in general, a safe and mild laxative in cases where we wish to avoid irritation, as in those of colic, calculus, gonorrhoea, &c. and some likewise use it as a purgative in worm-cases. Half an ounce or an ounce commonly answers with an adult, and a dram or two with an infant. The castor oil which is imported is not so good as the expressed oil from the nut made in this country. The disagreeable taste is from the coats of the seeds; the best kind is pressed out after the seeds are decorticated.

259. *ROSA centifolia*. DAMASK ROSE. *Petals. L. E. D.*—In distil-

lation with water, it yields a small portion of a butyraceous oil, whose flavour exactly resembles that of the roses. This oil, and the distilled water, are very useful and agreeable cordials. Hoffmann strongly recommends them as of singular efficacy for raising the strength, cheering and recruiting the spirits, and allaying pain; which they perform without raising any heat in the constitution, rather abating it when inordinate. Although the damask rose is recommended by Dr. Woodville, yet, having grown this article for sale, I find that the preference is always given to the Provence rose by those who distil them.

260. *ROSA Gallica*. RED OFFICINAL ROSE. *Petals*. *L. E. D.*—This has very little of the fragrance of the foregoing sort; it is a mild and grateful astringent, especially before the flower has opened: this is considerably improved by hasty exsiccation, but both the astringency and colour are impaired by slow drying. In the shops are prepared a conserve and a tincture.

261. *ROSA canina*. DOG-ROSE. *The Pulp of the Fruit*. *L. E.*—The fruit, called heps or hips, has a sourish taste, and obtains a place in the London Pharmacopœia in the form of a conserve: for this purpose, the seeds and chaffy fibres are to be carefully removed; for, if these prickly fibres are not entirely scraped off from the internal surface of the hips, the conserve is liable to produce considerable irritation on the primæ viæ.

262. *ROSMARINUS officinalis*. ROSEMARY. *Tops*. *L. E. D.*—Rosemary has a fragrant smell and a warm pungent bitterish taste, approaching to those of lavender: the leaves and tender tops are strongest; next to these the cup of the flower; the flowers themselves are considerably the weakest, but most pleasant. Aqueous liquors extract great share of the virtues of rosemary leaves by infusion, and elevate them in distillation: along with the water arises a considerable quantity of essential oil, of an agreeable strong penetrating smell. Pure spirit extracts in great perfection the whole aromatic flavour of the rosemary, and elevates very little of it in distillation: hence the resinous mass left upon abstracting the spirit, proves an elegant aromatic, very rich in the peculiar qualities of the plant. The flowers of rosemary give over great part of their flavour in distillation with pure spirit; by watery liquors, their fragrance is much injured; by beating, destroyed.

263. *RUBIA tinctorum*. Madder. *Roots*. *L. E. D.*—It has little or no smell; a sweetish taste, mixed with a little bitterness. The virtues attributed to it are those of a detergent and aperient; whence it has been usually ranked among the opening roots, and recommended in obstructions of the viscera, particularly of the kidneys, in coagulations of the blood from falls or bruises, in the jaundice, and beginning dropsies.

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It is observable, that this root, taken internally, tinges the urine of a deep red colour; and in the Philosophical Transactions, we have an account of its producing a like effect upon the bones of animals which had it mixed with their food: all the bones, particularly the more solid ones, were changed, both externally and internally, to a deep red, but neither the fleshy nor cartilaginous parts suffered any alteration: some of these bones macerated in water for many weeks together, and afterwards steeped and boiled in spirit of wine, lost none of their colour, nor communicated any tinge to the liquors.

264. *RUMEX Acetosa*. SORREL. *Leaves. L.*—These have an agreeable acid taste. They have the same medicinal qualities as the *Oxalis Acetosella*, and are employed for the same purposes.

Sorrel taken in considerable quantities, or used prepared for food, will be found of great advantage when a refrigerant and antiscorbutic regimen is required.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.*

265. *RUTA graveolens*. RUE. *Leaves. L. E. D.*—These are powerfully stimulating, attenuating, and detergent: and hence, in cold phlegmatic habits, they quicken the circulation, dissolve tenacious juices, open obstructions of the excretory glands, and promote the fluid secretions. The writers on the *Materia Medica* in general have entertained a very high opinion of the virtues of this plant. Boerhaave is full of its praises; particularly of the essential oil, and the distilled water cohobated or redistilled several times from fresh parcels of the herb: after somewhat extravagantly commending other waters prepared in this manner, he adds, with regard to that of rue, that the greatest commendations he can bestow upon it fall short of its merit: "What medicine (says he) can be more efficacious for promoting perspiration, in cases of epilepsies, and for expelling poison?" Whatever service rue may be of generally, it undoubtedly has its use in the two last cases: the cohobated water, however, is not the most efficacious preparation.

266. *SALIX fragilis*. CRACK WILLOW. *Bark. L. D.*—The bark of the branches of this tree manifests a considerable degree of bitterness to the taste, and is also astringent; hence it has been thought a good substitute for the Peruvian bark, and, upon trial, was found to stop the paroxysms of intermittents: it is likewise recommended in other cases requiring tonic or astringent remedies. Not only the bark of this species of *Salix*, but that of several others, possess similar qualities, particularly of the *Salix alba pentandria*, and *caprea*, all of which are recommended in foreign Pharmacopœias. But, in our opinion, the bark of the *Salix triandria* is more effectual than that of any other of this genus; at least, its sensible qualities give it a decided preference.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.*

267. *SALVIA officinalis*. GREEN AND RED SAGE. *Herb. E. D.*—Its

effects are, to moderately warm and strengthen the vessels; and hence, in cold phlegmatic habits, it excites appetite, and proves serviceable in debilities of the nervous system.

The red sage, mixed with honey and vinegar, is used for a gargle in sore throats. Aqueous infusions of the leaves, with the addition of a little lemon juice, prove an useful diluting drink in febrile disorders, of an elegant colour, and sufficiently acceptable to the palate.

268. *SAMBUCUS nigra*. COMMON ELDER. *Flowers and Berries. L. E. D.*—The parts of the *Sambucus* which are proposed for medicinal use in the Pharmacopœias, are the inner bark, the flowers, and the berries. The flowers have an agreeable flavour, which they give over in distillation with water, and impart by infusion, both to water and rectified spirit: on distilling a large quantity of them with water, a small portion of a butyraceous essential oil separates. Infusions made from the fresh flowers are gently laxative and aperient; when dry, they are said to promote chiefly the cuticular excretion, and to be particularly serviceable in erysipetulous and eruptive disorders.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* 598.

269. *SCILLA maritima*. SQUILL. *Root. L. E. D.*—This root is to the taste very nauseous, intensely bitter and acrimonious; much handled, it exulcerates the skin. With regard to its medical virtues, it powerfully stimulates the solids, and attenuates viscid juices; and by these qualities promotes expectoration, urine, and perspiration: if the dose is considerable, it proves emetic, and sometimes purgative. The principal use of this medicine is where the primæ viæ abound with mucous matter, and the lungs are oppressed by tenacious phlegm.

270. *SCROPHULARIA nodosa*. KNOTTY FIGWORT. *Herb. D.*—The roots are of a white colour, full of little knobs or protuberances on the surface: this appearance gained it formerly some repute against scrophulous disorders and the piles; and from hence it received its name: but modern practitioners expect no such virtues from it. It has a faint unpleasant smell, and a somewhat bitter disagreeable taste.

271. *SINAPIS nigra*. BLACK MUSTARD. *Seeds. L. E. D.*—By writers on the *Materia Medica*, mustard is considered to promote appetite, assist digestion, attenuate viscid juices, and, by stimulating the fibres, to prove a general remedy in paralytic and rheumatic affections. Joined to its stimulant qualities, it frequently, if taken in considerable quantity, opens the body, and increases the urinary discharge; and hence has been found useful in dropsical complaints.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 404.

272. *SINAPIS alba*. WHITE MUSTARD. *Seeds. L. E. D.*—These have been recommended to be taken whole in cases of rheumatism, and have been known to produce considerable relief.

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273. *SISYMBRIUM Nasturtium*. WATER-CRESSES. *Herb. E.*—Hoffman recommends this as of singular efficacy for accelerating the circulation, strengthening the viscera, opening obstructions of the glands, promoting the fluid secretions, and purifying the blood and humours: for these purposes, the expressed juice, which contains the peculiar taste and pungency of the herb, may be taken in doses of an ounce or two, and continued for a considerable time.

274. *SIUM nodiflorum*. CREEPING WATER-PARSNEY. *The Root. D.*—This plant has not been admitted into the *Materia Medica* of any of the *Pharmacopœias* which we have seen, except that of the London College, into which it was received in the character of an antiscorbutic, or rather as the corrector of acrid humours, especially when manifested by cutaneous eruptions and tumours in the lymphatic system, for which we have the testimony of Beirre and Ray; but the best proofs of its efficacy are the following given by Dr. Withering:—“A young lady, six years old, was cured of an obstinate disease by taking three large spoonfuls of the juice twice a-day; and I have repeatedly given to adults three or four ounces every morning in similar complaints with the greatest advantage. It is not nauseous; and children take it readily if mixed with milk. In the dose I have given, it neither affects the head, the stomach, nor the bowels.” *Woodville's Med. Bot.* 146.

275. *SMILAX Sarsaparilla*. SARSAPARILLA. *Root. L. E. D.*—This root was first brought into Europe by the Spaniards, about the year 1563, with the character of a specific for the cure of the lues venerea, which made its appearance a little before that time, and likewise of several obstinate chronic disorders. Whatever good effects it might have produced in the warmer climates, it proved unsuccessful in this. It appears, however, from experience, that though greatly unequal to the character which it bore at first, it is in some cases of considerable use as a sudorific, where more acrid medicines are improper.

276. *SOLANUM Dulcamara*. BITTERSWEET. *Stalk. L. D.*—The taste of the twigs and roots, as the name of the plant expresses, is both bitter and sweet; the bitterness being first perceived, and the sweet afterwards. They are commended for resolving coagulated blood, and as a cathartic, diuretic, and deobstruent.

277. *SOLIDAGO Virga aurea*. GOLDEN ROD. *Flowers and Leaves. D.*—The leaves have a moderately astringent bitter taste, and hence prove serviceable in debility and laxity of the viscera, and disorders proceeding from that cause.

278. *SPARTIUM scoparium*. BROOM. *Tops and Seeds. L. D.*—
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These have a nauseous bitter taste: decoctions of them loosen the belly, promote urine, and stand recommended in hydropic cases. The flowers are said to prove cathartic in decoction, and emetic in substance, though in some places, as Lobel informs us, they are commonly used, and in large quantity, in salads, without producing any effect of this kind. The qualities of the seeds are little better determined: some report that they purge almost as strongly as hellebore, in the dose of a dram and half; whilst the author above mentioned relates, that he has given a decoction of two ounces of them as a gentle emetic.

279. *SPIGELIA marylandica*. WORM GRASS. Root. L. E. D.—About forty years ago, the anthelmintic virtues of the root of this plant were discovered by the Indians; since which time it has been much used here. I have given it in hundreds of cases, and have been very attentive to its effects. I never found it do much service, except when it proved gently purgative. Its purgative quality naturally led me to give it in febrile diseases which seem to arise from viscosity in the primæ viæ; and in these cases it succeeded to admiration, even when the sick did not void worms.

To a child of two years of age who had been taking ten grains of the root twice a-day without having any other effect than making her dull and giddy, I prescribed twenty-two grains morning and evening, which purged her briskly, and brought away five large worms. [Communications from Dr. Gardner.]—*Woodville's Med. Bot.*

280. *TANACETUM vulgare*. TANSY. Herb. E. D.—Considered as a medicine, it is a moderately warm bitter, accompanied with a strong, not very disagreeable flavour. Some have had a great opinion of it in hysteric disorders, particularly those proceeding from a deficiency or suppression of the usual course of nature.

281. *TEUCRIUM Marum*. CAT THYME. Herb. D.—The leaves have an aromatic bitterish taste; and, when rubbed betwixt the fingers, a quick pungent smell, which soon affects the head, and occasions sneezing: distilled with water, they yield a very acrid, penetrating essential oil, resembling one obtained by the same means from scurvy-grass. These qualities sufficiently point out the uses to which this plant might be applied; at present, it is little otherwise employed than in cephalic snuffs.

282. *TEUCRIUM Chamædrys*. GERMANDER. Herb. D.—The leaves, tops, and seeds, have a bitter taste, with some degree of astringency and aromatic flavour. They were recommended as sudorific, diuretic, and emmenagogue, and for strengthening the stomach and viscera in general. With some they have been in great esteem in intermittent fevers; as also in scrophulous and other chronic disorders.

283. *TORMENTILLA erecta*. TORMENTIL, or UPRIGHT SEPTFOOT. *Root. L. E. D.*—The root is the only part of the plant which is used medicinally; it has a strong styptic taste, but imparts no peculiar sapid flavour. This has been long held in great estimation as an astringent. Dr. Cullen has used it with gentian with great effect in intermittent fevers. Lewis recommends an ounce and a half of the powdered root to be boiled in three pints of water to a quart, adding towards the end of the boiling a dram of cinnamon. Of the strained liquor, sweetened with an ounce of any agreeable syrup, two ounces or more may be taken four or five times a-day.

284. *TUSSILAGO Farfara*. COLTSFOOT. *Herb. L. E. D.*—Tussilago stands recommended in coughs and other disorders of the breast and lungs: the flowers were an ingredient in the pectoral decoction of the Edinburgh Pharmacopœia.

285. *VALERIANA officinalis*. VALERIAN. *Root. L. E. D.*—Valerian is a medicine of great use in nervous disorders, and is particularly serviceable in epilepsies proceeding from a debility in the nervous system. It was first brought into esteem in these cases by Fabius Columna, who by taking the powdered root, in the dose of half a spoonful, was cured of an inveterate epilepsy after many other medicines had been tried in vain. Repeated experience has since confirmed its efficacy in this disorder; and the present practice lays considerable stress upon it.

286. *VERATRUM album*. WHITE HELLBORE. *Root. L. E. D.*—The root has a nauseous, bitterish, acrid taste, burning the mouth and fauces: wounded when fresh, it emits an extremely acrimonious juice, which mixed with the blood, by a wound, is said to prove very dangerous: the powder of the dry root, applied to an issue, occasions violent purging: snuffed up the nose, it proves a strong, and not always a safe, sternutatory. This root, taken internally, acts with extreme violence as an emetic, and has been observed, even in a small dose, to occasion convulsions and other terrible disorders. The ancients sometimes employed it in very obstinate cases, and always made this their last resource.

Similar Plant.—*Gentiana lutea*; which see.

287. *VERONICA Beccabunga*. BROOKLIME. *Herb. L. D.*—This plant was formerly considered of great use in several diseases, and was applied externally to wounds and ulcers; but if it have any peculiar efficacy, it is to be derived from its antiscorbutic virtue.

As a mild refrigerant juice, it is preferred where an acrimonious state of the fluids prevails, indicated by prurient eruptions upon the skin, or in what has been called the hot scurvy.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* 364.

288. *VITIS vinifera*. GRAPE VINE. *Raisins and different Wines. L. E.*—These are to cheer the spirits, warm the habit, promote per-

aspiration, render the vessels full and turgid, raise the pulse, and quicken the circulation. The effects of the full-bodied wines are much more durable than those of the thinner; all sweet wines, as Canary, abound with a glutinous nutritious substance; whilst the others are not nutrimental, or only accidentally so by strengthening the organs employed in digestion: sweet wines in general do not pass off freely by urine, and heat the constitution more than an equal quantity of any other, though containing full as much spirit: red port, and most of the red wines, have an astringent quality, by which they strengthen the tone of the stomach and intestines, and thus prove serviceable for restraining immoderate secretions: those which are of an acid nature, as Rhenish, pass freely by the kidneys, and gently loosen the belly: it is supposed that these last exasperate, or occasion gouty and calculous disorders, and that new wines of every kind have this effect.

The ripe fruit or grapes, of which there are several kinds, properly cured and dried, are the raisins and currants of the shops: the juice of these also, by fermentation, affords wine as well as vinegar and tartar.

The medical use of raisins is, their imparting a very pleasant flavour both to aqueous and spirituous menstrua. The seeds or stones are supposed to give a disagreeable relish, and hence are generally directed to be taken out: nevertheless I have not found that they have any disagreeable taste.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

289. *ULMUS campestris*. *ELM. Bark. L. E. D.*—The leaves have a bitterish astringent taste, and are recommended in powder, to the extent of at least two grains a day, in ulcerations of the urinary passages and catarrhus vesicae. The powder has been used with opium, the latter being gradually increased to a considerable quantity, in diabetes, and it is said with advantage. Some use it for alleviating the dyspeptic symptoms in nephritic calculous ailments.—*Lewis's Mat. Med.*

290. *RHODODENDRON Chrysanthemum*. *YELLOW-FLOWERED RHODODENDRON. E. The Leaves.*—This species of Rhododendron has lately been introduced into Britain: it is a native of Siberia, affecting mountainous situations, and flowering in June and July.

Little attention was paid to this remedy till the year 1779, when it was strongly recommended by Kœlpin as an efficacious medicine, not only in rheumatism and gout, but even in venereal cases; and it is now very generally employed in chronic rheumatisms in various parts of Europe. The leaves, which are the part directed for medicinal use, have a bitterish subastringent taste, and, as well as the bark and young branches, manifest a degree of acrimony. Taken in large doses they prove a narcotic poison, producing those symptoms which we have described as occasioned by many of the order Solanaceae.

Dr. Home, who tried it unsuccessfully in some cases of acute rheumatism, says, it appears to be one of the most powerful sedatives which we have, as in most of the trials it made the pulse remarkably slow,

and, in one patient, reduced it 38 beats. And in other cases in which the *Rhododendron* has been used at Edinburgh, it has been productive of good effects; and, accordingly, it is now introduced into the Edinburgh Pharmacopœia.

The manner of using this plant by the Siberians was, by putting two drams of the dried leaves in an earthen-pot with about ten ounces of boiling-water, keeping it near a boiling heat for a night, and this they took in the morning; and by repeating it three or four times it generally effected a cure. It is said to occasion heat, thirst, a degree of delirium, and a peculiar sensation of the parts affected.—*Woodville's Med. Bot.* p. 239.

SECT. VIII.—MEDICINAL PLANTS not contained in either of the BRITISH DISPENSATORIES.

For the use of the Medical Student I selected in the foregoing section such plants as are contained in the Pharmacopœias of the present day: but there are many mentioned in *Woodville's Medical Botany*, *Lewis's Dispensatory*, &c. which, although discarded from the College list, are nevertheless still used by medical practitioners and others.

It would be difficult to give a full history of all the plants that have from time to time been recommended for medical uses. The old writers, as Gerard, Parkinson, Lyte, &c. attributed medical virtues to all the plants which came under their notice; and, on the other hand, as we observed above, the vegetable department of the Pharmacopœias has from time to time been reduced so much, that, if we had confined ourselves to that alone, we fear our little treatise on this head would, by many persons, be thought defective. The following list is therefore given, as containing what are used, though probably not so much by practitioners in medicine, as by our good housewives in the country, who, without disparagement to medical science, often relieve the distresses of their families and neighbours by the judicious application of drugs of this nature, and many of which are also sold for the same purposes in the London herb-shops.

291. *ACANTHUS mollis*. SMOOTH BEARS-BREECH. *The Leaves*.—Are of a soft sweetish taste, and abound with a mucilaginous juice: its virtues do not seem to differ from those of *Althea* and other mucilaginous plants.

292. *ACHILLEA Ptarmica*: SNEEZEWORT. *The Root*.—The roots have an acrid smell, and a hot biting taste: chewed, they occasion a plentiful discharge of saliva; and when powdered and snuffed up the