

DIOSCORIDES, Book I, Aromatics, Oils, Ointments, Trees

Section I. AROMATICS

I. IRIS. *Iris Germanica* or *I. florentina*

Iris [Somme call it Iris Illyrica, somme Thelpida, somme Urania, somme Catharon, somme Thaumastos, the Romanes call it Radix Marica, somme Gladiolus, somme Opertritis, somme Consecratrix, the Egyptians call it Nar] is soe named from the resemblance of the rainbow in heaven, but it beares leaves like unto a little sword but greater & broader & fatter [or thicker]: the flowers on the stalke, are bended in, one ouer against another, & diners, for they are white or pale or black or purple or azure. Whence for the varietie of colours it is likened to the heauenly rainebow. The rootes under are knotty, strong [or sound], of a sweet savour, which after the

cutting ought to be dryed in the shade, & soe (with a linnen thread put through them) to be layd vp. But ye best is that of Illyria & Macedonia, & of these the best is that which hath a thick roote, stumped, & hard to breake, & in color of a faint-yellow, & exceeding well-scenting, & very bitter to the tast, of a sound smell, & not enclining to nastinesse, & moving to sneeing in ye beating. The second is that of Lybia, [or Africa] white according to the colour, bitter according to the tast, next in strength (to the former), but when they grow old they will be worm-eaten, yet then they smell the sweeter. But all of them haue a warming, extenuating facultie, fitting against coughs, & extenuating grosse humors hard to get up. They purge thick humors & choler, being dranck in Hydromel to the quantity of seven dragms they are also causers of sleep & prouokers of tears & heale the torments of ye belly. But dranck with vinegar they help such as are bitten by venomous

beasts, and the splenitick and such as are troubled with convulsion fitts, & such as are chilled, & stiff with cold, & such as let fall their food. But dranck with wine, they bring out the menses, yea, & the decoction of them is fitting for women's formentations which doe mollify & open the places, & for the Sciatica being taken by way of infusion, & for Fistulas, & all hollow sores, which it fills up with flesh. But being applyed as a Collyrium, with hony, they draw out the Embryons. Being fed, & layd on by way of Cataplasme, they doe mollify the struma & the old Scirrhus, but being dryed they fill up vlcers, & cleanse them, & with hony they fill vp with flesh the bare of the bones. They are good also for the headache being layd on by way of cataplasme with acetum & Rosaceurn: being dawbed on also with white Veratrum, & twice soe much hony, they cleanse off the Lentigo, & sun burning; they are mixt also with the Pessi, with ye Malagmata & with the Acopi, & in generall they are of

very much use.

2. AKORON. *Iris pseudacorus*

Acorum [somme call it Chorus or Aphrodisia, the Romans call it Venerea, somme call it the Mariner's roote, the Frenchmen call it the pepper of bees, Piper apum] hath leaues much resembling those of Iris but narrower, & roots not vnlike, but one wrapt in the other, not growing downe right, but sydelong in the vpper part of the earth, distinguished with knots of a pale white, sharp in tast, & not vnpleasant in smell. But that is best which is thick & white, not worm-eaten, full & odoriferous. Now this is that which in Colchis and that out of Galatia is called Asplenium. The roote hath an heating power, & the decoction thereof dranck, moueth vrina. It is good for the paine of ye Latus, & of the Thorax, & of the Hepar, for ye Tormen, for the Ruptures, for the Convulsions, it abates the

Spleen, & it helps the sick of ye Stilliciidum, & them that are a beluis venenatis demorsi. It is profitable by insessus, as Iris, for the muliebria. The succus of the roote doth cleanse off such thinges as darken the Pupillae. The roote thereof also is profitably mixed with Antidotums.

3. MEON. *Meum atharnanticum*

That Meum, which is called Athamanticum, doth grow abundantly in Macedonia & Spain, is like in the stalke & leaues to Anethum, but thicker than Anethum, somme tyme rising up to two cubits, underscattered with thinne, winding, & streight, long, rootes, sweet-smelling, warming the tongue. Which being sod with water, or being beaten smooth [or small] Without seething, & soe dranck, doe assuage the paines caused by stoppage about ye vesica and the Renes; & they are good for the vrinae difficultas, & for the Inflatio

stomachi, & for the Tormen, & for diseases of the matrix, & ye paine of the joints. Being beaten small with hony, & taken in manner of an Eclegma, they helpe a Rheumatick Thorax: being boiled for an Insessus, they draw ye bloud by ye Menstrua: being layed on playster-wise to ye lower part of children's bellies, they move the vrina. But being dranck more than is fitting, it causeth the Dolor capitis.

4. KUPEIROS. *Cyperus rotundus*

[The Romans (call it) the roote of the Bullrush, others the Bulrush] Somme call Cyperus, as well as Aspalathus, by the name of Erysisceptrum. It hath leaues like to Porrum, but longer & more slender; a stalke of a cubit high or higher, with corners like a Iuncus, vpon the top whereof there is a growing-out of ye little leaues & of ye seed, the roots lie under, of which also there is vse,

long as of ye oliva, cleaving together, or round, black, well-smelling, bitter. It growes in tillowed places, as also in marishie. But that is ye best [roote] which is heaviest, thick, full, hard to breake, rough, with a certaine sharpenesse, but such as this is ye Cilician & the Syrian, and that from the Cycladean Islands. There is a warming power in it, opening ye narrow mouths of the vasa & it is diuretically, being dranck it helps such as are troubled with the Calculus, & ye Hydropicall & also for them that are a scorpione morsi, & it is good for the prefrigeratio vulvae, & the obstruction thereof, it being applyed by way of fomentation, drawing downe the menstrua. It is good also for the vlcera oris, yea although they be feeding [or fretting], being dried & beaten to powder. It is mixed also with ye malagmata calfacientia, & it is usefull for the thickning of oyntments. Somme speake also of another kinde of Cyperus which growes in India, like Ginger, which being chewed,

is found to tast like saffron & to be bitter, & being applyed like an oyntment, presently it gets off the hayre.

5. KARDAMOMON. *Elettaria cardamomum*

The best Cardamomum is that which is brought out of Comagene, & Armenia, & Bosphorus; it growes too in India, & Arabia. Chuse thou that which is hard to be broken, full, close shut (for that which is not such is out of date), & that which with the smell doth offend [the head], sharpe in tast, & sommewhat bitter. It hath vim calfactoriam, beeing dranck with water, it is good for such as have the morbus Comitralis, the Tussis, the Sciatica, & the Paralysis, the Ruptures, for the convulsions, the Tormina, & it doth expell. the Latus Lumbricus. But dranck with wine it is good for such as haue ye Vitium renum, the Difficultatem meiendi. It is good also for them that are a Scorpione icti, & for all that are hurt by the poyson

of other beasts. But being dranck to ye quantitie of a dramme with ye barck of ye roots of a Bay, it breakes the stone. It kills the Embrya being taken by way of Suffitus, & being dawbed on with Acetum it takes away the Psoras. It is mixed also for the thickning of ointments, & other Antidots.

6. NARDOS. *Nardostachys jatamansi* ('Indian')

There are two kindes of Nardus. For the one is called Indian, the other Syrian: not that it is found in Syria, but because one part of ye mountaine whereon it growes turnes towards Syria, & the other towards the Indians. And of that which is called Syrian★ that is the best which is new, smooth, full of haire, of a yellow color, very odoriferous, & besydes that it doth resemble Cyperus in ye smell, it hath a short eare, it is of a bitter tast, & much drying of ye tongue, continuing a long tyme in its sweet smell. Of the Indian one kinde

is that which is called Gangeticall, from a certain river named Ganges running by the hill where it growes. Being somewhat weaker in strength because it commeth out of watry places, & it is higher, & hath more eares comming out of the same roote, both full of haire, & one wrapt in ye other, hauing a poysonous smell. But that which growes more vpon the Hill** is a great deale the sweeter, shorteared, resembling Cyperus in the sweetness of its smell, & hauing other qualities in it, such as that hath which is surnamed the Syrian Nardus. There is also another kinde of Nardus called Samphariticall from the name of the place, very little, yet great eared, hauing a white stalke, growing somme tymes in the middle, in scent, too much like to ye smell of a goate. This ought vtterly to be refused: it is sold also infused, which fault is found out heereby, that the eare thereof is white, withered, & hauing downe on it. They doe adulterate it by blowing of Stibium with water or

wine of dates into it, for to make it ye more close, & that it may be heauier. When you are now to vse it, if any dirt stick to ye roots thereof, you are to take it off, & to sift it, separating ye dust thereof which is good to make a washing water for the handes. They haue a warming, drying & vreticall facultie, whence they both stop ye Aluum being dranck, & being layd to, they stay ye fluxes of ye wombe & ye whites. But, being dranck with cold water they help both the Nauseas, & the Stomachi rosiones & ye troubled with flatuosities & with the morbus hepaticus, & with the morbus regius, & with the dolor renum; but sod in water, either by fomentation or by Insessus, they heale the Inflammatio Vuluae; they are good also for the superflous humors of the lids of the eyes, binding, & thickning the eyelids. And for moyst bodies the inspersion of them [is profitable to take away the smell of ye sweat]. They are mixed also with Antidots; being ground smooth, & made into balls with

wine they are layd up for eye medicines in a new vessell, not pitchie.

★ *Patrinia scabiosaefolia*, “Syrian”

★★ *Valeriana hardwickii*, Wallich

7. NARDOS KELTIKE. *Valeriana celtica*

The Celtick Nard growes on the Alpes of Liguria, in that countrietongue called Gallica. It growes also in Istria. It is but a little shrub [& short] which is gathered together with ye roots & made vp into hand bundles. It hath sommewhat long leaues of a pale yellow, with an yellow flower. The vse and ye sweetnesse of the smell is only of the stalkes & roots. Wherefore you ought, (hauing ye day before sprinckled the bonds with water) & taken off

the earthly stuffe [about them] to lay them in a more moyst ground, hauing first layd paper under them & the next day to make them cleane againe, for that which is good in it is not taken away by the strength of the moisture, together with the chaffie & strange stuff
This Herb is often counterfaited by another herb like it gathered together with it, which for the poysonous smell. that it hath, they call the goate, but the difference [between these twoe] is easy to be known, for this herb is without stalke and whiter, & hath lesse long leaues, neither hath it a bitter, or sweet smelling roote, as in the true Nardus. Chusing therefore the little stalke, & ye roots, but casting away the leaues, but if you will lay them vp you must first have them ground smooth [or small] & mixt with wine, & hauing made them into little balls, keep them in a new fictile vas, stopping them carefully. That is best which is new, & odoriferous, full of roots, plump, not easie to be broken. It is good for all thinges that

the Syriack is, but it is more Diureticall & better for Stomach griefs. It helps also the Inflammations about ye Liver, & the Ictericall, & ye Inflatio ventriculi, being dranck with the decoction of Wormwood. In like sort it is good for the Spleen, for the Bladder, & for the Reines; as also mixed with wine for the Bitings of Venemous beasts. It is vsed also to be put into malagmata & into Potions, & into warming oyntments.

8. NARDOS OREINE. *Valeriana tuberosa*. Mountain Nard
The mountaine Nardus, which of some is called Thylacitis, and Nevis, growes in Cilicia & Syria, hauing stalkes & leaues like to Eryngium, but lesse, yet not sharpe and prickly. The roots that lye vnder, are black, odoriferous, twoe or more, as of Asphodelus, but thinner & a great deale lesse. Neither doth it beare stalk, nor fruit, nor flower [any long tyme]. The roote is good for all those things

that the Celtick Nardus is.

9. ASARON. *Asarum europaeum*

Asarum, somme call it Nardus Syluestris, [the Magi Sanguis Martis, the Osthanes Thesa, the Aegyptians Cereera, the Romans Perpensa, somme call it Baccharis, the Thuscans (or Hetruscians) call it Succinum, somme Nardus Rustica, the French call it Baccar.] It hath leaues like vnto Ivie, but much thicker & rownder, a flower between the leaues, neere to ye roote, of an azure colour like to the Cytinus or Hyoscyamus, wherein lyes the seed like the kernell in grapes; the roots vnder are many [in smell like to Cinnamon. It loves rough & vnmoist grounds. The roote of this doth help the Ruptures, the Convulsions, the Vetus Tussis, the Difficultas Spirandi, the Difficultas vrinandi. It expelleth the Menses also, & being dranck with wine it is good for those that are a venenato

animali morsi. But the leaues being of a binding qualitie, being layd on help the Oculorum inflammationes, the Dolores capitis, the Aegilops beginning, and the inflammed duggs after childbearings, & the Erysipela; & the smell (of it) is somnificus. And Crateuas the Herballist, (speaks) to this purpose.] The roots that lye vnder, being manie, knottie, slender, crooked: like vnto grasses, yet a great deale slenderer, and well smelling, heating, & biting the tongue very much. The force of them is diureticall, warming, & causing vomiting, good (therefore) for the Hydropicall, & an inveterate Ischias and they bring downe also the menses. The roots being dranck the quantitie of six dragms with Melicrate doe purge after ye manner of Veratrum album. They are mixed also with ointments. It growes on shadie mountaines, but very much in Pontus, & Phrighia, & in Illyricum, & Vestinum of Italie.

10. PHOU. *Valeriana Dioscoridis* not *V. officinalis*

Phu, which some call also Syluestris, Nardus, growes in Pontus, & it hath leaues much like to Elaphoboscon, or to Hipposelinon, it hath a stalk of a cubit high or more, smooth, soft, inclining to a purple colour, hollow in the middle, distinguished by knotts; the flowers are sommewhat like those of Narcissus, but greater & tenderer, & purple in a pale white. The roote in the upper part of it is about the thicknesse of the little finger but it hath capillamenta, like as Iuncus, or Veratrum nigrum, which grow one within another, of a pale yellow, well scenting, & resembling Nardus in ye smell, with a certaine poysonous kinde of heauinesse. It being dried, & giuen to drinke, hath a facultie to warme, & to prouoke vrine, & the decoction thereof may doe the same, & (it is good) for the Dolor lateris, and prouokes the Menses, & it is mixed with Antidots. It is adulterated by being mingled with ye roots of Ruscus

but ye knowledge heereof is easy, for these are hard, & not easy to be broken, & without any good smell.

II. MALABATHRON*

Somme doe imagine Malabathrum to be ye leafe of ye Indian Nardus, being deceived by the likenesse according to the smell for there are many thinges like to Nardus in smell, as Phu, Asarum, Neris. But it is not soe, for it is a peculiar kinde (of herb) growing in the Indian Marishes, the leafe being swimming vpon the water as the Palustris Lens in ye marishes, hauing no roote, which hauing gathered forthwith they pierce it through with a linnen thread, & so drying it, lay it vp. They say also that the water, being dried vp by the summer heate, that the earth is burnt with the shootes of it, & vnlesse this be donne they spring no more. That is best which is newest, & of a pale white enclining to blacknesse, & hard to

breake, & sound, biting the nose with ye smell & long continuing in the sweetnesse of its smell; like Nardus in relish without any tast of salt. But that which is weake, and that breaks small, hauing a mustie scent, is naught. It hath the same vertue with Nardus, but that doth doe all things more forcibly. Yet ye force of Malabathrum is more Diureticall, & better for ye stomach, & it doth conduce for the inflammations of the eyes, being boyled in wine, beaten small, & soe anointed on. It is put also vnder the tongue for the sweetnesse of the breath; & it is put amongst cloaths, for it keeps them from moths, & (makes them haue) a sweet scent.

★ *Cinnamomum malabathrum* has doubtless been so named in the belief that it is this plant.

12. KASSIA. *Cinnamomum iners*

There are many kindes of Cassia growing about Arabia, bearing store of Aromaticall thinges. It hath a twigge of a thick barck, & the leaues, as of Pepper; chuse that which is fulvescens, well coloured, resembling Corall, very slender, long, and thick, full with pipes, of a biting tast & astringent with much heate, aromaticall, resembling wine in the smell. Such, by the inhabitants of the Countrie, is called Achy, but it is called Daphnitis by ye merchants in Alexandria. Before this is preferred the black kind, enclining to a purple, & thick, which is called Gizir, hauing the smell of a Rose, most fitting of any for Physicall vses; & that formerly spoken of is next to this. But the third is that which is called Mosyleticus* blastos. But the rest are of noe account, as that which is called Aphysemon, black, & vnsightsomme, & thinne barked, or hauing it full of chinckes, as also that which is called Kitto, & Dacar. There is also a certaine bastard Cassia, vnspeakably like, which yet is found

out by the tast, which is neither sharpe nor aromaticall, & it hath a barck cleaving to ye medulla. There is found also a broade Fistula, tender, light, full of branches, which is better than the other. But reiect that which is of a pale white, rugged, & that smells like a goate, & hath not a thick Fistula, but rugged, and thinne. It hath an vreticall, warming, drying, & gently astringent qualitie. It is fitt for those eye medicines which are made for clearing the sight, & for malagmata. It takes away the Lentigo, [being layd on with Hony, & prouokes the Menstrua. Yea, & being dranck, it helps those that are a vipera dimorsi.] It is good too being dranck for all inward inflammations, & for ye Reines, for women too by Insessus and Suffitus for ye Dilatio Vteri. If there be noe Cinnamon at hand, then twice as much of this mixed with medicines will doe ye same (that the other would). It is very profitable for many thinges.

★ Cape Guardafui

13. KINAMOMON. *Cinnamomum cassia*

Of Cinnamon there are many kindes, named by seuerall names, Proper to the countries where they grow, but that is best which they call, Mosulum, because it doth in a manner bear a similitude to that Cassia which they call Mosulitis, and of this that which is newest, black in colour, enclining to an ashie colour in that of wine, with slender shootes, & smooth, full of continued knotts, exceeding odoriferous. For most commonly the discerning of that which is best, doth consist in the proprietie of the sweetness of the smell. For there is found with that which is the best, & the most special, a smell resembling that of Rue, or like to Cardamomum. & moreouer sharp, & biting to ye tast, & sommewhat salt with heate, & in the rubbing not scone rough, & in the breaking languinous,

having smoothnes between the knotts. Prove it hereby, in taking a shoot from one roote, for this triall is easie, for there are somme fragments mingled, & at the first tryall the best casting about a sweet savour, & filling the nose with the scent thereof, doth hinder the discerning of ye worst. There is also a mountaine (Cinnamon) thick, dwarfish, of a very glittering color. And a third, from Mosul, black, & of a very sweet sauor, shrubbie, and not hauing many knotts. The fourth kinde is white, fungosum, puft up to sight, and vile, & brittle, hauing a great roote, smelling like Cassia. The fifth sort, bites the nose with the smell, is fulvescens, & [in the barck,] very like to red Cassia; but to the touch it is solid, not very nervosus hauing a thick roote. Of these, that which smells of Franckincense, Cassia or Amonum is the worst in smell. Chuse that which is white, rough, and of a rugged barck: but pass by that, which is smooth & woody about ye roote, as vnprofitable. And

there is another thinge sommewhat like it, which is called bastard Cinnamon, vile, of a faint smell & of as weake a strength. And it is also called Ginger being *Xylocinnamomum* hauing yet somme likenesse to Cinnamon. There is also woody Cinnamon that hath long, & strong shoots, but much inferior (to Cinnamon) for the sweetnesse of the smell. It is sayd of somme also, that this *Xylocinnamomum*, doth differ also in kinde from Cinnamon, as being of another nature. Now all Cinnamon hath a warming, vreticall, mollifying, & concocting facultie. It driues out also the menstrua, & the foetus, being drancke with myrrh, or else layd to. It is good also against beasts that cast out their poyson & against deadly poysons, & it doth cleanse away, heate & attenuate the matters that did darken the apples of ye eyes, and it is Diureticall, & being anointed on with hony it takes away the Lentigo, and the Sunburning. It is good also for coughs, & falling downe of rhe mes,

u the Dropsies, the diseases of the kidnies, the Difficultates vrinae. It is also mixed with precious ointments, & in gencrall it is profitable for many thinges. Being beaten small, and put into wine, & dried in the shade, it is put up for to be kept.

14. AMOMON. *Amomum subulaturri* or *Cissus vitiginea*

Amomum is a little shrub, winding out of ye wood within itself, in manner of ye Racemus, & it hath a little flower like that of the Leucoion★ but leaues like ye Bryonia. That is best which is brought out of Armenia, of a good colour, of a pale reddish wood, of a very fragrant smell. But that (which commes out) of Media, because it growes in plaine & watry places, is the weaker. It is great & of a pale green, & soft to touch, & full of veines in ye wood, resembling Origanum in the smell. That which commes from Pontus is of a pale redd neither is it long, nor hard to be broken, clustery, full of

fruit, and biting to the smell. Chuse that which is new & white, or of a faint red, not that which is close and cleaving together, but that which is loose & diffused, full of seeds, like the kernells of grapes, heauie, very fragrant without rottennes or mustinesse, & sharp, biting ye tast, of a single, & not many colours. It is a warming, binding, and drying. It causeth sleep, assuaging paine, being layd on as a Cataplasme to the forehead. It doth ripen and dissolve both inflammations, & scald sores of ye head. It is good also for those that are percussi a Scorpione being layd on as a cataplasme with Ocimum; It helps the podagricall, & it helpeth & assuageth ye inflammations of ye eyes, & those in ye bowells with uva passa, & for muliebria vitia, both by [Pessums] and by insessions it is profitable. The potion thereof being dranck is good for the liuersick, for ye vitium renum, for the Podagrical, it is mixed also with Antidots, & with ye most pretious of ointments. But somme

doe adulterate Arnomum with [an herb] called Amomis, being like to Amomum, yet without smell, & without fruit, yet growing in Armenia, hauing a flower like to Origanum, but wee must in the proof of such as these avoyd the fragments, and chuse those which haue perfect branches out of one roote.

★ Goodyer translated the Greek levkolov by white violet here and elsewhere. See book III, ch 138.

15. KOSTOS. *Saussurea Lappa*

Of the Costus, the Arabick is the best,★ I being white & light, hauing a great & pleasant smell; next after it, is the Indian, being fun & light, & black, like Ferula, but the third is the Syriack, heauy, of the colour of box, of a biting smell. That is the best which is new, white, full throughout, thick, dry, not wormeaten, not of a

stincking smell, of a biting and hott tast. It hath a warming diureticall facultie, & with all power to expell ye menstrua, & it, is good for the diseases of the Vterus, being applyed in Pessums, either by irrigations or by fomentations. It helps those which are bitt by a viper, being dranck to ye quantity of twoe ounces, (it is good) for the Pectoris affectus, for the Convulsions, for the Inflatio, [being taken] with wine & Wormewood, & it prouokes Venerie, being taken with Mulsum, & taken in water it driues out the Lumbricus Latus. An ointment thereof, with oyle, help§ such as haue ye Rigor of an ague, before ye comming of ye fitt, as likeNvise the Paralyticall: being anointed on with water or Hony it takes away ye Sun burning: it is mixed also in the malagmata & ,the Antidota. But somme adulterating it, mix the strongest roots of Commagene Helenium (with it). But ye difference is ~easily discerned. For this Helenium doth neither burne ye tast, neither

doth it yield a pleasant smell, strong, and biting.

★ *Costus arabicus*.

16. SCHOINOS. *Cymbopogon Schoenanthus*

Iuncus Odoratus, somme growes in Libya & somme in Arabia, & againe somme in that part of Arabia which is called Nabataea, which is the best But the Arabick is the next, which somme call Babylonian, others Teuchitis, but that of Libya, is vnprofitable.

Chuse that which is new, red, & full of flowers, which when it is cut or cleft enclines to a purple colour, & thinne, & smells sweet like a rose when it is rub'd between the handes, & bites the tongue with much burning. The vse (is only) of the flower, & of ye reeds, & of the root. It hath a Diureticall facultie, bringing downe ye Menstrua, dissoulving Inflations. It causeth the Capitis gravedo. It is

indifferently binding. It hath a breaking, digesting, & opening power. The flower thereof therefore being vsed in drinck is good for ye Sanguinis reiectiones, & for the Dolor Stomachi, of the Pulmones, of the Iecur, of the kidnies. It is mixt also with Antidote, but the root is the more binding, & therefore is giuen to such as haue a fastidiosum Stomachum. It is good also for the hydropicall, & Convulsions, (being giuen) to the weight of one dramme, with the like quantitie of Pepper, for some daies. But ye Decoction thereof is by Insession most convenient for the inflammations about the Vulua.

17. KALAMOS EUODES. *Acorus Calamus*. Sweet Flag
Calamus Aromaticus growes in India, but that is the best of it, which is fulvus, thick with knots, and which being broken falls into many pieces, hauing ye fistula full of spiders' webbs, sommewhat

white, but slammie in ye chewing, binding, & sommewhat sharpe
Being dranck it is of force ad Vrinam Ciendam. Wherefore being
sod either with grapes, or the seed of Apium, & dranck, it is good
for the hydropsicall, for the vitium Renum, for the strangurie, and
for ye. Ruptures. It driues out the menstrua also, being dranck, &
layd to. It helps the Cough, being suffited either of itself, or with
Resina Terebinthina, the smoke thereof being taken in at the
mouth through a funnell. It is sod, also for muliebres insessus, & for
Infusions, it is mixed also with Malagmata, & with perfumes to
make them smell the sweeter.

18. BALSAMON. *Balsamodendron Opobalsamum*

Balsamum, the tree, is seen according with the bignesse of Lycium,
or Pyracantha, hauing leaues like to Rue, but whiter a great deale,
& euer more flourishing. It growes only in Judaea in a certaine

vallie, & in Egypt. Itself differing from itself in ruggednesse, & tallnesse, & slendernesse, that [part] of the shrub which is thinne & hairie, is called Theriston, it may be because it is easily mowed by reason of the slendernesse of it: but that which is called Opobalsamum, is that iuyce which is got, the tree beeing cut with iron nailes in the heat of ye Dog dayes. But it drops soe little, that at euerie yeare they can get no more but six or seven Congii,[★] of it, & a weight of it is sold in that place for double the weight in silver. But that iuyce is good which is new, of a strong smell, & pure, & not enclining to sweetnesse, dilui facilis, smooth, astringent, and a little biting the tongue. But it is sophisticated diuers waies, for there are somme that mix oyntments with it, as ye Terebinthinum, Cyprinum, Lentiscinum, Susinum or Liliaceum, Balaninum, and Metopium, Hony, Ceratum Myrtinum, or Cyprinuin valde liquidum. But such as this is easily discerned, for the vnmixt being

let fall upon a woollen cloth, & that afterward washed out, it makes noe staine nor spot vpon it, but that which is counterfaieted, sticks. Againe the pure, being put into water or ilk, is easily diffused, & turnes like milke, but that which is counterfaieted swimmes on the top like oile, turning round or diffusing itself like a starre. But in tyme, the pure, also turning thick, prooues worse than itself. But they are deceaved which thinke that this which is pure, being dropt into water, doth goe downe to ye bottome first, & afterward being easily diffusable, to rise up againe. But the wood which is called Xylobalsamum, is best liked, which is new, & slenderstalked, redd, sweetsmelling, sommewhat resembling the smell of the Opobalsumum. Of the fruit (for there is necessary use of this too) chuse that which is yellow, full, great, heauy, biting in tast, & hot in the mouth, sommewhat scenting of the savour of Opobalsamum. There is brought from the towne Petra a seed like vnto

Hypericum,★★ whereby they counterfait this fruit which you may know heereby, because that it is greater, & emptie, of noe strength, of ye savour of pepper. But the iuyce hath most strength as which doth heate most, cleansing away the thinges that darken the Pupillae, & curing the Perfrictio circa Vuluam, being applyed with Ceratum Rosaceum, & it expells the menstrua, & the Secundas, & the Foetus, & it dissolueth Rigor, being annointed on, & the filthy matter of boyles. It is also Concoctionem iuvans, and Vrinam ciens, being dranck; it is good also for the difficult breathers and for such as haue drank Aconitum, being giuen with milke, as also for those that are a vipera demorsi. It is mingled also with Acopus, & Malagma, & Antidotums. And generally, the iuyce of the Balsamum hath most force; next to that, the fruit; but the wood hath the least strength of all. The fruit being dranck is good for pleuriticall, for the Peripneumoniall, for the Tussical, for the

Sciaticall, for ye Epilepticall, for the Vertiginous, for Orthopnoeicall, for the Torminosi, for the difficultas meiendi, for them that are a vipera demorsi. It is fitting also for muliebres suffitus, & being sod for Insessions it opens the Vulua and drawes out the moisture. The wood hath the same vertues the fruit hath, but in a lower degree. Being sod in water, & dranck, it helps ye Cruditas, the Tormina, them that bee a vifiera demoyssi, ye Convulsi, and it expells the Vrine, & with drie Iris it is good for the Vuhiera Capitis. It drawes out also Squamas ossium. Also it is mixed for the thickning of ointments.

★ The Greek chon was a libation, here used as a fluid measure, a congius = 5.76 pints.

★★ *Hypericum revoltum*

19. ASPALATHOS. *Cytisus lanigertis* or *Genista acanthoclada* [Aspalathus, somme call Sphagnon, somme Phasganon, but ye Syrians call it Diaxylon.] Somme Erysisceptron. It is a woody, kinde of shrub hauing many prickly thornes, growing in Istrus, & Nisyus, & Syria, & Rhodes, which the oyntmentmakers vse for the thickning of their ointments. That is good which is heauie, & after it is barked about, enclining to a red or a purple colour, thick, odoriferous, & bitter in the tast. There is also another kinde of it, Spartium. horridurn or *Cytisus spinosus* white, woody, without any smell, which is also reckoned the worst. It hath an heating with a binding qualitie, whence, being sod in wine, & gargaLized, it is good both for the tetra vlcera oris, & for the Nomae in genitalibus, & for ye Immunda cluuias, & for the ozoena, being infused; & beeing put into a Pessum it brings out the Embryon. But the

decoction thereof Alvurn sistit, & being dranck stops the Reiectio sanguinis, & it dissolues the Dysuria, & the Inflations.

20. BRUON. *Usnea sp.*

Muscus, but of somme it is called Splanchnon. Being found vpon trees, as the Cedars, the white Poplars or the oakes: that is best which growes vpon the Cedar, next that which growes vpon the white Poplar. Of it that which smells sweetest*, & is white is the best, but that which is blackish is the worst. Muscus hath an astringent qualitie, hot and cold. Being good in Decoctions made for all those griefs insessus about ye Vulua. It is mixt also with oyntments made for suppositories, & with [other] ointments, for the binding qualitie in it, & (it is good) also for ye preparing of perfumes, & to be put into Medicines called Acopi.

★ *Alectoria arabium* is strongly scented.

21. AGALLOCHON. *Aloexylon Agallochon*★

Agallochurn is a kinde of wood, that is brought out of India, & Arabia, like to Thyne wood,★★ distinguished with spots of a sweet scent, somewhat astringent in the tast, with somme bitternesse, hauing a barck like to soft skinne, & sommewhat diuers coloured. Beeing chewed, & also the decoction thereof gargalized up and downe ye mouth, causeth a sweet breath. And the powder thereof being sprinckled vpon it, doth serve for ye sweetning of the whole body. It is vsed also in perfumes, instead of Franckincense. But the roots of it, being dranck to ye weight of one dramme doth assuage the moyst griefs of ye stomach, & the weakenesse, & the heate of it. It is good also for them that have dolorem lateris, & for the Hepar, & for the Dysentericall & for the Torminosi, being dranck with

water.

★ Possibly *Thuia articulata*.

★★ Thyine-wood, *Callitris quadrivalvis*.

22. NASKAPHTHON

Nascaphthum, somme call Narcaphthon, and this also is brought out of India. But it is barkie, like the rinde of the Mulberrie tree; vused for a perfume for the sweet smell it hath, and put into artificiall perfumes. Being taken by way of suffitus, it is good for a vulua astricta.

23. KANKAMON. *Amyris sp.*★

Cancamum. is the Lachryma of an Arabick tree resembling Myrrhe,

poysonous in the tast, which they use as a perfume. They make a perfume also heerewith for their cloaths, with Myrrh and Storax. It is reported to have ye power of making fatt bodies leane, the quantitie of a Triobol,** being dranke with water, or oxymel for many days together. It is giuen also to the spleneticall the Epilepticall, and to the Astmaticall. And it brings downe the Menses, being taken with Melicrate, & it doth quickly take off the Cicatrices in oculis and heales the Hebetudines of them, being diluted in wine; & for ye rotting of the gums by moysture, and toothache, it doth doe as nothing else can doe.

* A species of Amyris known as *kataf* is like *Sorbus domestica*.

** Two 3-obol pieces weighed 1 drachma or about 66.5 grains. 100 drachmas = 1 *mina* (or “pound” of 15.2 oz).

24. KUPHI

Cyphi is the Composition of a perfume, wellcomme to ye Gods: the Priests in Egypt doe vse it abundantly. It is mixt also with Antidots, & it is giuen to the Asthynaticall in drinkes. There are many waies of the making of it carryed about, in which this also is. Take one half a Sextarium of Cyperus, of full juniper berries as much, of plum raisins of the Sun stoned twelve poundes★; Resinae repurgatae 5 lb., of Calamus Aromaticus, of Aspalathus, & of Iuncus odoratus, of each a pounce, of Myrrh twelue dragms, of old wine nine sextarios, of Holly twoe lb. Hauing taken out the stones of the raisins, pound the Raisins, & worke them together 'with wine and Myrrh, & pounding and sifting the other thinges mix them with these, and let them drinck vp the liquor one day. Afterward seething the Holly, till it comme to a glutinous Consistence, mix

the Rosin being melted carefully with it, & then hauing pounded all the other thinges diligently together, put them up into a vas fictile.

★ Two 3-obol pieces weighed 1 drachma or about 66.5 grains. 100 drachmas = 1 *mina* (or “pound” of 15.2 oz).

25. KROKOS. *Crocus sativus*

Crocum. [somme call Castor, others Cynomorphos, the Magi (call it) Sanguis Herculis]. The Corycian is the best in physicall vse, being new, &well coloured, hauing sommewhat of white in Caprqplo, sommewhat long, hauing all its parts hard to be broken, without fatnesse, full, colouring the handes with ye Dilutum of it, not cariosum, or moyst, alluringwith ye scent & a little sharper, for that which is not such, is either old or macerated, The next best to

the Corycian is that which comes from that tract of land near Lycia & that which is of Olympus [a mountaine] of Lycia, then that which is ex Aegis Aetolia; but the Cyreniacum & that which is of Centuripinum are the weakest for strength of all which are in Sicilie, all of them being sative as potherbs. Nevertheless because it is full of iuyce, & well coloured, they in Italie, dying Thyne wood heerewith, doe vse this, & for this it is sold at an high rate. But for Physick that which is ye formerly described is the more vsefull. But it is Adulterated with the mixture of Crogomagma beaten, or daubed with Sapa, Litharguruin or Plumbago, being beaten together with it to make it weigh the heauier. But all this is discovered by the dustiness that is found amongst it, & by the smell of the Defrutum that it beares with it. It hath a concocting, mollifying, sommewhat binding, & vreticall facultie. It causeth a good colour, & it is good against the Crapula being dranck with

Passum. It stops the flux of the eyes, being layd on with womans milk. It is also profitably mixed with drinkes that are taken inwardly, and with Pessums, & for Cataplasmes, which are for the vterus, & the Sedes. It stirrs vp also to venerie, and being anointed on, it asswageth the inflammations accompanied with an Erysipelas, and it is good for the inflammations of ye eares. They say also that it will kill one, if the quantitie of 3 dragms be dranck with water. But that it may be beaten ye smaller, it must be dryed in the sunne in an hott earthen vessell, & it must be often quickly turned. The root of it also beeing drank with Passum, moves vrine.

26. KROKOMAGMA

Crocomagma is made of Oil of Saffron, the aromatical part of it squeesed out, & made into Pastilli. That of it is good which is sweetsmelling, sommewhat resembling the savour of Myrrh, heauy,

black, hauing noe woodinesse in it, & which being sufficiently diluted, is of ye color of saffron, smooth, subflavus, strongly colouring ye teeth & tongue, & abiding on many houres together, such is that from Syria. It hath a vis detergens, to cleanse away hose things which darken the pupillae, a vreticall, mollifying, concocting, & warming facultie. And it doth sommewhat resemble ye strength of Saffron for it doth partake much of this.

27. ELENION. *Inula Helenium*. Elecampane
Helenium [somme call Symphyton, Somme Perfica, some Medica, Somme Orestion, Somme Nectarion, Somme Cleonia, Somme Rubus Idaeus, somme Verbascum Idaeum, the Romans call it Terminalium, others Inula Campana, the Aegptians call it Lone]. It hath leaues like to Verbasculum, which hath narrow leaues (but the leaues of this) are sharper, & sommewhat long. In somme places it

puts out no stalks at all. The roote (is) subruffa, odoriferous, great, sommewhat Sharpe, out of which for consition, as in Lillies, or Arum the fairest shoots are taken. It growes in hilly, & shadie & moyst places. The roote is digged vp in the summer, & being cut is dried. The Decoction thereof being dranck, doth mooue the vrine, & ye Menstrua. But the root itself being taken in an eclegma with honye, helps the Tussis, the Orthopneas, ye Ruptures, the Convulsions, the Inflations, the bitings of venemous beasts, being generally of a warming facultie. The leaues thereof sod in wine are profitably applyed to such as haue the Sciatica. The roote is good for ye stomach being condited in Passum. For ye Confectioners, drying it a little, then afterward hauing sod it, they macerate it in cold water, then passing it into ye decoction they set vp for vse. Beeing pounded, & dranck, it is good for the Excreantes sanguinem.

28. ELENION AIGUPTION. *Calamintha incana*. Calamint
Crateuas makes mention of another Helenium, that growes in
Aegypt. It is an Herb having branches of a cubit long, spreading
vpon ye ground like Serpyllum, the leaues like to those of Lenticule
but longer & many about the branches, the rootes of a pale color,
the thickenesse of the little finger, below thinne but aboue thicker,
hauing a black rinde. It growes in places bordering vpon the sea &
vpon hillocks & rocks. One roote of it dranck with wine hath
power to help those who are icti a serpentibus.