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COMPASSIONATE  
HERBS

*The Culpeper House Books*  
*by Mrs. C. F. Leyer*

★

HERBAL DELIGHTS

ELIXIRS OF LIFE

*(in preparation)*

# COMPASSIONATE HERBS

by  
MRS. C. F. LEYEL

*with drawings by*  
MILDRED E. ELDRIDGE

FABER & FABER LIMITED  
24 Russell Square  
London

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK  
TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN WOUNDED  
OR WHOSE HEALTH HAS BEEN INJURED  
IN THIS WAR

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I am very grateful to Mr. Christmas Humphreys for the verses he has written for this book, and which appear for the first time under the initials T. C. H.

## INTRODUCTION

**T**he words 'Herbs' and 'Herb Gardens' conjure up in most people's minds a picture of idyllic peace—a picture that ignores their potency—but surely the explosion of the atomic bomb has brought home to every mind the realization of the terrific forces latent in the smallest particle of natural matter.

Herbs are no new and untried remedy for they earned their first fame on the battlefield. In the Middle Ages surgical dressings as we know them to-day were unknown, and many of the herbs with an established reputation for curing wounds acquired it during the early wars, and bear the record in their names, like the Daisy, *Bellis Perennis*.

There are herbs that are specifically named for healing wounds which have been inflicted with iron weapons. These either won their reputation from their use on the battlefield, or in healing cuts incurred during pursuits of an agricultural life.

In the case of the plant known as the Water Soldier or Knight's Pondweed it seems more likely that it owes its name to its use in war than, as some botanists suggest, to its sword-like leaves.

The Water Soldier grows, as its name suggests, in water and is found in the dykes in the Fen district and other parts of Norfolk and Suffolk. It is the only species of its genus which is indigenous to England.

In the days when England was exclusively an agricultural country many accidents occurred through the use of the scythe and sickle. Gerard tells us of a wound that had been caused by an iron scythe and was cured with one of the woundworts.

There are two species of these herbs, the hedge and the marsh woundwort. They have labiate flowers and are like the deadnettle in appearance. Both grow in Great Britain, and both are still regarded as useful for the healing of open wounds.

It is also interesting to remember that during the Great War of 1914, sphagnum moss was found to be one of the best dressings for wounds on account of its sponge-like quality of holding moisture.

Though Germany claims to have discovered its value as a surgical dressing less than a hundred years ago, there are records to show that it was used in the same way by the Irish and the Scots in wars before the Norman Conquest. At the Battle of Flodden it was used by the Highlanders to staunch their wounds.

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Agrimony, Bugle, Prunella and the wild Mignonette probably first acquired their healing character in ancient wars, and the Delphinium has an old reputation which may have the same association.

The name Self-heal is often applied to the Wood Sanicle, but belongs more correctly to Prunella. Both plants have the title of universal panaceas.

The Madonna Lily is the cottager's wound herb and many country people still make a preparation from the leaves or bulbs or even from the flowers. It cures bruises and reduces inflammations.

For most wounds to-day herbalists use Comfrey, Slippery Elm, and the root of the Marshmallow, either combined or separately.

All three plants abound in mucilage, and Comfrey assists fractures and lives up to its old name of 'knit bone'. By removing inflammation surrounding the fracture it induces a union of the affected parts. Analysis has shown that it actually contains allantoin, a crystallizable substance which is used in orthodox medicine to encourage epithelial formation in ulcers and wounds.

Most of the country names for Comfrey, such as Boneset, Knitback, Knitbone, Consolida, testify to its power of healing bones and even the name Comfrey is derived from the Latin word 'con-firmare', to strengthen together. If taken internally and used externally after a fracture has been set it will greatly hasten the jointure, even in elderly people. And when bones that have been set do not join Comfrey will bring about a union.

The plant is decorative enough for any garden with its creamy yellow or purplish blue flowers and very much resembles other borages.

Of the other two mucilaginous plants, Slippery Elm holds a very high place in herbalism and many herbalists use it as a general healing agent. It is derived from the inner bark of an Elm tree, the *Ulmus fulva*, which grows in Canada and the United States of America. The powdered bark is both a food and a medicine. It poultices and nourishes so that in cases of gastric ulcers or for any internal wound it not only heals, but feeds while it heals.

Every part of the Elder tree is a natural salve and so safe that it can be used by anyone, internally or externally; so can the common Marigold, and the lotion made from it which we call *Calendula* is antiseptic and restorative to a high degree. It not only heals the scars that follow an operation, but promotes healthy tissue when it is diseased.

Leopard's Bane (*Arnica*) makes another useful lotion in injuries, but it is not nearly so safe as *Calendula* and should only be used in homoeopathic form.

We even have in the plant world a substitute for collodion in the curi-

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ous herb called *Siegesbeckia*. This is a common weed in China, and the juice applied to wounds produces a protective film.

All these plants I have referred to are antiseptic, and before iodine was even thought of they were the universal 'first aid' remedies and still serve the same purpose if called upon.

The much advertised Penicillin which has been so widely used in this war is proving not to be the specific cure for all wounds as was at first thought.

It is most extraordinary the way the medical profession and the general public are chary of trying herbs which have borne the test of centuries of experience, and yet are willing to accept unconditionally a newly discovered panacea; and accept it as infallible without the infallible test of time. Penicillin is now proving ineffective in certain cases.

Even in the middle of winter when other plants are vegetating the Snowdrop will provide an excellent dressing for cuts and injuries.

Interest in herbal medicine has developed greatly in the last ten years, but there is still very little real understanding of the differences in principle between the actions and reactions of herbs and drugs. (I use the word 'drug' to mean any inorganic medicinal substance.) Many drugs are derived from plants, but the processes employed in their manufacture destroy or eliminate the organic properties that are retained when the same medicines are used in their herbal form.

This imperfect comprehension of the principles involved is partly due to the fact that the relevant knowledge is to be found only in old pharmaceutical treatises, and then only unsystematically arranged; and partly because so much of our knowledge of herbs is traditional and the results have never been proved or measured by modern scientific methods. But what is scientifically known about herbs does substantiate the traditional claims made by those who use them; and so it would seem that scientific investigation of such claims should be encouraged. Yet orthodox medical practice seems to be developing along other lines, in spite of the fact that the scientific research of botanists has established that herbs contain auxins, hormones, enzymes and chlorophyll which can be obtained from no other source and on all of which man depends.

The idea of Paracelsus still persists that violent diseases must be treated with strong medicines; but so many of the diseases the remedies for which have so far eluded medical science are the chronic ones. And in such cases potent drugs, which can only be taken safely for a short time, leave the sufferer worse off than he was before, because he needs continuous treatment.

In herbal medicine, herbs, like drugs, are classified according to their

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action on the body; those which control the action of the muscles and relax spasms are called antispasmodics; those that subdue pain, anodynes; those that cause perspiration, diaphoretics; others, that alter the constituents of the blood, alteratives, and herbs that tighten up relaxed membranes and muscles and allay haemorrhage, either active or passive, are the astringent herbs. So, like drugs, medicinal herbs are grouped as astringents, antispasmodics, anodynes, diuretics, diaphoretics, emollients, emetics, expectorants, febrifuges, etc. But one herb can belong to several groups. The same herbs can be both astringent and diaphoretic. Indeed, most herbs belong to more than one group, and some have as many as five or six different actions on the body.

This is one of the reasons why most herbs can be used in the cure of many different diseases. To the lay mind these varied functions of herbs are confusing and are probably responsible for the idea, prevalent among the uninitiated, that herbs are a sort of faith cure. Actually there are other cogent reasons which I will explain, why the same herbs are used to cure divers complaints.

The similarity between drugs and herbs ends with this physiological action that groups them in classes; for the therapeutic principle of a herb is quite different from the therapeutic principle of a drug. A drug is, or should be, administered to relieve symptoms; the right herb cures by removing the causes of the symptoms, and this herbal healing process generally provokes an aggravation of the symptoms at first. Such reactions are nature's way of restoring health to the body.

In a normally healthy person, rest, warmth, fresh air, sunshine and freedom from worry will cure without the addition of any medicine, but when disease germs have become too well established, or the constitution is naturally weak, herbs are needed to reinforce nature and will always produce a quicker cure than nature unassisted. But it is important to remember that the methods are the same. For instance, nature's favourite way of killing disease germs is to raise the temperature of the body, because germs cannot remain alive in a high temperature. This raising of the temperature is a very usual reaction produced by herbs when they are administered to those suffering from infections of any kind. But nature and the herbs have other ways of eliminating toxins. The skin is a great eliminator and eruptions often follow the internal use of herbs, disappearing sooner or later, and then the condition of the skin is greatly improved.

With regard to the treatment of wounds by herbs the first consideration as in orthodox medicine is to render the injured area antiseptic. After this is achieved herbal treatment differs in several respects from the effect of drugs. To start with herbs are administered to the wounded

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internally as well as externally, and this results in elimination of poison and promotion of healthy tissue.

Under herbal treatment no wound begins to heal until all poison is eradicated, and therefore the healing process is often slower than under orthodox treatment when the main idea is to close the wound whether the poison has been eliminated or not. Occasionally the cure is interrupted by a rise in temperature. In cases where a considerable amount of blood has been lost before the wounded received medical attention, herbs would render a blood transfusion unnecessary because of their action on the spleen and other ductless glands.

Nearly every herb, in fact I would say that practically every herb, has, either directly or indirectly, an action on the blood; and this is another reason why the same herb can be used to cure more than one disease; for, in the herbalist's view, most chronic complaints are primarily due to obstructions in the blood or to a toxic condition of the blood, or to a lack of certain constituents that should be in the blood of every healthy person. An alteration in the chemistry of the blood can be effected by the action of plant hormones on the ductless glands of the human body and by the catalysing enzymes which herbs contain.

Enzymes are only found in the vegetable kingdom and when they exist in animal products such as milk and butter it is because cows are herbivorous animals. Enzymes are particularly interesting because they cause fermentation and this is why fermented liquor can be made from any herb, vegetable, flower, fruit, berry or tree, indeed from anything that grows on the earth.

When a herbal medicine is prepared from an infusion of the dried plant, the enzymes are liberated; and when a herbal extract or tincture is prepared by a cold maceration of a fresh plant, the enzymes are preserved. So herbal medicines contain these valuable enzymes, these living cells of the plants, and other medicines do not contain them, which is one of the reasons why herbs successfully cure so many chronic diseases, particularly the allergic ones. Enzymes are catalysers which have the power of altering the mineral constituents of the blood, and causing them to adjust themselves into the right ratio to each other. For when these constituents are maladjusted and out of correct proportion, ill health follows. These enzyme catalysts can also bring about chemical changes in the toxins.

The elements of which herbs are composed are oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, lime, potash, iron, ammonia and magnesium.

Plant life with the help of chlorophyll transforms these into starches, sugars, gums, resins, mucilages, oils and acids—so herbs are foods as well as medicines. The vegetable organism combines a physical as well



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as a therapeutic constitution and this brings us to another important difference between herbs and drugs. Herbs stimulate the phagocytes by improving and building up the general health and so they actually reduce the disease germs. Drugs merely produce a latent effect on the germs by driving them into a position where they are for the time being inactive.

The processes of nature are so complicated, and one substance is so dependent on the presence of another, that it seems reasonable to believe that the whole plant yields better results in medicine than any isolated substance or substances.

The reason why the alkaloids only are used in orthodox medical practice is because this is the only way of standardizing the medicinal herbal products. Experience, however, proves that the herb in its natural form, with all its tonic substances, immeasurable as they may be, does produce not only quite different results, but that the cures wrought by their agency, though slower, are more permanent.

Furthermore, when the herbal derivatives are prescribed in the form of drugs they are administered in much larger doses and in more concentrated form than they are found in the plants themselves. So that their action is quite different from the action of the same substance administered in the infinitesimal small quantity as it exists when in the plant itself, as it is then given naturally combined with its appropriate potash salts, and with the nutritious ingredients of the plant in their proper proportions. The active difference is that the large dose tends to suppress, the small dose to eliminate the toxins with which they have affinities.

Tradition is at present a more helpful source of information on which to acquire a knowledge of the healing powers of particular plants than science, because tradition has borne the test of thousands of years of experience; and science can pronounce no verdict in the absence of laboratory tests. Many of the ingredients in herbal medicines give no reactions in the chemical laboratory and defy analysis. When a compound medicine of drugs and herbs is analysed the herbs in it cannot be detected and are therefore regarded as negligible, although their presence may account for a chemical change in the other constituents, and, undetectable as they are, may have a catalysing influence on the toxins of the body.

Finally, to come to the value of herbs not only in the healing of wounds, but in the restoring of health and strength, it is difficult to overrate their importance because of their beneficial action on the blood stream and on the ductless glands. So in the cure of diseases that have become chronic I do not believe they have an equivalent in medicine. They do not as a rule bring quick relief like drugs because they do not

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take the place of drugs. Their special function is to cure. They accomplish their work through their threefold capacity, which is physical, physiological and therapeutic.

I wrote this in Greece just before the outbreak of war. It was spring and the wild flowers were out, flowering among the stony remains of ancient Hellas—the herbs that are familiar in our own country, Lady's Bedstraw, Holy Thistle, Wild Thyme, Borage, Blue and Red Pimpernels and Valerian.

Euphorbia grows about the sacred fountain of Castalia, near the site of the Delphic oracle; Yellow Broom was in blossom all round the theatre at the famous healing Temple of Aesculapius at Epidaurus; Pimpernel and Hawkweeds flourished at Troy, outside the walls of Priam's city; the stony Sicilian mountains near the Temple of Segesta were covered with Valerian, Yellow Mustard, orange coloured Marigolds with huge clumps of Yellow Fennel, a riot of colour accentuated by the crops of cherry red Fenugreek cultivated in the valleys.

The very names of the flowers that star the earth like the names of the stars that flower in the heavens are timeless links with the people in whose knowledge and wisdom our western civilization is rooted. It is not only the romantic names of such flowers as Narcissus and Hyacinth that carry our imaginations back to that age of the gods and heroes, the scientific names of medicinal plants come to us in direct descent from Galen and Aesculapius—Centauray, Paeony, Valerian, Artemisia, Sempervivum, Dittany, Euphorbia, Myrtle, Salvia, etc.

And the familiar English names of so many of our wayside plants are derived from their medicinal properties and are witnesses to the age-long practice of our forebears. In herbal practice to-day they are still used for the complaints from which they have derived their names—Ague Tree, Feverwort, Bruisewort, Rupturewort, Quinsey Berry, and Madwort are some of them. Other names apply to the organs of the body for which they are particularly adapted—Lungwort, Spleenwort, Liverwort, Kidney Wort, Navel Wort, Blood Wort, Mouth Wort, Throat Wort and Eyebright.

It is a comforting thought that these useful herbs are the wild plants that grow so lavishly here and in other countries, the Dandelion and Plantain, Daisies and Buttercups, Cowslips, Saxifrages and Potentillas—even the despised 'Darnel and all the idle weeds that grow in our sustaining corn'—they are all the compassionate Creator's gift to mankind. They are for the healing of the nations.

HILDA LEVEL

Shripney Manor,  
St. Valentine's Day, 1946.



## Chapter One

### WOUND HERBS

*Agrimony; Bugle; Cocklebur; Comfrey; Crosswort; Daisy;  
Darnel; Delphinium; Dittany; Flax; Leopard's Bane;  
Madonna Lily; Marshmallow; Matico; Medlar;  
Mignonette; Moneywort; Moonwort; Plough-  
man's Spikenard; Prunella; Rattles;  
Siegesbeckia; Slippery Elm;  
Snowdrop; Sphagnum Moss;  
Water Soldier; Wood  
Sanicle; Woundworts*

**T**he history of wound herbs is associated with ancient Greece. Professor Humphrey Sibthorpe made a special journey to Greece at the beginning of the nineteenth century to identify the herbs mentioned in the classics with those that are growing in Greece to-day, and the result of his labours is incorporated in his monumental work, the *Flora Graeca*, which was published between 1806 and 1840 in ten royal folio volumes. He was Professor of Botany at Oxford where he succeeded Dillenius. The book is most beautifully illustrated in colour and I have been fortunate enough to secure a complete copy of Sibthorpe's work for the Society of Herbalists. Many of the herbs described in these volumes grow in England and when I was in Greece I recognized this. Our garden sage grows in great profusion on the limestone rocks, and so does Jerusalem sage which forms great bushes and is extremely decorative in the spring with its deep yellow flowers and grey leaves. Sage has such a wholesome reputation that in all countries it is used in domestic medicine. The name of the Genus *Salvere* is derived from the Latin *Salvere* (to save) and the ancient saying 'Cur moriatur homo cui salvia crescit in horto' (Why should a man die who grows sage in his garden?) is similarly expressed in an English proverb: 'He that would live for age must eat sage in May.'

Sage has the reputation of strengthening the nerves, the brain and the sinews.

*Sage helps the nerves and by its powerful might  
Palsy is cured and fever put to flight.*

## Wound Herbs

Another group of camphoraceous herbs, the marjoram, have as ancient a reputation as the sages for maintaining health. Dittany belongs to this family and was one of the herbs belonging to Crete, most famous in classical literature. Virgil says it was used by Venus to heal the wound of Aeneas. Dittany flowers in Crete from June to August, and though this species of marjoram does not grow here unless cultivated, other species are common on chalky soil in England and contain large amounts of healing camphor.

The yellow spikes of Agrimony are seen all over Greece as they are in England. The flower was called by the Greeks Agemone, pointing to their use of it as a remedy for defects of the eye. Its Greek name Eupatoria connects it with Mithridates Eupator—a king who was famous for his herbal remedies.

No herb is better for healing wounds than the common Daisy which gained its earliest reputation on the battlefield. This has a Roman rather than a Greek origin, for Pliny tells us that it was frequently used, combined with wormwood, to make into cataplasms for the wounded in war.

Everyone is familiar with the decorative Delphinium. The petals of the flower bear the letters A.J.A. and this has a legendary connection with Ajax—the hero of the Trojan War. Its Greek name records the plants' power of consolidating wounds.

Then we must remember the mignonette which Pliny says grew in his lifetime at Rimini and was used by the natives not only for wounds, but as a general panacea; applied with the words, 'Reseda, cause these maladies to cease!'

Bugle, another wound herb, takes us back to the fifteenth century when it was used by Charles V of Spain to cure his gout.

Finally the common Marshmallow which makes the best healing ointment, is common to Greece as well as to every other country. The ancient Greeks relied on it to diminish the heat in the ordeal of hot irons which was inflicted on suspected delinquents. Marshmallow is as efficacious to-day as it ever was. It is the most emollient of all herbs and in the treatment of wounds emollients naturally play a large part.

Most of the manufactured antiseptics, unlike the herbs, endanger the living tissue, and yet in spite of this recognized fact, herbs are still neglected in surgery.

## Wound Herbs

### AGRIMONY

*Green O Green with ancient peace, and full of sap and sunny  
Lusty fields of Warwickshire, O land of milk and honey.*

*Might I live to pluck again a spike of Agrimony*

*A silver tormentilla leaf or lady smock upon ye.*

—AGNES MARY FRANCES DUCLAUX

*Botanical name:* Agrimonia Eupatoria (Linn.). *Natural order:* Rosaceae.  
*Country names:* Cocklebur, Cockeburr, Church steeples, Egremoine, Egremoude, Garclive, Goosechite, Harvest lice, Hemony, Liverwort, Red tail, Stickwort. *French names:* Aigremoine, Eupatoire, Soubeirette. *German names:* Kleiner Odermennig, Leberkraut. *Italian names:* Agrimonia, Agremomen, Eupatoria. *Turkish name:* Kasik-otu. *Under the dominion of:* Jupiter and the sign Cancer. *Symbolical meaning:* Gratitude. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Common in ditches and fields and by roadsides throughout England, only found locally in Scotland. *Constituents:* A volatile oil, a bitter principle, tannic acid. *Action:* Astringent, diuretic, tonic.

Agrimony has an ancient reputation as a wound herb. The Anglo-Saxons called it Garclive and prescribed it not only for wounds but also for snake bites.

Chaucer refers to it as Egrimoyne and in his time it was combined with Mugwort and vinegar and applied to wounds.

This is one of the herbs that has preserved its reputation all through the ages. It was an ingredient of the famous arquebusade water which was used at the battle of Morat in 1476 as recorded by Philip de Comines.

Paracelsus recommended it to be used in baths for those suffering from palsy, and other herbalists have prescribed it for foot baths to relieve tired feet. It combines with Greater Celandine, Centaury, Juniper, Sage, Peppermint and Wormwood.

At one time it was included in the London official pharmacopoeia and it still is regarded by herbalists as an important herb.

It grows from one to two feet high and has tall spikes of yellow flowers which has given it its country name of Church Steeples.

The whole plant is somewhat aromatic and it makes a pleasant tisane because of its apricot-like flavour.

It can be added to ordinary tea when dried. As a simple spring tonic for the blood it is excellent, it removes obstructions and strengthens the liver. Its praises have been sung all through the centuries by herbalists

## Wound Herbs

who have recommended it either in the form of a tisane, a decoction, or infused in beer. Six ounces of the dried herb put into a muslin bag and hung in a barrel of beer for a week impart the virtues of the herb to the beer and improve the flavour of the beer.

Agrimony makes a lovely yellow dye similar to the Chinese Yellow we call Nankin.

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### BUGLE

*And woodbine*

*Of velvet leaves, and bugle bloom divine,  
Convolvulus in streaked vases flush.*

*Botanical name:* Ajuga reptans. *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Country names:* Brown Bugle, Bellows, Carpenter's herb, Middle Comfrey, Sicklewort, Middle Consound, Dead Men's bellows, Helfringwort, Wild mint. *French names:* Bugle rampant, Ajuga (Old French), Herbe de St. Laurent. *German names:* Günsel, Lorenskraut. *Italian names:* Bugula, Consolida mezzana. *Turkish name:* Mayasil otu. *Under dominion of:* Venus. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Britain, in damp shady woods and other places. *Action:* Astringent, aromatic, tonic.

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The Bugle plant is not unlike a deadnettle but the flowers are purplish blue in colour and are in bloom from May till July.

The plant has been used successfully in quinsy but its chief use is in haemorrhage of the lungs and complaints of the bile duct. Its action is to allay irritation and to lower the pulse. It is a mild and safe narcotic.

There are two other varieties—the Mountain Bugle which is rare in England and the Yellow Bugle, Ajuga Chamaeepitys, which is found in Bedford, Kent, Surrey, Essex, Hampshire and Cambridge. It is better known as Ground Pine.

## Wound Herbs

### COCKLEBUR

*When fevers rise and fall, and life burns low  
And fast upon the skin's unending flow  
The vital forces follow, send for me—  
The flow, and the alarm, will cease to be.  
And should the ravening hound your madness woo.  
Send for me quick, or you will perish too.*

—T. C. H.

*Botanical name:* Xanthium spinosum (Linn.), Xanthium Abyssanicum (Wallr). *Natural order:* Annuals in group of Ambrosiaceae of the Compositae. *Country names:* Burweed, Button bur, Spring Clot Burr, Ditch Bur. *French names:* Xanthium, Lampourde. *German name:* Spitzklette. *Italian names:* Lappola, Bardana minore. *Turkish name:* Siraca otu. *Part used:* The whole plant. *Natural habitat:* Southern Europe, naturalized on the sea-coast of America, Central Asia and northwards to the Baltic. *Action:* Diuretic, diaphoretic, styptic, salagogue.

Xanthic plants are spread as weeds or cultivated over a great part of the world. The flowers are yellow, but are sometimes white or red. They never can become blue. The flowers give way to fruit which is a rough burr covered with hooked prickles.

As a remedy for hydrophobia, Cocklebur held a high place. It has very active properties and is said to influence the blood in overcoming the periodicity of malaria. Dr. Ellingwood suggests it being combined with red onion. It is a good remedy in passive haemorrhages and he regards it as of special benefit if the intermission of the fever is characterized by profuse and exhausting perspiration.



# Wound Herbs

## COMFREY

*This is the Consound,  
Whereby the lungs are eased of their grief.*

—TENNYSON

*Botanical name:* Symphytum officinale (Linn.). *Natural order:* Boraginaceae. *Country names:* Ass ear, Alum, Bruisewort, Boneset, Blackwort, Briswort, Great Consound, Consolida, Knitbone, Knitback, Slippery root, Gum plant. *Saxon name:* Yalluc. *French names:* Grande Consoude, Oreille d'âne. *German name:* Beinweld. *Italian names:* Consolida maggiore, Simfit, Zinzinnici. *Turkish name:* Sinfit. *Under dominion of:* Saturn and Capricorn. *Symbolic meaning:* to unite. *Part used:* Leaves, root. *Natural habitat:* Europe and temperate Asia, common in England on the banks of rivers and in damp ditches. *Constituents:* Mucilage in abundance, 0.6 to 0.8 per cent of Allantoin, a little tannin and a very small amount of starch. *Action:* Astringent, demulcent, expectorant.

---

Every member of the Borage family is useful medicinally, but the Comfrey surpasses them all as the best established vulnerary. It heals internally and externally. For diseased bones and diseased lungs it has no equal and it joins fractures and broken bones. Even if bones have been badly set and will not heal infusions of Comfrey will bring about a clean join. It is the best remedy for injuries to sinews, tendons and the periosteum, and for traumatic injuries to the eyes there is nothing to compare with it.

The word 'symptium' is derived from the Greek word meaning to unite. The herb contains allantoin which is known to be a stimulant for tissue growth. The roots contain much mucilage and make an excellent vegetable if boiled, or the young shoots can be blanched and eaten like asparagus.

The plant is very similar to Borage in appearance—it has the same rough and hairy leaves, and the flowers are a very pretty bluish purple and are sometimes creamy yellow.

The flowers grow in drooping clusters on one side of the stem only and are in flower for the greater part of the summer. There is an old saying that the cream-coloured flowers should be used for a woman and the purple for a man. The plant is found all over Europe.

There is a rare and very lovely variety of Comfrey, *symphytum asperrimum*, with turquoise blue flowers which I obtained from the Cambridge botanical gardens, which grows near a pond in my garden in

## Wound Herbs

great profusion. The leaves are smaller than the ordinary Comfrey, but have the same properties.

### *Comfrey roots to boil*

Take a pound of Comfrey roots, scrape them clean, cut them into little pieces, and put them into three pints of water. Let them boil till there is about a pint; then strain it, and when it is cold put it into a saucepan. If there is any settling at the bottom throw it away; mix it with sugar to your palate, half a pint of mountain wine and the juice of a lemon. Let it boil, then pour it into a clean earthen pot and set it by for use. Some boil it in milk, and it is very good where it will agree, and is reckoned a very great strengthener.

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## CROSSWORT

*I am astringent, and the blood that flows  
Too freely from a wound or nose  
Will cease as soon as I begin.  
I also cure the haemorrhage within.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Galium cruciata (Scopoli). *Natural order:* Rubiaceae. *Country names:* Scop, Lady's Bedstraw, Golden Muguet, Honeywort, Maywort, Oxan. *French names:* Croisette, Oeillet Croisette. *German name:* Kreuzlabkraut. *Italian names:* Pittimbrosa, Erbe croce di fossi. *Turkish name:* Hac otu. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* Herb, leaves. *Natural habitat:* England.

---

The Crosswort was at one time in great use as a wound herb. It is one of the Bedstraws and belongs to the same family as Dyer's madder and the herb called Clivers. All these herbs yield a good dye, though little use is made of them in that respect.

The flowers of the Crosswort are not unlike the yellow Lady's Bedstraw, but they are more insignificant.

The plant was used internally and externally for wounds and the most usual way of administering it internally was in wine—a decoction of the plant was diluted with wine. It was an old cure for rupture.

Nicholas Culpeper says, 'This is a singular good wound herb, and is

## Wound Herbs

used inwardly not only to stay bleeding of wounds, but to consolidate them, as it doth outwardly any green wound which it quickly soldereth up and healeth.'

---

### DAISY

*Daisies those pearl'd Arcturi of the earth  
The constellated flower that never sets.*

—SHELLEY

*Botanical name:* *Bellis perennis* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Bachelor's Buttons, Bairnwort, Banwood, Banwort, Bennergowan, Bennest, Bennet, Benwort, Bessy-Banwood, Billy Button, Boneflower, Bonwort, Briswort, Bruisewort, Catposy, Cockiloorie, Con-fery, Less Consound, Cumfirie, Daiseygh, Shepherd's daisy, Dog daisy, Children's daisy, Dazey, Dicky daisy, Ewe gowan, Gowam, May Gowan, Gowlan, Mary Gowlan, Hen and chickens, Herb Margaret, March daisy, Margaret's herb, Marguerite, Maudlinwort, Mother of thousands, Silver penny, Sweep. *Scotch names:* Bairnwort, the gowan. *French names:* Fleur de Pâques, Marguerite, Pâquerette. *German names:* Wildes Massliebchen, Margarethenkraut, Gänseblume. *Italian names:* Bellide, Margarita, Protolina, Pratellina. *Turkish name:* Paskalya cic. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Symbolical meaning:* A pearl, innocence, fidelity. *Part used:* Leaves, root. *Natural habitat:* Throughout the world. *Constituents:* Oil and ammoniacal salts, tannic acid, inulin, Saponin. *Action:* antispasmodic, diuretic, discutient, tonic.

---

The Daisy is one of the herbs with the longest record of success in healing wounds. Its name perpetuates its service amongst the wounded on the battlefield. It not only heals but counteracts the debility that follows injuries.

Its healing power is substantiated by the homoeopaths who find it invaluable for muscular soreness not only in the limbs, but for the muscular fibres of the blood-vessels.

It is used in liver, kidney and bladder ailments and externally has been found of value in baths in the treatment of Paralysis.

A salad of young Daisy leaves is recommended in Germany as a good spring medicine to stimulate metabolism.

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Burnett says, 'It is a princely remedy for old labourers, especially gardeners.'

It reduces hard swellings and was recommended by Dioscorides for this purpose. The Ox-eye daisy has rather similar properties, but is chiefly used as an antispasmodic in whooping cough and asthma, and in America the root is used to check the night sweats of consumptive people. Pliny recommended it to be combined with Mugwort in the treatment of tumours.

The Daisy was in fairy tales credited with the power of arresting growth and children were given daisy roots and cream to keep them from growing. The Measure of Love is the ancient name for the daisy because it was used then and has been ever since for lovers to pull to pieces to divine whether their love was reciprocated.

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## DARNEL

*The crimson Darnel flower, the blue bottle and gold  
Which though esteemed but weeds, yet for their dainty lines  
And for their scent not ill, they for this purpose choose.*

*Botanical name:* Lolium temulentum (Linn.). *Natural order:* Gramineae.  
*Country names:* Drake, Cheat, Ray grass, Bragge, Cockle, Dornel, Dragge, Drank, Dravick, Droke, Drunk, Drunken Plant, Eaver, Ivray, Jum, Lover's steps, Ray, Riely, Rivery, Sturdy. *French names:* Ivraie, Zizanie. *German names:* Taumel-lolch, Dolik. *Italian names:* Zizzania, Lolio, Pane vino. *Turkish names:* Delice otu, Zivan, Karamuk. *Under dominion of:* Saturn. *Symbolical meaning:* Vice. *Part used:* Seeds.  
*Natural habitat:* Europe including Britain.

---

The Bearded Darnel was used in medicine before the birth of Christ. It is one of the oldest herbal simples. The French name for the grass refers to its intoxicating properties which bring on all the symptoms of drunkenness. This may be due to its being in an ergotized condition.

Some peasants consider that it is degenerated wheat because when experiments have been made in sowing both wheat and darnel, wheat

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has come up instead of darnel. It may be 'the tares among the wheat' that we read of in the Bible.

It is one of the few poisonous grasses and its danger is that it may be threshed with wheat.

Theophrastus tells us that the Pontic and the Egyptian wheat were very free from darnel, but that the Sicilian wheat produced a plant called Melampyron which unlike darnel was quite harmless.

Culpeper says of Darnel, 'It is a malicious part of sullen Saturn. As it is not without some vices, so hath it also many virtues. The meal of Darnel is very good to stay gangrenes, and other suchlike fretting and eating cankers, and putrid sores. It also cleanses the skin of all leprosy, morphews, mugworm and the like, if it be used with salt and raddish roots.'

One of its indications for use is trembling of the limbs and violent pains in the calves.

John Hill says, 'Tis a medicine fitter for habitual complaints than sudden illness'.

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## DELPHINIUM

*Say in what countries do flowers grow  
With the names of kings written upon them.*

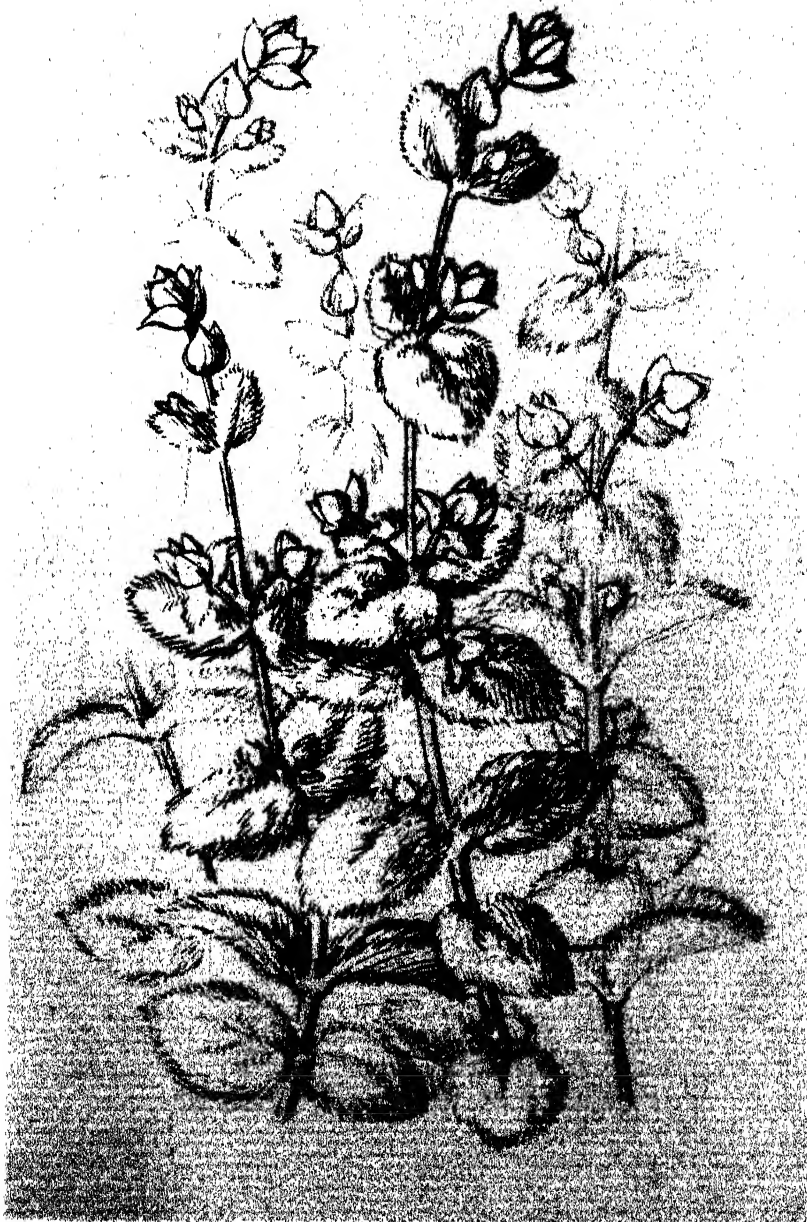
—VIRGIL

*Botanical name:* Delphinium consolida. *Natural order:* Ranunculaceae. *Country names:* Field larkspur, Knight's spur, King's consound, Lark's toe, Dolphin flower. *French names:* Dauphinelle, Pied d'alouette, Consoud royale. *German names:* Feldrittersporn, Hornkümml, Rittersporn. *Italian names:* Consolida regale, Erba del cardinale. *Turkish name:* Hezarenk cic. *Symbolical meaning:* Levity. *Part used:* Herb, seeds. *Natural habitat:* Europe.

---

The wild Delphinium is found in cornfields throughout Europe: all languages record the plant's power of consolidating wounds.

The seeds have an old reputation as a cure for the stings of scorpions. In medicine they are used in the same way as the seeds of the Stavesacre (an allied plant) to destroy insects and parasites. A tincture of the seeds



DITTANY OF CRETE—*ORIGANUM DICTAM*



## Wound Herbs

is applied locally. The seeds are an irritant poison and should be used with the greatest care.

A tincture of the seeds is also given to relieve attacks of asthma and to cure dropsy, and the juice of the flowers and an infusion of the whole plant is a remedy for colic. A conserve of the flowers was sometimes given to children as an astringent. The juice of the petals with the addition of alum makes a good blue ink.

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### DITTANY

*A branch of healing dittany she brought  
Which in the Cretan fields with care she sought  
Rough in the stem, which woolly leaves surround  
The leaves with flowers, the flowers with purple crown'd  
Well known to goats: a sure relief  
To draw the pointed steel and ease the grief.*

*Aeneid, Book XII, DRYDEN*

*Botanical name: Origanum Dictamnus (Linn.). Natural order: Labiatae. Other names: Dittany of Crete, Candia, Right Dittany. French name: Dictame de Crete. German names: Kretischer Diptam, Diptamodosten. Italian names: Dittamo Di Creta, Origano di Creta, Dittamo. Turkish names: Girid otu, Mangir otu, Girid Diktami. Under the dominion of: Mercury. Symbolizes: Happiness. Part used: Herb, oil. Natural habitat: Crete. Action: Tonic, Carminative, stimulant, Healing. Constituents: A volatile oil, tannin, resin, and a bitter principle.*

---

Virgil has perpetuated the healing properties of Dittany in his description of the healing of the wound of Aeneas by the goddess Venus. The Greeks venerated the plant and attributed to it not only the power of healing wounds, but of aiding childbirth. Apuleius, Theophrastus, Dioscorides and Cicero all testify to its properties.

It was dedicated to Lucina the goddess of childbirth, and she is often portrayed wearing a wreath of Dittany.

Mixed with wine the juice of the plant was drunk to cure the bites of snakes. Goats ate the herb to get rid of arrows when they were wounded by them.



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Both Pliny and Plutarch corroborate the high opinion of other classical writers as to its powers. Theophrastus tells us that it was always rather a rare plant even in Crete because it was so much eaten by wounded goats.

Dittany of Crete must not be confused with False Dittany or Poor Man's Pepper—*Lepidium Latifolium*. To avoid making this mistake the former was called by many Right Dittany.

Dittany is in bloom from June to August, the small nodding flowers grow in loose leafy purple heads, the stamens stand out beyond the corolla. Plants will generally survive an ordinary English winter if they are placed in a warm border in a dry soil and are well mulched with compost or leaf mould.

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## FLAX

*. . . the slopes are blue  
Knee deep with flax, the orchard boughs are breaking  
Strange outlandish fruit.*

—CHARLES KINGSLEY

*Botanical name:* *Linum usitatissimum* (Linn.). *Country names:* Common flax, Linseed, Lint bells, Lint bennels, Blaebows, Lint, Lint-bow, Vlix. *Natural order:* Linaceae. *French name:* Lin. *German names:* Flachs, Echter Lein. *Italian name:* Lino usuale. *Turkish name:* Keten. *Arabian name:* Bazen. *Indian names:* Tesi-mosina, Alashi, sufulsi. *Chinese name:* Hu-ma-Esze. *Under the dominion of:* Mars. *Symbolical meaning:* Domestic industry, fate, I feel your kindness. *Part used:* Seeds, oil. *Natural habitat:* Common in most temperate countries, Central Asia, Egypt, Southern Europe. *Constituents:* The seed nucleus contains a fixed oil, 30 to 35 per cent, the epithelium contains mucilage 15 per cent, proteid 25 per cent, amygdalin, resin, wax, sugar and ash 3 to 5 per cent, the ash contains phosphates, sulphates and chlorides of potassium, calcium and magnesium. *Action:* Demulcent, diuretic, emollient, expectorant.

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The Common Flax from which we obtain linseed is the same plant that provides us with flax to make into linen garments and tablecloths. Flax spinning is one of the oldest of English trades. The Romans intro-

## *Wound Herbs*

duced the plant into England and it was made a compulsory crop till the sixteenth century. It was grown by the Egyptians who at one time controlled the cotton trade. They made it into sails. Herodotus says that cotton reached Greece from Egypt in two days. The plant is mentioned in Genesis and Exodus. The curtains of the Tabernacle and the Jewish High Priests' garments were made from the Flax plant. There is an old belief in Germany that if a child of seven dances in a field of flax it will grow up to be beautiful—under the care of the goddess Hulda.

Flax is an annual with pretty blue flowers so that a whole field of the plants when in flower is a lovely sight.

Linseed is largely used by painters who choose linseed oil in preference to any other because it absorbs oxygen from the air and when applied to canvases forms a hard transparent varnish.

The seeds and the oil are also of great value in medicine. The carron oil used in the treatment of burns is linseed oil mixed with lime water. The seeds are used in affections of the respiratory organs and also to soothe the urinary and digestive organs.

Linseed tea is a popular drink for coughs and colds and is of value in tuberculosis of the lungs.

A poultice of linseed can be safely applied to any wound or any swelling and produces excellent results. It is one of the most important of the emollient herbs and is suitable for ointments as well as cataplasms.

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### LEOPARD'S BANE

*They say that all four-footed things  
Avoid my tiny golden wings.  
But man employs me night and day  
For all the perils of the fray.  
There's not a wound or bruise or blow  
But I can lay the damage low.  
And even with a brain concussed  
With me the battle's far from lost.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Arnica montana (Linn.). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country name:* Mountain tobacco. *French names:* Doronie, Aronique, Bétoine des Montagnes. *German names:* Gemenwuruz, Echter Wolferlei, Arnika, Wohlverleih. *Italian names:* Arnica, Polmonaria di montagna, Tabacco di montagna. *Turkish names:* Dag tütünü. *Part used:* Flowers, root. *Natural habitat:* Central Europe. *Constituents:* A bitter yellow crystalline principle Arnicin, and a volatile oil, tannin and plutin are also present. The flowers are said to contain more arnicin than the root but no tannin. *Action:* Diuretic, discutient, stimulant.

---

Leopard's Bane is a perennial plant found in woods and mountain pastures. It has a striking appearance because the long flower stalk often rises two feet in height from a rosette of leaves. The flowers are composite and bright yellow.

As a remedy for sprains and bruises it is better even than Calendula, but it must be used with care because when taken internally, and sometimes when used externally, it causes severe local poisoning in people who are sensitive to the plant. The safest way to use it is in homoeopathic form. It is a good remedy for tired feet if half an ounce of the tincture is added to the foot bath. It also will make the hair grow if applied to the scalp, and the homoeopathic tincture can be taken before and during a voyage to prevent sea sickness.

The plant was first used medicinally at the beginning of the eighteenth century when it was discovered as a healing agent by a Dr. Fehr, and it then obtained the name Panacea lapsorum. It was used with great success in putrid fevers by Dr. Collin of Vienna from 1771 to 1774, and since

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then other doctors have advocated its use and it has become one of the homoeopaths' principal remedies.

Before making use of the plant, Dr. Hamilton considers it indispensable to clean the flowers because they are often soiled by the eggs of a parasitical fly which feeds on the plant. The root soon loses its virtue if exposed to the air. Any reactions that arnica produces are increased if it is followed by wine.

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### MADONNA LILY

*The virgin lilies in their white  
Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked night.*

---ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Botanical name:* *Lilium candidum* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Liliaceae. *Country names:* Mary lily, White lily, Juno's rose, Gley glof. *French names:* Lis blanc, Lis candide. *German names:* Weisse Lilie, Marien lilie. *Italian names:* Giglio bianco, giglio della madonna. *Turkish name:* Beyaz zanbak. *Under the dominion of:* The moon. *Symbolical meaning:* Purity. *Part used:* Bulb, petals. *Natural habitat:* Mediterranean countries.

---

The Madonna lily has been used by country people as a cure for wounds and bruises from the earliest times. The bulb contains a good deal of mucilage and the plant has astringent, anodyne and demulcent properties. Eastern herbalists recommended Madonna lily flowers for epilepsy; Culpeper advised the fresh bulbs for dropsy and Gerard advised the root stamped with honey to glue together cut sinews. The bulbs make a good ointment for painful corns; and the petals steeped in wine are used in the same way as Arnica for sprains and bruises.

Madonna lilies will thrive anywhere unless attacked by disease against which there seems to be no protection. They are generally seen at their best in cottage gardens, and one of the theories given to explain this is that soapy water that cottagers use to wash with, is thrown over the garden instead of being wasted.

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### MARSHMALLOW

*The medicinal mallow here,  
Assuaging sudden tumours;  
Or jagged polypodium there  
To purge out evil humours.*

—MICHAEL DRAYTON

*Botanical name:* *Althea officinalis* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Malvaceae. *Country names:* Cheeses, Mallards, Mortification root, Schloss tea, Wymot. *French name:* Guimauve. *German names:* Malve, Apothekerstockmalve, Witte Malve, Eibisch. *Italian names:* Malvavisco, Altea officinale, Malvacioni, Bismalva, Buonvischio. *Turkish names:* Hitmi, Kitmi, Gül hatem. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Symbolical meaning:* Humanity. *Part used:* Leaves, flowers, root. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Great Britain.

**T**he Mallow family is a large one and it contains no poisonous herbs. Every species is abundantly supplied with mucilage, and all the flowers have the kidney shaped, one-celled anthers.

The Marshmallow contains the most mucilage and the root has more than the rest of the plant; the stems yield good fibre as do all the mallows. The plant is rough and hairy and grows from one to three feet high. The rose-coloured flowers grow in the axils of the downy leaves, the stems are erect and unbranched. The plant is very common on roadsides, in fields and ditches particularly near the sea, and is very common in the south of England.

For poultices it rivals Slippery Elm with which it is often combined. Whenever there is irritation or inflammation, Marshmallow can be relied upon to soothe and heal and it can be used with perfect safety and indefinitely. Its old name of Mortification root has been well earned. Marshmallow ointment is a safe external application for all wounds.

The mallows are equally useful for chest complaints, and many of them are edible.

The Blue Mallow, *Malva sylvestris*, is particularly suitable for coughs and colds.

The Dwarf mallow and the Tree mallow also grow in England and have similar properties. The Hibiscus shrub also belongs to the mallow family and partakes of their mucilaginous properties. The Ochra of the

## Wound Herbs

East which is used in soups is the young head of the *Hibiscus esculentus*. The *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* is used for blacking shoes in the East Indies, and in China for dyeing hair black. The seeds of other species are used as a substitute for coffee but the cotton plant, which belongs to the same family, has the most commercial value.

Many of the hibiscus shrubs are very useful in medicine.

### *Marshmallow Syrup*

Infuse two ounces of sliced, dried Marshmallow roots in a pint of boiling water for a whole day.

Then strain and add to the liquid three pounds of plain, cold, white syrup. Boil together till it registers 30 degrees, leave to cool and then bottle.

Before bottling add 15 drops of orange flower water.

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## MATICO

*Botanical names:* *Piper angustifolium*, *Artanthe Elongata*. *Natural order:* Piperaceae. *Country name:* Soldier's herb. *French names:* Matico, Herbe du soldat. *German name:* Soldatenkraut. *Italian name:* Erba di soldato. *Turkish names:* Filfil, Matiko. *Part used:* The leaves. *Natural habitat:* Persia, Brazil, Cuba. *Constituents:* A volatile oil, antanthic acid, resin, a bitter principle, tannin and mucilage.

---

**M**atico is a species of pepper. The leaves are heart shaped and aromatic. The under part of the leaf if applied to bleeding surfaces promotes coagulation of the blood.

The leaves are used as a local haemostatic and for this reason the plant is called the Soldier's herb.

# Wound Herbs

## MEDLAR

*Then as I mused I cast aside my eye  
And saw a Medlar Tree was planted high  
The spreading branches made a goodly show  
And full of opening blooms was every bough:  
And as I stood and cast aside mine eie  
I was 'ware of the fairest Medle tree,  
That ever yet in all my life I sie.*

—CHAUCER

*Botanical name:* Mespilus Germanica, Pyrus Germanica. *Natural order:* Rosaceae. *Country names:* Dutch Medlar, Thorn tree, Hosedoup, open arse, How doup, marle. *French names:* Néflier, Merlier Nèle. *German name:* Deutche Mispel. *Italian name:* Nespolo. *Dutch name:* Mispelboom. *Turkish name:* Musmula ag. *Part used:* Fruit, leaves. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain.

---

The Medlar tree was greatly cultivated in England in the past and was valued for its fruit and for its medicinal properties. The leaves were made into plasters and applied to wounds, and the fruit has the reputation of strengthening the memory.

The tree bears large white flowers and the fruit which is gathered when hard is kept till it is almost rotten when it is considered ready to eat.

## Wound Herbs

### MIGNONETTE

*Such a scent when evening closes  
Steals beneath the hawthorn trees,  
Mingled mignonette and roses,  
And delightful memories,  
Till the years slip off their pain,  
And the heart grows young again.*

—CHRISTIAN BURKE

*Botanical name:* Reseda odorata. *Natural order:* Resedaceae. *French names:* Reseda d’Egypte, Herbe d’amour. *German names:* Reseda-wan, Gartenreseda. *Italian names:* Reseda odorosa, Amoretti d’Egitto, Amorino. *Turkish name:* Muhabbit-çiç. *Symbolical meaning:* Your qualities surpass your charms. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, Egypt.

---

The Mignonette is said to have reached France from Egypt. The family of resedas were known to the Romans and used by them medicinally as wound herbs. They have soothing properties, allay irritation and ease pain, properties to which their generic name is a testimony.

Reseda latifolia yields a yellow dye which the Romans made famous, and from the Wild Mignonette a dye called Dutch pink is produced.

It is common on chalky hills throughout England and is in bloom throughout July and August.

The Mignonette was introduced and grown in the apothecaries’ garden at Chelsea in 1752.

It is cultivated to-day in the south of Europe as a shrub which has the same sweet scent.



## Wound Herbs

### MONEYWORT

*I look like money and my worth is gold.  
No finer healer for a wound is sold.  
Beside the fountain and the hidden pool  
I wait the coming of the saint or fool.  
For all alike who pluck my pale green flower  
Are welcome to its timeless healing power.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* *Lysimachis mummularia* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Primulaceae. *Country names:* Creeping Jenny, Creeping loosestrife, Wandering Jenny, Wandering sailor, Runagates, Twopenny grass, Herb twopence, Meadow runagates, Two penigrass, *Serpentaria*, String of sovereigns. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Part used:* Leaves, root. *Natural habitat:* Europe. *Action:* Astringent, antiscorbutic, anti-acid.

---

Moneywort is familiar to gardeners because it is so often cultivated at the edges of fountains and on rockeries. It takes its name of Moneywort from the shape of its smooth leaves which suggest coins. It is allied to the yellow loosestrife and grows in damp meadows. The stems and flowers have green sepals, are heart shaped and frilly at the base.

The leaves are used medicinally for coughs, and the plant was at one time a specific for whooping cough. Boerhave recommended the leaves for haemorrhages, in ten-grain doses in powder form. Culpeper recommended the herb as a quick healer of wounds of all kinds, and it can be taken internally for this purpose or a lotion can be made from it to apply externally.

Sibthorp's Moneywort, so common in Cornwall, belongs to a different family altogether.

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### MOONWORT

*And I ha' been plucking plants among  
Hemlock, henbane, adder's tongue;  
Nightshade, moonwort, Ibbard's bane,  
And twice by the dogs was like to be ta'en.*

*Botanical name:* Botrychium lunaria. *Natural order:* Ophioglossaceae. *Country name:* Osmunde. *French name:* Botryche. *German name:* Echte Mondraute. *Italian names:* Erbe lunaria, Lunaria dei grappolo. *Turkish name:* Gazel lisani. *Under the dominion of:* The Moon. *Symbolical meaning:* Forgetfulness. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including England.

---

Though Moonwort is really a fern its first appearance does not suggest this. What looks like a stem is really a bud containing the unopened frond, and when it opens and grows, as it often does, to a height of two feet, it does not resemble other British ferns, and it has the crescent shape of the moon.

It is found in Surrey, Cambridgeshire, Oxfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Yorkshire and Staffordshire, but it is not common. Culpeper said in his time that it grew where there was much grass and it is difficult to find for this reason.

The herb was recommended to heal wounds and was boiled in white wine and made into lotions and salves for wounds, bruises and sprains. It probably, in common with other ferns, contains much nitrogenous matter.

The old superstition was that it had the magical power to open locks and unshoe horses.

This plant must not be confused with Lunaria (Honesty) which is sometimes called Moonwort, or with the Moon flower of India, which is a bindweed.

## Wound Herbs

### PLOUGHMAN'S SPIKENARD

*The Ploughman's spikenard's spicy smell.*

*Botanical name:* Inula Conyza, Conyza squaurosa (Linn.). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Cinnamon root, Great Fleabane, Fleawort, Horsetail. *French names:* Conise, Herbe aux puces, Herbe aux punaises. *German names:* Dürrwurz, Grosses Flohkraut. *Italian names:* Conizza, Erba della pulci. *Dutch name:* Loudekruid. *Turkish name:* Pire otu. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, on limestone or chalk, in copses and on dry banks.

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**T**he Ploughman's Spikenard is closely allied to Elecampane and the Fleabanes. It contains inulin, is useful in coughs and colds, and has a good reputation as a wound herb—for ruptures, bruises and inward and outward wounds.

The powdered plant destroys insects. It grows about a foot high and has numerous daisy-like flowers of a yellow or dusky purple colour. Its seeds are small, black and crowned with a sessile feather, with simple rays as long as the calyx. The smell is pleasantly aromatic.



SELF HEAL—*PRUNELLA VULGARIS*



# Wound Herbs

## PRUNELLA

*My garden grew self-heal and balm,  
And speedwell that's blue for an hour,  
Then blossoms again, O grievous my pain,  
I'm plundered of each flower.*

—DEVONSHIRE SONG

*Botanical name:* *Prunella vulgaris* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Country names:* Touch and heal, All heal, Self heal, Slough heal, Brownwort, Brumel, Bumble bees, Carpenter's grass, Fly flowers, Heart of the earth, Hook heal, London bottles, Pick Pocket, Prince's feathers, Prunell, Sickwort. *French name:* Brunelle. *German name:* Kleine Brunelle. *Italian names:* Brunella, Basilico salvatico. *Spanish name:* Brunela. *Turkish name:* Dag erigi. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Great Britain.

Several plants compete with *Prunella* for the name of Self-heal, but *Prunella* is recognized among herbalists as the genuine Self-heal.

It is either taken inwardly or applied outwardly in fomentations, ointments and plasters for wounds of every kind. The plant differs from other labiate herbs in the flowers which grow on the top of the stalk in whorls which are set thickly together in a spike—two leaves standing out around the head and forming a collar. In colour the flowers are a lilac purple and do not come out at once so that it always has a rather ragged appearance.

It is a very safe herb to use as an antiseptic and astringent, and is good in gargles for all forms of ulcerated sore throats.

# Wound Herbs

## RATTLES

*And where high grasses wave  
Shall great moon daisies blink,  
With rattle and sorrel sharp  
And Robin's ragged pink.*

—ROBERT BRIDGES

*Botanical names:* (Red Rattle) *Pedicularis sylvatica* (Yellow Rattle), *Rhinanthus Crista-Galli*. *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Country names:* Pence, Penny rattle, Red rattle grass, Yellow rattle, Marsh Lousewort, Rattle box, Hen's comb, Cock's comb, Pennyweed, Penny grass. *French names:* (Red) *Pediculaire des bois*, (Yellow) *Crête de coq*, *Cocrête*, *Cocrête des prés*. *German names:* (Red) *Waldäuskraut*, (Yellow) *Hahnenkamm*, *Klapper*, *Gelber Klapperkraut*. *Italian names:* (Red) *Pedicolare*, (Yellow) *Cresta di Gallo*. *Dutch name:* *Haanekam*. *Turkish names:* (Red) *Mevzed*, (Yellow) *Horozebige*. *Under the dominion of:* The Moon.  
*Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Great Britain.

The Rattles were better known a hundred years ago as Louseworts by which name they appear in old herbals. There are two British varieties, the Marsh Lousewort and the Pasture Lousewort, now called the red rattle and the yellow rattle. They were well-known vulneraries at one time.

The red rattle is striking in appearance and the name is derived from the rattle-like sound of the seeds ripening in their capsules. It is rose coloured and labiate in form. It was boiled in port wine and drunk to assist the healing of wounds.

Most of the genus thrive best in mountainous districts and as far north as Siberia. The magnificent *Pedicularis sceptrum Carolinum*, so called by Rudbeck in honour of Charles XII, is peculiar to Sweden and Lapland. Linnaeus found it growing in such profusion in Lapland that it stopped his horse when he was riding it.

The red rattle has very pretty two-lipped purplish red flowers with a spotted calyx and is in flower from June to September. It grows about eighteen inches high, its branches are often tinged with purple and it has deeply cut leaves.

The yellow rattle has pinkish yellow flowers and the stamens have anthers covered with bristly hairs. Its leaves resemble the comb of a cock,

## Wound Herbs

hence its name of Crista-Galli. It was used for dimness of sight and, like the Eyebright, grows among corn.

There is a theory that flocks that feed on these plants do not prosper, but sheep and goats both eat them with relish.

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### SIEGESBECKIA

*All birds and animals, to meet the weather  
Make their own clothes of fur and feather.  
I, when an accident has let it in  
Provide for man a temporary skin.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Siegesbeckia orientalis (Linn.). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country name:* Holy Herb. *Part used:* Juice, leaves, whole plant. *Natural habitat:* Isle of Bourbon, India, China.

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Siegesbeckia is a common weed in China. It is an annual, growing nearly four feet in height, sending out many branches. The flowers are small, yellow and terminating. It is peculiar in having the ray on one side only. When the ripe seeds are gathered they appear to move as if they were alive. It flowers in July and August.

The juice applied to wounds or burns forms a new skin like collodion. Mixed with glycerine the juice is also used for ringworm; and the plant is a cure for rheumatism, colic, and skin diseases of a leprous nature. As a stomachic tonic its properties are similar to camomile.



# Wound Herbs

## SLIPPERY ELM

*Here is a rare delight. How good,  
A medicine that is also food!*

*Four enemies to every chill,  
It first protects from further ill;  
It drives the evil from its lair  
And cools the fevers harboured there;  
It heals, as in its creamy flow  
It slowly circulates below;  
And fourthly, as a food alone  
It is to every healer known.  
For he who nothing takes beside  
For many days is well supplied.  
What other plant, or flower or tree  
Can rival thy sufficiency?*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* *Ulmus fulva* (Mich). *Natural order:* Urticaceae. *Country names:* Red elm, Moose elm, Indian elm. *French name:* Orme. *German names:* Ulme, Ulmbaum. *Italian names:* Olmo, Ulmo. *Turkish name:* Kara ag. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* The inner bark. *Natural habitat:* The United States, Canada. *Constituents:* Mucilage in large quantities.

All elm trees are suitable for healing wounds, but the red elm of America, which is known to herbalists all over the world as Slippery Elm is, on account of the large amount of mucilage contained in the inner bark, the best healing agent known.

The powdered bark is sold in two forms, coarsely powdered to use as a poultice, and finely powdered to make into a food; for the bark of the tree has the double advantage of a food and a poultice. For gastric complaints and ulcers it is unrivalled because it soothes and heals, and at the same time provides enough nourishment, if made with milk, to live on for a considerable time.

The powder is antiseptic and soothing, and can be used for wounds of all kinds—abscesses, suppurations, eruptions and glandular enlargements. It quickly allays inflammation and arrests gangrene.

The common elm, *Ulmus campestris*, is astringent and has also

## Wound Herbs

demulcent properties, but it does not contain as much mucilage as the American red elm. It is used successfully in ringworm and other skin diseases.

Slippery Elm is the basis of many emollient preparations suitable for external applications to wounds of all kinds.

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### SNOWDROP

*Snowdrops, nun-like, flawless, crisp, less flowers than a little gasp of white astonishment.*

—HUMBERT WOLFE

*Botanical name:* Galanthus nivalis (Linn.). *Natural order:* Amaryllidaceae. *Country names:* Bulbous violet, Fair maid of February, Candlemas Bells, French Snowdrop, Purification flower, Snowflower, White ladies, Hope-friend-in-need. *French names:* Perce-neige, Clochette d'hiver. *German name:* Schneeglöcken. *Italian names:* Pianterella, Fior di latte, Foraneve, Lacrime della madonna. *Turkish name:* Sut çiç. *Symbolical meaning:* Consolation. *Natural habitat:* Southern Europe, Switzerland, Austria.

---

The Snowdrop was introduced from Italy in the fifteenth century, probably by the monks.

Its botanical name relates to its milk white and snow-like character. In old herbals it is called Bulbous violet and is recommended as a 'digestive, resolute and consolidante herb'. It is said to consolidate bones as well as wounds. The homoeopaths prescribe it in cases of 'initial regurgitation with broken down compensation.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Boericke.

# Wound Herbs

## SPHAGNUM MOSS

*When men by others' cold intent  
Or else by foolish accident  
Lie wounded, and the red blood's flow  
Imperils life, all healers know  
That spongelike, as an eager web  
I stay the bleeding at the ebb.  
And when the friend of all in pain  
Brings sweet forgetfulness again,  
'Tis I beneath the sleeper's head  
That wooed her to the warrior bed.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Sphagnum Cymbifolium. *Natural order:* Lichenes. *Country names:* Bog moss, Gold heath. *French name:* Sphaigne. *German name:* Torfmoos. *Italian names:* Stagno, Muschio di palude. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Symbolical meaning:* Ennui. *Part used:* The whole moss. *Natural habitat:* In bogs on peat soil in Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Yorkshire, Devon, the Lake District, and the Wye Valley.

Sphagnum Moss has a different habit of growth from other mosses and is very varied in colour from pink, deep red and brown to the brightest pale green.

It is permeated with capillary cells which absorb moisture and it holds it like a sponge, so that in the dressing of wounds it is better than the ordinary absorbent bandages.

Though Germany is credited with the discovery of this particular use of Sphagnum in the early 'eighties, there is a record in the Gaelic Chronicle of 1014 to prove that it was used at the Battle of Clontarf. It was also used at the Battle of Flodden by the Highlanders, and long before the Norman Conquest it was in use amongst the Esquimaux and the natives of Kashmir. The Laplanders make it into bolsters and mattresses for their babies.

The moss has a peculiar even action, absorbing the discharge from wounds laterally as well as from above. It can absorb more than twice as much moisture as any ordinary dressing so that it does not require to be changed nearly so often.

To prepare the moss it should be gathered as whole as possible,



WATER SOLDIER—*STRATIOTES ALOIDES*



## Wound Herbs

squeezed and dried in the open air, otherwise its elasticity is diminished. No other moss is a substitute for it.

In the north of Europe where sphagnum mosses of various species occupy large tracts of bogland this becomes peat and is used as common fuel.

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### WATER SOLDIER

*The healer, at the doors of doubt  
Will often turn a herb about  
And seek within its form to find  
Some healing purpose underlined.  
Thus eyebright, like a starry eye  
Offers a clue in mimicry,  
And lung-wort and the liver-wort  
Display the fell disease or hurt  
Or organ which with due appeal  
The virtues of the herb will heal.  
So Water Soldier with a leafy sword  
Offers a clue too oft ignored.  
No iron blade of peace or war  
That injures man but to my lore  
Will yield, and my unfailing knife  
Will slay the injury, and summon life.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Stratiotes aloides. *Natural order:* Hydrocharitaceae. *Country names:* Water house leek, Water sengren, Sea green, Crab's claw, Freshwater soldier, Knight's pondweed, Knight's wort, Water pine, Soldier yarrow, Water parsnip, Water aloe. *French names:* Stratiote-aloés, mille-feuille. *German names:* Wasserfeder, Wasserschere. *Italian names:* Erba coltella, Guincherella boreale. *Turkish name:* Su Savi Sabr. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* The Fen district of England, Eastern Counties particularly, Yorkshire.

---

The Water Soldier is a perennial aquatic plant found in the Eastern Counties of England, particularly in the Fen district. It is the only

## Wound Herbs

British species. It is unlike any other plant though it has a resemblance to the aloe, and it spreads rapidly.

The flower stalk has at its summit a two-leaved sheath from which arises the large white flower with stamens, one flower only bearing pistils. The dark prickly green leaves remain embedded in the mud.

The plant was particularly renowned for wounds caused by iron, and it was prescribed for St. Anthony's fire and for bruised kidneys. Gerard says it is of 'a cooling nature and temperament'.

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### WOOD SANICLE

*Qui a la Bugle et le Sanicle fait  
aux Chirurgiens la niche.*

*Botanical name:* Sanicula Europaea (Linn.). *Natural order:* Umbelliferae. *Country names:* Self-heal, Pool root. *French name:* Sanicle. *German names:* Sanikel, Echte helknecke. *Italian names:* Sanicola, Fragolina. *Dutch name:* Sanikel. *Turkish name:* Deve kulagi. *Under dominion of:* Venus. *Part used:* Whole herb. *Natural habitat:* North and Central Europe, including Great Britain. Tropical Africa.

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**T**he Wood Sanicle is often called Self-heal, so it must not be confused with Prunella which is the herb really entitled to that name. The Wood Sanicle is the only species of the Saniculas that is found in England, and it thrives in a moist rich soil in a shady position. It is a perennial plant, with white or pale pink flowers which grow in umbels and blossom in May and June: the leaves are heart shaped at the base and much toothed like a saw.

The flowers are followed by prickly seeds which adhere to everything with which they come in contact.

The medicinal properties of the plant are astringent and alterative. It makes a very good gargle for sore throats and is a cleansing herb for the blood. It has a good reputation as an alterative herb.

## Wound Herbs

### WOUNDWORTS

*I grow within the lowly hedge ;  
My cousin at the marsh's edge.  
And each, as shown within our name,  
For healing wounds is known to fame.  
Less famous is our second feat—  
Our roots are very good to eat.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical names:* Hedge woundwort : *Stachys Sylvatica* (Linn.), Marsh woundwort : *Stachys Palustris* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Country names:* (Hedge woundwort) Hedge archangel, Blind nettle, Cow's weather wind, Dead nettle, Nettle foot, Toadflower, Cow's withywind. (Marsh woundwort) All heal, Cockhead, Dead nettle, Hound's tongue, Panay opopanewort, Swines maskert, Rough weed, Rusticum vulna herba, Runch, Sheep's brisken, Downy woundwort, Swine arbut, Clown's woundwort. *French names:* (Hedge woundwort) Crapandine, (Marsh woundwort) Ortie des marais, Ortie morte. *German names:* (Hedge woundwort) Bergziest, (Marsh woundwort) Sumpfziest. *Italian names:* (Hedge woundwort) Erba giudaica, (Marsh woundwort) Scabiosa palustre, Spigo fiorito. *Turkish name:* Otu isi gan. *Under the dominion of:* (Clown's woundwort) Saturn. *Part used:* Herb, leaves. *Natural habitat:* Great Britain.

---

Both the woundworts were universally used to heal wounds. Gerard, Parkinson and all the great herbalists were enthusiastic in their praise.

The tuberous roots are edible and are often very large and full of nutriment. The young shoots can also be eaten like asparagus. The Hedge woundwort produces a good yellow dye.

The woundworts are closely allied to Wood Betony which is an excellent herb for the nerves and the blood.



## Chapter Two

### ANTISEPTIC HERBS

*Balsam of Peru; Betel; Carrot; Echinacea;  
Eucalyptus; Garlic; Germanders; Milk-  
wort; Myrrh; Pareira Brava;  
Plume Poppy; Sassafras;  
Smartweed; Wild Indigo*

**M**ost herbs are to a certain extent antiseptic—that is to say, they prevent putrefaction, but some of them are powerful enough to inhibit micro-organisms. Cinnamon, for instance, possesses a special power of destroying bacteria and is one of the specifics against the influenza germ, which it will antidote if taken in time to destroy the parent virus. It is the oil in the tree that has such valuable anti-germicidal properties.

Sassafras oil, obtained from another member of the Laurel family, is extensively used by herbalists as an alterative and antiseptic. Cloves, on account of their oil, are also anti-putrescent.

Eucalyptus oil is in such general use that its antiseptic properties are universally known. The tree belongs to the Myrtle family, as does the Clove. There are many varieties of the eucalyptus, but the *Eucalyptus Globulus* will live and flourish in the south of Europe, and anywhere where the temperature does not drop below 60 degrees F. The Italians have made extensive use of eucalyptus trees in draining and making healthy parts of the Roman Campagna and other places in Italy that only a few years ago were uninhabitable. At the monastery of the Three Fountains in Rome they make an excellent liqueur from *Eucalyptus* which is sold as a cleansing tonic. It has a strong taste of eucalyptus, but is not unpleasant. Among the aromatic herbs Thyme and Southernwood have the best reputation as antiseptics, but undoubtedly all the camphoraceous plants have disinfectant properties: Lavender, Rosemary, Marjoram, Camomile, Peppermint, and the other mints. The Garden Thyme is cultivated on a large scale for medicinal purposes. The oil, added to baths, is extremely helpful in nervous prostration and to allay irritation of the skin.

Thymol, so much used in medicines as an antiseptic, is an alkaloid of the Thyme plant. It is not unlike Carbolic Acid in action, but it is less

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

irritating, more permanent, and more effective in destroying bacteria.

Lavender, the companion of Thyme, sharing its liking for a poor soil, for the moisture of our English climate, and for the same conditions of growth, has also anti-germicidal properties, and has been used with success in the treatment of wounds. Oil of Lavender is one of the best applications to prevent and cure the bites of mosquitoes and other insects.

Lovage is used extensively in India for its antiseptic properties in cholera.

One plant of Camomile will keep a whole border of other plants healthy. Marjoram was used by the ancient Greeks for fomentations and is said to keep milk from turning sour if placed near it.

But it is not only the camphoraceous plants that have disinfectant properties. The Garden Carrot is strongly antiseptic and arrests the activity of micro-organisms inside or outside the body, if taken either internally as a medicine, or applied externally as a poultice.

One of the most powerful of all herbal prophylactics is the lovely purple Rudbeckia, which has been so much cultivated of late years in herbaceous borders. Wherever there is suppuration, it is a useful remedy.

The common Barberry is antiseptic as well as digestive, and the berries are a good remedy in typhus and other contagious fevers. The ancient Greeks used it as a preventative against plague and other violent epidemics. Wild Indigo is another typhus herb, much used by homoeopaths for septic conditions of the blood, putrescent phenomena being one of its chief indications.

The White Water Lily is a very old herbal cure for cleansing and disinfecting wounds and ulcers, and the root is used internally or externally. Both the Wall and the Water Germander have a reputation amongst herbalists as an antidote to poisons. Decoctions of either herb are used in gangrene. Smartweed, a close relation of the Bistort, has antiseptic properties and so has the oil of the Myrtle plant.

Golden Seal is recommended for sore eyes, but it has a healthy action on all open wounds and particularly on the mucous membranes. The best disinfectant for the bladder is Pareira Brava, a plant which grows in the West Indies and is found in Brazil and Peru. The Brazilians use it to antidote poisonous snake bites.

Plume Poppy, a Chinese plant which can be cultivated in Great Britain, antidotes insect bites. The juice is extracted from the stems of the leaves and stains a deep yellow.

The Dalmatian Pyrethrum is also an insecticide, and the bark of Quassia destroys insects and parasites. So does Balsam of Peru.

Coto Bark, obtained from a species of *Nectandra* growing in Bolivia,

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

is used as an antiseptic astringent in cholera. It acts specifically on the alimentary canal, and is chiefly used to exterminate poison that has been conveyed into the body by drinking water or food. It must be used with great caution and is not advised if inflammation is present, because it can produce violent pain.

Cane Sugar is anti-putrescent. It prevents wounds from turning septic and assists their healing. It also prevents infection.

One of the safest of all antidotes to a poisonous condition of the body is the Garlic plant. The fresh bulb is a positive antiseptic and a valuable prophylactic against the spread of contagious diseases. Latin countries have such a respect for its disinfectant properties that they flavour most of their dishes with it. It is a very safe remedy in incipient tuberculosis of the lungs and has been used successfully in many cases. It appears to have a destructive action on the tubercle bacillus. The best way to prescribe it is in the form of the freshly expressed juice, which must be extracted from Garlic before the outer green skin containing the chlorophyll has been removed.

The whole tribe of onions—garlic, leeks, asafoetida are powerfully antiseptic. The Allyl, which they all contain and from which the name of the genus *allium* is derived, is rich in sulphur, and sulphur taken in the form of a plant for a prolonged period, far from impairing the condition of the blood, as isolated sulphur does, improves and purifies it. Club Moss is called vegetable sulphur, because the spores when powdered are bright yellow like sulphur, which the plant evidently contains to a considerable degree. The powder is used in the same way as sulphur for diseases of the skin. This is the *Lycopodium* of the homoeopaths.

Herbal disinfectants are safer than chemicals, and though they appear less strong, are actually stronger and more permanent. One of their great advantages is, that their prolonged use produces no deleterious results. They are not injurious in any way.

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

### BALSAM OF PERU

*Eruptions on the fairest skin  
Are final payment for a former sin.  
And those whose loveliness is hid  
Eat less, and far more wisely than they did.  
And daily, knowing what to do,  
Use, at your service, Balsam of Peru.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Myroxylon Pereirae. *Natural order:* Leguminosae.  
*Other names:* Toluifera Pereira, Myrospermum Pereira. *French name:*  
Baumier de Peru. *Italian name:* Balsamo di Peru. *Part used:* Gum.  
*Natural habitat:* The forests of San Salvador in Central America. *Action:*  
Stimulant, expectorant.

---

**T**he balsamic resin obtained from this tree is called Peruvian balsam because it is shipped from Peru.

The tree from which the resin is obtained has a very fragrant scent which can be smelt from a long distance. The flowers are the least fragrant part of the tree. The wood resembles mahogany and the trees begin to yield resin when they are four years old and continue to do so for thirty years. They can reach a height of about fifty feet.

To obtain the balsam they are beaten with a blunt instrument; when the fractured bark becomes loose, notches are cut in it and burnt, to ignite the balsam; then the wounds are stopped up with rags, and after a fortnight the balsam exudes freely. The rags are then thrown into boiling water and the balsam floats on the top and is skimmed off.

It has stimulating and expectorant properties and is prescribed for skin eruptions in the same way as sulphur ointment. It resembles benzoic acid in its action. Internally it is given for some forms of bronchial catarrh when the expectoration is profuse and septic. Balsam of Tolu, Myroxylon Toluifera, is very similar in action.

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

### BETEL

*My leaves relieve a troubled skin  
From sores and ulcers and their kin.  
All those with tight, congested lung  
I heal while yet the trouble's young.  
The hungry find I have no peer,  
And those who know me never fear  
Starvation ere the journey's end.  
But some, while chewing call me friend  
And stain with me the road beneath.  
Fools, they will ruin lips and teeth.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Piper betel. *Natural order:* Peperaceae. *Other names:* Chavica betel, Artanthe Hixagona. *French names:* Bétel, Temboul, Poivrier betel. *German name:* Betelpfefferstrauch. *Italian name:* Betel. *Turkish name:* Tambul. *Malayan name:* Sirch. *Under dominion of:* Mars. *Part used:* Leaves. *Natural habitat:* India, Malay, Java, Cochin China, cultivated in Madagascar, Bourbon and the West Indies. *Action:* Astringent.

---

**T**he Betel plant is one of the peppers. It is a climbing shrub similar in growth to the Black pepper. It is cultivated for its leaves which produce an oil containing two phenols, betel phenol and chavicol, and it has antiseptic and stimulating properties. The natives of India and Malay chew it with the betel nut which is wrapped in it. This nut is not found on the Betel plant but grows on one of the Palms, *Areca catechu*. It is chopped up and wrapped in one of the betel leaves to which lime is added and these nuts are chewed by the natives to such an extent that their teeth crumble away.

It is in general use among the Malays who find it stimulating enough to take the place of meat.

They use the stalks medicinally and in choosing the leaves which they apply to ulcers and skin diseases they prefer those that grow on the low branches.

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

### CARROT

*As soon as man was born he needed me,  
For 'he' was ever witless without 'she'.  
And who shall find and hold his heart's desire  
That has not offered first my philtre's fire?  
Each, too, that seeks his love within the night  
Has need of me to purify his sight.  
Alas, that in the warring skies above  
Hate is the hunter, and the victim, love.*

—T. C. H.

*Botanical name:* *Daucus carota* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Umbelliferae.  
*Country names:* Bird's nest, Bee's nest, Crow's nest, Dawki, Fiddle, Hill  
trot, Mirrot, Rantipole. *French name:* Carotte. *German names:* Echte  
Möhre, Karrotten, Mohren. *Italian name:* Carota. *Turkish name:*  
Havuc. *Under dominion of:* Mercury. *Part used:* Herb, seeds, root.  
*Natural habitat:* Southern Europe and cultivated all over Great Britain.  
*Action:* Antiseptic, diuretic, tonic.

---

**T**he Garden Carrot is derived from the Wild Carrot which is superior medicinally. The plant was much esteemed by the Greeks who had various names for it. It is mentioned by Epicharmus in 500 B.C. under the name of Sisaron; in 430 B.C. Hippocrates refers to it as Staphylinos and in the first century A.D. the Greeks called it Elaphoboscum. In a cookery book by Apicius Coelius, A.D. 230, it is called Carota and Galen added the name of *Daucus* to distinguish it from the parsnip. The Greeks regarded it as an aphrodisiac and called it philtion.

The carrot prevents putrescent changes in the body, can be used as a poultice for wounds and swellings and is an invaluable food for children generally. The sugar obtained from it is useful for consumptive children.

The central purple flower of the umbel distinguishes it from similar plants though the *Daucus Maritimus* is said to be without it.

# *Antiseptic Herbs*

## ECHINACEA

*This purple daisy's good for blanes  
And septic boils and other pains.  
It disinfects the tiny foe  
Before the invading force can grow.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Echinacea angustifolia. *Natural order:* Compositae. *Other names:* Brauneria pallida. *Country names:* Black Sampson, Cone-flower, Niggerhead, Rudbeckia. *Part used:* The whole plant, including the root. *Natural habitat:* America, west of Ohio, cultivated in England. *Action:* Alterative, antiseptic, aphrodisiac. *Constituents:* Oil resin, inulin, inuloid sucrose, vulose, betaine, two phytosterols and fatty acids, cerotic linolic and palmatic. It also contains iodine.

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Echinacea angustifolia is a perennial plant native to the Central and Western elevated parts of the United States of America. It has black roots, an erect stem and large purple composite flowers.

Other species are sometimes used; Echinacea purpurea E. Dicksoni, and E. Dubia and all appear to have the same properties. The latter two grow in Mexico.

The plant is a specific in some kinds of boils and in some skin diseases, especially skin eruptions caused by bromide of potassium.

It influences secretion and excretion and stimulates the glandular system. It is one of the best remedies we have for septicaemia.

The plant is known to the Indians, who use it as a cure for snake poisoning. It inhibits the staphylococcus and as an external lotion for swellings it is invaluable.

Dr. Ellingwood considers it the most satisfactory of all remedies to stimulate retrograde metabolism and tissue waste.

Until comparatively lately this herb was used exclusively by herbalists.

# Antiseptic Herbs

## EUCALYPTUS

*That man shall have his weight in gold  
Who slays unborn the common cold.  
I am but gaoler to disease,  
And hold in chains the common sneeze.  
Yet fiercer foes I strive to quell,  
And many a fever knows my smell.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Eucalyptus Globulus. *Natural order:* Myrtaceae. *Other names:* Blue gum tree, Stringy bark tree. *French names:* Eucalyptus, Gommier bleu. *German names:* Schönmütz, Blauer Gommibaum. *Italian name:* Eucalipto. *Turkish names:* Setma ag, Kafur ag. *Part used:* Oil from leaves and the leaves themselves. *Natural habitat:* Australia, Tasmania, North and South Africa, India, Southern Europe. *Action:* Antiseptic disinfectant, deodorant, antipyretic, haemostatic, nutrient. *Constituents:* The most important constituent is Eucalyptol, present in E. Globulus up to 70 per cent of its volume. It consists chiefly of a terpene and cinene.

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Eucalyptus is one of the best remedies in the treatment of Typhoid fever.

Various species of Eucalyptus trees are cultivated, but the Eucalyptus Globulus is the hardiest and will grow anywhere where the temperature does not drop below 60 degrees.

E. Polybractea and E. Smithii are preferred for their odour and E. Odorata and E. Citriodora are used in perfumery. E. Radiata has a peppermint-like smell.

All species of Eucalyptus are strongly antiseptic and many of them are cultivated in malarial countries where they drain the land and produce a healthy climate.

In the last few years vast districts in Algiers and Italy that were uninhabitable have become entirely free from the danger of malaria, due partially to the capacity of the trees for absorbing water, and also to their power of preventing the development of the plasmodium malaria.

The plant is non-poisonous and non-irritant. The oil is a controlling agent in pyorrhoea and is a useful local application in severe and extensive burns because it prevents sepsis.

The leaves yield their properties to alcohol and water.



## Antiseptic Herbs

The most decorative of all the Eucalyptus trees is the *E. Ficifolia* or red flowered gum tree. Its habitat is confined to the south-western portion of West Australia, and it is most plenteous near Nornalup. The blossoms which grow in bunches have red fringed petals and the colour of the massed blossoms is a brilliant scarlet vermilion, though hybridization has produced blooms varying in colour from a pale pink to a deep crimson. It is now cultivated in many hot countries for its great beauty.

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### GARLIC

*I have been spending some weeks of dissipation in London,  
and was transformed by Circes' cup, not into a brute, but a beau.  
I am now eating the herb moly in the country.*

—SIDNEY SMITH

*Botanical name:* *Allium sativum* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Liliaceae. *Country names:* Poor Man's Treacle, Clown's Treacle. *French name:* Ail. *German name:* Knoblauch. *Italian name:* Aglio. *Turkish names:* Sarmusak, Sarmisak. *Arabic name:* Som. *Indian name:* Lashuna. *Chinese names:* Swan, Livan. *Persian name:* Sir. *Sanscrit names:* Lasuna, Mahu Shuda. *Malayan name:* Bayang Putch. *Part used:* Bulb. *Natural habitat:* South-West Siberia, Sicily, cultivated in Europe. *Action:* Antiseptic, disinfectant, expectorant, tonic, vermifuge. *Constituents:* An acrid volatile oil, starch, sulphide mucilage 35 per cent, albumen, sugar. The oil contains allyl, propyl, disulphide, diallyl.

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Garlic is soluble in water or alcohol. It contains an essential volatile oil, sugar, mucilage and albumen. As an antiseptic it is unequalled. The juice prevents open wounds from becoming septic and the bulbs themselves keep away infectious germs.

For asthma and chest complaints it has proved a valuable remedy.

Garlic has never been as popular in England as it is in Latin countries, where it enters into the cooking of many of their dishes. The French cook mutton with a clove of garlic inserted into the flesh of the joint, they smear their salad bowls with it before making a salad : but the Spaniards and the Italians do much more than use it as a flavouring, they cook and serve it with eggs, chicken, sausages and every conceivable form of savoury food.

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

The bulb contains a good deal of sulphur.

So powerful and so ancient is the reputation of Garlic as an antidote that Homer introduces it as the gift from Hermes to Odysseus to counteract the spells of Circe.

*To find a name for me the gods took care  
A mystic name that might my worth declare  
They call me Moly: dull Grammarian's sense  
Is puzzled with the term  
But Homer held Divine intelligence.  
In Greek and Latin both my name is great  
The term is just, but Moly sounds more neat  
My powers prevented Circe's dire design  
Ulysses but for me had been a swine  
In vain had Mercury inspir'd his brain  
With craft and tipt his wheedling tongue in vain  
Had I not enter'd timely to his aid.*

In Malaya the natives prescribe Garlic juice for septicaemia, and they make eye drops from it mixed with betel nut and alum which they use in the treatment of many eye diseases. In India the juice is applied to the nose of hysterical girls and is used externally to relieve strangury.

# Antiseptic Herbs

## GERMANDERS

*Germander, marjoram and thyme,  
Which used are for strewing,  
With hissop as an herb most prime,  
Herein my wreath bestowing.*

—MUSES ELYSIUM

*Botanical names:* Sage leaved wood Germander: *Teucrium scorodonia* (Linn.), *Teucrium scordiades* (Schrehz); Wall Germander: *Teucrium chamaedrys* (Linn.); Water Germander: *Teucrium scordium* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Country names:* (Sage leaved) Ambroise, Ambrose, Garlick sage, Wood germander, Rock mint, Mountain sage. (Wall Germander) Herteclowre, Horsechire. (Water Germander) Scordium, English treacle. *French names:* (Sage leaved) Ambroise, Germandrée sauvage. (Wall Germander) Germandrée officinale, Petit chène. (Water Germander) Scordion, Germandrée aquatique, Herbe mithradate, Germandrée d'eau. *German names:* (Sage leaved) Wald Gamander, Wald Salvei. (Wall Germander) Echter Gamander. (Water Germander) Lauch Gamander, Wasser Gamander. *Italian names:* (Sage leaved) Camendrio salvatico, *Salvia dei boschi*, Melino, Scorodonia, Teucro salvatico. (Wall Germander) Camendrio officinale, Germandria, Calamandrea, Querciola, Trissagine (Water Germander) Scordio, Camendrio acquatico, Querciola-acquatica. *Turkish names:* (Sage leaved) Yabani dalak otu. (Wall Germander) Kemedris, Dalak otu, Yer palamudu. (Water Germander) Yilan otu, Sarmusak. *Under dominion of:* Mercury. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Morocco, Europe, including Great Britain. *Constituents:* Sage leaved Germander: Alterative, tonic, diuretic, astringent, emmenagogue; Wall Germander: Diuretic, tonic, stimulant, diaphoretic.

The Germanders are allied to the large family of Sages and have the same greyish green foliage and partake of their aromatic scent. Wood Sage is one of the names for the Sage leaved Germander.

All the Germanders are strongly antiseptic. They make good gargles for the throat, especially the sage leaved variety. The Wall Germander has a very old reputation for curing aches and pains, and the Emperor Charles V is said to have been cured of his rheumatism by this herb after taking it for sixty days continuously. It was one of the strewing herbs

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

which were used as disinfectants. It is very often described in old herbals as 'bordering knots' because it was a favourite edging plant for the intricately patterned beds that made a 'Knot Garden'. The vogue for these has passed, but an excellent specimen of a Knot Garden still survives at Hampton Court.

The Wall Germander is a perennial plant about eight or nine feet in height with whorls of pink flowers. The stems are decumbent at the base and the root throws out long runners.

The Water Germander is much more rare. It has a garlic-like scent and rose-coloured flowers which usually grow in pairs in the axil of the leaf. According to Sowerby it is common in the neighbourhood of Cambridge and in the Isle of Ely.

The Sage leaved Germander was used in England to flavour beer and as a substitute for hops, but it is now only used in France and Jersey for this purpose.

The Germander Speedwell is not allied to the Germanders and belongs to a different order.

Miss Crowfoot and Mrs. Baldensperger who have made a study of the plants of Palestine say that Germander was universally used there as a fever herb under the name of Kamendre until the introduction of quinine and that it is still in use medicinally. Its reputation as a febrifuge is preserved in its French name of Chasse-fièvre. Culpeper recommended it for tertian and quartan agues.

The *Teucrium polium* is sold in Palestine for the stomach troubles of infants and it is used in steam baths for feverish complaints. Its Palestinian name is Lâde.

# *Antiseptic Herbs*

## MILKWORT

*Mauve orchises in painted dresses,  
Yellow hawkweed, purple vetches,  
Woodruff white, geranium rose,  
Milkwort bluest flower that grows.*

—SYLVIA LYND

*Botanical name:* Polygala vulgaris (Linn.). *Natural order:* Polygalaceae. *Country names:* Hedge Hyssop, Milkweed, Rogation flower, Procession flower, Four sisters, Cross flower, Robin's eye. *French names:* Polygale, Herbe à lait, Latier. *German name:* Kreuzblume. *Dutch name:* Kruisbloem. *Italian names:* Polygala, Erbe da latte, Erba bozzolina. *Turkish name:* Süt otu. *Symbolical meaning:* Hermitage. *Part used:* Herb, root. *Natural habitat:* Great Britain. *Action:* Antiseptic, expectorant.

**M**ilkwort is the only species of Polygala that grows wild in Great Britain.

It is a perennial plant with blue, pink or white flowers; the two outer leaves of the calyx are of the same colour as the corolla, and spread out to give the appearance of wings.

The lower petal has a sort of fringe and the flower somewhat resembles a butterfly. The leaves are small and spear shaped and the stems are close to the ground. The plant is found on chalky soil, in pastures, and on heaths, and though less decorative than the handsome varieties that grow in Brazil, China and Arabia, is a striking-looking plant. The name Polygala is derived from a Greek word referring to its milky juice.

The plant was carried in bouquets on Rogation Days and was used as an offering against plagues, pestilences and attacks from fire and wild beasts.

It has been used successfully in pleurisy, asthma, pneumonia and dropsy.

The powdered root is sometimes prescribed in half-drachm doses in pleurisy and a decoction of the herb taken in three-spoonful doses hourly has proved successful in dropsy. The decoction is made by boiling an ounce of the herb in a pint of water till reduced to threequarters of a pint.

The plant is closely related to the Senega snake root which is referred to in the chapter on alteratives.

The milkwort of the ancients was not this plant, but the Euphorbia antiquorum of Linnaeus.

# Antiseptic Herbs

## MYRRH

*Speak modest myrrh! Why do you so delay  
Why do the tears run down thy bark so fast?  
Thou needs't not blush for faults so long time past  
Ah! happy faults, that can such tears produce,  
Which to the world are of such sovereign use.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Botanical name:* Balsamodendron Myrrha, Commiphora myrrha. *Natural order:* Burseraceae. *French name:* Arbre à myrrhe. *German name:* Echter Myrrhenbaum. *Italian name:* Albero del mirra. *Spanish name:* Arbol de Mirra. *Turkish names:* Mer aj, Mir aj, Mür aj. *Arabian names:* Mukala, Murr, Habak, Hadee. *Indian names:* Bysabole, Bhensabole, Bal, Mhaisagaggul. *Sanscrit names:* Vola Minaharma, Gandha Rosaha, Samudra gugul, Saindhava. *Symbolises:* Gladness. *Part used:* The gum from the stems. *Natural habitat:* Arabia, Somaliland, Africa, Socotra, Yamen. *Constituents:* A volatile oil myrrhol, an oxygenated ethereal volatile oil 2 per cent, resin, myrrhin 25 to 40 per cent which by fusion becomes converted into myrrhic acid, gum 40 to 60 per cent, bitter principle—a glucoside, salts as calcium phosphate, and carbonate, etc. The gum is soluble in water. *Action:* Antispasmodic, disinfectant, expectorant, emmenagogue, tonic, externally astringent and stimulant.

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Myrrh is one of the most useful antiseptic applications for the gums and mucous membranes. Taken internally its stimulating action diminishes excessive secretions from mucous surfaces, quickens the cardiac action, acts as a gastric stimulant and tonic, allays hysteria and asthmatic complaints, and dissolves polypi. It is excellent in dentrifices and mouth washes, prevents the hair from falling and makes a stimulating and antiseptic gargle. It should only be used in small doses.

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

### PAREIRA BRAVA

*Fools who from ignorance or sin  
Take many a foolish liquor in  
In time repent, and when devout,  
I help to cleanse the passage out.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical names:* Chondrodendrum tomentosum, Cissampelos Pareira (Rutz), Abuta Rufescens. *Natural order:* Menispermaceae. *Country names:* Virgin vine, Velvet leaf, Ice vine, Portuguese Wild Olive. *French names:* (White pareira) Abuta, Liane amère. *German name:* (White pareira) Abutawurzel. *Italian names:* (White pareira) Abuta, Liana amara. *Turkish name:* (White pareira) Abuta. *Part used:* Leaves, root, bark. *Natural habitat:* West Indies, Brazil, Peru, Spanish Main. *Constituents:* The plant contains calcium malate, potassium nitrate, a soft resin, yellow bitter principle, a nitrogenous substance, fecule and various salts. *Action:* Disinfectant, diuretic, tonic, aperient.

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**P**areira Brava plant is a climber and belongs to the Moonseed family. The fruit is first scarlet and then black and in size like a grape.

It has a great reputation as a disinfectant for the bladder.

Two other allied varieties, the Cissampelos Pareira and the White Pareira (*Abuta rufescens*) are used for similar purposes.

The botanical name of Chondrodendron is derived from Chondros, a grain, and Dendron, a tree, in allusion to the grain-like warty protuberances on the bark.

# *Antiseptic Herbs*

## PLUME POPPY

*There's never worker, peer or king  
That can avoid the common sting.  
And who, for all the day and night  
Avoids th' unmentionable bite?  
In brief, whoever you may be,  
The scratching over, send for me.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Bocconia Cordata. *Natural order:* Papaveraceae.  
*Country names:* Chinese celandine, Macleaya. *French name:* Bocconie.  
*German name:* Federmohn. *Italian name:* Bocconia. *Turkish name:* Bokonia. *Part used:* Juice from the stem of the leaves. *Natural habitat:* China. *Constituents:* Protopine, homo-chilidonine, Chelenythrine, sanguinarine.

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This tall decorative plant is a perennial. It has cream-coloured flowers which grow in large panicles. Though it is a native of China there does not appear to be any mention of it in Dr. Bretschneider's *Botanicum Sinicum*. The plant can be cultivated in Europe and in England.

Other species such as the *Bocconia arborie*, the *Bocconia frutescens* and the *Bocconia integrifolia* are natives of Mexico and the West Indies.

The juice of the plant is used as a disinfectant against the bites and stings of insects.



## *Antiseptic Herbs*

### SASSAFRAS

*Louisiana, what a claim  
Is yours upon the bank of fame!  
For all the country of my birth  
Is scented with my peerless worth.  
My leaves a sauce for every meal,  
All swellings, bumps and boils I heal.  
Yet nobler does my worth appear—  
For all the world I flavour beer.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Sassafras officinale (Lees and Eberm). *Natural order:* Lauraceae. *Country names:* Sassafrax, Ague tree. *French names:* Sassafras, Bois odorant. *German names:* Fenchelholz, Sassafrasbaum. *Italian names:* Sassafraso, Lauro degl' Trocchesi. *Turkish name:* Sassafras ag. *Part used:* Bark, root. *Natural habitat:* From Canada to Florida and Mexico. *Constituents:* The bark contains a volatile oil 5 per cent, sassafrid 9 per cent, tannin 6 per cent, starch, gum, resin, wax. The pith contains mucilage. *Action:* Alterative, diaphoretic, emmenagogue stimulant.

---

Sassafras bark is given in hot infusions to purify the blood. The oil has the same properties and is anodyne, and antiseptic. It is used to disperse glandular swellings.

For rheumatism the bark is often combined with Guaicum and Sarsaparilla. Infused in rose water it is applied to sore eyes. Sassafras oil is a good remedy for hard swellings if applied externally with gentle massage.

In the southern parts of America, where the tree is abundantly grown, the scent from it perfumes the air for a considerable distance.

In Louisiana the leaves of the plant are used as a condiment, and in Virginia the young shoots are added to beer.



**SMARTWEED—POLYGONUM HYDROPIPER**



# Antiseptic Herbs

## SMARTWEED

*Beneath the cooling waters' silent flow  
Unhurried and invisible I grow.  
Yet Water Pepper is my other name  
And irritant indeed my burning fame.  
The fevered body knows my hot caress  
And fever in my flaming burns the less.  
Beneath the saddle of the drowsy male  
I burn the rider's, not the horse's tail.  
In brief, who plucks me from my hidden pool  
Will find that I am everything but cool.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Polygonum Hydropiper (Linn.). *Natural order:* Polygonaceae. *Country names:* Aremart, Arsemart, Arsemick, Bity tongue, Ciderage, Blodewort, Bloodwort, Culrage, Curage, Cyderack, Esmert, Keliage, Kilbridge, Lakeweed, Plumbago, Red Knees, Red Shank, Red weed, Sanguinary, Smartass, Smart grass, Water pepper. *French names:* Curage, Poivre d'eau, Piment d'eau. *German name:* Pfeffer-knöterich. *Italian names:* Poligono, piperino, pepe d'asino, pepe del povero. *Turkish name:* Su biberi. *Under the dominion of:* Mars. *Part used:* Herb, leaves. *Natural habitat:* Great Britain and Ireland, Europe, Russia and Asia to the Arctic. *Action:* Diuretic, emmenagogue, stimulant.

---

Smartweed has not yet been analysed, but the plant yields its virtues to alcohol and water. Heat impairs its virtues.

The plant is an annual growing to a height of about two feet with drooping spikes of pink flowers. It prefers to grow under water.

A decoction of the plant is used to dye wool a yellow colour, but it must first be dipped in a solution of alum. This plant is said to be the Hippice of the Scythians who put it under their horses' saddles to prevent them getting tired or hungry.

It is used in baths to relieve rheumatic pains and cholera patients are sometimes wrapped in sheets dipped in a hot decoction of the plant to relieve their suffering. The tincture must be made from the fresh plant because heat and age destroy its properties.

Culpeper refers to it under the name of Arssmart, and distinguishes two varieties, the hot arssmart and the mild arssmart, which he says has

## *Antiseptic Herbs*

much broader leaves with a leaden coloured spot in them, and a colder taste.

Salmon recommends it for dissolving calculous complaints, and Waller for hypochondriacal subjects.

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### WILD INDIGO

*The symptoms for its use are of an asthenic type, simulating low fevers, septic condition of the blood, malarial poisoning, and extreme prostration.*

—BOERICKE

*Botanical names:* Baptisia tinctoria (R. Br.), Sophora tinctoria (Linn.), Podalyria tinctoria (Michx). *Natural order:* Leguminosae. *Country names:* Dyer's Baptisia, Yellow Broom, Horsefly weed, Indigo weed, Rattle bush, Wild Indigo, False indigo, Clover Broom. *French names:* Baptisie sauvage, indigo trèfle. *German name:* Baptisie. *Italian name:* Baptisia. *Part used:* Leaves, bark, root. *Natural habitat:* Canada to Carolina. *Constituents:* Baptisin (a bitter glucoside), Baptin (a purgative glucoside), Baptitoxin (a poisonous alkaloid), resin, and fixed oil. *Action:* Antiseptic, tonic, purgative.

It yields its properties to alcohol and water.

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Wild indigo, a perennial plant, is allied to the Japanese pagoda tree. It has yellow flowers which grow in small, loose terminal branches and flower in August and September. The plant delights in dry, sandy soil. The young shoots of the plant are not unlike asparagus and are used in New England as a substitute.

It takes its botanical name from the Greek word Bapto, 'to dye', because it was formerly in great demand as a dyeing plant. To-day it has been superseded by Indigo fera and other plants.

The importance of the plant lies in its antiseptic properties and in its power of combating low fevers of a putrescent nature. It has been widely used in America in the treatment of typhoid, malignant tonsillitis, diphtheritic laryngitis and also scarlet fever and dysentery. It has a powerful influence on the glandular structure of the intestinal canal and it prevents the destruction of red corpuscles. It was used originally as an antiseptic dressing for gangrenous wounds.



**WILD INDIGO—BAPTISIA TINCTORIA**



## *Antiseptic Herbs*

The homoeopaths use it for illnesses where muscular soreness is a noticeable feature and putrid phenomena are present.

In Germany wild indigo is combined with scurvy grass and made into a tisane to tighten teeth which have become loose. It is also used in the treatment of tuberculosis and chronic fevers.



## Chapter Three

### ASTRINGENT HERBS

*Archangel; Bael Tree; Baobab Tree; Banyan Tree; Bastard Ipecacuanha; Bearberry; Beth Root; Bignonia; Bilberry; Bistort; Blackberry; Bluebell; Cajeput Oil Tree; Campions; Catchfly; Celandine (Lesser); Duck's Meat; Ebony Tree; Fleabanes; Fulsee Flower; Geraniums; Heliotrope; Heliotrope (Indian); Herb Robert; Indian Plum; Jambul; Jewelweed; Kinos; Knotgrass (Russian); Logwood; Mangosteen; Mimosa; Mountain Ash; Periwinkle; Pinus Bark; Ragged Robin; Rupturewort; Sea Lavender; Service Tree; Silverweed; Sloes; Spiraea; Sumachs; Thrift; Tuberose; Wayfaring Tree; Whortleberry; Yellow Flag*

**T**he word astringent is derived from a Latin word which means to bind or suppress. Herbs with astringent properties contain tannic or gallic acid, which has the power to bind or tighten relaxed membranes and tissues. Such herbs are valuable medicinally because they act as styptics and restore elasticity to organs of the body which have lost their firmness and in many cases are out of position. They allay haemorrhages, cause contractions of the muscular fibre and restore tone to the whole body.

Many of these herbs have a specific sphere of action, so by a right choice of astringent herbs organs of the body can be treated locally. It is to these herbs that we look for the work of repair when the body has been wounded or ravaged by ill health or disease.

The chief indication of their properties is a roughness that they give to the tongue when they are taken into the mouth.

One of the best astringent herbs is Bistort—one of the Polygonums. It is known in the north of England as Easter Giant because it is made into a traditional Easter pudding with nettles.

Bayberry is another important herb in this class; it is the chief ingredient in a famous cleansing powder which herbalists prescribe for internal use after a chill. It is one of the myrtles, most of which have

## *Astringent Herbs*

similar properties. Venus is said to have used myrtle water as an astringent lotion. Avens, one of the geums, is both astringent and pleasant to the palate. It has a delightful clove-like scent and taste, and its virtues are said to be stronger in the spring than at any other time. It went by the title of the Blessed Herb, and 25th March, our Lady's Day, was the actual date fixed for it to be taken from the ground.

The wild blackberry is a favourite remedy for children when a mild astringent is required, and it is sometimes made into a cordial for this purpose. Sloes and whortleberries are also astringent.

Geraniums are powerfully so, and the species used in medicine are the American cranesbill and the wild Herb Robert of our English hedges.

Silverweed and Tormentil are wild English herbs which make good astringent infusions or decoctions. They are better known to gardeners as potentillas. Silverweed, with its silver-white leaves, is a very familiar sight on country roads. It often grows in large patches and its silvery appearance is very attractive.

The periwinkles are, as Culpeper said, 'Great binders', and both blue and red have much the same properties and are used by herbalists for diabetes. Lord Bacon advocated the periwinkle as a cure for cramp, and it is praised in all herbals for its power of binding.

Astringent herbs are necessary for haemorrhages of all kinds, and bleeding of the lungs is healed by comfrey. This is so safe and efficacious a herb that it can be used with perfect confidence. It acts as a styptic, heals scarred tissues and injuries to tendons and sinews, and for injuries to the eyes few herbs are so satisfactory.

Nettles, particularly the white and purple archangel, are good, simple and safe agents to check haemorrhages of all kinds.

The Campions and lesser Celandine have similar properties, so has the common Fleabane and an old-fashioned herb called rupturewort, which is actively astringent. It is a very inconspicuous little plant with small green flowers intermixed with the leaves.

The berries of the mountain ash make an excellent astringent gargle, and the sweet-scented heliotrope (the delicious cherry pie) is also a cure for sore and relaxed throats, especially clergyman's sore throat.

Our English oak tree has both astringent and febrifuge properties. The Greeks and Romans used every part of the tree—Galen recommended particularly the leaves, but to-day the bark is most esteemed. It is an excellent substitute for Peruvian bark. The gall nuts which grow on the tree and which are produced by the puncture of insects, partake of the properties of the tree, and these nuts are extensively used in industry as well as in medicine for their astringent properties.

Various members of the arbutus family are prescribed for their astringent

## *Astringent Herbs*

gency, in diseases of the kidneys. Most of them grow under trees, especially under the Pine trees of North America. The arbutus strawberry tree is found wild in Killarney, and in England the trailing Arbutus is cultivated as an ornamental plant.

Bethroot is constantly employed for haemorrhage of the lungs, and the healing properties of the witch hazel tree are too well known to need more than a passing comment. Not nearly so well known is a tree with powerfully astringent properties—the Java plum, which grows in India. It is entirely free from poisonous principles and is an excellent remedy for some forms of diabetes. Its botanical name is *Eugenia Jambolana*.

The Sumachs are also used for diabetes. This very attractive family of plants is found all through the United States and Canada. Some species grow only in China and Japan.

The Bael tree is known throughout India as a specific in dysentery, but as the dried fruit is of no value its use is not known in other countries.

Peruvian Rhatanay, a South American tree, contains a peculiar acid known as *Krameria*, which has very active astringent properties, and is used on that account in tooth powders and mouth washes.

Pharmacists also depend on astringent substances such as the Catechu and the Kinos. The Black Catechu is obtained from one of the Burmese acacias, and the pale from a tree called *Uncaria Gambia*, which grows in the Eastern Archipelago.

The different kinds of Kino are prepared from the inspissated juice of the Bastard Teak Tree.

In so far as they are vegetable substances they are a great improvement on old-fashioned drugs such as lead, copper and zinc, which were formerly employed, but it is extraordinary that so many useful astringent herbs still remain in the hands of the unorthodox only.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## ARCHANGEL

*Some country nook, where o'er the unknown Grave,  
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave  
Under a dark, red-fruited, yew tree's shade.*

—MATTHEW ARNOLD

*Botanical name:* *Lamium album* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Country names:* Bee nettle, dummy nettle, dead nettle, blind nettle, dumb nettle, deaf nettle, day nettle, white nettle, Snake flower, Suchie Sue, Suck bottle. *French names:* Ortie blanche, ortie morte, Lamier blanc. *German name:* Weisse Taubnessel. *Italian names:* Lamio bianco, ortica bianca, ortica morta. *Turkish name:* Beyaz isirgan otu. *Under dominion of:* Venus. *Part used:* Flowers. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain.

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The white deadnettle has astringent, mucilaginous and haemostatic properties. It is given in dysentery and haemophysis internally, and externally it arrests local haemorrhages, if an alcoholic solution is applied.

A decoction has been recommended in pleurisy.

The young shoots are used as greens in parts of the country.

The purple deadnettle has similar properties.

The old-fashioned way of administering the nettle was in the form of a conserve—the proportions being a pound of the flowers to two and a half pounds of white sugar.

The plant is eaten by horses, goats and sheep, but is refused by cows. It is a great favourite with bees.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## BAEL TREE

*Dimas Bosque. Have you ever heard of Marmelos de Bengali?*

—ORTA

*It seems to me to be very styptic, and the physicians of Guzerat use this fruit when young and tender as a conserve in vinegar, which they call Achar, and also in conserve of sugar as we use it. It always preserves that styptic taste however ripe it may be.*

—GARCIA DA ORTAS, 'Simples and Drugs of India'

*Botanical name:* Aegle Marmelos (Corre). *Natural order:* Rutaceae. *Country names:* Bengal quince, Marmelos. *French names:* Bel Indien, Bela Indien. *German names:* Bhelbaum, Schleimapfelbaum. *Italian name:* Bella indiana. *Turkish name:* Hind ayva ag. *Arab name:* Sapharajale-hindi. *Bengal name:* Shriphal. *Other Indian names:* Bela, Billinu-phal. *Malayan name:* Tanghai. *Persian name:* Saphara-jale-hindi. *Sanskrit name:* Bilva-phalam. *Part used:* Unripe fruit pulp. *Natural habitat:* Malabar, Coromandel, dry forests in India. *Constituents:* Mucilage, pectin, sugar, tannin, a volatile oil, bitter principle and ash. The wood ash contains potassium and sodium compounds, phosphates of lime and iron, Calcium Carbonate, Magnesium Carbonate, Silica sand. *Action:* Alterative, laxative, nutritious.

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The Bael tree is largely cultivated in Hindu gardens and the Indian name of Shriphal is derived from two words, Shri—the goddess of abundance—and phal, meaning a fruit.

The tree is the size of an olive, the leaves resemble peach leaves, and have much the same scent. The fruit is at first the size of a small orange, but increases to the size of a large coconut, and varies in shape from oval, to round. The rind is very hard, and when dry becomes stony.

The ripe fruit is very nutritious and has a delicious aromatic flavour. It is prescribed in India with sugar candy for the relief of constipation.

A decoction of unripe fruit or a jelly made from the unripe fruit, or the unripe fruit baked for several hours, is a most useful remedy in dysentery.

The leaves made into an infusion or decoction are a cure for asthma, and the root bark has refrigerant properties and is given to asthma patients who have palpitation of the heart. The root is one of the ingredients in the Indian remedy known as the 'Ten roots' (dasa mula).

# *Astringent Herbs*

## BAOBAB TREE

*The oldest organic monument of our planet.*

—HUMBOLDT

*Botanical name:* Adansonia Digitata. *Natural order:* Bombaceae. *English names:* Monkey Bread, Sour gourd. *French names:* Arbre de mille ans, Baobab, Pain de Singe. *German names:* Ahenbaum, Baobab, Affenbaum. *Italian names:* Baobab, Albero di mille anni, Noce d'Egitto. *Turkish name:* Baobab ag. *Arabian names:* Habbabu, Bahobab. *Indian names:* Rookha, Hathi-Khatiyan, Gorak-xamli. *Part used:* Leaves, bark, pulp of the fruit. *Natural habitat:* Senegal. Cultivated in India and other tropical countries. *Constituents:* The pulp contains phlobaphene, mucilage and gum, glucose, tartrate and acetate of potash and other salts. The pericarp contains phlobaphene, albuminoids, gum, colouring matter, carbonate of potash and soda; the leaves contain wax, glucose, salts, gum and albuminoids; the bark contains wax, tannin, gum, albuminoids, carbonate and chloride of sodium and potassium, and a glucoside andansonin antagonistic to stropanthus. *Action:* Astringent, demulcent, mucilaginous, refrigerant.

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The Baobab tree is the colossus of the vegetable kingdom. It lives to a thousand years and the trunk is so enormous that when hollow it has been known to give refuge to several large families. The appearance of the tree is very singular, not only because of its enormous girth, but on account of the arid grey colour of the wood.

The Africans prize it for its thick mucilaginous juice, which they obtain by tapping the tree. The leaves, when dried and powdered, form a favourite condiment known by the Negroes as Ala. The fruit which is not unlike a lemon in shape contains a sweet and acid spongy red pulp, which is edible and which surrounds the seeds from which agreeable and refrigerant drinks are prepared. The natives mix the fruit and decoctions of the seeds with tamarinds, in the cure of dysentery. Dr. Louis Frank, a French doctor—who had the opportunity of watching its effect on patients suffering from dysentery—adopted its use in his own practice with marked success.

In India the dried shells of the fruits are used by the monks as watering pots, and the Indian name—Gorukha Chinch—is derived from the name of the monk who gave lessons under the tree, and Chinch which is the Indian name for tamarind.

## Astringent Herbs

The Baobab Tree belongs to the small family of Bombaceae which contains the Bombax and a few other large trees of tropical origin which have many of the properties of the mallow family and are classed by some botanists under Malvaceae.

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### BANYAN TREE

*The great Banyan tree is still the pride and ornament of the garden. Dr. Falconer has ascertained satisfactorily that it is only seventy-five years old: annual rings, size, etc., afford no evidence in such a case, but people were alive a few years ago who remembered well its site being occupied in 1782 by a Kugoon (date palm) out of whose crown the Banyan sprouted, and beneath which a Fakir sat.*

—HOOKER'S 'Himalayan Journal'

*Botanical names.* Ficus Indica, Ficus Bengalensis, Urostigma Bengalensis. *Natural order.* Urticaceae. *Other names:* Indian Figtree, Pagoda tree, Bengal figtree. *French names:* Figuier des banians, Figuier des Pagodes, Banian. *German names:* Bengalische Feige, Banianen-Feigenbaum. *Italian names:* Fico dei Baniani, Fico sacro. *Turkish name:* Banian ag. *Arabian name:* Tinâ Barry. *Indian names:* Bargat, Vad, Kadugh. *Malayan name:* Perâlin pâla. *Persian name:* Anjire dasht. *Sanskrit names:* Vata, Srikska, Nya-grodha, Shandaga. *Part used:* Milky juice, bark. *Natural habitat:* East Indies. *Constituents:* The bark contains tannin, wax and caoutchouc. *Action:* Alterative, astringent, tonic.

---

The juice of the Banyan Tree is applied externally to cure cracks in the palms of the hand and the soles of the feet, and also to cure toothache.

The bark and the juice are prescribed in dysentery, diabetes, and in haemorrhages.

## *Astringent Herbs*

### BASTARD IPECACUANHA

*The root dried and reduced to powder is used by the negroes as an emetic—hence its name of bastard ipecacuanha.*

*Botanical name:* *Asclepias curassavica.* *Natural order:* *Asclepiadaceae.* *French names:* *Herbe à sang, Ipécacsauvage.* *German name:* *Bastard ipecacuanha.* *Italian names:* *Ipecacuanha della Antille, Pianta della seta a fiori rossi.* *Turkish names:* *Kan çiç, Yabani altun-köktü.* *Indian names:* *Kurki, Kakatundi.* *Part used:* *Root and juice.* *Natural habitat:* *Central America, West Indies.* *Constituents:* *An active principle, asclepiadin, a glucoside resembling emetin.* *Action:* *Emetic, astringent, anthelmintic.*

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The juice and pounded plant of the Bastard ipecacuanha are applied to arrest haemorrhage from wounds.

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### BEARBERRY

*The American aborigines smoke the dried leaves with tobacco, making a mixture called Sagack-homi in Canada, and Kinikinik among the Western tribes; this is the Larb of the Western hunters.*

—MILLSPAUGH

*Botanical name:* *Arctostaphylos Uva Ursi.* *Natural order:* *Ericaceae.* *Country names:* *Arbutus uva ursi, uva ursi, Bear whortleberries, Bear Bilberries, Brawlins, Cranberry, Creashak, Dogberry, Mealberry, Burren myrtle, Rappen-dandies.* *French names:* *Busserole, Raisin d'ours.* *German name:* *Gemeine Bärrentraube.* *Italian names:* *Uva d'orso, Uva orsina.* *Turkish name:* *Ayi üzümü.* *Part used:* *Leaves.* *Natural habitat:* *Europe, Asia, America. Common in Scotland, Yorkshire and North and West Ireland.* *Constituents:* *Arbutin, methyl-arbutin, ericolin, ursone, Gallic acid, Malic acid, tannin, resin, myrecotin, sugar.*

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The Bearberry plant, which yields its virtues to alcohol or water, was used by the mysterious physicians of Myddrai in the thirteenth



## *Astringent Herbs*

century and is described by Clusius in 1601 as a haemostatic which Galen prescribed. It was admitted to the London Pharmacopoeia in 1763, and is still used in orthodox medicine. The plant is trailing and perennial, with a long fibrous root and dark glossy green leaves of a leathery texture. The flowers are wax-like and grow in drooping clusters at the end of the branches of the preceding year. The corolla is urn-shaped and reddish white in colour or white with a red lip, the stamens are ten in number, chocolate brown in colour with awned anthers. The berry that follows is the size of a currant, bright red, with a glossy surface and a tough skin which encloses a mealy pulp with five one-seeded stones.

The leaves which are the part used as medicine are powerfully astringent and have at the same time soothing properties, and prove curative in ulceration of the bladder.

Another species of the same family called gravel root has very similar properties. Many species produce refreshing astringent berries, as for instance the Blue Berry—*Gaylussacia fronellosa*, the Huckleberry, *G. Resinosa*, the Blue Huckleberry, *Vaccinium Pensylvanicum*, and the Cranberry, *Vaccinium Macrocarpa*.

Among the American Indians the fruit of the *Arctostaphylos tomentosa* is eaten either fresh or dried, or it is ground and made into bread or mixed with Cornmeal and cactus syrup from which a fermented intoxicating drink is made. Whortleberries and the fruit of the Levantine strawberry tree, *Arbutus uneda*, can be used in the same way.

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### BETH ROOT

*On account of the wide range, prolific growth, acidity and evident strength, I deem Trillium Erectum, Linn., the common purple Trillium, the proper species for homoeopathic use.*

—DR. E. M. HALE

*Botanical names:* *Trillium pendulum* (Willd), *Trillium erectum* (Linn.).  
*Natural order:* Liliaceae. *Country names:* Birth root, Ground lily, Indian Balm, Indian Shamrock, Lamb's quarters. *Part used:* Leaves, root and rhizome dried. *Natural habitat:* Middle and Western U.S.A. *Constituents:* An acrid principle, a resin, tannic acid. *Action:* Alterative, anti-septic, astringent, pectoral, restringent, tonic.

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**Beth Root** is one of the plants used by the aborigines of North America and prepared by the Shakers.

## *Astringent Herbs*

Ellingwood says: 'It influences mildly the nerve supply of the organ of the thorax, assists heart remedies in relieving simple functional irritation and cures Catarrhal bronchitis when there is very profuse expectoration. It soothes the cough of incipient phthisis, especially when there is a tendency to haemorrhage, over which it has a marked controlling influence.'

Various species of Trillium have been combined, but the species regarded as the best is the Trillium erectum (Linn.), the common purple Trillium. It is used under the label Trillium pendulum.

The Indians of Canada and Missouri think that the red blossoms are best for men and the white for women.

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## BIGNONIA

*Gorgeous floweret in the sunlight shining,  
Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day.*

—LONGFELLOW

*Botanical names:* Bignonia Grandiflora, Bignonia radicans, Tecoma grandiflora. *Natural order:* Bignoniaceae. *Country name:* Trumpet flower. *French names:* Bignone, Tecoma. *German names:* Trompetenblume, Kranzranke. *Italian names:* Bignonia aranciata, Tromba del Gindizio. *Turkish names:* Bignonia, Borulu hanin eli. *Chinese name:* (Peking) Ling siao kua. *Part used:* Flowers, root. *Natural habitat:* China and tropical countries. *Action:* Astringent, anthelmintic.

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The ancient Chinese writers describe Bignonia as both growing wild in the mountains of Peking and as a cultivated creeper with orange flowers the size of a cup. It grows easily in England, especially in the vicinity of the sea and is one of the most decorative of all climbers. It is in flower all through August and September.

The flowers are much used in China for their astringency.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## BILBERRY

*And purple bilberry's globe-like head  
And Cranberry's bells of rosy red.*

—BISHOP MANT

*Botanical name:* *Vaccinium myrtillus* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Vacciniaceae. *Country names:* Huckleberry, Whinberry, Whortleberry, Blae-berry, Blueberrie, Blackheart, Blechwhort, Brylochs, Bullberries, Crone, Crow-berry, Fayberry, Fraghan, Frughans, Hartberries, Horts, Hurts, Whimberry, Wimberry, Windberry. *French names:* Abrétier, Petit myrte. *German name:* Echte Heidelbeere. *Italian names:* Baceri mirtillo, Uva orsina. *Turkish name:* Yaban mersini. *Under dominion of:* Jupiter. *Symbolical meaning:* Treachery. *Part used:* Ripe fruit, leaves, root, bark. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain. *Constituents:* Quinic acid is found in the leaves and tannin. The fruits contain sugar, etc. *Action:* Astringent, antiscorbutic.

---

Bilberries are astringent and have an ancient reputation, having been recommended by Dioscorides for dysentery. The leaves or bark root are useful as a local application to ulcers and a tea made from the leaves has been found very good if persevered with in cases of diabetes.

The fruit is anti-scorbutic and, steeped in gin with the addition of the bruised root, is given to sufferers from dropsy.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## BISTORT

*Then whether it divine tobacco were  
Or Panachaea or Polygony,  
She found and brought it to her patient deare,  
Who all this while lay bleeding out his heart-blood neare.*

—SPENSER

*Botanical name:* Polygonum Bistorta (Linn.). *Natural order:* Polygonaceae. *Country names:* Adderwort, Artrologia, Dock bistort, Dragons, Dragonwort, Easter giant, Easter Ledges, Easter Magiants, Easter Mangianta, Meeks, Oderwort, Osteriachs, Oysterloyte, Passions, Red Legs, Snakeweed, Twice-writhen, Wester Ledges. *French names:* Bistorte, Serpentaire. *German name:* Matterknöterich. *Italian names:* Bistorta, Poligono ritorto. *Turkish name:* Kurd pencesi. *Malayan name:* Séludang. *Under dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* Root stock gathered when the leaves begin to shoot in March, and seeds. *Natural habitat:* Northern Europe, Siberia, Japan, Western Asia to Himalayas, north of England, Southern Scotland. *Constituents:* Bistort Polygonic acid, tannic and gallic acids, starch and calcium oxalate. *Action:* Anti-periodic, astringent, diuretic, expectorant, tonic.

---

The Bistort is regarded by herbalists as the most astringent of all herbs. It is closely allied to the Knotgrass. The root contains much tannic and gallic acid.

The plant has a great reputation against plagues and was said to render anyone who carried it immune from danger.

Culpeper says: 'Both the leaves and the roots have a powerful faculty to resist all poison.'

It is useful in capillary bronchitis and lung complaints, and is given in malaria and chronic dysentery.

The leaves and young shoots have been used in salads, as a vegetable, and are made into a pudding which is eaten in Cumberland. In Russia they make it into bread. The Malays eat the fragrant leaves of another species, *P. minus*.

### *Bistort Pudding*

Take one and a half pounds of bistort to a pound of young nettles, add a few leaves of blackcurrant and yellow dock and a sprig of parsley.

Wash and chop fine. Put in a bowl and add a teacup of barley

## *Astringent Herbs*

washed and soaked, half a teacupful of oatmeal, salt, pepper and a bunch of chives. Boil in a bag for three hours till the barley is well cooked. The bag must be lightly tied.

Turn out on to a hot bowl. Add a lump of butter and a beaten egg. The egg will be cooked by the heat of the pudding.

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### BLACKBERRY

*And here are rich blackberries black and wild,  
Beneath the beech trees' thickest branches growing:  
This makes me once again a wayward child,  
A pilgrimage into the woodland going.*

—ROBERT NICHOLLS

*Botanical name:* *Rubus fruticosus*. *Natural order:* Rosaceae. *Country names:* Blacebergass, Black bides, Black blegs, Black bowours, Black-boyds, Black brier, Blackkites, Black spice, Blays, Bleggs, Boyds, Brimbles, Brammelkite, Brammle, Briar, Bremmyll, Bumbleberries, Brumley-berry bush, Brammelkite, Broomles, Brummel, Bullbeef, Bumly-kites, Brymble, Cockbramble, Cock brumble, Country lawyers, Ewe bramble, Gaitberry, Gaites tree, Gartenberries, Hawks-bill, Lady's Garters, Landbriars, Mooches, Mulberry Bramble, Scald-berry, Thethorne, Theve thorn, Thief. *French names:* Ronce, Pinte de Vin, Mûrier Sauvage, Ronce Sauvage. *German names:* Brombeerstrauch, Beerstrauch. *Italian names:* Rovo, Rogo, Roveto, Moro delle siepi. *Turkish name:* Böyürtlen çalisi. *Under dominion of:* Venus in Aries. *Symbolical meaning:* Lowliness, envy, remorse. *Part used:* Leaves, root. *Natural habitat:* Grows more luxuriantly in Australia than anywhere else though common everywhere. *Constituents:* Tannin, malic and citric acid, pectin. *Action:* Astringent.

---

The leaves and the root of the wild blackberry are a very useful astringent medicine for children. Both contain much tannin and the fruit contains malic and citric acid, pectin and albumen.

The root desiccated in a moderate oven and reduced to powder, makes an effective remedy in dysentery and the summer diarrhoea of children.

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The American blackberry can be used in the same way.

The cloudberry, *R. Chamaemorus*, and the dewberry, *R. caesius*, are different species, but can be used for their rather similar astringent properties.

The leaves of the Cloudberry are often given in Nephritis. They act on the kidneys without influencing the beat of the heart.

A fluid extract is made from the fruit and leaves. The Laplanders make a jelly from the fruits which is eaten with meat in the same way that we use red currant jelly.

The Cloudberry, known in America as mountain raspberry, also makes a delicious jelly which is eaten in Sweden with meat, so does the strawberry-leaved Bramble of Northern Europe, *R. Aretius*, which has an even better flavour.

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## BLUEBELL

*Cowslips had come along the bubbling brook;  
Cowslips and oxlips rare—and in the wood  
The many blossomed stalks of blue bells shook.*

—MASEFIELD

*Botanical names:* *Scilla nutans* (S.M.), *Hyacinthus nonscriptus* (Linn.), *Agraphis nutans*. *Natural order:* Liliaceae. *Country name:* Wild hyacinth. *French names:* Jacinthe sauvage, Jacinthe des bois. *German name:* Hasenblaustern. *Italian names:* Giacinto dei boschi, Giacinto piccolo. *Turkish name:* Kampana çiç. *Part used:* Bulb dried and powdered. *Natural habitat:* Western Europe, Central France along the Mediterranean as far as Italy, Great Britain. *Constituents:* The bulbs contain inulin. *Action:* Styptic.

---

Bluebells were once used as a substitute for starch. They contain an enormous amount of mucilage, but no actual starch. The bulbs contain inulin and are useful as a styptic, and in catarrhal affections due to a relaxed system.

According to Tennyson the juice of the stems has been used to antidote snake bites :

*In the month when earth and sky are one  
To squeeze the bluebell 'gainst the adder's bite.*

## *Astringent Herbs*

The botanical name of the wild hyacinth, *non scriptus*, refers to the absence of the Greek signature A I which appears in the cultivated hyacinth. According to the Greek legend Apollo's cry of grief Ai after the death of his friend Hyacinthus appeared on the flower of the garden hyacinth.

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### CAJEPUT OIL TREE

*The tree has numerous thin coats of very light or whitish ash-coloured, soft, fibrous-scaly bark, which peels off from time to time like that of the birch tree. The interior part is separable into numerous lamellae like the leaves of a book.*

*Dictionary of Malayan Medicine, GIMLETTE and THOMSON*

*Botanical names:* *Melaleuca cajaputi* (Roxb.), *Melaleuca leucadendron*.  
*Natural order:* Myrtaceae. *English names:* Cajeput oil tree, Punk tree, Tea tree. *French names:* Cajeputier, Méléleuque naine. *German name:* Kajeputbaum. *Turkish name:* Kayaput ag. *Malayan names:* Gélam, Pokok kayu putch. *Part used:* Oil, leaves, root. *Natural habitat:* The Moluccas. *Action:* Antiscorbutic, astringent, emollient, sedative, tonic.

---

The oil of cajeput much resembles that of the clove tree and was in demand amongst Europeans in the treatment of cholera. The Malays use a decoction of the leaves in dysentery for its astringent properties, and a decoction of the root as a tonic. The green colour of the oil is considered to be due to the presence of copper. It is much used in embrocations to relieve rheumatism.

The tree grows by the seashore and is very attractive in appearance because of its drooping green foliage and silvery grey bark. The bark is constantly peeling and this accounts for the whitish grey appearance of the trunk. The Malayan name, Kayu putch, refers to this.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## CAMPIONS

*Thy beauty, Champion, very much may claim,  
But of Greek Rose how did'st thou gain the name?  
The Greeks were ever privileg'd to tell  
Untruths, they call thee Rose, who hast no smell  
Yet formerly thou wast in garlands worn  
Thy starry beams on temples still adorn  
Thou crown'st on feasts, where we in mirth suppose  
And in our drink allow thee for a rose.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Natural order:* Caryophyllaceae.

### WHITE CAMPION

*Botanical name:* *Lychnis vespertina* (Sibth.). *Country names:* Bachelors' Buttons, Bull rattle, Cowmack, Grandmother's nightcap, Thunder bolts, Thunder flowers, Plum puddings, Cow rattle, Cuckoo flower.

### ROSE CAMPION

*Botanical name:* *Lychnis Coronaria* (Linn.). *Country names:* Gardener's Delight, Gardener's eye, Rose Campion, Mullein pink. *French names:* Coquelourde, Passe-fleur, passe rose, Agrostemme Coronaire. *German names:* Samtlichtnelke, Rade. *Italian names:* Coronaria, Cotonella, Stellino, Garofano di Dio, Occhio di Dio. *Turkish name:* Gelincik çiç Sakayik.

### RED CAMPION

*Botanical name:* *Lychnis diurna* (Sibth.). *Country names:* Adders' flower, Bachelors' Buttons, Billy Button. Bird's-eye, Brassetty Buttons, Bull's Eye, Cock-Robin, Cuckoo flower, Devil's flower, Fleabites, Gentry flower, Gramfer, Greyglas.

*Under dominion of:* The Sun. *Symbolic meaning:* Religious candour.  
*Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain.

---

The Campions are a large family which include the Catchflies, the Corn Cockle and the familiar wild flower known as Ragged Robin. The botanical name for Campion is *Lychnis* and the white, rose and red Campions bear this name, so does the Ragged Robin.

The Catchfly's botanical name is *Silene*, but some of the Campions, such as the Bladder Campion and the Moss Campion, bear the botanical name *Silene*, so it is rather confusing.



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All the plants of this family have astringent properties. Culpeper says of them that they are 'of very great use in old sores, ulcers, cankers, fistulas and the like, to cleanse and heal them by consuming the moist humours falling into them, and correcting the putrefactions of tumours offending them'.

The word *Lychnis* means a lamp, and in the language of flowers symbolizes a religious enthusiast.

---

### CATCHFLY

*Unlike Silene, who declines  
The garish noontide's blazing light;  
But when the evening crescent shines  
Gives all her sweetness to the night.*

*The Catchfly with Sweet William we confound  
Whose nets the stragglers of the swarm surround,  
Those viscous threads that held th' entangled prey  
From its own treach'rous entrails force their way.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Botanical name:* *Silene Nutans*. *Natural order:* Caryophyllaceae. *Country names:* Limewort, Nottingham Catchfly, Dover Catchfly, *Muscipula*, *Silene paradoxa*, *Muscaria*. *French names:* *Attrape mouches*, *Silène à bouquet rouge*. *German name:* *Gartenleimkraut*. *Italian names:* *Acchiappa mosche*, *Silene a mazzetti*. *Turkish names:* *Sinek kapan*, *Daruzara*. *Under dominion of:* Saturn. *Symbolical meaning:* (White) Betrayed; (Red) Youthful love. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Great Britain.

---

The name Catchfly was derived from the fact that flies got entrapped by this plant. Gerard says that he christened the *Silene Armeria* Catchfly for this reason, but other writers referred to this particular plant as *Muscaria* and *Muscipula*.

The Catchfly plants are closely allied to the Campions and to the Ragged Robin.

The Nottingham Catchfly is common in the neighbourhood of Nottingham and is also found in the Isle of Wight, in Yorkshire and on the

## *Astringent Herbs*

Dover cliffs, hence its early name of Dover Catchfly. It has an almond-like scent almost as strong as meadowsweet.

The Spanish Catchfly is found in sandy fields in Norfolk and Suffolk and has yellowish-white flowers.

The *Silene inflata* known as the Bladder Campion grows on arable land and by the coast, and the Moss Campion, *Silene Acaulis*, is found on mountains in Scotland.

Other varieties are the Night-flowering Catchfly, *Silene Noctiflora*, the Italian Catchfly, *Silene Italice*, and the striated Corn Catchfly, *Silene Corice*.

The Catchfly plants have astringent properties and were infused in red or white wine and taken medicinally.

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### CELANDINE (LESSER)

*There is a flower, the lesser Celandine  
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain  
And, the first moment that the sun may shine  
Bright as the sun himself 'tis out again.*

—WORDSWORTH

*Botanical name:* *Ranunculus Ficaria* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Ranunculaceae. *Country names:* Bright, Burwort, Celidony, Crain, Crazy, Crow-pightle, Foalfoot, Gilding cup, Gilty cup, Golden cup, Golden Guineas, Goldy kush, Kingcup, Marsh pilewort, Paigle, Pilewort, Smallwort. *French names:* Éclairette, Ficaire, Petite chéridoine. *German name:* Scharbockshahnenfuss. *Italian names:* *Ranunculo ficario*, *Celidonia minore*, Favagello, Scrofularia minore. *Turkish name:* Basur otu. *Under dominion of:* Mars. *Symbolical meaning:* Modest genius. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* All parts of Europe, Western Asia, North Africa.

---

**T**he Lesser Celandine must not be confused with the Greater Celandine which belongs to a different family altogether. Though they both have rather similar yellow flowers they are not alike in any other particular, and they have different medicinal virtues.

The lovely yellow flowers of the Lesser Celandine come into blossom as early as February and as they grow in masses in shady places, under

## *Astringent Herbs*

trees and on the sides of hills, they have attracted the special attention of most English poets, especially Wordsworth.

The old Celtic name of Grian means the sun, and their burnished petals suggest sunshine.

The flowers close before rain and open at nine and close always at five.

The leaves make a good pot herb. The whole herb has astringent properties and for centuries has been used by herbalists as a cure for piles—pilewort is its Old English name. It is used internally and externally as an infusion, a decoction, a fomentation, and is made into an ointment.

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### DUCK'S MEAT

*From me great benefits all the world must own  
Though long time hid, they're many, yet unknown  
But this I'll tell you; dry blew cankers  
And cholorick fire of hot St. Antony,  
Do soon extinguish; and all other flames  
Whatever are their natures or their names.  
My native cold, and watery temper show  
Who my chill parent is and where I grow.  
Thus when the water in the joint inclos'd  
Bubbles by pain and natural heat oppos'd  
The boiling cauldron my strong virtue rules,  
And sprinkled with my dew the fury cools.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Botanical name:* Lemna minor (Linn.). *Natural order:* Lemnaceae. *Country names:* Duckweed, water lentils, water lens. *French names:* Lenticule, Lemne, Lentille d'Eau. *German name:* Kleine Wassarlinse. *Italian names:* Lenticularia, Lente d'acqua, Erba anitrina. *Turkish name:* Su mercimek. *Spanish name:* Lenteias de agna. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe.

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**D**uck's Meat is a moss-like herb growing without stalks, flowers or fruit. It is often seen floating in ponds with the ducks that feed on it.

It has a well-established reputation in curing inflammations and was in great use as a remedy for St. Anthony's Fire. It is said to cure ruptures in young children and mixed with barley meal can be used externally to relieve hot, painful and swollen joints.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## EBONY TREE

*By age the interior of the wood becomes hard and black, and is the ebony of commerce.*

—JOHN SMITH

*Botanical names:* Diospyros embryopteris, Diospyros ebenum. *Natural order:* Ebenaceae. *French name:* Ebénier. *German name:* Ebenholzbaum. *Italian names:* Ebano, Avolio. *Turkish name:* Abanos ag. *Indian names:* Gab, Temru. *Malayan name:* Kayu arang. *Arabian name:* Abnes-e-hindi. *Sanskrit name:* Tumbiri Tinduka Kinkini-Kanka. *Symbolical meaning:* Blackness. *Part used:* Unripe fruit, dried seeds. *Natural habitat:* Tropical India, Ceylon and Mauritius. *Constituents:* Tannin, pectin, glucose. *Action:* Astringent.

---

The hard trees of the Ebony family have an astringent bark which is used in digestive complaints and to arrest haemorrhages and dysentery. The fruits of many of them are edible.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## FLEABANES

*Fleabane on the lintel of the door there hung,  
St. Johnswort, Capes and wheatears  
With a halter as a roving ass  
Thy body I restrain,  
O evil spirit, get thee hence!  
Depart, O evil Demon.*

—R. C. THOMPSON, *Translated from the Babylonian*

*Botanical names:* Common Fleabane: *Inula dysenterica*; Canadian Fleabane: *Erigeron Canadense* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Common pulicaria dysenterica, Common fleabane, Middle fleabane, Mullet, Fleawort, Prideweed, Butterweed, Canadian Coltstail. *French names:* Pulicaire, Inule des prés. *German name:* Grosses Flöhkraut. *Italian names:* Psillo, Sillio, Policaria, Arnica svedese. *Turkish names:* Pire otu, Karm yank. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* Herb, root, seeds. *Natural habitat:* (Common) In Europe, including England; (Canadian) Canada and North and Middle U.S.A. *Constituents:* (Canadian) A bitter extractive, tannic and gallic acids, a volatile oil to which its properties are attributed. *Action:* Astringent, diuretic, tonic.

---

The Common Fleabane is closely related to the Elecampane and has a good reputation as a curative medicine in dysentery and skin complaints.

Job is said to have used a decoction of this herb to cure ulcers, and its Arabian name of Job's tears, 'Rarajeub', refers to this. The soap-like smell of its leaves when bruised suggests that it contains saponin.

The Canadian Fleabane was introduced into England in the seventeenth century and is still found in the Thames valley. It has white flowers whereas the Common Fleabane has yellow ones. Both plants have astringent, diuretic and tonic properties.

The oil of *Erigeron* resembles turpentine oil in its action, but is less irritating.

The *Erigeron Sumatrense*, which the Malays call 'chapu', is made by them into a lotion which is used for fomentations to relieve painful rheumatic pains.

## *Astringent Herbs*

### FULSEE FLOWER

*The red flowers are astringent and are chiefly used in certain parts of India as a native remedy for dysentery.*

—GIMLETTE and THOMSON, *Dictionary of Malayan Medicine*

*Botanical names:* Woodfordia floribunda, Lythrum fruticosum, Grislea tomentosa. *Natural order:* Compositae. *English name:* Downy Grislee. *Indian names:* Dhai, Dhonga, Daite, Dhanen, Dhaiti, Chota-dhaon, Dhâva, Devti, Gul-Bakar, Gul-dhaur. *Malayan names:* Seduayah, Chadaya, Jednayah, Sidawayah. *Turkish names:* Vudfordia, Inek çiç. *Sanskrit names:* Dhataki, Dhayatia-pushpika, Parvati. *Part used:* Flowers. *Natural habitat:* India. *Constituents:* Tannin 20 per cent. *Action:* Astringent, stimulant.

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**W**oodfordia Floribunda is found in hilly districts and has flame-coloured flowers. It is used to allay haemorrhages of all kinds and is imported into Malaya as a medicine for dysentery and as an important tanning and dyeing plant.

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### GERANIUMS

*O! let sweet leaved Geranium be  
Entwined amidst thy clustering hair,  
Whilst thy red lips shall paint to me  
How bright its scarlet blossoms are;  
'Tis but a whim, but oh do thou  
Crown with my wreath thy lovely brow.*

*Botanical name:* American Cranesbill: Geranium maculatum (Linn.). *Natural order:* Geraniaceae. *Country names:* Alum root, Alum bloom, Chocolate flower, Spotted Cranesbill, Crowfoot, Dove's foot, Old maid's nightcap, Shameface, American Kino, Astringent root, American Tormentilla. *Under the dominion of:* Mars. *Part used:* Dried root, leaves. *Natural habitat:* Newfoundland to Manitoba, south to Georgia, Europe. *Constituents:* Tannic and gallic acid, starch, sugar, gum, pectin, and colouring matter. *Action:* Astringent, styptic.

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**G**eranium maculatum is the most powerful of all the Cranesbills and is an invaluable astringent tonic and styptic.

The leaves contain the most tannin and should be collected before the

## *Astringent Herbs*

plant seeds. *Geranium dissectum*, an English species, has rather similar properties and the *Geranium Wallichianum* of Afghan is regarded as a powerful astringent. It is often combined with *Hydrastis* and used in dysentery and relaxed condition of the mucous membranes. The wild geraniums have been used in medicine under the name of Cranesbill for many centuries for their astringent properties. The word *Geranos* means a Crane, and the plant has been so named because of the resemblance between the beak of the capsule and a crane's beak. Herb Robert is one of the wild geraniums and it is a famous old vulnerary. It is more astringent than the other varieties with the exception of the *Geranium maculata* of Canada and northern Carolina where the plant is known on account of its astringency as alum root. The leaves of the red garden geranium are also healing and were used from the earliest times for wounds inflicted by iron. At the Cape of Good Hope, which is the native home of the geranium, geraniums are even more decorative than our garden varieties and they go by the name of *Pelargoniums*.

### *Geranium powder*

Take half a spoonful of powdered, dried Cranesbill night and morning for a month and wash it down with red wine. This will cure a rupture.

---

## HELIOTROPE

*A flower resembling the pale violet  
Which, with the sun though rooted fast doth move  
And being changed, yet changeth not her love.*

—OVID

*Botanical names:* *Heliotropium Peruviana*, *Heliotropium Europaeum* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Heliotropeae. *Country names:* Cherry pie, Turnsole. *French names:* Héliotrope, Verrucaire, Herbe aux verrues. *German names:* Sonnenwende, Heliotrop. *Italian names:* Verrucaria, Vaniglia, Erba da porri, Erba da bitorzoli, Erba da verruche. *Turkish names:* Mambol otu, Akrab otu. *Symbolical meaning:* Devotion.

---

The Heliotrope plant keeps her face to the sun, hoping, according to legend, to win back the sun god Helios who turned her into the plant for causing the death of a princess he had fallen in love with.

## *Astringent Herbs*

The plant provides an essential oil which can be used as a perfume, and in medicine has been found of great service in clergyman's sore throat. It is made into a tincture.

The Indian Heliotrope, which belongs to the same family, has anodyne properties and is often called Indian Turnsole.

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### HELIOTROPE (INDIAN)

*The garden should be adorned with roses and lilies, the turnsole or heliotrope, violets and mandrake . . . the cucumber, the poppy, the daffodil and black-ursine ought to be in a good garden.*

—ALEXANDER NECKHAM, *De Nature Rerum*

*Botanical names:* Heliotropium Indicum, Heliotropium Cordifolium, Tiaridium Indicum. *Natural order:* Heliotropeae. *French names:* Hélio-trope, Verrucaire. *German names:* Sonnenwende, Heliotrop. *Italian names:* Verrucaria, Vaniglia. *Turkish name:* Mambol otu. *Indian names:* Hathisura, Hâthi-sundhâne. *Malayan name:* Tetkatukka. *Sanskrit names:* Hoste sunda, shri-hastine. *Symbolical meaning:* Devotion. *Part used:* Herb, juice. *Natural habitat:* India. *Constituents:* Tannin, an organic acid and alkaloid.

---

Indian Turnsole belongs to the Borage family, and its Indian name, Hâthi-sundhâne, is derived from 'hathi', an elephant, and 'sundha', a trunk, referring to the resemblance between the curve of the flower spike and the elephant's trunk.

The plant is used as a local anodyne. The leaves are used as a poultice to painful boils, wounds and ulcers, and the juice, boiled in castor oil, is an Indian cure for the bites of mad dogs, and the pain of scorpion bites.



## *Astringent Herbs*

### HERB ROBERT

. . . *Down in the grass,  
And blushing through green blades, Herb Robert fain  
Would catch the eye of pilgrims as they pass  
And seek for rarer plants.*

*Botanical name:* Geranium Robertianum. *Natural order:* Geraniaceae. *Country names:* Adder's tongue, Arb rabbn, Little Bachelors' buttons, Bird's eye, Red bird's eye, Pink bird's eye, Bloodwort, Soldier's buttons, Cuckoo meat, Cuckoos, Cuckoo's victuals, Death come quickly, Dog's toe, Dragon's blood, Fellon grass, Fox grass, Garden gate, Fox geranium, Scotch geranium, Wild geranium, Jenny wren, Kiss me, Knife and fork, London pink, Nightingales, Red breasts, Red shank, Redweed, Robert, Little red robin, Robin flower, Robin hood, Robin i' the hedge, Robin redbreast, Robin Red shanks, Round robin, Robin's eye, Rub wort, Sailor's knot, Stinking bob, Stockbill, Stork's bill, Wren's flower. *French names:* Herbe à Robert, Aiguille. *German names:* Robertskraut, Ruprechtsforchschnabel. *Dutch name:* Oijevaarstck. *Italian names:* Geranio Robertino, Erba Roberta. *Turkish name:* Turna gagasi. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Symbolical meaning:* Steadfast piety. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Great Britain and Europe.

---

The Herb Robert is a very old vulnerary and was prescribed at one time for gout. It can be given whenever an astringent is required and will be found effective.

Culpeper says, 'Herb Robert is commended not only against the stone, but to stay blood, where or howsoever flowing; it speedily heals all green wounds, and is effectual in old ulcers in the privy parts, or elsewhere. You may persuade yourself this is true, and also conceive a good reason for it, but consider it an herb of Venus, for all it hath a man's name.'

The herb was much used by farmers when their cattle were diseased.

The bloody Cranesbill, *Geranium sanguineus*, is very decorative when found on whinstone soil near Edinburgh and on the Ganick shore of Ayrshire. It also grows near Bristol. The Blue meadow Cranesbill has large blue flowers and is also found in Ayrshire and on the Clyde. It grows in Cambridgeshire, in the Yorkshire dales, and in the vicinity of London.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## INDIAN PLUM

*The fruit is eaten and has a flavour of gooseberry*

*Botanical names:* Flacourtia indica, Flacourtia cataphracta, Flacourtia ramontchi, Flacourtia jangomas. *Natural order:* Flacourtiaceae. *French names:* Prunier malgache, Prunier de Madagascar Flacourtie. *German name:* Echte Flacourtie. *Italian name:* Pruno d'India. *Turkish name:* Acab ag. *Arabian name:* Zarnab. *Indian names:* Joggam, Talispatzi, Brahmi, Paniala, Panijala. *Malayan names:* Rukam, Ekor serangat. *Sanskrit names:* Talisha, Prachinamalaka. *Part used:* Fruit, leaves, bark. *Natural habitat:* India, Assam, Nepal, Behar.

*Action:* Astringent, stomachic, refrigerant.

---

The Indian Plum is used to allay fever, to prevent nausea and biliousness, and to cure hoarseness of the throat. An infusion of the leaves and young shoots is a remedy for dysentery. The fruit is astringent.

The Malayans make the leaves into wafer cake for the complaints of women and they also enter into the composition of an oil that is used in smallpox. The juice of the leaves is also used for inflammation of the eyelids.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## JAMBUL

*You can see the trees in my garden from this verandah. The small ones have been planted two years and in four they will yield plenty of good fruit and several times in the year. The shape of the tree, like that of the fruit, is oval with fruit the size of a plum. The flower is red and very sweet, with a taste like sorrel. The leaf is like the point of a lance, large and of a very pleasant green colour. The roots of this tree strike far into the ground to uphold the tree, when it is loaded with fruit, which is the case many times in the year. Conserves are made both of the fruit and the flower.*

—GARCIA DA ORTA

*Botanical names:* Eugenia Jambolana (Lank), Eugenie jambos. *Natural order:* Myrtaceae. *Country names:* Jambul, Java plum, Jamum, Malabar plum, Rose apple. *French names:* Jambosier, Pomme rose, Eugénier jambos. *German name:* Jambosenbaum. *Italian names:* Mela rosa, Pomo rosa, Prugna di Malabar. *Turkish name:* Jamboz ag. *Indian names:* Jamuna, Kâlâ Jam. *Sanskrit names:* Jambu, Megha-varna, Rajaphala. Nilaphala, Jambra. *Symbolical meaning:* Privation. *Part used:* Seeds, bark. *Natural habitat:* India, East Indies, Queensland. *Constituents:* The seeds contain jambulin, a glucoside, also a trace of essential oil, chlorophyll, fat, resin, gallic acid, albumen, etc. The bark contains tannin and a gum like kino. *Action:* Astringent, diuretic.

---

The fruit of the Jambul tree reduces the sugar of those suffering from diabetes by 'checking diastatic conversion of starch into sugar in cases depending on increased production of glucose'.

The juice of the fresh fruit promotes digestion and is astringent and diuretic—the bark is also astringent and is given in cases of diarrhoea in children, and a paste of the leaves promotes healthy discharge from indolent ulcers.

The tree grows from twenty to thirty feet high. It has leaves like the peach tree and greenish flowers which grow in terminal bunches in July. They are followed by rose-coloured fruits with an apricot-like scent which vary in colour from flesh colour to a deep rose and are about the size of a Victoria plum. The Anglo-Indians call the fruit Black Plum.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## JEWELWEED

*With fierce distracted eye Impatience stands  
Swells her pale cheeks and brandishes her hands,  
With rage and hate the astonished groves alarms  
And hurls her infants from her frantic arms.*

*Botanical names:* Impatiens aurea (Muhl), Noli-me-tangere (Linn.).  
*Natural order:* Geraniaceae. *Country names:* Wild Balsam, Speckled jewels, Spotted touch-me-not, Slipperweed, Wild lady's slipper. *French name:* Balsamine. *German names:* Springkraut, Balsamine. *Italian names:* Impazienti, Balsamina. *Turkish name:* Kina çiç. *Symbolical meaning:* Impatience. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Africa and Asiatic mountains.

---

Jewelweed is related to the Touch-me-not which is found wild in the north of England and in Wales.

It has slipper-shaped yellow, pink, purple, white and sometimes scarlet flowers, which grow from the axils of the leaves and are often spotted. They have oblong capsules which explode when ripe to discharge the seeds.

The juice of this plant is used to remove warts and corns and to cure ringworm, and the fresh plant, on account of its astringent properties, is used mixed with lard as a local application to relieve pain and inflammation.

A decoction of the plant has been found of use in dropsy and in jaundice, and is given in wine-glassful doses three times a day—but it is not a safe herb for the amateur to experiment with.

It is related to the Garden Balsam, Impatiens Balsamina.

# Astringent Herbs

## KINOS

*The Butea Frondosa is a native of Bengal and attains a height of thirty or forty feet. Its leaves are trifoliolate, and covered with a velvety down. Its flowers are produced before the leaves. Each flower is about two inches long and of a bright orange-red colour, and when the tree is in full flower is a splendid sight, the masses of flowers resembling sheets of flame.*

—JOHN SMITH

*Botanical names:* Pterocarpus marsupium, Pterocarpus erinaceus, Butea frondosa. *Natural order:* Leguminosae. *French names:* Butée, Arbre à laque. *German names:* Kinobaum, Lackbaum. *Italian name:* Butea. *Turkish name:* Yalan sac ag. *Arabian name:* Dammul. *Indian names:* Kino, Hira-dokhi, Pita Sala, Ranga-basota. *Malayan name:* Vennappasha. *Persian names:* Khuneseysi, Aonshan-e-hindi. *Part used:* Juice. *Natural habitat:* India, Western Africa, Malabar, East and West Indies. *Constituents:* Kino, tannic acid, 75 per cent, pyrocatechin, (catechol) a crystalline neutral substance kinoin, kino red gum, pectin and ash, 1-5 per cent.

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**K**ino is almost entirely soluble in ether, almost entirely in alcohol and partly in water. It has an astringent tonic and haemostatic action, but is less powerful than tannin. It acts only on the lower bowels.

The official tree from which Kino is obtained is the Bastard Teak Tree, Pterocarpus marsupium, but a gum kino is also obtained from Pterocarpus Dalbergioides, which grows in Burma and the Andaman Islands; and the so-called Bengal Kino is the product of one of the Flame trees, Butea frondosa, called in India Pulas or Dhak.

These flame trees are so called because they have brilliant scarlet flowers which in most cases appear before the leaves and, when seen at a distance, look almost as if they were on fire.

One of the rhododendrons growing in Nepal goes by the name of Flame tree, and the Acacia Farnesiana found near the Dead Sea goes by the same name on account of its flame-like appearance.

The Sterculia acerifolia of New South Wales is another example and all of them belong to different families.

The Jamaica Kino is produced by Coccoloba unifera, belonging to the Polygonias.

## *Astringent Herbs*

### KNOTGRASS (RUSSIAN)

*This evening late, by then the chewing flocks  
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb  
Of knotgrass, dew-bespent, and were in fold,  
I sate me down to watch upon a bank  
With ivy canopied, and interwove  
With flaunting honeysuckle.*

—JOHN MILTON

*Botanical name:* Polygonum Erectum (Linn.). *Natural order:* Polygonaceae. *Country names:* Allseed, Armstrong, Beggarweed, Bird's knotgrass, Bird's tongue, Black strap, Bloodwort, Centinode, Cow grass, Crab grass, Crab weed, Cumberfield, Doorweed, Finzach, Iron grass, Hogweed, Knotwort, Mantie, Nine joints, Ninety-knot, Pig rush, Pig weed, Pink weed, Red legs, Red weed, Sparrow tongue, Stone weed, Swine carse, Swine's skin, Tacher grass, Way grass, Wireweed. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* Whole herb. *Natural habitat:* Every country. *Action:* Astringent, styptic, vulnerary.

---

**K**notgrass is found all over the world, but varies in size with the soil and position. The English variety, *Polygonum aviculare*, has the same virtues as the Russian which is more highly esteemed. The stems are smooth and jointed, the flowers are minute, in clusters in the axils of the stem, with hardly any scent.

A decoction was once used to prevent the growth of children.

‘Twere worse than knotgrass, he would never grow after it.’

—BEAUMONT and FLETCHER

*To stop nose bleeding by holding a simple in the hand*

Let the patient hold Knotgrass and Solomon's Seal in his hand till it grows warm there, or longer if need be.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## LOGWOOD

*The Logwood tree takes its name of Haematoxylon from Haema (blood), in reference to the colour of the heart wood and the fact that it is imported in logs.*

*Botanical name:* Haematoxylon Campechianum (Linn.). *Natural order:* Leguminosae. *Country names:* Bloodwood, Lignum Campechianum, Blackwood, Campeachy wood. *French names:* Campèche, Hématoxyle. *German names:* Campechebaum, Campecheholy. *Italian name:* Campeggio. *Turkish name:* Bakam ag. *Part used:* Heart wood. *Natural habitat:* Tropical America, cultivated in West Indies and Jamaica. *Constituents:* Haematoxylin, 12 per cent, volatile oil, tannin, fat, resin, a crystalline principle, pale yellow, sweet like liquorice, soluble in alcohol and ether.

---

Logwood is used in medicine as an astringent in dysentery and to arrest haemorrhages and for polypi of the nose. It is blood red in colour and imparts its colour to the urine. It is pleasant in flavour, but incompatible with chalk and lime water. The tree has been grown in England since the reign of George II.

## *Astringent Herbs*

### MANGOSTEEN

*The fruit is about the size of an apple, of a reddish brown colour when ripe, having a thick succulent rind, and crowned with the persistent rays of the stigma. It contains a juicy white pulp of a refreshing, delicate, sweet and acid flavour. It is universally esteemed, and is considered to be one of the finest of tropical fruits.*

*Botanical name:* *Garcinia mangostana*. *Natural order:* Hypericaceae. *French names:* Mangoustanier, Garcinie. *German name:* Mangostanbaum. *Italian names:* Albero della gommagut, Mangostana, Lauro delle Molucche, Lauro di Giavi. *Turkish name:* Cevez ül cinan ag. *Indian names:* Mangousatan, Mungeestun, Mangustan. *Malayan names:* Manggusta, Manggis. *Chinese name:* Shan-chuhekwo. *Part used:* The rind of the fruit and the pulp. *Natural habitat:* Malacca, Malayan and Indian peninsula, Singapore. *Constituents:* The rind contains mangostin, resin and tannin. *Action:* Astringent.

---

The Mangosteen plant is allied to the Gamboge tree, *G. Hanburii*. It is used as a substitute for Bael fruit in dysentery and has been found of great use in the tropical hospitals where it has been introduced. It makes a useful astringent medicine for all catarrhal affections; and for gargles and outward application. The ripe fruit is given to allay thirst in smallpox and fevers. The Malaysans use the wild mangosteen root, *G. Hombroniana*, as a medicine to cover the bodies of those suffering from irritating skin diseases. They boil it in water with sulphur and a pinch of black peppercorns and after using it the patient is not allowed to wash for three days.



# *Astringent Herbs*

## MIMOSA

*Weak with nice sense the chaste mimosa stands,  
From each rude touch withdraws her timid hands;  
Oft as light clouds o'er pass the summer glade,  
Alarm'd, she trembles at the moving shade;  
And feels, alive through all her tender form,  
The whisp'ring murmurs of the gath'ring storm;  
Shuts her sweet eyelids, to approaching night;  
And hails with freshen'd charms the rising light.*

—LINNAEUS

*Botanical names:* Mimosa Catechu, Acacia Catechu (Willd.). *Natural order:* Leguminosae. *Country names:* Cutch, Khairtree. *French names:* Catéchu, Acacie au Cachou, Cachoutier. *German names:* Katechu akazie, Kate-mimose. *Italian name:* Acacia di Cachou. *Turkish name:* Kad hindi. *Indian names:* Khair, Khera-sara, Shia-dza, Shazibin, Cuth kagli, Kiheri. *Malayan names:* Kachu, Gambia, Kadaram. *Sanskrit names:* Khadira-sara, Mekashaha, Khadi-ramu. *Part used:* Leaves, young shoots, the bark. *Natural habitat:* Burma, India. *Constituents:* Catechu tannic acid, Catechu acid, Catechu red, gum, quercetin and ash. *Action:* Astringent, anti-periodic, expectorant, stimulant.

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The Mimosa Catechu is more usually known as Acacia Catechu. It is chiefly used in medicine for its powerfully astringent properties.

Kathbal, a preparation of Catechu mixed with myrrh, is given as a tonic, and a confection of Catechu, roses, and sugar, called Kathalan, is used for the same purpose.

There are an enormous number of varieties of Mimosas and most of them are propagated by seeds which seldom ripen in Great Britain.

Some of them are natives of America, particularly Campeachy—others, like the Ash-coloured Mimosa, *M. Cineraria*, are natives of the sugar countries; the Sensitive Plant, *M. Casta*, grows in Brazil and so does the Humble plant, *M. Pudica*. The Floating Mimosa, *M. Natans*, is cultivated in Cochin China for salads, and the Mimosa Nilotica and the Mimosa Catechu produce a gum which is extremely useful in medicine for catarrhal affections.

Mimosa Entada, known to the Indian natives as Kakha Bilari, is made into a paste and applied to swollen hands and feet, and the seeds, which contain Saponin, are used by the women to wash their hair.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## MOUNTAIN ASH

*The mountain ash*

*No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove*

*Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head*

*Decked with autumnal berries that outshine*

*Spring's richest blossoms.*

—WORDSWORTH

*Botanical name:* Pyrus Aucuparia (Gaertn), Sorbus Aucuparia (Linn.).  
*Natural order:* Rosaceae. *Country names:* Rowan tree, Caers, Care, Cock drunks, Dogberry, Field ash, Fowler's service, Hen drunks, Heer, Quick beam, Quicken, Ran tree, Rown tree, Royne tree, Sap tree, Twick band, Twick-Whicken, Whitty tree, Wickey, Wiggin, Witchwood, Witty tree, Wychen. *French names:* Sorbier sauvage, Sorbier des oiseaux. *German name:* Gemeine Eberesche. *Italian names:* Sorbo salvatico, Sorbo degli uccelli. *Turkish name:* Yabani uvez ag. *Symbolical meaning:* Prudence. *Part used:* Fruit, bark. *Natural habitat:* Europe. *Constituents:* Before ripening the fruit contains tartaric acid and when ripe citric and malic acids. Two sugars are also found in the ripe fruit, sorbin and sorbit, the latter after fermentation. *Action:* Astringent.

---

Both the berries and bark of the Mountain Ash are used for gargles, and whenever an astringent medicine is required.

The fruit makes a good jelly to eat with game, and the Welsh made an ale from it, the secret of which appears to be lost.

The Mountain Ash tree is quite unlike any of the other ashes except in the shape of its leaves.

## *Astringent Herbs*

### PERIWINKLE

*Through primrose tufts in that sweet bower  
The periwinkle trail'd its wreaths,  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.*

—WORDSWORTH

*Botanical name:* Vinca major. *Natural order:* Apocynaceae. *Country names:* Greater Periwinkle, Band plant, Cut finger, Dicky Dilver, Blue Buttons, Cockles, Blue fingers, Ground ivy, Joy of the ground, Penny-winkle, Sorcerer's violet. *French names:* Violette de sorcier, pervenche, pucelage. *German names:* Sinngrün, immergrün. *Italian names:* Centocchio, Pervinca, Mortine. *Spanish name:* Pervince. *Dutch name:* Maagdepalm. *Turkish name:* Kucuk. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Symbolical meaning:* (Blue) Early and sincere friendship; (White) Pleasures of memory. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe.  
*Action:* Astringent, tonic.

---

The Periwinkles are a great adornment to our gardens and very conveniently will grow in shady places which are seldom reached by the sun. Their beautiful blue flowers have given their name to their particular shade of blue.

All species have glossy leaves which remain green all through the winter. There are two other species besides the Great Periwinkle—the Lesser Periwinkle and the Red Periwinkle—and all three are used in medicine for the same purpose.

The Periwinkle is recommended for its astringent properties in all old herbals from Dioscorides and Apuleius down to Culpeper.

It is the Vinca pervinca of Pliny, and the Parwyke of Chaucer. It was one of the herbs introduced into England by the Romans. The name Vinca is derived from the Latin word 'vincio' in allusion either to its binding properties or to its habit of growth.

Herbalists have long used it as a cure for diabetes and for the particular skin trouble known as 'plica polonica'.

Lord Bacon recommended its use in cramp and so did William Cole.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## PINUS BARK

*Fir trees are typically represented by the well-known Norway Spruce, Silver, and Balm of Gilead firs which, with the recently discovered allied species, form a part of the important family, Coniferae.*

—JOHN SMITH

*Botanical names:* Tsuga Canadensis (Carr), Abies Canadensis. *Natural order:* Pinaceae. *Country names:* Hemlock Pitch, Hemlock Bark, Hemlock Gum, Pinus Canadensis, Abies Canadensis. *French name:* Sapin de Canada. *German names:* Echte Schierlingstanne, Hemlockstanne. *Turkish name:* Amerike baldiran. *Symbolical meaning:* Philosophy. *Part used:* The bark with the dry juice, known as Canada Pitch, adhering. *Natural habitat:* North America. *Constituents:* Volatile oil, 20 or 30 per cent, also resin. *Action:* Astringent, stimulant.

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Canada Pitch is rather similar to Burgundy Pitch, but it is softer. It is non-irritant, astringent and stimulant to the mucous membranes, and is used internally and externally for catarrh of the stomach, the intestines, the throat and the lungs. It resembles rhatany in its action.

The tree from which it is obtained grows in the shape of a pyramid in the marshy mountainous regions of North America. In Canada it attains a height of about sixty or more feet. The long leaves are silvery underneath and the flowers grow in catkins. It was introduced into England in 1736 as an ornamental tree.

In common with other fir trees it was classified by Linnaeus as a Pine, but later botanists have grouped all the fir trees, including the Larch and the Cedar of Lebanon, under the name of Abies.

The Firs differ from the Pines in their leaves which are short, linear, separately attached and closely set in the branches in two or more distinct rows, whereas the Pine leaves grow in long narrow needles and are produced in fascicles of two, three or five.

The resinous exudation from the stems of the Abies Excelsa or Pinus Picea is also used in medicine as a stimulant and is chiefly made into plasters for rheumatism. It contains pimaric acid in addition to a volatile oil and resin. This tree is generally known as the Silver Fir.

## *Astringent Herbs*

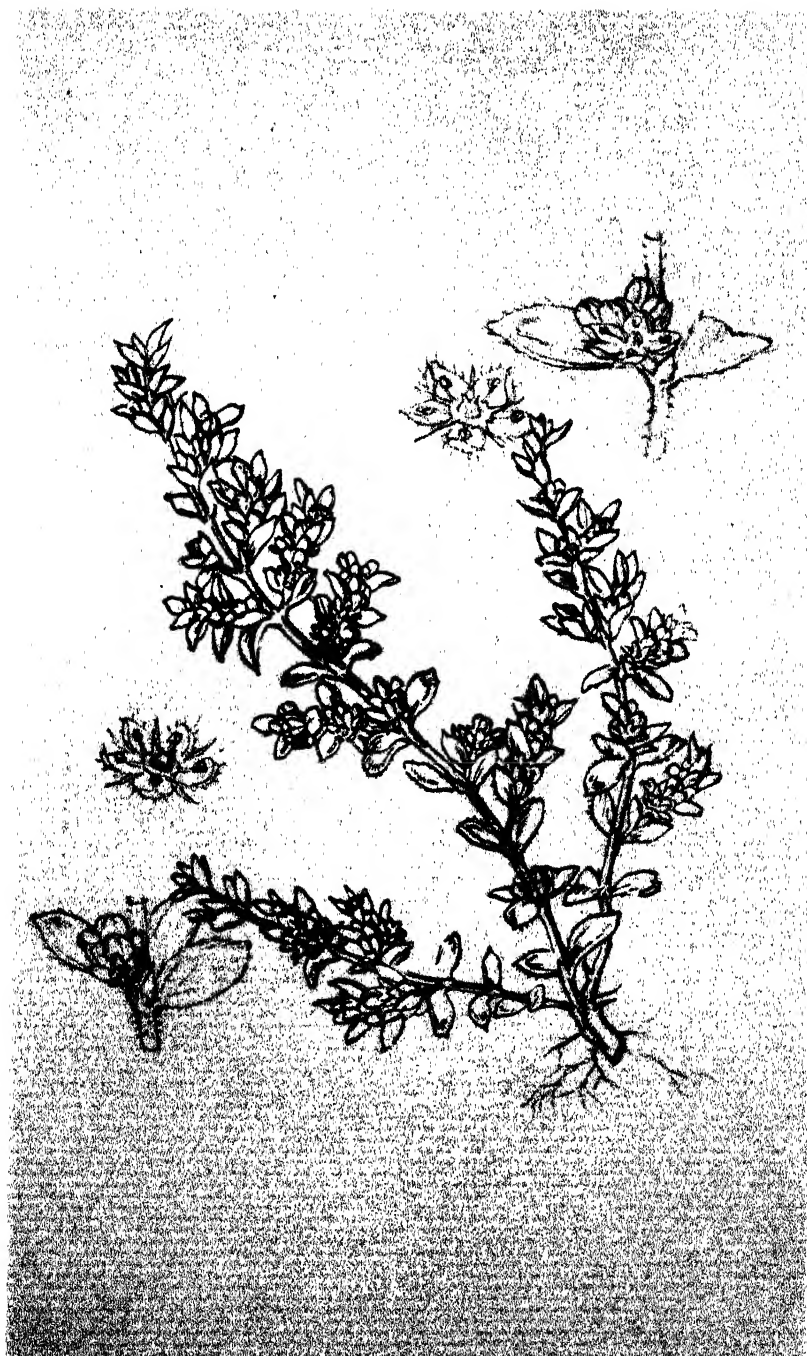
### RAGGED ROBIN

*How gaily ragged robin stands  
'Mid cotton grass and rushes;  
Pleased he thrives in marshy lands,  
Nor envies gaudy bushes.*

*Botanical name:* *Lychnis flos-calculi* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Caryophyllaceae. *Country names:* Bachelor's buttons, Meadow campion, Cock's carm, Cock's comb, Crowflower, Cuckoo flower, Fair maid of France, Indian pink, Marsh gilly flower, Meadow pink, Pleasant in sight, Ragged Jack, Robinhood, Rough robin, Spink Wild Williams, Hen's eye, Jack by the hedge, Lousy beds, Lousy soldiers' buttons, Mother Dee, Plum puddings, Poor robin, Ragged robin, Red butcher, Red Jack, Robin flower, Robin in the hose, Robin in the hedge, Scalded apple, Soldiers, Water poppies. *Italian name:* Croce de Cavaliere. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Symbolical meaning:* Wit. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Great Britain.

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The Ragged Robin in common with the other Campions has astringent and stimulating properties. It has been used in herbal medicine for dropsy, jaundice, gastritis and paralysis. See Campions and Catchfly.



RUPTURE WORT—*HERNIARIA GLABRA*



# *Astringent Herbs*

## RUPTUREWORT

*Rupturewort hath such a signature, that thereby it may be perceived to be profitable for the falling down of the guts into the cods.*

—COLE

*Botanical name:* Herniaria glabra (Linn.). *Natural order:* Caryophyllaceae. *Country names:* Burstwort, Rupture grasse, Turk's herb. *French names:* Herniare, Herniole, Herbe au cancre. *German name:* Glattes buckkraut. *Italian names:* Erniaria, Erba turchetta, Erniola. *Turkish name:* Kasik otu. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Southern Europe, Russian Asia, Scandinavia, Southern and Central Britain. *Constituents:* A crystalline principle called Herniarine which proved to be methyl-umbelliferone. *Action:* Astringent, diuretic.

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Rupturewort was at one time included in the natural order of Illecebraceae. It is an annual with small, green flowers and small leaves. The root is very long and thin. It is not common and has few relatives.

Whether it was known to the Greeks is undecided, but Lobel and Cesalpine refer to it under the name of Herba Turca. Matthioli calls it Minus and William Cole says that in his days it was called Polygonum. It is sometimes found in Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire and Cambridge-shire and is allied to the Knotgrass.

It is a very powerful diuretic and is prescribed in cardiac or nephritic dropsy. It has been used in herbal medicine to cure ruptures as its name bears testimony to. The fresh juice is applied as a local application.



## *Astringent Herbs*

### SEA LAVENDER

*Pale Sea Lavender, that lacks perfume.*

*Botanical names:* Statice Limonium (Watt), Statice Maritima. *Natural order:* Plumbaginaceae. *Country names:* Ink root, Sea Lavender, Marsh rosemary, Wild marsh beet, Lavender thrift. *French names:* Béhen rouge, Lavande de mer, Saladelle. *German name:* Echter Widerstoss. *Italian names:* Stitice marittimo, Behem, Been rosso, Butola d'acqua. *Turkish name:* Kirmizi behmen. *Part used:* Root. *Natural habitat:* America, Europe, England. *Constituents:* Volatile oil, resin, gum, albumen, tannic acid, caoutchouc, extractive colouring matter, woody fibre and salts. *Action:* Astringent.

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The Sea Lavender has pale green leaves with waved edges and the flowers form lilac branches of flowers.

There are several species, the most common being the Statice Limonium. The shrub often forms whole hedges in the vicinity of the sea. The root has been used in domestic medicine for centuries as a gargle or wash for the throat. An infusion or decoction makes an excellent astringent medicine either internally or externally. See Thrift.

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### SERVICE TREE

*With acid juices from the service tree  
And burning ale, they make their lemon squash.*

—VIRGIL

*Botanical names:* Pyrus domestica (Linn.), Pyrus sorbus, Sorbus domestica. *Natural order:* Rosaceae. *Country names:* Pyrus sorbus, Sorb, Whitty, Whitty Pear, Whitten Pear. *French names:* Sorbier domestique, Cormier, Sorbier. *German name:* Echter Speierling. *Italian names:* Sorbo domestico, Sorbo gentile. *Turkish name:* Uvez ag. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* Fruit. *Natural habitat:* Southern Europe.

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The Service Tree is not considered indigenous to England though Sowerby says a few trees have been discovered in their wild state.

## *Astringent Herbs*

The leaves resemble the Mountain Ash, but the pear-shaped fruit is larger. It also has flowers which grow in panicles instead of in corymbs. The fruit does not mellow until after a frost and is not unlike a medlar. It was much appreciated at one time for dessert.

The wood which is extremely hard was used for mathematical instruments.

The Wild Service Tree, *Pyrus torminalis*, is quite common in woods in the south of England. It also has fruit which is only edible after a frost; the fruit is green with dark spots and is quite small, and the flowers grow in yellowish white clusters. The tree is found in Kent where it sometimes attains a height of fifty feet, and the wood is so hard and durable that it can be used for house building. The leaves of the tree are not winged as in the Wild Service Tree.

The unripe fruit has astringent properties and must be used fresh in the same way as Bael berries. It is a useful remedy in dysentery and a decoction allays bleeding wounds. It promotes digestion and prevents, as Culpeper says, 'the too hasty passage of food from the bowels'.

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### SILVERWEED

*Blue-eyed Veronicas*  
*And grey-faced Scabious*  
*And downy Silverweed*  
*And striped Convolvulus.*

—ROBERT BRIDGES

*Botanical name:* *Potentilla anserina* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Rosaceae.  
*Country names:* Wild agrimony, Argentina, Blithran, Camoroche, Fair days, Fair grass, Goose grass, Goose tansy, Helde, Marsh corn, Mascorns, Midsummer silver, Moor Grass, Moors, Moss crops, Silver feather, Dog's tansy, Traveller's ease. *French names:* Potentille, Argentine, Bec d'oeie, Herbe aux oies. *German names:* Gänse-Fingerkraut, Wilder Rainfarn. *Italian names:* *Potentilla anserina*, Argentina, Erba della vele, Erba d'argento. *Piè d'oca.* *Turkish name:* Kaz otu. *Symbolical meaning:* I claim at least your esteem. *Part used:* Herb, roots, seeds. *Natural habitat:* Great Britain and temperate regions from Lapland to the Azores. *Constituents:* All parts of the plant contain tannin. *Action:* Anodyne, astringent, tonic, vulnerary.

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The silverweed is familiar to most of us on account of its much divided and silvery leaves which are covered with a soft down on both

## *Astringent Herbs*

sides. It has yellow buttercup-like flowers which are very sweet scented and the plant grows rather close to the ground. Its silvery appearance is recorded in its ancient name of Argentina, and the botanical name *Potentilla* is a testimony to its medicinal powers.

It has been praised as a cure for jaundice in common with other yellow flowers. It fastens loose teeth, breaks the stone, removes discoloration of the skin and cures inflamed eyes. The distilled water removes freckles and pimples.

The roots are edible, not unlike parsnips in flavour and contain a good deal of nourishment.

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## SLOES

*When the sloe tree is white as a sheet  
Sow your barley whether it is dry or wet.*

*Botanical name:* *Prunus spinosa*. *Natural order:* Rosaceae. *Country names:* Blackthorn, Buckthorn, Bullens, Bullies, Bullins, Bullister, Cat sloes, Egg peg bushes, Hedge picks, Hedge speaks, Heg Peg bushes, Hep, Winter Kicksies, Hedge Picks, Quick, Scrog, Skeg, Sleathorn, Slacen bush, Slaun bush, Slon, Slone bloom, Sloo bush, Sluies, Snag bush, Winter picks. *French names:* Prunellier, Sibarelles, Prunier épineux, Epine noir. *German name:* Schlehenpflaume. *Italian names:* Prugnolo, Pruno salvatico, Prunello, Spina fiorita. *Turkish name:* Kümüküm ag. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Symbolical meaning:* (Blackthorn) Difficulty. *Part used:* Wood, bark, leaves, fruit. *Natural habitat:* Europe.

---

The flower of the Sloe tree is the blackthorn about which there are so many superstitions. Dr. Fernie says that the old fear of bringing blackthorn into the house arose from the fact that the flowers come out before the leaves, emphasizing the union of life and death.

The leaves of the Sloe were used so generally in the nineteenth century to adulterate tea leaves that an attempt was made to legalize the adulteration.

The fruit makes a pleasant wine either by itself with the addition of the kernels or added to port wine. It can also be added to currant, raisin or elderberry wine and can be made into sloe gin.

## *Astringent Herbs*

All parts of the plant are useful in medicine. The bark can be used as a substitute for Peruvian bark and so can the leaves. The flowers are laxative, anthelmintic and antinephritic, and can be infused in water, whey or wine. The fruit is styptic and has been used since the time of Dioscorides, and the root is a cure for asthma.

The juice relieves ciliary neuralgia arising from a functional disorder of the structures within the eyeball. It also stays haemorrhage from the nose and will be found an agreeable and useful astringent.

The French call Sloes, Sibarelles, because after eating them it is impossible to whistle.

Bullaces are the fruit of the *Prunus institia*, a closely allied plant with very similar properties.

### *Syrup of Sloe Flowers*

Take of fresh sloe flowers, two pounds; take of fresh boiling water, four pints.

Infuse for twelve hours, the liquor to be poured upon two pounds of fresh flowers. This is to be repeated a third time, and the syrup to be finally made with the strained liquor, and four pounds of sugar.

### *Dose*

For children, from one to three drachms. Dose for adults, six drachms to an ounce.

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## SPIRAEA

*Hardhack owes its perfume to the coumarin it contains.*

*Botanical name:* *Spiraea tormentosa*. *Natural order:* Rosaceae. *English name:* Hardhack. *Country names:* Steeple bush, Silver leaf, White cap, White leaf. *Part used:* Leaves, flowers, root. *Natural habitat:* Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia to the mountains of Georgia westwards. *Constituents:* Tannin, coumarin, a bitter principle and a volatile oil.

*Action:* Astringent, tonic, aromatic.

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**H**ardhack belongs to the *Spiraea* family and the flowers are fragrant like the Meadowsweet which is a member of the same family. The flowers are a good tonic and the root is a useful astringent which can be given to adults or children. It is used as an infusion, or as a decoction, or in the form of a liquid extract.

## *Astringent Herbs*

The Garden Spiraea, *S. Arunus*, is a native of Austria and Siberia, and the Spiraea salicifolia, a shrub of the Rose family, is found wild sometimes in Scotland, northern England and in parts of Wales. There are other species of Spiraea which are native to Great Britain—such as the Dropwort, *S. Fillipendula*.

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### SUMACHS

*The fruit of the Rhus aromatic is termed the squawberry because the Indian women gather large quantities which are dried and used for food. When macerated they make a pleasant drink. This wood exhales a peculiar odour, which is always recognizable about the camp of the Indians.*

—MILLSPAUGH

*Botanical names:* (Smooth) *Rhus glabra* (Linn.), (Sweet) *Rhus aromatica* (Linn.), (Venetian) *Rhus cotinus*. *Natural order:* Anacardiaceae. *French names:* (Venetian) Fustet, Arbre à perruque, Sumac des Teinturiers. *German name:* (Venetian) Echter perückenstrauch. *Italian names:* (Venetian) Scuatano, Legno giallo, Cappechio, Sommacco à parruca. *Turkish name:* (Venetian) Kutuna. *Part used:* Bark of branches and root, dried ripe berries. *Natural habitat:* Asia, America, Canada, Europe. *Constituents:* (Smooth) Free malic acid and acid calcium, malates co-exist with tannic and gallic acid, tannin, 5 per cent, fixed oil, red colouring matter. (Sweet) Resins, calcium and potassium salts, malates, tannin, volatile oil, fat, mucilage. *Action:* Astringent, antiseptic, tonic.

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The Sumachs belong to the same family as the Poison Ivy (*Rhus Toxicodendron*) and many of the varieties are poisonous, but the smooth Sumach and the sweet Sumach are exceptions and are distinguished from the poisonous varieties by their downy covering. The *R. glabra* is used medicinally in diabetes and the *R. aromatica* to cure certain skin diseases. The sap of other varieties, particularly the *Rhus Vernicifera*, provides the Chinese and Japanese with their lacquer.

The Venetian Sumach thrives in our English climate and with its blue-green leaves and feathery stalks is an ornamental addition to the herbaceous border.

## *Astringent Herbs*

The family includes such important plants as the Cashew marking nut plant, the Pistachio nut tree, the Mango tree and the Cuban guao, *Comocladia dentata* which is said to kill whoever sleeps under it.

The active properties of the Smooth Sumach bark and the berries are yielded to water infusions. The bark is astringent, tonic and antiseptic and the berries are diuretic and refrigerant and are used in diabetes and in fevers.

The dried berries when smoked are said to give a distaste for ordinary tobacco. The Western Indians smoke a mixture of the root and leaves which they call Kinikah.

The influence of the Sweet Sumach is felt primarily on the urinary organs and is used in diabetes, cystitis, albuminuria, etc.

The wood of the tree is very fragrant and is used by the Indians to make baskets.

The shrub grows to a height of three to six feet and has yellow flowers which grow in spikes. The red fruit which follows grows in clusters and when opened is strongly aromatic.

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## THRIFT

*High on the downs so bare,  
Where thou dost love to climb,  
Pink thrift and milkwort are  
Lotus and scented thyme.*

—ROBERT BRIDGES

*Botanical names:* Statice Armeria, Statice Caphalotus. *Natural order:* Plumbaginaceae. *Country name:* Sea Pink. *French name:* Armérie. *German names:* Grasnelke, Standgrasnelke. *Italian name:* Armeria. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Portugal, America, but common in England at one time

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**T**he Thrifts belong to the Plumbago family and are usually found in temperate regions but grow best near the sea and in salt marshes.

They have astringent properties.

## *Astringent Herbs*

### TUBEROSE

*Tuberose with her shining light  
That in this garden of Malay  
Is called the Mistress of the Night,  
So like a light scented and bright  
She comes out when the sun's away.*

*Botanical name:* Polianthes tuberosa (Linn.). *Natural order:* Liliaceae. *Other names:* Garden Primrose, Garden Tuberose. *French name:* Tubéreuse. *German name:* Echte Tuberose. *Italian names:* Tuberosa, Giacinto delle Indie. *Turkish names:* Teber, Tutya çiç. *Indian names:* Pajuni-gundha, Gulcheri. *Malayan name:* Andi-malleri. *Sanskrit name:* Sandhyaraga. *Part used:* The bulb. *Natural habitat:* East Indies, Bombay. *Action:* Diuretic.

---

The Tuberose takes its name from 'polis', meaning a city, and 'anthos', a flower, the flower of the city. It is cultivated in the south of France for its perfume and in Italy for its bulbs, which are in great acquisition because of the extreme fragrance and beauty of the flowers.

The bulb is used in medicine in the form of a tincture to relieve purulent discharges and is applied locally mixed with turmeric and butter to certain skin diseases. The flowers are used in magical ceremonies.

# *Astringent Herbs*

## WAYFARING TREE

*Wayfaring tree! What ancient claim  
Hast thou to that right pleasant name?  
Was it that some faint pilgrim came  
Un-hopedly to thee  
In the brown Desert's weary way,  
'Mid toil and thirst's consuming sway,  
And there as neath thy shade he lay,  
Blest the Wayfaring Tree?*

—WILLIAM HOWITT

*Botanical name:* Viburnum lantana. *Natural order:* Caprifoliaceae.  
*Country name:* Mealy guelder rose, cotton tree, Cottoner, Coventree, Lithewort, Mealy tree, Twistwood, Whipcrop, White wood. *Part used:* Berries. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain, part of the Himalayas, North America. *Action:* Astringent.

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This shrub, which is closely related to the common Guelder Rose, *V. opulus*, is familiar to people living in chalky districts in England. It has a downy foliage which gives it a dusty appearance, and white flowers, which grow in compact clusters. These are followed in the autumn by brilliant scarlet glossy berries, which as they ripen become purplish and black in colour.

The Indians of North America, who call the tree hobble bush, make these berries into cakes as the Himalayans do. The Indian name for these cakes is 'Nalum'.

Another species of *Viburnum*, *V. faetidum*, is used in Indian medicine as a good astringent and sedative. Hindu women superstitiously hang the flowers and leaves of the plant over their door to keep away demons.



## *Astringent Herbs*

### WHORTLEBERRY

*Our table, small parade of garden fruits,  
And whortleberries from the mountain side.*

—WORDSWORTH

*Botanical name:* *Vaccinium myrtillus* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Vacciniaceae. *Country names:* Bilberry, Whortle, Blackheart, Blackwhort, Blae-berry, Bleaberry, Blueberry, Brylocks, Bullberries, Crone, Crowberry, Fazberry, Fraghan, Frughans, Hartberries, Heart, Horts, Huckleberry, Hurtleberry, Hurts, Whimberry, Whinberry, Whorts, Wimberry, Winberry, Windberry. *French names:* Myrtille, Arbrétier, Airelle. *German name:* Heidelbeere. *Italian names:* Mirtillo, Uva orsina, Uva del boschi. *Turkish name:* Kucuk Yaban mersini. *Swedish name:* Blabar. *Dutch name:* Blanbessen. *Polish name:* Borrowki cyarne. *Under the dominion of:* Jupiter. *Symbolical meaning:* Treason. *Part used:* Fruit, leaves. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain, Siberia and Barbary. *Constituents:* Quinic acid is found in the leaves and also tannic acid.

*Action:* Astringent.

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The Whortleberry or Bilberry is the Huckleberry of America. It is closely related to the Cranberry, *Oxycoccus palustris*.

It grows on heaths and moors and in mountainous districts and is found in most parts of England except Cambridgeshire and Suffolk.

There are many varieties of Whortleberry all of which grow plentifully in Sweden, and the Cranberry grows in Cheshire and Staffordshire, and in Cumberland is made into a popular wine.

The Whortleberry is useful in medicine. It antidotes the typhoid bacillus. The fruit and the leaves were known to Dioscorides and largely used in ancient materia medica, for dysentery, urinary complaints and as a local application to ulcerated surfaces. A tea of the leaves is a safe and useful remedy in diabetes if persevered with.

An infusion of the berries makes a good gargle. The young leaves can be used as a tisane to replace ordinary tea.

## *Astringent Herbs*

### YELLOW FLAG

*Oh Flower de luce bloom on, and let the river  
Linger to kiss thy feet.*

—LONGFELLOW

*Botanical name:* Iris pseudacorus. *Natural order:* Iridaceae. *Country names:* Butter and eggs, Cegge, Cheiper, Cucumbers, Daggers, Dragon flower, Water flag, Flaggan, Flagous, Fliggers, Flower de luce, Jacob's sword, Laister, Laver, Levers, Livirs, Lug, Marken, Miklin, Saggan Sedge, Scap, Seggs, Water seg, Seggin, Shalder, Skeg, Sword flag, Water lily. *French names:* Iris des marais, Iris jaune, Iris faux acore, Flambe d'eau. *German names:* Wasserschwertelilie, Gelber Schwertel. *Italian names:* Iride gialla, Spadella d'acqua, Acoro falso. *Turkish name:* Sari susan. *Under the dominion of:* The Moon. *Symbolical meaning:* Fire. *Part used:* Root. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Great Britain, North Africa and Siberia.

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The Yellow Flag grows by rivers and in moist and shady ditches. It has deep yellow flowers and the sword-shaped leaves common to irises.

In Chaucer's time it was called Gladwyn and Culpeper's name for it is Myrtle Flag. Some of its other names are derived from the Anglo-Saxon word 'segg', meaning a dagger.

This plant is the original fleur-de-lis of France and the French kings. It does not provide orris root as the other irises do, but the dried root is much used in herbal medicine and the distilled water was recommended by Culpeper as an outward application for sore eyes.

He says, 'The distilled water of the whole herb is a sovereign remedy for weak eyes, applied on a wet bandage or dropped into the eye'.

The root is powerfully astringent on account of the tannin it contains.

## Chapter Four

### HERBS TO CONTROL PAIN

*Barber's Bael Fruit; Black Cohosh; Californian Poppy; Camphor; Ceylon Jasmine; Cherry Laurel; Cloves; Club Moss; Country Borage; Ephedra; Evening Primrose; Figworts; Fireweed; Fish-Catching Coral Tree; Five-Leaved Chaste Tree; Five-Leaved Cleome; Gardenia; Gelsemium; Gladwin; Golden Seal; Goutweed; Grindelia; Guelder Rose; Horse Chestnut; Ipecacuanha; Knawel; Laburnum; Lippia; Lobelia; Lovage; Malabar Nut; Marsh Marigold; Meadow Saffron; Navelwort; Paeony; Pellitory; Plumbago; Quebracho; Sassy Bark; Satinwood Tree; Screw Pine; Stone Root; Sumbul; Sycacarpus; Thapsia; Tiger Lily; Toothwort; Water Lily; Wild Jessamine; Wild Lime; Wild Yam*

**H**erbs that control pain are called anodynes. The best known are the poisonous ones like the Opium Poppy, Hemlock, Cannabis Indica. There are, however, others of a non-poisonous nature, which if rightly used relieve suffering and can be prescribed indefinitely without danger. They are not habit forming and they not only control pain but the disease itself so that they alleviate first, and then cure.

Another class of pain-relieving herbs are the antispasmodics. They allay the spasms of gallstones and asthma and other spasmodic complaints and eventually prevent their recurrence.

Some of these herbs are stimulating and others act as sedatives—for instance Ephedra and Grindelia which are much used in asthma, are stimulants. Ephedra stimulates the whole of the respiratory tract and has much the same effect as adrenalin. Grindelia stimulates the heart's action.

Collinsonia, a gallstone remedy, is primarily a sedative and so is Lippia, a herb used for chest complaints. The sweet scented Lippia has a peculiar sedative effect on the mucous membranes of the chest and the nose. Some herbs like Sumbul combine both properties and are stimu-

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

lant and sedative. Hysterical outbursts are cured by Sumbul, a herb closely related to Asafoetida—one of the garlic tribe.

The Guelder rose is a remedy for cramp and the wild Yam relieves violent colics caused by gallstones or angina pectoris.

Goutweed, an old-fashioned English simple, often found in the vicinity of monasteries because it was cultivated by the monks in their herb gardens, brings great comfort to those who suffer from painful gouty joints; and the Yellow Laburnum, with which everyone is familiar, was grown by Gerard in his garden in Holborn and recommended by him to allay the spasms of asthma and whooping cough.

A most painful disease, emphysema, the symptoms of which are so distressing to watch, is often instantly relieved by Quebracho, a herb that grows wild in the Argentine. It is called the Digitalis of the Lungs.

The oil from the Fireweed plant, a native of Canada, is a most efficacious outward application for sciatica, and the leaves of the Malabar nut tree are smoked by the Indians to relieve asthma.

The best known of the English non-poisonous anodyne herbs are the Water lily—either white or yellow—and the Horse chestnut. The knotted and the water Figwort are also pain relieving. These simple herbs will generally bring comfort in painful swellings and inflammations and can be applied with safety to any open wound.

The Meadow Saffron, though not nearly so poisonous as many of the drugs that are used to ease rheumatic pains, is not by any means a safe herb for the amateur to prescribe. It very quickly allays the agonizing pain that gout can produce; but black cohosh is much safer and often just as efficacious.

Toothwort, Spanish pellitory and Knawel are herbal cures for toothache; and Gladwin, a herb with so vile a smell that it is called stinking Gladwin, has a reputation two thousand years old for curing sciatica. It used to be infused in ale and was drunk by country people as an antidote to cramp. Many of these local beers had a medical origin.

The stinking Arrach is another evil-smelling herb with sedative virtues. It is used to cure what our grandmothers called the vapours.

Ovarian neuralgia is allayed by the lovely Tiger Lily, which has a specific action on the pelvic organs.

Even such pernicious weeds as Darnel serve mankind, and palsy and trembling of the limbs are said to be cured by it. This herb is the pest of farmers, who have not yet discovered whether it is degenerate wheat or a weed that grows amongst the corn.

Gelsemium is called Herbal Chloroform, because it brings freedom from pain but it has slightly poisonous properties.

Headaches can be relieved by the Californian Poppy, which gardeners

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

know best as *Eschscholtzia*. It has, in common with other members of the Poppy family, narcotic and anodyne properties but it is less dangerous than the rest of its family because it does not cause the unpleasant after symptoms that they do.

The Indians have anodyne herbs unknown to us, such as the Satinwood tree, the Barber's Bael fruit tree, the *Sycacarpus*, the wild Lime, the Ceylon Jasmine, the five-leaved *Cleome*, and the Indian *Heliotrope* which they use as a local anaesthetic for painful boils and wounds.

The Indians prefer the Fish-catching coral tree to opium because it has no bad after effects; and they make much more use than we do of the comforting properties of cloves and lovage. One of the great Indian cures for cholera contains lovage which can be used quite freely because it is so safe as well as being anti-germicial.

Lovage is still used in the making of English beer to which it must add many of its wholesome properties.

*Ipecacuanha* and *Lobelia* are both emetics but they are two of the most useful remedies we have in herbal medicine for spasmodic chest complaints. The influence of *ipeacacuanha* in painful dysentery is also very remarkable, and so is that of the Indian *Lohd* tree.

Camphor is perhaps the most valuable medicine known for relieving irritation but it has many other useful properties as well. Menthol obtained from mint is our English substitute.

Two of the most decorative of our cultivated flowers have anodyne properties—the handsome *Paeony*, which makes its appearance in the garden when there is so little to keep it company, and the lovely and exotic *Gardenia*. In country places children wear strings of *paeony* seeds round their necks to cure them of epilepsy, and *gardenia* tea, though an expensive luxury, is an inviting preparation to put an end to digestive pains.

These are only a few of the plants which cure man's aches and pains.

The relieving of pain is an art, and a good prescriber should be able to do this as successfully with simple herbs as with dangerous ones.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### BARBER'S BAEI FRUIT

*It is so called because it is used by barbers in Java instead of soap.*

*Botanical names: Limonia Acidissima, Limonia Cremulata. Natural order: Rutacea. Hindu name: Beli. Native names: Naibel, Jerukat mari-gam, Torelaga, Nai, Navi. Part used: Fruit, leaves, root. Natural habitat: Himalaya, Coromandel, Malabar, Assam, Western Peninsula.*

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The leaves and the root of *Limonia* cure such spasmodic diseases as epilepsy. The fruit is used by the Arabs as a prophylactic against plague and smallpox. It has tonic properties and is sometimes prescribed in fevers.

The shrub has small white fragrant flowers which grow in corymbs, the fruit is bright red when ripe, and about the size of a nutmeg with flesh-coloured pulp.

# Herbs to Control Pain

## BLACK COHOSH

*I'm black or blue, and yet my name  
Covers a pair of equal fame  
For through the length and breadth of earth  
We help the unwilling babe to birth.  
My brother black for pity's sake  
Will cure the stubborn muscle's ache;  
My brother blue will safely treat  
Rheumatic joints of hands and feet.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Cimicifuga racemosa, Actae racemosa. *Natural order:* Ranunculaceae. *English names:* American Baneberry, Bugbane, Black snakeroot. *French names:* Cimicaire, Actée à grappes. *German name:* Schwarzes Wanzenkraut. *Turkish name:* Tahta biti otu. *Natural habitat:* United States, Canada, Temperate Himalaya, Kashmir. *Constituents:* An active crystallizable neutral principle, cimicifugin; starch, fat, gum, sugar, tannic acid, gallic acid, volatile oil (when fresh) and two resins both of which are soluble in alcohol. *Action:* Alterative, aphrodisiac, antispasmodic, diuretic, diaphoretic, nervine, stomachic.

---

**B**lack Cohosh is a remedy of the greatest importance in muscular rheumatism. Its action on the central nervous system, the heart and the circulation resembles the action of digitalis. It has the same effect as ergot on the unstriped muscular fibres. In neuralgia of the heart or even in angina pectoris it gives prompt relief and it is a good agent in acute inflammatory conditions as an early remedy in acute fevers. In coughs, bronchitis and stomachic troubles it is equally efficacious. It stimulates the bronchial mucous membranes and the kidneys. It combines with Gelsemium and Valerian.

The English Baneberry is a substitute for it medicinally.

The Blue Cohosh, which belongs to a different order of plants, has many of the same properties as the Black Cohosh, but must not be confused with it as they are not in any way related in the plant world.

Black cohosh is an attractive plant in an herbaceous border and is easily distinguished from other plants by its snake-like 'cream flowers. I have found it quite easy to grow in a south border where it gets plenty of sun.



**BLACK COHOSH—*CIMICIFUGA RACEMOSA***





## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### CALIFORNIAN POPPY

*They scent the breath of the dewy morn  
They feed no worm and they hide no thorn,  
But revel and glow in our balmy air.*

—V. SIGOURNEY

*Botanical name:* Eschscholtzia Californica. *Natural order:* Papaveraceae. *French names:* Eschscholtzie, Globe du soleil. *German names:* Californische Escholzie, Goldmohn. *Italian names:* Escolzia di California, Papavero di California. *Turkish name:* Günes topu. *Symbolical meaning:* Do not refuse me. *Part used:* The whole plant. *Natural habitat:* California. *Constituents:* Morphine and a glucoside. *Action:* Anodyne, soporific.

---

The Californian Poppy has soporific properties, but it does not cause the bad taste, the dryness in the mouth and the vomiting that morphia does. It is given for headaches, but it is not a herb for the amateur to prescribe.

The plant is well known to gardeners under the name of Eschscholtzia, and the colours of the flowers vary from yellow to red and only open in the sun. They take their name from a botanist called Eschscholtz and were introduced into England in 1790.

The Californian coast where they grow was called by the early settlers 'the land of fire' because these flame-coloured flowers grew in such profusion there.

# Herbs to Control Pain

## CAMPHOR

*I know that for the common cold,  
The chill, and other woes as old,  
For soothing and for killing pain  
None ever called on me in vain.  
Yet some there are who dare to doubt  
My powers of putting moth to rout.  
They say that as they come to birth  
The baby mothlings rock with mirth.  
What nonsense! If I do not slay  
At least they smell, and go away.*

—T.C.H.

*Botanical name:* Cinnamomum Camphora (T. Nees and Eberm). *Natural order:* Lauraceae. *Other names:* Laurus camphora, Camphora officinarum, Laurel camphor, Gum camphor. *French names:* Camphrier, Laurier du Japon, Camphrier de Chine. *German name:* Japanischer Kamferbaum. *Italian names:* Laurocanfora, Albero della canfora, Alloro canforato. *Turkish name:* Kiafur ag. *Arabian name:* Kafur. *Malay name:* Karppûram. *Persian name:* Kafur. *Indian names:* Mar-Kapur, Kaphur. *Sanskrit names:* Karpurch, Pakva, Apakva. *Symbolical meaning:* Fragrance. *Part used:* Gum. *Natural habitat:* China, Japan, Formosa. *Constituents:* Camphor when heated with chloride of zinc and distilled yields cymol: with nitric acid it forms camphoric and camphoretic acids: soluble in alcohol, ether and fatty oils, in boiling water (1 in 10) and in cold water (1 in 100): insoluble in carbon sulphide. *Action:* Anodyne, sedative.

---

Camphor often greatly relieves the pain of toothache, sore joints and muscles. It cures neuritis and allays excitement and irritation. As a nerve sedative it is used in insomnia, convulsions and delirium tremens. It stops sudden cold and severe catarrh and it makes a good liniment for sprains and bruises and rheumatic affections generally. It stimulates the heart, the organs of respiration and the vasomotor ganglia, but must be used carefully or it will act as a depressant.

It is also used for asthma, rheumatism, and as a wash for wounds of the eye to which it is administered after being exposed to the dew. Camphor is used internally for its calming influence in inflammatory conditions and externally as a counter-irritant.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### CEYLON JASMINE

*Flowers nodding gaily, scent in air,  
Flowers poised, flowers for the hair,  
Sleepy flowers, flowers told to share,  
O pick me some.*

— T. STURGE MOORE

*Botanical names:* Taberna montana Caronaria, Nerium Divaricatum, Tuberna Heybeana. *Natural order:* Apocynaceae. *Indian name:* Tagar. *Malayan name:* Karata pala. *Sanskrit names:* Nandi, Vriksha. *Symbolical meaning:* I attach myself to you. *Part used:* The juice and root. *Natural habitat:* Cultivated in India, Tropical Asia and Australia. *Constituents:* The root contains resin, extractive matter and an alkaloid. The milky juice contains caoutchouc and resin.

---

The flowers of the Ceylon Jasmine are applied to inflamed eyes, and the juice is a cooling and soothing application in ophthalmia and opacity of the cornea, for which purpose it is usually mixed with lime juice.

When chewed the root cures toothache.

The shrub grows to about eight feet in height and has very sweetly scented double-white flowers. The whole plant secretes a milky juice which is free from acidity.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## CHERRY LAUREL

*My flower is sweet in smell, bitter my juice in taste  
Which purges cholera, and helps him that else would waste.*

*Botanical name:* Prunus Laurocerasus. *Natural order:* Rosaceae. *French name:* Laurier-cerise. *German name:* Lorbeerkirsche. *Italian names:* Lauro ceraso, Ceraso di Trebisonda, Lauro mandorlo. *Turkish names:* Taflan ag, Kara yemis ag. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Part used:* Fresh leaves. *Constituents:* On distillation the leaves yield Laurocerasin, identical with amygdalin, a bitter principle, tannin, sugar, and a ferment by the action of which on laurocerasin, is produced a volatile oil consisting of benzaldehyde or prussic acid. *Action:* Sedative, anodyne, antispasmodic, tonic and narcotic.

---

The tonic influence of the Cherry Laurel is more apparent when it is prescribed in chronic pulmonary complaints and it is a better remedy during the period of convalescence than during the acute stage of the illness.

It aids digestion and has a tonic effect on a heart that is structurally weak owing to illness. It improves the valves and cures dilatation.

Though in common with the ordinary Laurel Tree the Cherry Laurel contains hydrocyanic acid which gives them both their almond-like smell, the two shrubs are not in any way related botanically.

The Cherry Laurel was introduced into England in 1629. Its white flowers appear in April and May and these are followed by oval, dark purple fruit about the size of a cherry arranged in grape-like clusters on the central stalk.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## CLOVES

*Hail traveller in an Eastern land  
Beneath my boughs a shelter seek  
My graceful droopings to the ground  
My hospitable wish they speak.*

*Botanical names:* Eugenia carophyllata (Thumb), Caryophyllus aromaticus, Myrtus caryophyllus. *Natural order:* Myrtaceae. *French names:* Giroflier, Géroflier. *German name:* Gewürznelken. *Italian names:* Garofano, Eugenia cariofilloide. *Turkish name:* Karanfil ag. *Indian names:* Lavanga, Long, Nara Lavanga, Laung. *Arabian name:* Karnaphal. *Malayan name:* Karampu bunga chank. *Chinese names:* Tkeng-hia, Ting-hisug. *Indian name:* Naelnaug. *Sanskrit name:* Lavanga. *Part used:* The fruit, the dried flower buds, oil. *Natural habitat:* Malacca, East and West Indies, Sumatra, Penang, Ceylon, Travancore. *Constituents:* A heavy volatile oil, 18 per cent, carophyllin—a camphor resin, 6 per cent, carophyllic acid or eugenic acid, eugenin, a crystalline body, tannin, woody fibre, gum, etc. *Action:* Antiseptic, anaesthetic, aromatic, anthelmintic, carminative, stomachic, spasmodic.

---

Cloves increase the circulation and nutrition, promote digestion and relieve gastric and intestinal pains. They stimulate the skin, the bronchial mucous membrane, the salivary glands, the kidneys and the liver.

In debilitating wounds and illnesses cloves greatly assist a languid digestion and remove nausea.

The Clove Tree is small and evergreen and the leaves are smooth, bright green in colour and emit a delightful fragrance when bruised. The flowers are of great beauty and have a most refreshing scent; the corolla of the flower is a lovely shade of peach and as it fades the calyx turns first yellow and then red. The seeds are not allowed to ripen or they would lose their pungency so they are beaten from the trees while they are still in embryo in the flower.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## CLUB MOSS

*Or with that plant which in our dale  
We call stag's horn or fox's tail,  
Their rustic hats they trim;  
And then as happy as the day  
Those shepherds wear their time away.*

—WORDSWORTH

*Botanical name:* Lycopodium clavatum (Linn.). *Natural order:* Lycopodiaceae. *Country names:* Buck grass, Buckshorn, Creeping burr, Forks and knives, Fox's claws, Foxtail, Stag's horn, Lamb's tail, Robin Hood's Hatband, Stag horn, Todstail, Traveller's joy, Wolf's claws; muscus terrestris repens; vegetable sulphur. *French names:* Lycopode, Griffes de loup, Mousse terrestre. *German names:* Kolbenmos, Echter Bärlapp, Wolfsklau. *Italian names:* Licopodio, Musco terrestre, Erba strega, Musco clavato. *Turkish name:* Kurt ayagi. *Symbolical meaning:* Sporting. *Part used:* Spores of the fresh plant. *Natural habitat:* Britain, Russia, Germany, Switzerland. *Constituents:* A bland fixed oil, 48 per cent, cane sugar, 2 per cent, volatile base (methylamine) and ash, 4 per cent.

---

The spores of the Club Moss are used by homoeopaths to make one of their most important remedies. By trituration the spores become fractured and release the oil globules which are the valuable part of the plant. The oil contains alumina and phosphoric acid.

The plant has been identified with the Golden Herb or the Cloth of Gold of the Druids and the powder is still sold in some parts of the country as witches' sulphur. In Cornwall it is used for diseases of the eyes, and it is gathered on the third day of the moon and prescribed with the following words:

*As Christ healed the issue of blood,  
Do thou cut what thou cuttest for good.*

Old herbalists claimed that Club Moss acts as a stimulant to the sympathetic nervous system, that it increases the tone of the liver, and restrains over-activity of the kidneys.

It relieves urinary incontinence and is an important bladder tonic, especially when red sand is present. When urinary and digestive symptoms are marked, Club Moss is a good remedy, especially if the symptoms develop slowly and the aggravations occur between 4 and 8 p.m.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

It is a cure for excessive uric acid with severe pain in the stomach and under the shoulder blade, a tendency to sleep after meals, bleeding piles, nausea and irritation of the bowels with persistent constipation.

It acts specifically on the right side of the body. The powdered spores are a useful application to skin eruptions.

The Swedes call the plant Matte Grass because it makes a large greenish network on the ground owing to the branched stems which cross each other.

It is found plentifully in the north of England and on the moors of Scotland.

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### COUNTRY BORAGE (COLEUS)

*This plant is allied to the French Nettle Coleus Blumei.*

*Botanical names:* Coleus Carnosus, coleus aromaticus, coleus amboinicus. *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Indian names:* Patherchur, Patharchur. *Malayan names:* Orá pána, Hati-Hati. *Part used:* The leaves. *Natural habitat:* Moluccas, cultivated in India and Ceylon.

---

The Country Borage has a pungent aroma.

Medicinally the juice expressed from the leaves is given to children to cure colic and convulsions. It is used in asthma, in epilepsy and other convulsive illnesses. Locally it relieves headaches and the irritation caused by the stings of centipedes.

The Coleus plant is much used by Malays in the treatment of liver and stomach complaints for which they give a decoction of the leaves.



## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### EPHEDRA

*The already scanty vegetation diminished rapidly: it consisted chiefly of scattered bushes of a dwarf scrubby honeysuckle and tufts of nettle, both so brittle as to be trodden into powder, and the short leafless twiggy ephedra, a few inches higher.*

—HOOKER'S *Himalayan Journal*

*Botanical names:* Ephedra sinica (Stapf), Ephedra equisetina, Ephedra shennungiana. *Natural order:* Gnetaceae. *Chinese name:* Ma Huang. *French name:* Ephèdre. *German name:* Meerträubchen. *Italian name:* Uva di mare. *Turkish name:* Deniz üzümü. *Persian name:* Huma. *Japanese name:* Ma oh. *Indian names:* Butshur, Phok. *Part used:* Dried branches and roots. *Natural habitat:* Western Himalayas, West Central China, Southern Siberia, Japan, Afghanistan, Central Asia. *Constituents:* Ephedrine, an alkaloid; by oxidation it splits up into benzoic acid, mono-methylamine and oxalic acid. *Action:* Alterative, diuretic, stomachic, tonic.

---

Ephedra is the medicinal Ma Huang of the Chinese. It was brought to public notice through the efforts of the Emperor Shen Nung, fifty or more centuries ago. It is one of the great cures for asthma, resembling adrenalin in its action and in its effect on the unstriped muscular fibres. The plant has a slight resemblance to equisetum.

The best Ephedra comes from Yung Yang and Chung mon. It grows about a foot high and has yellow flowers at the top. The fruit is small, resembling the scaly bulb of a lily, and is of sweet taste. The outer skin of the fruit is red and contains black seeds. The root is purplish red. According to the *Botanicum Sinicum* the Chinese distinguish the female and the male Ma Huang plant. The male produces neither flower nor fruit.

It is a common plant in Northern China and Mongolia and is found on sandy seashores.

The plant is much used for asthma, hay fever, and in low blood pressure. It is prompt in action.

Ephedrine, like atropine, can dilate the pupil of the eye. It improves digestion, gives tone to the intestines, relieves asthma, and is a remedy for acute muscular and articular rheumatism.

The Indians use two other species of Ephedra, *E. vulgaris* and *E. pachyclada*.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### EVENING PRIMROSE

*Almost as pale as moonbeams are,  
Or its companionable star,  
The Evening Primrose opens anew  
Its delicate blossoms to the dew:  
And hermit like, shunning the light  
Wastes its fair bloom upon the night.*

—JOHN CLARE

*Botanical name:* Oenothera biennis. *Natural order:* Onagraceae. *English names:* Four o'clock, Cure all, Tree Primrose, Large rampion. *French names:* Oenothère, Onagre, Herbe aux ânes. *German name:* Echte Nachtkerze. *Italian names:* Rapunzia, Erba asinina, Enagra, Stella di sera, Enotera. *Turkish name:* Esek çiç. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Symbolic meaning:* Silent love. *Part used:* Flowering tops, leaves. *Natural habitat:* North America, Europe. *Action:* Antispasmodic, sedative.

---

**T**he Evening Primrose is specifically indicated in difficult breathing and is of therapeutic value in asthma, whooping cough, pulmonary and gastric irritability.

The roots are edible and make a nourishing vegetable. It was introduced from America in the reign of Charles I and was first adopted in Padua. At one time it was eaten after a meal as an incentive to drinking wine after dinner. There is a very lovely variety of this plant called the Trumpet Evening Primrose which is found in the prairies of the West and Middle-West of America. The petals almost form a square when open. As the petals bloom in succession on the stem the effect of colour is very attractive because the buds which are a rosy purple show the green stigmas emerging at the tip and the full-blown flower has crinkled silky petals bent back to reveal eight anthers bursting with yellow pollen.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## FIGWORTS

*During the siege of Rochelle by Richelieu's army in 1628 the roots of the water figwort supplied sustenance to the garrison and in consequence the plant is known best in France under the name Herbe du Siège.*

*Botanical names:* (Knotted) Scrophularia Nodosa, (Water) Scrophularia aquatica. *Natural order:* Scrophulariaceae. *French names:* (Knotted) Scrofulure des bois, (Water) Herbe du Siège, Scrofulaire aquatique. *German names:* (Knotted) Knotige Braunwurz, (Water) Wasser Braunwurz. *Italian names:* (Knotted) Scrofularia maggiore, (Water) Scrofularia Acquatica. *Part used:* Herb, leaves. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including England.

---

**B**oth Figworts have obtained a good reputation as vulneraries. They can be made into decoctions or into ointments for the relief of painful wounds and swellings and are applied externally. Fomentations of figwort made from the leaves relieve both pain and swelling in a short space of time and can be applied not only to wounds, but to piles and swollen glands.

Other varieties of the plant found in England are the Yellow Figwort, *S. Vernalis*, the Balm-leaved Figwort, *S. Scorodonia*, and the purple flowered *S. Ehrharti*, known as Ehrhart's Figwort and found in certain parts of England and Scotland. The Knotted Figwort which is commonly used by herbalists is conspicuous for the knobs on its roots.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## FIREWEED

*It is often found growing amongst peppermint in America and when distilled with it causes deterioration of the oil.*

*Botanical names:* Senecio hieracifolius (Linn.), Erechtite hieracifolia (Linn.), Cineraria Canadensis (Watter). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Part used:* Herb, oil. *Natural habitat:* Newfoundland, Canada to South America. *Constituents:* A peculiar volatile oil, oil of Erechtites obtained by distilling the plant with water. It is said to consist almost entirely of terpenes boiling between 175 and 310 degrees F. *Action:* Astringent, antispasmodic, alterative, emetic, tonic.

---

Fireweed is a name given to several plants in England because their leaves contain enough moisture to induce fermentation to fire a rick. The *Plantago media* is called Fireweed for this reason in Gloucestershire and Hertfordshire, and the *Scabiosa succisa* goes by the same name in other parts of the country. Whether this applies to the American Fireweed I do not know. It is said to have acquired its name from its habit of growing on newly burnt fallow.

It is a troublesome weed in the United States. It has hairy leaves and white or yellow flowers growing in corymbose panicles, with oblong fruits crowned with a silky pappus either white or purple in colour. The whole plant is succulent.

It is primarily a remedy for haemorrhages from any part of the body, particularly the lungs. It allays colic spasms and hiccoughs. Both the herb and the oil have been used to allay the pain of piles and, applied externally, the oil gives great relief in gout, sciatica and rheumatism.

A tincture of the plant can be made by pounding the herb and mixing it with twice the amount of alcohol by weight, one-sixth being added first. It should be stirred, put into a well-stoppered bottle, and left for eight days in a dark cool place.

Applied externally the oil relieves pain.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### FISH-CATCHING CORAL TREE

*It increases the secretions of the skin and the salivary glands.*

*Botanical name:* Piscidia Erythrina. *Natural order:* Leguminosae. *Part used:* The root bark. *Natural habitat:* West Indies, common in Jamaica and in arid districts on the mountains of the Antilles. *Constituents:* Piscidin is the active principle.

---

Piscidia is used in India as a substitute for opium and though inferior to it as an anodyne, it has not the disturbing after effects of opium. It does not produce headaches, nervous symptoms or constipation, and its hypnotic action is more decisive than opium. It augments the arterial tension, stimulates the spinal cord, strengthens the heart's action and increases the secretion of the skin and the salivary glands.

It is used locally to cure toothache, and is given as a nerve sedative in insomnia, painful neuralgia and sciatica, and to allay the cough in asthma, bronchitis and tuberculosis of the lungs.

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### FIVE-LEAVED CHASTE TREE

*In Perak a drop of Lenggundi juice is squeezed into a man's eye when he is supposed to be possessed of a devil.*

—BURKILL and HANIFF, *Malay Village Medicine*

*Botanical names:* Vitex negundo, Vitex paniculata, Vitex trifolia. *Natural order:* Verbenaceae. *Arabian names:* Athalaka, Fanjangasht, Zükham-satil. *Indian names:* Katari, Sanbhâlu, Nishinda, Nirgundi. *Persian names:* Panjangusht, Sishan. *Malayan names:* Ban-nuichi, Lenggundi-legundi. *Sanskrit names:* Niragundi, Sindhuvara. *Part used:* Leaves, fruit, root. *Natural habitat:* Ceylon, India. *Constituents:* The leaves contain an essential oil and resin; the fruit contains an acid resin, an astringent organic acid, malic acid, an alkaloid and a colouring matter.

*Action:* Alterative, anodyne, aromatic, bitter tonic.

---

Vitex Negundo and its close relation, the Indian Pepper tree, V. trifolia, are allied to the Chaste tree, Vitex Agnus Castus.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

All three plants are of great use medicinally and have a long curative history behind them.

The *Vitex Negundo* is used internally and externally for colic, rheumatism and dyspepsia. The fruit reduces an enlarged spleen and is a cure for dropsy. The leaves are used to preserve books from damage by insects, by placing them between the pages of the books.

The Indian Pepper tree, *V. trifolia*, which the Malayans call *Legundi*, is found in Australia and all through Southern Asia. It has pale blue flowers and very aromatic leaves which have discutient properties. In Sumatra they are used instead of Peruvian bark to subdue fever and also to disperse swellings. The plant is taken internally and used externally for poultices and fomentations.

It is said to be useful in paralysis.

---

### FIVE-LEAVED CLEOME TREE

*Cold herbes in the garden of agues that burne,  
That overstrong heate to good temper may turne.*

—TUSSER

*Botanical names:* *Cleome Pentaphylla*, *Gynandropsis Pentaphylla*.  
*Natural order:* Capparidaceae. *Country names:* Spider flower, Bastard mustard. *French names:* Cléome, Brède caya. *German names:* Kleome, Senfkapper. *Italian name:* Cleome. *Turkish names:* Kleom, Tamalika. *Indian names:* Kamal, Katkoduku, Shada-kurburija, Kan phuti, Karaila. *Part used:* Herb, seeds. *Natural habitat:* India and other tropical countries. *Action:* Antispasmodic, carminative, sudorific.

---

**C**leome has a strong smell something like *Asafoetida*—the seeds are hot and are used as a substitute for mustard. They are given in hysteria, fevers, bilious complaints and convulsions.

The juice from the leaves mixed with salt cures earache and the herb boiled in oil is much used as an application to leprous eruptions.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## GARDENIA

*Who loves a garden loves a greenhouse too,  
Unconscious of a less propitious clime  
There bloom exotic beauty, warm and snug,  
While the winds whistle, and the snows descend.*

—COWPER

*Botanical names:* Gardenia gummifera, Gardenia Resinifera, Gardenia Arborea, Gardenia Lucida, Gardenia Campanulata, Gardenia Florida, Gardenia Uliginosa. *Natural order:* Rubiaceae. *French names:* Gardénie, Jasmin du Cap. *German names:* Gardenie, Jasminglanz. *Italian names:* Gardenia, Gelsomino del Capo. *Turkish name:* Gardenia. *Arabian names:* Kala-loxada, Kimk-kham. *Indian name:* Dika-mäle. *Malayan name:* Bunga China. *Sanskrit names:* Hingu nadika, Pindahva. *Symbolical meaning:* Refinement. *Part used:* The resinous exudation from the fruit, and root. *Natural habitat:* Tropical Asia and South Africa. *Constituents:* Gardenin, a crystalline resin of golden colour, and another resin soft and greenish. *Action:* Alterative, antiperiodic, anthelmintic, antispasmodic.

---

**A**ll the Gardenias have the same properties.

The Gardenia is used in intermittent fevers, chronic skin complaints and indigestion.

The root of Gardenia Florida is prescribed in hysteria.

In Malaya the leaves are made into a poultice to relieve headache, and decoctions of the leaves and root are given in all fevers.

In England, Gardenias can only be grown in a greenhouse, but they are a good deal cultivated under glass on account of the beauty of their white wax-like flowers.

# Herbs to Control Pain

## GELSEMIUM

*It flowers in March and April and some years a second time. Although its support somewhat regulates the extent of the growth of the climbing vine, still it extends beyond the limits of the support in such a manner as to form beautiful trails and fringes; this occurs even above trees that are over fifty feet high. The beautiful yellow flowers, the odour of which is said to be narcotic, yield a delightful perfume.*

—C. F. MILLSPAUGH

*Botanical names:* Gelsemium nitidum, Gelsemium sempervirens. *Natural order:* Loganiaceae. *Country names:* Yellow Jasmine, Wild woodbine, Caroline Jasmine. *French names:* Gelsémie luisante, Jasmin de la Caroline. *German names:* Gelber jasmin, Glänzende jasminbignonie. *Italian name:* Gelsomino della Carolina. *Turkish name:* Sari yasemin. *Symbolical meaning:* Grace and elegance. *Part used:* Root. *Natural habitat:* North America, and on sea coast from Virginia to Florida and Mexico. *Constituents:* Gelsemine, gelsemic acid, gelseminine, volatile oil, gum, starch, resin.

---

Gelsemium is a better medicine for children than adults, but it is almost a specific for facial neuralgia in adults as well as children.

It is specially indicated in fever accompanied by nervous irritation. It has a powerful action upon the nervous system, and is a good remedy in influenza, and also in muscular weakness and in lack of muscular co-ordination.

It soothes an irritable heart and is an admirable remedy in nervous debility due to prostrating wounds and inflammation. It is prescribed with success in nephritis and palpitation.

It is antagonized by strychnine, nux vomica, digitalis, ammonia and alcohol.

Gelsemium is often called the chloroform of herbs. It has a poisonous principle and is better used in a homoeopathic form. A much more poisonous species grows in China, Gelsemium elegans, and is known at Hong Kong under the name of Nu Mass Kiang and Tuan ch'ang ts'ad. This is the Kon wen of Chinese herbalists.

Though called Yellow jasmine the plant is not really one of the true



## *Herbs to Control Pain*

jasmines, though it has a climbing habit. The flowers are bright yellow funnel shaped, very decorative and strongly scented. They make a delicious perfume when it is extracted.

The flowers are said to be narcotic. John Parkinson grew the plant in his Holborn garden, but it does not usually flower in England and it must not be confused with the Yellow jasmine of our gardens.

Ignatia, nux vomica, and the Indian pink, Spigelia, belong to the same order of plants.

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### GLADWIN

*The rankest compound of villanous smell that ever offended nostril.*

—SHAKESPEARE

*Botanical name:* Iris foetidissima (Linn.). *Natural order:* Iridaceae. *Country names:* Dragon flower, Gladden, Glading root, Stinking Glad-don, Wild Ireos, Poison berry, Roast beef plant, Blue Seggin, Snake's fiddles, Snake's food, Snake's poison, Spurgewort. *French names:* Iris fétide, Iris gigot, Xyris puant. *German names:* Korallenschwertel, Stinkende Iris. *Italian names:* Giglio dei morti, Flamma fetida, Iride fetida, Ricottaria, Iride puzzolente. *Turkish name:* Fena kokulu kuzgun kilici. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* Root. *Natural habitat:* South-Western counties of England. *Action:* Anodyne, antispasmodic.

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The stinking Iris, known to Theophrastus in the fourth century, B.C., has lately become fashionable in English gardens because of its ornamental seed vessels which open in the autumn and disclose orange red berries, which make a useful decoration at Christmas.

Its flowers are quite inconspicuous and in this respect it does not compare at all favourably with other irises. It grows best in woods and in damp places, and on account of its unpleasant scent is generally called Stinking Gladwin.

It cures cramps and convulsions, relieves the pain of gout and sciatica and was at one time infused in ale and used by country people 'to purge corrupt phlegm and choler'.



GLADWIN—IRIS FOETIDISSIMA



# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## GOLDEN SEAL

*Acts especially on mucous membranes.*

—BOERICKE

*Botanical name:* Hydrastis Canadensis (Linn.). *Natural order:* Ranunculaceae. *Country names:* Orange root, Indian Paint, Jaundice root, Ground raspberry, Wild Curcurna, Yellow puccoon, Turmeric root, Indian dye, Yellow paint, Eye root, Eye balm, Warnera. *Part used:* Root. *Natural habitat:* Canada and the following states of U.S.A.: Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Indiana, New York. *Constituents:* Hydrastine, berberine, xanthopuccine, canadine, starch, sugar, resin and affluorescent compound. *Action:* Antiseptic, alterative, aperient, antiperiodic, diuretic.

---

Golden Seal stimulates the nervous system rather in the same way as strychnine and acts as a stimulant to the circulation, giving tone to the heart's action.

Its most important action is on the mucous membranes of the stomach and intestines. It is a remedy of great value in catarrhal gastritis, catarrh of the bladder, hepatic congestion and inflammation of the eyes. It often overcomes chronic constipation, uterine haemorrhages, rectal fissures and anal prolapse and is a cure for some skin diseases; but it should not be taken too long because, by poisoning the protoplasm, it may arrest the movement of the white corpuscles.

It is a perennial plant with fruit and leaves not unlike the raspberry. Its juice has been used as a lovely yellow dye. Mixed with indigo it makes a good green.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## GOUTWEED

*Neither is it to be supposed Goutwort hath its name for nothing but upon experiment to heal the gout and sciatica; as also joint aches, and other cold griefs. The very bearing of it about one eases the pains of the gout, and defends him that bears it from the disease.*

—NICHOLAS CULPEPER

*Botanical name:* Aegopodium podagraria (Linn.). *Natural order:* Umbelliferae. *Country names:* Ashweed, Bishopsweed, Bishopswort, Bishops elder, Masterwort, Pigweed, White ash, Ground ash, Achweed, Aise, Aiseweed, Aishweed, Wild alder, Axweed, Ayshweed, Dogeller, Farmer's plague, Garden plague, Goatweed, Goutwort, Herb Gerard, Jack-jump-about, Jump-about, Kesh, Setfoil, Weyl-eshr. *French names:* Epopode, Pied de chèvre, Herbe aux goutteux. *German names:* Gemeiner giersch, Podagra-kraut. *Italian names:* Egopodo, Erba gerarda. *Turkish name:* Keci ayagi. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Part used:* Herb, root. *Natural habitat:* Russia, Asia, Europe, but not in Spain, introduced into England. *Action:* Sedative.

---

Goutweed is a sedative used to allay painful gouty joints and was at one time considered a specific for gout and sciatica. It grows like a weed and is found near monasteries and ecclesiastical buildings, having been introduced by the monks, and cultivated by them in their herb gardens. It was often called Bishop's weed.

It has a creeping root and spreads quickly in moist places. The stems bear large umbels of white flowers without involucre and the leaves of the stems are pointed and sharply toothed.

In Sweden and Switzerland the young leaves are eaten as a green vegetable.

They make a good hot application for sciatica, gout, and pain generally.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## GRINDELIA

*Grindelia has a more permanent action on asthmatic breathing than other plants.*

—ELLINGWOOD

*Botanical names:* *Grindelia camporum* (Greene), *Grindelia cuneifoca*, *Grindelia squarrosa*. *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Gum plant, Hardy grindelia, California gum plant, Scaly grindelia, Wild sunflower. *Part used:* Dried leaves and flowering tops. *Natural habitat:* California and the Western Coast of the United States of America, *Constituents:* 'A resin appears on the involucre early in the growth of the plant, which is afterwards found in the leaves, which with a volatile oil, contains the larger portion of the medicinal properties of the plant. The resin is slowly soluble in water and freely soluble in ether and alcohol. There are medicinal properties, however, which alcohol does not dissolve—an aqueous solution rendered alkaline extracts the larger portion of the medicinal properties' (Ellingwood). *Action:* Anti-asthmatic, diuretic, tonic.

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In their early growth most of the species of *Grindelia* shrubs are covered with a kind of varnish. The flowers grow in solitary yellow heads with discs the same colour. The plant has an aromatic scent—the leaves are coarsely toothed and have a clasping base. The involucre are covered with a milk-white resinous exudation in the early spring.

*Grindelia* relieves the irregular heart action in asthmatic subjects and if persevered with overcomes all the symptoms, but it must be given in frequent and rather large doses.

It combines with yerba santa, lobelia, sundew or ipecacuanha.

It greatly relieves hay fever and antidotes the poisonous stings of insects. It is used as a sedative in chronic cystitis and to allay the pain of cancer of the stomach. It soothes the acute pain and irritation of skin diseases and ulcerations in the form of a lotion (1 to 9) which also can be used for burns.

Inability to breathe when lying down is one of its indications for use.

There is practically no difference between *Grindelia robusta* and *Grindelia squarrosa*.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## GUELDER ROSE

*Here glows*

*The crimson berry of the Guelder rose*

*Whose vine-like leaves have caught a sanguine stain*

*From the October sun.*

---

*Botanical name:* Viburnum opulus (Linn.). *Natural order:* Caprifoliaceae, *Country names:* Cherrywood, Dogberry, Dog elder, Dog rowan tree, Dog tree, Marsh elder, White dogwood, Gadrise, Gatten, Gatter bush, Gatteridge, Gelders rose, Golden ball, Gottridge, King's crown, Love roses, May rose, May tosty, Mugwet, Ople tree, Parnell, Pincushion tree, Prim, Red elder, Rose elder, Royal elder, Skaw dower, Snowball, Stink tree, Tisty tosty, Whipcrop, Whitten tree, Whitsuntide bosses. *French names:* Obier, Opier, Viorne, Sureau d'eau, Boule de neige. *German names:* Schneeball Schlinge, Schingbaum. *Italian names:* Viburno loppo, Loppo, Palla di neve, Sambuchello, Viburno roseo. *Turkish name:* Dagdigan ag. *Russian name:* Gordowina. *Symbolical meaning:* Winter, age. *Part used:* Bark. *Natural habitat:* England and North America. *Constituents:* A brown resin, viburnin, valexianic, tannic, oxalic, citric and malic acids, sugar, earthy carbonates and phosphates. *Action:* Antispasmodic, nervine, sedative.

---

The wild Guelder rose is like the Elder tree in habit—the fruit which was known to Chaucer as Goitre berries is used in Canada as a substitute for cranberries and the wood is used for making skewers.

The tree was first cultivated in Holland, hence the name Guelder rose—but it has now become almost part of the English landscape, rivalling the maple in the colour of its leaf, and reigning supreme on account of the beauty of its autumn berries.

The cultivated Guelder rose is without berries and would have no attraction if it were not for its snowball heads of flowers.

Some of the Chinese varieties which have been introduced in the last thirty years have lovely evergreen foliage—such for instance as the V. Burkwoodii which is as fragrant as the V. Carlesii. The V. Davidii has beautiful turquoise blue fruits, the V. Henryi also has decorative berries and a most lovely foliage.

In medicine the wild Guelder rose is an important remedy in curing cramps. Cramp bark is one of its popular names. Another Guelder-rose,



**GUELDER ROSE—VIBURNUM OPULUS**





## *Herbs to Control Pain*

the *Viburnum Prunifolium*, has the same properties. It goes by the name of Black haw and is a useful remedy in hysteria and in sympathetic disturbances of the heart and nervous system. Ellingwood says, 'It directly influences the action of the heart as it lowers arterial pressure to a marked degree'.

The *Viburnum-foetidum* is used in India and Hindu women hang the plant outside their door to keep away evil spirits.

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### HORSE CHESTNUT

*In its honour prodigal nature weaves  
A princely vestment, and profusely showers  
O'er its green masses of broad palmy leaves  
Ten thousand waxen pyramidal flowers:  
And gay and gracefully its head it heaves  
Into the air, and monarch-like it towers.*

—HOWITT

*Botanical name:* *Aesculus hippocastanum*. *Natural order:* Sapindaceae. *Country names:* *Hippocastanum vulgare*: Bongay, Conquerors, Knuckle-bleeders, Konker tree, Lambs, Oblionker tree. *French names:* *Aescule*, *Marronnier d'Inde*, *Chataigne de cheval*. *German names:* *Gemeine Rosskastanie*. *Italian names:* *Eschilo*, *Castagno ippocastano*, *Marrone d'India*. *Turkish name:* *Yabani kestane*. *Under the dominion of:* Jupiter. *Symbolical meaning:* Do me justice. *Part used:* Bark, seeds and fruit. *Natural habitat:* Northern and Central Asia. *Constituents:* A poisonous principle acting like *nux vomica*. *Action:* Febrifuge, narcotic, tonic.

---

The Horse Chestnut is not even distantly connected with the Sweet Chestnut though its nuts are very similar in appearance. The nuts are sometimes used as fodder for horses and cattle, but they are not fit for human use as the Sweet Chestnuts are.

In medicine, the tree, which was brought to England in the sixteenth century, has a specific influence on the capillary circulation of the rectum. It relieves the pain of haemorrhoids and cures them when they are caused by congestion of the pelvic or portal circulation. 'Fullness' in different parts of the body is one of its indications for use. It actively stimulates the nerves by acting on the cerebro-spinal system.

A decoction of the bark is drunk in intermittent fevers and used externally as an application for painful ulcers.

The American Buckeye tree, *Aesculus glabra*, has similar properties.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## IPECACUANHA

*Coughing in a shady grove  
Sat my Juliana.  
Lozenges I gave my love,  
Ipecacuanha—  
Full twenty from the lozenge box  
The greedy nymph did pick ;  
Then sighing sadly, said to me  
My Damon, I am sick.*

—GEORGE CANNING

*Botanical name:* Psychotria Ipecacuanha. *Natural order:* Rubiaceae. *Other names:* Caphaelis ipecacuanha, Carthagena ipecacuanha. *French name:* Ipecacuanha. *German name:* Ipecacuanhapflanze. *Italian name:* Ipecacuana. *Turkish names:* Altum koku, ipekakuana. *Part used:* The dried root. *Natural habitat:* Brazil, India. *Constituents:* An active principle, an alkaloid, emetine, cephaelina, ipecacuahnin acid, allied to catechin, saccharose, starch, fatty or oily matter, cholin, resin, pectin. *Action:* Antispasmodic, cholagogue, diaphoretic, emetic, expectorant, haemostatic, sternutatory.

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Ipecacuanha is almost a specific in dysentery, but it is also used as a cardiac sedative in fevers and as a stimulant to the mucous membranes in pneumonia, consumption and bronchial catarrh.

Though known in Brazil for centuries this plant was unknown in Europe till 1672, when Helvetius used it as the basis of a patent medicine for dysentery, which was bought from him by the French Government for a large sum, and the formula made public.



**KNAWEL—SCHLERANTHUS ANNUUS**



# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## KNAWEL

*In some lands the roots are attacked by the insect called the Scarlet Grain of Poland (Coccus polonicus). This yields a very nice crimson tint, and on this account the plant was once collected in large quantities in the Ukraine, and in Lithuania, for dyeing red.*

—ANNE PRATT

*Botanical name:* Scleranthus annuus (Linn.). *Natural order:* Caryophyllaceae (Scleranthaeae). *Country names:* German Knotgrass, Annual knawel. *French names:* Gnavelle annuelle, Scléranthe. *German names:* Sommerknäuel, Wilde knauelle. *Italian names:* Scleranto, Centigrani. *Dutch name:* Jaarlykys-hardbbem. *Swedish name:* Tandgras. *Turkish name:* Knavel otu. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Great Britain.

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The Annual Knawel and the Perennial are both indigenous to Great Britain. The former is common in cornfields. It grows about three feet high and has awl-shaped leaves and green flowers which grow in terminal clusters, or in the forks of the stems. The plant prefers gravel or a sandy soil. The Perennial Knawel is common in Norfolk and Suffolk, but is found in other counties.

A decoction of the plant is used by the Swedes to cure toothache. They inhale the hot infusion.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## LABURNUM

*And in the season of perfect and palest beauty  
Pear blossoms broke and the lilac's waxen cones  
And a tranced laburnum trailing its veils of yellow  
Tenderly drooped over the ivied stones.*

—SIR JOHN SQUIRE

*Botanical names:* Cytisus laburnum (Linn.), Laburnum anagyroides (Medic). *Natural order:* Leguminosae. *Country names:* Base tree, French ash, He broom, Golden chain, Ear rings, French broom, Golden drops, Golden shower, Hoburn Saugh, Lady's fingers, Peatree, Seyny tree, Watch guards. *French names:* Faux ébénier, Laburne, Pluie d'or. *German names:* Goldregen, Falscher Ebenbaum. *Italian name:* Ebano falso. *Turkish name:* Yalan abanos ag. *Symbolical meaning:* Forsaken. *Part used:* Roots, seeds. *Natural habitat:* Switzerland and mountains of France and Germany and cultivated everywhere. *Action:* Anti-asthmatic, antispasmodic, stimulant.

---

The Laburnum was introduced into English gardens at the end of the sixteenth century and was grown by Gerard in his Holborn garden in 1596.

A poisonous principle is contained in the seeds and roots, which have a sweet taste rather like liquorice. The seeds have been found useful in whooping cough and asthma, but must be used with care.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### LIPPIA

*No daintie flower or herb that grows on grounds  
No arborett with painted blossoms drest  
And smelling sweete but there it might be found  
To heed out faire and throw her sweete smells all around.*

—SPENSER

*Botanical name:* Lippia dulcis (Trev.). *Natural order:* Verbenaceae.  
*Country names:* Yerbe dulce, Mexican lippia. *Part used:* Leaves, flowers, stalks. *Natural habitat:* Mexico, Cuba, Central America, Columbia.

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Lippia dulcis must not be confused with Lippia citriodora, the lemon-scented verbena of our gardens, though it belongs to the same family and has a lemon-like scent and taste. It is a creeping shrub covered with minute glandular hairs and is in bloom from November till March.

It has a peculiar sedative effect on the mucous membranes of the bronchial tubes and the post nasal region. It cures a barking winter cough without secretion and is a good remedy in asthma and chronic bronchitis.

The lemon verbena, Lippia citriodora, has rather similar properties, but is particularly used as a sedative for the digestive organs. It is a good herb for fevers from any cause.



# Herbs to Control Pain

## LOBELIA

*Lobelia attired—like a queen in her pride.*

*Botanical name:* Lobelia inflata. *Natural order:* Lobeliaceae. *Country names:* Bladder podded lobelia, Indian tobacco, Wild tobacco, Emetic herb, Asthma weed, Vomitwort, Gagroot, Pukeweed. *French names:* Lobélie enflée, Tabac indien. *German names:* Indianischer Tabak, Spalglöckchen. *Italian names:* Lobelia, Tabacco indiano. *Turkish names:* Lobelia, Frengi otu. *Symbolical meaning:* Distinction. *Part used:* The dried herb collected after a portion of the capsules has become inflated. *Natural habitat:* North America. *Constituents:* Lobeline, a narcotic principle, Lobelacrin, an acrid principle, Inflatin, lobelic acid, resin, wax, gum, fixed oil, lignin, salts of calcium, potassium and iron, lobeline, lobelinium. *Action:* Antispasmodic, expectorant, diaphoretic, Sialogogue.

Lobelia is a very useful antispasmodic remedy in attacks of asthma, whooping cough and bronchial catarrh. It is a great relaxant and increases the flow of saliva and of gastric mucus.

The natives smoke the leaves of lobelia in the same way as tobacco.

The plant is an annual weed with small pale blue flowers growing in long racemes followed by inflated capsules.

Cardinal's lobelia and other species cultivated in English gardens belong to the same family. Lobelia dortmanna is indigenous to England. But the Cardinal's lobelia, *L. Cardinalia*, with vermilion flowers and the *L. Syphilitica* with large and intensely blue flowers are both used in medicine.

The *L. Purpureum* has been known to cure paralysis of the tongue.

In herbal medicine Samuel Thompson was the first exponent of *Lobelia inflata*, but it was known in New England through the American Indians long before his time. Herbalists have never considered it to be poisonous if used in its entirety. Nevertheless, it has recently been added to the poison list, and herbalists who used it for a hundred years before it was adopted as an orthodox medicine are thus deprived of one of their best medicines. Furthermore, herbalists through their long experience understand the therapeutic principles of lobelia far better than those who only use its alkaloids.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## LOVAGE

*'It is an herb of the sun, under the sign Taurus. If Saturn offend the throat (as he always doth if he be the occasion of the malady, and in Taurus is the genesis) this is your cure.'*

—NICHOLAS CULPEPER

*Botanical names:* Ligusticum Levisticum (Linn.), Levisticum officinale (Koch), Carum copticum, Carum Ajowan, Ptychotis Ajowan, Ligusticum ajawain. *Natural order:* Umbelliferae. *Other names:* Bishop's weed, King's cumin. *French names:* Ammi, Sison. *German names:* Agyptischer Kümmel, Herrenkümmel. *Italian names:* Sisone, Ammi. *Turkish names:* Emmus, Misir anisonu. *Arabian names:* Kâmun-el-mulûki, Amus. *Indian names:* Ajwain, Juvan, Baro-Jöan, Ova, Ajvayan, Ajamoda. *Malayan names:* Homama Azamoda. *Sanskrit names:* Yavani, Ajmodam, Yavanika. *Persian names:* Zhinyan, Nankhah. *Under the dominion of:* The sun. *Part used:* Fruit. *Natural habitat:* India, Southern Asia, Africa, countries of Mediterranean, Greece, Balkans, mountains of south of France. *Constituents:* An aromatic volatile oil and a crystalline substance which collects on the surface of distilled water and is identical with thymol, but is called in India, Ajawankaphul. *Action:* Antispasmodic, antiseptic, carminative, stimulant.

---

Lovage combines the stimulating properties of capsicum with the bitter tonic properties of chiretta and the antispasmodic properties of Asafoetida. It is of great value in cholera for which it is much used in the East. It is a good remedy for hysteria, bronchitis, and asthma. As a local application it relieves rheumatic pains and, being antiseptic and germicide, it removes the odour of ulcerated surfaces when applied externally, and assists wounds to heal.

Lovage is much more universal in India than in other countries, though it is one of the herbs that was generally cultivated in England in the fourteenth century and still bears the name Old English Lovage. It is a hardy perennial not unlike the garden angelica and has a strong aromatic smell and taste. The foliage is ornamental and the flowers grow in white umbels and appear in July. It is common on the sea coasts of Scotland and Northumberland, but is not regarded as indigenous to Great Britain.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### MALABAR NUT

*The leaves are often smoked in asthma.*

—KATRAK

*Botanical name:* Adhatoda vasica (Nees), Justicia adhatoda (Linn.).  
*Natural order:* Acanthaceae. *French names:* Carmantine, Noyer de Malabar, Justice. *German names:* Malabarische Nuss, Malabarnuss.  
*Italian names:* Noce del Malabar, Justicia-arborescente. *Turkish names:* Malabar ceviz ag. *Part used:* Flowers, leaves, fruit, root. *Natural habitat:* India. *Constituents:* An odorous principle, fat, resin, a bitter alkaloid, vasacine, an organic acid, adhatodic acid, sugar, gum, colouring matter, salts. *Action:* Alterative, antispasmodic, expectorant.

---

The leaves of the Malabar Nut Tree are smoked to relieve asthma, and infusions of all parts of the plant are prescribed for asthma, bronchitis and lung complaints. The flowers and roots are prescribed with ginger and sitab in consumption, asthma, chronic bronchitis, rheumatism and ague

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## MARSH MARIGOLD

*The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,  
And by the meadow trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo flowers,  
And the wild marsh marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows grey.*

—TENNYSON

*Botanical name:* *Caltha palustris*. *Natural order:* Ranunculaceae. *Country names:* Bassinet, Blobs, Boots, Bull flower, Butter blob, Great Butter flower, Carlock cups, Brave celandine, Chirms, Clout, Cow cranes, Crazy, Crazy Bet, Crow cranes, Crow flower, Drunkard, Fire o' Gold, Git-cup, Gitty cup, Water goggles, Golden cup, Golland, Gowan, Gollin, Gowlan, Halcups, John Georges, Johnny Cranes, Jonette, King cob, King cups, Mare blob, Meadow bout, Meadow bright, Mire blob, Moll blob, Publicans, Publicans and Sinners, Soldier's buttons, Spousa solis, Verrucaria. *French names:* Calthe, Populage, Souci d'eau. *German name:* Sumpfdotterblume. *Italian names:* Calta palustre, Farfarugio, Margheritina gialla. *Turkish name:* Nargiz marzagi. *Symbolical meaning:* Desire of riches. *Part used:* Whole plant. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain.

---

The Marsh marigold has several uses in medicine. It is good for anaemia and also for epilepsy. A tincture of the whole plant when administered has proved successful in cases of epilepsy, and cures have also resulted when a vase of the flowers has been placed in the bedroom of the patient.

The beautiful thick large golden flowers make them decorative indoors and out, but they only grow in marshy places.

## Herbs to Control Pain

### MEADOW SAFFRON

... or tempered every baleful juice  
Which poisonous Colchian glebes produce.

—HORACE

*Botanical name:* Colchicum autumnale (Linn.). *Natural order:* Liliaceae. *Country names:* Naked boys, Naked ladies, Upstart, Purple Michaelmas, Naked virgins, Rams, Autumn Crocus, Fog crocus, Meadow crocus, Son-before-the-father, Boy's starnaked, Tube root. *French names:* Tue chien, Mort aux chiens, Colchique d'automne, Safran bâtard. *German names:* Herbstzeitlose, Mottensafran. *Italian names:* Efemero, Dama nuda, Morte dei cani, Zafferano dei prati, Colchico florido, Croco dei prate. *Turkish name:* Surincan. *Symbolical meaning:* My best days are past. *Part used:* Seeds, bulb. *Natural habitat:* Great Britain—meadows or limestone. *Constituents:* Colchicine, colchico resin, beta colchico resin, a trace of veratrine, fat, gum, starch, sugar, tannin and gastric acid. Colchicine, an alkaoid, is intensely bitter and poisonous and is a weak base. Its salts are decomposed by water. It is the methylic ether of colchicum obtained by the action of mineral acids or acetic acid on colchicum. A white amorphous or yellowish micro-crystalline powder, darkening on exposure to light; odour saffron-like, and taste bitter; soluble in water, alcohol and chloroform; insoluble in ether. *Solvents:* Alcohol, vinegar, wine. *Action:* Anti-rheumatic, cathartic, emetic.

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**M**edicinally Colchicum combines well with gelsemium and black cohosh.

The Meadow Saffron is said to be the Hermodactyls of the Arabians, that soothing medicine so famous for controlling pains in the joints, its botanical name of Colchicum being derived from Colchis—a country on the Black Sea.

The flowers appear in the late summer and autumn when the sun's powers are waning. They resemble the flowers of a crocus, are pale mauve in colour; the ripening of the seeds is an unusual process. The ovary which is hidden in the tube of the flower remains there right through the winter. In the spring it rises on a fruit stalk and ripens above the soil—the leaves appear at the same time.

Medicinally it increases the secretions of the skin and kidneys and also the flow of bile. The plant is still a specific for gout in France, and is used in England in patent medicines. It is undoubtedly a very effective



NAVELWORT—COTYLEDON UMBILICUS



## *Herbs to Control Pain*

medicine for gout, but it is not a safe one unless used in homoeopathic doses, and its use should not be prolonged. It has been used successfully in rheumatic carditis.

It has a specific action on the muscular tissues, the periosteum and the synovial membranes of the joints.

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### NAVELWORT

*Next spotted sanicle and navelwort,  
Though both have signs of blood, forsake the Court  
Moonwort goes next, borne on its reddish stalk  
And after that does gently Cranesbill walk.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Botanical names:* Cotyledon Umbilicus, Cotyledon Lusitanica. *Natural order:* Crassulaceae. *Country names:* Kidneywort, pennywort, wall pennywort, Penny pie, wall pennyroyal. *French names:* Cot ombillique, Cotylédon, Nombriil de Venus. *German names:* Gemeines Nabelkraut, Venus Nabelkraut. *Italian names:* Orecchio d'abate, ombrellini, Erba bellica, ombellico di Venere, Cappelloni. *Turkish names:* Saksi güzeti, Ver göbegi. *Under dominion of:* Venus. *Part used:* Herb, Juice. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including England, chiefly found in the west of England.

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**T**he succulent Navelwort which often goes by the name of Kidneywort or Pennywort is an old-fashioned healing herb which had a great reputation in the seventeenth century. Like the stonecrops it requires little soil and encouragement to live and prosper, and its leaves contain a considerable amount of nutriment and moisture. It is cooling to the blood and makes a capital local application for burns, scalds and affections of the eyes.

The juice or distilled water was a great remedy for erysipelas in the days when it was called St. Anthony's Fire.

It has soothing and healing properties and can be used on open wounds or taken internally to allay inflammation of the liver and spleen. It was an old remedy for epilepsy in the west of England where it is still chiefly found.



# Herbs to Control Pain

## PAEONY

*Nor do I go in Physicks beaten road  
By other plants before me trod  
But in a way worthy a healing God  
I never with the foe come hand to hand,  
My odour death does at a distance send;  
Hung round the neck, strait, without more ado  
I put to flight the rampant foe  
I neither come (what think you Caesar now)  
Nor view the camp and yet can overthrow.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Botanical name:* Paeonia officinalis. *Natural order:* Ranunculaceae. *Country name:* Piney. *French names:* Pivoine, P eonie. *German names:* Echte Pfingstrose, Paeonie. *Italian names:* Peonia, Erba santa Rosa, Rosa del Madonna. *Turkish names:* Ayt gulu, Sakayik. *Indian name:* Ud salap. *Persian name:* Fawania Aod-el-Salib. *Symbolical meaning:* Shame. *Part used:* The tubers. *Natural habitat:* Temperate Himalayas, Europe. *Constituents:* Tubers contain malates, oxalates and phosphates, a little tannin, sugar, starch and volatile oil. *Action:* Alterative, antispasmodic.

---

The Paeony is a useful antispasmodic medicine in biliary and renal colic, hysteria, epilepsy, asthma and all convulsive diseases.

It has alterative properties and is used to purify the blood and to increase the activity of the liver.

Galen recommended it in epilepsy and it has been used in later ages for the same complaint. Children in the country sometimes wear a necklace made from the root to cure epilepsy and also St. Vitus's Dance. At one time it was a popular cure for lunacy.

The name is derived from Paeon, the physician of the gods, who is said to have cured Pluto with it when he was wounded by Hercules.

The extremely showy and decorative flowers, ranging from white to rose and pink, make it a great standby in the herbaceous border in June when there is little else, and if the roots are not interfered with in the autumn, the plants grow to a great size and flower abundantly. The plant is not indigenous to Britain, though it grows wild at Steep Holme, an island in the Severn, where there was once a monastery.

Distinction is made in herbal medicine between the male and female paeony. This is a reference to two species and not to the difference in

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

sex. The male paeony is found on the island of Steep Holme. The flowers of the female paeony are deep purple in colour.

In herbal medicine the male paeony is preferred. In cookery the kernels of the paeony were used as a flavouring agent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and Paeony Water was a favourite drink.

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### PELLITORY

*Small are thy blossoms, double Pellitory  
Which yet united are the garden's glory  
Sneezing thou dost provoke, and love for thee  
When thou wast born, sneez'd most auspiciously.*

*The Pellitory healing fire contains  
That from a raging tooth the humour drains  
At bottom red, above 'tis white and pure  
Resembling teeth and gums, for both a certain cure.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Botanical names:* (Spanish) Anacyclus Pyrethrum, (Dalmatian) Chrysanthemum Cineraria, (Persian) Chrysanthemum roseum, Chrysanthemum Carneum. *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* (Persian) Insect plant, (Spanish) Alexander's foot, Bertram, Longwort, Pellitory of Spain. *French name:* (Spanish) Pyrèthre. *German names:* (Spanish) Alexanderfuss, Speichelwurzh. *Italian names:* (Spanish) Piretro, Pilatro, Parietaria di Spagna. *Turkish name:* (Spanish) Nezle otu. *Arabian name:* (Spanish) Akara-Karkâ. *Indian names:* (Spanish) Akalkara, Mitho Akalararo. *Malayan name:* (Spanish) Akke Karruka. *Persian name:* Akar-Karah. *Sanskrit name* (Spanish) :Akara Karabha. *Under dominion of:* Mercury. *Constituents:* (Spanish) Pyrethrin, an acrid brown resin, Pyrethrine, 5 per cent, an alkaloid, two fixed oils, inulin, 50 per cent, gum, salts, a trace of tannin. *Action:* Cordial, sialogogue, stimulant.

---

All three species of Pellitory are used in medicine to allay toothache. When the root is chewed it deadens the nerves. The flower of the Dalmatian Pellitory and of the Persian variety are made into powders and lotions to keep away insects and to allay the stings of mosquitoes.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

A large trade in this insect powder is carried on in Dalmatia. The Spanish Pellitory root is given in the form of an infusion mixed with ginger and galangal as a stimulant, also to ease the pain of neuralgia and paralysis of the tongue. It is a very useful remedy to eliminate iodine poisoning.

There are two English varieties of *Chrysanthemum*. The ox eye daisy, *C. Lencanthemum*, and the corn marigold, *C. segetum*—both partake of the properties of the pellitorys.

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### PLUMBAGO

*It is called Dentellaria in Latin from its property of curing the toothache.*

*Botanical names:* *Plumbago rosea*, *Plumbago zeylanica*. *Natural order:* *Plumbaginaceae*. *English names:* Rose-coloured leadwort, Toothwort. *French names:* Dentellaire, Plombagine, Malherbe. *German name:* Bleiwurz. *Italian names:* Piombaggine, Dentellaria, Crepenello. *Turkish name:* Dis otu. *Indian names:* Chitra-mul, Chitro, Chitraka. *Malayan names:* Cheraka merah, Tumba-kodivale. *Persian name:* Shitarah. *Arabian name:* Shitaraj. *Sanskrit names:* Chitraka, Druna. *Under the dominion of:* Saturn. *Symbolical meaning:* Holy wishes. *Natural habitat:* India, East Indies. *Part used:* Plant, seeds. *Constituents:* Plumbagin, an acrid principle. *Action:* Alterative, gastric stimulant, astringent, anodyne.

---

**P**lumbago is used in gastric complaints, and the European variety has a universal reputation for curing toothache.

The bruised root is laid on the wrist to cure the ache in the tooth, but it leaves a lead-coloured mark on the wrist which is difficult to eradicate.

The root is also held in the mouth for a moment and is said to be an instantaneous cure for headaches.

The juice is so acrid that it will injure the skin if allowed to remain more than a few seconds.

There are several varieties of *Plumbago* with flowers varying in colour from white and scarlet to blue. The flowers are tubular.

The European variety which is cultivated in English greenhouses has exquisite pale blue flowers, but they are sometimes white.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

The rose-coloured Plumbago is a shrubby plant which perpetually produces flowering spikes of scarlet blossom and can with ease be kept in flower during most of the year.

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### QUEBRACHO

*The digitalis of the lungs.*

*Botanical name:* *Aspidosperma quebracho-blanco*. *Natural order:* Apocynaceae. *Part used:* Bark. *Natural habitat:* Bolivia, Chile, Argentine, Southern Brazil. *Constituents:* The bark contains at least six alkaloids, aspidospermine, which is thought to be one of them, is not a single alkaloid but represents the full activity of the drug. *Action:* Anti-asthmatic, febrifuge, tonic.

---

Quebracho is an evergreen tree with extremely hard and valuable wood.

The bark was used by the South American Indians as a febrifuge long before it was introduced into Europe, which did not occur till 1878.

Quebracho is a specific in difficult breathing and has a rapid action. It stimulates the respiratory centres, increases oxidation and excretion of carbonic acid. It is not dangerous and its use can be safely prolonged.

It is particularly indicated in thrombosis of the pulmonary artery, in heart disease, in asthma and emphysemata and in pulmonary tuberculosis, giving tone and regularity to the contractions of the heart.

It has been called the digitalis of the lungs and it assists in climbing mountains and overcoming fatigue. It decreases the sensation of lack of air due to overwalking, but it should be avoided by old people suffering from heart disease.

It is used as a protection to wounds and is a valuable remedy in typhoid and other fevers.

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### SASSY BARK

*The bark is used as an ordeal poison in trials in West Africa.*

*Botanical name:* Erythroploeum quineense. *Natural order:* Leguminosae. *Country names:* Cascabark, Doom bark, Mancona bark, Ordeal bark, Saucy bark, Nkasa, Red water bark. *Part used:* Branches and bark. *Natural habitat:* Senegambia and Upper Guinea. *Constituents:* Erythro-phleine (an alkaloid not unlike digitalis in its action). *Action:* Anagelsic, astringent.

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The Sassy Bark yields its properties to water. It is said to give great relief in dyspnoea and it has been given in dropsy, but it must be used with great care because it is liable to disturb digestion, and in large doses can cause coma and death.

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### SATINWOOD TREE

*This is the satinwood of India used in the making of stethoscopes.*

*Botanical name:* Chloroxylon Swietenia, DC. *Natural order:* Rutaceae. *Other name:* Yellow wood. *French name:* Bois satin. *German names:* Seidenholz, Atlas holz. *Italian name:* Legno rasato. *Turkish name:* Yesil odunu. *Hindu name:* Rakata Rohidi. *Part used:* Bark. *Natural habitat:* Ceylon, Western Peninsula. *Constituents:* Tannin. *Action:* Astringent, anodyne.

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A decoction of the bark of the Satinwood Tree is applied externally to allay the pain of sprains and painful joints.

The wood is used commercially for making stethoscopes.

This large tree with its fine-grained wood of a light yellow colour belongs to the mahogany family. It is peculiarly suited to the making of fine furniture because of its satin sheen.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## SCREW PINE

*'One day we walked up the Teasta to the Rumphiu River, a torrent from Mainom mountain to the West; the path led amongst thick jungle of Wallichia palm, prickly rattan canes and the Pandanus or Screw Pine, called "Borr", which has a straight, often forked, palm-like trunk, and an immense crown of grassy saw-edged leaves four feet long; it bears clusters of uneatable fruit as large as a man's fist, and their similarity to the pineapple has suggested the name of Borr.'*

—HOOKER'S *Himalayan Journal*

*Botanical names:* Pandanus odoratissimus (Linn.), Pandanus sativa. *Natural order:* Pandanaceae. *Other names:* Caldera Bush, Pandang oil plant, Anthrodactyllis spinosa. *French names:* Baquois, Vacouet, Vaquois. *German name:* Pandanuspalme. *Italian names:* Pandano odorosa, Pandano, Ananasso della China, Uva cacca. *Indian names:* Keori, markevada, Kevara, gaganphula. *Persian names:* Gul-i-kivea, kavondi. *Arabian names:* Kâdhi, keder. *Sanskrit names:* Keteka, Dhuli push pika. *Part used:* The stem, seed and male inflorescence. *Natural habitat:* India, Persia, Arabia.

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The Screw Pine is a palm-like tree producing male flowering branches with bracts of a whitish colour, in the axils of which are bunches of yellow anthers which are highly scented, and from which a perfumed drink is prepared called Aarka which is used medicinally. The fruit of the tree is about the size of a coconut. The water which is distilled from the flowering tops is used as an antispasmodic medium to relieve faintness and giddiness and the oil cures earache and otorrhoea.

# Herbs to Control Pain

## STONE ROOT

'A cure for venous engorgement.'

—BOERICKE

*Botanical name:* Collinsonia Canadensis (Linn.). *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Country names:* Richweed, Knobweed, Horsebalm, Hardback, Horseweed, Rich leaf, Knobroot, Heal all, Oxbalm, Canadian horse-mint. *French names:* Baume de Cheval, Guérit-tout, Collinsone de Canada. *German name:* Kanadische collinsonie. *Italian name:* Collinsonia. *Turkish name:* Kolinsonia. *Part used:* Whole plant, fresh root. *Natural habitat:* From Canada to the Carolinas. *Constituents:* Magnesium salts, volatile oil, resin. *Action:* Antispasmodic, astringent, diuretic, diaphoretic, sedative, tonic.

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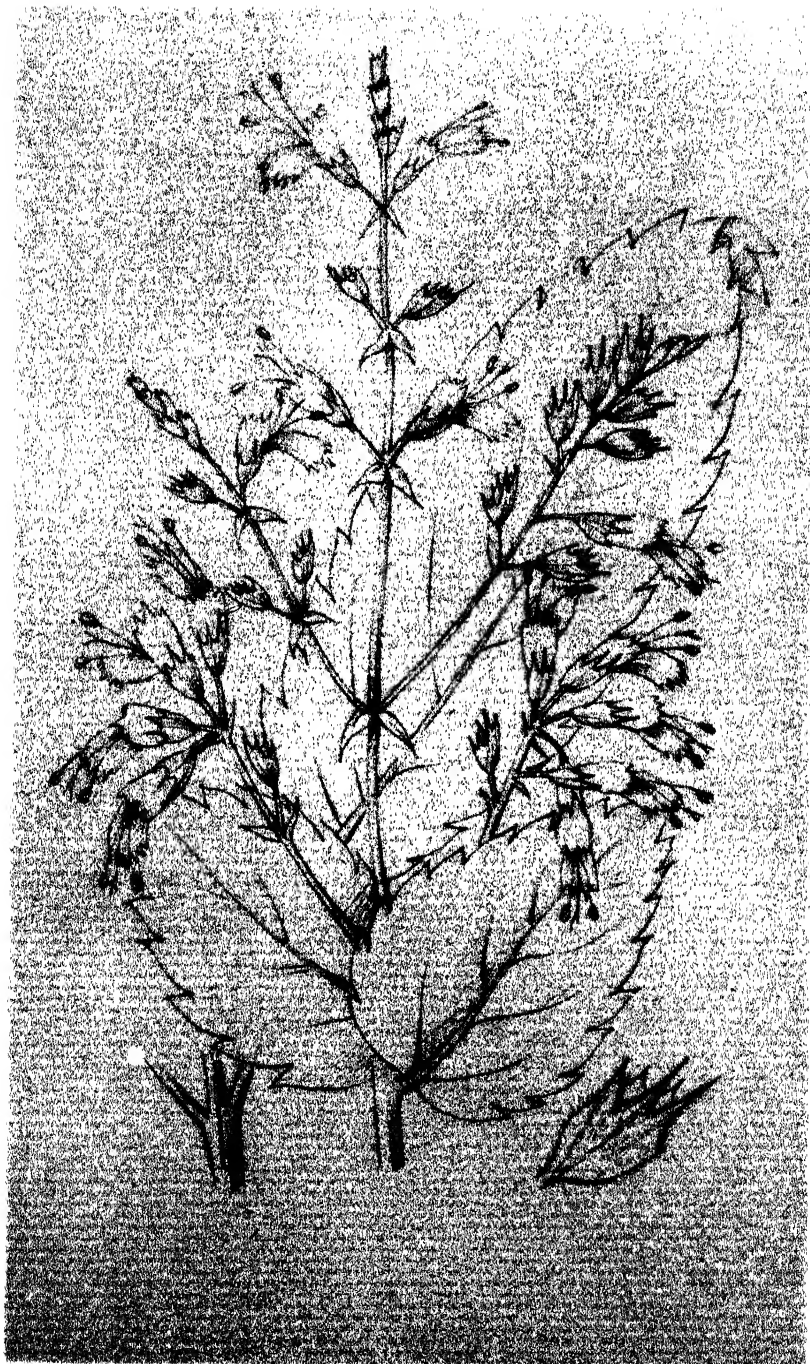
Stone root grows in damp woods. It has large yellow-green flowers and an unpleasant pungent smell. Its chief medicinal value lies in the root which must always be used fresh. It actively stimulates the function of the stomach, and through this benefits the functional power of the other important organs.

It has a tonic effect on the muscular structure of the heart, and acts as an astringent to the walls of the veins. In imperfect circulation of the capillary veins it is a splendid remedy. It is a specific for piles and for pain in the rectum from whatever cause. It relaxes spasms of the ureter and urethra, and facilitates the expulsion of small calculi.

It is a good remedy in clergyman's sore throat and in laryngitis and pharyngitis, when the walls are relaxed and there is improper capillary circulation. Its continued use has a most beneficial effect on the heart, strengthening and improving the circulation. Chronic nasal, gastric and pharyngeal catarrh are all relieved by it. It combines with Cranesbill, Hydrastis and Witch hazel.

Ascarides are destroyed by renal injections of 1 to 4 of water.

It is given as a tonic in anaemia.



STONE ROOT—*COLLINSONIA CANADENSIS*





## *Herbs to Control Pain*

### SUMBUL

*It grows in the mountains north-east of Samarkand.*

*Botanical name:* Ferula sumbul. *Natural order:* Umbelliferae. *Country name:* Musk root. *Part used:* Rhizome, root. *Natural habitat:* Northern India, Turkestan, Russia. *Constituents:* Volatile oil, two balsamic resins, one soluble in alcohol and one in ether; wax, gum, starch, a bitter substance soluble in water and alcohol, angelic and valenic acid, the odour seems to be connected with the balsamic resins. The volatile oil has a taste like peppermint and on dry distillation yields a bluish oil containing umbelliferone, among the volatile acids are acetic, butyric, angelic and tiglic acid and among the non-volatile oleic, are linoleic, tiglic, cerotic, palmitic, and stearic.

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Sumbul is allied to Asafoetida and Garlic. It was first discovered by a Russian called Fenschenko and used by Russian doctors before it was known in Europe.

It is a powerful nerve sedative and tonic to the mucous membranes and is given as a quick remedy in neurasthenia and hysteria. It has a specific action on the pelvic organs and is a stimulant to the mucous membranes in chronic bronchitis and asthma.

Sumbul is a nerve tonic rather similar to Valerian and Musk, and is given as a substitute for Musk in cholera and typhoid. It is also prescribed for delirium tremens, epilepsy, and nervous prostration owing to debilitating and inflammatory conditions.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## SYCACARPUS

*This tree belongs to the Bead Tree family and unlike most of the group is not bitter.*

*Botanical name:* Sycacarpus Rusbyi. *Natural order:* Mellaceae. *Part used:* The bark. *Natural habitat:* South America. *Constituents:* Oxalate of lime in large monoclinic crystals, gutta-percha, a resinous secretion, a yellowish white, amorphous, sometimes slightly granular substance, Caoutchouc; and an active principle.

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Sycacarpus acts as an expectorant and is given in acute bronchitis and pulmonary complaints. It acts at first as a stimulant and then as a sedative.

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## THAPSIA

*It derives its name from the island of Thapsos where it grows abundantly.*

*Botanical name:* Thapsia garganica (Linn.). *Natural order:* Umbelliferae. *Country names:* Drias plant, Smooth Thapsia. *French names:* Thapsie, Faux Fenouil, Faux turbith. *German name:* Falsche Turbith. *Italian names:* Tassia, Panacea d'Esculapio, Turbitto di Puglia. *Turkish names:* Deryas, Yentun. *Part used:* Gum, resin, leaves, bark, root. *Natural habitat:* Algeria, from Spain to Greece.

---

The Thapsia tree has a very ancient reputation in medicine. Theophrastus speaks of it under the name of Silphion, and describes it as having a leaf like fennel but broader, a stalk like that of ferule, and a white root. The Algerians regard it as a great pain killer, but it is deadly poisonous to camels, and is strongly purgative to human beings. The French make it into a plaster which is a drastic counter irritant and will produce its full results in six hours.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

It will often cure persistent sciatica. Thapsia is sometimes useful in chronic bronchial complaints and has proved a curative remedy in dropsy with haematuria and strangury, given in thirty-drop doses of the tincture five times daily; but on account of its irritating character is not often used internally.

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### TIGER LILY

*O'er her blue dress an endless blossom strayed;  
About her tendril curls the sunlight shone;  
And round her train the tiger lilies swayed,  
Like courtiers bowing till the Queen be gone.*

—AUSTIN DOBSON

*Botanical name:* *Lilium tigrinum*. *Natural order:* Liliaceae. *Country name:* Crumple lily. *French name:* Lis tigré. *German name:* Tigerlilie. *Italian name:* Giglio pardo. *Turkish name:* Pars Zambagi. *Symbolical meaning:* For once may pride befriend me. *Part used:* Leaves, flowers, stalks. *Natural habitat:* China, Japan.

---

**T**he Tiger Lily is used in China and Japan where it first grew, as food. The bulbs are steamed or boiled.

In medicine it is used as a specific for ovarian neuralgia, but it is a useful remedy to strengthen the ciliary muscle, and is prescribed in myopic astigmatism.

# *Herbs to Control Pain*

## TOOTHWORT

*'After flowering, while the capsules are half ripe, in form as well as in colour they simulate human teeth in a most remarkable manner.'*

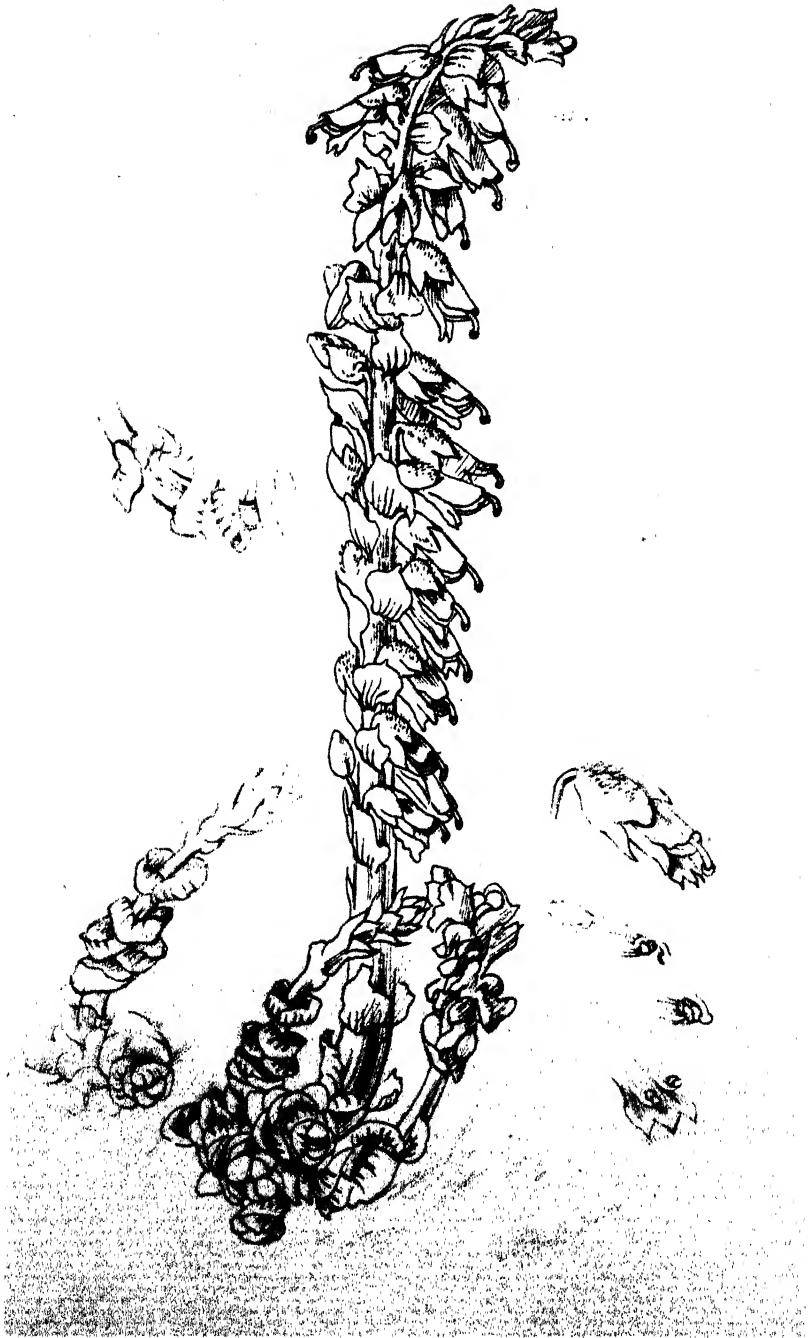
—BRITTEN and HOLLANDER

*Botanical name:* Lathroea squamaria (Linn.). *Natural order:* Orobanchaceae. *Country names:* Clown's lungwort, Lungwort, Toothwort. *French names:* Clandestine, Herbe cachée, Lathrée-écailleuse. *German name:* Schuppenwurz. *Italian name:* Fuoco de boschii. *Spanish name:* Madrona. *Portuguese name:* Dentaria bestarda. *Dutch name:* Schshwortel. *Turkish name:* Gizli otu. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* England, Scotland and Ireland, but rare.

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The curious-looking Toothwort plant with brownish pink flowers which turn to a much brighter pink if the plant is exposed to sun, prefers woods and shady places. It is a parasite and grows on elmi, hazel or other trees. It is leafless, juicy, with fleshy tooth-like scales and its appearance gave it its name and revealed its virtues. The name is said to refer to the tooth-like scales of the root.

The plant is used by herbalists as a cure for toothache.



TOOTHWORT—LATHROEA SQUAMARIA



# Herbs to Control Pain

## WATER LILY

*Asleep upon the stream,  
The moonlight stream,  
The water lilies dream—  
Floating they dream.  
With cups of purest white  
All folded from the night.*

*Botanical name:* Nymphaea odorata (Soland). *Natural order:* Nymphaeaceae. *Country names:* Alan, Bobbins, Cambie leaf, Candock, Canleaves, Flatter dock lily, Nenuphar, Water bells, Water blob, Water can, Water socks, Water rose. *French names:* Nénuphar blanc, Lis des étangs. *German names:* Seeblume, Weisse Seerose. *Dutch name:* Plomper. *Italian names:* Ninfea bianca, Luna d'acqua. *Turkish name:* Ak nilufer. *Under the dominion of:* The moon. *Symbolical meaning:* Sanctity. *Part used:* Root flesh and leaves. *Natural habitat:* United States in marshy rivers, ponds and streams. *Constituents:* Tannin, gallic acid, mucilage, starch, gum, resin, sugar, ammonia, tartaric acid, fecula. *Action:* Anodyne, astringent, demulcent.

---

The Water Lily grows wild in streams round Oxford and in many other places in England. It grew in the Ouse where it was familiar to Cowper, and the Cherwell is also famous for its water lilies.

The legend about the flower is that it first appeared on the surface of the water when a maiden who was in love with Hercules drowned herself for love of him. It is said to bloom at the gates of Paradise.

The flowers open as the sun rises and close for the midday heat and again at night.

The yellow Water Lily is much more strongly scented and grows in England as well as the white. It is sometimes called Brandy Bottle on account of its scent and also from the shape of its seed vessels.

The Oriental water lilies are still more strongly perfumed and more highly coloured. They range from crimson to paler shades of rose, their roots are often roasted and eaten like potatoes and the seeds are roasted or eaten raw like millet. The Turks and Arabs make a liqueur called *Pufer* from water lilies.

The leaves and roots of the water lily are made into poultices to relieve the pain of boils, tumours and wounds of all kinds.

Culpeper says: 'The leaves do cool all inflammations both outward



## *Herbs to Control Pain*

and inward heat of agues; and so doth the flowers also, either by the syrup or conserve; the syrup helps much to procure rest and to settle the brain of frantic persons, by cooling the hot distemperature of the head; the oil of the flowers as oil of roses is made, is profitably used to cool hot tumours, and to ease the pain and help the sores'.

The plant has a marked action on the organs of procreation and is said to have cured cancer. It is used locally by the American Indians, and both the leaves and root can be made into poultices for scrofulous ulcers. The yellow water lily has the same properties.

*All heats in general I resist, nay I  
To all that's hot am a sworn enemy  
Whether distracting flames with fury fly  
Thro' the burnt brain, like comets through the skie  
Or whether from the belly they ascend  
And fumes all o'er the body swiftly send,  
Whether with Sulph'rous fire the veins within  
They kindle, or just singe the outward skin  
Whate'er they are, my awful juice they fly.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

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## WILD JESSAMINE

*The leaves and seeds smell of Coriander.*

*Botanical names:* *Canthium didymum*, *Canthium parviflorum*, *Canthium umbellatum*, *Canthium cymosum*. *Natural order:* Rubiaceae. *Indian name:* Ursool. *Malayan names:* Kanden, Khara, Merajak, Meraga. *Part used:* The plant. *Natural habitat:* Ceylon, Malaya. *Action:* Astringent, anthelmintic, antispasmodic.

---

In Malaya decoctions of wild jessamine are given to stop hiccoughs in children and for the relief of colic.

The shrub is small and thorny with small, yellow flowers and reddish brown fruit which have a sweet taste. The leaves and seeds are aromatic.

## Herbs to Control Pain

### WILD LIME

*With leaves as fragrant as the orange.*

*Botanical name:* *Atalantia monophylla*. *Natural order:* Rutaceae. *Other names:* *Limonia monophylla*, *Trichilia spinosa*. *Native names:* Katunimbe, Malvaregam, Makhur-limbu, Konda-minma. *Part used:* The oil, root, leaves. *Natural habitat:* Western Peninsula, Ceylon, Malabar Coast, Bombay, Coromandel. *Action:* Antispasmodic, stimulating.

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The wild Lime is one of the Oriental plants that relieve pain. A decoction of the leaves is used for itch and the oil is massaged into paralysed limbs and rheumatic joints.

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### WILD YAM

*Relieves colic from any cause.*

*Botanical name:* *Dioscorea villosa* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Dioscoreaceae. *Country names:* Colic root, Rheumatism root, Devil's bones. *French name:* Ignose indigène. *German names:* Wilde-yam, Zottige Yamwurzel. *Italian name:* *Dioscoria salvatica*. *Turkish name:* Yabanihind yer elmasi. *Part used:* Dried root. *Natural habitat:* Coast of Malabar, Ceylon, cultivated in West Indies, Africa, Asia, Southern U.S.A. and Canada. *Constituents:* Saponin. *Action:* Anodyne, antispasmodic.

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Wild Yam was first imported into England in the eighteenth century. It is a climbing plant with sharp pointed smooth leaves, and spikes of small flowers which grow from long footstalks. It is the only one of its species used in medicine, with the exception of the Black Bryony.

Two other species, the *Dioscorea sativa* and the Winged Yam, *Dioscorea alata*, are cultivated in the same way as the potato—the former of the two being known as the East Indian Sweet Yam. It is pleasant to eat and very nutritious.

## *Herbs to Control Pain*

The only species that grows wild in Great Britain is the Black Bryony, *Tamus communis*. The young shoots can be boiled and eaten like asparagus. The French name for it is Tamier, the Germans call it Schwarzwurzel, and the Italians Brione vena.

Under the name of Sham Yao the Chinese cultivate the *D. japonica* and the *D. batatas* as vegetables and the roots of the wild species are used by them in medicine.

The Wild Yam is one of the best medicines for bilious colic. It is specifically indicated in the pain of gallstones, in griping pain in the stomach and intestines, and in recurring colicky pains for which the cause is unknown.

It even relieves the pain of angina pectoris, especially when the pain passes from the sternum into the arms.

## Chapter Five

### HERBS TO ALLAY FEVERS

*American Boxwood; Boneset; Bugloss; Chrysanthemum; Compass Plant; Crawley Root; Dita Bark; Feverbush; Fiveleaf Grass; Gipsywort; Gourds; Gravelwort; Hemp Agrimony; Jack Fruit Tree; Lemon Verbena; Lilac; Ngai Camphor Plant; Peruvian Bark; Pittosporum; Scabious; Shoe Flower; Snake Root; Virginia Creeper; Vervain; Winter Cherry; Yarrow*

**I**n approaching the whole subject of fevers we must remember that the orthodox view in the past was founded on the idea that any deviation from a normal circulation and temperature was a cause for alarm.

The present attitude of science approximates much more to the herbalists' view, and it is now generally recognized that in many illnesses a fever is Nature's method of killing disease germs, which cannot exist in a high temperature.

Fevers are not always due to bacteria. They may be caused by an engorgement of the venous system, inflammatory wounds, nervous irritation, or by obstructions in various parts of the body. The remedies for dealing with them are called anti-pyretics. They allay fevers by influencing the heat centres of the brain, by decreasing oxygenation or by increasing the radiation of heat. One of the principles of herbal medicine is based on this idea of creating equilibrium of heat through the administration of hot medicines or stimulants.

There are two types of febrifuge medicines—those which reduce inflammation or counteract it, and those which cure periodic tendencies in disease. Peruvian bark is an antiperiodic, and so are Fever bush, Wafer ash, White Willow, Quebracho, Alstonia, and the Common Ash tree.

In herbal medicine there are a great many diaphoretic herbs which produce perspiration by stimulating the secretions of the sweat glands. Many of them are cardiac sedatives. Some of the diaphoretic and febrifuge herbs with tonic properties are Avens, Boneset, Catnip, Poplar Germander, Contrayerva, Yellow Parilla, Yarrow and Wormwood, etc.

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

There are others with sedative properties like Crawley root and Lemon-scented verbena ; Gelsemium is an arterial sedative and acts by dilating the cutaneous vessels.

Other febrifuge herbs are carminatives, as in the case of Angelica and Balm ; they relieve flatulence. Buchu and Butcher's Broom are diuretics as well as diaphoretics and stimulate the action of the kidneys, or relieve renal congestion.

Devil's Bit is one of the few herbs that combine demulcent or soothing properties with its febrifuge and diaphoretic virtues. It is one of the Scabious family—a very familiar herb to all country people and a very common one. Its dark blue flower heads with conspicuous stamens are in flower nearly everywhere from July to October. The plant derives its name of Devil's Bit from the root, which, as it dies away, has a gnawed appearance. There is a legend that Satan bit away the root hoping to destroy it because it was so beneficial to mankind.

Many of the refrigerant or refreshing herbs are good to administer in fevers because they quench thirst. There is a chapter on them in my book, *Herbal Delights*. Bitter Tonic herbs like Angustura or Bogbean are also beneficial because they strengthen the digestive organs. Bogbean also removes obstructions, and so does Gravelwort which is a good nerve tonic as well. So often fevers are accompanied by great nervous tension—this is why Vervain and Yarrow are good remedies in the early stages of fevers, and Crawley root at a later stage.

The Winter Cherry is a cure for intermittent fevers. This plant is a native of China and Cochin China. In parts of Europe the berries are eaten and are strongly recommended for gout. The fruits of some of the cornels are also used to subdue fevers and these purplish black fruits were in common use in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Dryden refers to them and so does Bacon who calls them *Cornehians*.

American Boxwood is a well-known cure for intermittent fevers among the American Indians, and is one of the same family and so is Jamaica Dogwood which induces sleep as well.

The Snake root of America (*Aristolochia Serpentina*) is a valuable medicine in typhoid fever, and scarlet fever, and in chronic agues. It is a restorative as well as a diaphoretic and can be used at the beginning of acute fevers of all kinds. It was one of the ingredients in the Duke of Portland's famous rheumatic powder. The plant has very curious flowers which grow close to the root and droop so much that they are often hardly visible, being almost buried in the ground or in their own leaves.

The red Virginia Creeper is another herb that has been used in febrile complaints. In Charles II's reign the berries were sometimes infused in

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

vinegar to antidote the plague, and Ivy berries are still given to allay fevers.

In America they use the Sweet Lilac of our English gardens as a cure for malaria. The leaves and the fruit have anti-periodic properties.

Two lesser-known plants, the Bitter Broom, *Parthenium Hystero-phorus*, and the Compass Plant, *Silphium perfoliatum*, both of which grow in America, are fever cures. The Compass plant takes its name from its habit of pointing to the north. The Bitter Broom is a well-known remedy in Cuba for intermittent fevers.

The Button Bush, *Cephalanthus occidentalis*, one of the Rubiaceous plants, cures intermittent fever and quotidian and tertian fever.

The leaves of the *Pittosporum*—a comparatively late innovation to our English gardens—have febrifuge properties. The lovely foliage of this plant makes it a useful hedge tree and as the leaves are evergreen and grow well near the sea it is a very great acquisition to the English coast garden.

In England our best simples for feverish complaints are Avens, Catnip, Devil's Bit, Five-leaf grass ; and children's feverish complaints are generally treated by herbalists with Elder flower and peppermint, Yarrow and Vervain. The bark of the Poplar tree, of the ash and the oak, are as good in intermittent fevers as Peruvian bark and have as great a tonic effect. But in choosing a remedy the other properties of the plant must also be taken into account in order that the cause of the complaint may be removed as well as the fever.

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

### AMERICAN BOXWOOD

*The twigs are dentifrice.*

*Botanical name:* *Cornus florida* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Cornaceae. *Country names:* Flowering cornet, American dogwood, Bitter redberry, Cornel, Dog tree, Box tree, Virginian dogwood, Mon-ha-can-ni-min-schi, Hat-ta-wa-no-min-schi. *French name:* Cornouiller. *German names:* Blumenhartriegel, Hartriegel. *Italian name:* Corniolo florido. *Hindu name:* Kandar. *Symbolical meaning:* Durability. *Part used:* Bark of root when dried, fruit. *Natural habitat:* U.S.A. from Massachusetts to Florida, Sublej valley, Punjab. *Constituents:* Cornin or cormic acid, resin, gallic acid, tannin. *Solvents:* Alcohol, water. *Action:* Antiperiodic, astringent, stimulant.

---

The American Boxwood plant is allied to the dogwoods and the Cornels. The twigs from which the bark has been removed are used by the American Indians in intermittent fevers in the same way as Peruvian bark, and the ripe fruit infused in brandy makes a good stomachic tonic. The same plant was known to Dioscorides, to Hippocrates and to Pliny who recommended it as a cure for dysentery.

Ellingwood says, 'This agent is indicated not only to correct the atomic conditions of the glandular structure of the gastro-intestinal apparatus in malaria, but as an antidote to the malarial condition itself. It has marked control over many of the manifestations of malaria. In its influence upon the stomach it increases the appetite at once and relieves the drowsiness and dullness apt to follow imperfect digestion.'

It is a tonic to a weak digestion from any cause, so is invaluable during convalescence.

Heat destroys the active principle so a decoction is useless. The twigs make an excellent tooth powder.

The tree grows from fifteen to thirty feet high and has what appear to be large white flowers. Actually these are bunches of flowers surrounded by four large bracts. The flowers appear so regularly at the end of May that they fix the time for the Indians to sow their corn.

The flowers are followed by brilliant red berries. The plant yields its properties to alcohol or water.

# *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

## BONESET

*Boneset derives its name from its value in the treatment of Break Bone fever.*

*Botanical name:* Eupatorium perfoliatum (Linn.). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Thoroughwort, Wood bone-set, Ague weed, Feverwort, Vegetable antimony, Sweating plant, Indian sage. *Symbolical meaning:* Delay. *Part used:* Herb, leaves. *Natural habitat:* In meadows and damp places from Nova Scotia to Florida. *Constituents:* A neutral bitter principle, Eupatorin (glucoside), a volatile oil, tannin, wax, gum, resin, sugar, ash 7-5 per cent. Eupatorin—a crystalline glucoside. Soluble in water, alcohol, chloroform and ether. *Action:* Febrifuge, laxative, stimulant.

---

The botanical name of Boneset is derived from Mithridates Eupator, King of Pontus, who used it in medicine. The plant is closely related to gravel root, eupatorium purpureum, which sometimes goes by the name of Queen of the Meadow. The homoeopaths use both species and also another variety, the Eupatorium aromaticum, the English name of which is Pool root.

We owe our knowledge of Boneset as an important diaphoretic medicine to the North American Indians, and it derived its name of Boneset from curing break bone fevers (Dengue fever). It is sometimes instantaneous in relieving aching bones.

It is a cure for intermittent fevers of the severest type and for continued fevers, and it is valuable in all catarrhal complaints. It has a very soothing effect on the nervous system and prevents gastric disturbance. It acts as a stimulating tonic.



## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

### BUGLOSS

. . . with bright blue eye

*Your pains the Bugloss will repay  
And famed for driving care away,  
Dipp'd in a broader brighter blue,  
Rough borage.*

—BISHOP MANT

*Botanical name:* *Echium vulgare* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Boraginaceae. *French names:* Herbe aux Vipères, Vipérine. *German name:* Gemeiner Natterkopf. *Italian names:* Echio, Erba delle vipere, Viperina. *Turkish name:* Havaciva otu. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Symbolical meaning:* Falsehood. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain. *Action:* Demulcent, diuretic, expectorant, febrifuge.

---

All species of the Bugloss in common with other anchusas have mild febrifuge and tonic properties and can be used in the form of an infusion to be drunk either hot or cold, as a remedy for feverish colds or fevers of any kind.

Anne Pratt quotes botanists who have considered the Viper's Bugloss the most beautiful of all lovely wild flowers. The plant grows on chalky hills and in June and July produces bells of flowers which vary in colour from a deep purple blue to the palest of blues, and even sometimes snow white.

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

### CHRYSANTHEMUM

*Here's fine rosemary, sage and thyme.*

*Come, buy my ground ivy.*

*Here's featherfew, gilliflowers and rue.*

*Come, buy my knotted marjoram ho!*

*Come, buy my mint, my fine green mint.*

—ROXBURGH BALLADS

*Botanical names:* Pyrethrum parthenium (Linn.), Matricaria parthenium, Chrysanthemum parthenium (Bernh). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Adrelwort, Arsmart, Bertram, Buncholery buttons. Midsummer daisy, Feather few, Feather fowl, Flirtwort, Maghet, Nosebleed, St. Peterwort, Vethervoo, Weythernoy, Whitewort. *French name:* Chrysanthème matricaire. *German names:* Goldfederwucherblume, Grosse Kamillen. *Italian names:* Matricaria, Amarella, Partenio, Matricale, Morella, Occhio di sole. *Turkish name:* Varadika otu. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* middle and southern Europe. *Action:* Antispasmodic, diuretic, emmenagogue, febrifuge resolvent, vermifuge.

---

**T**he Feverfew belongs to the same family as the Chamomile, and its feathery leaves have a strong Chamomile-like scent, as indeed has the whole plant.

It was considered at one time a specific for agues and was sold in the streets of London.

Since the time of Dioscorides it has been recommended in intermittent fevers and has derived its name from its general use as a febrifuge.

It yields its properties to alcohol or water, and externally is a good ingredient for fomentations, especially if combined with Chamomile flowers.

Other varieties of Chrysanthemum will be found under Pellitory in the chapter on anodyne herbs. See Pellitory.

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

### COMPASS PLANT

*Look at this delicate flower, that lifts its head from the meadow,  
See how its leaves are pointed to the north as true as a magnet;  
It is the compass flower, that the finger of God has suspended  
Here on its fragile stalk, to direct the traveller's journey  
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.*

—LONGFELLOW

*Botanical names:* Silphium perfoliatum (Linn.), Silphium laciniatum.  
*Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Rosinweed, Polar plant,  
Pilot plant, Cup plant, Compass weed, Indian cup plant, Ragged cup,  
Bastard chrysanthemum, Turpentine weed. *French name:* Plante au  
compas. *German name:* Geschilitzte Tassenpflanze. *Italian name:* Silfio  
a foglie intagliante. *Turkish name:* Pergel otu. *Part used:* Root, gum.  
*Natural habitat:* Ohio and Western United States. *Action:* Alterative,  
diaphoretic.

---

**T**he Compass plant is also commonly called Cup plant and derives the latter name from the cup-like appearance of the winged stalks of its opposite leaves which are united.

It is called Compass plant because of its habit of pointing to the north. It is a remedy for enlarged spleen and pulmonary affections as well as for intermittent fevers. The root is usually taken infused in brandy and sugar.

The gum which exudes from the plant is used by the native Indians to sweeten their breath and is very like mastic.

The Californian Compass plant, *Wyethia Helenoides*, is also used in medicine.



COMPASS PLANT—*SILPHIUM PERFOLIATUM*



# *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

## CRAWLEY ROOT

*A remedy for fever accompanied by intense nervous restlessness and burning of hands and feet.*

—BOERICKE

*Botanical names:* Corallorhiza innata (Linn.), Corallorhiza odontorhiza (Nutt). *Natural order:* Orchidaceae. *Country names:* Coral root, Chicken toe, Dragon's claw. *Part used:* Root. *Natural habitat:* U.S.A. from Maine to Carolina westwards.

---

If Crawley Root were not so expensive to buy it would be much more used medicinally, because it is one of the quickest diaphoretics we have. It acts as a sedative as well and never produces nervous excitability. Its use is indicated in hectic fever which begins at 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. and lasts till midnight with an absence of thirst.

---

## DITA BARK

*It is called the Devil's tree*

*Botanical name:* Alstonia scholaris, R. Br. *Natural order:* Apocynaceae. *Other names:* Dita bark, Devil's tree. *French names:* Dita, Alstonie, Échite. *German name:* Schulholzbaum. *Italian name:* Alstonia. *Turkish name:* Dita ag. *Malayan names:* Pulai, Pokok basong. *Part used:* Bark and leaves. *Natural habitat:* Forests of India, Assam, Coromandel, Bengal, Western Africa, Moluccas, Philippine Islands. *Constituents:* An alkaloid ditamine, two bases echitamine and echitenene, also echicaoutchin, an amorphous yellow mass; echicerin in acicular crystals; echitin in crystallized scales; echitein in rhombic prisms; and echiretin, an amorphous substance. *Action:* Alterative, astringent, bitter tonic, febrifuge.

---

The stately evergreen Dita tree provides one of the best medicines for fevers.

It is known as the Lord of the Indian Jungle and there are many

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

superstitions about it. One is that it assembles all the other trees in the forest to pay it yearly homage. Dita is one of the haunted bee trees.

In India it is used medicinally to cure malaria, and it can be tolerated when quinine cannot. It is an excellent bitter tonic in convalescence from exhausting wounds and fevers, and it is a useful astringent remedy in dysentery.

The Malays use the juice to relieve toothache and in passive liver complaints.

---

### FEVERBUSH

*It contains a new alkaloid called Garryine.*

*Botanical name:* *Garrya fremonti* (Torr). *Natural order:* Compositae.  
*Country names:* Californian feverbush, Skunk bush. *Part used:* Leaves.  
*Natural habitat:* California, Oregon, Mexico, Cuba, Jamaica. *Constituents:* Garryine.

---

The leaves of the Feverbush are used in California for fevers in place of Peruvian bark.

It is a small evergreen shrub with composite yellow flowers and broad leathery leaves, grey-green on the upper side and paler grey-green underneath. It is very common in its native countries and can be cultivated in England if it is protected in the winter.

# *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

## FIVELEAF GRASS

*And for the falling ill by five-leaf doth restore  
And melancholy cures by sovereign hellebore.*

—MICHAEL DRAYTON

*Botanical name:* *Potentilla reptans* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Rosaceae. *Country names:* Cinquefoil, Fiflef, Five finger blossom, Five-finger grass, Five fingers, Five leaf, Five leaves grass, Golden blossom, Herb five leaf, Sinkfield, Synkefoyle, Tormentil. *French names:* Quintefeuille, Potentille rampante. *German names:* Fünffingerkraut, Kreichendes Fingerkraut. *Italian names:* Cinque foglio, Pentafillo, Strisciante. *Spanish name:* Cinco en rama. *Turkish name:* Bes parmak otu. *Dutch name:* Vytringerkruid. *Under the dominion of:* Jupiter. *Symbolical meaning:* Maternal affection. *Part used:* Herb, root. *Natural habitat:* Europe, Northern and Western Asia to the Himalayas, Canaries and Azores.

---

The Fiveleaf Grass is one of the potentillas and is closely related to the Silverweed, sharing its astringent properties. It is a creeping plant with yellow flowers and short tapering stamens, the leaves are divided into five, hence its name, and this characteristic distinguishes it from the Silverweed.

The astringent properties of the plant are yielded to water or spirit and much resemble the tormentil, but the plant is not so powerfully astringent. The leaves have the same properties as the root in a lesser degree. It has been used since the time of Dioscorides as a cure for intermittent fevers and its efficacy is confirmed by Hippocrates.

Dioscorides advised one leaf for a quotidian ague, three for a tertian and four for a quartan ague.

A decoction of the root or the expressed juice of the root was considered a cure for chronic inflammation of the eyes.



## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

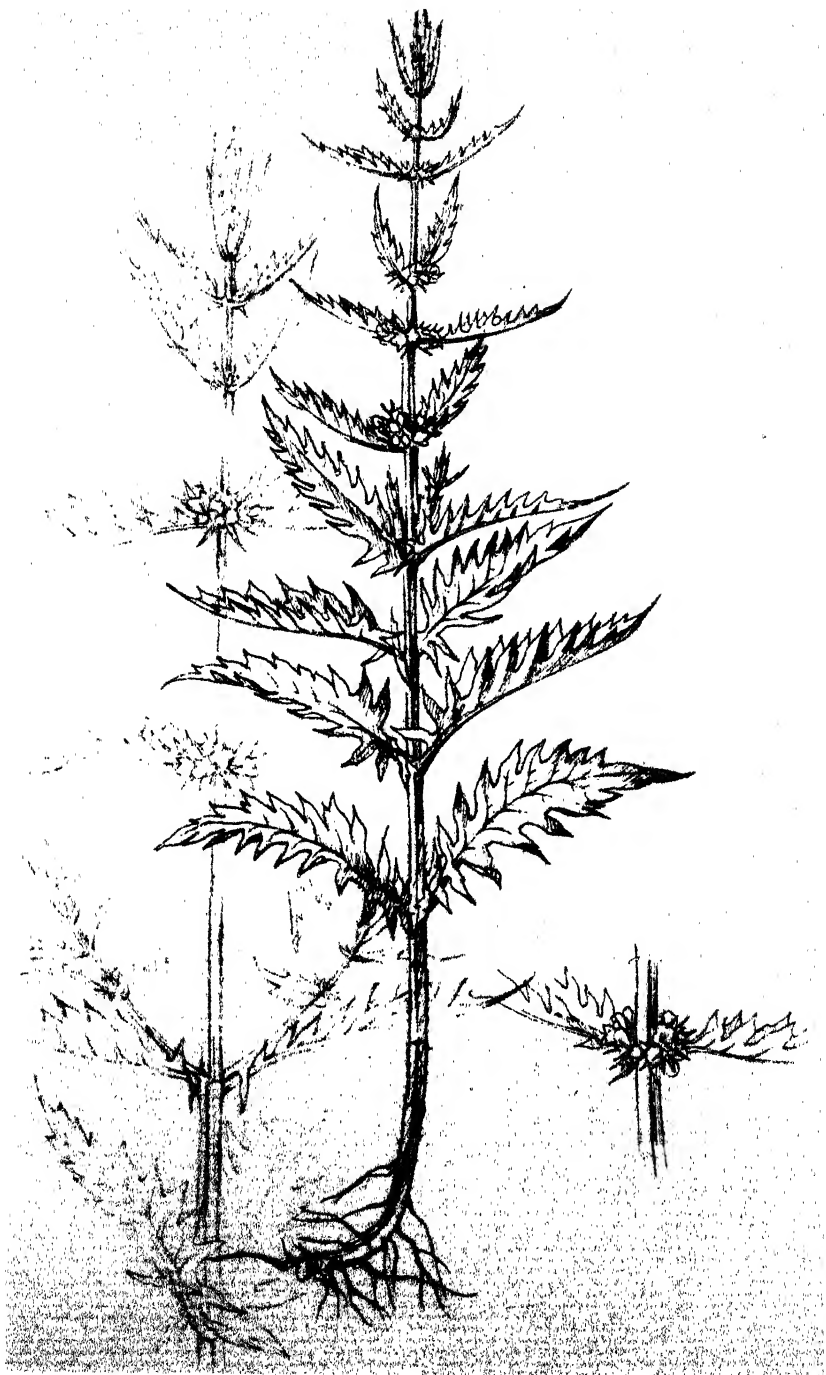
### GIPSYWORT

*The plant has received its name because it is used by gipsies to stain their skin brown.*

*Botanical name:* Lycopus Europoeus (Linn.). *Natural order:* Labiatae. *Country names:* Water horehound, Gipsyherb, Lancea Christi, Marsh horehound, Egyptian herb, Gipsyweed. *French names:* Lycope, Marrube aquatique, Pied de loup, Lance du Christ. *German names:* Wolfsfuss, Gemeiner Wolfstrapp. *Italian names:* Licopo, Marrubio acquatico, Erba sega, Piè di lupo, Siderite. *Turkish name:* Su ferasyuni. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* England.

---

Gipsywort is closely allied to the Bugleweed and is found on the banks of rivers and streams. It has pale lilac flowers which are crowded amongst the upper leaves. The herb is a powerful astringent and a good fever herb. This plant obtained its name from its use among gipsies as a stain for their faces.



GIPSYWORT—LYCOPUS EUROPAEUS



# Herbs to Allay Fevers

## GOURDS

But the most magnificent plant of these jungles is *Hodgsonia* (*Trichosanthes* of Roxburgh) a gigantic climber allied to the gourd, bearing immense yellowish white pendulous blossoms, whose petals have a fringe of buff coloured curling threads, several inches long. The fruit is of a rich brown, like a small melon in form, and contains six large nuts whose kernels (called *Ratiar-pot* by the Lepches) are eaten. The stem, when cut, discharges water profusely from which end is held downwards.

—HOOKER'S *Himalayan Journals*

*Botanical names:* *Trichosanthes Cucumerina*, *Trichosanthes Dioica*, *Trichosanthes anguina*, *Trichosanthes cordata*, *Hodgsonia heterochita*. *Natural order:* Cucurbitaceae. *English names:* Bitter gourd, Snake gourd, Serpent gourd, Viper gourd. *French names:* *Trichosanthe*, *Patole*. *German names:* Haarblume, Sineischer Kürbis. *Italian names:* *Serpente vegetale*, *Serpentone*, *Zuccetta cinese*. *Turkish name:* *Yilan kabagi*. *Indian names:* Patel, Kadu padavala, Jangli chichôndâ. *Chinese names:* Ko-lau, Kwa-lau. *Sanskrit name:* Patolaka. *Malayan names:* Kaippam-patolam, Ketola pahit. *Part used:* The plant in fruit. *Symbolical meaning:* Extent, bulk. *Natural habitat:* Northern India, Bengal, Ceylon. *Action:* Alterative, antiperiodic, cooling hydragogue, laxative, stomachic. All gourds have cooling and febrifuge properties.

---

The natives use the Bitter Gourd for skin diseases of a leprous nature.

The seeds are stomachic and anthelmintic and so are the young shoots. A decoction is given in rheumatism and feverish complaints.

Another gourd known as the Bottle Gourd, *Lagenaria vulgaris*, is common throughout the tropics and has been cultivated in the West Indies. The fruit is shaped like a bottle and is used medicinally in fevers.

Another Indian variety, *T. Palmata*, produces an oil which is applied to the ear in Otorrhoea and is used outwardly in purulent discharges. The root is said somewhat to resemble *Calumba* in its bitter tonic properties. It contains a bitter principle called *Trichosanthin* and the plant is called by the Hindus, *Kaundala*, in reference to the shape of the fruit, *Kondala* meaning a pendant or ear-ring.

It is used by the Hindus as a pendant for their gods.

Another variety, *T. Kirilowii*, known in Peking as *Kua lon*, is a very

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

familiar sight to those living in China because it is common all over China and is remarkable for the beauty and fragrance of its flowers which are white and heavily fringed followed by bright red coloured fruit. It winds itself everywhere over trees and plants.

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### GRAVELWORT

*The botanical name, Eupatorium, is derived from Mithridates Eupator, a king of Pontus who first used the plant medicinally.*

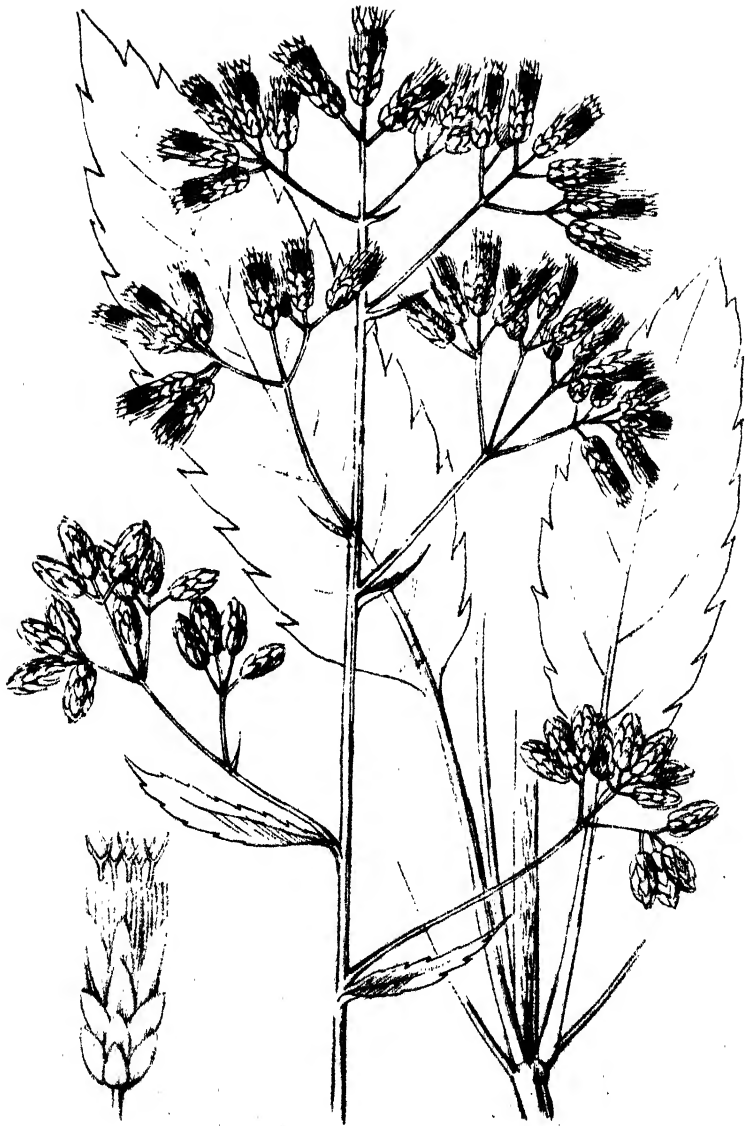
*Botanical name: Eupatorium purpureum (Linn.). Natural order: Compositae. Country names: Queen of the meadow, Purple boneset, Trumpet-weed, Joe-pye, Hempweed, Jopiweed. Part used: Fresh root. Natural habitat: North America, Canada to Florida. Constituents: Eupatorin, resin, volatile salt, tannin. Solvents: alcohol, water. Action: Alterative, anti-acid, stimulant.*

---

Gravelwort, closely allied to Boneset and Hemp agrimony, is called Jopiweed in America from the North American Indians' name for typhus fever.

It has a marked power over the uric acid diathesis. It reduces the acid in urine and is a valuable remedy for dropsy due to suppression of urine caused by gravel. It stimulates the elimination of waste material, acts on the nervous system, improves appetite, and is an important remedy in intermittent fevers. It is given in diabetes insipidus.

Three other species are used as antiperiodic medicines in India, the E. Ayapana, the E. Triplinerve, and the E. Aromaticus.



**GRAVELWORT—EUPATORIUM PURPUREUM**



## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

### HEMP AGRIMONY

*Boerhave calls it Rusticorum Panacea, and states that the turf diggers in Holland use it with great benefit in jaundice and those swellings of the feet to which they are much exposed.*

—BARTON and CASTLE

*Botanical name:* Eupatorium Canaabinum. *Natural order:* Compositae.  
*Other names:* Rusticorum panacea, St. John's herb, Holy Rope. *Part used:* Root, leaves. *Natural habitat:* Temperate Himalaya and Europe.  
*Action:* antiscorbutic, alterative, diaphoretic, diuretic, febrifuge.

---

**H**emp Agrimony is used in fevers and in jaundice. It has an ancient reputation as a healing agent and is referred to by Boerhave and also by Tournefort. It purifies the blood, heals wounds, cures fevers and jaundice.

Hemp Agrimony, though it belongs to the same family as the common agrimony, is quite different in appearance. It has flower heads which are arranged in crowded masses of a dull lilac colour and have a hairy appearance. The leaves resemble those of the hemp plant. The plant grows to a height of four or five feet.



# Herbs to Allay Fevers

## JACK FRUIT TREE

*The taste of the fruit has been compared to the melon and pineapple combined, but to some the smell is anything but inviting.*

—JOHN SMITH

*Botanical name:* Artocarpus integrifolia, Artocarpus integra, Artocarpus polyphema, Artocarpus elastica. *Natural order:* Artocarpaceae. *Indian names:* Jaca, Jak. *Malayan names:* Jerami, Nangka. *Part used:* Pulp, seeds, roots. *Natural habitat:* Indian and Malayan archipelagoes. *Action:* Febrifuge.

The Jack Fruit is allied to the bread fruit and though it is not as palatable to Europeans as the latter, it is extensively cultivated in Malaya for its seeds and the pulp surrounding them. The fruit is about the size of a vegetable marrow.

The roots are made into a decoction by the Malaysans for the cure of fevers.

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## LEMON VERBENA

*Flags, nasturtiums, phlox, verbena,  
Foxglove with its open lip,  
Blossom in the green arena  
In a joyous fellowship;  
Country thrift, and London Pride,  
Growing gaily side by side!*

—CHRISTIAN BURKE

*Botanical names:* Lippia citriodora, Aloysia citriodora, Verbena triphylla. *Natural order:* Verbenaceae. *Country name:* Herb Louisa. *French names:* Lippie, Citronelle. *German names:* Citronenkraut, Lemonekraut. *Italian names:* Cedrina, Cetrina, Erba cedrine, Erba limoncina, Erba Luigia. *Turkish name:* Lipia. *Part used:* Leaves, flowering tops. *Natural habitat:* Cuba, Central America, Columbia. *Action:* Febrifuge, sedative.

The sweet-scented Lemon Verbena will grow in sheltered positions in an English garden if the roots are protected through the winter.

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

It was introduced into England in 1784 and on account of its delightful fragrance is much cultivated in gardens, growing often side by side with the Cherry pie (heliotrope) shrub, both of which grow to about the same height.

The leaves have a peculiarly sedative effect on the mucous surfaces of the bronchial tubes and the post nasal region.

Ellingwood says of it, 'The use of this agent is limited to the air passages'.

It is a specific remedy in a hard barking cough without secretion and is excellent in some forms of asthma and chronic bronchitis and as a febrifuge.

---

### LILAC

*Just now the lilac is in bloom  
All before my little room;  
And in my flower beds I think,  
Smile the carnation and the pink;  
And from the borders, well I know,  
The poppy and the pansy blow.*

—RUPERT BROOKE

*Botanical name:* *Syringa vulgaris*. *Natural order:* Oleaceae. *Country names:* Blue ash, Ducks' bills, Laylock, Lily oak, Mayflower, Oysters, Pipe tree, Prince's feather, Roman willow, Spanish oak. *French name:* Lilas commun. *German names:* Türkischer Flieder, Lilac, Flieder. *Italian names:* Lilacco, Ghianda unguentaria, Siringa lilla, Serenella, Gelsomino ceruleo. *Turkish name:* Leylak. *Symbolical meaning:* (Purple) First emotions of love, (White) Joy of youth. *Part used:* Leaves, fruit. *Natural habitat:* Persia, mountainous parts of Eastern Europe. *Action:* Antiperiodic, febrifuge, tonic.

---

The Lilac tree appears in an inventory made by Cromwell at Norwich and was probably introduced in Henry VIII's reign. It has been grown as a flowering shrub for many centuries.

In medicine it has been used successfully in the treatment of malaria and in America is given as a vermifuge.

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

### NGAI CAMPHOR PLANT

*It is stated that £3,000 worth of this camphor is annually used in the manufacture of Indian ink, to which it imparts its peculiar scent.*

—JOHN SMITH

*Botanical names:* Blumea balsamifera, Blumea densiflora, Conyza Balsamifera, Conyza odorata, Baccharis salma. *English name:* Buffalo's ear. *Natural order:* Compositae. *Arabian name:* Kamâ phitûs. *Indian name:* Kakronda. *Burmese name:* Pungmatheing. *Chinese name:* Ngai. *Malayan names:* Bonga chappa, Semboug, Telinga kerbau. *Symbolical meaning:* Fragrance. *Part used:* The herb. *Natural habitat:* Tropical Himalaya, Burma, Eastern Peninsula, Fiji Islands, Moluccas. *Constituents:* A volatile oil with the odour of wormwood, a camphor called Ngai camphor. *Action:* Astringent, anthelmintic, diaphoretic, expectorant, deobstruent, resolvent.

---

The Ngai Camphor plant is common in waste ground in tropical islands, and the leaves which have a strong camphoraceous smell are used in fevers and catarrhal affections, and also for the relief of stomach-ache.

The Malaysans give a decoction to invalids to restore appetite. It is a very common fever medicine and is made into lotions and fomentations for rheumatism, beri-beri and skin diseases. A tisane of the plant is given to relieve vertigo.

Another species, *B. Eriantha*, is used much in the same way.

# Herbs to Allay Fevers

## PERUVIAN BARK

*'When the secretory functions of the body are in working order, quinine will produce no unpleasant symptoms.'*

—ELLINGWOOD

*Botanical names:* Cinchona succirubra (Pavon), Cinchona officinalis. *Natural order:* Rubiaceae. *Country names:* Jesuits' powder, Red bark, Countess's powder. *French name:* Quinquina. *German names:* China-baum, Fieberrindenbaum. *Italian names:* Polvo de la Condesa, China, China-china. *Turkish name:* Knakna ag. *Part used:* Bark of stem and branches. *Natural habitat:* South America, cultivated in Ceylon, Java, India. *Constituents:* Cinchonine, Quinine, Quinidine, Cinchonidine, Quinamine, tannic acid, 32 natural and 8 artificial alkaloids, resinoid, volatile oil, gum, sugar and wax. *Solvent:* alcohol. *Action:* Antiseptic, astringent, febrifuge, tonic.

---

Peruvian Bark was made known in Europe by the Jesuit missionaries and for a long time went by the name of Jesuits' bark. Its curative properties were also brought to public notice because the wife of a Viceroy in Peru, Countess Cinchon, who lived in the time of Charles I, was cured of a fever by the use of it.

It was the principal ingredient of several quack remedies, one of which was purchased by Louis XIV for a large sum of money, and the publication of the formula further stimulated public interest in the remedy.

James Thompson was the first person to sell it in England in 1658.

The bark augments the power of the heart's action and increases the arterial tension. If taken in the form of an infusion it can be used almost indefinitely without any harmful effects, but when used in alkaloidal form, produces deafness and acts as a protoplasmic poison.

## *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

### PITTOSPORUM

*A plant with an aromatic odour of Caraway, which is used by the Indians to cure snake bites.*

*Botanical names:* Pittosporum floribundum, Pittosporum Ceylonicum, Celastrus verticillatus, Senecia nepalensis. *Natural order:* Pittosporaceae.

*English name:* Pittosporum. *Indian name:* Vel-kali, Vehyente. *Part used:* Bark. *Natural habitat:* Himalayas, Western Ghauts, Peninsula. *Constituents:* A bitter glucoside—Pittosporim, and an aromatic oleo resin.

*Action:* Bitter tonic, aromatic, febrifuge.

---

Several varieties of Pittosporum have been introduced lately into English gardens because the evergreen foliage is particularly attractive and there is a demand for it from florists. It grows well by the sea, and Major Sterne at Goring, in Sussex, showed me a hedge at least twenty feet high that he had grown from seed in ten years.

The bark has been used in India and other places as a febrifuge medicine of great efficacy. It has bitter aromatic properties and in large doses is narcotic. It is used by the natives as an antidote to snake bites.

# *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

## SCABIOUS

*The scabious blooms in sad array  
A mourner in her spring.*

*(This really relates to the garden Scabious often called 'The Mourning Bride')*

*Botanical name:* Scabiosa succisa (Linn.). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Bachelors' buttons, Blueball, Blue bonnets, Blue banners, Blue buttons, Blue caps, Blue heads, Blue kiss, Blue tops, Bunds, Bundweed, Carl doddie, Carl doddy, Devil's bit, Fire leaves, Forbete, Forebit, Forebitten More, Gentleman's buttons, Hardhead, Hog-a-beck, Lamb's ears, More harbyw, Ofbit, Remcope, Stinking Nancy. *French names:* Mors le diable, Scabieuse. *German names:* Skabiose, Ackergrindkraut. *Italian names:* Scabiosa, Socera, Ambretta. *Spanish name:* Escabiosa. *Dutch names:* Duvelles bit, Schurftkruid. *Turkish name:* Uyuz otu. *Under the dominion of:* Mercury. *Symbolical meaning:* Unfortunate love. *Part used:* Herb. *Natural habitat:* Europe, including Britain. *Action:* Demulcent, diaphoretic, febrifuge.

---

Several species of Scabious are used in medicine, but this particular species more often goes by the name of Devil's bit because it is said that the Devil bit a piece of the root off hoping to destroy it on account of its medicinal value to mankind. The root has a gnawed and broken appearance and the flowers are dark blue and grow in globular heads.

It is a very useful tonic remedy in fevers and inflammatory wounds and the infusion can be taken in wineglassful doses very constantly. The Lesser Scabious, *Scabiosa columbaria*, is also used in medicine, and the Field Scabious, *Knantia arvensis*, which closely resembles the Garden Scabious, is a cure for shrunken sinews. It has flat heads of a bluish mauve and an edging of petals and grows abundantly in chalky districts like the Sussex downs.

The cultivated garden scabious, especially the newer variety, *Caucasius* large flowered Scabious, is one of the most satisfactory of all herbaceous plants, not only on account of its lovely lavender blue colour, but because it flowers throughout the summer and is lovely for decoration in the house.

# Herbs to Allay Fevers

## SHOE FLOWER

*Hibiscus blossoms, scarlet and white, were wantonly entangled in her mass of loosened tresses that fluttered to the Zephyrs, as though magical fingers caressed her and would call her back to the portals beyond the setting suns.*

—A. SAFRONI MIDDLETON

*Botanical name:* Hibiscus rosa-sinensis (Linn.). *Natural order:* Malvaceae. *English names:* China rose, Blacking plant. *French name:* Rose de Chine. *German name:* Chinesische Rose. *Italian name:* Rosa della China. *Turkish name:* Cin gulu. *Arabian name:* Anghar-e-hindi. *Indian names:* Orphul, Joba, Uru, Juva, Jasund, Jasus, Jassun. *Burmese name:* Khounyan. *Chinese name:* Chukin. *Malayan names:* Shem pariti, Kambang-saptu. *Sanskrit name:* Jaba. *Persian name:* Angharac. *Symbolical meaning:* Delicate beauty. *Part used:* Root, flowers. *Natural habitat:* India, China. *Action:* Demulcent, emollient, mucilaginous.

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The Chinese rose is the shoe blacking flower of China. The petals are used to blacken the eyebrows of the Chinese and to blacken their shoe leather. Medicinally, the plant is made into a cooling drink for feverish patients and is used as a demulcent for coughs, cystitis and other inflammations.

In Malaya the juice of the white flower is given for sprue combined with dragon's blood and red sandal wood. The leaves are made into poultices to relieve headache, and an infusion of the petals mixed with sugar candy is administered in bronchitis.

Lotions are made from the leaves to bathe the body of feverish patients.

The plant is closely allied to the mallow tribe and has the same demulcent properties.

The Hibiscus trionum, which is called the Flower of an Hour, is common in Nova Scotia and clothes large tracks of waste places with its lovely cream-coloured flowers.

'The variety of hibiscus with double flowers is most frequently cultivated in the East. Rumphius says that the white flower variety is not esteemed in the east, for the inhabitants of India are extremely partial to whatever is red, which they consider is a colour tending to exhilarate' (*The Universal Herbal*).

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## SNAKE ROOT

*The plant abounds in a bitter principle and a volatile oil*

*Botanical name:* Aristolochia serpentaria (Linn.). *Natural order:* Aristolochiaceae. *Country names:* Sangree, Sangrel, Virginia serpentaria, Pelican flower. *French name:* Aristoloche serpenteaire. *German name:* Virginische Schlangenzwurzel. *Italian names:* Aristologia, Serpentaria della Virginia. *Turkish name:* Zeravend. *Part used:* Dried roots. *Natural habitat:* Central and Southern U.S.A., a perennial herb growing in shady woods in Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia and Indiana. *Constituents:* Volatile oil, Aristolochina (bitter principle), resin, gum, starch, albumen. *Solvent:* alcohol and water. *Action:* Alterative, diaphoretic, emmenagogue, nervine, stimulant, tonic.

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Snake root is not in any way related to the Button Snake root, *Liatris Spicata*, or to Senega snake root, *Polygala Senega*, though all three plants are used to cure the bites of rattlesnakes.

It was admitted to the London Pharmacopoeia in 1650 after attention had been drawn to it by Cornutus in 1635 and Parkinson in 1646.

The plant is a gastric, cardiac, and nervine stimulant of much value where there is a marked suppression of secretions which it promotes. It is a good remedy in typhoid, scarlet fever, measles, and smallpox and is of great assistance in sudden acute inflammatory fevers and in advanced stages of fevers. It is a tonic to the nervous system.



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## VIRGINIA CREEPER

*Under the name of Hedera Quinquifolia this creeper was brought to Europe from Canada and was cultivated in England as early as 1629.*

*Botanical name:* Vitis hederacea (Willd). *Natural order:* Vitaceae. *Country names:* Ampolopsis, American Ivy, Five-leaved Ivy, Wood vine. *Part used:* Bark, twigs, fresh leaves, berries, resin. *Natural habitat:* Canada. *Constituents:* Free tartaric acid and its salts with sodium and potassium, Pyrocatachin (oxyphenic acid) in the green leaves. Cissotannic acid in the coloured leaves. In the berries glycoltic acid and calcium glycollate. *Action:* Antiseptic, alterative, antiscorbutic, febrifuge, stimulant.

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Virginia creeper which turns an ugly red in the autumn is a very common sight not only in the suburbs, but outside country and town villas.

It is even to be seen outside parts of the lovely modern Town Hall of Stockholm where its bright red clashes with the mellow rose-coloured bricks, and it often disfigures ancient monuments as well.

The berries were considered a specific against the plague and were infused in vinegar and carried during the plague of London. They have been used in scrofulous complaints for which the Indian species are used. The Vitis Indica is an antiscorbutic of some power.

The Vitus Quadrangularis of India and Arabia has jointed stems like a chain of bones and on the doctrine of Signatures is used to reduce fractures and dislocations.

# *Herbs to Allay Fevers*

## VERVAIN

*Hallowed be thou, Vervain,  
On the ground thou growest,  
For on the mount of Calvary  
There thou wast found.  
Thou healest our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
And staunchest this bleeding wound;  
In the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
I take thee from the ground.*

*Botanical names:* Verbena officinalis, Verbena hastata. *Natural order:* Verbenaceae. *Country names:* Ashthroat, Berbine, Blue vervain, Columbine, Pigeon's grass, Holy herb, Juno's tears, Mercury's moist blood, Simpler's joy, Herb of Grace, Enchanter's plant, Herba veneris. *French names:* Verveine, Herbe sacrée. *German name:* Echtes Eisenkraut. *Italian names:* Verbena, Colombaria, Crocetta. *Turkish name:* Guvercin otu. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Symbolical meaning:* Enchantment. *Part used:* Leaves, flowering heads. *Natural habitat:* Europe, Cochin China, China, Japan, Barbary. *Action:* Antispasmodic, febrifuge, nervine.

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The Vervain plant was said to be an ingredient of the Druids' Lustral Water. Its name of Herba veneris suggests that it was used as an aphrodisiac. It has a very old reputation in herbal medicine and the word Vervain is derived from a Celtic one meaning 'to drive away'. It is said to cure jaundice, dysentery, ague and fever and diseases of the eyes and throat. It contains a particular kind of tannic acid and is regarded by Tournefort as a useful remedy in fevers. It is also a nerve tonic and has been recommended in epilepsy and to allay pain in bruises. It is a useful nerve tonic in tubercular complaints and allays the fever.

Its ancient reputation was founded probably to some extent on its use in magic and in sacrifices, but it is nevertheless a very useful nerve tonic, pleasant to the palate and cheering to the heart. If used in epilepsy it relieves depression and when suspended round the neck it has been known to cure inveterate headaches. It is an antispasmodic.

The juice clears the eyes and the sight, and white wine in which Vervain has been steeped is a useful remedy in jaundice. It removes obstructions from the spleen. The juice can be made into a syrup by boiling it with honey.

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Some of the tropical varieties have very fragrant and beautiful flowers, and the leaves are often used as a substitute for China tea.

The ordinary Vervain has no scent and its lilac-coloured flowers are insignificant. It is a common wayside weed in parts of England and Ireland, but is not found in Scotland.

The plant was dedicated by the ancients to Isis, the Goddess of Birth.

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### WINTER CHERRY

*For I not only water do expel,  
That other weaker plants can do as well,  
But such hard rocks of adamant I break,  
As Hannibal to pass wou'd prove too weak,  
Unhappy he who on this rock is tos't,  
And shipwrecked is in his own waters lost  
Ev'n Sisyphus might pity and bemoan  
The wretch that's tortur'd with an inbred stone.*

—ABRAHAM COWLEY

*Botanical name:* *Physalis Alkekengi* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Solanaceae. *Country names:* Strawberry tomato, Alkekengi. Bladderherb. *French names:* Alkékenge, Coqueret Cerise de Juif. *German names:* Deutsche Schlutte, Lampionpflanze. *Italian names:* Alcachengi, Chichingero, Solatro alcachengi, Vescicaria alcachengi, Palloncini. *Turkish name:* Fener çiç. *Symbolical meaning:* Deception. *Part used:* Berries, juice and seeds. *Natural habitat:* Europe, United States, Persia. *Constituents:* The berries contain sugar and citric acid. The leaves contain a bitter principle called physalin. *Action:* Alterative, diuretic, febrifuge, stimulant.

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Winter Cherry has been used successfully in intermittent fevers, dropsy, rheumatism and skin complaints. It is an hepatic stimulant.

Dioscorides recommended the plant as a cure for epilepsy and other herbalists refer to it as a remedy for gravel which the urinary symptoms it produces confirms.

It has been used for stiffness and paralysis, and in the country is regarded as the right remedy to take after scarlet fever. On the Continent the berries are eaten as other fruit.

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The *Physalis minima*, an Indian species, is also used in dropsy and urinary complaints.

The Winter Cherry is to be found in most English gardens and it is cherished for its lantern-like red fruit which resembles a bladder. These fruits are used as winter decoration in the house. The plant was introduced from Europe in 1548. The *Physalis Franchetii*, which was introduced from Japan in 1894, has larger fruit, and the Cape Gooseberry, *P. Peruviana*, which came from South America in 1772, has edible fruit; the last-named variety is not however hardy.

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### YARROW

*Thou pretty herb of Venus tree  
Thy true name it is Yarrow;  
Now who my bosom friend must be,  
Pray tell thou me to-morrow.*

*Botanical name:* *Achillea millefolium* (Linn.). *Natural order:* Compositae. *Country names:* Arrowroot, Green arrow, Bloodwort, Camil, Cammock, Carpenter grass, Devil's nettle, Dog daisy, Eerie, Garwe, Girs, Hundred leaved grass, Melefour, Milfoil, Nosebleed, Old Man's mustard, Old man's pepper, Sanguinary, Sneezewort, Thousand leaf, Tansy, Yarroway, Yallow, Yenow. *French names:* Achilée, Mille feuille, Herbe aux charpentiers. *German names:* Schafgarbe, Tausend-augbraun. *Italian names:* Achillea, Millefoglie, Erba da falegname, Erba da carpentieri. *Turkish name:* Civan perçemi. *Indian names:* Roga mari, (Bazaar) Birangasifa. *Under the dominion of:* Venus. *Natural habitat:* Europe, N. America. *Part used:* Whole herb. *Constituents:* Achillein, Achilleic acid, volatile oil, tannin, gum, various salts as malates, nitrates, phosphates, and chlorides of potassium and calcium. *Action:* Antiscorbutic, febrifuge, tonic.

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The Yarrow is common in meadows and by roadsides throughout England. Its flat white heads of corymbose flowers and feathery leaves are familiar to most people.

It is a famous old wound herb which is said to have been used by

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Achilles, from whom the genus derives its name. It was dedicated to the devil.

The ancients regarded it as a most valuable styptic and astringent, and amongst herbalists it has never lost its reputation.

It yields its properties to alcohol and water. The herb has a decided action on the blood vessels especially of the pelvis. It acts best in strong infusion and if persisted with will cure profuse mucal secretions and soothe the mucal surfaces. It combines very well with Bur marigold.

As a fever herb especially in feverish colds and inflamed wounds, it is most reliable though sometimes slow in action. It is mild and never debilitates; and it is a tonic as well as a febrifuge, purifying the blood. In fevers it combines well with Angelica, or with Feverfew or Peppermint.

It is a very useful remedy in relaxation of the sphincter muscle; and in a sluggish digestion it promotes appetite.

The flowering tops and leaves make an excellent vapour bath in fevers if mixed with Lavender flowers, wheat, bran and milk.

In the bazaars of India the plant is called Biranjâsif.

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