

disagreeable smell and an acrid bitter taste, and the root has also a nauseous odour. The leaves of this plant were, at one time, supposed to have tonic, diaphoretic, and anthelmintic properties, and were advocated for the cure of scrofula. Farmers occasionally use a decoction of the leaves for curing scab in pigs.

The great mullein, *Verbascum Thapsus*, L., a well known British plant, in gravelly, sandy, or chalky soils, is common also in neglected fields and along roadsides in the United States. The thick woolly leaves have a mucilaginous, bitter taste, which is extracted by infusion in water. They are demulcent and emollient, and were at one time much valued not only in domestic practice but by practitioners in catarrh and diarrhoea. Sir James Smith testifies to their value in the following words: "A pint of cow's milk, with a handful of the leaves of this mullein boiled in it to half a pint, sweetened, strained, and taken at bed-time, is a pleasant emollient and nutritious medicine for allaying a cough or removing the pain and irritation of the piles." The leaves, steeped in hot water, are not unfrequently used by country people as poultices in hæmorrhoidal complaints. In Sweden and Norway a decoction of the leaves is given to cattle suffering from cough or pulmonary diseases. The flowers, it is said, when dried in the sun, give off a fatty substance, which is used in Alsace as a cataplasm. Porcher, in his "Resources of the Southern Fields and Forests," thinks that sufficient attention has not been paid to this plant as a medicine, and strongly recommends the desirability of making a careful analysis. In an enumeration of the uses to which the plant is put in North America, he states that the leaves steeped in hot water are applied externally as a feebly anodyne emollient dressing for sores, for the relief of headache and frontal pains, and are much used by the poorer classes. The leaves of this plant and the bark of the root of sassafras, in equal parts, boiled in water and concentrated, then mixed with powdered sassafras bark to form pills, are said to be valuable in the treatment of ague; and finally he refers to a report of "several cases, in which the paroxysms of intermittent fever were completely prevented by the administration of the warm infusion of the fresh root. Four ounces of the fresh root to one pint of water reduced one-half by boiling, of which two ounces were given every hour, commencing four hours previous to the expected chill."

Other species of *Verbascum* have been said to possess similar properties to the species just mentioned.

In the genus *Veronica*, which is well known in this country as including some of the prettiest of our native flowers, we find several species have been used at various times in medicine. The well known and beautiful little plant, the germander speedwell (*Veronica chamædrys*, L.), was at one time valuable amongst the old herb-doctors as a vulnerary, and Gerarde recommends the root as a specific in pestilent fevers.