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Title: A treatise on the culture of the tobacco plant with the manner in which it is usually cured

Author: Jonathan Carver

Release date: December 12, 2014 [eBook #47638]

Language: English

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A TREATISE ON
THE CULTURE OF THE TOBACCO PLANT WITH THE MANNER IN
WHICH IT IS USUALLY CURED ***

**A
TREATISE
ON THE
CULTURE
OF THE
TOBACCO PLANT.**

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Flowers of the Tobacco plant
Drawn and Engraved by Copland & Sansom N° 16 Maiden Lane

A
TREATISE
ON THE
CULTURE
OF THE
TOBACCO PLANT;

WITH THE
MANNER in which it is usually CURED.

ADAPTED TO
NORTHERN CLIMATES,

AND
DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF THE
LANDHOLDERS OF GREAT-BRITAIN.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,
TWO PLATES OF THE PLANT AND ITS FLOWERS.

By JONATHAN CARVER, Esq.

Author of TRAVELS through the interior Parts of
NORTH-AMERICA.

L O N D O N :
Printed for the AUTHOR,
And sold by J. JOHNSON, in St. Paul's Church-yard.

1779.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE PRESIDENT,
VICE-PRESIDENTS,
AND
MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY
FOR THE
ENCOURAGEMENT OF ARTS,
MANUFACTURES AND
COMMERCE.

The Extension of every Branch of useful Knowledge being the great Object of the SOCIETY for the Encouragement of ARTS, MANUFACTURES and COMMERCE, the Author begs Leave to commit the following Treatise to their Patronage.

London, March 26th, 1779.

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Tobacco plant
Drawn and Engraved by Copland & Sansom N° 16 Maiden Lane

A TREATISE, &c.



CHAPTER I.

Of the Discovery and Uses of Tobacco.

Tobacco, or Tabacco, is a medicinal plant, which remained unknown to Europeans till the discovery of America by the Spaniards; being first imported from thence about the year 1560. The Americans of the continent called it Petun; those of the islands, Yoli. Hernandez de Toledo sent it into Spain from Tabaco, a province of Yucatan, where he first found and learned its use; and from which place he gave it the denomination it still bears.

Sir Walter Raleigh first introduced the use of it into England, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, about the year 1585. The plant was probably known in this kingdom before that time, by means of the Spaniards or Portuguese; it is however certain, that he first taught the English to smoke it.

The French, on its first introduction among them, gave it various names, as Nicotiana, or the Ambassador's Herb, from John Nicot, who came soon after it was discovered, as ambassador to that court, from Francis the Second of Portugal, and brought some of it with him; which he presented to a grand Prior of the house of Lorraine, and to Queen Catherine de Medicis: on this account it was sometimes called the Grand Prior's Herb, and sometimes the Queen's Herb.

When, or in what manner this plant was introduced into the oriental nations is uncertain, although it is at present in general use among them. Considerable quantities of it are likewise cultivated in the Levant, the coasts of Greece and the Archipelago, in the island of Malta and in Italy.

Tobacco is termed by botanists, Nicotiana; and is arranged by them as a genus of the Pentandria Monogynia class of plants. It is sometimes used medicinally; but being very powerful in its operations, this must be done with great caution. The most common uses of it are, either as a sternutatory when taken by way of snuff, as a masticatory by chewing it in the mouth, or as an effluvia by smoking it; and when used with moderation is not an unhealthy amusement, whether it replenishes the humble pouch of the rustic, or the golden box of the courtier.

Before pipes were invented, it was usually smoked in segars, and they are still in use among some of the southern nations. The method of preparing these is at once simple and expeditious: a leaf of tobacco being formed into a small twisted roll somewhat larger than the stem of a pipe, and about eight inches long, the smoke is conveyed through the winding folds, which prevent it from expanding, as through a tube; so that one end of it being lighted, and the other applied to the mouth, it is in this form used without much inconvenience: but in process of time, pipes being invented, they were found more commodious vehicles for the smoke, and are now in general use.

Among all the productions of foreign climes introduced into these kingdoms, scarcely any has been held in higher estimation by persons of every rank than tobacco. In the countries of which it is a native, it is considered by the Indians as the most valuable offering that can be made to the Beings they worship: they use it in all their civil and religious ceremonies. When once its spiral wreaths ascend from the feathered pipe of peace, the compact that has just been made, is considered as sacred and inviolable. Likewise, when they address their great Father, or his guardian Spirits, residing as they believe in every extraordinary production of nature^[1], they make liberal offerings of this valuable plant to them, doubting not but that they secure thereby the protection they request.

Smoking was at first supposed to be the only means by which its virtues could be attained; but at length it was found out that the juices of it extracted by chewing were of a cordial nature, alleviating, in laborious employments, the cravings of hunger, or the depression of fatigue; and also, that the powder of it received into the head through the nostrils, in moderate quantities, was a salubrious and refreshing sternutatory. For these purposes, the Americans inhabiting the interior settlements manufacture it in the following easy manner. Being possessed of a tobacco-wheel, which is a very simple machine, they spin the leaves, after they are properly cured, into a twist of any size they think fit, and having folded it into rolls of about twenty pounds weight each, they lay it by for use. In this state it will keep for several years, and be continually improving, as it every hour grows milder. When they have occasion to use it, they take off such a length as they think necessary, which, if designed for smoking, they cut into small pieces, for chewing into longer, as choice directs; if they intend to make snuff of it they take a quantity from the roll, and laying it in a room where a fire is kept, in a day or two it will

become dry, and being rubbed on a grater will produce a genuine snuff. Those, in more improved regions, who like their snuff scented, may apply to it such odoriferous waters as they can procure, or think most pleasing.

The Illinois usually form it into carots, which is done by laying a number of leaves, when cured, on each other, after the ribs have been taken out, and rolling them round with packthread, till they become cemented together. These rolls commonly measure about eighteen or twenty inches long, and nine round in the middle part. But as many other methods are at present well known in England, that probably answer the purpose full as well as these, it is almost unnecessary to describe them.

These directions are here given for the benefit of those who raise tobacco for their own use, and chuse to make their snuff without applying to the manufacturer for it.

Among the articles of commerce tobacco holds a distinguished rank, and affords no inconsiderable addition to the revenues of the state. Before the present unhappy dissensions broke out between Great-Britain and America, about ninety-six thousand hogsheads were annually imported from Maryland and Virginia. Thirteen thousand five hundred of which were consumed at home; the duty of which, at the rate of 26*l.* 1*s.* per hogshead, amounted to 351,765*l.* The remaining eighty-two thousand, five hundred hogsheads were exported to various parts of Europe, and their value received in specie, or the produce of those countries.

To the uses already enumerated, I shall add another to which tobacco might be applied, that I believe has never been made known to Europeans, and which will render it much more estimable than any of the foregoing. It has been found by the Americans to answer the purpose of tanning leather, as well, if not better, than bark; and was not the latter so plentiful in their country would be generally used by them instead of it. I have been witness to many experiments wherein it has proved successful, especially on the thinner sorts of hides, and can safely pronounce it to be, in countries where bark is scarce, a valuable substitute for that article.



CHAPTER II.

A Description of the Plant and its Flowers.

There are several species of the Tobacco Plant, and these are chiefly distinguishable by their flowers, and the junction of the leaves to the stalks; but as this is not intended for a Botanical Treatise, I shall confine my description to those sorts which are cultivated in the colonies for exportation: these are two; the Oronokoe and the sweet-scented; which differ from each other in no respect but in the shape of their leaves, those of the former being longer and narrower than the latter. Both are tall, herbaceous plants, of an erect growth and noble foliage, rising each with a strong stem (in their native soil) to the height of from six to nine feet. The stalk is upwards of an inch diameter near the root, and surrounded with a kind of hairy or velvet, clammy substance, of a yellowish green colour. The leaves, which are rather of a deeper green, grow to the stalk alternately, at the distance of about two or three inches from each other. They are oblong, of a spear-shaped-oval, and simple; without pedicles embracing the stalk by an auriculated base. The largest are about twenty inches long, decreasing in size as they ascend, till they are not longer than ten inches, and nearly half as broad. The face of the leaves is much undulated, or corrugated, not unlike those of spinnage when full ripe. In their first state, at the time they do not exceed five or six inches, the leaves are usually of a full green, and rather smooth, but as they increase in size they acquire a yellowish cast and become rougher.

The stem and branches are terminated by large bunches of flowers, collected into clusters of a delicate red, the edges, when quite blown, inclining to a pale purple. The flowers continue in succession until the end of summer, when they make room for the seed. These are of a brown colour, kidney-shaped, and very small, each capsule generally containing about a thousand, and the whole produce of a single plant is estimated at three hundred and fifty thousand. The seeds are usually ripe in the month of September, and when perfectly dry may be rubbed out and preserved in bags till the following season.

The Oronokoe, or, as it is termed by the seedsmen, the long Virginia, appears

to me to be the sort best suited to bear the rigour of a northern climate, the strength of the plant, as well as the scent and efficacy of the leaves being greater than the other. The sweet-scented flourishes most in a sandy soil and warm countries, where it greatly exceeds the former in the celerity of its growth; and although, as I have before observed, it differs from the Oronokoe only in the shape of its leaves, being shorter and rounder, yet it is unlike in its strength and flavour, being, agreeable to its name, much milder and pleasanter.

As a species of garden plants, the Nicotiana is an ornamental annual for the pleasure ground, as it attains a majestic stature, and being adorned with fine luxuriant leaves, and large clusters of pleasing flowers which terminate all the shoots, during the autumn it exhibits an elegant appearance.

For a more compleat idea of the Oronokoe plant and its flowers, the reader is referred to the plate prefixed to this Work. But it must be observed, that the number of leaves represented on the stalk is not designed to serve as a rule for topping the tobacco, as directed in the fourth chapter. Only a few of them are annexed to the stalk, that the representation of the leaf might be the more compleat.



CHAPTER III.

Of the Soil and Situation most proper for raising the Plant.

The best ground for raising the plant is a warm, kindly, rich soil, that is not subject to be over-run with weeds; for from these it must be totally cleared. The soil in which it grows in its native climate, Virginia, is inclining to sandy, consequently warm and light; the nearer therefore the nature of the land in which it is planted in England approaches to that, the greater probability there is of its flourishing here. Other kinds of soils may probably be brought to suit it, by a mixture with some attenuating species of manure, but a knowledge of this must be the result of repeated trials. It must however be remembered, that whatever manure is added to the soil must be thoroughly incorporated with it.

The situation most preferable for a plantation is the southern declivity of a hill, rather gradual than abrupt; or a spot that is sheltered by a wall, a bank, or any other means, from the blighting north winds which so frequently blow, during the spring months, in this island: but at the same time it is necessary to observe, that the plants must enjoy a free current of air; for if that be obstructed they will not prosper.

CHAPTER IV.

Of its Culture, with a Description of the Worm that annoys it.

As the tobacco plant, being an annual, is only to be raised from seed, I would particularly recommend to such as mean to cultivate it, the greatest care in purchasing these, lest by sowing such as is not good, they lose, with their expected crop, the season. The different sorts of the seeds not being distinguishable, like the plants, from each other, nor the goodness to be ascertained by their appearance, the purchaser, till he has raised a supply from his own cultivation, must depend on the veracity of the seedsman; who may be also sometimes deceived, having nothing to rely on but the honour of the person who raised it: prudence therefore requires that he should apply to a person of character in that profession.

In describing the manner in which the plant ought to be raised from the seed, as well as in the succeeding process, I shall confine myself (without regarding the methods usually pursued in Virginia or Maryland, which, from the difference of the climate, can be of little service here) to the practice of the northern colonies of America; as these are more parallel in their latitude to England. And there being even a difference between the climate of these and that of Great-Britain, to the disadvantage of the latter (I mean with regard to the cultivation of the tobacco plant) I shall minutely attend to this variation, and in the directions I give endeavour to guard against the inconveniences of it. These instructions shall likewise be given in plain and familiar terms, and not in a language that can be only understood by the Botanist or Gardener, that this Treatise may be of general use.

About the middle of April, or rather sooner in a forward spring, (for the season must be attended to, as this plant will not bear forcing) sow the seed in beds first prepared for the purpose, composed of such soil as before described, mixed with some warm, rich manure. In a cold spring, regular hot beds would be most eligible for this purpose; and indeed the Gardeners of this country are persuaded, that the *Nicotania* cannot be raised in any other way; but as these are seldom to be found in the garden of the farmer, and as I am convinced that if the weather is not remarkably severe, they might be

reared without doors, for his benefit I shall give the following instructions relative to their treatment.

Having sown the seed in the manner directed, on the least apprehension of a frost after the plants appear, it will be necessary to spread mats over the beds, a little elevated from the ground by poles laid across, that they may not be crushed. These however must be removed in the morning soon after the sun appears, that they may receive as much benefit as possible from its warmth, and from the air. In this manner proceed till the leaves have attained the size of about two inches in length, and one in breadth, which they will do in about a month after they are sown, or near the middle of May, when the frosts usually are at an end. One invariable rule for their being able to bear removal is, when the fourth leaf is sprouted, and the fifth just appears.

Then take the opportunity of the first rains, or gentle showers, to transplant them into such a soil and situation as before described. This must be done in the following manner: The land must be plowed, or dug up with spades, and made as mellow and light as possible. Where the plants are to be placed, raise with the hoe small hillocks at the distance of two feet, or a little more, from each other, taking care that no hard sods or lumps are in it, and then just indent the middle of each, without drilling holes as for some other plants.

When your ground is thus prepared, dig in a gentle manner from their native bed, such plants as are arrived at the state before-mentioned, and drop, as you pass, one on every hillock. Insert a plant gently into each center, pressing the soil around it with your fingers, and taking the greatest care, during the operation, that you do not break off any of the leaves, which are at this time exquisitely tender. If the weather proves dry, after they are thus transplanted, they must be watered with soft water, in the same manner as is usually done to coleworts or plants of a similar kind.

Notwithstanding you now appear to have a sufficient quantity of plants for the space you intend to cultivate, yet it is necessary that you continue to attend to your bed of seedlings, that you may have enough to supply any deficiencies which, through accident, might arise. From this time great care must be taken to keep the ground soft, and free from weeds, by often stirring with your hoe the mould round the roots; and to prune off the dead leaves that sometimes are found near the bottom of the stalk.

The difference of this climate from that in which I have been accustomed to

observe the progress of this plant, will not permit me to direct with certainty the time which is most proper to take off the top of it, to prevent it from running to seed. This knowledge can only be perfectly acquired by experience. When it has risen to upwards of two feet, it commonly begins to put forth the branches on which the flowers and seeds are produced; but as this expansion, if suffered to take place, would drain the nutriment from the leaves, which are the most valuable part, and thereby lessen their size and efficacy, it becomes needful at this stage to nip off the extremity of the stalk, to prevent its growing higher. In some other climates the top is commonly cut off when the plant has fifteen leaves. If the tobacco is intended to be a little stronger than usual, this is done when it has only thirteen; and sometimes, when it is chosen to be remarkably powerful, eleven or twelve leaves only are allowed to expand. On the contrary, if the planter is desirous to have his crop very mild, he suffers it to put forth eighteen or twenty: but in this calculation the three or four lower leaves next the ground, which do not grow so large and fine as the others, are not to be reckoned.

This is denominated "topping the tobacco," and is much better done by the finger and thumb, than with any instrument, because the former close, at the same time, the pores of the plant; whereas, when it is done with the latter, the juices are in some degree exhausted. And though this might appear unimportant, yet every method that tends to give vigour to the leaves should be carefully pursued.

For the same reasons care must be taken to nip off the sprouts that will be continually springing up at the junction of the leaves with the stalks. "This is termed succouring or suckering the tobacco," and ought to be repeated as often as occasion requires.

The last, and not the least concern in the cultivation of this plant, is the destruction of the worm that nature has given it for an enemy, and which, like many other reptiles, preys on its benefactor. To destroy these, which are the only insects that molest this plant, or at least to keep them under, for it is impossible totally to exterminate them, every leaf must be carefully searched. As soon as a wound is discovered, and it will not be long before it is perceptible, care must be taken to destroy the cause of it, who will be found near it, and from his unsubstantial texture, which I shall describe at the conclusion of this chapter, be easily crushed: but the best method is to pluck it away by the horn, and then crush it. Without a constant attention to these

noxious insects, a whole field of plants may be soon destroyed; and even if any of them are left in the leaves, during the cure, they prove equally destructive. This is termed "worming the tobacco;" and as these worms are found most predominant the latter end of July, and the beginning of August, they must be particularly attended to at that season.

As I have just observed, that it is impossible, without experience, to point out the due time for topping the plant, so it is equally as impossible to ascertain the time it will take to ripen in this climate. That can only be known by future observations; for as it is at present only cultivated in England as an ornament for the garden, no attention has, I believe, been hitherto bestowed on the preservation of its leaves. The apparent signs, however, of its maturity are these: The leaves, as they approach a state of ripeness, become more corrugated or rough; and when fully ripe, appear mottled with yellowish spots on the raised parts, whilst the cavities retain their usual green colour. They are, at this time, also thicker than they have before been, and are covered with a kind of downy velvet, in the same manner as the stalks are described to be, in the preceding chapter.

If heavy rains happen at this critical period, they will wash this excrescent substance off, and thereby damage the plants. In this case, if the frosty nights are not begun, it is proper to let them stand a few days longer; when, if the weather be more moderate, they will recover this substance again. But if a frost unexpectedly happens during the night, they must be carefully examined in the morning before the sun has any influence on them; and those which are found to be covered with frosty particles, whether thoroughly ripe or not, must be cut up: for though they may not all appear to be arrived at a state of maturity, yet they cannot be far from it, and will differ but little in goodness from those that are perfectly so.

Having now given every instruction that occurs to my memory relative to the culture of the plant, I shall proceed, as proposed, to describe the worm that infests it. It is of the horned species, and appears to be peculiar to this plant; so that in many parts of America it is distinguished by the name of the Tobacco-Worm. In what manner it is first produced, or how propagated, is uncertain; but doubtless by the same inexplicable means that nature makes use of to continue the existence of many other classes of this minute part of the creation. The first time it is discernible, is when the plants have gained about half their height: it then appears to be nearly as large as a gnat; soon

after which it lengthens into a worm, and by degrees increases in magnitude to the size of a man's finger. In shape it is regular from its head to its tail, without any diminution at either extremity; indented or ribbed round at equal distances, nearly a quarter of an inch from each other, and having at every one of these divisions, a pair of feet or claws, by which it fastens itself to the plant. Its mouth, like that of the caterpillar, is placed under the fore-part of the head. On the top of the head, between the eyes, grows a horn about half an inch in length, and greatly resembling a thorn; the extreme part of which is in colour brown, of a firm texture, and sharp pointed. By this horn, as before observed, it is usually plucked from the leaf. It is easily crushed, being only, to appearance, a composition of green juice inclosed by a membranous covering, without the internal parts of an animated being. The colour of its skin is in general green, interspersed with spots of a yellowish white; and the whole covered with a short hair scarcely to be discerned. To preserve the planter from the ravages of an insect so destructive to his plantation, as he will thereby be able to distinguish it with a greater degree of precision, I have given in the frontispiece as exact a representation of it as can be done from memory.



CHAPTER V.

Of the Manner in which it is usually cured.

When the plant is found, agreeable to the preceding directions, to be fit for gathering, on the first morning that promises a fair day, before the sun is risen, take an axe or a long knife, and holding the stalk near the top with one hand, sever it from its root with the other, as low as possible. Having done this, lay it gently on the ground, so as not to break off the leaves, and there let it remain exposed to the rays of the sun throughout the day, or until the leaves are entirely wilted, as it is termed in America; that is, till they become limber, and will bend any way without breaking.

But if, on the contrary, the rain should continue without any intervals, and the plants appear to be full ripe, they must be cut down and housed immediately. This must be done, however, with great care, that the leaves, which are in this state very brittle, may not be broken. Being placed under proper shelter, either in a barn or a covered hovel, where they cannot be affected by the rain or too much air, they must be thinly scattered on the floor, and if the sun does not appear for several days, so that they can be laid out again, they must remain to wilt in that manner; which is not indeed so desirable as in the sun, nor will the tobacco prove quite so good.

When the leaves have acquired the flexibility before described, the plants must be laid in heaps, or rather in one heap, if the quantity be not too great, and in about twenty-four hours they will be found to sweat. But during this time, when they have lain for a little while, and begin to ferment, it is necessary to turn them; bringing those which are in the middle to the surface, and placing those which were at the surface, in the middle, that by this means the whole quantity may be equally fermented. The longer they lie in this situation the darker coloured the tobacco becomes. This is termed "sweating the tobacco."

After they have lain in this manner for three or four days, for in a longer time they may heat so much as to grow mouldy, the plants may be fastened together in pairs, with cords or wooden pegs, near the bottom of the stalk, and hung across a pole, with the leaves suspended, in the same covered place, a

proper interval being left between each pair. In about a month the leaves will be thoroughly dried, and of a proper temperature to be taken down. This state may be ascertained by their appearing of the same colour as those imported from America, with which few are unacquainted. But this can be done at no other season than during wet weather; for the tobacco being a plant greatly abounding with salts, it is always affected if there is the least humidity in the atmosphere, even though it be hung in a dry place. If this rule be not observed, but they are removed in dry weather, the external parts of the leaves will crumble into dust, and a considerable waste will attend its removal.

As soon as the plants are taken down, they must once more be laid in a heap, and pressed with heavy logs of wood for about a week. This climate, however, may require a longer time. While they remain in this state, it will be necessary to introduce your hand frequently into the heap, to discover whether the heat be not too intense; for in large quantities this will sometimes be the case, and considerable damage will accrue from it.

When they are found to heat too much, that is, when the heat exceeds a moderate glowing warmth, part of the weight by which they are compressed must be taken away; and the cause being removed, the effect will cease. This is called "the second or last sweating," and when compleated, which it generally will be in about the time just mentioned, the leaves may be stripped from the stalks for use. Many omit this last operation, but I think it takes away any remaining harshness, and renders the tobacco more mellow. The strength of the stalk also is diffused by it through the leaves, and the whole mass becomes equally meliorated.

When the leaves are stripped from the stalks, they are to be tied up in bunches or hands, and kept in a cellar, or any other place that is damp; though if not handled in dry weather, but only during a rainy season, it is of little consequence in what part of the house or barn they are laid up. At this period the tobacco is thoroughly cured, and equally as proper for manufacturing as that imported from the colonies.

Having gone through the whole process, if it has been properly managed, that raw fiery taste so frequently found in the common sale tobacco will be totally eradicated, and though it retains all its strength, will be soft and pleasing in its flavour. Those who are curious in their tobacco in the northern colonies of

America sprinkle it, when made up into the roles for keeping, described in the first chapter, with small common white wines or cyder, instead of salt water, which gives it an inexpressibly fine flavour.



APPENDIX.

That estrangement which at present subsists between Great-Britain and the American colonies, renders a supply of the article of which I treat, and which is become so essentially necessary to the happiness of a great number of his Majesty's subjects, very uncertain; it depends, in a great measure, on the prizes, freighted with this commodity, that happen to be taken, and on the quantities which are imported from other commercial states at a high price. It is therefore to be hoped that the legislature will take into consideration so important a concern, and pursue such measures as will conduce to remove this uncertainty. A remedy is at hand; that of cultivating it in these kingdoms; but this appears to be prohibited by the following ancient acts of parliament:

In an act of Charles the Second, entitled, "An act for prohibiting the planting, setting, or sowing tobacco in England and Ireland," the prohibition is thus expressed: "Your Majesty's loyal and obedient subjects, the Lords and Commons in this present parliament assembled, considering of how great concern and importance it is, that the colonies and plantations of this kingdom in America, be defended, protected, maintained, and kept up, and that all due and possible encouragement be given unto them; and that not only in regard great and considerable dominions and countries have been thereby gained, and added to the imperial crown of this realm, but for that the strength and welfare of this kingdom, do very much depend upon them, in regard of the employment of a very considerable part of its shipping and seamen, and of the vent of very great quantities of its native commodities and manufactures, as also of its supply with several considerable commodities which it was wont formerly to have only from foreigners, and at far dearer rates: And forasmuch as tobacco is one of the main products of several of those plantations, and upon which their welfare and subsistence, and the navigation of this kingdom, and vent of its commodities thither, do much depend; and in regard it is found by experience, That by the planting of tobacco in these parts your Majesty is deprived of a considerable part of your revenue arising by customs upon imported tobacco; Do most humbly pray, That it may be enacted by your Majesty: And it is hereby enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, and the Lords and Commons in this present

parliament assembled, and by authority of the same, That no person or persons whatsoever, shall or do from and after the first day of January, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty, set, plant, improve to grow, make or cure any tobacco either in seed, plant, or otherwise, in or upon any ground, earth, field, or place within the kingdom of England, dominion of Wales, islands of Guernsey or Jersey, or town of Berwick upon Tweed, or in the kingdom of Ireland, under the penalty of the forfeiture of all such tobacco, or the value thereof, or of the sum of forty shillings for every rod or pole of ground so planted, set or sown as aforesaid, and so proportionably for a greater or lesser quantity of ground; one moiety thereof to his Majesty, his heirs and successors; and the other moiety to him or them that shall sue for the same, to be recovered by bill, plaint, or information in any court of record, wherein no essoign, protection or wager in law shall be allowed.

"Provided always and it is hereby enacted, That this act, nor any thing therein contained, shall extend to the hindering of the planting of tobacco in any physic garden of either university, or in any other private garden for physic or chyrurgery, only so as the quantity so planted exceed not half of one pole in any one place or garden."

In this act all sheriffs, justices of the peace, or other officers, upon information or complaint made unto them, are empowered to cause to be burnt, plucked up, consumed or utterly destroyed all such tobacco, set, sown, planted or growing within their jurisdiction. But it not proving forcible enough to prevent the cultivation of tobacco; in the fifteenth year of the reign of the said King, a clause was inserted in an act, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of trade," to the following purport, clause 18.

"And forasmuch as planting and making tobacco within the kingdom of England doth continue and encrease, to the apparent loss of his said Majesty in his customs, the discouragement of the English plantations in the parts beyond the seas, and prejudice of this kingdom in general, notwithstanding an act of parliament made in the twelfth year of his said Majesty's reign for prevention thereof, entituled, An act for prohibiting the planting, setting or sowing of tobacco in England and Ireland; and forasmuch as it is found by experience, that the reason why the said planting and making of tobacco doth continue, is, That the penalties prescribed and appointed by that law are so little, as to have neither power or effect over the transgressors thereof; For remedy therefore of so great an evil, Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid,

That all and every the person or persons whatsoever, that do, or shall at any time hereafter set, plant or sow any tobacco in seed, plant or otherwise, in or upon any ground, field, earth, or place within the kingdom of England, &c. shall, over and above the penalty of the said act for that purpose ordained, for every such offence forfeit and pay the sum of ten pounds for every rod or pole of ground that he or they shall so plant, set, or sow with tobacco, and so proportionably for a greater or lesser quantity of ground; one third part thereof to the King, one other third part to the poor of such respective parish or parishes wherein such tobacco shall be so planted, and the other third thereof to him or them that shall sue for the same." "Physic gardens excepted as before."

This penalty also proving insufficient to put a stop to the cultivation, it was found necessary in the twenty-second year of the reign of the said Charles the Second to enforce it by the following act, entitled, "An act to prevent the planting of tobacco in England, and regulating the plantation trade."

"Whereas the sowing, setting, planting and curing of tobacco, within divers parts of the kingdom of England, doth continue and increase, to the apparent loss of his Majesty's customs, and the discouragement of his Majesty's plantations in America, and great prejudice of the trade and navigation of this realm, and the vent of its commodities thither, notwithstanding an act of parliament made in the twelfth year of his Majesty's reign that now is, for the prevention thereof, entitled, 'An act for prohibiting the planting, setting, or sowing of tobacco in England and Ireland;' And also one other act of this present parliament, made in the fifteenth year of his said Majesty's reign, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of trade.'

"And forasmuch as the remedies and provisions by these laws are found not large enough to obviate and prevent the planting thereof, Be it therefore enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the first day of May, which shall be in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Six Hundred and Seventy-one, all justices of the peace, within their several limits and jurisdictions, shall and do, a month before every general quarter-sessions to be holden for their respective counties, issue forth their warrants to all high-constables, petty-constables, and tything-men, within their several limits, thereby requiring the said high-constables, petty-constables and tything-men,

and every of them, to make diligent search and inquisition, what tobacco is then sown, set, planted, growing, curing, cured or made within their several and respective limits and jurisdictions, and by whom; and to make a true and lawful presentment in writing upon oath, at the next general quarter-sessions to be holden for such county, of the names of all such persons as have sown, set, planted, cured or made any tobacco; and what the full quantity of land is, or was sown, set or planted therewith, and who are the immediate tenant or tenants, or present occupiers of the land so sown, set or planted, who are or shall be deemed planters thereof, to all intents and purposes.

"Which said presentment upon oath, shall be received and filed by the clerk of the said county in open sessions; and after such receipt and filing, shall be a sufficient conviction in law to all intents and purposes, of all such persons as shall be so presented for the sowing, setting, planting, improving to grow, making or curing tobacco, either in seed, plant, leaf, or otherwise, contrary to the said recited act or either of them; unless such person or persons so presented shall, according to the usual forms, traverse such presentment.

"And it is hereby further enacted, That all constables, tything-men, bailiffs, and other public officers, shall and do within their respective jurisdictions, from time to time, as often as occasion shall require, within fourteen days after warrant from two or more of the justices of the peace within such county, town, city or place, to them, calling to their assistance such person or persons as they and every of them shall find convenient and necessary, pluck up, burn, consume, tear to pieces, and utterly destroy, all tobacco seed, plant, leaf, planted, sowed, or growing in any field, earth or ground."

The other clauses relative to the cultivation of tobacco in this act, are, "A penalty on the officers of five shillings for every rod, perch, or pole of ground so set, planted, or sowed with tobacco, that shall be suffered or permitted to grow or be consumed in seed, plant or leaf, within their jurisdiction, by the space of fourteen days after the receipt of such warrant or warrants." "A penalty for refusing to assist the officers, and also for resisting them." And after making the same provision as before for the physic gardens, and reciting many other articles for regulating the plantation trade, the act thus concludes: "Provided always, and be it enacted. That this act shall continue in force for nine years, and from thence to the next session of parliament, and no longer."

By an act made the fifth of George the First, these acts are confirmed and

rendered perpetual.

The repeated inforcement of them seems to prove, that large quantities of tobacco were raised at that period in these dominions, and that even the penalty of ten pounds per rod was not sufficient to deter persons from the cultivation of it.

As an application has just been made to parliament for an act to permit the growth of it in Ireland, the observations made in this Treatise will not, I flatter myself, be thought unworthy the notice of the legislature, that so advantageous a branch of agriculture may not be confined to one division of Great-Britain, but that every part of these united kingdoms may be allowed to share in the emoluments arising from it.

The advantages which will proceed from the permission, are too many to be enumerated in so short a Work. Whether a sufficient quantity can be raised in these kingdoms to supply the demand there was for it before the American trade became interrupted, (as a revival of the demand will be the certain consequence of a reduction of the price) time alone can discover: but if enough be only raised for home consumption, this will be no inconsiderable saving to the nation.

When the very great profits, arising to the planter from every acre of tobacco, come to be known, (they will appear chimerical if I inform my readers to what they amount) I doubt not but that tobacco will be considered as the most valuable branch of agriculture which can be attended to. An emulation, heightened by the prospect of gain, being once excited in the breasts of the landholders of these kingdoms, large tracks of land that now lie unimproved, will be cultivated, and, after some years, enough may probably be raised to answer the usual demands for exportation.

By this means the revenue, which has been so greatly diminished by the unhappy divisions between Great-Britain and the colonies, will be in a great measure restored. The duties to be collected for this purpose may either be laid on the plants before they are gathered, or during the time of cure, as on the article of malt; the collection of which would be attended with very little additional expence, and probably, at no distant period, amount to as much as was heretofore received on imported tobacco. When the happy æra arrives that will unite once more Great-Britain to the American colonies (an event, I fear, more to be wished than expected) and a constant uninterrupted supply of

this necessary exotic provided, the wonted restraint might be renewed, as far as is consistent with the situation of both countries at that time.

By pursuing the rules laid down in the preceding chapters, which I have endeavoured to give in as explicit terms as possible, country gentlemen and landholders in general will be enabled to raise much better tobacco than that which is usually imported from Maryland or Virginia: for notwithstanding there are not wanting prohibitory laws in those countries to prevent the planters from sending to market any but the principal leaves, yet as most other commodities are subject to abuse or adulteration, they frequently, to increase their profit, suffer the sprouts to grow, and mix the smaller leaves of these with the others, which renders them much inferior in goodness.

The crops that I have reason to believe may be raised in England, will greatly exceed in flavour and efficacy any that is imported from the southern colonies: for though northern climates require far more care and exactness to cultivate and bring tobacco to a proper state of maturity than warmer latitudes, yet this tardiness of growth tends to impregnate the plants with a greater quantity of salts, and consequently of that aromatic flavour for which it is prized, than is to be found in the produce of hotter climes, where it is brought to a state of perfection, from the seed, in half the time required in colder regions.

A pound of tobacco raised in New-England or Nova-Scotia is supposed to contain as much real strength as two pounds of Virginia; and I doubt not but that near double the quantity of salts might be extracted from it by a chymical process.

Good tobacco, the produce of the northern colonies, is powerful, aromatic, and has a most pleasing flavour. The fumes of it are invigorating to the head, and leave not that nausea on the stomach that the common sort does. As much time would be required to smoke one pipe of it, as three of that which is generally used: before so great a quantity of the vapour could be drawn from it as to prove hurtful, the smoker, from intoxication, would be unable to continue his amusement. I can truly say, after a residence of several years in England, that I never met with any tobacco, though I frequently smoke, that in strength or the delicacy of its flavour, is to be compared with that which I have been accustomed to in New-England.

Many authors have given accounts of the bad effects proceeding from an

immoderate use of tobacco. Borrhi mentions a person, who through excess of smoking, had dried his brain to so great a degree, that after his death there was nothing found in his skull but a small black lump confirming of mere membranes. From the use of good tobacco this could not have happened; for, as I have just observed, the fumes which only prove noxious from an immoderate continuance, could not have been repeated so often as to produce such dreadful effects.

To the instructions already given I shall add, that I would advise the planter, in his first trials, not to be too avaricious, but to top his plants before they have gained their utmost height; leaving only about the middle quantity of leaves directed before, to give it a tolerable degree of strength. For though this, if excessive, might be abated during the cure, by an increase of sweating, or be remedied the next season by more leaves being suffered to grow, it can never be added; and without a certain degree, the tobacco will always be tasteless and of little value. On the contrary, though it be ever so much weakened by sweating, and thereby rendered mild, yet it will never lose that aromatic flavour which accompanied that strength, and which greatly adds to its value.

In the directions before given for raising the plants from the seed, I have omitted to mention the size of the beds on which a specified number of them may be produced. I apprehend that a square yard of land, for which a very small quantity of seed is sufficient, they being so diminutive, will produce about five hundred plants, and allow proper space for their nurture till they are fit to transplant.

I shall also just add, though the example can only be followed in particular parts of these kingdoms, that the Americans usually chuse for the place where they intend to make the seedling-bed, part of a copse, or a spot of ground covered with wood, of which they burn down such a portion as they think necessary. Having done this, they rake up the subjacent mould, and mixing it with the ashes thus produced, sow therein the seed, without adding any other manure, or taking any other steps. Where this method cannot be pursued (though it is much the best, as it destroys at the same time the weeds) wood ashes, which are most proper manure for this purpose, may be strewed over the mould in which the seed is designed to be sown.

The Author presumes that the preceding instructions will be found sufficient

for any person inclined to enter upon the cultivation of tobacco; yet if any nobleman or gentleman wishes to consult him upon the subject, he will give his attendance on receiving a line at his Publisher's.

FINIS.

FOOTNOTES:

[\[1\]](#) Vide Travels into the interior parts of North-America, chap. 13, page 382.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A TREATISE ON
THE CULTURE OF THE TOBACCO PLANT WITH THE MANNER IN
WHICH IT IS USUALLY CURED ***

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