
CHAP. XIV.**OF ERRHINES.**

ERRHINES or Sternutatories, are substances which occasion a discharge from the nostrils, either of a mucous or serous fluid. They all operate by direct application, and generally in consequence of a slightly acrid quality. Any substance in fine powder snuffed up the nostrils has this effect in a certain degree; but it is, as is to be expected, more copious as the substance is more acrid or stimulating. The discharge, as produced by different errhines, varies in extent, and in the time during which it continues. Some also occasion a sense of heat, or even inflame the membrane to which they are applied, while others have no such effects.

It is evident, that the effects of this class of remedies must be very limited, as applied to the treatment of disease. By the evacuation they occasion, it has been supposed that they diminish the quantity of fluid circulating in the neighbouring vessels; hence they have been inferred to be useful in rheumatic affections of the muscles of these parts, and in toothach. It has even been supposed, that their effects may extend to all the branches

of the external carotid, and Dr Cullen mentions, that he has, apparently from this operation, known headach, pain of the ear, and some cases of ophthalmia, cured or relieved by the use of errhines. He has likewise supposed, that they may have been of use in preventing apoplexy or palsy: this at least should, he remarks, be so far attended to, that whenever any approach to these diseases is suspected, the drying up of the mucous discharge should be attended to, and if possible obviated.

 ERRHINES.

IRIS FLORENTINA.

ÆSCULUS HIPPOCASTANUM.

ORIGANUM MAJORANA.

LAVANDULA SPICA.

RODISMARINUS OFFICINALIS.

ASARUM EUROPÆUM.

VERATRUM ALBUM.

NICOTIANA TABACUM.

EUPHORBIA OFFICINALIS.

SUB-SULPHAS HYDRARGYRI.

IRIS FLORENTINA. Florentine Orris. *Triand. Monogyn.—Ensata. Radix. South of Europe.*

THE root of this plant, freed from its outer bark, is of a white colour, has a pleasant odour, and slightly bitter taste. It is a mild sternutatory, and enters into the composition of some cephalic snuffs.

ÆSCULUS HIPPOCASTANUM. Horse-Chesnut. *Heptand. Monogyn. Trihilata. Semen. Cortex.*

THE fruit of this tree is principally farinaceous; and this farina acts as a sternutatory. The bark is bitter, and has been proposed as a substitute for Peruvian Bark.

ORIGANUM MAJORANA. Sweet Majoram. *Didynam. Gymnosperm. Verticillata. Herba. South of Europe.*

THE leaves of this herb have an aromatic odour, and, when dried and reduced to power, a slight errhine power.

ROSMARINUS OFFICINALIS. Rosemary. *Diand. Monogyn. Verticillata. Summitates florentes.*

THE flowers and flowering tops of this plant have a fragrant odour, which resides in an essential oil. It is used as a stimulating perfume, under the form of the distilled spirit, and the powder is sometimes mixed with other errhines.

Offic. Prep.—Ol. Ess. Rosism. Spirit. Rosism. Ph. Lond. Dub. Ed.

LAVANDULA SPICA. Lavender. *Didynam. Gymnosperm.*
Verticillata. Spica florentes. South of Europe.

LAVENDER flowers have a fragrant smell, and a warm bitterish taste. They yield a quantity of essential oil, which is employed in medicine as a stimulant, when combined with alcohol, and other aromatics, under the form of what is named Compound Spirit of Lavender. The simple spirit or solution of the oil in alcohol is used as a perfume, and the dried leaves in powder are errhine.

Offic. Prep.—Spir. Lavand. T. Lav. C. Ol. Lavand.
Ph. Ed. Lond. Dub.

NICOTIANA. Tobacco. (Page 183.)

THE leaves of tobacco are in common use as an errhine; their powder forming the different kinds of snuff.

ASARUM EUROPEUM. Asarabacca. *Dodecand. Mono-*
gyn. Sarmentaceæ. Folia. Indigenous.

THE leaves of this plant possess rather more errhine power than those hitherto noticed, and are employed as the basis of the officinal sternutatory powders.

Offic. Prep.—P. Asar. Europ. C. *Pharm. Ed. Dub.*

VERATRUM ALBUM. Helleborus Albus. White Helle-
bore. *Polygam. Monœc. Liliacæ. South of Europe.*

THE root of this plant has a strong disagreeable smell when fresh, which is lost by drying, and an acrid taste which is retained. Snuffed up the nostrils in very small

quantity, it excites violent sneezing, with a sense of heat, and a copious discharge of thin mucus. It is therefore sometimes used as a sternutatory mixed with some of the milder and more fragrant errhines. Taken internally, in the dose of a few grains, it acts as a violent emetic and cathartic. Externally, when mixed with lard, so as to form an ointment, or in the form of decoction, it is used as an application in some cutaneous diseases.

Offic. Prep.—T. Verat. A. *Ed.*—Dec. Verat. Ungt. Verat. *Lond.*—Ung. Helleb. A. *Dub.*

EUPHORBIA OFFICINALIS. *Dodecand. Trigynia. Gummi-resina. Africa.*

THIS substance, which is of a resinous nature, is said to be obtained by exudation from incisions in the branches of the plant producing it. It is in small round fragments, having scarcely any smell, but a very acrimonious taste. Its operation as a drastic purgative is so violent, that it is never given internally. Its powder is the most violent of all the errhines, occasioning a copious discharge of mucus, with a sense of heat, and even inflammation. Hence it is scarcely ever employed. Externally it has been used as a rubefacient or vesicatory.

SUB-SULPHAS HYDRARGYRI. Sub-Sulphate of Mercury.

THIS preparation of mercury is an errhine, and has been employed in chronic ophthalmia and amaurosis; one grain of it being mixed with six or eight grains of any mild vegetable powder, and snuffed up the nostrils occasionally.