

The leaves of the common speedwell (*V. officinalis*, L.) are astringent and bitter, and were, even up to a comparatively recent date, not only used as a medicine in this country, but also as a substitute for tea. The plant grows in South Carolina, and, though not at present included in the United States Dispensatory as an official medicine, it is nevertheless, after careful examination, reported to contain "in the fresh juice and an extract from the herb, a bitter principle, soluble in alcohol, but scarcely so in ether; an acrid principle, red colouring matter, a variety of tannic acid, a crystallizable fatty acid, with malic, tartaric, citric, acetic, and lactic acids; a soft, dark, green, bitter resin and mannite." The Brooklime (*V. Beccabunga*, L.), also a British species and found in moist places, was formerly valued as an antiscobutic, the leaves and young tender stems being the parts used. In some parts the leaves are occasionally applied as a styptic to wounds, and when bruised are also applied to burns. Like the former, this species has been used in North American practice for purifying the blood.

Within the last few years, some attention has been given in America to the Virginian veronica or culversroot (*Veronica Virginica*, L.) It is a perennial plant, common in the United States in mountain valleys, and grows to a height of three or four feet. The root is the part used; it is bitter and nauseous, and imparts its active properties to boiling water. The fresh root is an active cathartic and emetic. A large teaspoonful of the root in a gill of boiling water, repeated every three hours, is said to be an efficient purgative, operating with mildness and certainty, and peculiarly adapted to typhoid and bilious fevers.

The *Gratia Dei*, so called in olden times on account of its active medicinal properties, and known also as the hedge hyssop by the herbalists, is the *Gratiola officinalis*, L. It is a perennial herb, common in moist places in the South of Europe, where it is used in dropsy, jaundice, scrofula, chronic hepatic affections, etc. In large doses it is poisonous. "According to Vauquelin, the purgative property depends upon a peculiar substance analogous to resin, but differing from it in being soluble in hot water. Dr. Whiting has announced the existence of veratria in it, which accounts for its active properties." Though not used in medicine in this country, it is said to have formed the chief ingredient in a once famous nostrum for gout, known as "eau médicinale." In some of the meadows of Switzerland the plant is said to be so abundant that it is dangerous to allow cattle to graze in them.

In a recent American list of "Pure Medicinal Preparations prepared *in vacuo*" at New Lebanon, occurs a preparation from *Chelone glabra*, L. The plant is known as the snake-head, or balmony, and grows in damp soils. Its action is described as follows in the catalogue above referred to: Tonic, cathartic, and anthelmintic, valuable in jaundice and hepatic diseases, likewise for the removal of worms.