
INTRODUCTION.

WHEN we take a view of the vast number of vegetables with which our country is adorned, we must candidly acknowledge that our acquaintance with their medical properties, is extremely limited indeed. The investigation of their uses in the arts and as medicines, is an object of some importance to society. There is, perhaps, no portion of the globe that has been more highly favoured by nature in esculent and medicinal vegetables. The zea (maize) and potatoes, as articles of diet, stand unequalled; the podophyllum peltatum, nicotiana, spigelia and what has been emphatically called the vegetable antimony, the eupatorium perfoliatum, are medicines not inferior to any yet discovered. An infinite number yet remain to be investigated. To increase the list of articles in the Materia Medica, is not, however, a desirable object; but to expunge those which are nearly inert, and increase the number of active ones is certainly of the first importance. This taken into consideration, and with a view to the more easy procurement of our medicines, is of sufficient consequence to stimulate to an examination of our indigenous vegetables.

I have made a feeble attempt to investigate the properties and uses of the Sanguinaria Canadensis, a plant peculiar to our country. Most of

the experiments have been repeatedly made, and are related with as much precision as I was capable of. Any errors which may have been committed, were through my inexperience in the business of experimenting. Circumstanced as I have been, little more has been done by me than the simple introduction of the subject. It is well worthy further investigation, both as it respects the science of medicine and the arts.