

The bark is of a deep grayish or greenish color, shaded to almost black on portions of the stem, and marked with whitish spots that are transversely oblong, and which appear to be glands. The catkins are formed in the latter part of summer, and continue through the winter ready to expand in early spring; and their peculiar tasselled appearance amongst the leafless branches has given the plant its popular name in this country.

It is common throughout Canada, forming thickets along streams and in marshy grounds.

The taste of the bark is sweetish inclining to bitter, has a rough feeling in the mouth when chewed, possesses some astringency, and affects the fauces with a slightly acrid sensation. It imparts a reddish color to the saliva, and both the recent bark and the stick from which it has been peeled very soon acquire a red color by exposure to the air.

I am not aware that any thorough chemical examination of the constituents of this bark has been made. It contains both tannic and gallic acids, the latter probably in greater abundance, besides volatile oil, fixed oil, resin, coloring matter, and other constituents peculiar to the plant. The precipitates thrown down by the ferric salts from the infusion, decoction, alcoholic and ethereal tinctures, have a *greenish* black color similar to those from tea, sumach, catechu, and some other vegetables.

Very little seems to be known of its medical properties. It is not mentioned either in Bigelow's or Griffith's Medical Botany. Wood and Duglison both give a short description of a European species, (*a. glutinosa*) which is astringent and slightly tonic, and presume that this species possesses analogous properties. In Beach's American Practice, (Eclectic) it is said to be alterative, and a tea of it directed to be drunk freely, to purify the blood. Mr. Saunders of London, Ont., prepares an extract of the bark, (*Extractum alni fluidum*) which is prescribed in doses of from twenty to sixty drops, as an alterative and astringent.

Beyond the foregoing I cannot obtain any reliable information respecting its peculiar qualities, as observed by others. It is, doubtless, astringent, somewhat stimulating to the stomach, and perhaps tonic; but its *hemostatic* property is to me its most characteristic one, and that with which I am best acquainted. I have prescribed the bark both externally and internally, and have never observed any ill effects follow its use, except occasionally nausea, and vomiting when drunk too freely.