vedly held in great esteem. It quenches thirst, promotes the natural secretions, expels flatulencies, and moderately strengthens the stomach. It may be given in doses of from twenty drops to a drachm, in any convenient vehicle. Mixed with a small quantity of spiritus ammoniæ aromaticus, it proves a mild, yet efficacious diaphoretic, and often remarkably diuretic, especially in some febrile cases, where such a salutary evacuation is wanted. A small proportion of this spirit added to malt spirits, gives them a flavour approaching to that of French brandy.

Chap. XV.—VEGETABILIA. *Lond.*

Vegetables.

Vegetables are to be gathered in their native soil and situation, and in a dry season, when they are neither wet with showers nor dew; they are to be collected every year, and what are older must be thrown away.

Roots, for the most part, are to be dug up before they shoot up their leaves or stalks.

Barks ought to be gathered when they can be separated most easily from the wood.

Leaves are to be plucked after the flowers have faded, and before the seeds are ripe.

Flowers are to be gathered when just opened.

Seeds are to be collected when ripe, and before they fall, and are to be kept in their proper coverings.

Vegetabilium præparatio. *Lond.*

Preparation of Vegetables.

Vegetables, soon after they are gathered, except those which are used fresh, are to be loosely spread out, and dried as quickly as possible, with a heat so low as not to alter the colour. They are then to be preserved from the action of light and moisture in proper situations or vessels.

Roots, which are directed to be preserved fresh, are to be buried in sand. The Squill, before drying it, is to have its arid coats peeled off, and to be cut transversely into thin slices.

Herbarum et florum exsiccatio. *Ed.*
The Drying of Herbs and Flowers.

Herbs and flowers are to be dried by the gentle heat of a stove or common fire, in such quantities only at a time, that the process may be finished as quickly as possible: for by this means their powers are best preserved; the test of which is the perfect preservation of their natural colour.

The leaves of hemlock *(conium maculatum)*, and of other plants containing a subtile volatile matter, must be immediately reduced to powder, after being dried, and afterwards kept in glass phials well corked.

Dub.

Put the fresh leaves of the herb, when in flower, into paper bags, and expose them to a low degree of heat for an hour; then spread them lightly upon a sieve, and dry them as quickly as possible, taking care that the green colour be not injured by too great a degree of heat: but if the herbs are to be used in the form of powder, they are to be powdered immediately, and preserved in small opaque phials well corked.

Herbs and flowers, from which waters or oils are to be distilled, should be dried as soon as they are gathered.

Pulvis scillæ. *Dub.*
Powder of Squills.

Cut the squills, after having removed their membranaceous integuments, into transverse slices; dry these on a sieve with a gentle heat, and reduce them to powder, which is to be kept in phials with ground glass-stoppers.

Scilla maritima exsiccata. *Ed.*
Dried Sea Squill.

Cut the root of the sea-squill, after having removed its external coat, transversely into thin slices, and dry it by a gentle heat. The sign of its being properly dried is, that although rendered friable, it retains its bitterness and acrimony.

By this method, the squill dries much sooner than when its several coats are only separated; the internal part being here laid bare, while, in each of the entire coats, it is covered with a thin skin, which impedes the exhalation of the moisture. The root loses in this process four-fifths of its original weight; the parts which exhale with a moderate heat appear to be merely watery: hence six grains of the dry root are equiva-

lent to half a drachm of it when fresh;—a circumstance to be particularly regarded in the exhibition of this medicine. But if too great heat has been employed in drying it, it becomes almost inert, and it also loses its virtues by long keeping in the state of powder.

Dried squills furnish us with a medicine, sometimes advantageously employed as an emetic, often as an expectorant, and still more frequently as a powerful diuretic.

PULVIS SPONGIÆ USTÆ. *Dub.* SPONGIA USTA. *Lond.*
Powder of Burnt Sponge.

Cut the sponge in pieces, and bruise it, so as to free it from small stones (foreign matters adhering to it *Lond.*); burn it in a covered iron vessel, until it becomes black and friable; afterwards reduce it to a very fine powder.

THIS medicine has been in use for a considerable time, and employed against bronchocele, scrofulous disorders, and cutaneous foulnesses, in doses of a scruple and upwards. Its virtues probably depend on the presence of a little alkali. It also contains charcoal, and its use may be entirely superseded by these substances, which may be obtained in other manners at a much cheaper rate.

PULVIS QUERCUS MARINÆ. *Dub.*
Powder of Yellow Bladder Wrack.

Take of

Yellow bladder wrack, in fruit, any quantity.

Dry and clean it; then expose it to the fire in an iron pot or crucible, covered with a perforated lid, until, after the vapours cease, the mass becomes of a dull red. Powder the carbonaceous mass which remains.

THIS charcoal was formerly known under the name of *Æthiops Vegetabilis*. It is analogous to the preceding article.

CHAP. XVI.—EXPRESSED JUICES.

THE juices of succulent plants are obtained by expression. They are of a very compound nature, consisting of the sap, the secreted fluids, and fecula, mixed together. When first procured, they are very high coloured, turbid, and loaded with parenchymatous matter. They may be purified by rest,