called spirits : becauſe, when this is taken away from the moſt fragrant bodies, what remains has ſcarce any ſmell at all ; but this, poured on the moſt inodorous bodies, gives them a fragrancy.

Willis obſerves, that brutes have generally the ſenſe of ſmelling in much greater perfection than man : by this alone they diſtinguiſh the qualities of bodies, which could not otherwiſe be known; hunt out their food at a great diſtance, as hounds and birds of prey ; or hid among other ſubſtances, as ducks, &c. Man, having other means of judging of his food, &c. did not need ſo much ſagacity in his noſe ; yet have we inſtances of a great deal even in man. In the *Histoire des Antilles,* we are affured there are negroes who, by the ſmell alone, can diſtinguiſh between the footſteps of a French­man and a negro. It is found, that the laminae, where­with the upper part of the noſtrils is fenced, and which ſerve to receive the divarications of the olfactory nerves, are always longer, and folded up together in greater numbers, as the animal has this ſenſe more acute : the various windings and turnings of theſe laminæ detain­ing the odoriferous particles.

The ſenſe of ſmelling may be diminiſhed or deſtroy- cd by diſeaſes ; as by the moiſture, dryneſs, inflammation, or ſuppuration of the olfactory membrane, the compresſion of the nerves which ſupply it, or ſome fault in the brain itſelf at their origin. A defect, or too great a degree of ſolidity of the ſmall ſpongy bones of the up­per jaw, the caverns of the forehead, &c. may likewiſe impair this ſenſe ; and it may be alſo injured by a col­lection of fetid matter in theſe caverns, which is conti Dually exhaling from them, and alſo by immoderate uſe of ſnuff. When the noſe abounds with moiſture, after gentle evacuations, ſuch things as tend to take off irri­tation and coagulate the thin ſharp ſerum may be ap­plied ; as the oil of aniſe mixed with fine flour, cam­phor diſſolved in oil of almonds, &c. the vapours of am­ber, frankincenſe, gum-maſtic, and benjamin, may like­wiſe be received into the noſe and mouth. For moiſtening the mucus when it is too dry, ſome recommend ſnuff made of the leaves of marjoram, mixed with oil of amber, marjoram, and aniſeed ; or a ſternutatory of cal­cined white vitriol, twelve grains of which may be mix­ed with two ounces of marjoram water and filtrated. The ſteam of vinegar upon hot iron, and received up the noſtrils, is alſo of uſe for ſoftening the mucus, re­moving obſtructions, &c. If there be an ulcer in the noſe, it ought to be dreffed with ſome emollient oint­ment, to which, if the pain be very great, a little lau­danum may be added. If it be a venereal ulcer, 12 grains of corroſive ſublimate may be diffolved in a pint and a half of brandy, a table ſpoonful of which may be taken twice a day. The ulcer ought likewiſe to be waſhed with it, and the fumes of cinnabar may be re­ceived up the noſtrils.

If there be reaſon to ſuſpect that the nerves which ſupply the organs of ſmelling are inert, or want ſtimulating, volatile ſalts, or ſtrong ſnuffs, and other things which occaſion ſneezing, may be applied to the noſe ; the forehead may likewiſe be anointed with balſam of Peru, to which may be added a little oil of amber.

SMELT, in ichthyology. See Salmo.

SMELLTNG, in metallurgy, the fuſion or melting of the ores of metals, in order to ſeparate the metalline

part from the earthy, ſtony, and other parts. See Metallurgy, Part III.

SMEW, in ornithology. See Mergus.

SMILAX, rough bindweed, in botany : A ge­nus of plants belonging to the claſs of *dioecia* and order of *hexandria ;* and in the natural ſyſtem ranging under the 11th order, *Sarmentacee.* The male calyx is hexa- phyllous, and there is no corolla ; the female calyx is al­ſo hexaphyllous, without any corolla : there are three ſtyles, a trilocular berry, and two ſeeds. There are 18 ſpecies; the aſpera, excelſa, zeilanica, ſarſaparilla, china, rotundifolia, laurifolia, tamnoides, caduca, bona nox, herbacea, tetragona, lanceolata, and pſeudochina. Of theſe, the ſmilax ſarſaparilla, which affords the ſarſapa­rilla root, is the moſt valuable. This is well deſcribed in the London Medical Journal by Dr Wright, who, during a long reſidence in Jamaica, made botany his peculiar ſtudy.

“ This ſpecies (ſays he) has ſtems of the thickneſs of a man’s finger : they are jointed, triangular, and beſet with crooked ſpines. The leaves are alternate, ſmooth and ſhining on the upper ſide ; on the other side are three nerves or costæ, with ſundry ſmall crooked ſpines. The flower is yellow, mixed with red. The fruit is a black berry, containing ſeveral brown ſeeds.

“ Sarſaparilla delights in low moiſt grounds and near

the banks of rivers. The roots run ſuperficially under the ſurface of the ground. The gatherers have only to looſen the soil a little, and to draw out the long fibres with a wooden hook. In this manner they proceed till the whole root is got out. It is then cleared of the mud, dried, and made into bundles.

“ The ſenſible qualities of ſarſaparilla are mucilagi­nous and farinaceous, with a flight degree of acrimony. The latter, however, is ſo flight as not to be perceived by many ; and I am apt to believe that its medicinal powers may fairly be aſcribed to ifs demulcent and fa­rinaceous qualities.

“ Since the publication of Sir William Fordyce’s pa­per on Sarſaparilla in the Medical Obſervations and In­quiries, Vol. I. ſarſaparilla has been in more general uſe than formerly. The planters in Jamaica ſupply their eſtates with great quantities of it ; and its exhibition has been attended wich very happy conſequences in the yaws and in venereal affections; as nodes, tophi, and exoſtolis ; pains of the bones, and carious or cancerous ulcers.

“ Sir William Fordyce ſeems to think ſarſaparilla a ſpecific in all ſtages of lues ; but from an attentive and careful obſervation of its effects in ſome thouſands of caſes, I muſt declare I could place no dependence on ſarſaparilla alone. But if mercury had formerly been tried, or was uſed along with ſarſaparilla, a cure was ſoon effected. Where the patients had been redu­ced by pain, diſonler, and mercury, I preſcribed a de­coction of ſarſaparilla, and a table-spoonful of the pow­der of the ſame, twice a day, with the greateſt ſucceſs, in the moſt deplorable caſes of lues, ill-cured yaws, and carious or ill-diſpoſed fores or cancers.”

The china, or oriental ſpecies of china root, has roundiſh prickly ſtalks and red berries, and is a native of China and Japan. The pſeudochina, or occidental ſpecies, has rounder ſmooth ſtalks and black berries, grows wild in Jamaica and Virginia, and bears the colds of our own climate.