

It never grows larger than a moderate-sized pine, throws out no branches, and has a smooth trunk, and the top tufted, forming a kind of cup. The leaf is three-pointed, like that of a fig, of a dull green, and a pleasant odor, especially when dried; the young leaves are of the shape of the leaf of a pear-tree. The bark is polished, reddish, and tastes like aniseed. The wood is light, and has the aromatic taste and smell of fennel. The root is harder and heavier, and spreads on the surface only. This tree grows on the seashore and on the mountains, but always on a soil neither too dry nor too moist. Its wood is hot to the second degree, the bark almost to the third. When several of these trees grow together, they give an odor but little different from that of cinnamon.

1562.

Sassafras.

Some Spaniards of St. Matheo and St. Augustine—that is to say, of Dolphin and May rivers—being almost all attacked with fever, caused by improper food, and the turbid, unhealthy water which they drank, were taught by some Frenchmen to use sassafras, as they had seen the Indians do. They cut the root into small pieces, and boiled them, drinking the decoction after fasting and at meals. It cured them perfectly. They subsequently tested it frequently, and if they are to be credited, there is scarcely any disease that resists this drink; it was their sole and universal remedy and preservative in Florida. But when provisions failed, they did not employ it; as it caused a hunger more insupportable than any disease could be. It is added that the sassafras is an admirable specific against venereal diseases; but the Indians apparently resort more frequently to esquine, not only against this terrible disease, but also against all of a contagious character.

In many diseases, the roots, small branches, and leaves of the sassafras are cut into small pieces, and a decoction made in this way. An ounce is steeped for a night in twelve pounds of water, then the whole is boiled at a slow fire, till the water loses one-third. But in this, regard must be had to the patient's condition, and he must diet