

"What savour is better, if physicke be true,  
For places infected, than wormwood and rue?"<sup>1</sup>

The root of elecampane (*Inula helenium*) "taken with hony or sugar made in an electuary . . . prevaieth mightily against the cough,"<sup>2</sup> and a candy made from it and molasses is most popular with the victims of whooping-cough, whether from the healing properties or soothing qualities of the sweet, it would be difficult to say.

The dyspeptic natures of the Clarenceville people demand varied treatment, and boneset tea (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), "dandelion bitters" (*Taraxacum dens-leonis*), and tansy tea (*Tanacetum vulgare*) are mentioned in respectful tones by older people who measure the efficacy of a medicine by its unpleasantness. Dandelions are favourite "greens," and Culpepper, who is fond of preaching a sermon, says of the herb "the French and Dutch do eat it in the spring," showing, he adds, that "foreign physicians are not so selfish as ours, but more communicative of the virtues of plants to people."<sup>3</sup>

Rheumatism is a disease of which the so-called cures are as varied as the victims. The favourite remedy is to carry in the pocket a potato, which in some mysterious way absorbs the disease. A piece of flax bound round the afflicted member, or applications of smartweed (*Polygonum hydropiper*) are also commonly used.

Saffron (*Crocus sativus*) is a Clarenceville cure for measles, but it is not a local remedy. Gerarde says, "the eyes being anointed with the same dissolved in milke or fennel or rose water are preserved from being hurt by small-pox or measles."<sup>4</sup> The use of saffron in cases of jaundice is probably due to the bright yellow color of the flower, of which Dioscorides said "it maketh a man well-coloured."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Folk-Lore of Plants" by T. F. Thistleton Dyer.

<sup>2</sup> 4, 5. Gerarde's "Herball."

<sup>3</sup> Culpepper's Complete Herbal.