to check inordinate discharges, see *Decoctum Quercus*. Oak bark is sometimes administered in the form of powder, combined with ginger and other aromatics, and bitters, for the cure of intermittents, and it has frequently succeeded, but *see* page 171. Dose, ℈j to ʒss. In the form of poultice this powder is said to have proved highly useful to gangrenous sores. Its inhalation has also been supposed to prove beneficial in consumption; a striking case is related by Dr Eberle of a man who had laboured under the usual symptoms of confirmed Phthisis, and who, at the time he went to grind in a bark-mill, was extremely weak and emaciated; in a short time, however, the cough, night sweats, and other hectic symptoms, began to abate sensibly, and in less than three months he was perfectly restored to health.

RHEI RADIX. L.E.D. *Rhubarb.**

Two varieties of this root are known in the shops, viz. *Turkey* or *Russian*, and *East Indian* or *Chinese*.

1. Turkey or Russian. (*Rheum Palmatum.*)

Qualities. *Form*, small round pieces, rather compact and heavy, perforated in the middle; *Colour*, lively yellow with streaks of white; it is easily pulverized, affording a powder of a bright buff yellow colour. Chemical Composition. Gum, resin, extractive, tannin, gallic acid, and a peculiar colouring matter, with traces of alumina and silex; the white or flesh-coloured streaks pervading its substance, consist of sulphate and oxalate of lime: according to the experiments of Mr. John Henderson, there is besides a peculiar vegetable acid, to which he has given the name of *Rheumic* acid, but M. de Lassaignes has satisfactorily proved that this is no other than the oxalic acid: the purgative powers of the root appear to be intimately connected with its extractive and resinous elements, but the subject is still involved in considerable obscurity. Solubility. Water 212° takes up 24 parts in 60, see *Infusum Rhei*: by decoction, its purgative qualities are lost, and it becomes more bitter and astringent; alcohol extracts 2·7 from 10 parts, (see *Tinct. Rhei*) Med. Uses. In this substance, Nature presents us with a singular and most important combination of medicinal powers, that of an astringent, with a cathartic property; the former of which never opposes or interferes with the energy of the latter, since it only takes effect when the substance is administered in small doses; or if given in larger ones, not until it has ceased to operate as a cathartic; this latter circumstance renders it particularly eligible in cases of diarrhœa, as it evacuates the offending matter before it operates as an astringent upon the bowels. It seems to act more immediately upon the stomach and small intestines, and therefore in relaxed and debilitated states of these organs, it will prove an easy and valuable resource; it may, for such an object, be exhibited in conjunction with alkalies, bitters, and other tonics. Its cathartic property is most efficient when given in substance. It was formerly supposed that by toasting rhubarb we increased its astringency, but this

* Warner's Cordial. Rhubarb bruised ʒj; Sennæ ʒss; Saffron ʒj; Powdered Liquorice ʒiv; Raisins pounded lbj; Brandy oiij; digest for a week and strain.

Moseley's Pills. The stomachic Pills which are sold under this name, consist merely of Rhubarb and Ginger.

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process merely diminishes its purgative force, so that a larger dose may be taken. The colouring matter of rhubarb may be detected in the urine of persons to whom it has been exhibited; it does not however appear to possess any specific powers as a diuretic. Dose. grs vj to x as a tonic; ℈j to ℥ss as a purgative; the operation of which is considerably quickened by the addition of neutral salts; the super-sulphate of potass forms also a very useful adjunct, and its acidulous taste completely covers that of the rhubarb. *Form.* 83. 85. Its powder, when sprinkled upon ulcers, is found to promote their healthy granulation. Off. Prep. *Infus: Rhei.* L.E. *Vinum Rhei Palmati.* E. *Tinct. Rhei.* L E.D. *Tinct. Rhei Comp.* L. *Tinct. Rhei cum Aloe.* E. *Tinct. Rhei cum Gentian.* E. *Pil. Rhei comp.* E.

2. East Indian, or Chinese. (*Rheum Undulatum ?*)*

Qualities. *Form*, long pieces, sometimes flat, as if they had been compressed; they are heavier, harder, and more compact than those of the preceding species, and are seldom perforated with holes; *Odour*, stronger; *Taste*, more nauseous; white streaks less numerous, and they afford a powder of a redder shade than those of *Turkey* rhubarb. Chemical Composition. It differs from the *Turkey* in containing less tannin and resin, and according to the experiments of Mr. A. T. Thomson, less oxalate of lime, in the ratio of 18 to 26. It contains however more extractive and gallic acid. Solubility. Water takes up one half of its weight, but the infusion, although more turbid, is not so deep coloured as that of Russian rhubarb; alcohol extracts 4 parts in 10. It habitudes with acids, alkalies, and neutral salts, differ likewise from those of the Russian variety, as Mr. A. T. Thomson has exhibited in a very satisfactory manner. (*London Dispensatory, Edit.* 3. *p.* 474.) Adulterations. The inferior kinds of *Russian*, *East Indian*, and even *English* rhubarb, are artfully dressed up and sold under the name of Turkey rhubarb. I am well informed that a number of persons in this town, known in the trade by the name of *Russifiers*, gain a regular livelihood by the art of dressing this article, by boring, rasping, and then colouring the inferior kinds; for which they charge at the rate of eighteen-pence per pound. The general indications of good rhubarb are, its whitish or clear yellow colour, and its possessing the other characteristic properties as above mentioned; it ought also to possess in an eminent degree the peculiar odour, for when this is dissipated, the powers of the medicine are nearly destroyed. In the form of powder, rhubarb is always more or less mixed with foreign matter; the detection of which can be alone effected by a trial of its efficacy.

RICINI† OLEUM. L.E.D. (*Ricinus Communis.*)

Castor‡ Oil.

Qualities. *Form*, a viscid and colourless, or pale straw-coloured oil;

* Dr. Rehman asserts that it is the root of the same species as that which produces the Turkey variety, but that it is prepared with less care.

† The seeds of this plant, from which the oil is expressed, are variegated with black and white streaks, resembling in shape as well as colour, the insect Ricinis or Tick, whence the name. These seeds, from the acrid juice in their skins, are very drastic and emetic; they were however used by Hippocrates. Mathiolus attempted to correct their emetic quality by torrefaction, but without success. Gulielmus Piso proposed a tincture of them, but the preparation is not only uncertain, but unsafe in its operation. See Tiglii Semina.

‡ For the derivation of the name *Castor* oil, *see* page 39.

it is nearly inodorous, but on being swallowed, excites a slight sensation of acrimony in the throat. It has all the chemical aptitudes of the other expressed oils, except those which relate to its solubility in alcoholic and ethereal menstrua. MED USES. It is mildlly cathartic, and is particularly eligible in cases where stimulating purgatives would prove hurtful, but in obstinate constipation, where copious evacuations are required, this oil cannot be trusted, it will insinuate itself through the intestinal canal, bringing with it a small portion of the more fluid contents, but leaving behind it the collection of indurated fæces. FORMS OF EXHIBITION. The most efficacious mode of administering it is by floating it upon tincture of senna, or peppermint water, or some other similar vehicle ; it is also sometimes given with success in coffee or mutton broth, or suspended in water by the intervention of mucilage, yelk of egg (*Form.* 75,) or by honey, which at the same time contributes to its laxative operation : alkalies, although they form an emulsion with it, convert it into a saponaceous compound, and impair its cathartic force. DOSE f℥ss to f℥iss. ADULTERATIONS. It is usually adulterated with olive oil or poppy oil, and when to a considerable extent, scammony is added to quicken its operation. There is however a peculiarity in castor oil which serves to distinguish it from every other fixed oil, viz. its great solubility in rectified spirit; for instance, f℥iv of alcohol of ·820 will mix uniformly with any proportion of castor oil, whereas it will not dissolve more than f℥j of *Linseed Oil ;* and a still less proportion of the expressed oils of almonds and of olives ; when the spirit is diluted, its action on all these oils is equally diminished, so that the common *spirit of wine* has but little power even over castor oil ; but here chemistry again interposes its aid, for by the addition of camphor in the proportion of one part to eight of spirit, spirit of ·840 is enabled to dissolve castor oil, whilst it has no influence upon the other fixed oils ; castor oil is also soluble in any proportion, in sulphuric æther of the specific gravity ·7563, while four fluid-ounces of the same liquid will only dissolve a fluid-ounce and a quarter of the expressed oil of *Almonds ;* a fluid ounce and a half of that of *Olives ;* and two fluid-ounces and a half of *Linseed* oil. Vogel introduced a composition, as a substitute for this oil, which some practitioners have greatly extolled ; it consisted of nine grains of the extract of Jalap, and three grains of Venetian soap, triturated in a mortar with an ounce and a half of Olive oil.

SABINÆ FOLIA. L. (Juniperus Sabina)

Savine Leaves.

QUALITIES. *Odour*, heavy and disagreeable ; *Taste*, bitter, hot, and acrimonious. CHEM. COMP. Essential oil, which may be obtained by distillation with water ; fixed oil, bitter extractive, and resin. SOLUBILITY. Both water and alcohol extract its active principles. MED. USES. *It* possesses highly stimulating properties, and has been used as a diaphoretic, anthelmintic and emmenagogue. Rave, a German writer of great respectability, speaks of its use in chronic rheumatism in the highest terms ; Alibert commends its anthelmintic powers, but its reputation has principally rested upon its generally acknowledged influence over the uterus. The testimony of Dr. Home of Edinburgh is strong in favour of its emmenagogue powers, but the adverse opinon of Dr. Cullen brought it