

## CHAP. XI.

## VINÆ.—WINES.

WINE is capable, by infusion, of extracting several of the proximate principles of vegetable substances. From the portion of alkohol it contains, it dissolves in some measure their resin, extract and essential oil; its watery part dissolves their gum or mucilage; and being milder and more pleasant to the taste than diluted alkohol, it is sometimes preferred to it as a solvent; hence Medicated Wines have long been in use, and some of them are still retained in the Pharmacopœias.

It cannot be said, however, to be well adapted to this use. Wine itself, when not carefully excluded from the air, is apt to decompose and become acescent; and, when it holds vegetable matter in solution, it appears to be still more liable to suffer this change. This has been established by the researches of Parmentier; and the greater number of medicated wines, if kept for any length of time, become medicated vinegars. Now this change may modify the powers of the dissolved matter; and in some cases, where the wine is taken in a considerable dose, must prove hurtful to the stomach, especially in dyspeptic affections. Accordingly, few of the medicated wines are

now employed. The spontaneous decomposition to which these wines are liable, is sometimes attempted to be obviated by the addition of a portion of alkohol, but this is attended only with imperfect success.

From the tartaric acid which some wines contain, they are capable of acting chemically on some of the metals, and are better solvents of some metallic preparations than water or alkohol.

VINUM ALOES SOCOTORINÆ, *vulgo Tinctura Sacra*. Wine of Socotorine Aloes. *Sacred Tincture*. (Vinum Aloes, *Ph. Lond. Dub.*)

“Take of Socotorine Aloes, reduced to powder, one ounce; Lesser Cardamom Seeds, Ginger Root, of each, bruised, one drachm; Spanish White-wine, two pounds. Digest for seven days, shaking frequently, and strain.” In the Dublin and London Pharmacopœias, the proportion is an ounce of aloes to a pound of the medicated wine; and the solvent is not pure wine, but wine with the addition of a third part of diluted alkohol.

Aloes is entirely soluble in wine; so that in this preparation all its virtues are obtained, and from the presence of the resinous matter of the aloes, it is not liable to decomposition. It is a stimulating cathartic, which has long been in use under the name of Sacred Tincture. It produces its full effect in the dose of one ounce. In a dose of one or two drachms, it is given to excite the action of the intestines and neighbouring organs, in dyspepsia, amenorrhœa and similar affections.

VINUM GENTIANÆ COMPOSITUM, *vulgo Vinum Amarum.*  
Compound Gentian Wine.

“ Take of Gentian Root, half an ounce; Peruvian Bark, one ounce; Orange-Peel dried, two drachms; Canella Bark, one drachm; Diluted Alkohol, four ounces; Spanish White-wine, two pounds and a half. On the root and barks cut and bruised, pour first the diluted alkohol; and after twenty-four hours, add the wine. Then macerate for seven days, and strain.”

This wine is designed as a stomachic; and has been regarded as preferable to the tincture of similar composition, as being more mild and grateful, and therefore better for continued use; but from its tendency to become acescent, it is not well adapted to administration in dyspepsia. Its dose is six drachms.

VINUM IPECACUANHÆ. Ipecacuan Wine. (Vinum Ipecacuanhæa, *Ph. Lond. Dub.*)

“ Take of Ipecacuan Root bruised, one ounce; Spanish White-wine, fifteen ounces. Macerate for seven days, and strain through paper.”

Wine extracts sufficiently the active matter of ipecacuan, and covers its taste and flavour, while it is less pungent than diluted alkohol. This wine is often used as an emetic, especially to children. Its dose is one ounce to an adult, one drachm to a child a year old.

## VINUM NICOTIANÆ TABACI. Tobacco Wine.

“Take of the leaves of Tobacco, one ounce; Spanish White-wine, one pound. Macerate for seven days, and strain through paper.”

Under this form, Tobacco has been used as a diuretic in dropsy. The dose is thirty drops, gradually increased to sixty or eighty twice a-day. It is liable, however, to excite sickness in this large dose, and in a smaller dose often fails in its diuretic effect.

## VINUM RHEI PALMATI. Rhubarb Wine.

“Take of the Root of Rhubarb cut, two ounces; Cinnamon Bark bruised, one drachm; Diluted Alcohol, two ounces; Spanish White-wine, fifteen ounces. Macerate for seven days, and strain through paper.”

Wine extracts the active matter of rhubarb, and this medicated wine operates as a purgative, in a dose from half an ounce to an ounce. The tincture is in general to be preferred to it, as more uniform, and not liable to decomposition.

## VINUM OPII. Wine of Opium. Ph. Lond.

“Take of Extract of Opium, an ounce; Cinnamon Bark bruised, Cloves bruised, each, one drachm; Wine a Pint. Macerate for eight days, and strain.”

Wine appears to dissolve sufficiently the active matter

of opium, and has often been used as a menstruum. With the addition of aromatics, it formed the liquid laudanum of Sydenham, and was at one time an officinal preparation in the Pharmacopœias, though afterwards excluded, to give place to the simple tincture of opium. It is now restored by the London College, as it had still continued in use, and is supposed to have some advantages over the tincture. It is nearly of the same strength. Vinegar impairs the narcotic power of opium, hence if this medicated wine were liable to acescency, it might be regarded as an uncertain preparation, but it is possible that the resino-extractive matter of the opium and the aromatics may counteract any spontaneous decomposition.

VINUM FERRI. Wine of Iron. Ph. Dub.

“ Take of Iron Wire in small pieces, four ounces; White Rhenish Wine, four pints. Sprinkle the pieces of iron with a little of the wine, and expose them to the air, until they are covered with rust; then add the remaining wine: digest for seven days, shaking the vessel occasionally, and lastly strain the wine.”

The iron being oxidated by the joint action of the wine and the atmospheric air, a portion of the oxide is dissolved by the tartaric acid of the wine. The chalybeate impregnation must, however, be variable, according to the acidity of the wine, and it is therefore perhaps preferable to employ a preparation of more uniform strength.