

XCVIII. *Some Observations upon the Agaric, lately applied after Amputations, with regard to the determining its Species. By Mr. William Watson, F. R. S.*

Read Dec. 5, 1754. **T**HE agaric lately applied' as a styptic after amputations, and which has been brought from France, I do not believe to be the common agaric of the oak, as has been imagined by the French surgeons. What is called the common agaric is a parasitical plant, found growing upon the oak, and upon several other trees; and is denominated by Caspar Bauhin, *Fungus in caudicibus nascens, unguis equini figurâ*; of which touchwood or spunk, and the *amadoue ordinaire* of the French, is usually prepared. I think it impossible, by any process, to prepare from the common agaric a substance perfectly similar to the French agaric, which exactly answers the description, which Breynius gives of the *Fungus coriaceus quercinus hæmatodes*, and of which we find the following * account in the *Ephe- merides naturæ curiosorum*. “ In medio quercus, “ says that author, medullæ velut subucula circum- “ volutus, inventus est: tener erat, mollis, flexilis, “ planus, nonnihil rugosus, eâ longitudine et lati- “ tudine, ut colobium ex eodem commodè conficere “ licuisset: colore pallido ad flavum nonnihil ten- “ dente; itemque substantiâ, tractatione, et figurâ

* An. 4, et 5. Obf. 150.

“ alutæ ex pelle caprinâ confectæ fimilior quam
 “ ovum ovo, niſi quod craſſior, materiâ minus com-
 “ pactâ ; intus præterea paſſim duriuſcula & rotunda
 “ tubercula, in manus magis quam in oculos inter-
 “ currentia occultante. Initio guſtatus viſ ſtatim
 “ quædam attractiva apparebat. Reperitur et in aliis
 “ arboribus.” Breynius further ſays, that this vege-
 table has been recommended as a moſt excellent re-
 medy to ſtop the bleeding at the noſe.

Mr. Ray, in his *Synopſis ſtirpium Britannicarum*, upon the authority of the late Dr. William Sherard, ſays, that this *Fungus coriaceus quercinus hæmatodes* is found upon putrid oaks in Ireland, where it is called oak-leather ; and that the country people there collect and preſerve it to dreſs ulcers with. Dr. Sherard makes no doubt but that it may be found in England ; and Mr. Ray had even ſome ſent him from the late Dr. Eales in Hertfordſhire. Dr. Richardſon, in Yorkſhire, found it growing upon the aſh ; and Dr. Dillenius further obſerves, that in Virginia it is uſed as leather, to ſpread plaſters upon ; and that, beſides its being a ſoft ſubſtance, fitting eaſy upon the afflicted part, it has a healing property.

Thus much I thought proper to lay before the Royal Society, in order that thoſe members of it, who correſpond with the French ſurgeons, may make ſome further inquiry into the nature, as well as the preparation, if any, of this uſeful vegetable.

William Watſon.