

ture. The simple oil of this plant hath the same virtues as that of castor, but is much stronger; if snuffed up the nose, it purgeth the head of phlegm; it is also good in old and cold pains of the joints, liver, and spleen. It is good for cold diseases of the nerves and brain, the head-ach, and pains in the side thereof; it cures the lethargy, being snuffed up the nose; anointed on the privities it provoketh lust, and it healeth all numbness and stiffness proceeding from cold. *Oleum de euphorbia compositum*, or the compound oil of euphorbium, operates as the simple, but more effectually; it healeth old and cold diseases of the nerves and brain, and prevents drowsiness. It is very effectual in cold pains of the womb, kidneys, and bladder, being anointed on the regions thereof. The extract of euphorbium healeth the palsy, gout, spasm, and dropsy, and bringeth phlegm from the nerves.

## F E R N.

DESCRIPTION. OF this there are two kinds principally to be treated of; viz. the male and female. The female groweth higher than the male, but the leaves thereof are less and more divided or dented, but of the same smell as that of the male. The virtues of each are the same.

PLACE. They grow on heaths and in shady places near the hedge-sides in most parts of this kingdom.

TIME. They flower and feed at midsummer.

GOVERNMENT AND VIRTUES. It is under the dominion of Mercury, both the male and female. The roots of both these sorts of ferns, being bruised and boiled in mead, or honey-water, and drank, killeth both the broad and long worms in the body, and abateth the swelling and hardness of the spleen. The green leaves eaten, purge the belly of cholerick and waterish humours, but it troubles the stomach; they also cause abortion, consequently are unfit for the use of pregnant women. The roots bruised and boiled in oil or hog's lard, make a very profitable ointment to heal wounds, or draw forth thorns from the flesh. The powder of them used in foul ulcers, drieth up their malignant moisture, and causeth their speedy healing. Fern being burnt, the smoke thereof driveth away serpents, gnats, and other noisome creatures, which in fenny countries are sometimes very troublesome.

## No 50 WATER - FERN.

CALLED also osmond-royal.

DESCRIPTION. This shooteth forth in the spring time, it hath several rough hard stalks, half-round, or flattish on one side, and hollow; they are about two feet high, having many branches of winged yellowish green leaves on all sides, set one against another,