

virtute præstantissimas esse asserit, denique subjungit fertilissimam esse hanc plantam, quæque plusquam decem millia feminum gignit.

Hujus usurpantur folia, semen, quod præ cæteris partibus laudat præfectus ille noster nosocomii Zeylanensis, Radix, caules & rami.

Folia Lecta antequam flores prodeunt in umbra Siccata & in pulverem comminuta dantur in convenienti vehiculo aut aquæ calidæ infunduntur, bibiturque ea infusio instar infusionis herbæ The. infunduntur & Spiritus vini & paratur per destillationem Spiritus ex Radice, caulibus & ramis.

Flores, Radices extractum & Sal in Pleuritide Colica & febribus feliciter se usurpasse testatur alius quidam Nosocomii Zeylonensis præfectus.

Atque hæc sunt, quæ mihi innotuere ex litteris Colombo ad Societatem nostram Indicam & ad me datis de herbæ hujus facultatibus, utendique modo. Ex duobus Chirurgis primò memoratus, qui satis accuratus mihi videtur observator, laudat quoque in suis litteris a vi lithontriptica cortices Radicum ipsasque Radices herbæ cujusdam *Mangul Caranda pottu* Zeylanensibus dictæ, at, quæ illa sit, me latet.

Etiamsi autem modus & ratio qua agant hæc aliave vere lithontriptica habita medicamenta non facilis sit explicatu, durum tamen videtur nullam plane fidem habere viris fide dignis. Ego vero hæc experientiæ debite institutæ sæpiusque repetendæ Committo.

VIII. *Part of a Letter from Mr Stephen Gray to the Publisher, containing his observations on the Fossils of Reculver Cliffe, and a new way of drawing the Meridian Line, with a Note on this letter by the Publisher.*

S I R, Canterbury, Jan. 13. 1701.

I Received the Transaction for the months of September and October, 1700. most gratefully. I was
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extremely satisfied with the account Mr *De La Prins* gives us of his Observations on the Shells in the Quarries near *Broughton*, especially with the agreeable notion he has conceived of the Deluge of *Noah*.

To the many instances the Earth gives us of the great and violent mutations she has suffer'd, be pleas'd to take a remarkable one of those I have observed in *Kent*.

About half a mile from *Reculver*, towards *Herm*, there appears in the Cliff a *Strata* of Shells in a greenish Sand; they seem to be firm, and some of them are entire, but when you go to take them from their beds they crumble to Powder between your fingers; but that which is most remarkable is, that in the lower part of the *Strata*, where the Shells are more thickly dispersed, there lies scatter'd up and down portions of Trunks, Roots and Branches of Trees; the Wood is become as black as Coal, and so rotten that large pieces of it are easily broken with ones fingers. I know not what depth these may lye, the *Strata's* surface not appearing above 2 foot from the Beach, but I judge it from the superficies or top of the Cliff about 12 foot. I saw the stump of one Tree standing upright broken off about a foot from the ground. I should have given a more particular account, but cannot at present find the note I took upon the place. I shall only add, that the Shells were of the White Conchites.

Give me leave to conclude the remaining part of this Paper on another subject. I have lately thought of a new contriv'd Instrument for Drawing a Meridian line, which, for any thing I know to the contrary, is my own; 'tis easie in its use, and sufficiently exact: I believe you will understand its structure without a Figure.

Take the Gnomon of an Horizontal Dial for the Latitude of the place, and to the *Hypothensusa* fix two Sights, whose centers may be parallel to the same; let the Eye-sight be a small hole, but the others diameter must be equal to the Tangent of the double distance of the

North

North Star, from the Pole the distance of the Sights being made Radius, let the Stile be rivetted to the end of a straight Ruler; then when you would make use of it, lay the Ruler on an Horizontal Plane, so that the end to which the Stile is fixed may over hang, then look through the Eye-sight, moving the Instrument till you see the North Star appears to touch the circumference of the hole in the other Sight, on the same hand with the Girdle of *Cassiopea*, or on the opposite side to that whereon the Star in the Great Bears Rump is, at that time then draw a line by the edge of the Ruler, and it will be a true Meridian line, as tis very easie to demonstrate.

I do not hear that any of the Occultations of *Aldebaran* by the Moon were observed last year. I expected several, but was always hindred by the weather from observing any. I hope to have better success this year, before the Moons visible way leaves that Star.

A Note on this Letter by the Publisher.

It is very likely that the Black Wood mentioned in this Letter is Oak, which has lain so long as to be turn'd of that colour by the Vitriolick juices of the earth in which it has lain, as galls and a solution of Vitriol turn of that colour. I never saw any Oak that had lain any time in any kind of earth, where water came to soak into it, that was not turned of that colour: and I have seen many Trees of Black Wood of great bigness, taken up (as well as lesser pieces) and all of it was Oak. It looks at first taking up like Ebony, is very ponderous, but as it dries, it splits, grows friable, light, and comes to be good for little.

E R R A T A in No. 267.

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