
CHAP. XII.**ACETA.—VINEGARS.**

VINEGAR is generally capable of dissolving all those proximate principles of vegetables which are soluble in water, and with regard to some substances its acid appears farther to increase its solvent power. But, at the same time, it very often modifies their medicinal qualities, either by the chemical changes it occasions, or more generally, perhaps, by the action it exerts on the stomach. Hence there is only one medicated vinegar of any importance,—the Vinegar of Squill; the active matter of this root being dissolved by it, and suffering apparently no alteration. The activity of colchicum appears to reside in a similar acrid matter, and it also affords a medicated vinegar; of less importance, however, as the colchicum itself is little employed. As a solvent of camphor, the concentrated acetic acid is also used in one preparation.

ACETUM AROMATICUM. Aromatic Vinegar. Ed.

Take of the dried tops of Rosemary; the dried leaves of Sage, of each four ounces; dried Lavender Flowers, two ounces; Cloves, two drachms; distilled Acetous Acid, eight pounds. Macerate for seven days, and strain the expressed liquor through paper.

This is an improved formula for a preparation which

has long had a place in the different Pharmacopœias, under the name of *Acetum Prophylacticum*, having attained celebrity as an antiseptic and preservative against the operation of contagion. From the impregnation of the vinegar with the flavour of the aromatic vegetables, it is a grateful perfume, but it is weak, and its odour is very soon impaired.

ACIDUM ACETOSUM CAMPHORATUM. Camphorated Acetous Acid. Ed.

Take of the stronger Acetous Acid, six ounces; Camphor, half an ounce. Rub the camphor with a little alkohol into powder, which put into the acid, that it may be dissolved.

ACIDUM ACETICUM CAMPHORATUM. Dub.

Take of Acetic Acid, six ounces; Camphor, half an ounce; Rectified Spirit of Wine, as much as may be sufficient. Reduce the camphor to powder by the aid of the spirit, then add the acid and dissolve.

Camphor is soluble in the concentrated acetic acid, and the solution has an odour highly fragrant and pungent. It has been used as a stimulating perfume, more grateful than the common odoriferous essences. It forms what is named *Aromatic Spirit of Vinegar*. The preparation of the Pharmacopœias, however, especially that of the Edinburgh College, is inferior in pungency, owing to a weaker acetic acid being employed.

ACETUM SCILLÆ MARITIMÆ. Vinegar of Squill. Ed.

Take of Squill Root dried, two ounces; distilled Acetous Acid, two pounds and a half; Alkohol, three ounces. Macerate the squill with the acetous acid for seven days: express the acid; to which add the alkohol; and when the impurities have subsided, pour off the liquor.

ACETUM SCILLÆ. Vinegar of Squill. Lond.

Take of Squill Root recently dried, a pound; Vinegar, six pints; Proof Spirit, half a pint. Macerate the squill root with the vinegar in a close glass vessel with a gentle heat, for twenty-four hours; then express, and put aside, that the impurities may subside; lastly, add the spirit to the pure liquor.

ACETUM SCILLÆ. Vinegar of Squill. Dub.

Take of Squill Root recently dried, half a pound; Wine Vinegar, three pints; Rectified Spirit of Wine, four ounces. Digest the squill root with the vinegar for four days in a glass vessel, agitating frequently; then express the vinegar, to which poured off, after the impurities subside, add the spirit.

Vinegar appears to dissolve completely the active matter of squill, without much impairing its powers: the addition of the alcohol is designed to counteract any spontaneous decomposition to which the vinegar might be liable. Under this form, squill has long been employed as an expectorant: the dose is one drachm; or more usually it is given in the form of syrup, prepared from this medicated vinegar. The proportion of squill ordered by the different Colleges is very various, and if all its active matter is dissolved, must afford preparations of very unequal strength.

ACETUM COLCHICI. Vinegar of Meadow Saffron. Lond.

Take of the fresh Root of Meadow Saffron cut, one ounce; Distilled Vinegar, a pint; Proof-Spirit, a fluidounce. Macerate the root with the vinegar, in a close glass vessel, for twenty-four hours; then press it out, and put it aside, that the impurities may subside; lastly, add the spirit to the clear liquor.

Colchicum bears a considerable resemblance to squill, and its active matter is so far similar, that it appears to be dissolved by vinegar, without its powers being altered. It has been given as a diuretic in dropsy, either under this

form, or made into an oxymel, by the addition of honey; but in modern practice it is little employed.

CHAP. XIII.

TINCTURÆ.—TINCTURES.

TINCTURES are solutions usually of vegetable, sometimes, however, of animal, and even of mineral substances in spiritous liquors. The solvent may be alkohol either pure, diluted with water, or impregnated with ammonia or ether. Alkohol dissolves the resin, camphor, extract, and essential oil of plants: it is more particularly employed as the menstruum for substances purely resinous, or the powers of which reside in a resin. Where a portion of gum is mingled with the resin, or where tannin or extractive matter is the active principle, diluted alkohol is the proper solvent: it in general dissolves the active matter of all entire vegetable substances, as the bark, leaves, flowers; and wherever it can be properly applied, it is preferable to pure alkohol, both as more economical and as less pungent. Alkohol, impregnated with ammonia, is employed only in forming tinctures of a few substances, with the medicinal operation of which, ammonia is supposed to coincide.

Tinctures usually contain the active matter of the substances from which they are prepared, in a more concentrated state than infusions or decoctions, the power of the solvent being greater; hence they require to be given only