

Virtues of British herbs. With the history, description, and figures, of the several kinds; an account of the diseases they will cure; the method of giving them; and management of the patients in each disease ... No. I ... / [John Hill].

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V I R T U E S

O F

BRITISH HERBS.

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]



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V I R T U E S
O F
BRITISH HERBS.

WITH THE
HISTORY, DESCRIPTION, and FIGURES,
of the several Kinds ;

An Account of the DISEASES they will cure ;
The Method of giving them ; and Management of
the Patients in each Disease :

CONTAINING THE CURES OF

CONSUMPTIONS by COLTSFOOT Tea,	COLICS by Leaves of CHAMOMILE, And
HECTIC FEVERS by the DAISY,	AGUES by its Flowers.

A Recommendation of the *BIDENS CERNUA* to supply the
Place of the *CEYLON ACMEILLA*, so celebrated in the
Gravel ; but not to be had with us.

And a CASE, with all its Circumstances and Symptoms, of the
HOOPING-COUGH, cured by a Tea of the fresh Root of
ELECAMPANE.

The WHOLE illustrating that important Truth,
That the PLANTS of our own Country will cure all its DISEASES.

To which are added,

CAUTIONS against the Two *OTHONNAS*, destructive of Sheep.

A WORK intended to be useful to the Sick, and to their Friends ; to
private Families ; and to the Charitable, who would help their Neighbours.

No. I.—To be continued Occasionally, as new Virtues are discovered in
PLANTS ; or neglected or doubtful ones ascertained by Experience.

By JOHN HILL, M. D.
MEMBER of the IMPERIAL ACADEMY.

L O N D O N :

Printed for R. BALDWIN, in Pater-noster-Row ; J. RIDLEY, in St. James's-
Street ; J. NOURSE, T. BECKET, P. ELMSLY, J. CAMPBELL, in the
Strand ; and T. DAVIES, in Ruffel-Street, Covent-Garden.

M.DCC.LXX.



INTRODUCTION.

THE Author having read a great deal, and seen something, of the Virtues of Plants of our own Growth, intends here, to the best of his abilities, to be useful: recounting all that is justly attributed to these Plants by respected Authors; and confirming, by authentic cases, whatever has been repeated within his own experience.

Having lately written a History of the British Plants in a succinct manner, and in the Latin language; intended principally for the use of

Physicians, he proposes here to deliver the Accounts of their Virtues, and Rules for administering them; fitted for general service, and in our own tongue: and to lay down the whole more at large, than was needful to those who were already acquainted with the practice of Physic.

The first care will be to acquaint the Reader perfectly with the Plant that is recommended to be used: and to prevent all occasion of error, a Figure and History will be given, not only of the right kind, but of all others of the same Name, and general Nature; which might be mistaken for it, tho' they have no particular virtue, or perhaps even contrary qualities.

Next, the Disease in which the Herb thus known with certainty may be serviceable, will be so explained, that all error in that article may be also avoided.

And

And the last care will be to direct in what manner the salutary Plant may best be used.

Beside the English Name of every Herb, there is here given the Latin one : and this it is earnestly recommended to all persons, to accustom themselves to use. There is great and useful knowledge easily to be acquired on this subject ; it should be propagated universally : and this way alone it can be done. The English Names of Herbs are equivocal : the same word is often used by our authors as a Name for many different Plants. In the Latin all is certain. As our own Names can be only useful in our own country ; when we use a Latin one the whole world knows what we speak of : and by the arrangement here, (when the Tables of Method relating to it, are published,) as all Plants of a like kind are placed together, and their distinguishing characters are given, all will be found with ease.

Lungwort is equally the Name, of a kind of *Hawkweed*, of a sort of *Moss*, and of a Plant approaching to the nature of *Hound's-tongue* : and when an Herb is directed under that Name, no one can tell which of all these is meant. In Latin their Names are as different as their Nature ; and in using them, there can be no mistake. A thousand instances of this might be produced ; but one is as good as a thousand.

It will be happy, if, by these means, the knowledge of Plants also become more general. The study of them is pleasant ; and the exercise of it healthful. He who seeks the Herb for his cure, will often find it half effected by the walk : and when he is acquainted with the useful kinds, may be more than his own physician.

This knowledge is not to be sought for in the old Herbals ; they contain but a small part of it : and what they hold is locked up in
obscurity.

obscurity. They are excessive in their praises ; and in saying too much, they say nothing. All virtues are, in a manner, attributed to all Plants ; and 'tis the skill alone of a Physician that can separate, in those that have any, which is the true. Turn to the Herbals of Gerard Parkinson, or the more antient Turner, and you shall find, in many instances, virtues of the most exalted kind related of Herbs, which, if you were to eat daily as fallads, would cause no alteration in the body.

But we are not to conclude from this that Herbs do not possess real virtues. Many of them do ; and of kinds so eminent, that physic would be but a poor art without them. To distinguish these, and to teach persons not bred to physic to apply them, is the good intended in this Publication ; and even beyond the bounds of written lessons, such opportunities, as the Author of it has, to promote this intended utility, will never be withheld.

x INTRODUCTION.

If any entertain a doubt concerning the Plant they would use, after comparing it with the Figure and Description, the Gardener at *Bayswater* shall give a sample of it, for asking; and they may command the farther Opinion and Directions of the Author when they please.

St. James's Street,

May 1, 1770.

J. HILL.

VIRTUES

V I R T U E S
O F
B R I T I S H H E R B S.

H E R B S

Which have a radiated Flower, growing
in a divided Cup.

I. O T H O N N A.

S E G G R O M.

The Cup is deeply divided into a number of
long, flat Teeth.

I. O T H O N-

1. OTHONNA INTEGRIFOLIA.

MOUNTAIN RAGWORT.

The Leaves are undivided.

This is a Weed of our high Pasture Grounds, but not common ; it scarce exceeds Eight Inches in height ; it grows upright ; and has no Branches.

The Leaves are pale, thick, and downy.

The Flowers are of a light yellow ; they grow in a Cluster at the Top of the Stalk, and have a Circle of narrow Leaves under them.

They blow in July.

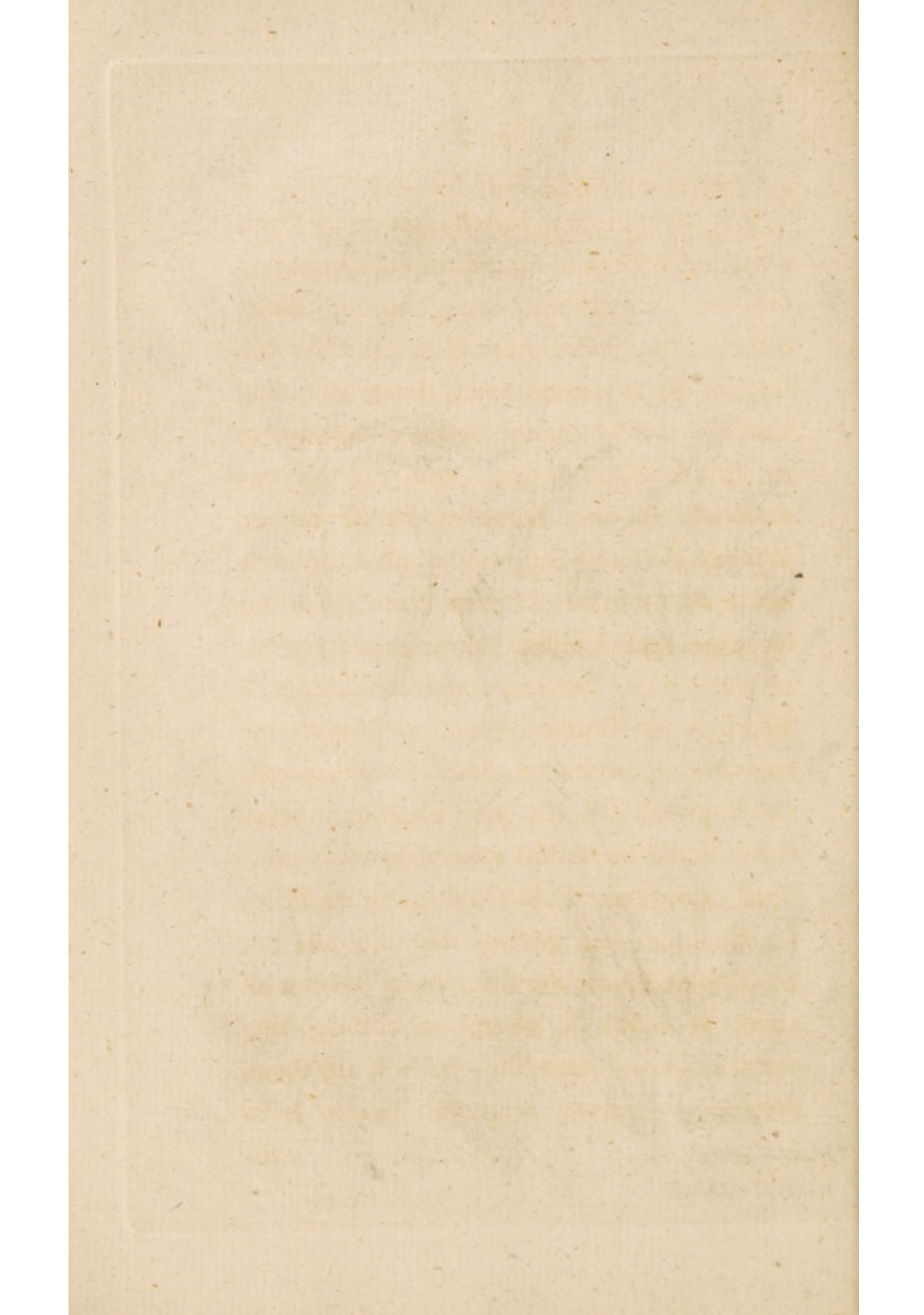
Beside the Virtues which are known in Plants, it will be useful to give Cautions of their Danger. Careful farmers say this hurts their sheep : their wool grows loose on eating it. Taken inwardly it is an acrid, and a dangerous purge. There is a kind, scarce differing from this, which manifests the same ill qualities, in Switzerland.

We

OTHONNA

Character Genericus





We have in this, and the succeeding Plant, a striking instance of the value of Latin names. *Othonna*, or *Cineraria*, belongs to both these; and each has, under either of them, a just distinction by its second name, *Integrifolia*, and *Palustris*. The name *Othonna* belongs to no British Plant beside; and will be understood, not only here, but in all nations. Whereas the name *Seggrom*, which is distinctly and truly the name of these Plants, is in our language applied also to the common Ragwort, an Herb of our Pastures, and to Groundsell, a Weed of our Gardens: and, to encrease the confusion, to neither of these; for custom calls one Ragwort, and the other Fleabane. Many words would be needful to explain these equivocal expressions, if used in directing the Plants for Medicine; and perhaps then it would not be done well: but the Latin name removes all doubt at once; it belongs to nothing else, and it is known universally; nor will any future innovation, however supported, change it in
the

the judicious mind ; or prevent the Plant being distinctly and perfectly known, by all persons, under this denomination.

2. OTHONNA PALUSTRIS.

MARSH FLEABANE.

The Leaves are deeply cut.

This is an inhabitant of our marshes, toward the sea : a perennial Plant.

It grows to a Yard high, but with few Branches.

The Leaves are of a fresh green ; very smooth, and delicate.

The Flowers are yellow, large, and not unhandsome.

They blow in August.

Its qualities too much resemble those of the preceding kind. Cattle, brought from other places, into some lands belonging to myself, near Whitlesea, in the Isle of Ely, have fallen into diseases on eating it. Those bred where it grows are observed not to touch it.

H E R B S

Which have a radiated Flower, growing
in a Cup, formed of one row of
distinct Scales.

B I D E N S.

HEMP AGRIMONY.

The Scales which compose the Cup are hollowed.

1. B I D E N S C E R N U A.

DROOPING HEMP AGRIMONY.

The Leaves embrace the Stalk at their base.

This is a common Plant about the ditches in
Ireland ; but scarce with us.

It has a branching reddish Stalk of about Two
Feet high.

The

The Leaves are of a deep, dull green, and smooth.

The Flowers are of a dead yellow: they hang their heads; but the Tufts of Seed that follow stand upright.

It is an Annual; it flowers in July, and till the frost kills it.

This is one of the very many British Plants, concerning the Virtues of which we are perfectly ignorant. No one has yet tried it: but there are reasons to suppose its qualities are eminent. Cattle are not fond of it. This often is a mark of great medicinal virtues, as well as sometimes of mischievous powers.

The smell is strong, and singular. The taste is sharp and biting, with a little bitterness.

There is a Plant, of Ceylon, called Acabella, a kind of Verbesina, distinguished beyond all things in the cure of the Gravel. This has its very taste and smell, and flavour; and Chymistry has

has shewn their near resemblance. A careful successor of Nebelius made this trial. 'Tis pity some one has not, in like manner, examined into its qualities in medicine. 'Tis one of the Herbs to be recommended to the practising physicians; and will not want its place among those to be examined by the Author of these observations.

If there could want more proof of the propriety, nay the necessity, of speaking of Plants under their Latin names, we have it here again before us. This Herb is recommended to the practisers of physic, for trial, in a great and terrible, and yet a very common disease. If we should give it only its English name, Hemp Agrimony, that is also the name of Eupatorium, a Plant as different from this as two Plants well can be from one another; and that in taste, in smell, and virtues, as well as in their form: for the other Herb, called Hemp Agrimony in English, is a purge.

Two persons, in two places, using the different Herbs under the same name, could never confirm, or so much as believe, each other's accounts: and there is no way to truth in medicine, but by these mutual trials. But when we call the Herb by its distinct Latin name, *Bidens*, it is impossible this error should have place; or any, when we apply farther to its second name, and its Description, and Figure here.

2. TUSSILAGO.

COLTSFOOT.

The Scales which compose the Cup are flat.

1. TUSSILAGO FARFARA.

COMMON COLTSFOOT.

The Leaves are hearted.

This low Herb spreads its Roots in damp and clayey grounds, from which the Flowers rise early
in

TUSSILAGO



Character Genericus

BIDENS

Tab. A.



Character Genericus



*Tussilago
Farfara.*

Common Coltsfoot.

Bidens Cernua.

Drooping Hemp Agrimony.

1847

My dear Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. in relation to the above named subject. I am sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with the result of the investigation. I have, however, no objection to your making such use of the facts as you may think proper.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. H. Thompson

in Spring, before the Leaves appear ; and fade and are quite gone by that time these have attained their natural size : a thing that looked so singular to our ancestors, they called the Plant, The Son before the Father.

The Stalk is seven Inches high, leafless, but hung about with skinny films ; and on its top there stands only one Flower.

The Leaves, which are in their perfection when this part is quite gone, are roundish, and notched ; as broad as one's hand ; of a pale green ; white and downy underneath ; and of a tough, firm substance.

The Flower is lemon-coloured, and large.

The Root is perennial, and the Leaves are to be had till Winter. These are the part which contain its great virtue. They have a soft and mucilaginous but somewhat bitter taste.

They are good in the Gravel, and Inflammations of the Kidneys : but their great virtue is in diseases of the Breast ; in Asthmas par-

ticularly, and in Consumptions. The best way of taking it is in decoction ; for it does not so fully or well communicate its virtues to spirit. The way to have them best is this :

Clip small a quantity of the Leaves fresh gathered ; put them into an earthen pipkin, and pour upon them as much boiling water as will cover them. Let this stand all night. In the morning boil it a few minutes, and put in as much honey as will sweeten it. A half-pint basin of this should be drank warm three times a day.

The patient should also have some Leaves dried and cut small, and smoke them as tobacco. This is a practice as old as the time of the Romans, and present experience shews it right and excellent.

Few things will do so much toward curing a Consumption as Coltsfoot, used constantly these two ways.

Here

Here let us stop a moment, and adore the goodness of the Divine Providence, which makes the best things the most common ! The Seggroms, which can do only mischief, are found but in a few places : this, so full of excellence, grows at our doors, and we tread it every where under our feet.

RADIATED HERBS,

WITH A

DOUBLE CUP.

B 3

HERBS

HERBS

Which have a radiated Flower, growing
in a Cup, composed of two Ranges
of Scales.

1. BELLIS.

DAISY.

The Cup is rounded, and its Scales are equal.

1. BELLIS PERENNIS.

LITTLE DAISY.

One Flower only grows upon a Stalk.

This is the universal ornament of our pastures ;
a Perennial ; flowering all the Summer.

Its leafless Stalk is three Inches high.

The

BELLIS

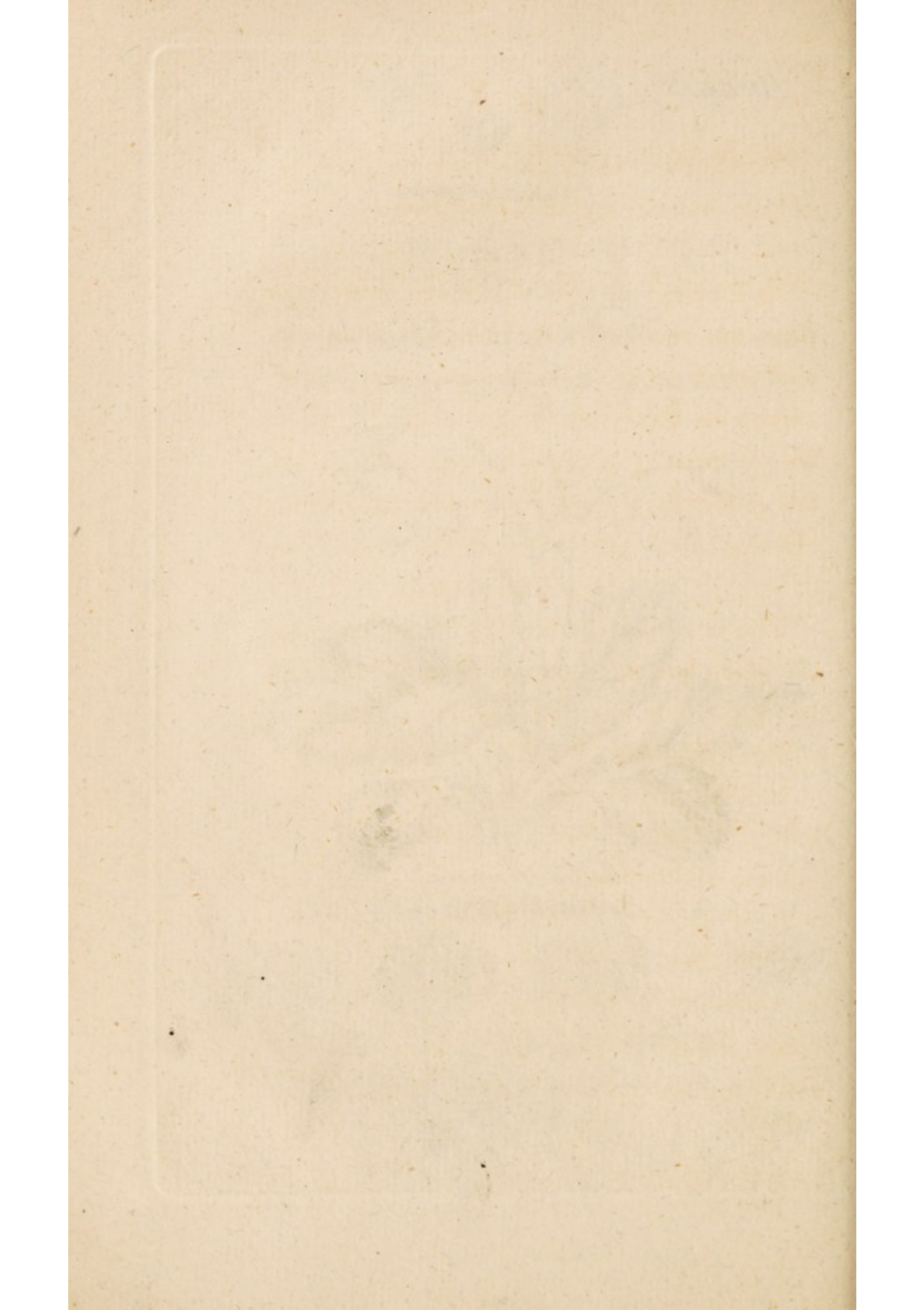


Character Genericus



Bellis Perennis
Little Daisy





The Leaves, which grow from the Root, are oblong, smooth, and of a deep green.

Its Flowers, in their wildest and most simple state, are very pretty in their mixture of red and white ; but when the gardener bestows culture on them, few things return it better : we see them grow double, large, full, quilled, and proliferous ; young Flowers surrounding the older.

This is another Herb which Nature has made common, because it may be useful.—The Daisy has great, but neglected qualities ; worthy of a serious attention.

Its Leaves contain its virtues. Their taste is that of Coltsfoot, but more mucilaginous ; and without all bitterness.

It is excellent against Hectic Fevers ; and internal Inflammation, of whatever kind ; and in which ever of the Viscera.

An infusion of it should be made as of the Coltsfoot, and just once boiled. It should then

be drank in the same manner, with an equal quantity of milk.

Asses milk has ten times its effect if this be taken with it.

2. ANTHEMIS.

CHAMÆMILE.

The Cup is rounded, but the Scales are of unequal length.

1. ANTHEMIS NOBILIS.

SWEET-SCENTED CHAMÆMILE.

The Leaves are three times divided, and the divisions are narrow.

This sweet Plant grows wild with us, on damp heaths, and by waters; and has much greater virtues there than in our gardens.

'Tis a Perennial, scarce rising Five or Six Inches from the ground.

The

ANTHEMIS



Character Genericus



Anthemis nobilis.

Sweet Chamaemile.



Anthemis foetida.

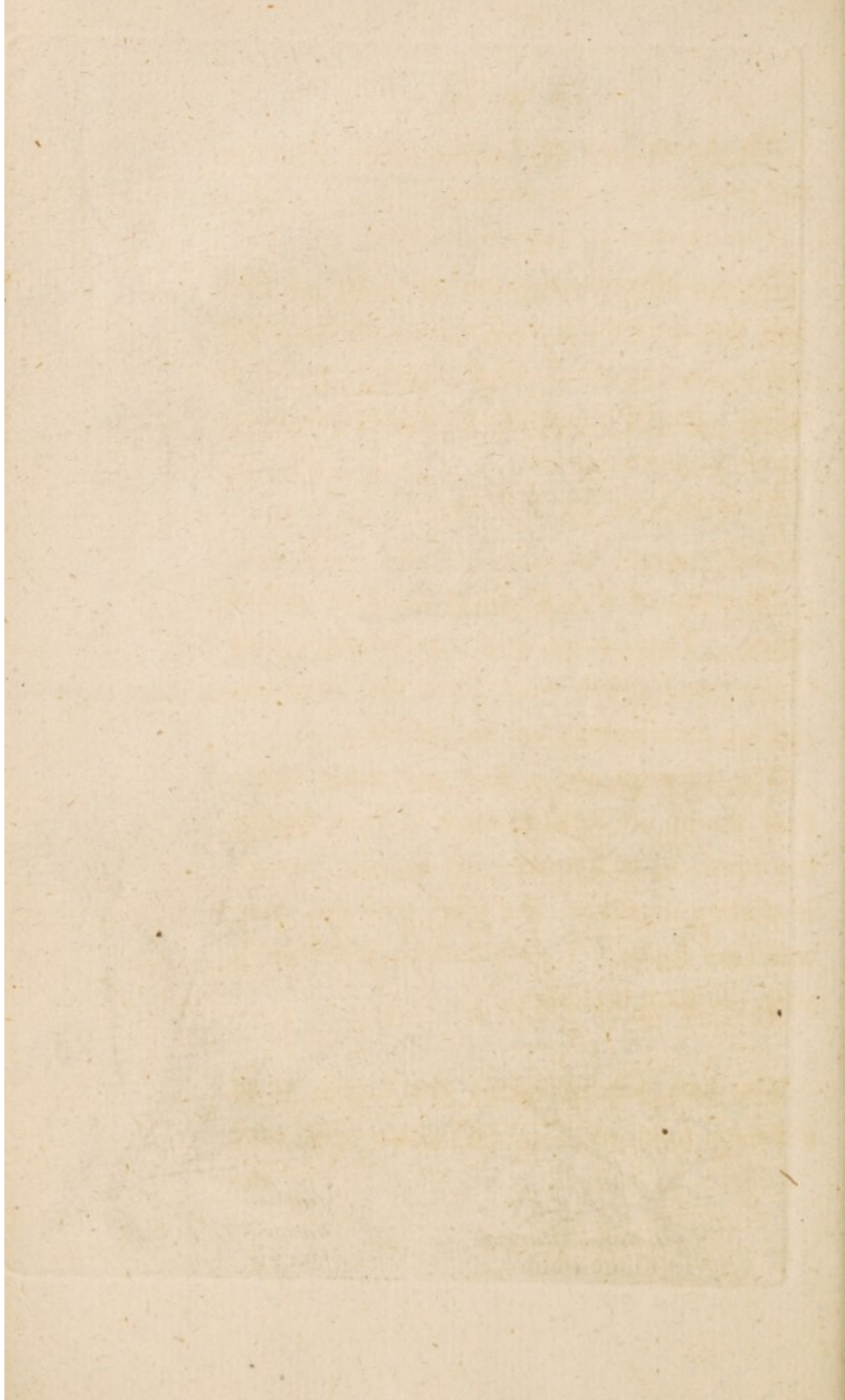
Stinking Mayweed



Anthemis arvensis
Corn Chamaemile



Anthemis tinctoria?
Oxeye. 4



The Leaves are of a deep green, fragrant, and cut into very fine divisions.

The Flowers are large and white.

Nature offers them to us single ; and in that state they have the greatest virtue ; because those yellow Threads which fill their center possess it highly ; but 'tis the unlucky custom to use them double from the gardens.

They blow in July and August.

All parts of this excellent Plant are full of virtue. The Leaves, given in infusion, cure Colics ; and dispel wind from the Stomach ; and are excellent against Indigestion.

The Flowers are a fine and noble bitter. Few things are equal to them in strengthening the Stomach, and creating an appetite, as well as assisting digestion. But more than this, they will cure Agues. I have known them do it after the Bark has failed.

The best way of taking the Leaves is in a strong kind of Tea, in which way even
the

the Colic that attends the Gravel yields to them.

When given to strengthen the Stomach, a Tea made strong of the single Flowers of the Wild Chamæmile is best; and those who have not made it from such Flowers know less than half its virtue.

For Agues, the same kind of Flowers should be dried and powdered, and a scruple taken once in four hours; and this repeated for four days.

An oil, distilled from these Flowers, is excellent in Colics; and, what is very singular, it is blue.

2. ANTHEMIS COTULA.

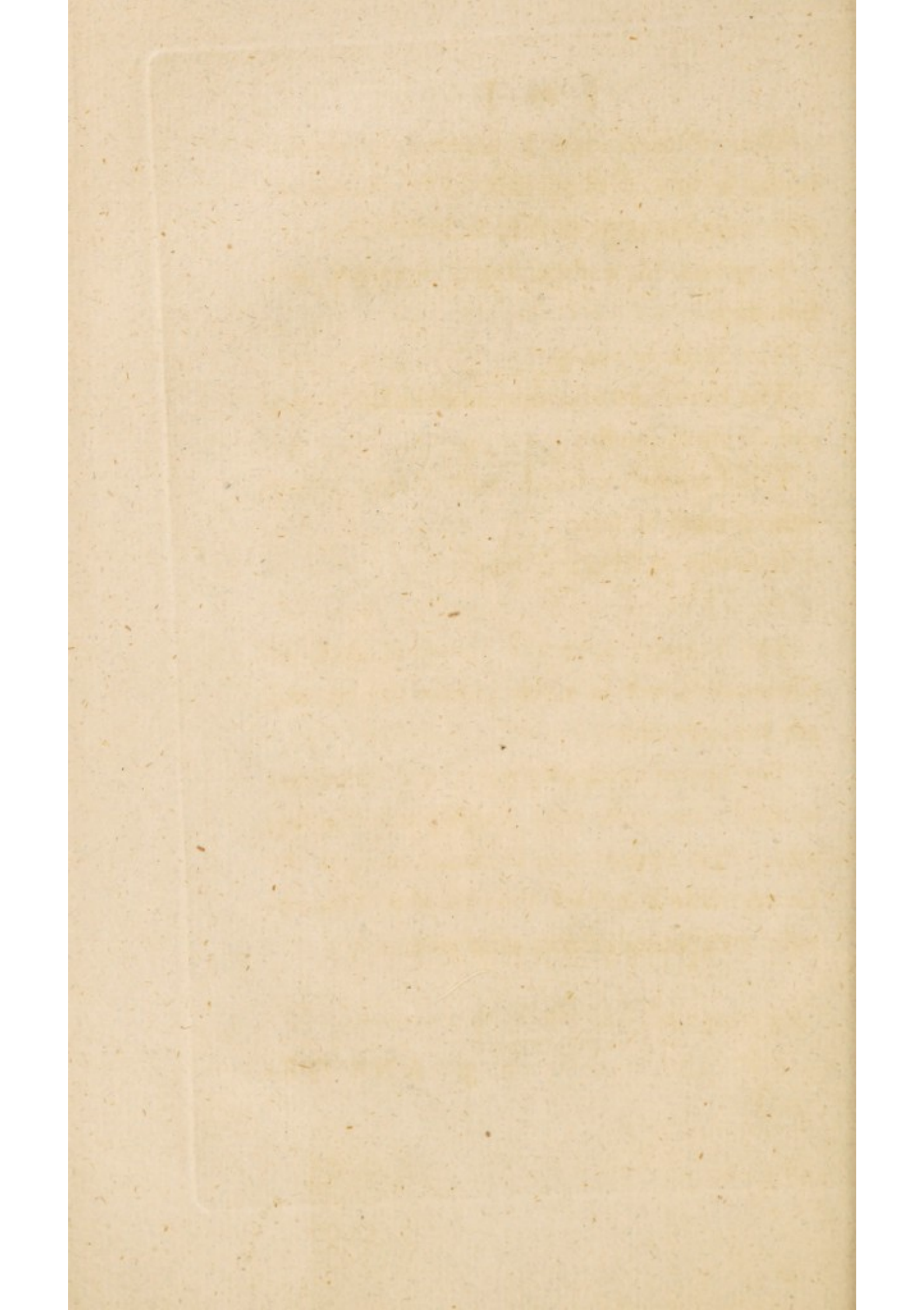
STINKING MAYWEED.

The center of the Flower rises, and the divisions of the Leaves swell in the middle.

ANTHEMIS



Anthemis Maritima
Sea Chamæmyle



This offensive Plant is common in plowed lands; an annual Weed that, by its abundance, often robs the crops of their best nourishment.

It grows to a Foot high, branched and spreading.

The Stalk is ruddy.

The Leaves are of a deep and blackish green, and of an ill smell.

The Flowers are white, with a high yellow disk, pointed at top.

It flowers in May and June.

The Flowers have the virtue of those of Chamæmile, but in a very inferior degree, and are less agreeable.

The Leaves operate by urine, and sometimes by stool; but both ways roughly and disagreeably. 'Tis strange that Hoffman thought the Leaves more emollient than those of Chamæmile. Experience shews otherwise.

3. ANTHEMIS ARVENSIS.

CORN CHAMÆMILE.

The center of the Flower rises : the Leaves are thin as hairs.

This is the commonest Weed on our ditch banks.

It grows to a Foot and half high, wild and spreading.

The Stalk is red, and brittle.

The Leaves are of a dead pale green.

The Flowers are large, and white.

They blow in June, and last till Winter kills the Plant.

The qualities are those of the Sweet Chamæmile, but in a slight degree.

4. ANTHEMIS TINCTORIA.

OXEYE CHAMÆMILE.

The Leaves are deep cut, and their parts are dented.

This

This is a Perennial, native only of our northern counties ; but there, it is a pasture Weed not uncommon.

The Stalk is ruddy, two Foot high, and branchy.

The Leaves are glossy, of a fresh, pale green, and a little downy underneath.

The Flowers are of a gold yellow, large, and very handsome.

They blow in June.

The Flowers contain the virtue of the Plant. They promote urine, and have often cured the Jaundice. They are to be dried, and carefully powdered. A dram is to be taken twice a day.

They are useful also in manufacture ; for they afford a yellow for the dyers.

5. ANTHEMIS MARITIMA.

SEA CHAMÆMILE.

The Leaves are thick and fleshy, and the Cups are downy.

This

This is an inhabitant of our damp grounds, toward the sea; a very pretty creeping Plant.

The Stalk is crimson, branchy, and six Inches long; but it scarce rises from the ground.

The Leaves are of a fresh, bluish green, and dotted.

The Flowers are small, and white, with a yellow disk.

They blow in June.

Their virtues are those of Chamæmile; but slight and trifling.

Those who live about the sea coasts, where it is common, use an infusion of the Flowers, for Agues; but the powder of the right kind is far better.

HERBS

HERBS

Which have a radiated Flower, growing
in a Cup, formed of many ranges
of scaly Films.

I. INULA.

ELFWORT.

The Cup is wide, the Scales stand loose, and
the lower range is leafy.

I. INULA HELENIUM.

ELE CAMPANE.

The Leaves are vast, rugged, long; and
hoary underneath.

This

This is a native of our meadow grounds ; and from its virtues is become common in our gardens.

It is a robust and stately Plant ; a Perennial ; with a firm and handsome appearance. It grows to four Foot high.

The Stalk is thick, ruddy, and branched a little.

The Leaves are of a dull, faint green.

The Flowers are large, and yellow.

They blow in July and August.

The Root, which is long and large, contains the virtues of the Plant : and few have greater.

It has a fragrant, very agreeable smell, and a spicy, sharp, and somewhat bitterish taste. It has long been famous for the cure of all diseases of the Breast ; and it has great virtues in malignant fevers : but it has more, and those more distinguishable than these : in strengthening the Stomach, and that way assisting digestion, not in the way of bitters, but as a warm, invigorating,

INULA

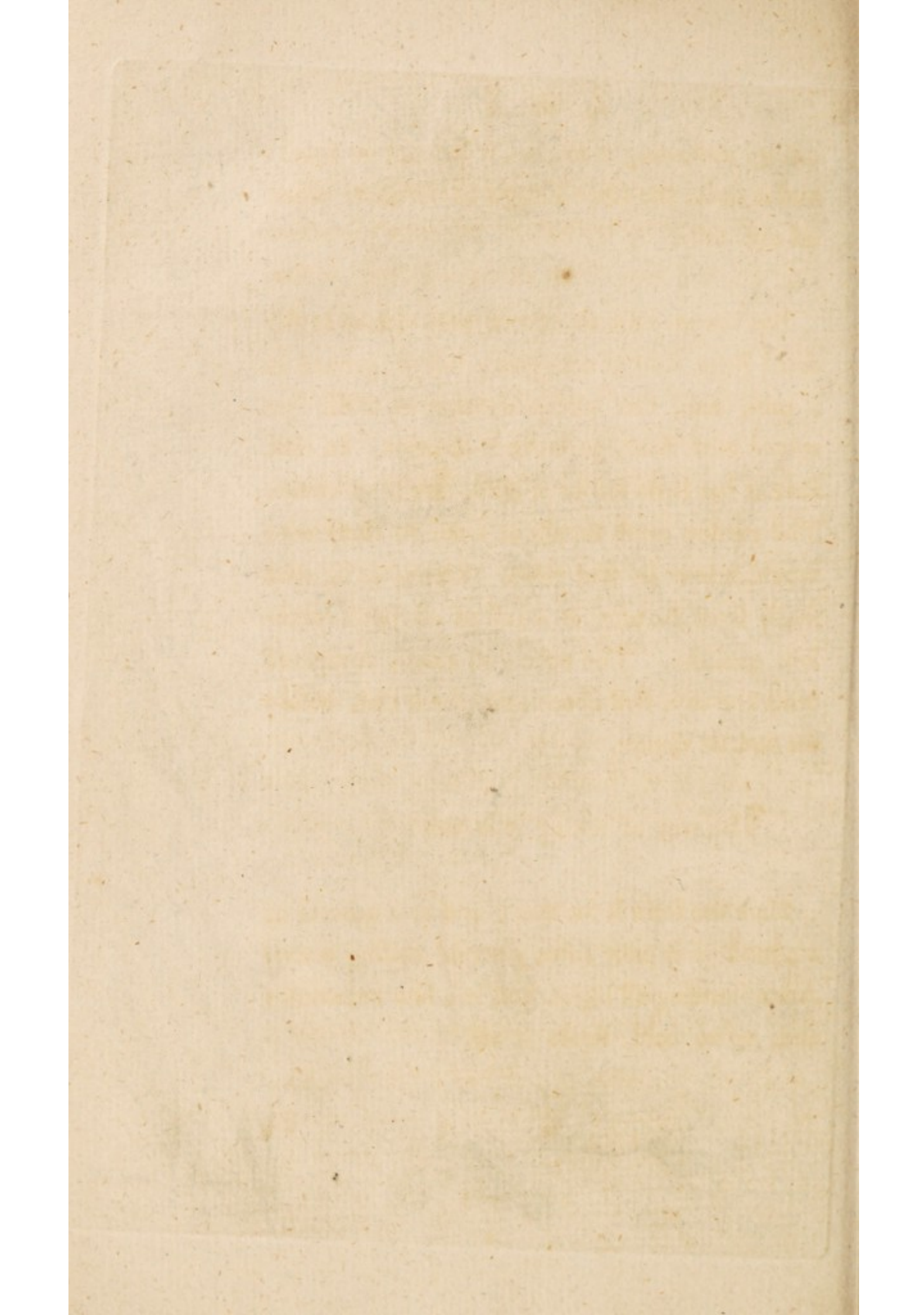


Inula dysenterica.
Middle Fleabane.

Inula Helenium.
Elecampane.

Inula pulicaria.
Small Fleabane.

Inula Crithmoides
Golden Sampire



rating, animating medicine, it has not its equal : and it cures the Chin-Cough in children, when all else fails.

But 'twere vain to expect these virtues in the dried Root, sold at druggists ; baked, ground in a mill, and, tho' cheap enough in itself, yet mixed with flour, to make it cheaper. In that state it has little either of taste, smell, or virtue. The garden must supply it fresh to those who would know its real value. There, as it rises freely from Nature, it is full of all these excellent qualities. The taste and smell, compared with the dry, will abundantly shew this, before we feel its virtues.

The way of taking it is this :

Slice the fresh Root thin ; and to a quarter of a pound of it pour three pints of boiling water. After standing all night, boil it a few moments ; and, when cold, strain it off.

To a pint of this add a quarter of a pint of mountain wine; if 'tis to be given to a grown person, for disorders of the Stomach: and let a full wine glass be drank three times a day.

When it is intended for the Chin-Cough, half the quantity of the Root will be sufficient. It need only be infused, not boiled: and instead of the wine, add a quarter of a pound of honey; and give two table-spoonfuls, four times a day.

Nor will the virtues of this Root, in curing this kind of Cough, appear at all strange to those who, practising rational physick, trace up diseases to their cause.

The Chin-Cough is not of the nature of those Coughs which follow Colds; it has not the same origin, nor is it seated in the same place. A tough and fourish phlegm, lodged on the coats of the Stomach, and adhering to them,

is the cause. Nature at once shews this ; and points out the way to the cure ; by childrens vomiting up such phlegm after their violent fits of coughing in this way ; and always finding relief from it.

Now, of all medicines yet known, Elecampane Root, when fresh and full of virtue, warms, strengthens, and invigorates the Stomach the best : and by that cures the disease, and prevents its return.

This is not a new ; but only a neglected doctrine : Walschmid and Dolæus, great and excellent writers, tho' too little read at present, confirm it with reasons ; and by repeated observations.

Receive an instance of it here, at home :

Miss * * * * *, of Soho, was brought to me, reduced almost to death by this disease. She coughed by fits for a length of time scarce

credible ; and that with distracting efforts, and a sound that tore the hearts of all who saw, and heard her.

The nurse had given her Cup Moss; and the apothecary mosaic gold; in vain. They had fed her with fried mice, (according to a boasted family receipt) to loathing : but that could be to no purpose. A physician of great worth had followed Sydenham faithfully, and the poor infant had been bled and purged till no strength remained ; except in the disease : which grew still worse as she grew weaker.

'Twas in this state I saw the poor, the emaciated little creature, when I directed the Elecampane Root.

She first took a very gentle vomit, a few grains of Ipecacuanha. The efforts this occasioned were nothing ; compared but to an ordinary fit of coughing.

A few

A few drops of Lettuce wine composed her for the night; and next day she began to take the infusion, as here directed to be made, with honey; and only of half the strength: two ounces of the Root being used to three pints of water, and that without the boiling.

From the time she began this she used no other drink; and from that time she gradually recovered.

Her body was, in the mean while, kept open; not by purges; for they irritate; but by glysters: and she became so well, the servants here could not believe 'twas the same child, tho' brought by the same person.

What infinite good may arise from this easy remedy being once made universally known! 'Tis so innocent that none need fear to administer it. And if in any case circumstances rise which

require particular advice, such as I can give, they always may command who want it.

2. INULA DYSENTERICA.

MIDDLE FLEABANE.

The Stalk is woolly; and the Leaves are oblong, and clammy.

This is an ugly and ill-looking annual Weed, frequent on waste grounds and by way-fides.

It grows to a Foot high, with a few Branches.

The Leaves are pale, and whitish; and stick to the Fingers on touching them.

The Flowers are of a light yellow.

They blow in August.

One scarce would think any thing resembling Elecampane in smell, could be disgusting: but this, tho' with the real flavour of it, is highly so: and in its taste is acrid and forbidding.

3. INULA

3. INULA PULICARIA.

SMALL FLEABANE.

The Rays of the Flower are very short :
the Leaves are short and waved.

This is another ill-looking annual Weed,
frequent in wet waste places.

It grows to eight Inches high ; but commonly
lies, in part, upon the ground.

The Stalk is of a ruddy brown.

The Leaves are short, small, and of a dull,
dead green.

The Flowers are small, very poor, and of
a dirty yellow.

They blow in August.

The smell of this and the former are supposed
hateful to insects, and the juice destructive
of them.

4. INULA CRITHMOIDES.

GOLDEN SAMPIRE.

The Leaves are three pointed.

This beautiful perennial Plant is the ornament of our sea marshes.

It grows to a Yard high, with many Branches.

The Leaves are of a blue green ; thick, fleshy, and juicy.

The Flowers are of a gold yellow.

They blow in June.

II.

CHRYSA N T H E M U M.

CORN MARYGOLD.

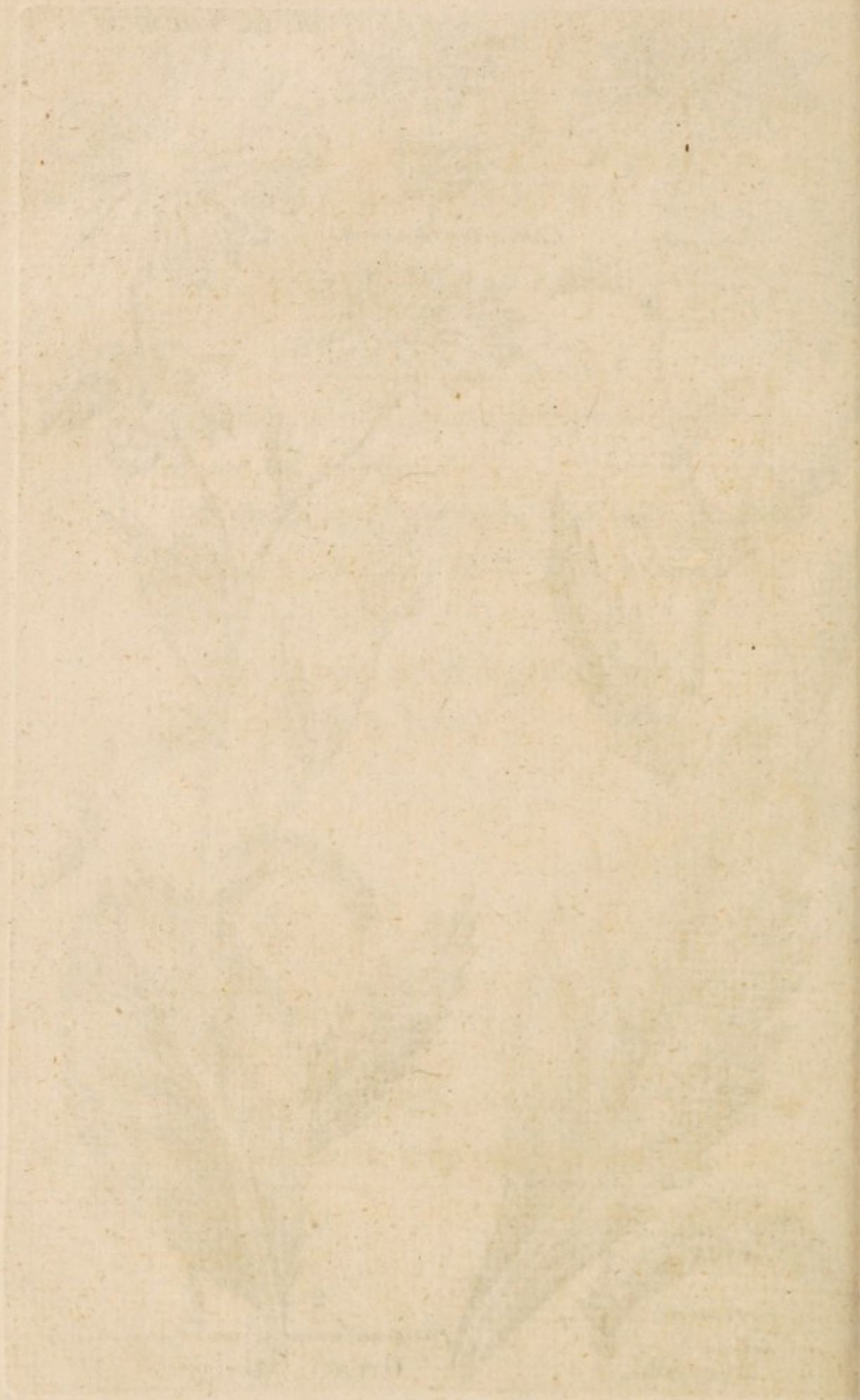
The Cup is elliptic, and its Scales stand close :
the inner range of them is thin.

I. CHRY-

CHRYSANthemum

Character Genericus





1. C H R Y S A N T H E M U M
S E G E T U M.

CORN MARYGOLD.

The Root Leaves are oblong, and deep dented.

This very beautiful Plant is an Annual, native of our corn fields.

It grows to two Foot high, with many spreading Branches.

The Leaves are glossy, and of a blue green.

The Flowers are large, and of a gold yellow.

They blow in August.

2. C H R Y S A N T H E M U M
L E U C A N T H E M U M.

GREAT DAISY.

This is a biennial Plant; an ornament of our pasture grounds, as the other of corn fields, in

Autumn; but no way related to the Little Daisy of our meadows, in character or virtues; only in name.

It grows to two Foot high, with few Branches.

The Leaves are of a deep, dead green, and smooth.

The Flowers are vast, and of a milky white.

They blow in August.

The taste of this Plant is sharp and acrid; and it has no smell. Its virtues have not been enough enquired into. It is a sharp and pungent diuretic; cleansing the kidneys: but many and careful trials should be made of it before 'tis freely used. An infusion contains all its virtue; and has the heat of Cardamoms, or Cubebs. Any boiling weakens it.

III.

A S T E R.

S T A R W O R T.

The Cup is conic; the Scales of it are leafy; and their points stand out.

A S T E R

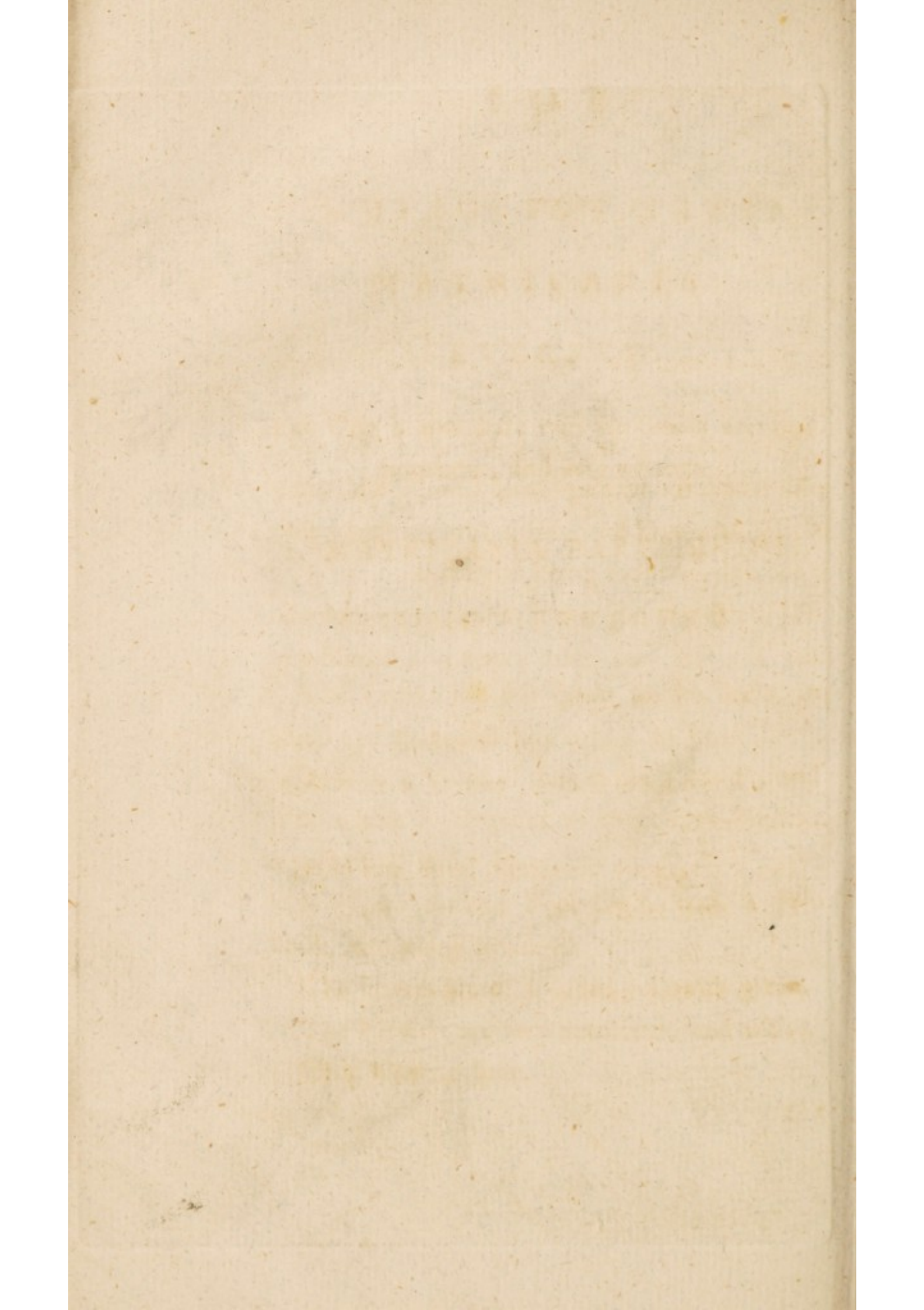
ASTER



Character
Genericus



Aster Tripolium.
Sea Starwort.



A S T E R T R I P O L I U M,

S E A S T A R W O R T.

The Leaves are narrow; and the Flowers are many.

Multitudinous as the kinds of Asters are, with which the warm parts of Europe, and, most of all, America, have filled our gardens; this is the only one that graces our fields.

It is a Perennial; native of our damp grounds near the sea, and great rivers: a handsome Plant, of a Yard high.

The Stalk is ruddy, and branched.

The Leaves are smooth, and of a very fine green.

The Flowers are numerous, large, and blue.

They blow in August.

Of its virtues nothing is known.

IV. M A T R I-

MULIO IV. T. R. A.

M A T R I C A R I A.

F E V E R F E W.

The Cup is rounded; and its Scales are very numerous, and very narrow.

I. M A T R I C A R I A P A R T H E N I U M.

C O M M O N F E V E R F E W.

The Leaves are cut down to the Stalk, in broad and flatted divisions.

This is a Weed of our waste grounds; and is no where so frequent as about farm-houses; a perennial, bushy Plant.

It grows to two Foot high, with a pale Stalk, and many Branches.

The Leaves are of a faded yellowish green.

The Flowers are very numerous, and white.

They blow in June.

The



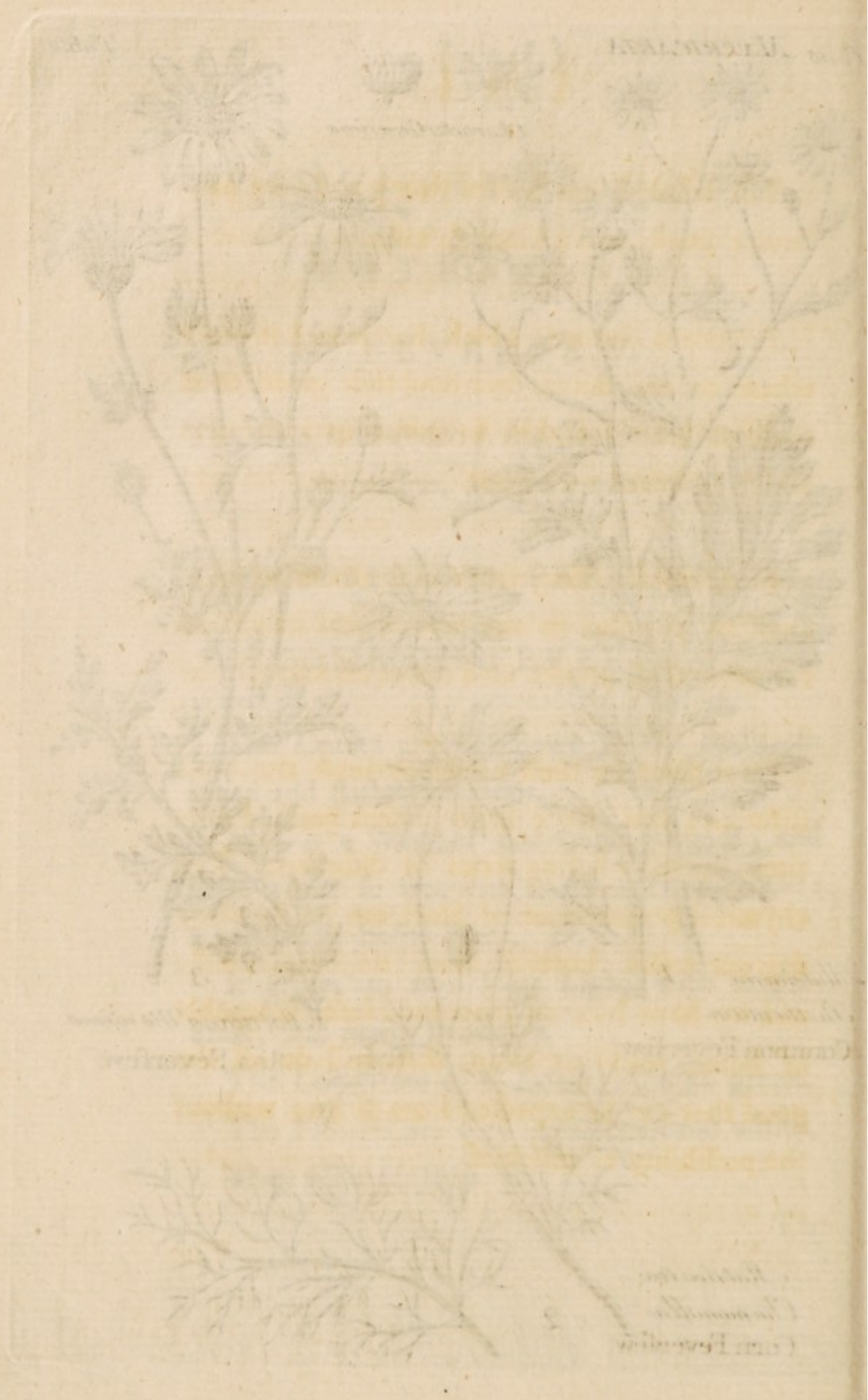
Character Genericus



Matricaria
Parthenium
Common Feverfew

Matricaria Maritima
Sea Feverfew

Matricaria
Chamomilla
Corn Feverfew



The whole Plant has a strong and very particular smell, and a bitterish taste.

Provident Nature, which has placed it every where at our doors, has doubtless given to it these striking qualities, to invite us to its use; which is indeed very great.

In disorders arising from obstruction of evacuations peculiar to the female sex, its virtues are beyond all praise; and above all value.

Steel given on these occasions tears the constitution; and, for a little present good, sometimes entails a lasting series of disorders. The chymical preparations of Steel are yet by many degrees more hurtful than its simple self; and we have here an innocent Herb, incapable of harm, ready at hand, that will do all the good that can be expected from them; without the possibility of mischief.

The

The fact is the same in a thousand other instances; for our own Herbs are as full of virtue, as destitute of mischief: and I do, in Christian truth, believe, tho' 'tis a very bold conclusion, that more good has been done in the world by Herbs; than mischief by chymical preparations.

For the use of this no medical art is needed: the Leaves are to be stripped off, and boiling water poured on them. A strong tea is to be thus made of Feverfew; and it is to be drank by half-pint basins. Three in a day will be sufficient.

A lady of great worth and virtue, the mother of the late Sir William Bowyer, told me, that having in the younger part of her life a very terrible and almost constant Head-Ach, fixed in one small spot, and raging at times almost to distraction; and which the neighbouring Dr. Thorold, of Uxbridge, very eminent in his profession,

profession, had by all usual, and some unusual means, attempted in vain to remove; she was at length perfectly cured by a maid servant, who had seen the effects of this Herb once before.

The lady drank the tea of it constantly, and plentifully; and applied the soft, warm leaves, of which the tea was made, to the part of the head where the pain was seated: the complaint ceased, together with its cause; and never returned.

If any who suffer the same pain think more advice than this is needful, tho' indeed it is not, they may apply for it freely. They will make me happy in giving me the means of being useful to my fellow-creatures.

2. MATRI-

2. MATRICARIA CHAMOMILLA.
CORN FEVERFEW.

The Leaves are cut into many parts, as fine as threads.

This is an annual Weed, hateful to farmers : but it has virtues that may recompense all the damage it can do among the corn.

It grows to a Foot and half high.

The Stalk is slender, pale, and branchy.

The Leaves are pale green ; and they have no smell.

The Flowers are large, and white ; with a high yellow disk.

They blow in July.

These have the virtues of the Flowers of Chamæmile, but with more cordial warmth. For those who have cold and weak stomachs scarce any thing is equal to them. They are best taken in the way of tea.

3. MATRI-

3. MATRICARIA MARITIMA.

SEA FEVERFEW.

The Leaves swell up, and are thick ; and they are composed of many parts, which are again cut down to the rib.

This is a sea-side perennial Plant, frequent in Cornwall.

It grows to eight Inches high, upright, and branchy.

The Stalk is thick, and ruddy.

The Leaves are of a dull green ; hollow underneath, and rising on the upper side.

The Flowers are white, with a low yellow disk.

They blow in August.

D

The

The candid Reader has thus, laid before him, a Specimen of a Method, by which it is proposed, to learn ; to ascertain ; and then to make public, The Virtues of the Plants of Britain.

Where nothing is known, nothing is ascribed to them : where many things have been said ; such alone are mentioned here as have been proved by experience ; where there is a probability of virtue ; it is proposed for trial ; and reasons are given for the opinion : and where danger threatens ; that is also mentioned.

Upon this plan, tho' the observations of many are requisite ; the means of them are rendered easy : and the cause truly deserves them. There are in England, on a free conjecture, fifteen hundred Plants which promise, by their taste and smell, considerable virtues : of these more than a thousand remain yet to be tried. And every advance is something to the general good ; so it be made with accuracy.

The

The first thing, to this purpose, must be to know, and perfectly to ascertain the Plant itself, to others: and in the method here employed 'tis hoped this is not difficult. The general heads of the characters, and descriptions of the parts, are plain at least, and obvious: and the superadded distinctions, which mark the gradations next under them, 'tis hoped are evident. Those which distinguish kind from kind, and Plant from Plant in the same kind, are easier yet, and cannot be mistaken: and herein lies the reality of knowledge.

Thus every one knows what a radiated Flower is; for every one has seen a Sun-flower, or a Marygold: when therefore he sees such a Flower, whose Cup has only one row of scales, he sees here, that two kinds of Plants only, have that character; and looking to the next distinction, he sees, that if those Scales are flat, the Plant is Coltsfoot; if they be hollowed,

it is Bidens. This is short and easy: more is not needful; and the Plant can never be mistaken.

Thus he will be led to know every Herb he finds; by referring it to such characters: those whose virtues are unknown, as well as those we are better acquainted with; for all are here: and all are necessary to be known; not only for distinction from each other; but that all may have virtues.

There is a plain necessity also of knowing all the Plants of the same name or kind with that in use; because the greatest errors may be fallen into by using one of these kinds for another.

Nightshade, for instance, is a name of many Plants; all of one general kind; but of many different virtues. There is one whose proper dose is two ounces; another that can make

great

great alterations in the body by a quarter of a grain ; and one whose roots, and several whose fruits, are eaten at table : therefore he who should say, give Nightshade in such a case, would prescribe under a dangerous name ; till all these were known asunder.

Hence also appears their folly (for it deserves no better name) who would advise men to seek the virtues of Herbs merely by their forms, or characters.

We see, in this small specimen, that, among radiated Plants, one is stomachic, another pectoral, a third a powerful diuretic ; and so on : yet are no Plants more naturally or justly joined in character than those with radiated Flowers. And even, beside all this variety of virtues ; the *Doronicum* and some others of this kind are poisonous. It is experience, not the forms of Plants, must lead us to the truth : but that, unless we are accurate, is useless.

The Author of these carefully considered Pages hopes, by their means, to make that accuracy easy, and familiar. God has given him many blessings; the Public are the means thro' which he has received them; and this is the return which piety and gratitude demand. For once the motive will not be mistaken: for those who see the nature and price of the present Publication, will not suppose 'tis dictated by interest.

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