

The leaves are bitter, and afford, by expression, a considerable quantity of juice, which is said to be diuretic, and to have been successfully used in dropsy.

DAPHNE MEZEREUM. *Ed. Lond. Dub.*

Willd. g. 773, sp. 1. Smith, Flor. Brit. g. 194, sp. 1. Octandria Monogynia.—Nat. ord. *Vepriculæ.*

Mezereon, spurge olive.

Off.—The bark of the root.

DAPHNES MEZEREI RADICIS CORTEX. *Ed.*

MEZEREI CORTEX. *Lond. Dub.*

MEZEREON is a shrub which grows in woody situations in the northern parts of Europe, and is admitted into our gardens from its flowering in winter. The bark, which is taken from the trunk, larger branches, and root, is thin, striped, reddish, commonly covered with a brown cuticle, has no smell, and when chewed, excites an insupportable sensation of burning in the mouth and throat. When applied to the skin in its recent state, or infused in vinegar, it raises blisters. Its acrid principle is said by M. Lartique of Bourdeaux to be soluble in ether.

Medical use.—The root was long used in the Lisbon diet-drink, for venereal complaints, particularly nodes, and other symptoms resisting the use of mercury. The bark of the root contains most acrimony, though some prefer the woody part. Mezereon has also been used with good effects in tumours and cutaneous eruptions not venereal.

Dr Cullen says that it acts upon the urine, sometimes giving it a filamentous appearance, and upon the perspiration, without diminishing the strength remarkably; and that, in irritable habits, it quickens the pulse, and increases the heat of the whole body. But Mr Pearson of the Lock Hospital asserts, that excepting a case or two of lepra, in which a decoction of this plant conferred temporary benefit, he very seldom found it possessed of medical virtues, either in syphilis, or in the sequelæ of that disease. In scrofula, or in cutaneous affections, it is employed chiefly under the form of decoction; but it has also been used in powder; and as it is apt to occasion vomiting and purging, it must be begun in grain doses, and gradually increased. It is often combined with mercury.

The berries are still more acrid than the bark, and they have even been known to produce fatal effects on children, who have been tempted by their beauty to eat them. It is said that they are sometimes infused in vinegar, to make it more pungent and appear stronger.

DATURA STRAMONIUM. Ed. Dub.
Willd. g. 377, sp. 1. Smith, Flor. Brit. g. 98, sp. 1. *Pentandria Monogynia.*—Nat. ord. *Solanaceæ*.

Thorn-apple. James-town weed.

Off.—The plant.

DATURÆ STRAMONII HERBA. Ed.

STRAMONII HERBA. Dub.

THE thorn-apple is an annual plant, a native of America, which gradually diffused itself from the south to the north, and now even grows wild on dry hills and uncultivated places in England, and other parts of Europe. The leaves are dark green, sessile, large, egg-shaped, pointed, angular, and deeply indented, of a disagreeable smell and nauseous taste. Every part of the plant is a strong narcotic poison, producing vertigo, torpor, death. Crystals of nitrate of potass shoot in the extract, as prepared by Stoerk, when it has been kept several months. Dr Barton mentions the cases of two British soldiers, who ate it by mistake, for the *Chenopodium album*: one became furious, and ran about like a madman, and the other died, with the symptoms of genuine tetanus. The best antidote to its effects is said to be *vinegar*.

Medical use.—Dr Stoerk first tried it as a remedy in mania and melancholy, with considerable success. Several cases of the same diseases were also cured or relieved by it, under the direction of different Swedish physicians. It has also been employed, and sometimes with advantage, in convulsive and epileptic affections. Dr Barton considers it to be a medicine of great efficacy. He gives it in powder, beginning with doses of a few grains, and increasing them, in some days, to 15 or 20. In a case, in which it was exhibited to the extent of 30 grains, it dilated the pupil of one eye, and produced paralysis of the eye-lids, which was removed by a blister. Hufeland gave it in the form of a tincture, prepared of two ounces of the seeds in four ounces of wine, and one of diluted alcohol, in diseases of the mind. The inspissated juice of the leaves has been most commonly used; but its exhibition requires the greatest caution. At first, a quarter of a grain is a sufficient dose. An ointment prepared from the leaves has been said to give ease in external inflammations and hæmorrhoids. And the bruised leaves, according to Plenck, soften hard and inflamed tumours, and discuss tumours in the breasts of nurses, from indurated milk.

The smoke of the stramonium has lately been much extolled for the cure of asthma. Its use in this manner has been derived from the East Indies, where, however, other species of

datura, the *fatuosa* and *ferox*, are employed. Dr Anderson of Madras recommended these to General Gent, who made the practice known in Britain, where the stramonium seems first to have been substituted by Mr Sills. This gentlemen received so much benefit from inhaling its smoke, that he published his case in the Monthly Magazine, and recommended it very freely. According to all those who have employed it, it is the root only and lower part of the stem which is to be used. These are to be dried as quickly as possible, cut into slips, and beat so as to divide the fibres. The manner of using them is by filling the bowl of a tobacco-pipe, as with tobacco, and inhaling the smoke. The saliva excited, is directed to be swallowed, but its safety I should think doubtful. Used in this way, it is however said to excite a sense of heat in the chest, followed by copious expectoration, and sometimes attended with temporary vertigo or drowsiness, and rarely nausea. It frequently gives relief when a pipe is thus smoked upon a paroxysm being threatened, or even after its commencement: the patient falls asleep, and awakes recovered from the paroxysm. In some cases, a perfect cure is effected, but more commonly the relief is only temporary. It seems however valuable as a palliative, and the direct application of the remedy to the seat of the disease is rational at least. I need scarcely caution my readers against the quack preparations said to contain stramonium.

DAUCUS CAROTA. *Ed. Lond. Dub.*

Willd. g. 530, sp. 1. Smith, g. 128, sp. 1. Pentandria Digynia.—Nat. ord. *Umbellatae*.

Carrot.

Off.—The seeds of the wild, and root of the garden carrot.

a) DAUCI CAROTÆ SEMEN. *Ed.*

DAUCI SYLVESTRIS SEMINA. *Dub.*

DAUCI (AGRESTIS) SEMINA. *Lond.*

b) DAUCI (HORTENSIS) RADIX. *Lond.*

THIS is a biennial plant, which grows wild in Britain, and is cultivated in great quantities as an article of food. The seeds, especially of the wild variety, have a moderately warm pungent taste, and an agreeable aromatic smell. They are carminative, and are said to be diuretic. The roots, especially of the cultivated variety, contain much mucilaginous and saccharine matter, and are therefore highly nutritious and emollient. When beaten to a pulp, they form an excellent application to carcinomatous and ill-conditioned ulcers, allaying the pain, checking the suppuration and fetid smell, and softening the callous edges.

DELPHINIUM STAPHISAGRIA. *Lond. Dub.*
Willd. g. 1061, sp. 13. Polyandria Trigynia.—Nat. ord.
Multisiliquæ.

Stavesacre.

Off.—The seed.

STAPHISAGRIÆ SEMINA. *Lond. Dub.*

STAVESACRE is a biennial plant, a native of the south of Europe. The seeds are usually brought from Italy. They are large and rough, of an irregular triangular figure, of a blackish colour on the outside, and yellowish or whitish within; they have a disagreeable smell, and a very nauseous, bitterish burning taste.

Neumann got from 480 parts, 45 alcoholic extract, besides 90 of fixed oil, which separated during the process, and afterwards 44 insipid watery, and inversely, 95 watery, and then by alcohol only one, besides 71 of oil.

Med. use.—Stavesacre was employed by the ancients as a cathartic; but it operates with so much violence, both upwards and downwards, that its internal use has been for some time almost laid aside. It is chiefly employed in external applications for some kinds of cutaneous eruptions, and for destroying lice and other insects; insomuch, that from this virtue it has received its name in different languages.

DIANTHUS CARYOPHILLUS. *Ed. Dub.*
Willd. g. 893, sp. 9. Smith, g. 209, sp. 3. Decandria
Digynia.—Nat. ord. *Caryophyllæ.*

Clove Gilly-flower. Clove pink, or carnation.

Off.—The flowers.

DIANTHI CARYOPHYLLI FLOS. *Ed.*

CARYOPHYLLI RUBRI FLORES. *Dub.*

THIS species of dianthus is perennial, and is a native of Italy, though now found wild on the walls of old castles in England. By cultivation, its varieties have increased to a very great number, and they form one of the greatest ornaments of our gardens. Most of these are termed Carnations; but the variety which is officinal surpasses all the others in the richness of its smell. It is also distinguished by being of an uniform deep crimson colour, and having the edges of its petals entire, not crenated as the others. It is now scarcely, if at all, to be found in Scotland; and, instead of it, the crimson carnations are commonly used to give the colour to the syrup, while for its flavour it is indebted to the spice clove. Their only use in pharmacy is to give a pleasant flavour and beautiful colour to an officinal syrup.

DIGITALIS PURPUREA. *Ed. Lond. Dub.*

Willd. g. 1155, sp. 1. Didynamia Angiospermia.—Nat. ord. *Solanaceæ.*

Foxglove.

Off.—The leaves.

DIGITALIS PURPUREÆ FOLIUM. *Ed.*

DIGITALIS FOLIA. *Lond. Dub.*

THIS is an indigenous biennial plant, very common on hedge-banks, and sides of hills, in dry, gravelly, or sandy soils, and the beauty of its appearance has gained it a place in our gardens and shrubberies. The leaves are large, oblong, egg-shaped, soft, covered with hairs, and serrated. They have a bitter, very nauseous taste, with some acrimony. Destouches analysed foxglove. Four ounces of the dried leaves yielded successively 9 drachms of watery, and 78 grains of alcoholic extract. The first was brown, smooth, and of a consistence fit for making pills. The second had a very deep green colour, a virose and disagreeable smell, the consistence of tallow, but more tenacious; did not furnish ammonia by distillation, and was not acted upon by acids. The ashes contained salts of lime and potass.

Med. use.—Its effects, when taken into the stomach, are,

1. To diminish the frequency of the pulse.
2. To diminish the irritability of the system.
3. To increase the action of the absorbents.
4. To increase the discharge by urine.

In excessive doses, it produces vomiting, purging, dimness of sight, vertigo, delirium, hiccough, convulsions, collapse, death. For these symptoms, the best remedies are cordials and stimulants.

Internally, digitalis has been recommended,

1. In inflammatory diseases, from its very remarkable power of diminishing the velocity of the circulation.
2. In active hæmorrhagies; in phthisis.
3. In some spasmodic affections, as in spasmodic asthma, palpitation, &c.
4. In mania from effusion on the brain.
5. In anasarous and dropsical effusions.
6. In scrofulous tumours.
7. In aneurism of the aorta, and palpitation, I have seen it alleviate the most distressing symptoms.

Externally, it has been applied to scrofulous tumours.

It may be exhibited,

1. In substance, either by itself, or conjoined with some

aromatic or made into pills, with soap or gum ammoniac. Withering directs the leaves to be gathered after the flowering stem has shot up, and about the time when the blossoms are coming forth. He rejects the leaf-stalk, and middle rib of the leaves, and dries the remaining part, either in the sunshine, or before the fire. In this state, they are easily reduced to a beautiful green powder, of which we may give, at first, one grain twice a-day, and gradually increase the dose until it act upon the kidneys, stomach, pulse, or bowels, when its use must be laid aside, or suspended.

2. In infusion. The same author directs a drachm of the dried leaves to be infused for four hours in eight ounces of boiling water, and an ounce of any spiritous water to be added to the strained liquor, for its preservation. Half an ounce, or an ounce of this infusion, may be given twice a-day.

3. In decoction. Darwin directs that four ounces of the fresh leaves be boiled in two pounds of water, until they be reduced to one, and that half an ounce of the strained decoction be taken every two hours, for four or more doses.

4. In tincture. Put one ounce of the dried leaves, coarsely powdered, into four ounces of diluted alcohol; let the mixture stand by the fire-side twenty-four hours, frequently shaking the bottle; and the saturated tincture, as Darwin calls it, must then be separated from the residuum, by straining or decantation. Twenty drops of this tincture may be taken twice or thrice a-day. The Edinburgh college use eight ounces of diluted alcohol to one of the powder, but let it digest seven days.

5. The expressed juice and extract are not proper forms of exhibiting this very active remedy.

When the digitalis is disposed to excite looseness, opium may be advantageously conjoined with it; and when the bowels are tardy, jalap may be given at the same time, without interfering with its diuretic effects. During its operation in this way, the patient should drink very freely. Two cases of phthisis are related by Dr Gregg, in which it produced a copious ptyalism.

DOLICHOS PRURIENS. *Ed. Lond. Dub.*
Willd. g. 1349, sp. 16. Diadelphia Decandria.—Nat. ord.
Papilionacea.
 Cow-itch.

Officinal.—The stiff hairs which cover the pods.

DOLICHI PRURIENTIS LEGUMINIS PUBES RIGIDA. *Ed.*

DOLICHI PUBES. *Lond.*

DOLICHI SETÆ LEGUMINUM. *Dub.*

THE *dolichos* is a climbing plant, resembling our common scarlet runner, growing in great abundance in warm climates, particularly in the West Indies. The pods are about four inches long, round, and as thick as a man's finger. On the outside they are thickly beset with stiff brown hairs, which, when applied to the skin, occasion a most intolerable itching. In the choice of cow-itch, we must reject all those pods which are shrivelled, brown, and diminutive in size, have lain long in damp warehouses, and are musty, or of a bad colour.

Med. use.—The ripe pods are dipped in syrup, which is again scraped off with a knife. When the syrup is rendered by the hairs as thick as honey, it is fit for use. It acts mechanically as an anthelmintic, occasions no uneasiness in the *primæ viæ*, and may be safely taken, from a tea-spoonful to a table-spoonful in the morning, fasting. The worms are said to appear with the second or third dose; and by means of a purge, in some cases the stools have consisted entirely of worms. For further information, the publications of Mr Chamberlayne may be consulted.

DORSTENIA CONTRAJERVA. *Ed. Lond.*

Willd. g. 244, sp. 5. Tetrandria Monogynia.—Nat. ord. *Scabridæ.*

Contrayerva.

Officinal—The root.

DORSTENIÆ CONTRAJERVÆ RADIX. *Ed.*

CONTRAJERVÆ RADIX. *Lond.*

THIS plant is perennial, and grows in South America, and some of the Caribæan islands.

The root is knotty, an inch or two long, and about half an inch thick, of a reddish brown colour externally, and pale within: long, rough, slender fibres shoot out from all sides of it; and are generally loaded with small round knots. It has a peculiar kind of aromatic smell, and a somewhat astringent, warm, bitterish taste, with a light and sweetish kind of acrimony, when long chewed: the fibres have little taste or smell; the tuberous part, therefore, should be alone chosen.

This root contains so much mucilage, that a decoction of it will not pass through the filter. Neumann got from 480 parts, 190 watery extract, and afterwards 7 alcoholic, and inversely, 102 alcoholic, and 60 watery. I find that the tincture reddens infusion of litmus, is precipitated by water, and has no effect on the salts of iron.

Medical use.—Contrayerva is a gentle stimulant and diaphoretic, and is sometimes given in exanthematous diseases, typhus, and dysentery. Its dose is about half a drachm.