

RESOURCES  
OF THE  
SOUTHERN  
FIELDS AND FORESTS,

MEDICAL, ECONOMICAL AND AGRICULTURAL;

BEING ALSO A

MEDICAL BOTANY OF THE SOUTHERN STATES;

WITH

PRACTICAL INFORMATION ON THE USEFUL PROPERTIES OF  
THE TREES, PLANTS, AND SHRUBS.

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OF NATURAL SCIENCES OF PHILADELPHIA.

Ille terrarum mihi praeter omnes  
Angulus ridet, ubi non Hymetto  
Mella decedunt, viridique coriat  
Bacca Venafro.

Ver ubi longum tepidasque praebet  
Jupiter brumae.

HORACE, CARTH. vi, Lib. II.

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decoction in gonorrhœa. The root is said to be emetic and cathartic, and is used in dropsy. Dr. R. S. Cauthorn, of Richmond, Va., has given the powdered root in three grain doses with success in six cases of intermittent fever; *Stethoscope*, 1858. Dr. Richardson, of Mass., found the root possessed of anodyne properties, giving a drachm of the powdered root in divided doses, and employing a strong infusion in cases of asthma and catarrh. Dr. A. E. Thomas, of Miss., and Dr. McLean, of Ky., in letters to the editors of the *U. S. Disp.*, speak of the success attending the employment of the root in scrofula, for which it has been long used. The latter found it useful as an alterative in hepatic affections, but was doubtful of the species. *U. S. Disp.*, 12th Ed.

BASTARD IPECAC; BLOOD WEED; CURASOA, (*A. curassavica*, L.) Grows in South Florida, (Chap. ;) is possessed of emetic and sudorific qualities, and by Dr. W. Hamilton is used in arresting hemorrhages. Dr. Barham found it very efficient in obstinate gonorrhœa. *Am. J. Pharm.* xix, 19.

#### OLEACEÆ. (*The Olive Tribe.*)

This order is said by Lindley to offer one of the few instances of oil being contained in the pericarp, it being in most other plants yielded by the seeds.

EUROPEAN OLIVE, (*Olea Europea.*) Introduced.

This well known plant, of which it has been said "*Olea prima omnium arborum est*," is cultivated in Charleston as a garden plant, and matures its fruit. A tree in Lamboll street bears fruit of good size, which I have seen made into excellent "olives" for table use; also pickled. Repeated attempts have been made to cultivate the olive, and little doubt exists that with greater efforts it may become a valuable oil-bearing plant. In Patent Office Reports, 1854, p. 28, is a brief statement of several efforts to introduce the olive into South Carolina, Georgia, and other Southern States. A paper was also published on this subject by Judge M. King, of Charleston. In 1755 Mr. Henry Laurens imported and planted olives, capers, limes, ginger, etc. The latter is still easily raised in our gardens in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. In 1785 the olive was successfully grown in South Carolina. It is not easily propagated from seeds. A colony of Greeks, settled at East Florida,



had planted the olive, and sixty years ago it is said there were large trees marking the site of that settlement. The tree was also cultivated by Mr. Cooper, of St. Simons, and Mr. Spalding, of Georgia. See a paper in *Southern Cultivator*, p. 7, vol. iii; also, Jefferson's letter to Drayton, in his *Memoirs*.

As this plant is an important one, and experience concerning its propagation in the Southern States is difficult to obtain, I add the following statement of Mr. R. Chisolm, Beaufort District, S. C.:

"My olive trees were imported from the neighborhood of Florence, by the way of Leghorn, in 1833, and consist of two kinds—the small, round, esteemed best for oil, and a much larger and more oval-fruited sort, which turns white before it becomes purple, the latter having been sent as stalks to engraft the other upon. The winter of 1834-5 was an excessively cold one, and injured to the roots all the orange trees of the South, and some of them so severely that they never afterward sprouted; yet I do not recollect that my olive trees suffered at all—certainly, none were killed. No cold which we have experienced since has caused them to shed a leaf, whereas our orange trees have suffered much, and about four years since barely escaped being killed to the ground. My olive trees are planted in a rather flat, clayey piece of land, quite near the salt water, and but little elevated above high tides. In Italy, I believe, it is generally thought that this tree does not thrive well far from the sea, but does best on what they call a fat soil, which contains more or less clay. From what I have seen of it on sandy soils in this vicinity it has proved not very fruitful. Finding that my trees grew very slowly, and not expecting to derive profit enough from them to pay for their culture, the idea occurred to me of trying to cultivate the sweet potato, field and cow-peas among them, hoping that the expense of cultivating the olive might be covered by these means. The land was well manured every year in June, and cultivated with one or the other of these crops, in such a manner as the other operations of the plantation would render convenient, generally, however, with sweet potatoes, irrespective of rotation. The result has much more than answered my expectations, as I very seldom failed to make a fair crop of potatoes, and the trees have grown vigorously, and rapidly come into bearing, and



have continued to bear good crops of fruit every year, occasionally abundant ones; while in Europe the habit of almost every variety of this tree is to bear only in alternate years. As the olive ripens during the months of October and November, at a time when we are straining every nerve to save most of our other crops, no attempt has been made to gather all the fruit; but one year enough was gathered, pounded in a mortar and the oil pressed out, to justify me in saying that I produced a very clear and good looking article, which was exhibited about two years since at the Fair at the South Carolina Institute. The only use that has yet been made of the olives is to pickle them while green, in a full grown state, in August or September, for which purpose they seem admirably adapted. A few may now be found on sale, which are preferred to those imported. The recipe for pickling was obtained from France, and is as follows: 'For each pound of the fruit take a pound of strong ashes (those of the hickory wood are the best we have) and an ounce of good slacked lime; mix the lime and ashes with water until a soft paste or mortar is formed, into which stir or imbed the olives, and finish by covering the whole mass with a layer of dry ashes. Let them lie in this state until all the bitumen is extracted, which may be known by the stones slipping readily out of the pulp when squeezed between the forefinger and thumb, for which purpose a few may be tried once an hour, or oftener if desired. The length of time required for this will depend entirely upon the quality of the ashes and lime, and may vary from two to three hours to as many days. As soon as the olives have been deprived of their bitterness they must be washed clean and put to soak in fresh water, which must be changed about once an hour for twenty-four hours, when the taste of potash will have been removed and the water cease to be discolored. The olives must then be put into bottles or jars, and a strong brine put over them made from good rock or alum salt. This brine will generally require to be changed several times, in consequence of becoming ash-colored, after which the bottles must be sealed air-tight, and if kept in a cool, dry, dark place, the olives will keep good for years.' Olives carefully cured after this plan will be found less salty than those pickled in France which are usually sold in this country, and will retain much of the nutty flavor of pure



olive oil. I do not think that the making of oil from the olive will be likely to prove sufficiently profitable to be pursued in this country for many years, as labor is expensive, and other crops will necessarily take the lead, unless the price of labor or soil in Europe should be increased, when there will, consequently, become a greater demand."

The oil is obtained of two or three qualities. The *virgin* oil is that which spontaneously separates from the paste of crushed olives. This is purified for watchmakers by placing in a vial containing in it a slip of sheet lead. In Sicily the olives are beaten from the tree. It is allowed to ferment in bins or receptacles. It is then conveyed to a mill, ground into a paste under heavy stones, and chaff or small straw occasionally thrown in to retain the oil. The pulp is then rammed into round, flat baskets, made of a strong kind of rush, and submitted to a press. When the oil ceases to run from a first pressing, the baskets are removed, their contents again pressed under the mill, returned to the baskets, submitted to the press again. Hot water is sometimes thrown over the mass to increase the flow of oil, the latter being subsequently skimmed from the surface. What is finally left in the baskets, after the third pressure, is refuse material, used for lamps by carriers and tanners. To procure the best oil no fermentation should be used. Consult Ure's Dictionary of Arts, Patent Office Reports, 1859, p. 114.

DEVIL-WOOD; AMERICAN OLIVE, (*Olea Americana*.) I have collected it near Charleston, Rutledge's farm and in St. John's, S. C. Rare and ornamental.

The wood has a fine and compact grain, and when perfectly dry it is excessively hard and very difficult to cut or split; hence is derived the name of devil-wood. On laying bare the cellular integuments of the bark its natural yellow hue changes instantaneously to a deep red, and the wood, by contact with the air, assumes a rosy complexion. I have not been able to verify this after repeated trials. Michaux suggests that experiments be made to test the nature of this active principle. Am. Sylva; Farmer's Encyc.

OLD-MAN'S BEARD; POISON ASH; FRINGE TREE, (*Chionanthus Virginica*, Walter.) A very ornamental plant; collected in the swamps of St. John's Berkeley; vicinity of Charleston; Newbern. Fl. April.