(SUCKLINGS) Roaring Boyes. 1641.

Much meate doth gluttony produce. He needes no napkin for his handes
And makes a man a swine —— His fingers for to wype
But hees a temperate man indeed Hee hath his kitchin in a box
That with a leafe can dine — His Roast meate in a pipe

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY GALLANTS CAROUSING

THE EARLY ENGLISH TOBACCO TRADE

BY

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WITH EIGHT PLATES

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PREFATORY NOTE

No attempt has been made in the present volume to deal with the manufacturing side of the Tobacco industry. This subject, together with the history of the Pipe-Makers' Companies, is well worth further investigation, but it can be treated more satisfactorily when regarded as a unity from its beginning down to the present time. The present volume is only concerned with the beginnings of the English Tobacco trade, and therefore does not extend beyond the first few years of the eighteenth century.

I wish to express my indebtedness to the Colston Research Society for their material assistance. My thanks are due to Dr. Charles Singer, who has very kindly allowed me to use some of his unpublished material, and has been good enough to provide the illustrations for this volume. I am indebted to Mr. R. H. Tawney for his generous help in the form of suggestions and criticisms. I wish also to thank Mr. Thornton Wills and Mr. Falk, of the Imperial Tobacco Company, for their readiness in lending me books which are now out of print. Lastly, I desire to thank Miss Sybil Egerton for her invaluable help in reading manuscripts, and my colleague, Professor O. V. Darbishire, for his advice and help on botanical questions connected with the present work.

C. M. MacInnes.

TOBACCO

CHAPTER I

The Discovery and Spread of Tobacco

In the following pages an attempt is made to sketch briefly the discovery and introduction of tobacco into Europe and to trace the development of the English tobacco trade in the seventeenth century. Coming to Europe shortly after the discovery of the New World, tobacco rapidly won a position of great esteem on this side of the Atlantic, particularly among the medical fraternity. By the end of the sixteenth century, though still spoken of as a panacea by many people, and though still used in one way or another by medical men in their practice, many people had already learnt to prize it as a social amenity.

In the meantime, European sailors had carried it to Asia, while others had introduced it into Africa, where it soon spread from the coast into the remote interior. When it is remembered that this rapid

spread took place in the face of the violent opposition of both lay and ecclesiastical powers alike in Europe and Asia, the spread of tobacco becomes more remarkable.

It is impossible to state definitely when tobacco first reached this country, but this probably took place somewhere about the time of the accession of Queen Elizabeth. Certainly by the seventies of the sixteenth century its use by the English people had become sufficiently widespread to attract the attention of several writers, and during the eighties and nineties it became almost a universal custom among courtiers and men about town.

In England, as elsewhere, tobacco, after its first rapid spread, encountered violent opposition, but, as in other countries, the opposition in England, although led by the King himself, proved completely unavailing. During the reigns of James I. and Charles I. the Government was mainly concerned to regulate the tobacco trade with a view to its ultimate extension, but even at this early time it is clear the Government was beginning to realize the substantial advantages to itself associated with the spread of the new custom of smoking. Cromwell and Charles II. regulated the trade, but solely with a view to putting down abuses in manufacture and frauds connected with imports, exports, and internal distribution. Long before the end of the century, as far as the

Government was concerned, the moral objections to tobacco had totally disappeared.

Partly as a result of the exorbitant duties placed upon tobacco by James I., and partly because of the ease with which it could be grown, many Englishmen turned their attention to the cultivation of tobacco in this country.

This new crop was denounced and prohibited by both James I. and Charles I., mainly because of their moral objection to the habit of taking tobacco, but also in the interests of the Virginia trade which was annually becoming more important. Cromwell continued the policy of the first two Stuarts, though his efforts in this direction were to a large extent nullified by his fear that a successful suppression of home-grown tobacco might drive many faithful supporters into the arms of the Royalists. Though under Charles II. the policy of suppression was vigorously pursued, tobacco continued to be planted and reaped in England down to the time of William III.

It was not until Virginia developed the tobacco industry that that province became prosperous. In spite of their hostility to it both James I. and Charles I. could not blind their eyes to the importance of this commodity in the colonial trade. After the time of Charles I. everything possible was done to encourage the colonial planter, because everyone realized that

this trade alone did more to encourage English shipping than all the others put together.

In the interests of the colonies the import of Spanish tobacco was practically suppressed, and the English planters, as has been seen, were subjected to a policy of extermination which was followed consistently for over 70 years. At long last the prohibition proved successful. In the middle of the century the Dutch, the Scotch and other interlopers were driven from the trade with the Colonies, in order that, among other things, England alone should reap the full advantage of the universal popularity of Virginian tobacco. By the end of the century, this commodity was so important in English trade that it was said to be the mainstay of English shipping. Trade with Sweden is discouraged because the Swedes do not buy our tobacco, while that with Russia is stimulated because of the inordinate amount of tobacco smoked by the Muscovites. By 1700, then, tobacco was an all-important commodity in our colonial trade; it gave employment to thousands in this country, who were engaged in its preparation both for the home consumption and for foreign trade.

There has been a good deal of discussion about the origin of the word "tobacco," but it is now fairly well established that it is derived from the word "tabaco," which was the name given by the natives

of the West Indies to the Y-shaped tube, or pipe, through which they inhaled the smoke. By a natural transition, the Spanish explorers, unacquainted with the language, applied the term first to the rudimentary Cuban cigars, and then to the herb itself. The original forms of the word "tabaco" or "tabacco" were retained in England till the eighteenth century when they were finally superseded by the word "tobacco." In Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, Act I., Scene 4, the word occurs thus: "He does take this same filthy *tabacco* the finest and cleanliest." (1598.)

In passing, it may be of interest to note that the Island of Tobago in the West Indies did not, as has sometimes been suggested, give its name to the herb, but rather was so called by Columbus because its shape resembled that of the instrument through which the natives inhaled the fumes. Among the Indians the herb had various names, such as "kohiba," "petun," "uppowoc," etc.

Though it is now generally acknowledged that tobacco came originally from America, two other theories of its habitat have been advanced, which must be taken into consideration. There is a view, supported by Meyen in his *Outline of the Geography of Plants*,[1] in the first place, that tobacco was introduced into China about the year 1300 A.D. Another

[1] Quoted in Cope's *Tobacco-plant*, February, 1871, p. 125.

variant of the theory of the Oriental origin of tobacco is that the Persians acquired the knowledge of its use from the Egyptians. There are, in fact, unanswerable arguments which disprove the whole Oriental theory. In the first place, none of the great mediæval travellers who visited the East, and who have left behind them minute descriptions of the manners and customs of the peoples they observed, anywhere mention tobacco. In view of the great interest which its use aroused among a variety of European writers, after its introduction into Europe in the sixteenth century, it is impossible that such a custom, if widespread in the East, should have escaped the notice of a man like Marco Polo.

A further proof of the fact that tobacco was unknown to the peoples of the Orient before the discovery of the New World is afforded by the absence of any mention of it among the " Forbidden Enjoyments of Intoxication " in the writings of all but the most modern commentators on the law of Mahomet.[1]

Again, there is no mention of the use of tobacco in Turkish, Persian or Tartar literature;[2] also the great hostility which it aroused among those in authority in Asia in the seventeenth century is in itself an unanswerable proof of its recent introduction, and lastly, the fact that the name " tobacco " in

[1] Quoted in Cope's *Tobacco-plant*, April 1873. [2] *Ibid.*

some form or other is universally employed by all the nations among whom the herb is in use would appear to be a proof of its American origin.

The second theory of the non-American origin of tobacco is, that both it and its uses were well known in Africa, long before the discovery of the New World. This idea has recently found a warm, though by no means convincing advocate in Professor Wiener,[1] of Harvard University. In his book *Africa, and the Discovery of America*, this writer takes up the perfectly tenable position that the negro has probably influenced the customs and beliefs of the aborigines of America much more than has usually been acknowledged. But, while this is reasonable enough, it cannot be said that he is on equally firm ground when he asserts that the negro slaves brought tobacco with them to America. In face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Professor Wiener states that the early explorers of the New World nowhere found tobacco in use.

His method of proof is simple, consisting of attempts to discredit undoubted descriptions of tobacco by early writers, and where this cannot be done, to ignore or misrepresent them. If the negroes of the West Coast of Africa were the inveterate smokers which he states they were, it is almost certain that one or more of the European explorers

[1] *Africa, and the Discovery of America*, by Prof. Wiener.

in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries would have observed this strange custom and left some description of it, as was done in the case of America.

It may be concluded, then, that the original habitat of tobacco was America. Of approximately seventy varieties of *Nicotiana* known to exist, fourteen are still to be found in North America, either in a natural state, or in aboriginal cultivation, and nine of these are used by various tribes for ceremonial and religious purposes, although trade tobacco is used by these same tribes for smoking. The only two varieties of *Nicotiana* which are of undoubted extra-American origin are the Australasian *Nicotiana suavolens* and *Nicotiana fragrans*, neither of which was used for smoking, chewing or snuffing before the advent of the European.[1]

The two most important species of *Nicotiana* are *Nicotiana rustica* and *Nicotiana tabacum*. The former of these at first monopolized the attention of Europeans and was the variety which was indigenous to Virginia. As will be shown later, however, it was superseded in that province, early in the seventeenth century by a variety of *Nicotiana tabacum*. The first Secretary of the Colony of Virginia, William Strachey, Gentleman, in his *Historie of Travaile into*

[1] *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXIII, No. 4, Oct.–Dec., 1921: "Aboriginal Tobacco," by W. A. Setchell.

Virginia Britannica,[1] which describes that Province between 1610 and 1612, writes as follows: "There is here great store of tabacco, which the salvages call 'Apooke'; howbeit, yt is not of the best kynd yt is but poore and weake and of a byting tast, yt growes not fully a yard above ground, bearing a little yellowe flower, like to hennebane, the leaves are short and thick, somewhat round at the upper end, whereas, the best tabacco of Trinidado and the Oronoque is large, sharpe, and growing two or three yardes from the ground, bearing a flower of the breadth of our bell-flowers in England. The salvages here dry the leaves of this 'apooke' over the fier and sometymes in the sun, and crumble yt into poulder, stocks, leves and all, taking the same in pipes of earth which very ingeniously they can make."

Nicotiana rustica[2] seems to have been planted and smoked by almost all the North-American Indians east of the River Mississippi, and by many to the westward as well, and it apparently originated in Mexico. It is this species of *Nicotiana* which certain writers contend was known in Europe before the discovery of the New World, but, as has already been shown, there is no satisfactory evidence to prove this. It reached the Old World, however, early in the

[1] *Historie of Travaile into Virginia Britannia*, printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1849, pp. 121–2.

[2] *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXIII, No. 4, Oct.–Dec., 1921: "Aboriginal Tobacco," by W. A. Setchell.

sixteenth century, and it is still planted by the peasants of Central Europe, and furnished the Syrian " tombac." *Nicotiana tabacum* supplies the bulk of the tobacco in the trade of all civilized nations. It is a native of the West Indies, of the greater part of Mexico, Central America, the United States of Colombia, the Guianas, Venezuela and Brazil. Among the aborigines of the latter country it was known as " petun," and it probably originated in the interior of Brazil, or on the eastern slopes of the Andes, though it is not now found in a wild state in any of the countries in which it is cultivated. North of Mexico it was unknown before it was introduced there by the Europeans.

Nicotiana tabacum[1] possesses a pink flower, and is the only species belonging to its section of the genus. It has all the earmarks of an old and widely cultivated plant.

Nicotiana rustica has a yellow flower, and is a much hardier species than the *Nicotiana tabacum.* In pre-linnean herbals it was designated as the lesser or female tobacco, and the *Nicotiana tabacum* as the male.

Nicotiana tabacum attains a height of six feet and upwards, while *Nicotiana rustica* is a much smaller plant.

Since none of the other varieties of *Nicotiana* are

[1] *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXII.

widely used, they have no immediate interest except for the botanist, and thus do not fall within the scope of the present work.

The custom of inhaling smoke in some form or other is of great antiquity, and the use of narcotics is also almost universal in the human race. Herodotus describes how the Scythians used hemp-seed for smoking.[1]

Pliny and Dioscorides and other ancient writers also refer to the custom of inhaling various fumes for medicinal purposes. In England and mediæval Europe this method of treatment, particularly for bronchitis, was frequently used, coltsfoot being the herb most generally employed. It is clear, however, that the custom of taking smoke in this way was purely medicinal, in view of the surprise which the habit of smoking for pleasure aroused among the first European observers. In fact, the ancient and mediæval use of smoke was purely inhalation, nothing resembling a pipe being employed.

Columbus gives what is probably the first reference of a European to tobacco in his *Journal* for Monday, October 15th, 1492. Again, on Tuesday, November 6th, there is another mention of what is obviously tobacco and the method of taking it used by the natives.[2] Then there follows a passage expanded in

[1] Herodotus, Bk. IV, ch. 75.

[2] *Quarterly Review*, No. 436, July, 1913: "The Early History of Tobacco," by Charles Singer, p. 126.

the *Historia* of Las Casas (probably compiled between 1527 and 1561).

An Italian contemporary of Las Casas, Benzoni of Milan,[1] gives a description of the tobacco plant, the methods of curing, and the manufacture of cigars. The first clear description of tobacco, however, comes from the pen of Gonzalo Hernandez de Oviedo y Valdes.

These writers, of course, refer to *Nicotiana tabacum.*

The French explorer, Jacques Cartier, in his second voyage up the St. Lawrence (1535) describes the use of tobacco among the aborigines of that area, and it is evident that he is alluding to *Nicotiana rustica.*[2] "There groweth also a certain kind of herb whereof in sommer they make great provision, all the yeer round making great account of it, and onely men use of it, and first they cause it to be dried in the sun, then weare it about their neckes, wrapt in a little beasts skine made like a little bagge, with a hollow piece of stone or wood like a pipe: then, when they please, they make pouder of it and they then put it into one of the ends of the said coronet or pipe, and laying a coal of fier upon it at the other end suck so long, that they fill their bodies full of smoke, till that it comes out of their mouth and nostrils, even as out of the tunnel of a chimney. They say that this

[1] Benzoni, *Travels in America:* Hakluyt Society, No. 21, p. 80
[2] Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Vol. VII, p. 240.

doth keep them warm and in health, they never goe without some of it about them. We ourselves tried the same smoke and having put it into our mouths it seemed almost as hot as pepper." If the tobacco which Cartier here describes resembles the modern Canadian shag smoked by the " habitant " then this statement that it tasted as hot as pepper, is very temperate !

Another Frenchman, Marc Lescarbot, writing at the beginning of the seventeenth century, gives a further description of the use of tobacco among the Indians of the St. Lawrence valley.[1]

During the time between Cartier and Lescarbot, Fernando Alarcon, 1540, and also Drake, 40 years later, exploring the west coast of North America, observed that the Indians of that region were also habituated to the use of tobacco. In fact, wherever the early explorers of the New World appeared, whether in North or South America, on the coast or in the interior, they almost invariably found that the aborigines were acquainted with its use. In some places it was confined to the medicine-man or priest, who employed it for purposes of divination, just as the Greek prophetess inhaled mephitic vapours in order to put herself into a state fit to receive the divine message. Indeed, it seems that primarily, in every case, tobacco was used by the Indians as an

[1] Marc Lescarbot, *Nova Francia*, Book II, ch. XIV, p. 215.

incense, connected with their religious observances. Later, when its employment became more general, it was still an indispensable feature of all ceremonial occasions, councils of war, feasts, and the like, as well as being used as a medicine.

A letter written for Panhekoe, Sachem of the Mohegan Indians (1703), affords an excellent illustration of the importance of tobacco and the practice of smoking among the Indians, and also its antiquity. Coming, as it does, from the chief of a vanishing people, this letter has also a pathetic and special interest:[1] "My loving Neighbour, Mr. Nicholas Hallam. I am inform'd you are bound for Old England. Lett me request you to make me and my condition known to the Great Q. Anne and to her noble Council: first of our hereditary right to the soyll and royalltys of our dominion and territorys before the English came into the country, insomuch that all due loyalty and obedience by our people is not conferr'd on us by the English, but by the Gods, who gave us a token as an earnest and pledge of our happy reign here, and also (as one old seer construed) a more ample reign in the other region. Wherefore the Gods had sent to that royale family one of their own tobacco pipes, which strange wonderment was taken upon the beach at Seabrook or thereabouts,

[1] *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Report on the MSS. of Lord Middleton preserved at Wollaston Hall, Notts, p. 195.

it being like ivory with two stemms and the boll in the middle. This strange pipe, not made by man, is kept choicer than gold from generation to generation. It animates all the royall society with a full persuasion that the said token is sufficient evidence that they shall sitt amongst the gods in the Long Huntinghouse and there smoake tobacco, as the highest point of honour and dignity, and where there will be great feasting of fatt bear, deer and moose, all joy and myrth to wellcome their entertainment, etc. (July 14th, 1703, Panhekoe (drawing of crested bird) his marck." "The true interpretation of Panhekoe's grievance and narration, by me, John Stanton Interpreter Generall."

While smoking was general throughout the New World,[1] tobacco in the form of snuff was known only to certain tribes in South America, and it was chewed by the people of Central America.

Among Europeans tobacco was at first chiefly prized because of its supposed remarkable medicinal properties; almost every writer and explorer who mentions it, alludes to its curative powers in many diseases, and by the end of the sixteenth century it was regarded by many as a panacea, able to cure the most opposed forms of human ailments. It was used in surgery for wounds, ulcers and abscesses,[2] and was

[1] *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXIII, No. 24, 1921: "Aboriginal Tobacco."

[2] *Tabacologia*, by Johannes Neander, of Bremen, 1626.

valued mainly for its antiseptic and counter-irritant action; it was taken as an anæsthetic, a narcotic and an emetic. When it is remembered that a number of the prevalent diseases of the time were largely the result of personal uncleanliness and insanitary conditions, and further, when the rudimentary state of medical science is taken into consideration, it is quite understandable that tobacco should have proved far more important as a disinfecting and cleansing agent than it does at the present time. Looked at in this way, the claims which the champions of tobacco put forward were founded on fact. Lobelius says of it: "It satisfieth hunger, it helps ulcers and wounds, and it is good for diseases of the chest and wasting of the lungs. In fact, there is no new thing that our age has obtained from America that is more efficacious as a remedy."[1]

Monardes[2] is equally convinced of the virtues of tobacco, as the following extracts will show:

"Tobacco can be bound together and used to heal wounds; it reduces filthy wounds and sores to a perfect health. It heals griefs of the head and cures colds in the head; 'the leaves muste be put hot to itt upon the grieffe.'"

"Tobacco is useful also for evil of the joints, cold

[1] *Quarterly Review, ut sup.*, p. 139.

[2] *Joyful Newes out of the New Founde World (etc.)*, by Dr. Monardes, of Seville, translated by John Frampton, printed by William Norton, 1577 (Brit. Mus., C. 55, d. 17).

JEAN NICOT OF NÎMES (1530-1600)

French Ambassador to Portugal. From a picture by Golzius, engraved by Pye

Nicot has given his name to the tobacco plant *Nicotiana*, and to the alkaloid *Nicotine*

swellings, toothache, chilblains, venomous wounds, especially 'against the Hearbe called of the Crossebowe shooter' (*i.e.*, called after the crossbow shooter)."

"It heals venomous carbuncles, bites of venomous beasts, wounds newly hurt, strokes and prickes and old sores."

"In Seville they run always to tobacco as a remedy."

Tobacco, in fact, suffered from the exaggerated statements of its advocates. Before the end of the sixteenth century it was obvious that many who celebrated the medicinal qualities of the herb used it, in reality, because they liked it, and the excuse made by those in perfect health, that they took it as a preventive against disease, was far from convincing. As will be shown later, King James I. and the other opponents of tobacco were quick to make use of this fact that its friends were sailing under false colours.

The rapidity with which the knowledge and use of tobacco spread throughout the Old World is one of the most striking features of its whole history, but naturally, it is only possible here to sketch the merest outline. In a little over one hundred years after it was first observed by Europeans it had firmly established itself in Europe, Asia and Africa.

No precise date can be given for its introduction into Europe. Probably the very sailors who were

with Columbus, when the latter first observed it in the possession of the Indians, brought it home with them. It is certain that by the beginning of the third decade of the sixteenth century it was already established in Portugal, for Diego Columbus,[1] in his will, dated May 2nd, 1523, made a legacy to a tobacco merchant in Lisbon.

As has already been shown, Cartier was the first Frenchman to give a clear description of tobacco, though probably not the first of his countrymen to observe it. Jean Nicot, French Ambassador to Portugal, is traditionally associated with the introduction of tobacco into France. In 1561 he sent some tobacco seed, as a curiosity, to Catherine de Medici, and this service has been commemorated by the association of his name with the herb ever since. It is abundantly clear, however, that this reputation is not fully deserved, since, several years before, another Frenchman, André Thevet,[2] had brought tobacco home with him from Brazil, and planted it in the neighbourhood of his native town of Angoulême, calling it "the herb of Angoulême." Thevet's book *Singularités de la France Antarctique* was translated into English anonymously in 1568

[1] *Bureau of American Ethnology*, Bulletin XXX, Part 2: Handbook of American Indians.

[2] *Natural History of Tobacco*, Harleian Miscellany, 1808 ed. Vol. I: "The Natural History of Coffee, Chocolate and Tobacco," printed in London, 1682, Sec. 4. *Cosmographie Universelle*, by André Thevet, 1575, Vol. 2, Livre XXI, ch. 8

and, as it is the first description of tobacco in English to appear in print, part of it is here quoted:[1] "There is another secrete herbe which they name in their language 'Petun,' the which most commonly they beare about them, for that they esteem it marvellous proffitable for many things, this herbe is like to our Buglos. They gather this herbe very charely (*cf.* chary—careful) and dry it within their little cabanes or houses. Their manner to use it is this, they wrappe a quantitie of this herbe being dry in a leafe of a Palme tree, which is very great, and so they make rolles of the length of a candle, and then they fire the one end and receive the smoke thereof by their nose and by their mouthe. They say it is very holesome to clense and consume the superfluous humours of the brain. Moreover, being taken after this sort, it kepeth the parties from hunger and thirst for a time, therefore they use it ordinarily. Also, when they have any secret talke or counsel among themselves, they draw this smoke and then they speake. The which they do customably the one after the other in the warre, whereas it is very needful. The women use it by no means. If they take too much of this parfume, it will make them light in the head as the smell or taste of strong wine The Christians that do now inhabite there, are become

[1] *The New Founde Worlde or Antarctike*, by André Thevet, ch. XXXII, p. 49.

very desirous of this parfume, although that the first use thereof is not without danger, before that one is accustomed thereto, for this smoke causeth sweates and weaknesse even to fall into 'syncope' which I have tried in my selfe."

The above extract refers to the custom as observed among the Indians of South America, while in another part of the same work Thevet describes the use of tobacco among the Indians of Canada.[1]

Tobacco was introduced into Germany by Spanish soldiers in the reign of Charles V.,[2] but it did not spread very rapidly at first, as in the sixties of the sixteenth century it was stated that its use was little known among the German people. During the remainder of the century, however, its popularity steadily increased,[3] and by 1620 large areas were planted with tobacco in Alsace, and towards the end of the century prizes were offered in different places to encourage its cultivation.

Cardinal Prosper de Santa Croce[4] is said to have brought tobacco with him from Portugal to Italy in 1561; but, undoubtedly, humbler people had

[1] *The New Founde Worlde or Antarctike*, by André Thevet, ch. LXXVII, p. 126. It has been suggested that Nicot introduced *Nicotiana rustica* from Florida, and Thevet *Nicotiana tabacum* from Brazil (Laufer, *Introduction of Tobacco into Europe*, pp. 51–52); but definite proof of this is not forthcoming.

[2] *Handbuch der Tabakskunde, ut sup.*

[3] It is suggested that this was owing to the example set by English merchants, sailors, etc. (Laufer, *op. cit.*, p. 57).

[4] Penn, *The Sovrane Herbe.*

long before introduced it into the Peninsula.[1] It was taken to Sweden, Denmark and Russia by English sailors during the same period. By the end of the sixteenth century, therefore, all the countries of Europe were acquainted with the use of tobacco, but, as will be shown later, it had to face a great deal of opposition before it finally established itself.

Meanwhile, European sailors had introduced it into Asia, and here the task of tracing the course of its spread is exceedingly difficult. It seems clear that the Portuguese brought tobacco to India, and as a matter of fact, the first clear reference to it, in connection with India, centres round the visit of the Portuguese missionaries to the Court of the Great Mogul. By the end of the first quarter of the sixteenth century the trade in tobacco was already becoming important in India, and homeward bound East Indiamen were carrying it as part of their cargoes.[2]

In 1681 Fryer,[3] the Oriental traveller, published his *East India and Persia*, an account of his travels, in the form of letters. He states that at Surat, tobacco always formed part of the entertainment offered by the people of that place to Christians

[1] According to Laufer, this was *Nicotiana rustica*, while Niccolo Tornabuori brought in *Nicotiana tabacum* a little later (Laufer, *op. cit.*, p. 56).

[2] *Cal. of State Papers:* Colonial, E. Indies, 1614–34. W. Foster, *The English Factories in India*, 1618–38.

[3] Fryer, *East India and Persia*, 1672–81, Vol. 1, Letter III, ch. 1, p. 234.

invited to dine. He also describes how a number of Thugs, who had been captured and condemned, "smoaked tobacco" on their way to execution.[1] Further on in the same work, speaking of the food of the people, he says that "boiled rice, etc., are the common food of the people; which, with a pipe of tobacco, contents them."[2]

His contemporary, the French writer Tavernier, mentions the great quantity of tobacco that was grown at Burhanpur, and adds: "In certain years I have known the people to neglect saving it, because they had too much, and they allowed half the crop to decay."[3]

Tobacco appeared in Persia early in the seventeenth century, and it reached Arabia and Turkey about the same time. It spread so rapidly in Persia, that, as has been shown, a certain group of writers hold that the custom of smoking was of great antiquity in that country. When Fryer visited Persia between 1672 and 1681 he found that its use was almost universal.[4]

An English traveller, Baskerville,[5] of the time of

[1] Fryer, *East India and Persia*, 1672-81, Vol. 1, p. 245.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 119.
[3] J. B. Tavernier, *Observations sur le commerce des Indes Orientales*, 1679, p. 134.
[4] Fryer, *Travels into Persia*, Letter V, ch. IV, p. 218. *Ibid.*, ch. V, p. 248. *Ibid.*, p. 259. Fryer, *The Present State of Persia*, Vol. III, ch. XI, p. 34. *Ibid.*, ch. XIV, p. 127. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
[5] *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Reports: Duke of Portland MSS., Vol. XXIV, XIII, p. 302: Thos. Baskerville's Journeys, temp. part. II, p. 36.

Charles II., in his *Journeys*, describes the prevalence of smoking among the Turks : " The Turks drink for the most part sherbet . . . this is the liquor for the true believing Musselmen, but most of the Court, city and country *chelibs*—(rich men)—have found more relish in good wine, and nothing is more familiar among them than wine and tobacco, though both are forbidden."

It was introduced into China and Japan by the Portuguese in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[1]

Tobacco reached Africa during the sixteenth century, and was probably used to barter for slaves. The earliest description by an English writer of its use among the negroes comes from the pen of a certain Richard Jobson Gent (1623) in his book *The Golden Trade.*[2] " Onelly one principall thing, they cannot misse, and that is their tobacco pipes whereof there is few or none of them, be they men or women, doth walke or go without, they do make onlly the bowle of earth, with a necke of the same about two inches long, very neatly, and artificially colouring or glasing the earth, and for the most part will hold halfe an ounce of Tabacco ; they put into the necke a long kane, many times a yard of length, and in

[1] *Handbuch der Tabakskunde, ut sup.*

[2] *The Golden Trade*, p. 122. (*N.B.*—This part was written either in 1620 or 1621, and occurs in the section entitled " We travel up the river," *i.e.*, Gambia.)

that manner draw their smoake, whereof they are great takers, and cannot of all other things live without it."

This remarkably rapid spread of tobacco is the more surprising in view of the great hostility which it aroused among authorities, both lay and ecclesiastical, in almost every country of the civilized world. Our own King James I. was one of the earliest to take up the cudgels seriously against the new custom of smoking, but for the moment we are concerned only with the history of tobacco outside England.

Pope Urban VIII. in 1624 issued a bull of excommunication against all those who should take snuff in church.[1]

About the same time the French King imposed a tax on tobacco with a view to moderating its use, which, in the form of snuff, was now becoming general in France, for tobacco was being grown in Brittany, Gascony and Flanders.[2] In 1635, as these taxes had not produced the desired result, Louis XIII. restricted the sale of tobacco to apothecaries, and then only on the order of a physician.

Nearly twenty years later, 1653, the problem of combating this new evil was seriously taken up by the Swiss authorities, and later, in 1661, the Council of Berne placed the prohibition against tobacco

[1] Penn, *The Sovrane Herbe.*

[2] Dr. O. Comes, *Histoire, Géographie, Statistique de Tabac* (Naples, 1900), p. 73.

among the Ten Commandments, a policy which was renewed in 1675 when a Court called "La Chambre de Tabac" was instituted.

In Germany, a decree, issued by the Town Council of Bautzen, 1651, indicates clearly the disgust with which the spread of tobacco was still regarded by many.

The Greek Church in 1634 followed the example of the Church of Rome and forbade her adherents to take tobacco in any shape or form.[1] This action was supported by the Russian State, and Tsar Michael decreed that for the first breach smokers should be whipped, and for the second executed, while snuff-takers were to have their noses amputated.

Those in authority in the Orient, both lay and ecclesiastical, were as determined as Western potentates to suppress the new custom, since in Turkey, Persia and India, the death penalty was inflicted on tobacco takers.[2]

Japanese penalties were less severe, but equally unavailing.[3]

In a letter written in 1614 from Osaka by William Eaton to Richard Wickam at Yeddo[4] it is stated that "at Yeddo at least 150 persons have been appre-

[1] Penn, *The Sovrane Herbe.*
[2] *Natural History of Tobacco :* Harleian-Miscellany, *ut sup.*
[3] *Handbuch der Tabakskunde*, pp. 1–6.
[4] *Cal. of State Papers :* Colonial, E. Indies, 1614, March.

hended for buying and selling tobacco, contrary to the Emperor's command, and are in jeopardy of their lives" ; also he states that great stores of tobacco have been burnt.

All these prohibitions, both in Europe and in Asia, failed to achieve their object, and by the end of the seventeenth century, as was the case with the Papal Bull, they had been formally repealed, or were ignored. Tobacco had won its place in the trade and estimation of all civilized countries, and had already become almost a necessity of life in many parts of the world. It had spread not only throughout the civilized world, but had preceded civilized man into darkest Africa and the remote islands of the Far East.

CHAPTER II

The Introduction of Tobacco into England

Tobacco did not arrive in England until some years after its first appearance on the Continent. Though there are various traditions of its introduction it is impossible to give any precise date, for doubtless, as in the case of other countries, it was first observed and introduced by English sailors during the second half of the sixteenth century. There is a tradition that one of the Marian martyrs smoked on the way to execution, but it is impossible to verify this. Some small quantities of tobacco probably reached England during the reign of Queen Mary as a result of the close connection which at that time existed between England and Spain.

With the reign of Queen Elizabeth we are on surer ground, for there are several unmistakable accounts of tobacco given by different English explorers. The earliest English description at first hand appears in the story of Hawkins' second voyage in 1565.[1] "The Floridians when they travel have a kinde of

[1] Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Vol. X, p. 57.

herb dried, who with a cane and an earthen cup in the end, with a fire and the dried herbe put together, do suck through the cane the smoke thereof, which smoke satisfieth their hunger, and therewith they live four or five days without meat or drinke, and this also the Frenchmen used for this purpose, yet do they hold opinion withal that it causeth water and fleame to void from their stomakes." Three years later, as has already been shown, Thevet's work was published and translated anonymously and, as the above-quoted description was not published till many years after, Thevet's translated work must have the credit of being the first description of tobacco to be printed in English.

From then on, the knowledge and use of tobacco spread rapidly in England. Lobelius,[1] afterwards botanist to James I., states that attempts were being made to plant tobacco in England in 1571, and two years later, the custom of smoking was beginning to attract notice.[2] "In these daies the taking in of the smoke of the Indian herbe, called 'Tabaco' by an instrument formed like a little ladell, whereby it passeth from the mouth into the hed and stomach, is gretlie taken up and used in England against Rewmes and some other diseases ingendred in the longes and inward partes and not without effect."

[1] Lobelius, *Plantarum seu stirpium Historia* (Antwerp), 1570.
[2] Harrison's *Chronologie*, 1573 ed., 1877.

Drake and his men, in 1579, were presented with tobacco by the natives on the West Coast of North America, under the belief that they were gods.[1]

Hakluyt wrote in 1582: "The seed of Tabacco hath bene brought hither out of the West Indies, it groweth heere, and with the herbe many have been eased of the rheumes, etc."[2]

During the next decade and a half tobacco became a comparatively common commodity, for travellers and explorers of the last years of the sixteenth century frequently refer to it, but give no description either of its properties or manner of use, for its novelty had by then disappeared.

In the last voyage of Drake and Hawkins there is given an account of the tobacco trade between the Europeans and the natives of the West Indies[3]: "In it (Dominica) groweth great store of tobacco, where most of the Englishmen and Frenchmen barter knives, hatchets, saws and suchlike yron tooles in truck of tobacco," and before the end of the century the demand for tobacco had grown to such an extent that English sailors[4] were beginning to regard West Indian Islands as valuable or otherwise according to the amount of tobacco they produced.

No account of the introduction of tobacco into

[1] Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Vol. IX, p. 119.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 242: "Remembrances for Masters," etc.
[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. X, p. 228.
[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. X, p. 478.

England would be complete without the famous passage describing its growth in Virginia, from which colony it was ultimately to be so largely imported. It is entitled[1] "A brief and true report of the new found land of Virginia, of the commodies there found, and to be raised, as well merchantable as others: Written by Thomas Heriot, servant to Sir Walter Raleigh, a member of the colony, and there employed in discovering a full twelvemonth. 1587. . . . There is an herbe which is sowed apart by itselfe, and is called by the inhabitants Uppowoc: in the West Indies it hath divers names, according to the several places and countrys where it groweth and is used, the Spanyards generally call it Tabacco. The leaves thereof being dried and brought into powder, they use to take the fume or smoke thereof, by sucking it thorow pipes made of clay into their stomake and head: from whence it purgeth superfluous fleame and other grosse humours, and openeth all the pores and passages of the body: by which means the use thereof not onely preserveth the body from obstructions, but also (if any be so that they have not been of too long continuance) in short time breake them: whereby their bodies are notably preserved in health, and know not many grievious diseases, wherewithall we in England are often times afflicted.

"This Uppowoc is of so precious estimation

[1] Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Vol. VIII, p. 363.

amongst them, that they thinke their gods are marvellously delighted therewith ; whereupon sometime they make hallowed fires, and cast some of the powder therein for a sacrifice and being in a storm upon the waters, to pacifie their gods, they cast some up into the aire, and into the water : so a weare for fish being newly set up, they cast some therein and into the aire ; also after an escape of danger, they cast some into the aire likewise : but all done with strange gestures, stamping, sometimes dancing, clapping of hands, holding up of hands, and staring up into the heavens, uttering therewithall, and chattering strange words and noises."

It is scarcely necessary to observe, in passing, that the tradition which regards Sir Walter Raleigh as the father of English smoking has little foundation in fact, but he probably does deserve the credit of having introduced the practice to the Court and to polite society. The close association of his name with tobacco undoubtedly springs from this, in addition to the fact that he was not only an inveterate smoker himself, but also the founder of Virginia. The number of places in which he is said to have smoked his first pipe can scarcely be equalled even by Queen Elizabeth's four-posters or Charles II.'s oaks. In the *Counterblaste*, published in 1604, King James I. states, though wrongly, that the discovery of Virginia and the introduction of tobacco into this

country were contemporaneous. "With the report of a great discovery and a conquest some two or three savage men were brought in, together with this savage custom, but the pity is the poor wild barbarous men died, but the vile barbarous custom is still alive, yea in fresh vigour, so as it seems a miracle to me how a custom springing from so vile a ground and brought in by a father so generally hated (obviously Raleigh, whom *he* hated) should be welcomed upon so slender a warrant."

Largely because it was made fashionable by Raleigh and other distinguished courtiers, tobacco-smoking (or drinking as it was called at this period) became the mark of the gallant and the man about town, and before 1600 it had won its way into English literature. Spenser refers to it in *The Faerie Queene.*[1]

Bishop Joseph Hall makes at least two references to tobacco in his *Satires*, published in 1597.

The practice of smoking had, in fact, become so common in England, that it attracted the notice of foreign visitors to this country. Thus, in his Latin *Itinerarium, or Journey to England,*[2] 1598, Paul Hentzner says: "At bull-baiting, bear-whipping, and everywhere else the English are constantly smoking the Nicotian weed, which in America is called 'Tobaca.'" Hentzner was a German, and

[1] Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, Bk. III, Canto 5, Stanza XXXII.
[2] Cope's *Tobacco-plant*, Vol. 2, p. 303.

rom Thevet's *Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique, autrement nommée Amé ique,* Paris, 1558. The drawings are by Jean Cousin (1500-1590)

1. An American Indian scene, with the earliest representation of smoking. In this picture tobacco smoke is being used medicinally. Other native drugs are also exhibited. Behind hangs the *hamaca*—our hammock—or tobacco bed.

2. An enlarged detail of the smoking Indian with a cigar in his mouth

[face p

the French Ambassador, two years later, noticed the same habit, for he describes the peers when they deliberated on their verdict at the trial of Essex and Southampton as smoking copiously.

At first no duty was imposed upon tobacco brought into England, and as late as 1590 there is no mention of it among the enumerated commodities of the rate-book of that year.[1] Shortly after this, however, the importation of tobacco became so considerable that an attempt was made to collect duty on it. This was done by virtue of the first statute of Elizabeth (1558), which had granted to the Queen a subsidy on all imported goods. This policy aroused great hostility, particularly in the west counties. By 1597 a spasmodic trade in tobacco had already sprung up in Cornwall, and those engaged in it stubbornly refused to pay the Queen's penny on every pound imported. In November of that year two ships, one Flemish and one French, came into Penryn and sold £2,000 worth of tobacco to the inhabitants. Both the masters of the ships, and the purchasers of their cargoes refused to recognize the right of the Customs official to examine the cargo or to impose a duty. Many of the local Government officials appear to have been in complete sympathy with the importers, and they all unanimously asserted that there was no Customs duty on tobacco. The unfortunate collector,

[1] Rate Book, 1590.

Randall Ingarson, in attempting to restrain a certain Thomas Spaye from landing tobacco in defiance of his order was roughly handled by Spaye's companions: [1] "I offring to make stay of that he wth his company did forcibly draw their (weapons) and did sweare if I did not depart p^{re}sentlie, they would kill me, and he did thrust his naked rapier to my brest about a dozen times." In the list attached to Ingarson's letter to his superior at Plymouth, of those who had forcibly landed tobacco, appear the names of several who bore the rank of "gentleman" and could buy in considerable quantities. The fact that landed gentlemen and men of substance were implicated in this one affair seems to be conclusive evidence not only that the use of tobacco had become general but also that the trade in it had become lucrative. Ingarson suggested that an example should be made of the most culpable in this particular episode and that for the future some charge on tobacco should be published, so that would-be law-breakers should not have the same excuse again.

Judging by the prices paid at this time it is certain that the trade in tobacco was very uncertain and irregular. England remained at war with Spain down to 1604, and Spain controlled the only tobacco-producing countries in the world. The tobacco which reached England, therefore, between 1588 and 1604 could only come through illicit channels; it

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, 84 (1597), No. 20.

could be smuggled in from the Spanish West Indies, or it could come as part of the booty seized by the English from the Spaniard either in the West Indies themselves or on the high seas.

In 1602, however, we have the first official figures of importation, 16,128 pounds of tobacco entering the Port of London in that year.[1]

The demand was increasing every year, and the merchant could therefore make any charges he thought fit.[2] The following figures give some idea of the fluctuations in the price of tobacco:

1597.	1 lb. Tobacco . . .	35s.
1598.	½ lb. ,, . . .	6s.
1598.	10 oz. ,, . . .	40s.
1598.	1 lb. ,, . . .	£4 10s.
1598.	1 lb. leafe tobacco . .	12s.
1598.	1 oz. ball tobacco . .	5s.
1600.	2 lb. tobacco . . .	32s.
1603.	1 lb. ,, . . .	33s.
1606.	1 lb. ,, . . .	40s.
1608.	½ lb. ,, . . .	15s.
1613.	2 lb. ,, . . .	4s.
1619.	3 lb. ,, . . .	£3
1619.	9½ lb. ,, . . .	£7 12s.

A passage in a letter of Mr. Alderman Watts to Sir

[1] A. Rive, *The Consumption of Tobacco since* 1600: *Economic Journal Supplement*, Jan., 1926, p. 57.

[2] *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, MSS. of His Grace the Duke of Rutland, at Belvoir Castle, pp. 412, 416–420, 427, 444, 457, 460, 493.

Robert Cecil, dated December 12th, 1600, probably gives the key to these violent fluctuations: "According to your request, I have sent the greatest part of my store of tobaca by the bearer, wishing that the same may be to your good liking. But this tobaca I have had this six months, which was such as my son brought home, but since that time I have had none. At this present there is none that is good to be had for money. Wishing you to make store thereof, for I do not know where to have the like, I have sent you of two sorts."[1] The demand was increasing, the trade not yet organized, the supply uncertain, and consequently uniformity in prices was impossible.

Before the accession of King James I. the rapid spread of tobacco and its great popularity had already produced the inevitable reaction. During the last decade of the sixteenth century tobacco was the cause of a pamphlet war which continued to rage with unabated violence on both sides during the first few decades of the seventeenth century. Ben Jonson in *Every Man in his Humour*, Act III, Scene 2, acted on 25th November, 1546, in the speeches of Bobadilla and Cob clearly states the case for and against tobacco.[2]

[1] *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Calendar of the MSS. of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, K.G., at Hatfield House, Hertford, Part VII, p. 416–7.

[2] For fuller account of this dispute see Arber, *English Reprints*, pp. 90–120. Again, in a letter to Sir George Carew, written in

Of this considerable tobacco literature it will be sufficient for the present purpose to notice only four pamphlets, two on either side, since they afford the best possible illustration of the popular attitude to tobacco and of the infinite variety of properties, both good and bad, which its friends and enemies held that it possessed. The first of these, in which the King himself joined with his *Counterblaste*,[1] was written on the side of the opponents of tobacco in the year 1602, by a London medical practitioner, Bushell, in a pamphlet entitled "A Work for Chimney Sweepers, or a Warning to Tabaconists, describing the pernicious use of Tabaco, no lesse pleasant then profitable for all sorts to reade."[2] Its motto was "Fumus patriæ igne alieno luculentior," which the writer translates as "Better be chokt with English hemp than poisoned with Indian tabacco," published at London, 1602,

1600, Sir Robert Cecil says: "I have sent you tabacco as good as I could procure any." (*Carew MSS.*, Vol. 6, p. 65.) Also Sir John Stanhope, writing to Sir George Carew, in a letter dated January 26th, 1601, says: "I send you now no Tabacco, because Mr. Secretary (Cecil) Sir Walter, and your other friends, as they say, have stored you of late, neither have I any proportion of it (that) is good, but only am rich in Alderman's (*sic*) Watses promises of plenty, wherewith you shall be acquainted, God willing." (*Calendar Carew MSS.*, 1601–3.)

[1] King James I., *A Counterblaste to Tabacco.*

[2] Bodleian 4° W. 2 Med. Sir William Vaughan declared in his *Naturall Artificall Directions for Health, etc.*, that "bare Tabacco well dried and taken in a silver pipe, fasting, in the morning, cured a wide variety of ailments." But it is significant that in the fourth edition of this work, published in 1613, he altered his mind and wrote against smoking. Arber's *English Reprints*, p. 94.

with the direction that it was to be sold at " the great North dore of Powles."

Two years later King James produced his work, which added very little to the argument.

On the other side it is only necessary to mention two writers. The first of these, in 1602, published a whimsical pamphlet entitled " A Defence of Tabacco, with a friendly answer to the late printed book called ' Worke for Chimney Sweepers,' " bearing the motto " Si iudicas, cognosce, si Rex es, jube."[1] The second pamphlet in defence of tobacco is supposed to be the work of Richard Browne, Clerk of the Green Cloth.[2]

When stripped of a vast amount of verbiage the arguments of the opponents of tobacco may be reduced to three :

1. The virtues of tobacco had been greatly exaggerated by its votaries. 2. Tobacco was, in itself, harmful both to the mind and body of man. 3. The mere fact that it was a recent importation should be in itself a sufficient ground of condemnation.

1. The champions of tobacco held that there was no sort of disease which could not be either cured or helped by the use of this miraculous herb. Both Bushell and King James make great play with this argument. It is impossible, they point out, that one remedy can suit all diseases, for things which are good

[1] Bodleian 4° W. 2 Med. Wood. D. 30.

[2] *MS. Ashmole* 1148 : " A true Report concerning the worthy accompt of Tobacco," etc.

for one malady are naturally bad for another. "Truly, as no one kinde of diet can fit all maladies, no more than one shooe can wel serve all mens feete."[1] Further, while in medicine, everything should be done in order and in due season, this is not so with tobacco. "At all times, all houres, and of all persons this Indian stranger most familiarly is received."[2] King James points out that if a man who is ill happens to recover, and then afterwards remembers that he had taken tobacco, he proclaims it as the cure, but if, on the contrary, he smokes himself to death, then, of course, some other cause must be alleged. James is willing to assume, for argument's sake, that tobacco may be taken for some diseases, but this is a very different thing from taking it for all. "Should it be used by all men, should it be used at all times, yea, should it be used by able, young, strong and healthy men."[3] There is no doubt that in this part of the argument King James and his supporters are more convincing than their opponents, for tobacco was being taken at the time on a very large scale, by all classes. These people tried to excuse their indulgence by saying that tobacco was medicine, just as to-day professed teetotallers can be found who, for a similar reason, keep a few bottles of choice spirits in their cellars.

[1] *A Work for Chimney Sweepers, ut sup.* [3] *Ibid.*
[2] King James I., *A Counterblaste, ut sup.*

2. Tobacco is, in itself, harmful to the health of man, both physical and mental. Under this general heading the opponents of tobacco produced a series of arguments, which may be thus summarized: (*a*) Tobacco possesses to an inordinate extent the two qualities of "heat and drith"; the human body being naturally warm when in a healthy condition, does not require the addition of more heat, which is what happens when tobacco is smoked—"like added to his like addeth to his resemblance and similitude the more."[1] This contention is supported by innumerable quotations from medical writers and others, ancient and modern, and by a variety of arguments based upon the medical theory and practice of the time. This particular point is dismissed thus: "That no small part of our nourishment is drawne away by the untimely use of this Tabacco may manifestly appear by those men who before the use thereof were grosse and foggy, but after they have acquainted themselves with this kinde of practice they become very lean and slender."[2] (*b*) Tobacco, it is held, is a violent purge and therefore should be taken only under strict medical supervision, for otherwise it may be very dangerous. When taken by the healthy it can only be harmful, for it is the nature of medicine never to leave a man as it finds him—"it makes the sick man

[1] *A Work for Chimney Sweepers, ut sup.* [2] *Ibid.*

whole and the whole man sick." (*c*) Tobacco produces sterility and therefore is very dangerous from the social point of view. This opinion seems to have been held by many both in Europe and in Asia during the seventeenth century. (*d*) Tobacco dissipates natural heat and therefore is the occasion of "raw and undigested humours" in the body. (*e*) Tobacco in itself possesses certain venomous and poisonous qualities which should make people beware of it. "I cannot resemble the poysoned force of this Tabacco to anything more aptly than to the venome of a scorpion which never receiveth cure but from the scorpion itselfe . . . in like case the venemous impression left in the stomache by Tabacco receiveth no ease by anything else whatsoever, but by Tabacco onely, eft soone reiterated and resumed." In the opinion of King James the very smell of tobacco was sufficient and convincing proof of its poisonous nature. (*f*) It produces an unnatural melancholy in man, because its fiery heat drives out the natural heat of the body. This melancholy is not the sort which philosophers have praised, but is due to a general debility and inertia.

3. The fact of the novelty of tobacco was sufficient reason for viewing it with suspicion, particularly when its origin was taken into consideration. The author of *A Work for Chimney Sweepers* acknowledges that in taking up the case against tobacco he

will draw upon himself the attacks of " those smoky gallants, who, having long time glutted themselves with the fond fopperies and fashions of our neighbour countries, yet, still desirous of novelty, have not stucke to travell as farre as India to fetch a *dulce venenum*, a gracious Helen, an insatiate Messaline." King James deplores the fact that his people should imitate " the barbarous and beastly manners of the wild, godless and slavish Indians, especially in so vile and stinking a custom." It was incredible that the English, who disdained to imitate the French and " could not endure the Spanish," even though these were the two most civilized nations in the world, should nevertheless debase themselves in this unworthy fashion. More than this, it was a weed invented by the devil himself, the uses of which had been taught by him to his servants and disciples. Did not Monardes and others refer to the fact that Indian priests, who were the devil's servants, used tobacco in order to put themselves into a trance, in which they could communicate with their master?

King James poured scorn on the argument, so often advanced, that tobacco must be a good thing, since so many people had taken it up and appeared to benefit thereby. " How easily the minds of all men with which God hath replenished the earth may be drawn by the foolish affectation of any novelty, I leave it to the discreet judgment of any man that

is reasonable . . . for let any two of the greatest masters of mathematics in any of the two famous Universities but constantly affirm any clear day that they see some strange apparition in the skies, they will, I warrant you, be seconded by the greatest part of the students in that profession, so loath will they be to be thought inferior to their fellows, either in depth of knowledge or in sharpness of sight."[1]

The author of the reply to the *Work for Chimney Sweepers* is far more interesting and convincing than his opponent. He agrees with his opponent's denunciation of those who take tobacco in excess, but this is very different from condemning tobacco itself. One does not condemn a good wine because certain injudicious persons use it in order to get drunk. He feels that tobacco, being a stranger in this country, and apparently of some account in his own land, should, in justice, have someone to plead his cause; for the honour of England he should receive a fair trial, were it only *in forma pauperis*, "or as my neighbours of Petticoat Lane, Scold, Childer and Spendall call it 'in form of papers.'" He is prepared to make no exaggerated claim for tobacco, and he will not defend its immoderate use "As for them that affirme agues to be cured by Tabacco, as you say, if any unlearned so say: in my judgment it is an unsavoury speech, and without

[1] King James I., *A Counterblaste to Tabacco.*

sence of methode, and I leave it to them that so say to defend it as they can . . . too much of anything is good for nothing."[1] He then proceeds to take up each of his opponent's arguments in turn, and points out that the latter has been guilty of contradiction. In one place he states that tobacco dries up the humours of the body and in another that it increases dampness; again, that it increases melancholy and also destroys it, and so on. The whole case against tobacco, in fact, he proves to be based upon contradiction, ignorance and exaggeration. The charge that tobacco must be evil because of its origin is surely unsound, for have not Christians frequently learnt useful and salutary things from the Turks? The violent hostility aroused by its *smell* he deals with thus: "But yet to be briefe in this point, for my part I do assent unto you and am of opinion, as you are, that sweete smels do nourish. . . But yet the principall point in question remains still in doubt, which is this: whether Tobacco stinke or no? . . . True it is, that as all noses are not alike in shape or making, but some are long noses, some short, some thin and sharpe, as they say shrewes be, some great and bottled, as I know whose is; so is there great variety of judgement in their smels, and that which pleaseth one much displeaseth an other."

[1] Bodleian 4° W. 2 Med. Wood. D. 30: *A Defence of Tabacco, ut sup.*

Having pointed out the many exaggerations and misstatements of his opponent, he concludes: "And here I must needs tell you by the way that your speeches be a little too much exceeding, as I might tearme them, too farre transcendent, and your comparisons too unequall, when you inveigh against poore Tabacco." This writer, in fact, takes up the position of the ordinary smoker of to-day: tobacco is neither good nor bad, but simply pleasant, and has a satisfying, soothing effect upon the nerves.

The other writer in defence of tobacco represents the die-hard defender's point of view. He has a very turgid, pedantic style, and his pamphlet is made up for the most part of Latin clichés. He, like the writer of the *Defence of Tabacco*, regards its immoderate use as reprehensible.[1]

Before he took tobacco, he informs us, he was a complete physical wreck, unfit almost to live, but, under its benign influence, his health returned and he was restored to his full strength. He describes in detail how tobacco should be taken: it should be smoked in a pipe for certain ailments, and the time between each pipeful should be carefully regulated; for one class of diseases, it should be chewed, and for another, it should be steeped in white wine overnight, and taken, mixed with nutmeg, ginger, and some

[1] *MS. Ashmole*, 1148: "A true Report concerning the worthy accompt. of tobacco," etc., *ut sup.*

other spice. Its ashes can be used to cure wounds, green ulcers and the like. In his opinion, tobacco should only be used as a medicine, particularly for old people, and should never, under any condition, be taken by the young.

In this dispute the champions of tobacco did not, however, have it all their own way, largely because people, like the last writer quoted, overstated their case. By the beginning of the seventeenth century tobacco-smoking had already become a fairly common social custom in England, a fact which King James loudly lamented. "Is it not great vanity and uncleanness that at the table, a place of respect, of cleanliness, of modesty, men should not be ashamed to sit tossing of tobacco-pipes and puffing of the smoke of tobacco, one at another, making the filthy smoke and stink thereof to exhale athwart the dishes, and infect the air, when very often men who abhor it are at their repast? . . . And is it not a great vanity that a man cannot heartily welcome his friend now, but straight they must be in hand with tobacco, it has become in place of a cure, a point of good-fellowship." In spite of this, those who used tobacco still tried to excuse themselves by saying that it was a medicine, whereas their critics clearly understood that this was not the case. King James states that some of the English gentry spent three or four hundred pounds a year on tobacco alone,

which would be a large sum to-day, but was enormous then. Obviously, they were not all ill, nor were they all afraid of infection. So that the conclusion was plain: they took tobacco because they found pleasure in its use. Indeed, as the century advanced, people forgot all about its medicinal qualities, and Aubrey, the Wiltshire antiquary, says that it sold for its weight in silver, and that when the yeomen went to Malmesbury or Chippenham market "they culled out their biggest shillings to lay in the scale against Tobacco."[1] As will appear later, King James himself did not scruple to "turn an honest penny" by this detestable custom of his people.

In 1614, "Barnebe Rych, gentleman, servant to the King's Most Excellent Maiestie," published his pamphlet, entitled "The Honestie of this Age."[2] He, like his royal master, deplored the growing custom of taking tobacco, and was equally contemptuous on the subject of its medicinal qualities. This pamphlet gives some idea of the popularity of the herb among the people of London, as Rych asserts that: "There is not so base a groome, that commes nto an Alehouse to call for his pot, but he must have his pipe of Tobacco, for it is a commoditie that is now as vendible in every Taverne, Inne and Alehouse, as eyther Wine, Ale or Beare." According

[1] Clarke, Aubrey's *Lives*, Vol. II, p. 181.
[2] *Brit. Mus.*, 721, f. 45, pp. 25 and 26.

to him there were at that time in London some 7,000 " newly erected houses " in which tobacco was sold, and he estimated that on the lowest computation the sales would amount in one year to £319,375, " All spent in smoake." Though it is certain that the retail trade in tobacco in London was very much more developed than in any other city or town in the Kingdom, still, the trade did exist outside the metropolis, and thus we may conclude that the annual sum spent in tobacco was a very considerable item.

At first, when the taking of tobacco was becoming a social custom among the gentry, it was usual to pass the pipe from man to man in the same way that the Indians of North America smoked the calumet, and the habit was also indulged in by women. It was during this period that it inspired both its friends and its critics to eulogize or decry it in prose and verse. In the main, the verse which is associated with tobacco is exceedingly poor, and the following samples may serve as fair illustrations. In 1611 Samuel Rowlands wrote " The Knave of Clubs," which contains the following :[1]

" Who durst dispraise tobacco whilst the
smoke is in my nose,
Or say, but fah ! my pipe doth smell ? I
would I knew but those
Durst offer such indignity to that which I prefer,

[1] Quoted in Fairholt's *Tobacco : its History and Associations.*

rom Thevet's *Cosmographie Universelle*, Paris, 1571. American natives are seen examining the tobacco plant, and lighting and smoking enormous cigars

For all the brood of blackamoors will swear
I do not err,
In taking this same worthy whiff with valiant
cavalier,
But that will make his nostrils smoke, at cups
of wine or beer.
When as my purse can not afford my stomach
flesh or fish,
I sup with smoke, and feed as well and fat as
one can wish.
Come into any company, though not a cross you have,
Yet offer them tobacco, and their liquor you shall have.
They say old hospitalitie keept chimnies smoking still,
Now what your chimnies want of that, our smoking
noses will.
Much victuals serves for gluttony, to fatten
men like swine,
But he's a frugal man indeed that with a leaf
can dine.
And needs no napkins for his hands his
fingers' ends to wipe,
But keeps his kitchen in a box, and roast
meat in a pipe.

Fairholt, from whom the above extract is taken, devotes a chapter to the social customs and literary associations of tobacco, to which the reader is referred, if more information of this sort is desired.

In 1628, the following curious entry occurs in the State Papers (Domestic) of that period: "Examinations of Mr Melvin, concerning certain expressions said to have been used by him at the house of one Payne, a tobacco-seller near the Savoy. Captain Neighbour and he, having been drinking and taking tobacco from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., he said, there were four honest bishops and that among the rest were '*Armenians* and other strange *sexes*.'"

The custom of chewing tobacco seems to have

grown up among sailors, as a class, largely because of the fear of fire on board ship. We find that Admiral Blake forbade tobacco-smoking on all "ships at sea in the service of the commonwealth . . . for the prevention of fire."[1]

Snuff seems to have been little known in England until the seventies or eighties of the seventeenth century, long after it had become general on the Continent, and also in Scotland and Ireland.

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1653.

CHAPTER III

The Home Trade in Tobacco

In his attack upon tobacco King James did not trust solely to the effects produced by his own literary effort. In the *Commissio pro Tabacco*, dated the 17th day of October, 1604, and addressed to the High Treasurer, the Earl of Dorset; James, after reciting the usual objections to the widespread use of tobacco, declared: "We do therefore will and command you . . . to give order to all Customers, Comptrollers, etc., that from and after the sixe and twentith day of October next comynge, they shall demande and take to our use of all Merchantes, as well English as Strangers, and of all others whoe shall bringe in anye Tabacco into this Realme, etc. . . . the somme of six shillings and eighte pence uppon everye Pound waighte thereof, over and above the custome of Twoo Pence uppon the Pounde Waighte usuallye paide heretofore."[1] Also in the New Book of Rates,[2] published in this year (1604), values tobacco at 6s. 8d. per lb., which made the

[1] Rymer's *Foedera*, XVI, 601. [2] *Ibid.*, 1604, Aug. 17.

poundage 4d. Hard-pressed for money in 1608, again without Parliamentary sanction, tobacco was valued at 20s. per lb., which brought the poundage up to 1s.

James, in 1613, again found himself in financial difficulties, and among other things he considered a project " for increase of the King's revenue by his resuming into his own hands the grant of sole importation of tobacco, and regranting it to an agent, who will yield him half the profits, estimated at 15,000 pounds, with reason why he may resume the grant."[1] James decided to adopt this policy,[2] for in March, 1615, having recently raised the imposition on tobacco, he granted Edmund Peshall and Edward White of London, " the late imposition of 2s. per pound on tobacco imported for ten years, paying to the King 3,500l. the first year and 7,000l. per annum afterwards, *with sole power to import tobacco*, and to name persons for selling the same, with a proviso of determination at six months' notice, if found prejudicial to the State."[3] A few months later, the Earl of Montgomery was paid £3,000, a payment which was to be continued for twenty-one

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1613, Dec. ?
[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1615, Mar. 29.
[3] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1615, July. In 1621 the Lord Treasurer informed the Virginia Co. that the " medium of the quantity of tobacco brought in these last seven years ending in Michaelmas, 1621, amounted to 142,085 ½ pounds." Rive, *op. cit.*

years in consideration of his surrender to the King of his patent for the " impost on tobacco," apparently granted between 1608 and 1613.

The immediate result of these high duties, though they probably did bring in more revenue to the King, was to stimulate planting in England (a subject which will be considered later) and also to encourage an illicit trade. This latter became so extensive that in 1620 it was ordered that all tobacco sold in the future must bear the Government seal.[1] In spite of this the King's patentees continued to complain of the sale of smuggled tobacco by unlicensed persons; therefore in 1624 tobacco became a royal monopoly. " Whereas it is agreed on all sides that the *Tobacco* of those Plantations of *Virginia* and the Summer Islandes (which is the only present meanes of their subsistinge) cannot be managed for the good of the Plantations unless itt be brought into one hand, whereby the Forraigne Tobacco may be carefullie kept out, and the Tobacco of those Plantations may yealde a certayne and ready Price to the Owners thereof, wee doe hereby declare, That to avoyde all Differencies and contrarietie of opynions, which will hardly be reconcyled betweene the Planters and Adventurers themselves, we are resolved to take the same into Our own Hands and by Our Servants or Agents for us, to give such

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1620. June 29.

Prices to the Planters and Adventurers for the same as may give them reasonable Satisfaction and Incouragement, but of the manner thereof we will determine hereafter at better leisure."[1]

In this year, and again in 1627, it was ordered that all tobacco brought into England should come through London.[2] As, however, in 1619, the[3] manufacture of pipes had been limited to the London Company with consequent ruin to a growing industry in Bristol, it is to be presumed that other considerations in addition to the desire to suppress smuggling weighed with the King. This restriction of the import of tobacco to London produced much dissatisfaction in the outports, particularly Bristol, where the trade had been developing rapidly.

The importance of the tobacco trade to the outports was shown in 1625,[4] for in that year the Mayor and Burgesses of Portsmouth petitioned the King that they should be given the right of importing all tobacco into England in addition to the right of fitting out all ships for New England, on the ground that their town had fallen into great decay. The limitation of the imports to London was renewed in 1630,[5] and again in 1634, when it was stipulated that

[1] Rymer's *Foedera*, XVIII, 72.
[2] Rymer's *Foedera*, 1624. *Acts of the Privy Council*, 1627, Jan. 20.
[3] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1619.
[4] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1625.
[5] Rymer's *Foedera*, 1630, Jan. 6.

not only was tobacco to be brought solely to London, but that there it was to be landed only at the Custom House Quay.

In 1634 a Commission[1] was issued to Sir William Russell, Sir William Uvedale, Sir Dudley Diggs, Sir John Wolstenholme, and sixteen others to contract with planters of Virginia and other English colonies for the pre-emption of their tobacco, while a few months before a proclamation had been issued, forbidding retail trading in tobacco without licence. Three years later Lord Goring was appointed with six others to try persons accused of selling tobacco without licence, an appointment which was confirmed in 1639.

A proclamation of 1637[2] gives a clear summary of the policy of regulation as applied to the tobacco trade which was developed by the first two Stuarts. It drew attention to the previous attempts made by the King to induce the people of Virginia and other English colonies to give up tobacco planting and turn their energies into more useful channels. In spite of these persuasions and the low price of tobacco the planters still confined themselves to this one industry. Further, the merchants, taking advantage of the necessities of the planters, very much underpaid them, with the result that little attention was paid

[1] Rymer's *Feodera*, 1634, May 19. *Ibid.*, 1634, June 19. *Ibid* 1634, March 13. *Ibid.*, 1637, March 16. *Ibid.*, 1639, August 19.
[2] *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, No. 11, 1627, March 14th.

to the sort of tobacco produced, which was mixed with "rotten fruits, stalks of tobacco and other corrupt ingredients" and sold.

This abuse had driven the English consumers, who wanted good tobacco, to import against the law large quantities of Spanish tobacco, in exchange for solid English goods, or else to cultivate tobacco in England; with the result that the plantations were impoverished and reduced to impotence, the health of the nation impaired, and its wealth diminished. Therefore: 1. The planting, manufacture, and consumption of English tobacco was once more forbidden. 2. All foreign tobacco, except such Spanish as the King should think necessary, should be excluded, which restriction was also to apply to English colonial tobacco. 3. All English colonial tobacco destined for foreign ports must first be brought to England, and landed at the Port of London, which was to continue to be also the staple of the kingdom. 4. All tobacco imported to be sold to the royal agents, at prices to be agreed upon. 5. All tobacco in the kingdom to be sealed with the royal seal, and to be bought wholesale at first hand from the royal agents only; further, no tobacco to be exported without their licences.

Any breach of these articles was to be punished with the confiscation of the tobacco in question.

All these efforts proved to be fruitless, for in spite

of prohibitions the outports continued to receive tobacco. Sometimes ships put into Bristol, Plymouth, or some other western port,[1] on account of leakage, or pretence of leakage, and sought for permission to land their cargoes. Such permission was granted when good reason could be shown, and sometimes the importers were allowed to dispose of their commodity to the local licensed dealers; at others, when the excuses were patently trumped up, the importers were ordered either to send the tobacco, when landed, direct to London, or to proceed forthwith to that port without breaking bulk.

Apparently the usual method in Bristol was to land the tobacco under the very eyes of the royal officials on consideration of heavy bribes. Thus, for example, in 1637, with the approval of the Farmers of the Customs, a Bristol merchant, called Lock, had been permitted to land a cargo of tobacco from St. Kitts, and similar permission was given to other merchants in the same year.[2] One Bristol merchant had been allowed to receive 9,000 lbs. of tobacco from Barbados, while another ship had landed a sufficient amount to enable her to victual for France. When these frauds were considered by the Special Commission appointed in 1641, Mr. Cale, one of the

[1] *Acts of Privy Council, Whitehall*, 1631, April 12. *Star Chamber*, 1636, May 31.

[2] John Latimer, *Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century* pp. 152, *et sqq.*

Commissioners, acknowledged that he, himself, by arrangement with Lord Goring's man, had landed 40,000 lbs. at Bristol. In other words, it seems that, no matter what the prohibition might be, provided the proper bribes were forthcoming, the laws could be ignored. This particular case in Bristol came to light because the official on the spot was annoyed by the deflection of the bribes which he had come to regard as his perquisites, into other pockets.

The usual secret smuggling also went on throughout the period, and the nett result was that the Farmers of the Customs acknowledged that it was impossible for them to enforce the law. In 1638, therefore, they petitioned that, as this was the case, Bristol and two other ports should be thrown open ;[1] this petition was granted, and Plymouth, Bristol, Dartmouth and Southampton were given the right of importing tobacco. As will be shown later, though the idea of making London the tobacco staple was put forward on different occasions during the latter part of the century, particularly by the London merchants themselves, the policy was never again adopted. As the country shortly afterwards entered upon the Civil War period, other outports besides the ones mentioned began to engage in the tobacco trade. By the end of the century, though these rivals to London still in the aggregate lagged very far behind

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, 1638, Feb. 17.

that port in the tobacco and other trades, yet their growth was considered sufficiently rapid to be regarded as a serious menace to the London merchants.

Once this restriction on tobacco was removed, Bristol rapidly developed a lucrative trade; the manufacture of clay pipes was revived, and a new Company came into existence for the prosecution of this industry, which quickly grew to be one of the most important Companies in the city. The development in Bristol's tobacco trade continued after the Restoration, of which an indication is afforded by the fact that in 1662 eight ships, followed soon after by six others, arrived in the port, bringing so much tobacco that there was not money enough in the city to pay the Customs, which were estimated at about £12,000. "His Majesty taking the same into his princely consideracon together with the present scarcity of money and deadnes of trade did order direction to be given to the Customs officers at Bristol to allow such time as they think necessary for payment of the Customs of the said ships, the merchants giving security: also for the like directions from time to time for the port of London or any other ports if it shall be found necessary."[1] In 1666, of the twenty-three sail which arrived in Bristol on the 19th and 20th of July from Virginia and Barbados,[2]

[1] *Cal. of Treas. Books*, 1662, May 7.
[2] *Cal. of Colonial Papers: America, the W. Indies*, 1666, July 20.

nineteen were laden with tobacco only. In spite of the considerable losses which the city sustained during the second Dutch war[1] Sir John Knight, Member for Bristol, was able to state in the House of Commons, 1670, that of the 6,000 tons shipping owned by that city, half was employed in the tobacco trade. Barretti says of Bristol: "They trade here also with less dependence on the Capital than any of the outports. Whatever exportations they make to any part, they can dispose of the full returns, without shipping of any part for London in ships bound thither, or consigning their own vessels to London to dispose of their cargoes."[2]

During the wars of William III. the Bristol Merchant Venturers sent many bitter complaints to the King on account of losses which they had sustained through the inadequate convoys supplied by the Government. The following letter[3] may give some idea of the great proportions to which this trade had already grown in a little over fifty years. The letter opens with the complaint that a ship, laden with 800 hogsheads of tobacco, bound for Bristol, had been met in Milford Haven by men-of-war, who had "prest all her men out of her." The writer states

[1] John Latimer, *Annals of Bristol*, p. 346.
[2] Barretti, *History of the Trade of Bristol*, p. 184.
[3] *Henley and Merchant Adventurers Papers*: Bristol Collection: "Letter from Mr Henley to the Hon. Sir Robert Southwell, Kt.," 1690, June 14th.

that the tobacco aboard will bring £8,000 sterling to their Majesties for " it is all sweet-scented tobacco and will not be exported againe. And with her came up nine Barbadoes ships and one from Nevis, which islands are in good circumstances. And the E. India ships and about 38 more Barbadoes ships steered for the North Channell. So that if money can be found to pay the Customes, this quarter's duty will not be less than 50,000£ sterl, of this Port only to their Ma[ties] one ship of Tobacco alone will bring in neere 11000£."

In 1692 and again in 1693, the Merchant Venturers petitioned for convoys for the Virginia fleet, but in spite of all that the Admiralty could do, Bristol sustained some losses, as, for example, in 1693,[1] when John Road, Master-mariner of Bristol, had his ship the *Hannah*, laden with tobacco from Virginia, captured by French privateers. Bristol had not yet forgotten the heavy losses of the Second Dutch War, and was anxious not to repeat the experience of that time. Thus Mr. Henley wrote to Mr. Secretary Blathwayt:[2] " No Virginia fleet arrived, the one of their convoyes, yt parted with them 10 or 12 dayes since, about 300 leagues off in a storme, came into Plimmouth, 5 or 6 days since and now another fireship of the same convoy is put into Plimmouth,

[1] *Henley and Merchant Adventurers Papers*, 1693.
[2] *Ibid.*, " Letter from Mr. Henley to Mr. Secy. Blathwayt."

who tell us ther are 133 Virginia ships and about 28 or 30 Barbado ships yt fell in with ym some time before. I need not tell you how ill-satisfied the merchants are with this conduct, who say these 2 ships will have ye crop of ye market with the tobacco they bring." Similar complaints recur down to the conclusion of peace in 1697 and they were again repeated during the War of the Spanish Succession.

The second half of the century witnessed not only the successful assertion by the southern outports of the right to trade in tobacco, but also the rise of their northern competitors. Liverpool began to import tobacco in 1670, and Whitehaven about the same time. Worse than this, however, from the point of view of the English towns, both north and south, was the entry of Glasgow into the trade. Even before the Union a beginning was made, but after that date Glasgow rapidly became one of the most important tobacco ports of the United Kingdom, and her tobacco lords with their gorgeous dress became famous.

The regulation of the internal trade in tobacco was taken up early in the century. Both James I. and Charles I. abhorred tobacco on moral grounds, and part at least of their regulative policy was designed to restrict, if not totally to suppress, the new custom of smoking In addition, the State

was anxious to ensure that the royal patentees were not cheated by unlicensed dealers, both wholesale and retail. As, however, at the same time English-grown tobacco, though prohibited by law, was openly sold in the market, masquerading under a variety of names, and as the State did not succeed in driving out this commodity until the end of the century, its attempts at regulation during the period could never have been wholly successful.

In 1619, and again in 1620, James issued proclamations with reference to the garbling (*i.e.*, sorting) of tobacco, and appointed a Commission to enforce them.[1] Five years later Charles I. was petitioned by the apothecaries, grocers and other retailers of tobacco in London to suppress the practices of " certain lewd persons who, under pretence of selling tobacco, keep unlicensed ale-houses " and conduct a trade with mariners in stolen and " uncustomed " tobacco, to the disadvantage of the petitioners.'[2]

During the rule without Parliament Charles tried hard to limit the sale of tobacco to licensed and authorized persons, but the latter still continued to protest against their unlicensed rivals, who were destroying their trade. A warrant was therefore issued to the King's patentee for the sole retailing of tobacco, authorizing him and his deputies to search

[1] Rymer's *Foedera*, 1619 and 1620.
[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1625. *Cal. of Treas. Papers*, 1636.

the packs and " fardells " of all such suspected wandering persons, and to seize the tobacco in their possession to the King's use. When discovered, these men were to be brought before the local magistrates, with their illegal burdens, and punished as rogues and vagabonds.

Charles I. was, however, attempting the impossible. The demand for tobacco was every year increasing, and, as the supply was limited and the duties high, it was still very expensive for the ordinary consumer. Smuggled Spanish, prohibited English, and a variety of unwholesome substitutes found, therefore, a ready market.

With the disorders of the Civil War these abuses, which the watchful despotism of Charles had not been able to suppress, went on unchecked. The situation became so serious that by 1644 the honest dealers in tobacco, of London, presented a number of petitions to the Mayor on the subject.[1] These petitions were accompanied by sworn statements, which described the methods and practices of the " counterfeiters " in the tobacco trade. From these documents it is clear that, as the trade then stood, it was in a most deplorable condition. One dealer—and there were many others—had mixed starch and " dyer's liquor " with tobacco stalks, and sold the compound as pure tobacco. This man had conducted

[1] *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, No. 9, 1644, Aug. 6.

PLATE V

THE SHOP OF A LONDON TOBACCONIST IN 1617

In the window are pipes, flagons, jugs and bottles, and the model of a negro boy smoking a vast cigar, and carrying another under his arm. Above the doorway hangs a picture of a *Nicotiana* plantation, with two running and one swimming negro figures. The drawn curtain reveals three smokers at a table supported on kegs of tobacco. Their names are given as Captains *Whiffe*, *Pipe* and *Snuffe*. Above them is written "*Qui color albus erat, quantum mutatus ab illo, Anglus in Aethiopeum*" — "The white man is transformed into a native." Below are the punning allusions *Itum est in viscera terrae, Fistula dulce canit*

his industry quite openly, and on a scale sufficient to provide him with an adequate living. When the honest dealers expostulated with him, he replied that as there was no law, there was no transgression. Others of his kidney had ground up " mere stalks, seasoned them with ' oil and spike,' " which they sold as tobacco. Some had mixed, with tobacco leaf, small coal, dust, and other trash, while yet others had inserted ponderous ingredients into their commodity. One of this last class, for example, had produced 35 lbs. of tobacco for the market out of 10 lbs. of leaf. The petitions contain other examples of various methods of adulteration ; the lists give several instances under each head, and as proof that adulteration was widespread, the petitioners pointed to the very low rates at which these dealers disposed of their product. Whereas it was well known, that, when all the charges had been paid, sound tobacco could not be sold under 12d. per lb., these men offered it at between 4d. and 6d. In fact, one man, a year previously, mixing his ground stalks with coal, starch and dust had sold many score pounds at 3½d.

It was stated in another petition,[1] that about one-fourth of the tobacco consumed in the kingdom was not really tobacco at all, but wholly counterfeit. This widespread adulteration, the petitioners pointed out, not only made it impossible for them to earn an

[1] *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, no. 4.

honest living, but also, by escaping the Customs, cheated the State and was detrimental to navigation. More than all this, it was harmful and dangerous to the bodies of the unfortunate purchasers, who innocently smoked all sorts of poisonous ingredients. The Mayor was therefore prayed to incorporate the honest tobacco-cutters into a Company, with full powers to search and supervise, as was given to other trades, in order that such abuses as those enumerated might be put down. This petition was signed by 249 tobacconists and supported by a certificate from the Commissioners of the Customs, who had examined several samples of this adulterated tobacco and expressed their opinion thus: "We conceive that the abuses in working tobacco-stalks, complained of by the petitioners, are of very dangerous consequences, and prejudicial to the State, as well in the point of Customs as otherwise, and that the speedy applying of some convenient remedy therein may be, as we conceive, a very great concernment to the State." (Signed by 8.)

This petition, however, was not acted upon, and the abuses complained of continued to flourish. Indeed, it is doubtful if, as long as the price of tobacco remained high, and substitutes could be easily palmed off, such an incorporation would have had any effect. As will be shown later, in addition to a certain amount of smuggled tobacco, the English

planters annually sent to market considerable supplies of which the authorities knew, or were supposed to know, nothing. The control of the trade demanded by the merchants in 1644, and in 1671 and later, would only have been possible had the State had full cognizance of all the tobacco on the market.

In the Restoration period abuses still continued, not only in the import and export trades, but also in the manufacture and wholesale and retail trades. As a result, in 1671, an elaborate scheme was put forward by a writer who appears to have been not only an enthusiastic but an unscrupulous Londoner. His suggestions may be thus summarized[1]: London should be made once more the tobacco staple for the kingdom, and that city should also have the sole right of manufacture. This course was advisable because, since the outports had been thrown open many abuses had crept into the trade. For example, in 1665, when owing to the Plague, no Virginia fleet had sailed, the price of Virginia leaf had risen from 4½d. to 8d.: nevertheless, so-called cut and dried tobacco had been sold for 6d. or 8d., one half, two-thirds, or the whole of which was worthless stalks. In 1671 there were in the neighbourhood of London vast stacks of tobacco-stalks which country chapmen bought and disposed of, and the writer naïvely confesses that this practice was going on even in

[1] *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, no. 12, pp. 20 *et sqq.*, 1671, April 1.

London. Another reason why London should be made the staple was that the people of the outports were able to live more cheaply, and the Londoners were driven to maintain their position by their greater skill—an argument which none but a Londoner could find convincing!

Great abuses were said to be practised in the outports, apparently unheard of in the virtuous metropolis. For example, in the previous year, one ship had imported 400 hogsheads of tobacco and paid duty only on 170. In the export trade even greater abuses were practised in the abandoned outports; sometimes drawbacks were received on tobacco which was never re-exported. Forswearing was common, some men having adopted the custom of letting their nails grow, so that, when they took oaths, their fingers would not touch the Book; they would then cut their nails and thus deprive the oath of its validity, or they would drink a glass of sack to wash the oaths away. Bribery and corruption were rampant. For example, in Liverpool in the previous year, which was their first year for tobacco, a ship had brought in 300 hogsheads and paid duty only on 60 with the full knowledge of the local official. Sometimes, as at Bristol, hogsheads were entered at 250 lbs. apiece, and reshipped at 400 lbs. In that port, two ships had recently brought in between twelve and thirteen hundred hogsheads, of which

only 800 were entered, and these only at 250 lbs., but all of them had been reshipped at 400. What had been done at Bristol could be done elsewhere.

The next part of this proposal is taken up with a number of suggestions respecting the prices which should be paid to all concerned in the trade from the Virginia planter down to the country retailer. It is interesting to note in passing, that, while the Virginia planter was to receive ½d. per lb., the consumer was to pay 16d. to 20d. per lb., or 1½d. per oz. All the tobacco brought in under these conditions was to come through the port of London, and the hands of the London manufacturers and wholesalers. The writer frankly recognized that this could only be done at the cost of ruin to all the importers, manufacturers and dealers in the outports, and the only justification he could urge for this drastic policy was, that the more open ports there were, the greater were the possibilities of fraud.

As to the internal trade, he proposed that the London tobacconists should be incorporated, in order that the same conditions might prevail in tobacco as in other trades. By such an incorporation the depredations of hawkers and pedlars, who dealt in adulterated tobacco, could be discovered and punished. He also outlined a system for checking and registering all tobacco imported into the country.

He believed that, if tobacco stalks were regularly

destroyed, this would make room for the importation of an additional 4,800,000 lbs. of leaf, which, at a duty of 4d. per lb. would yield about £80,000 per annum to His Majesty. Further, if, in addition, all English-grown tobacco was destroyed, this amount could be increased by half as much again. Thus, shipping would be encouraged, and the writer tries to prove that, if these ships were London ships, they would be larger than those of the outports, and therefore of more use to the State in time of war.

In fact, much of the value of this very interesting "Proposal" is ruined by the unreasonable point of view of the writer. For it must have been obvious to most people in 1671 that the trade of the outports had become too important to be summarily suppressed. Bristol would not willingly reduce her total shipping by half, even if the reasons adduced were more convincing than those of this pamphlet. Further, the experience of the years 1624–1638 was a convincing argument against making London again the staple, and now that the tobacco trade had become infinitely greater, such a policy, if renewed, would give rise to smuggling on a correspondingly magnified scale.

In the abstract of a Tobacco Bill,[1] 1686, many of the suggestions put forward in 1671 were renewed. It states in the preamble that many abuses still

[1] *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, no. 18.

continue to be practised by masters, owners and importers, so that a quarter of the tobacco consumed is dross. London was to be made the tobacco port of the kingdom and all ship-captains were to give adequate security that tobacco carried by them was landed there. All ships in the trade were to set sail in one month and a true invoice was to be given by the captains to the colonial authorities before sailing.

It also contains articles designed to put an end to the malpractices of those concerned in the unlading and warehousing of tobacco. In order to ensure that the wholesale trade in London should be properly regulated for the future, the tobacconists of that city were to be incorporated under the name of " The Master Wardens and Assistants of the Company of Tobacconists of London." This Company was to have a limited membership and to enjoy similar privileges to those of other London Companies, and it was to be made responsible for the wholesale and retail trade throughout the country. The tobacco-cutters and makers-up were to be incorporated under the name of " Master Wardens and Assistants of the Company of Tobacco-Cutters of London," with similar powers and privileges to those granted to the tobacconists. These Companies together were to control the trade, and all London retailers or licensed country wholesalers were to buy from them. Inn-keepers and other retailers of tobacco were to buy

only from licensed wholesalers. The Bill also dealt with such questions as the destruction of stalks, the unlading and warehousing of tobacco and every aspect of the trade which was capable of being abused. Breaches of this Act were to be punished with heavy penalties, and extraordinary powers were to be given to the authorities to enforce it. No one not a member of the Company of Tobacco-cutters was to have in his possession any machine used in the manufacture of tobacco. In fact, this Act was to have been an attempt to regulate the whole tobacco trade in this country—import, export, manufacture, wholesale and retail. It is mainly interesting because from the exact description which it gives of the things which were not to be done we may infer the abuses which were prevalent. Though this Bill never became law in the form in which it was drawn up, it contains many suggestions and provisions which were later adopted in practice.

The old abuses went on after 1686 and, in fact, after the new duty imposed upon tobacco by James II. in 1685, they seem to have increased. In 1694 stalks, when soaked, pressed, cured and cut, were sold as " old Spanish " at between £1 10s. and £1 13s. per cwt.[1] The new proposal which was put forward in this year was based on the reasonable principle

[1] *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, no. 17, and nos. 13, 14 and 15. See also *Harleian MSS.*, nos. 1, 3 and 7.

that if the Government made a fair allowance to the merchant for the stalks which were supposed to be destroyed, he would then have no interest in preserving them, and in this way the abuse would disappear. It was urged that he should be allowed 3d. per lb. for stalks which were burnt, but only half that amount when the tobacco was re-exported, because in this latter case the merchant benefited from the stalks by disposing of them in the form of snuff. It was stated that out of approximately 5,000,000 lbs. of tobacco annually consumed in England about 1,000,000 lbs. was made up of stalks. If, as proposed, these stalks were destroyed and enough additional tobacco imported to bring the amount of sound tobacco up to 5,000,000 lbs., this would mean, with a duty of 5d. per lb., an increase to the revenue of over £8,000.

Instead of allowing the importer so much for waste and damage, the damaged tobacco should be taken over by the Customs officials themselves and burnt forthwith, the importer being allowed 2d. per lb. This was advisable because all tobacco allowed in free was worked up in some way and disposed of. The proposal would therefore increase the market for sound tobacco, on which their Majesties received 5d. per lb. It was also suggested that hogsheads should be of one uniform size, and that no tobacco should be imported in any other way.

All ships trading with Scotland or Ireland should be compelled, in accordance with the law; to unlade in England, Wales, or Berwick-on-Tweed, in order to pay the duties, and where this was not done, the ship and the cargo were to be forfeited, and the master imprisoned for six months without bail.

It is impossible not to feel that the State was itself partially, at least, responsible for the prevalent frauds. Though the Virginia planter received very little for his product, the consumer was obliged to pay a fairly stiff price, the middlemen and the Government dividing between them large profits. If the merchants had been compelled to sell at more reasonable rates and the Government had been willing to forgo a part of the immense sums it collected in revenues, it would probably have been called upon to expend less in futile attempts to put down abuses. The nett result to it would therefore have been a larger return with less effort.

CHAPTER IV

Tobacco Growing in England

Lobelius states that attempts were being made to grow tobacco in England in 1571, and that in this country the plant only reached a height of two or three cubits as compared with four or five in Languedoc and Aquitaine.[1] There has been some considerable discussion as to what sort of tobacco was grown in England during the seventeenth century. Thus Harrison states :[2] " This herbe as yet is not so comon, but that for want thereof divers do practise for the like purposes with the Nicotian, otherwise called in latine Hyoscyamus Luteus, or the yellow henbane, albeit not without great error. . . . The herbe (Tabacco) is commonly of the height of a man, garnished with great long leaves like the paciens (*i.e.*, passions or patience, a dock) bering seede colloured and of quantity like unto, or rather lesse than the fine margerome ; the herbe itself yerely coming up also of the shaking of the seede, the

[1] Lobelius, *Plantarum seu Stirpium Historia*. Antwerp, 1576 (Brit. Museum, 447 g. 4).
[2] Harrison's *Chronologie*, 1573, ed. 1877.

collour of the floure is carnation, resembling that of the lemmon informe: the roote yellow, with many fillettes, and thereto very small in comparison, if you respect the substauns of the herbe." Thus it would appear that, while *Nicotiana tabacum* was probably first planted in English soil, certain people almost from the beginning turned their attention to the cultivation of the more hardy and from the medicinal point of view not less valuable *Hyoscyamus luteus*, yellow henbane, or *Nicotiana rustica*, the seeds of which were probably brought in by Hawkins.[1] It appears that at first *Nicotiana* was planted in England not only for its medicinal virtues, but also for the beauty of its flowers.

Gerard in his *Historie of Plants*, 1587, refers to *Hyoscyamus luteus* and also distinguishes two sorts of tobacco, "Hyoscyamus Peruvianus" and "Sana Sancta Indorum," or "Tobaco or Henbane of Peru" and "Tabaco of Trinidada" respectively. C.T., however, in his *Advice how to grow Tobacco in England*, written some eighteen years later, repudiates this unnecessary classification:[2] "Others (and thinke they speake learnedly) call our English of the lesser leafe, yellow Henbane, or Hyoscyamus Luteus, and the greater Hyoscyamus Peruvianus; yea, they make a difference between the Tobacco of Pana and Trini-

[1] See Comes' *Histoire, Géographie Statistique du Tabac*, p. 99.
[2] C.T., "An advice how to plant Tobacco in England . . . with the dangers of the Spanish Tobacco," 1615 (Brit. Mus., 1038 i. 38).

dada and that of Peru, although I am well assured, that there was never any one pound of Peru tobacce seene in England or in Europe."

During the reign of Elizabeth the amount of tobacco planted in England remained inconsiderable, but under her successor conditions changed. The new king, for a variety of reasons, abominated tobacco, and it is probable that it was partly due to his opposition that the English people were driven to grow tobacco for smoking themselves. The heavy duties which he imposed upon imported tobacco failed completely to stamp out its use, and resulted only in the increase of smuggling and the spread of native planting.

Other reasons for planting in England are enumerated in C.T.'s pamphlet. The gist of his arguments is that £200,000 a year is paid by England to the Spanish colonists for tobacco, a sum all vented in smoke. Why should our old enemies the Spaniards profit in this way, when they have ill-treated English merchants and other subjects of King James? And worse still, although the Indian tobacco is sold " for ten times the value of pepper, and the best of it, weight for weight for the finest silver, it is nearly all sophisticate (*i.e.*, adulterated)." He describes in some detail the disgusting methods employed by the Spanish slaves in the preparation of tobacco, and the poisonous ingredients they introduced in order

to give it a desirable colour, calling it sauce " por los perros Lutheranos " (for Lutheran dogs) ! Only tobacco obtained direct from the natives is good and clean. So he proceeds to explain how tobacco may be planted in England. And from the description which he gives of the variety most suitable for English soil and climate it is plain that by 1615 *Nicotiana rustica* had supplanted *Nicotiana tabacum* in England. This interesting pamphlet also describes the up-to-date methods of preparing tobacco for the market, and from this it appears that artificial methods of drying the leaves were already understood and practised in this country. The writer gives general rules for the time and method of tobacco planting as well as for the care and treatment of the growing crop and the various drying processes. He also deals with the question of the soil best adapted for the production of tobacco, and warns the planters not to be too eager to garner in the harvest—" for if you gather your leaves before they change colour on the stalke, they will be good for nothing."[1]

In 1619 James considered that the spread of the new crop had become sufficiently alarming to warrant his interference, for in that year he asked the College of Physicians to express their opinion upon the quality of English-grown tobacco. This body, partly because of conviction, but partly also because

[1] C.T., *op. cit.*, Brit. Mus., 1038 i. 38.

of the King's well-known opinions on the subject, gave James the reply he required: "As it is now usually taken it cannot but be very hurtful and unwholesome, and falling far short of the perfection of other tobaccos that are brought in from other more Southern parts, where it hath its natural maturity, vigour and efficacy."[1] Armed with this authority, the King proceeded to action. In a letter addressed to the Justices of the County of Middlesex, he states that he has been informed that many yards and gardens in the neighbourhood of London and Westminster, which formerly have been used to produce food for the poor, are now let out at exorbitant rents, and planted with tobacco. Since tobacco-planting is likely to be detrimental to the people, the Justices are therefore prayed to put an end to such plantations in their neighbourhood, so that the land may be preserved for its proper use, and tobacco shall be planted further afield.

This comparatively mild action was followed up in December of the same year by a Proclamation which forbade the planting of tobacco in England and Wales. This order was grounded on two main reasons:

1. Because tobacco grown in England was more unwholesome than the foreign commodity.

2. Because in the interests of the country people,

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1619.

it was desirable to prevent the further spread of these plantations.

By this time another consideration, besides the moral objection to tobacco—one which was destined to be supreme—began to influence the King. In 1620 James came to an agreement with the Virginia Company by which that body consented to pay a duty in excess of that stipulated in their charter, provided that the tobacco-planting in England were suppressed. The proclamation against English tobacco was again renewed and the importing of tobacco into England was restricted to the King's patentees:[1] strenuous attempts were at once made to put this proclamation into effect, for shortly afterwards, Thomas Biggs, Surgeon, journeyed up to London from Nottingham to sue for pardon. As he had not been successful in his profession of late, because "it was somewhat practised in the country by ladies and other gentlewomen," he had, in complete ignorance of the royal policy, planted an acre of tobacco, apparently for commercial purposes.

In August of the following year (1621) the Mayor and Aldermen of London received a letter from the King which showed his displeasure that his previous orders had not been, from his point of view, satisfactorily carried out. In spite of his royal proclamation and orders, in contempt of His Majesty's royal

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1620.

authority, to the great hurt of his subjects, both Englishmen and strangers had persisted in growing tobacco. " His Majesty being resolved not to endure such an insolency, but to let those offenders know what it is to contemn his princely pleasure," etc., ordered that all tobacco now planted within the city and its liberties should be sequestrated into safe hands, and that such measures should be taken with the offenders as would effectively restrain them from similar transgressions in the future. A significant feature about this letter is that it was also sent to the High Sheriffs and Justices of the Peace of the counties of Kent, Essex, Middlesex and Surrey.[1]

Towards the end of his reign James was forced by the facts of the case to acknowledge at least a partial defeat in his opposition to the tobacco trade, and he even came to see that, with proper regulation, it might be turned to his own interest. He encouraged the Virginia trade by enforcing the prohibition against English tobacco and also by limiting the imports of tobacco from Spain. The local officials were exceedingly zealous in so far as the English plantations were concerned, for in 1623 John Stradford, of London, presented a petition[2] in which he begged " for protection for twelve months, being much hindered, first by planting flax, which the

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council*, 1621.
[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1623.

Netherlanders now bring in ready dressed, and then by planting tobacco, the sale of which when grown in England, is forbidden by proclamation."

Two years later Henry Somerscales stated that his whole estate had been expended in finding out the mystery of planting and curing tobacco;[1] he prayed for a moiety of the tobacco seized from him for the King's use, and also for a warrant to be issued to him, empowering him to seize all forbidden tobacco. Thus, if he might not profit from his own industry he was prepared to do so at the expense of others.

Charles I., though not so pronounced in his dislike of tobacco as his father, viewed its spread with alarm, and he was equally determined to put an end to its growth in this country. In 1626 there were numerous signs of activity in various counties. The Council, for example, were informed that Michael Bland, of Lincolnshire, was growing horse-tobacco for medicine and about one-tenth of an acre of pipe-tobacco.[2] Later on news was received that he had planted near Batterby a quantity of tobacco, the greater portion of which was intended for the pipe and not for medicine. The Justices were ordered to make him give two good sureties that he would dispose of this tobacco as requested by the Board, or by the Court

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1625.
[2] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, Aug. 17, 1626

of Star Chamber, and if he refused, they were ordered to seize it.

In the same year, Winchcombe, which was destined to become later " the now famous town of Winchcombe," is for the first time mentioned in connection with the planting of English tobacco.[1] Sir J. Tracy reported to Mr Secretary Conway that he had examined John Ayres, of Winchcombe, who denied that he had planted any tobacco, which appeared to be true from the bailiff's certificate which he enclosed.

Shortly after this Somerscales was granted the warrant which he had prayed for in the previous year.[2] He was empowered to search the houses of all suspected persons in the counties of Buckingham, Lincoln and York, or any other county or city or town of England, with the exception of the cities of London and Westminster with their suburbs. He was to seize all English or Spanish tobacco or any other tobacco not grown in the English plantations, and those persons to whom the confiscated property belonged were to give a bond of £100 to appear before the Board to answer for their high contempt.

Much as Charles disliked tobacco, he was forced, in the interests of his subjects, to foster the trade. The colony of Virginia was coming to depend almost

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, Aug. 29, 1626.
[2] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, Sept. 3, 1626.

entirely upon tobacco for its existence, and the English Government, in order to keep the colony alive, while deploring the perversity of its people, in devoting themselves entirely to the cultivation of one plant, nevertheless continued the policy of James I.

It was about this time that Gloucestershire began to be the main centre of the English industry. Thus in February, 1627, a local warrant was issued to William Bedo,[1] similar to the one which Henry Somerscales had already received. In the following July William King[2] received a general warrant with powers to root up and destroy all English and foreign tobacco in the counties of Gloucester, Worcester and Wilts. Local Justices were commanded to assist King, and particular attention was drawn to ten places in Worcestershire, forty in Gloucestershire, and Wootton Bassett in Wilts.

The condition of Virginia continued to cause anxiety to the Council throughout 1627, and in December of that year a proclamation was issued largely in the interests of that colony. As Virginia and the Somers Islands depended entirely upon their export of tobacco, the Board,[3] by special direction, in the presence of the King, resolved that no tobacco henceforth should be grown in England or Ireland,

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council; Colonial*, Feb. 9, 1627.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 10, 1627.
[3] *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1627.

and that all English tobacco should be destroyed wherever found. Spanish tobacco henceforward could only be brought in by royal consent. A few weeks later the Attorney General was instructed to draw up a proclamation[1] which limited the importation of tobaçco to the Port of London—a repetition of the proclamation of 1624.

In 1628 the Privy Council heard with regret that tobacco was being grown in the Channel Islands. This was particularly harmful, for not only was the quality of the tobacco itself very poor, but this crop used up the land, small enough in extent already, which could be used for agricultural purposes. Before taking further action, Charles followed the example of his father, and referred the question of the quality of English tobacco to the College of Physicians for their considered judgment,[2] and again the reply seems to have been of the nature that the King required.

The subject did not again come up for consideration until 1631, but in this year the condition of the tobacco trade once more became pressing. Vast quantities of tobacco were planted in different parts of the kingdom, much unserviceable tobacco was being imported from Virginia and the Bermudas (Somers Islands), in addition to "an incredible

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, Jan. 20, 1627.
[2] *Ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1628.

amount of Spanish tobacco, which was smuggled in." This useless weed was a menace to the Colonies, which subsisted on it alone, and a danger to the health of the English people, whose bodies and minds it corrupted. The proclamation of this year renewed the prohibitions against English tobacco, and also imposed other limitations upon the trade, which have been mentioned elsewhere—" His Majesty, not thinking it fit to admit of an immeasurable expense of so vain and needless a commodity, which ought to be used as a drug only, and not so vainly and wantonly as an evil habit of late times has brought it to."[1]

The letters addressed to the Justices of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire in July, 1631, show that the attempt to suppress the English industry had been far from successful. " We could not have believed that after so many commands by His Majesty, and by his royal ffather of blessed memory by their royall proclamations, grounded upon such weighty reasons as are therein expressed, anie man would have presumed to have planted or maynteined any English tobacco."[2] But they had been lately informed that in diverse parts of the kingdom, more particularly in " that county of Gloucester," great quantities of tobacco were still planted. The Lords

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic,* 1631.
[2] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial,* July 24, 1631.

of the Council were determined to put an end to such disobedience, and the Justices were commanded to summon to their aid all local officials, both in country parishes and in the boroughs, where they knew tobacco to be planted. They were further ordered to take with them personally, such necessary assistance as they might require, in order to destroy all English tobacco, and to report to the Council for punishment the names of all those who resisted them, as well as the names of those officials who were negligent in the discharge of their duty. This shows not only that all previous proclamations had not been successful but also that the interest in the industry was shared by powerful groups in Gloucestershire. Local Justices had been negligent and royal officials had actually been resisted; these facts can only lead to the one conclusion that English tobacco at this time was popular in the country.

William King, messenger to the Chamber, was dispatched to Gloucestershire to supervise the work of destruction, and to make a report to the Council on the general situation.[1] The people of that county proved to be as determined as the Government, and the Council's representative found that he had no easy task. He reported to the Council that in the discharge of his duty in displanting and destroying

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1631.

the tobacco crop in Gloucestershire he "received many great affronts in divers places." The worst offenders were charged before the Star Chamber, but tobacco planting still went on. "The offenders, having gathered their tobacco, daily bring it to London by secret ways, and sell it for Virginia and Bermuda tobacco." As King closes his report with the request that a new warrant should be issued to him similar to the one he had previously received, it seems that the affronts and injuries of which he complained were outweighed by the profits derived from the work of destruction.

Three years later (1634) another proclamation against English tobacco was issued.[1] It was now asserted not only that tobacco grown in moist climate was inferior in quality and harmful in effect, but also that the tobacco plant injured the soil for other agricultural purposes for miles around. After 1634 this reason for suppressing the English plantations occurs frequently, but in the opinion of modern agricultural experts it is unfounded. Tobacco, like any other crop, if continually planted in the same place, will exhaust the soil, if nothing is done to replace the properties which it absorbs.

This year William King was fully engaged in the counties of Gloucester and Worcester, more particularly in the neighbourhood of Cheltenham,

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1634.

Winchcombe, and Tewkesbury.[1] His work was becoming more and more difficult, and the Justices were commanded to assist him in every way, and not to spare anyone on account of his poverty, this not being deemed a sufficient excuse for disobedience. For the time, it seems, King met with a certain amount of success,[2] as the presentments of the constables of a number of parishes show that no tobacco was being planted.

This success, however, was only temporary, for in the following year the Gloucestershire farmers, who had again planted, offered a more determined opposition to King and his men. In several places he was violently repulsed,[3] and the people of Winchcombe asserted that they would not allow their tobacco to be destroyed. The Council therefore ordered the constables of Winchcombe, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury and Gulferton to take with them a force sufficient to enable them to destroy the tobacco planted.

In 1636 the inhabitants of a number of towns in Gloucestershire threatened to do violence to anyone who should molest their crops ; the Government, for its part, contenting itself with another order, issued on June 19th, similar in tenor to that of the previous July.

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, June 7, 1634. *Ibid.*, July 24, 1634.
[2] *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Report on MSS. in Various Collections.
[3] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, July 10, 1635.

Another proclamation appeared in 1637,[1] stating that, in spite of royal orders and recommendations, the plantations of Somers Islands and Virginia depended solely upon tobacco for their subsistence. Their natural market—England—was being destroyed by a vast quantity of adulterated tobacco and by Spanish and English tobacco. Therefore, London was again proclaimed to be the only port through which tobacco could be imported, and the previous prohibitions against English tobacco were renewed. All tobacco then growing in England, Ireland, the Channel Islands, Berwick-on-Tweed or the Isle of Man was at once to be destroyed, and all local authorities were ordered to assist the royal officials in carrying out this work. Gilbert Hyde received a warrant which empowered him to seize, and keep until further orders, all tobacco being brought up from Gloucestershire to be sold in London.

One of the main difficulties in tracing the history of English tobacco is that there are no records of its distribution. From this proclamation, as well as several others, it is clear that it was sold in London and many other cities of the kingdom, but beyond this we are left almost entirely to conjecture. It is, of course, certain that it was sold under other names,

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, Feb. 24, 1637. *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1637.

such as " Old Spanish," but as to how the trade was managed there is no indication.

The efforts of the royal officials in 1637 proved to be as unavailing as those of previous years. Tobacco-growing by this time was not limited to obscure and isolated peasants, but had become a lucrative business which was participated in by people of all classes. If the Justices did not themselves as yet take part in it, they were already beginning to profit indirectly through the high rents paid for tobacco lands. This fact of the illicit interest of the Justices would seem to be borne out in 1638,[1] when they were very half-hearted in the assistance which they gave to the Government officials sent down from London to destroy this crop. But if the Justices were only lukewarm in the support, the farmers of Gloucestershire were becoming bolder in the resistance which they offered, for riots broke out in different parts of the county on the approach of the Government agents, with the result that they found it impossible to carry out their orders. For their remissness the Gloucestershire Justices were severely reprimanded by the Council, and were ordered to proceed at once to the destruction of the illegal crop, and to give all possible assistance to the representatives of the Government. Further, they were required to indict

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, June 27, 1638. *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1638.

and punish all those who had dared to resist the royal authority by force. "We do therefore hereby in His Majestie's name and by his expresse commande, straightlie . . . require you to proceed roundlie and effectuallie according to the lawes for the indighting and punishing of such."

In spite of this, a year later King reported that evasions and resistance had been made to him and other officials by the people of Winchcombe, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury, under the cover of their poverty.[1] Perhaps it should be pointed out here that Winchcombe, which was then a borough, was a very much more important place than Cheltenham, which was merely a Cotswold village. The Justices of Worcestershire and Monmouthshire again received letters from London similar to those of previous years.

For the rest of his reign Charles I. had other things to think about of more importance to him than the disobedience of Gloucestershire country folk. By now, tobacco-planting had been prohibited in England for upwards of twenty years, and yet at the end of that time there was actually a greater area under cultivation than at the beginning. Whereas in 1619 tobacco-planting was little known outside of London and its suburbs, by the later date it had made its appearance in the counties of

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial*, July 31, 1639.

York, Lincoln, Nottingham, Worcester, Warwick, Monmouth, Gloucester, Wiltshire, in addition to Kent, Essex, Middlesex and Surrey. If the struggle with Parliament and the Civil War had not supervened, the troubles of Cromwell and Charles II. might well have been antedated by fifteen years, for already by 1639 a strong opposition to the policy of the State had developed in Gloucestershire, an opposition in which the Justices of the Peace, if they did not actively participate, were at least sympathetic. During the chaos of the next decade everyone was too much occupied with more important questions to harass the Gloucestershire planters. These latter, however, profited by the practical breakdown of central control and cultivated their crops in comparative peace. It was not until after the execution of Charles I. that this subject could again be taken up by the authorities.

In 1650 the old enemies of the English planters, the Virginia merchants, became active once more. During the last ten years Virginia and Maryland, freed from the royal expostulations, had greatly increased the area of their plantations, and they were resolved that they would not allow some obscure English farmers to stand in the way of their prosperity. They petitioned Parliament,[1] praying that the cultivation of tobacco in England should be

[1] *Fragment of Pamphlet* 816 *m.* 14 (2) (Brit. Museum, *c.* 1650).

forthwith suppressed. They supported this petition by arguments which by now had become almost hackneyed : " The Humble Petition of the Merchants and others of the cities of London and Bristol most humbly sheweth . . . the great prejudice this Commonwealth doth suffer by the planting and growing of Tobaccoes in England, both in relation to their several Forrein Plantations, whereupon thousands of families English depend abroad, as also to the mainfold traffique which mutually accrueth thereby to the people here at home, by taking off a great part of the manufactures of this land, besides the interest of the State, both in the increasing and maintenance of shipping and navigation, and for advancing the Publique Revenue thereof in Customes and Excise ; and at the same time shewing both how unwholesome the Tobaccoes growing at home are to the Body, compared with the Forrein ; as also how impossible it is to plant enough in England, if it could be made so good, sufficient for the consumption of the nation, without far greater prejudice to the arrable grounds of this land." For the moment, however, the young Commonwealth had questions of greater moment to consider, and so the petitioners were obliged to bide their time. After the Royalist forces had been crushed at Dunbar and Worcester and when the sea had been cleared of Royalist ships, the subject was at last considered.

Already in 1651 the Navigation Act had been passed, and in 1652 the Commonwealth had begun the first Dutch War. These two facts taken together, showed that the new Government was as determined as its predecessor to foster English trade. At heart Cromwell was a great Imperialist, strongly imbued with the determination to realize the conception of a self-sufficing Empire, and this brought him into conflict with the tobacco planters of Gloucestershire and other English counties. In fact, in this, as in so many other parts of his policy, Cromwell was faced with the impossible task of reconciling opposites. On the one hand, his ears were continually deafened with the complaints of the planters and merchants of Virginia, who asserted that not only the prosperity, but the very existence of that province, was threatened by the product of the English plantations. Though Virginia had been a Royalist centre, now that Blake was clearing the sea of Royalist shipping, Cromwell and his friends recognized the advisability of adopting a policy of conciliation. Further, whatever the political opinions of the Virginians might be, they could, he knew, help by increased output to foster English shipping and thus cater to the idea of a self-sufficing Empire. To this extent, it was obviously to his interest to do everything he could to encourage their prosperity.

On the other hand, however, he could not afford

to neglect the people of Gloucestershire and the other English counties engaged in the trade. Tobacco-planting by now, thanks to ten years' immunity from Government interference, had become widespread and lucrative. Whatever the interests of Virginia might be, Cromwell could not afford, by adopting an over-masterful policy, to throw away the allegiance of one, perhaps of many, English counties. To be too strict with the people of Gloucestershire and neighbouring counties was simply to throw these people into the arms of the Royalists, who were always on the look-out to make the most of any disaffection which might arise. But to allow them to grow tobacco freely, since it would ruin Virginia and Maryland, and throw a large number of English seamen out of employment, was to deny one of the main articles of his political and economic creed. In the circumstances, Cromwell adopted what was perhaps the only possible policy: he conciliated the Virginia merchants by showing that he was opposed to the planting of tobacco in England, of which he gave ample proof in an Act of Parliament, 1652, but in dealing with the Gloucestershire planters, he was always prepared to temper justice with mercy, and as will be shown, to waive the enforcement of the law. Throughout these years law had to play second fiddle to policy.

From Johannes Neander's *Tabacologia*. Bremen, 1622

1. Scene in American tobacco plantation. Naked Indians are tending and gathering the plant
2. Scene in American tobacco factory. Naked Indians are drying and curing the gathered leaves.

[*face p.*

On April 1st, 1652, Parliament passed an Act prohibiting the planting of tobacco in England.[1] In the preamble it states that: "Whereas divers great quantities of tobacco have been of late years and now are planted in various parts of this Nation, tending to the decay of Husbandry and Tillage, the prejudice and hindrance of the English Plantations abroad, and of the Trading, Commerce, Navigation and Shipping of the Nation . . ." therefore from the following first day of May, no one should plant, set, etc., or cure any Tobacco anywhere in England on pain of a fine of 20/-s. for every pole or rod of ground so planted; of this fine, half was to go to the Commonwealth, and half to the informer, as a reward. The Act concludes by authorizing any person to enter any such tobacco plantation, and "to grub, cut up, destroy and utterly to consume all and every such Tobaccos."

As a result of this Act a number of petitions poured in on Parliament, praying for leniency in the enforcement of the law. One of these,[2] signed by the Mayor of Bristol, declared that riots had been caused in the neighbourhood of that city by the officers who had been sent down from London to put the Act into execution. In the words of the petition of 1654,

[1] *Acts and Ordinances of General use made in the Parliament*, by Henry Scobell, Clerk of the Parliament, printed and published, 1658.

[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1654, June 30, p. 229.

referring to a previous petition of 1652, these efforts resulted in "a favourable exposition of the Act being given, and thus many were saved from perishing in that year" (*i.e.*, 1652). Similar petitions were presented in 1653, and in September, Parliament resolved as follows: "Planters of Tobacco may enjoy the Tobacco by them planted made or cured for this year onely, the first buyer to pay Three pence upon every neat pound for Excise, the Planter, or first Vendor not to sell any till entry thereof made in the Excise Office, and a Ticket from thense had on pain to forfeit double the value, and such as shall buy any before such entry, or without such Ticket, to incur like forfeiture."[1]

This was a great victory for the English planters, since it was the only time when their industry in England had been recognized as legal after King James I. had made his first attack upon it. The truth appears to be that while Cromwell was genuinely anxious to safeguard the interests of the colonial trade, and to conciliate the Virginia merchants, he was not prepared to do this at the risk of alienating the support of a whole English countryside.

Encouraged by this great success, the tobacco planters, unmindful of the qualification "for this year onely," proceeded in 1654 to plant a larger crop than ever. The Virginia merchants and others

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1654. Also Latimer, *Annals of Bristol.*

interested in the Colonial trade, were so insistent however, that the Government was forced to listen to their protests. Bristol sent up its members to Parliament with strict injunctions to do everything possible for the prevention of further plantations in England. "Vast quantities having been planted this year, and daily brought into the city, to the great prejudice of the local trade."[1] On March 31st, all those interested in the colonial trade presented a joint petition to the Council for redress of this grievance.[2] An Order was at once drawn up, stating that, as it was so detrimental to the interests of the English plantations abroad, all tobacco now growing in England must immediately be destroyed.[3] This proclamation brought things to a head in Gloucestershire, for the people of Winchcombe resolved to defend their property at all costs, raised 300 horse and foot to resist the soldiers who were sent down to do the work of destruction, and invited other tobacco-growing communities to join them in their insurrection.[4] They asserted that they were bred to the trade, and that "if they lost it, they will lose their lives." The Council was informed that they were buying up all the tobacco plants they could find, and vowing that they would plant again for all that was destroyed. It was also stated that,

[1] Latimer, *Annals of Bristol.*
[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1654, March 31, p. 65.
[3] *Ibid.*, April, 7 p. 85. [4] *Ibid.*, June 30, p. 229.

in order to do the work of destruction properly, a considerable force would be required, and that half-hearted efforts, which were only partially successful, would be worse than useless.

While the more turbulent spirits of Winchcombe took up arms to defend their property, the more moderate ones despatched envoys to London to present their case to the Protector. They stated that because of the clemency previously shown them, they had again planted tobacco; they freely acknowledged the rashness of those who had risen in arms against the law, but at the same time they craved toleration for that year's crop, and for the future they promised that, although tobacco-growing had been their trade for forty years, they would not plant again without licence. On the ground that the petitioners had acknowledged their fault, as well as for other reasons, which may be imagined, but were not stated, the Protector acceded to the petition. The Commissioners were instructed to suspend the enforcement of the law for that year in respect to the crop about Winchcombe, and to allow the people to harvest it without further molestation.

In the following March, the President of the Council, Henry Lawrence, wrote to the Justices of the Peace of the City and County of Gloucester on the subject.[1] In this letter he reviews what had

[1] *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, XII Report, Appendix, Part 9: MSS. of the Duke of Beaufort, Earl of Donoghmore, and others, etc., p. 510, March 27th, 1655.

happened during the last three years, reminding the Justices how, in the interests of the colonial trade, Parliament had passed an Act prohibiting the planting of tobacco in England,[1] and how later, in consideration of a petition signed by 110 people in Winchcombe, the enforcement of the Act had been suspended. The letter goes on to state that His Highness had been recently informed by a number of merchants and others interested in the colonial trade that the well-being of the plantations was being adversely affected by the continued existence of planting in England. The result of this was that the colonies were unable to purchase the usual amount of goods from this country, and this in turn was having a detrimental effect upon English shipping, as well as upon the Customs of the country. His Highness and the Council are therefore determined that the Act must at long last be put into execution, and the Commissioners are ordered to proceed to the work of destruction. In order that there shall be no misunderstanding or justification for the accusation of injustice, this proclamation is to be published in such a way that no one can possibly have the excuse of ignorance. Those who suffer will, therefore, have no one to blame but themselves, and, in any case, considering the previous clemency of the Government, and the repeated undertakings of the people

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1655, March 27.

not to plant without special licence, their disobedience will be inexcusable.

Other reasons, besides the ones stated, appear to have influenced the Protector and his Government. The intermittent nature of the industry was in itself a reason against it from the point of view of a Government that had to be continually on the watch for possible outbreaks of disaffected persons. It was said that the industry brought together annually "a thousand dissolute persons who only labour for one quarter of the year,"[1] and are idle for the rest; the very sort of people, in fact, whom Royalist agents might easily use against the Government. Further, many people at the time believed that tobacco ruined the soil for ordinary agriculture and since, moreover, it could never be properly cured in England, owing to the nature of the climate, it was likely to breed disease. When the tenacity with which the planters clung to the industry is remembered, it seems fairly evident that the tobacco was not as bad as it was accused of being; otherwise, now that Virginia tobacco was becoming cheap in England, people would naturally have preferred it.

In spite of the emphatic letter of Mr Secretary Lawrence, the Act was again suspended for 1655. Cromwell knew well that he was steering through

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1655.

dangerous waters, and that the slightest mistake might prove disastrous. Royalist agents were busy everywhere, and particularly occupied in the disaffected tobacco counties.

There are several letters to Mr Secretary Nicholas (Charles II.'s Secretary, then in exile with his master) from various correspondents in England, in which it is stated that 1,400 men were ready in Bristol to march within four days after the King's landing, to his assistance.[1] He was promised that the gates of Gloucester would be thrown open by Royalist sympathizers, who were sure of the ready support of 600 discontented tobacco-planters in that neighbourhood.

Crops were again planted in the neighbourhood of Winchcombe in 1657,[2] and the people made ready in arms to defend their property. Because this was deemed a reflection upon the supreme power, and a danger to the public peace, the Governor of Gloucester was ordered to lend all possible assistance to the Commissioners for destroying tobacco, and the County Justices were ordered to co-operate, in order that the crops might be destroyed and the leaders brought to justice.

This attempt proved to be just as unavailing as all previous ones had been, for in the following spring

[1] Latimer, *Annals of Bristol.*
[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic,* 1657, June 14, p. 211.

preparations were made in Gloucester and other counties for the planting of a great deal of tobacco. The Sheriffs were again ordered to do their utmost, but to no purpose. A letter of John Beaman to Thomas Colclough, one of the Commissioners, written in 1658, sums up the situation at the end of the Protectorate: "Our hopeful proceedings are clouded, for this morning I got together 36 horse, and went to Cheltenham early, and found an armed multitude guarding the tobacco field. We broke through them and went into the town, but found no peace officer, but a rabble of men and women, calling for blood for the tobacco, so that, had there been any action, blood would have been spilt. The soldiers stood firm and with cocked pistols bade the multitude disperse, but they would not, and 200 more came from Winchcombe. Major Clark is not come, and I want advice. Ten men could not in four days destroy the good tobacco about Cheltenham. The cornet would not act, and some of the county troop are dealers and planters. I was forced to retreat. The Justices of the Peace rather hinder than help us. The soldiers say, if this be suffered, farewell all levies and taxes, and farewell the Virginia trade for tobacco. I can do nothing till I hear from you."[1]

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic* 1658, July 31, p. 104–5.

CHAPTER V

Suppression of English Planting

As far as the English planters were concerned, the Restoration brought no relief, for, whatever the Government might be, it was hostile to their industry. Clarendon was just as strongly convinced of the value of the colonies as Cromwell had been, and he therefore resolved to put a stop to an industry in England which hindered their development. As will be shown later, during the Restoration period, in consequence of a variety of causes, the colonies of Virginia and Maryland passed through a very critical economic period, and this fact still further intensified the hostility of the home authorities to the English planters.

In the very year of the Restoration Clarendon made a determined effort to destroy this obnoxious industry. The Navigation Act of 1660 clearly showed the direction in which English policy was tending, and this was followed up before the end of the year by more specific action. On December 21st an Act prohibiting the planting of tobacco in

England was read in Council;[1] two months later, on the petition of the planters and others interested in the colonial tobacco trade, the Attorney General was ordered to draw up a proclamation putting the Act into execution; and on March 20th the draft Proclamation was read and approved.

It is stated in the preamble to the Act that it was necessary to encourage the plantations in America, and to protect them for a variety of reasons: they employed a large quantity of English shipping, and thus catered to the national power; if prosperous, they were a good market for English goods; they supplied this country with many commodities formerly purchased at very much higher rates abroad. English-grown tobacco was denounced, not only on the ground that it was unwholesome, but also because, by being used as a substitute for colonial tobacco, it materially lessened the customs of the realm. In this preamble, there is no mention of the moral objections to tobacco, which had been such an important consideration to James I. and Charles I., the protection of the colonial tobacco trade being justified solely on economic grounds.

The Act states that any person who shall set or plant tobacco in England shall be liable to the forfeiture of the tobacco itself, or its equivalent

[1] *Acts of Privy Council: Colonial*, 1660, December 21st. 12 Charles II., cap. 34–5.

value, and also for a fine of 40s. for every rod or pole of ground so planted. The proceeds of the fines were to be divided equally between His Majesty and the informer, and sheriffs were empowered to destroy tobacco crops within ten days after receiving information. Those who resisted the execution of the Act were made liable to a fine of £5 or the forfeiture of £5 in personal property, or if this was impossible, to two months in gaol "without bail or mainprize." The Act concludes with a provision, permitting small quantities of tobacco to be planted for scientific purposes in University gardens, and it was duly published throughout the county in April, 1661.[1]

In 1662 Sir W. Berkeley, Governor of Virginia, and others interested in the Virginia and Maryland trade, petitioned that orders be immediately issued to the sheriffs of the counties affected, requiring the Act to be put into effect.[2] The Government was also stimulated to action by complaints from another quarter, for the planting of tobacco in England was also causing alarm to the Farmers of the Customs. With the fall in the demand for colonial tobacco, consequent upon the increasing consumption of the English commodity, there had

[1] *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, MSS. of Rye and Hereford Corporation, etc., etc., R.B. XIII 4, p. 240, 1661, April 19.
[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1661–2, p. 367.

been an appreciable shrinkage in the customs receipts.

On April 30th the Sheriff of Gloucester was ordered to proceed to the destruction of the crop in accordance with the law.[1] Mr Secretary Nicholas again wrote to the Sheriff on May 10th :[2] The King had heard that he had not yet left town, and as it was now the season for planting tobacco, he was to repair immediately to his county to discharge his duty. This duty, however, the High Sheriff was very reluctant to perform, and though he returned to his county, he did not display the requisite amount of energy in the work, for in July he received a sharp reprimand from Mr Secretary Nicholas :[3] " There still being very much tobacco in your county undestroyed." At the same time, letters containing similar instructions to those of April 30th were issued to the High Sheriffs and Justices of Worcester and Hereford.

In August it was reported from Bristol that the militia were to appear that month to destroy the local crop in which many were interested.[4] The writer of the report at the same time expressed a doubt as to the wisdom of a policy which brought together all the horse of many shires thereabouts, and thus encouraged the people to think of plots.

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1662, April 30th.
[2] *Ibid.*, May 10th. [3] *Ibid.*, July 13th.
[4] *Hist. MSS. Report Comm.*, 29 XII 2, p. 144, 1662, Aug. 6.

So far, however, no tangible results were apparent; in fact, the tobacco plantations, instead of being utterly destroyed actually increased, for in 1663 it was stated that in addition to the already offending counties of Gloucester and Worcester, tobacco was being planted in Oxford and Monmouth as well. The Surveyor to the Farmers of the Customs asked for soldiers to assist him in his work, and also for special letters to the Sheriffs, ordering them to co-operate with him. As a result of this, and also because of renewed petitions from the Virginia and Maryland planters and merchants, Government decided to introduce stricter legislation. Another Act,[1] similar to the Act of 1660, but much more severe, was passed by Parliament. The preamble confesses that, notwithstanding previous legislation, tobacco-planting had actually increased, and the reason assigned for this was the smallness of the penalties previously inflicted. In future, therefore, in addition to the fines already on the statute-book, a further fine of £10 was now to be imposed on every person who planted one rod or pole; of the proceeds one-third was to go to the King, one-third to the poor of the parish, and one-third to the informer. In cases of resistance to the Act, over and above the penalties already in force, convicted

[1] 15 *far. can* 7, 55, 15–17. *Acts of Privy Council*, 1663, July 1st.

offenders were to be committed to the county gaol, there to remain without bail or mainprize until adequate security was given, with two sufficient sureties of £10, for future good behaviour. The Universities were again permitted to plant tobacco for medicinal and scientific purposes, but such plantations were not to exceed a half-pole. Letters were despatched to the Sheriffs of Gloucester, Worcester, Oxford, Hereford and Monmouth, ordering them to assist Mr Thomas Delaval, Surveyor to the Farmers of His Majesty's Customs, and such other persons as he shall employ, in the destruction of the tobacco crops. Similar letters were again sent out on January 30th, 1664, which, in addition, ordered the sheriffs to have the proclamation publicly read at the next Quarter Sessions; at the same time a special letter was directed to the bailiff of the town of Winchcombe, as being a particularly intransigent district.

As conditions did not improve in 1664, it was decided to act upon Mr Delaval's suggestion of the year before.[1] The Lord Lieutenant of the County of Gloucester was ordered to assist the Sheriff with sufficient horse to do the work of destruction thoroughly, and the local Justices were also commanded to co-operate.[2] Apparently, the forces at the disposal of Lord Herbert, the Lord Lieutenant,

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, April, 1664. [2] *Ibid.*, April 13th, 1664.

were not sufficient for his purposes, as appears from a letter to the Duke of Albemarle (Monk) dated June 10th, 1664.[1] The Sheriff of Gloucester, in the discharge of his duty, had encountered violent opposition in the neighbourhoods of Evesham and Winchcombe; this opposition had been so determined that the Sheriff had found it impossible, with the forces at his command, to complete his work. The Duke was therefore asked to send a troop of horse of the Earl of Oxford's regiment as quickly as possible, to aid the royal officials.

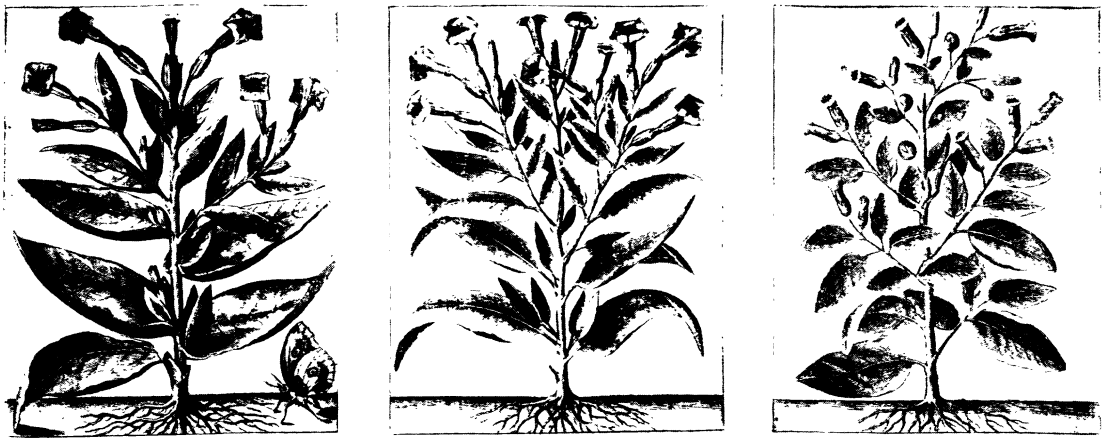
Another letter,[2] of a similar tenor, was sent in the following year, which shows that even a troop of horse, in addition to the county levies, was not sufficient to turn the local planters from their industry. This should be ample proof, if proof were necessary, not only that the industry must have been exceedingly lucrative, but also that it was one in which a large proportion of the people of Gloucestershire were engaged. If this were not so, and if the local planters had not been supported by public opinion, the very determined action of the Government during these two years would have been completely successful.

New ground was prepared in 1666, and planting

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, June 10th, 1664.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 7th, 1665.

went on as usual. The Council exhorted the Sheriffs of Gloucester and other counties to do all in their power to assist the Collector of the Customs to put an end to this long-prohibited industry.[1] The Sheriff of Gloucester thereupon set to work with energy, and the result was that serious riots broke out in the Cheltenham and Winchcombe district; the people vowed that they would lose their lives rather than obey these laws, and, in attempting to discharge his duty, the unfortunate Sheriff almost lost his. Lord Herbert of Raglan,[2] the Lord Lieutenant, was accordingly instructed to assist the Commissioner with as much militia as he might think necessary, and at the same time a supporting troop of horse was ordered to Tewkesbury to hold itself in readiness. The Judges of Assize at Gloucester were instructed to give the statute against the planting of tobacco in England in charge to the Grand Jury, in order that breaches of this law should be severely punished. Particular inquiry was made with regard to the riotous and mutinous behaviour of the inhabitants of Winchcombe and Cheltenham, who had mishandled the Sheriff while carrying out his duty. A significant indication of the importance of the tobacco industry in Gloucestershire is afforded by the fact that many of the local

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, March 6th, 1666.
Ibid., March 30th, 1666.



Three species of Tobacco plant figured by Johannes Neander, *Tabacologia*, Bremen, 1622

[*face p 112*

justices, in spite of definite orders, had done little or nothing to enforce the law, and they were particularly instructed this year not to be so lax in the future.

Notwithstanding this, the area of tobacco-planting still continued to extend, for on June 20th of this year (1666) letters were sent out to the Sheriffs of Gloucester, Warwick, Worcester, Oxford, Monmouth, Hereford and Brecknock, ordering them to destroy the tobacco crops. These letters are almost peevish in their tone: "His Majesty is wearied with continued complaints, and cannot but observe that his clemency is abused, and the stubborn spirit of nonconformists improved, in that they continue to dig up new grounds for planting this illegal crop."[1] It was rather a stretch of imagination to use the word "clemency" in connection with a policy persistently followed by the Government, which had failed, not on account of gentleness, but because it was opposed to the public opinion of a number of English counties. The situation, in fact, was similar to that which has recently been seen in certain of the American States where, it is said the prohibition law has remained almost a dead letter, because no one, even the judges, is prepared to put it into effect. Following on this expostulation come the usual orders, and letters asking for

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, June 20th, 1666.

assistance were also sent to the Lords Lieutenant of the affected counties. In order to make an example of notorious culprits, a warrant was issued summoning before the Board, John Ryland, Thomas Grey and John Lamport, " actors and assistants in planting and sowing tobacco in those parts "[1] (Cheltenham and Winchcombe).

In 1667 the area affected continued to extend,[2] for, in addition to the counties already mentioned, letters were sent out to the High Sheriffs of York and Essex ; they were ordered to return in writing to the Board a list containing the names of all those concerned in any way with the planting of tobacco and also a description of the character and quantity of the land so employed. As the Justices of Gloucestershire still continued to be very remiss in respect to this part of their duty, 120 horse of the Guards were despatched to that county to perform the unpleasant and even dangerous work, and all local officials were commanded to lend their help. The Sheriff of Gloucester, who, as a result of his recent experience at Winchcombe, naturally had not been particularly active, was ordered to attend the Commander of the troops in person, " with as much of the *posse comitatus* as shall be necessary." Two of the local justices, who had been particularly

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1666.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 24, August 14. *Cal. of State Papers : Domestic*, 1667, August 7.

slack, and had actually made difficulties, were ordered up to London to explain their actions to the Board, and the Judges of Assize were again bidden to charge the Grand Jury with the execution of the law against English tobacco.

Mr Philip Robinson, of Much Maplested, was summoned to appear before their Lordships in this year, in order to explain how he had dared to plant tobacco.[1] He proved to their satisfaction, however, that he had done this in total ignorance of the law, and on giving security of £500 to destroy it within a week, he was allowed to go. The very fact that a man of property could clear himself of the charge of breaking a law which had caused so much ferment in a not-distant county gives some indication of the almost complete isolation of country districts towards the end of the seventeenth century. After over forty years of continual prohibitions one would naturally assume that even a child in the most remote county would be acquainted with the attitude of the Government on this point, but it evidently was not so. The Farmers of the Customs were loath to part with Robinson's money, for, though he destroyed his crop at once, his £500 still remained in their hands. In the circumstances, he appealed to the Board, and in the following

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1667, Aug. 16, Aug. 6, Sept. 23, Nov. 15.

November his case was referred to the Commissioners of the Treasury.

The Farmers of the Customs acknowledged themselves to be completely baffled, and they recognized that under existing circumstances they were powerless.[1] In spite of the law and all their efforts, tobacco was still being planted, and they therefore complained to the Council. They stated that the Justices of the Peace and Sheriffs would not enforce the law and they produced an affidavit to this effect, sworn before the Mayor of Bristol. They went on to point out that it was actually in the interests of the Justices to protect the crop in defiance of the law, as, for example, in Gloucestershire, where it was grown on their own lands. As the yield of the industry was very great, and as half the profits went to the owners of the land in the shape of rent, it was obviously to their material interest to see that the law was not enforced. In the opinion of the Farmers, nothing could be done until the law was amended, since the power of destroying tobacco was given to magistrates, only when they had received information; but in a county where all were concerned in the industry it would be difficult to find anyone so rash as to give that information. They therefore suggested that, in

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1667, Aug. 2nd, Aug. 12th. *Report of Hist. MSS. Comm.*, 25, XII 7, p. 53, 1667, Aug. 20.

addition to the measures now being taken, the Judges of Assize should be instructed to order a return to be made of what had been done, and to impose fines on justices guilty of neglect. They further asked that the sale of such tobacco should be prohibited, and that they should be given a search warrant to destroy it. The Solicitor-General was ordered to consider what means might be taken to prevent its growth, distribution and sale, and to prepare a proclamation accordingly.

All these deliberations produced little tangible result as far as the tobacco planters were concerned, for in 1668 the list of counties in which tobacco was grown was larger than ever: Oxford, Gloucester, Monmouth, Hereford, Flint, Warwick, Worcester, Shropshire, Yorkshire and Essex.[1] The usual orders were again sent out, and county officials were told to return a list in writing, giving the names of the persons growing tobacco, and the names and extent of the lands on which it was grown. The much-tried Sheriff of Gloucester sent in a bill of £38, which he had expended in the hire of horses and men for the work of destruction. Having satisfied themselves that the money had been truly spent in this way, the King's Remembrancer was ordered to allow the payment.

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1668, June 26. *Cal. of Treas. Books*, 1667–8, Jan. 13, Jan. 27. 1668, June 18, July 7, July 8.

In 1671 the suggestions put forward by the justices four years before were embodied in a statute: One month before each Quarter Sessions written returns on oath were to be made by the High Constables and other officials, setting forth what tobacco was planted in their area and on whose land. Power was given to the officers to destroy the crop out of hand, and for dereliction of duty, a fine was imposed; persons refusing to assist the officers were fined 5s., and those convicted of resisting were to be fined £5 in addition to the other penalties already imposed by previous Acts, which were again recited and re-imposed by this one.[1]

These renewed efforts, however, seem to have been about as fruitful as their predecessors, for early in 1672 the Board learned that great quantities of land were being prepared in Gloucester, Hereford, Wilts and Worcester, and much new ground was being dug up. The Surveyor of Customs was given the usual authority for enforcing the law, and the men who did his work were duly paid off in the following September.[2]

A year later, July 31st, 1673, Colonel Rumsey, Collector of Customs at Bristol, was ordered by the Board to proceed to Winchcombe, taking with him

[1] 22–23 *Car. II.*, cap. 26. An Act to prevent the planting of tobacco in England and for regulating the plantation trade.
[2] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1672, Aug. 16. *Cal. of Treas. Books*, Sept. 24.

the Sheriff of Gloucester, and other officials, both civil and military, to destroy the tobacco planted there.[1] At the same time, an order was despatched to a certain Tyler, empowering him to destroy the crop in Yorkshire. As trouble was expected in Gloucestershire, the Earl of Oxford was asked to send a troop of horse from his regiment to assist Colonel Rumsey. Giles Dowle, of Lincoln's Inn, was appointed, in 1674, Prosecutor of the illegal planters of tobacco, a function which he continued to discharge and for which he was regularly paid for the next twenty years or so.[2] Later in the year a commission in the usual terms was issued, directing the destruction of tobacco in Gloucester, Wiltshire, Hereford, Worcester and Yorkshire, and the Duke of Monmouth assisted in Gloucestershire with a troop of horse. In 1675 planting still continued in Gloucester and Worcester, and payments were duly made to various officials who had attempted to enforce the law.[3] It is obvious, however, that up to this date, in spite of all that had been done, a sufficient amount of each year's crop had been marketed by the planters to encourage them to break the law again.

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1673, July 31.

[2] *Cal. of Treas. Books*, 1674, Feb. 23. *Acts of Privy Council*, 1674, July 17. *Cal. of Treas. Books*, 1674, Oct. 9.

[3] *Report of Hist. MSS. Comm.*, IX Report, Part II app. and index, p. 450. *Ibid.*, Reports of Various Collections, Wilts and Worcester, 1675–6, March 23. *Cal. of Treas. Books*, 1675, Dec. 2.

In March, 1676, Danby issued the letter which had by now become stereotyped, ordering the local officials to report the names of all those engaged in the trade, the places where tobacco was planted and the extent of acreage affected.[1] Crops were again planted in the Winchcombe area in this year, and the people were as resolved as ever to protect their property and market the crop. In an attempt to enforce the law, Nicholas Robinson, the constable, was very roughly handled by his fellow-townsmen, who later did their best by persistent persecution of himself and his family to drive him from the neighbourhood. He was personally assaulted, his wife and children were repeatedly threatened, and everything possible was done to make his life miserable. There are also records of payments to different men in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, for destroying tobacco in those areas, which shows that it was still being sown in the Midlands and the North.

In 1677 crops were widely planted in several counties.[2] The Commissions of this year were issued to the Surveyor General of Customs to destroy tobacco in and about Winchcombe, throughout Gloucestershire, in the counties of Worcester, Hereford, Warwick, York, Lincoln, Nottingham,

[1] *Cal. of Treas. Books*, 1676, Sept. 16, Oct. 3.
[2] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1677, July 20.

and places adjacent; in other words, tobacco planting had spread almost completely over the Midlands; but Gloucestershire, as usual, was the worst offender, and the people of Winchcombe the most determined and violent opponents of the law. Once more the Duke of Monmouth despatched a troop of horse to that neighbourhood in order to co-operate with the officials.[1]

Two years later, the Surveyor of Customs at Bristol, William King, received a warrant similar to those of previous years.[2] From this it appears that tobacco was still planted in Gloucester, Worcester, Hereford and places adjacent. The Surveyor was again given a troop of horse of the Earl of Oxford's regiment to assist him. A similar procedure was adopted in the following year, except that the assisting troops were ordered up by the Duke of Albemarle. In 1682, '83, '84 and '85 this process was repeated, but evidently these efforts, though more successful than those of ten years before, did not succeed in stamping out the industry entirely.

In 1682, in accordance with the law, minute instructions were issued from the Sheriff's Court, Gloucester, to the County Justices,[3] requiring them

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1678, June 21.

[2] *Ibid.*, 1680, July 7. *Ibid.*, 1681, June 30. *Ibid.*, 1682, June 17. *Ibid.*, 1683, June 23. *Ibid.*, 1684, June 13. *Ibid.*, 1685, Dec. 18.

[3] *Sheriff's Court Rolls, Gloucester City*, 1682. *Ibid.*, Aug. 12. *Ibid.*, 1690, July.

to send out warrants to all petty constables, in order to have a complete return of the names of the persons engaged in the industry. Also high constables, petty constables and tithing-men were ordered to make report after diligent search, of the names of all those who planted, set, improved or grew tobacco-seeds in any way. They were ordered to return a true account of the names of these people at their peril, and the high constables were to render an account of their proceedings to the Court at its next sitting. This policy was probably repeated all through the '80's, but the nett result in Gloucestershire must have seemed exceedingly meagre.

On June 27th, 1689, an order[1] was issued in the usual terms for the destruction of English tobacco, which " in spite of several statutes, imposing great and heavy penalties, is still grown in the counties of Gloucester, Hereford, Worcester and Warwick, but more particularly at Cheltenham and other places in County Gloucester." Similar orders[2] were issued in the following year, and apparently the officials were again at the work in 1691, for we have the surprising petition of Richard Teale, miller, of Cheltenham.[3] This person had the audacity to

[1] *Acts of Privy Council*, 1689, June 27.
[2] *Sheriff's Court Rolls, Gloucester City*, 1690, Feb. 20.
[3] *Cal. of Treas. Papers*, 1691.

demand recompense from the Government for a small plot of tobacco, which had been destroyed by the King's officers, planted by him—*in ignorance of the law!* It is impossible to explain this by the rural isolation of the time, since the very neighbourhood in which this man was living had been notorious for more than two generations for its illegal plantations of tobacco. The more reasonable conclusion must be that the people of Cheltenham and Winchcombe had from long experience come to believe that the law expressed a pious aspiration, and not only that it could be set at nought, but that those in authority in London were on the same plane with their own local justices, who were vitally interested in the trade.

It is probable that the industry would have been completely destroyed some years earlier than it actually was, had it not been for the breathing-space which the county planters were given during the reign of James II. That monarch appears to have been fully occupied with Monmouth's rebellion and his own religious reforms, so that the breaches of the law committed by distant tobacco planters escaped his notice. In spite of this intermission, however, the industry declined rapidly in the '80's, and appears to have died out almost completely in the '90's. Seventy years of Orders in

Council, Parliamentary prosecution, and military visitations had at last borne fruit, and the last entry we have found referring to this once flourishing industry is in 1697,[1] in which year Giles Dowle, who had been employed by the Council to destroy tobacco in Gloucestershire prays for the payment of his wages. From this it would appear that as Giles Dowle was first appointed twenty-three years before, there were evidently men who had made their livelihood by becoming specialists in the destruction of tobacco.

During this long struggle there had been many in England who sympathized with the county planters, and were opposed to the policy of the Government Few seem to have been taken in by the royal proclamations which repeatedly stated that English tobacco was unwholesome and injurious to the body : " It hath thriven very well in our English soil, and great quantities of it grow yearly in several gardens in Westminster and in other parts of Middlesex ; it is planted in great quantity in Gloucestershire, Devonshire and some other Western counties, His Majesty sending every year a troop of horse to destroy it, lest the trade of our American plantations be incommoded thereby ; yet many of the London apothecaries make use of English tobacco in their shops, notwithstanding the vulgar opinion that this

[1] *Cal. of Treas. Papers*, 1697, May 17.

herb is native to America and foreign to Europe."[1]

Owing to the fact that almost from the beginning the industry was carried on in the teeth of Government opposition and against the law of the land, it is almost impossible to discover anything about the methods of its preparation and distribution. Apparently it was taken, sometimes secretly, sometimes openly, to London, Bristol and other great towns, where it found a ready market. Sometimes it was sold as pure English tobacco, sometimes as pure Virginia, and sometimes, when mixed with Virginian tobacco, as Old Spanish. In whatever form it was sold, however, it seems to have been suited to the taste of the people of that century, otherwise the industry could never have flourished so long, in the face of such inveterate hostility.

English tobacco found at least one enthusiastic supporter in Carew Reynell, a noted economic writer of the Restoration period. As the opinions expressed in his pamphlet may, in part, help to explain how the industry managed to thrive in spite of the law, it is proposed to quote the relevant passages of his little work *in extenso*:—

"What would bring infinite wealth to this nation (if the law would permit it) is the planting of

[1] *The Natural History of Coffee, Chocolate and Tobacco*, printed in London, 1682, Section IV. *The Natural History of Tobacco*, Harleian Miscellany, 1808 ed., vol. 1.

tobacco; it would employ abundance of people, would raise the value of the land, *e.g.*, from 10s. to £3 per acre, the tenant making a profit of thirty to forty shillings per acre; before the severity of the laws against its planting, it went well forward; those counties where it began to be planted are believed to be willing to allow the King the common rent of the ground, or more, to be permitted to plant again. There are reputed to have been 6,000 plantations in Gloucestershire, Devon, Somerset and Oxford. If not so good as foreign-grown, it finds purchasers, people *will* have tobacco. Some prefer it to the foreign; being strong they can cure it to taste as they will; it has been sold for Spanish in London."[1] The writer then goes on to criticize the system of the Navigation Laws: "We should consider ourselves before the interests of Virginia. It would really be better to move Virginia and New England further south; then they could trade with us, while now, we and they have the same commodities, and they export them also to the West Indies. It would be better for Virginia to plant mulberries, vines and olives, as they begin in Carolina. If they wished to continue their

[1] *The True English Interest: or an account of the chief National Improvements in some Political Observations, demonstrating an infallible advantage of this nation to infinite Wealth and Greatnes, trade, and populacy with Imployment for and Preferment for all Persons.* By Carew Reynell, Esq., London, 1674, pp. 32–6 (Brit. Mus., 291, d. 42).

tobacco trade we should leave them liberty so to do, and they say theirs is so much better. The customs and shipping would not be hurt because the tobacco would fetch in so many other commodities. Indeed, it would be better to supply the King some other way than by prejudicing the common good. The whole of the South of England is fit for it. The more home industries we have, the more foreign trade we shall have."

The policy of the Government amounted to nothing short of the regulation of the national taste in tobacco in the interests of the colonies. In the earlier part of the century, it has already been pointed out, the universal demand was for the Spanish product, but later on, owing to its cost and the prohibitions of the Government, the people of England appear to have preferred the home-grown variety, or at least to have regarded it as a satisfactory substitute, not only for Spanish but also for Virginia leaf. Gradually, however, the plentiful supply from the colonies and the great fall in its price, coupled with the growing danger of using English tobacco, resulted in the English developing a marked preference for the colonial product. By the end of the century, Spanish tobacco was practically prohibited, the English plantations were destroyed, with the result that the Government succeeded in cultivating a national taste which fell

in with the economic and political policy of the time. While the economic theories and the political system which those theories were supposed to ensure have since disappeared, the carefully cultivated taste still continues; for the average Englishman of to-day will still prefer Virginia tobacco, whether in the shape of a "Gold Flake" or of a packet of "Navy Cut," to the best products of any other part of the world.

It is probable also, that as the century advanced, the Virginia planters became more expert in the art of curing, and this may have helped to determine the British consumer as much as anything else. The climate of England does not permit of the same drying and other processes under natural conditions, which are possible on the banks of the James and the Potomac. As this curing undoubtedly improved the flavour, English tobacco would probably have been supplanted in any case on the English market.

The seventeenth century saw the rise and decline of this interesting industry, and the great agricultural changes of the eighteenth century seem to have obliterated effectively from the minds of the Gloucestershire peasantry all memories and even traditions of its existence. The "now famous town of Winchcombe," as it was described in the reign of Charles II., has lost its borough rights and become

a quiet country village, completely oblivious of its great days, when its people bullied the local constable, defied and half-killed the County Sheriff, and met in open fight picked troops of the Guards. The only thing to remind the visitor of those stirring days is a field on the outskirts of Winchcombe on the Cheltenham road, which still bears the name "Tobacco Close."

CHAPTER VI

The Colonial Trade

During the first few years of her history Virginia passed through a very serious time, and the young colony was on several occasions brought to the verge of extinction, but with the beginning of tobacco planting by Rolfe in 1612, and the shipment of an experimental cargo in 1613 the tide definitely turned. Bermuda began planting in the following year and by 1619 a generous estimate of the Virginia trade puts it at £100,000.

Once the Virginia planters realized the possibilities of tobacco, they neglected everything for this one crop, and thus aroused the hostility of the king, who, as early as 1622 recommended the Virginia Company to breed silkworms, in order that a silk industry might be established in preference to tobacco.[1] Neither James nor his son believed that a province which was "built upon smoke" could prosper, and, besides this, they were genuinely opposed to the spread of a "vain" custom, which

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1622.

in their opinion, and in that of many others of the time, was harmful to the health of the nation.

Even when tobacco had become a royal monopoly, and consequently was of some material importance to the Crown, both James and Charles continued to be hostile to it.

In 1627 the Governor and Council of Virginia were informed that His Majesty was much troubled by the little account they had paid to his previous warnings against trusting to one crop only. It was a source of grief to the King that no more substantial commodity was being produced, and truly it may be said " that this province is wholly built upon smoke, tobacco being the only means it hath produced."[1] They were therefore not only recommended but commanded for the future to devote their attention to the production of pitch, tar, pipe-staves and other useful articles.

As a royal monopoly the King could regulate the whole of the tobacco trade, from the planters to the actual purchaser. This state of affairs was by no means satisfactory to the planters, and there are continual complaints during the period against the limitation of the quantity produced, and the prices offered, and praying for the restoration of free trade. When, for example, in 1626, the planters heard of the quantity which they were to be per-

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial*, 1627, Nov. (?).

mitted to import, and the price which the King allowed them, "they with one voice refused both propositions, as these would not be sufficient to support them"; they therefore asked that the King would allow them to have their tobacco, and dispose of it as they liked.[1]

A year later Governor Yeardley of Virginia and the Council of Virginia petitioned the Privy Council that free trading should be restored, and that the privilege of being the sole importers of tobacco, already promised, should be continued.[2] The answer of the King was a proclamation in which the growth of English tobacco and the importation of Spanish was strictly prohibited; further, no tobacco was to be imported from the English colonies without licence under the Great Seal, and when imported, was to be sold to Royal commissioners appointed in that behalf, from whom only tobacco should be bought.[3]

Charles was resolved that if tobacco was to be used, it was to be brought from those plantations only which as yet had no other means of subsistence. Thus, as has been already shown, new impositions were placed upon tobacco in 1631: 2s. per lb. on Spanish, 1s. on English W. Indies, and 9d. on Virginia and Somers Islands.[4] Once more the King lamented

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial*, 1626: *Answer to Proc. Car. I.* No. 61. [2] *Ibid.*, 1627.
[3] *Ibid., Domestic*, 1627.
[4] *Ibid., Colonial*, 1631, Jan. 6.

A TOBACCO FACTORY IN THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

1. Spinning or rolling
2. The tobacco-plant
3. Picking leaves from branches
4. Pressing
5. Cutting the cakes

the waywardness of his subjects "the King is careful to encourage and support the plantation and he has long expected some better fruit than tobacco and smoke to be returned from thence";[1] at the same time the quantity of tobacco exported was to be regulated for each planter and no one was to exceed his quantity.

This policy of regulation continued down to the outbreak of the Civil War, but all the Royal expostulations and reminders fell on deaf ears. Indeed, Charles himself was in a very weak position, for while he genuinely detested tobacco and feared its pernicious effects upon his subjects, he could not fail to see that the trade brought money into the Royal treasury; and further, no matter how much he might disapprove, it was plain that the very existence of at least two valuable plantations depended upon its continuance. It would patently be madness to destroy Virginia and the Somers Islands, with all their prospects and possibilities of development, simply because at the moment they were obstinately attached to a worthless industry.

For their part, the Virginia planters seem always to have been sure of their own wisdom, and also of the weakness of the King's position. Thus they did not hesitate to petition James, whose

[1] *Cal. of State Papers : Colonial*, 1631. Several references to the same proclamations in the *Cal. of State Papers : Domestic.*

opinion on the subject of tobacco was well known, to prohibit the import of the Spanish commodity in order that they might monopolize the English market. It is a proof, both of the importance of their industry and the weakness of the King's position, that in spite of his friendship with Spain, and his own loathing of tobacco, he concurred in this request.

The following figures may serve to indicate the displacement of Spanish by Virginian tobacco :—

Exports of Tobacco from Virginia.

1619 . . .	20,000 lbs.
1620 . . .	40,000 lbs.
1621 . . .	55,000 lbs.
1622 . . .	60,000 lbs.
1626 . . .	500,000 lbs.
1629 . . .	1,500,000 lbs.
1630 . . .	1,500,000 lbs.
1631 . . .	1,300,000 lbs.

From an estimate of the revenue made in 1628, we can calculate the annual import as 50,000 lbs. Spanish and 350,000 lbs. Virginian.[1]

As early as 1624,[2] the fame of the English plantations in Virginia was already considerable, for in that year Hollanders began to haunt her shores

[1] Rive, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1624.

and from then on to 1665 and even to the end of the century a certain amount of Virginia tobacco was shipped directly in Dutch ships to continental ports. This trade seems to have received additional stimulus, after tobacco became a Royal monopoly, on account of the small quantities which the planters were allowed to ship to England, and the low prices they were offered.

Between 1640 and 1650 the colonial planters were left free to develop their industry in comparative peace, for, as the years went by, public opinion came to see in the tobacco trade a great national asset, since it encouraged shipping and bred many mariners. By the latter year, as far as the Government was concerned, the moral objection to it had entirely disappeared, and the State henceforward bent all its energies to ensure that nothing, either in England or elsewhere, should stand in the way of its steady progress and development. It must be understood that this general rule was qualified by the proviso, stated or understood, that such development should be in conformity with contemporary political and economic theories.

After the Restoration, the trade continued to expand throughout the century, so that, at the end of the period under review, Beer estimates that of England's total colonial trade in 1697, valued at £1,638,086, about seven-eighths, *i.e.*, £1,420,207, was

carried on with the sugar and tobacco colonies, of which tobacco constituted by far the larger proportion.[1] This rapid growth in the trade did not mean that the whole period was marked by uniform prosperity. Both Maryland and Virginia suffered a great deal from the evils of over-production, and this evil was to a certain extent increased by the fact that new colonies which were planted during the period turned also to the production of tobacco. When, for example, the proposal to plant Carolina was discussed, one of the arguments urged in its favour was that the new colony would produce commodities not hitherto yielded from the English plantations, and that it would not therefore interfere with the tobacco interests of Virginia and Maryland.[2] This hope was not justified by the event, for many people from Virginia settled in Carolina, and naturally turned to the production of a commodity which they understood. In a letter from the Lords Proprietors of Carolina to Lord Shaftesbury, they state that they are now able to make considerable returns of tobacco, which they speak of as being equal to Spanish, and about ten years later Carolina was producing annually about 1,000,000 lbs.[3]

The Restoration period is filled with the complaints of the Virginia planters about the state of their

[1] G. L. Beer, *Old Colonial System*, vol. I, ch. I, pp. 41–2.
[2] *Cal. of State Papers : Colonial*, 1663. [3] *Ibid.*, 1674.

colony, and prophecies of their speedy ruin. In 1681, for example, a report from Virginia states that "our most formidable enemy—poverty—is falling upon us violently, through the low value, or rather no value of tobacco."[1] Lord Culpeper, in the same year, wrote: "But that which is more to us than all other things put together and will be the speedy and certain ruin of the colony, is the low price of tobacco. The thing is so fatal and desperate that there is no remedy; the market is overstocked and every crop overstocks it more. It is commonly said that there is tobacco enough now in London to last all England for five years; too much plenty would make gold itself a drug. Our thriving is our undoing, and our purchase of negroes, by increasing the supply of tobacco, has greatly contributed thereto."[2]

In the next year, Lord Baltimore, in a letter to Blathwayt, states: "It is certainly thought, unless some expedient can be found to raise the price of tobacco, ruin is well-nigh certain."[3] Serious tobacco-cutting riots broke out in that year, some of the inhabitants being resolved that no tobacco should be planted for that season. They first destroyed their own crops and then proceeded to do likewise to those of their neighbours who had not

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial*, 1681.
[2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*, 1682.

joined them, informing them that if they were unwilling to have their plants cut up, they would create willingness in them by force. A great quantity of tobacco was thus destroyed, and it finally became necessary to call out the military to quell the rioters.[1]

In the letter of Lord Culpeper, quoted above, one of the reasons for this over-production is explained: taxes, the salaries of some of the government officials, and the wages of the soldiers and sailors, were frequently paid in tobacco. For these *unproductive* purposes the planters produced "trash" tobacco which clogged the market. In 1673 it was stated in a petition from Virginia that "soldiers will not serve for tobacco, because the merchants give them so little for it as a year's salary will hardly clothe them."[2] An indication of the danger of using tobacco as a medium of exchange is shown by the fact that between September, 1674, and the end of the year the price of flour per barrel fell from 150 lbs. to 100 lbs. of tobacco. It is possible also that the exacting methods of the merchants had a good deal to do with the contemporary economic distress That the distress was not very deep-seated, however, seems to be shown by the fact that in 1683, just one year after the

[1] *Cal. of State Papers : Colonial*, 1682. [2] *Ibid.*, 1683.

lugubrious reports quoted above and the tobacco-cutting riots, Lord Culpeper writes: "Success beyond my expectations has attended my endeavours here and you need doubt little of peace and quietness here, so long as tobacco bears a price, which I hope will be two years at least."[1]

As early as 1662 the planters had themselves proposed a remedy for overproduction, which was to forbid planting for a year. A petition to this effect was sent to the King, which stated that as great quantities of tobacco had been planted in Virginia, Maryland, England and other places His Majesty would be pleased to grant two requests: (1) that he would prohibit the planting of tobacco in Virginia after June 1st, 1663, which will encourage the more staple commodities of silk, flax, etc.; and (2) that no ship depart from those colonies before the 1st May next, except only that which shall carry Sir William Berkeley there.[2] In 1666, 1667 and 1668, on account of the glut of tobacco it was agreed in Virginia, Maryland, Carolina and other places not to plant. The same policy was proposed again in 1680, 1681 and 1682.[3] Nothing ever came of these attempts at cessation, because it was never possible to get unanimity.

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial*, 1683.
[2] *Ibid., America and W. Indies*, 1662, May 4.
[3] *Ibid., Colonial*, 1666, 1667, 1668. *Ibid.*, 1680, 1681, 1682

The English Government opposed the idea for three reasons: it would, in the first place, cause a diminution of the revenue; secondly, as English colonial tobacco now supplied most of the markets of Europe, cessation of planting would encourage foreign nations to grow for themselves, and thus deprive England of their custom for the future, which would, in turn, have a disastrous effect upon English shipping; thirdly, as was shown in 1682–3, it was evident that the loud complaints of the planters were the result only of temporary distress. The colonial governments never genuinely believed in the idea of complete cessation, but looked rather for the cure of the evil to the encouragement of staple commodities, which would constitute a supplementary source of income. The planters themselves failed to co-operate for many reasons, but mainly because the poorer ones could not afford such a drastic experiment.

In addition to the evil of overproduction, the planters suffered in other ways during the period under review. Successive Dutch and French wars entailed losses at sea, and petitions and memorials on the subject, demanding better convoys, occur frequently during these years. A favourite scheme in this connection, which was put forward for economic reasons as well, was, that all the ships from Virginia should sail to and from that colony

in one fleet, preferably leaving England in the month of December. The reasons urged in favour of this were: "Ffirst Shipps comings into Virginia in the heat of the Summer endangers the healthes and lifes of the passingers. Secondly, The Planters when they see shippes arrive cutt down theire Tobacco before tis thorow ripe to the greate prejudice both of the King and alsoe of the Merch^{t}. because it will not keepe and proves badd. Thirdly because the shipps going thus to Virginia may go in fleetes and therefore in lesse danger of an enemie and make a shorter voyage which will be proffitable not only to the merchant but owners alsoe."[1]

Lastly, there was great dissatisfaction in the colonies over the conduct of the merchants, who alone understood market conditions in Europe. A very explicit complaint occurs in a letter of Governor Nicholson of Maryland: "I beg that a good number of ships may come to these parts, for when few come, the goods are very dear and tobacco cheap, and so left in the country, which are in danger of being spoiled. The merchants and buyers care not if there was not half so much tobacco made in the country, or the like quantity spoilt, so they could but get the other half into England which they may sell for more than if all went. They use all means to discourage the planters from making great crops

[1] *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, no. 12, 1671.

by writing and telling them that but few ships will come and little quantity of goods, and that tobaccos are cheap in England. This commonly happens in the depth of winter, when the planters are in greatest want of clothing, etc., and this amuses them and makes them uneasy and loath to apply themselves to planting as they would. . . . If ships do not come from England to fetch the tobacco and bring good quantity of linen, woollen, working tools and other necessaries, it may put the people upon clothing themselves, for if but one quarter of them should employ themselves in doing so, they may furnish at least half these two countries, they being capable of affording all materials for the purpose, as is Pennsylvania, where a great number of Germans and others do it, and as is in S. Carolina, where the French and others do the same. But if a sufficient number of ships come with suitable cargoes, then the planters will mind nothing but planting, and leave off their other projects, which I hope never to see, for the King's revenue will be diminished, the consumption of English manufactures lessened, and the trade impaired."[1]

Such complaints as these throw light on the objections of the English merchants to the Scottish interlopers. The latter were evidently quite prepared to give reasonable prices and were able, not-

[1] *Cal. of State Papers : Colonial*, 1695.

withstanding, to sell at a satisfactory profit in the open market. These English merchants, in the course of years, had come to think that they had a right to misuse the colonial trade in their own private interests. As their activities were favoured by the Government of the time on the ground of imperial unity and national power, they were able to call it to their assistance. In the circumstances it is difficult to sympathize with their bitter complaints against the Scots both before and after the Union, and the conclusion would seem to be that they would have received no more than their deserts if they had been driven completely out of the trade.

Within the limits imposed by the Navigation Acts the English Government did all in its power to foster the tobacco trade, and to remove obstacles in the way of the planters' prosperity. It has already been shown how it strenuously opposed the growing of tobacco in England, and it also destroyed the Spanish trade. At the same time, both before and after the Restoration, it continually urged upon the colonials the necessity of producing other commodities in addition to tobacco.

For example, in 1662, Sir William Berkeley was promised that if he sent home a ship of 300 tons laden with silk, hemp, flax, pitch and potashes, he would be allowed to send another

ship, of the same burden, laden with tobacco, custom free.[1]

Two years later it was ordered that pitch and tar from Virginia and Maryland should be customs free for five years, in order to encourage the planters to apply themselves to the production of commodities more valuable than tobacco.[2] Economic distress, due to over-production, the abuses of the merchants and the sound advice of the English Government had no permanent effect upon the planters, for money was to be made in the industry, and they were quite prepared to take the risks.

In 1621 it was ordered that all Virginia tobacco, whether destined for foreign markets or not, should be brought to England.[3] Three years later, in the proclamation which among other things made London the tobacco staple of the kingdom, appeared the statement that no tobacco brought to England in future should be imported in "forrayne bottoms."[4] The same principle reappeared frequently during the reign of Charles I., and received very clear enunciation in a proclamation of 1637, which sums up the whole tobacco policy of the first two Stuarts.[5]

[1] *Cal. of State Papers : Colonial*, 1662.
[2] *Cal. of State Papers : Domestic*, 1664.
[3] *Sainsbury Cal.*, 1574–1660, Oct 24, 1621: quoted by H. E. Egerton, *A Short History of British Colonial Policy*, p. 72.
[4] Rymer's *Fœdera*, 1624.
[5] *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, no. 11.

When, therefore, Parliament took up the question in 1651, the idea of protecting England's shipping was not even new for that generation, and the Act which was finally passed embodied a principle of which almost everyone approved. By this Ordinance it was provided that goods shipped to and from the English plantations should be carried in English or colonial ships commanded by English captains, and worked by crews two-thirds English. The Act of 1660 reaffirmed the principle of 1651, and also provided that no tobacco, amongst other enumerated commodities, should be shipped from any of the English plantations to any country except England, Ireland and the other English plantations, unless it was first landed in England, under penalty of the forfeiture of the cargo and also of the ship, with all her tackle, guns, ammunition, apparel and furniture.[1] The Governors of the plantations were required to swear to enforce the law, and all ships loading tobacco and other enumerated goods were to give bonds that their destination was England, Ireland or other English plantations. Three years later this policy was strengthened by Section 9 of an Act passed in that year: "It is commanded that if any Commissioner of Customs shall give a warrant allowing tobacco or the other

[1] 12 *Car. II, cap.* 18: *An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing Shipping and Navigation.*

enumerated commodities to be landed outside England, Ireland, Wales and Berwick-on-Tweed, he is to be deprived of his post and to forfeit a sum equivalent to the value of the goods for which he gave the warrant."[1] An Act passed eight years later, in 1671, definitely excluded Ireland from having the privilege of importing tobacco, and the other enumerated articles direct from the colonies.[2] Two years later, a tax of 1d. per lb. was levied on all tobacco shipped from one colony to another, but before the receiving colony could ship it to a foreign market it had to be landed first in England, and pay the usual duty.[3] The main result of this Act seems to have been to cause irritation and to encourage smuggling.

It is outside the scope of the present work to discuss the rights and wrongs of the Navigation Acts. Undoubtedly, the system did impose limitations upon the colonies, but it is certain that they did not in the seventeenth century feel these limitations as would a British colony to-day. For a fuller discussion of the whole system the reader is referred to Prof. H. E. Egerton's *Short History of British Colonial Policy*, and to G. L. Beer's *Old Colonial System*.

[1] 15 *Car. II, cap.* 7, *Sec.* 9: *An Act for Encouragement of Trade.*

[2] 22 *and* 23 *Car. II, cap.* 26: *An Act to Prevent the Planting of Tobacco in England and for Regulating the Plantation Trade.*

[3] 25 *Car. II, cap.* 7.

As might have been expected, these laws were frequently evaded. The Act of 1671 was particularly unreasonable with regard to Ireland, for that country consumed a vast amount of tobacco—much more, in fact, than might have been expected from her wealth and population; *e.g.*, in the year 1696–7 she imported over 4,000,000 lbs. of tobacco from England. Smuggling undoubtedly was largely carried on with Ireland, not merely at lonely places along its extended coastline, but in the ports themselves, with the open connivance of the custom officials. The following example is one of many, which illustrates the sort of irritation to which those engaged in the Irish trade were continually subjected: "Warrant of Treasurer Danby to the Customs Officers of Bristol port to permit Silvester Cross of Kinsale, merchant, to unlade into smaller vessels, at Hung Road near Bristol, the tobacco and sugar in the *Bonaventure*, lately arrived from the Caribee Islands, as the said ship cannot be brought to the quay of Bristol till the spring-tides, the said cargo being designed for Ireland."[1] The warrant goes on to say that Cross had been prevented from proceeding on his way until the King's duties were paid. When this was done, the tobacco was to be laden on the smaller vessels once more, taken out to the *Bonaventure* and replaced on board, so

[1] *Cal. of Treas. Books*, 1675, Aug. 21.

that she might proceed on her way. It must have been sufficiently galling to an importer to be forced to go far out of his natural course in order to pay customs to another country for the privilege of trading with its colonies, but in addition, to be obliged to land the cargo at a port which was not properly equipped to receive big vessels, and thus to lose still more time and money must have been little short of maddening. The State Papers[1] abound with references to smugglers in the Irish trade, and in the seventies many of these were run down by English men-of-war.

In a later chapter mention will be made of the extent to which the Scottish skippers were implicated in the smuggling of tobacco during the period under review. But they were equalled, if not surpassed, by the New Englanders, and down to 1665 the Dutch also participated. In fact, it was partly in order to bring the activities of these latter to an end that during the second Dutch War the colony of New Netherlands was seized and occupied.[2] There was some fear that this victory might be reversed by a counter-stroke from the Dutch in the following year, for it is suggested in a letter to Arlington that some considerable merchants should fit out an expedition to New York: "for the loss of Dela-

[1] *Cal. of Treas. Books* 1672, Nov. 19, etc.
[2] *Cal. State Papers : America and West Indies*, 1662, Aug. 25.

ware falls upon Amsterdam, who bought the plantation from the W. Indian Company (Dutch) which being proud and powerful (Amsterdam) may join the said Company next Spring to recover what they have lost this autumn—which is, the whole trade of tobacco; and their neighbours of Maryland are much bribed with the trade with the Dutch."[1]

According to one contemporary account, the New England merchants grew very prosperous on this trade, living in "houses as handsomely furnished as most in London." This prosperity was built up by the trade in fish, pipe-staves, wool and tobacco, which they exchanged for the products of Spain, Portugal, and other places.[2]

Until prevented, tobacco was landed in the Channel Islands without paying any customs, whence it was smuggled into France, a practice which the customs' officials speedily suppressed. "For this little trick, if tolerated, would open a dangerous gap in the law and His Majesty's revenue, in point of the plantation trade."[3] Indeed, there was some difficulty over the suppression of the trade between New England and the Channel Islands because the latter "were not situated either in Asia, Africa or America to which the Navigation

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial*, 1664, Oct.
[2] *Ibid., America and W. Indies*, 1675.
[3] *Ibid.*, 1666, May 11.

Act referred,"[1] but this difficulty was speedily dealt with. A good deal of smuggling also went on with the Isle of Man, which was particularly well situated for running tobacco into England, Ireland or Scotland.

In spite of these breaches of the law it is fairly certain that the Navigation Acts were on the whole successful, and the following figures will serve as well as anything else, to prove this, besides illustrating the growth of the tobacco trade during the century.

Imports of Tobacco from English Colonies during Seventeenth Century[2]

1615–6	2,300½ lbs.
1616–7	19,388 lbs.
1628	369,254 lbs.
1689	14,393,635 lbs.
1693	19,866,048 lbs.
1697–8	22,737,812 lbs.
1709–10	23,350,735 lbs.

A Report laid before the House of Lords in 1704 conveys a clear idea of the immense value of tobacco in England's commerce at the beginning of the eighteenth century :—

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial, America and W. Indies*, 1676, March.

[2] *Pipe Office Declared Account* 911. *Exchequer K.R. Custom books*, 230/7. Customs $\frac{3}{1}$ Ledger Book, 1697–98, and Customs $\frac{3}{1^{2}}$. *Harleian MSS.*, 1238, no. 14.

1704.[1] Virginia.—"As to Virginia and the neighbouring colony of Maryland, we take leave to lay before your Lordships the state of the trade for this last year, as follows, viz.: An account of the number of ships, their burden, guns and lading, cleared from Virginia and Maryland from July, 1703, to May, 1704."

	No. of ships.	Tons.	Guns.	Pitch Barrels.	Tobacco.	Weight. cwt.	qrs.
Virginia ...	76	15,455	477	228	34,056½ hogshds.	170,282	2
					105 barrels	245	0
					47 chests	141	0
					Bulk	17	0
						170,685	2
Maryland	51	6,342	461	—	18,829½ hogshds.	94,147	2
Total of both colonies	127	21,797	938	228	52,886 hogshds.	264,430	0
					105 barrels	245	0
					47 chests	141	0
					Bulk	17	0
						264,833	0

Two years later, in 1706, Col. Quary, Governor of Maryland, reports that a tobacco fleet of 300 ships left Virginia and Maryland, "a far greater number than ever went from these provinces in one year before."[2]

[1] *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Report MSS. of House of Lords, p. 95.
[2] *Cal. of Treas. Papers*, 1706, Sept.

Davenant, relying on the customs statistics, estimated the average annual consumption of tobacco in England, 1689–1709, at 11,300,000 lbs., this amounting to two-fifths of the total average yearly importation of about 28,000,000 lbs.[1]

[1] Rive, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

CHAPTER VII

The Foreign Trade in Tobacco

At the beginning of the seventeenth century Spain had complete control of the tobacco supply except that which was already being grown in Europe and the Orient. As the following figures show, her trade with England in this commodity became of considerable value to her during the first twenty years. In his *Advice How to Grow Tobacco*, published 1615, C.T. says: "So greedy were our English of the Indian tobacco; as where in the beginning of our traffique there, some yeares since, the Spaniards (as in all new plantations) were prest with all sorts of wants; and had neither cloathes to cover them, nor shooes to tread on, nor bread to eate, and did therefore exchange their tobacco for Fish, Wine; Aqua-Vitæ, all sorts of lasting foods, for woollen stockins, hats, threed, hatchets and the like; they became in a short time so cloyd with all these commodities, as nothing, (some silkes and cloath of silver and gold excepted) but ready money and silver plate could content them."

1615–6. Spanish tobacco imported, London	52,764½ lbs.
1616–7. Spanish tobacco imported, London	50,906 lbs.
1617—9/8/17. Spanish tobacco imported, London	1,613 lbs.
Total imports during whole period: Outports	4,296¼ lbs.[1]

In 1619 the customs duties on the imports of Spanish tobacco in London amounted to £3,178 6s. 8d., and at the outports to £264 17s. 4d.[2]

This condition of affairs was viewed with alarm both by the economic thinkers of the day and also by the Virginia Company. The result was that Edward Bennett produced a treatise "touchinge the inconveniences that the importation of tobacco out of Spayne hath brought into this land."[3] He states that if the trade with Spain were in a satisfactory condition, as the two countries have been at peace for almost twenty years, there should be an abundance of silver in England, since silver formerly constituted the chief import from Spain. This, however, is not the case, and on the contrary,

[1] *Pipe Office Declared Account* 911: *Account of the Executors of Richard Wright, collector (under Indenture of 4 May, 14 James I.* (1616) *of the new impost on tobacco from the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, 13 James I.* (1615) *to 9th August, 15 James I.* (1617).

[2] *Exchequer K.R. Customs Books*, $\frac{9}{10}$.

[3] *Harleian MSS. No.* 280, no. 30, pp. 173–7 (Brit. Mus.).

there is actually less silver in England in 1622 than there was in 1604. The reason why the normal importation of Spanish silver in exchange for English commodities has fallen off, is the enormous extent to which the Spanish tobacco trade has now grown. "For there is so much spent yeerly of that weed in this land as doeth cost in Spaine three score thousand pounds or neere thereabout." Not only are English goods sold for tobacco, but English money is taken out of the realm for the same purpose; and, as the Spanish are continually raising the price, the amount of money so lost is increasing. Taking everything into consideration, he believes that the total drain upon this kingdom, made by the Spanish tobacco trade averages about £100,000 per annum. "In soe much that I protest both Spain and all other nations saye tauntinglie unto us when they see all our goods landed (to use there owne words) 'Que todo esse se pagaca con humo,' 'that all that will be payd in smoake.'"

This evil has been increased by the imposition placed upon this commodity, for "that brings the more damage to this damage for (except it be prohibited) our people will buy it whatsoever it cost." When King James placed an imposition on it in this country the Spanish King had gone one better and placed two on it, one on the Spanish consumer and the other on the English trade, for both of which,

according to Bennett, the English consumer has to pay. Again, when the English king had granted a patent for its sale, the Spanish king had followed suit, with the result that its price is not only kept up but raised. Bennett concludes from this that there was £1,000,000 less of silver in the country than there would be, were it not for this disastrous trade

He holds that since 1598 Spain had been able to extend and develop her colonies, thanks to the flourishing tobacco trade. The Spaniards have been able to foster the production of other commodities, having first made a beginning with tobacco, so that in 1622 their colonies are producing articles of great use, such as coffee, hides, sugar, sarsaparilla and balsam, etc. As a result of the prosperity, due largely to the tobacco trade, the Spanish colonies have become so popular that it is actually necessary to forbid any more people to leave Spain.

Unfortunately, the converse of this is also true, for prosperity in the Spanish colonies has resulted in depression in the Somers Islands and Virginia. As the universal demand in England is all for Spanish tobacco, there is no market for the Somers Islands and Virginia product, and thus His Majesty has been deprived of much revenue. If the King would grant to the Virginia Company the privilege of being the sole importers of tobacco, this would encourage more people to emigrate to the colony than the

Company had been able to send in twenty years. Once there, they, like the Spaniards, would quickly turn their attention to the production of useful commodities, though originally attracted there by tobacco only. It is clear then that a sure way of increasing the revenue by £100,000 per annum and of populating and developing Virginia is to prohibit the importation of Spanish tobacco. This the King of England has a perfect right to do, for has not the King of Spain done likewise in the case of English paper and silk?

The argument that Virginia tobacco is not as good as Spanish is not convincing, because with encouragement better land will be discovered, and the cultivation improved. But even supposing the Spanish tobacco might be still superior, what of it? Is not Spanish wine better than English beer? Yet no one urges that therefore English beer shall be dropped for the Spanish product. Other countries have long obliged their peoples to use national products, no matter how inferior these may be to those from abroad, and this principle should be adopted in this particular case.

While it is clear that Bennett, like many others of the time, was seriously alarmed by the currency crisis of the years 1620–2, it is evident also that he was at least partially inspired to produce his work by those interested in the Virginia trade.

In spite of the preferential treatment given to Virginia in 1620, by which the tobacco from that plantation paid only half the duty which was charged upon Spanish, the Spanish commodity still continued to be imported Bennett's treatise and the complaints of the Virginia Company kept the subject alive, and in 1624 the question of the Spanish trade was discussed in Parliament.[1] In this discussion it came out that the statements made by Bennett two years before were only too true, and that, instead of silver, tobacco was now the chief import from Spain. The Commons therefore petitioned the king " to prohibit all importation of tobacco, except such as is grown in his own dominions." The King, having gone into the possibility of doing this by Act of Parliament without breach of treaty with the King of Spain, although informed that such an Act was perfectly unimpeachable, preferred to trust to a proclamation, and ordered Solicitor-General Heath to draw one up accordingly.[2] This appeared on September 29th, 1624,[3] and by the end of the year it was reported from the plantations that the King's late proclamation had put new life into Virginia and the Somers Islands. Four weeks before his death James issued

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1624 : several dates.
[2] *Ibid., Colonial*, 1624 : several dates.
[3] *Collection Tudor and Stuart Proclamations*, V.1, no. 1385.

another proclamation to the same effect,[1] and a fortnight after his accession his son re-affirmed this policy.[2] Further, Charles, on the 13th May, 1625, proclaimed a Royal monopoly of purchase as a means of securing his aim.[3]

But the English consumers were not prepared without a murmur to forgo the delights of choice Spanish for the inferior Virginia, no matter upon what high reasons of state such a policy might be based. The royal prohibitions were evaded by extensive smuggling, to the detriment of the revenue; so in the following year Charles decided to modify the total prohibition of the import of Spanish tobacco, as on October 19th, 1926, he issued a licence to Philip Burlamachi and William Anes as H.M.'s agents to import 50,000 lbs. of Spanish or other foreign tobacco, custom free, to be sold as His Majesty shall hereafter appoint.[4] Again, in a proclamation,[5] issued on February 17th, 1626, it is stated that " because of the immoderate desire of taking tobacco which prevailed throughout the Kingdom, and the difference, or at least the opinion of difference, between Spanish or foreign tobacco and that of the

[1] *Collection Tudor and Stuart Proclamations*, V.1, no. 1398.
[2] *Ibid.*, no. 1415. [3] *Ibid.*, no. 1423.
[4] *Cal. State Papers: Domestic*, 1626, p. 546.
[5] This proclamation orders that Virginia and Somers Island tobacco shall be sealed " with the royal arms, other English plantations with a lion and crown, foreign tobacco a broad arrow and portcullis." No unsealed tobacco was to be bought. This policy was renewed and rendered more stringent in the proclamations of 30 March and 9 August, 1627.

plantation of Virginia, the importation of 50,000 lbs. weight per annum of the former is allowed to the King's own particular use."[1] In order to make certain that these prohibitions were effective, Sir John Wolstenholme and ten others were commissioned to confiscate tobacco imported contrary to the proclamations of the King and his father.[2]

This concession to popular weakness was denounced by the Virginia merchants, and Bennett suggested to Buckingham that Spanish tobacco should be prohibited by Act of Parliament. Apparently, as a result of this pressure, the policy of total prohibition of foreign tobacco was once more adopted.[3] But ultimately it proved impossible to enforce, for on December 4th of the same year (1627) we again find a warrant under the Privy Seal issued to Burlamachi and others to be the Royal agents for the import of Spanish or other foreign tobacco, once more at the rate of 50,000 lbs. yearly.[4]

Henceforward the Government seems to have contented itself with keeping the Spanish commodity out by imposing upon it a very much heavier duty than upon the colonial. Thus in a letter from the Privy Council to the Farmers of the Customs, dated January 6th, 1631, a proclamation was enclosed

[1] *Coll. Tudor and Stuart Proclamations*, no. 1505.
[2] Rymer's *Foedera*, 1627, Jan. 31.
[3] *Coll. Tudor and Stuart Proclamations*, no. 1516.
[4] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1627–8.

which, in addition to a renewal of the prohibitions against tobacco-planting in England, laid an imposition upon all foreign tobacco: "Spanish will pay 2s. per lb., St. Kitts, Barbados and other islands in those parts (English) 12d. per lb., and that from Virginia and the Somers Islands 9d. per lb." This system of giving the English plantations preferential treatment was continued during the reign of Charles I., and throughout the period of the Commonwealth and Protectorate. In 1656, by the New Impost Act of that year (Cap. 19) a duty of 1s. (one shilling) per lb. was levied upon all foreign tobacco, while that on tobacco from the English plantations was only 1d. (one penny).[1]

The Restoration Government was even more determined than its predecessors to protect the English plantations against foreign competitors. According to the Rate Book of 1661 the rates inwards on Tobacco were as follows:—[2]

	s.	d.
Spanish and Brazil tobacco, in pudding or roll, the lb.	10	0
St. Kitts, Barbados, or any of the Caribee Islands, Virginia and Somers Island tobacco, the lb.	1	8

[1] *Acts and Ordinances of General use made in the Parliament*, by Henry Scobell, Clerk of the Parliament. Printed and published 1658.

[2] *Rate Book*, 1661.

In addition, special concessions were made to the English colonial importer for wastage and other charges, as, for example, the Rules and Regulations, published by H.M.'s Customs, to be observed by all officers in their allowance of taxes, upon all goods and merchandise, and not to be altered in London, outports or Spanish.

In barrels containing about 2¼ cwt. for tare	28 lbs. only
In ½ barrels containing 1¼ cwt. for tare	18 ,, ,,
Spanish in pottaceos, without canvas, for tare	14 ,, ,,
Spanish in pottaceos, with canvas, for tare	16 ,, ,,
Spanish in pottaceos, with skins, for tare	26 ,, ,,
Virginia, in hogsheads, weighing under 5 cwt., for tare	80 ,,
Virginia, in hogsheads, weighing about 5 cwt., for tare . . .	90 ,,
Barbados, in roll, per stick for tare .	6 ,,

Barbados, in chests and uncertain casks—tare them and make allowance accordingly.

By the Act of 1685 an additional 3d. per lb. was

placed upon colonial tobacco, with a corresponding 6d. on Spanish, and this policy was retained by William III. This policy was completely successful and the once-flourishing Spanish trade was reduced to insignificance, for by 1697–8, while the imports of Virginia and Maryland tobacco amounted to 22,737,812 lbs., that of Spanish amounted to only 27,058 lbs.[1] Twelve years later, 1709–10, the imports from Virginia and Maryland amounted to 23,350,735 lbs., while no Spanish tobacco at all was imported.[2]

It is, of course, a truism that the policy embodied in the Navigation Act of 1651 and succeeding Acts was not new, as the same principle underlay the commercial legislation of Richard II., and it appeared again during the first half of the sixteenth century. As soon as the Virginia trade began to be valuable those interested in it attempted to monopolize it as against all foreigners. As early as 1624 Parliament petitioned the King, among other things in connection with Virginia, "not to permit the sale of any tobacco to the Hollanders, who are now freighting ships for that trade."[3] In a report made to the Lords of the Council in 1633 it comes out clearly that all the arguments which were put forward a generation later in support of the Navi-

[1] *Customs* $\frac{3}{1}$ *Ledger Book of Imports and Exports, Michaelmas*, 1697, *to Michaelmas*, 1698. [2] *Ibid.*, $\frac{3}{15}$.
[3] *Cal. of State Papers: Domestic*, 1624.

gation Acts were already fully appreciated at that time. "It hath been often moved unto your Lordships by us, that the trade shall be carried wholly by the English and for the returns to be into England only. And thereupon your Lordships have heretofore given order to the Governors to take bonds of all ships that they bring and land all their ladings in England: by performance whereof it will follow that His Majesty's Customs and duties shall be wholly received, our own men and shipping employed, the navigation of the Kingdom increased, the Plantations duly and sufficiently supplied, our merchants and planters benefited and encouraged by the transportation of that surplus which now strangers carry to their own markets. All of which benefits to His Majesty's kingdom and people are wholly lost if strangers be permitted to trade and to transport the commodities of that plantation into foreign parts, as now they do."[1] They went on to point out that in the Spanish dominions all foreigners were strictly prohibited from engaging in the trade of that Empire, while the subjects of the Spanish King were permitted to carry on all the trade of those countries, on the one condition that they should bring their cargoes first to Spain.

It was the Dutch, however, who were the great

[1] *Colonial Office*, 1, No. 6 (80): *Sir John Wolstenholme, etc., to the Privy Council*, 14 Aug., 1633.

rivals of the English in this carrying trade, for this was Holland's golden age, and Dutch ships were trading on every sea. As the English planters in Virginia were not satisfied with the price allowed them by the King, after tobacco became a Royal monopoly, they turned their eyes towards the Dutch markets, where the prevailing prices were much better.

In this way, during the first years of the reign of Charles I., a considerable trade began to spring up between the English plantations and Holland. This development was one which the English Government was not prepared to allow, and it set itself the task of putting it down. A letter from Sir John Pennington[1] to the Lords of the Admiralty, dated August 7th, 1634, shows both the extent of the trade and the summary methods of that time employed in its suppression: "Met on the 9th inst. a great Holland ship, the *White Greyhound* of Rotterdam, which came from St. Christopher's, laden with tobacco and cotton, and bound for Holland, yet there were twenty-eight English aboard, planters, and 2/3rds. of the lading belonged to them, so sent her into Plymouth, by one of the whelps to Sir Jas. Bagg." Sir John hopes that he has not done amiss in acting in this high-handed manner, as his warrant "for

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial, America and the W. Indies*, 1634, Aug. 7.

that business" does not stretch to the Dutch; he feels sure, however, that the Government will take a reasonable view of the episode in view of the fact that it will bring in to the impecunious Charles I. "at least £1,000."

This rivalry with the Dutch continued throughout the century, though the successive Dutch wars and the fairly rigid enforcement of the Navigation Acts reduced the illicit trade of the Hollanders with the colonies to insignificance before the end of the period. As the century advanced, the colonies themselves seem to have acquiesced in English opposition to foreign interlopers, for "in 1658 and 1660 Virginia voluntarily imposed a heavy surtax on tobacco shipped to any place but to England and its European dominions."[1]

During the Restoration period everything possible was done to prevent any direct trade between the tobacco plantations and Holland or any other foreign country. As has been shown, it was partly the considerable trade which was carried on, in spite of the law, between Virginia, Maryland and New Netherlands, that induced England to seize the latter colony during the second Dutch War. As long as an outpost of Holland was to be found on the mainland of North America, it was obviously quite impossible to hope for a complete enforcement

[1] G. L. Beer, *The Old Colonial System*, Pt. 1, Vol. II, ch. 8.

of the Navigation Laws. Even after this, some smuggling undoubtedly continued, a trade in which Scotsmen and New Englanders took a noted share, but in the main it seems certain that the Navigation System was fairly successful.

In the second half of the seventeenth century tobacco bulked very largely in English foreign trade. By this time Virginia tobacco had won its place on the world market and, according to some writers, England supplied most of the countries of Western Europe with all their tobacco. The Table on page 168, compiled from Customs returns at the close of the period under review will give some indication, not only of the enormous size to which this trade had already grown, but also of the wide extent of the market which English colonial tobacco supplied.

These figures show the enormous preponderance of London's trade over all other rivals in the country. If Bristol called herself the second city of the kingdom, then, as far as the tobacco trade was concerned, she was, at the most, an exceedingly poor second. Assuming that the figures already given for the total imports be approximately 23,000,000 lbs., if we subtract the 17½ million lbs. it would appear that England consumed about 6,000,000 lbs.

Before the end of the seventeenth century everyone was agreed on the great importance of the tobacco trade, and attempts were made to ensure

Inspector General's Accounts of Exportations from the Port of London and Outports, Michaelmas, 1696–March, 1697.[1]

	Port of London.	Outports.	Total.
Canaries	6,073	226,572	232,645
Denmark and Norway	129,270	——	129,270
East Country	789,268	——	789,268
East India	5,764	——	5,764
Flanders	555,353	71,280	626,633
Germany	1,187,071	——	1,187,071
Guinea	1,568	1,024	2,592
Holland	7,799,662	422,898½	8,222,560½
Ireland	2,706	4,066,701	4,069,407
Madeiras	73,794	——	73,794
Newfoundland	14,201	25,950	40,151
Portugal	5,528	——	5,528
Scotland	41,185	118,031	159,216
Spain	264,733	1,030,372	1,295,105
Straits	79,090	——	79,090
Sweden	363,708	93,296	457,004
Venice	841	——	841
Barbados	1,263	——	1,263
New England	3,360	——	3,360
Guernsey	——	62,546	62,546
Virginia and Maryland	——	24,792	24,792
	11,324,438	6,143,462½	17,467,900½

[1] *Customs and Excise Commission Records* (Customs ⅔).

that England's monopoly should be made as complete as possible. A pamphlet written in 1685 on the proposal to raise the duties on tobacco gives a clear idea of the high opinion in which this branch of England's commerce was held by the economic thinkers of the time.[1] In this pamphlet the writer states :

1. It employs 200 sail of ships, from 100 to 500 tons burden, and breeds many mariners, and thus caters to the national power.
2. It vends in the colonies vast quantities of English manufactures, such as clothing, building material, and other things.
3. It pays annually to the King between £100,000 and £130,000 in customs.
4. Its manufacture in England employs many English people.
5. It is shipped from England to most parts of Europe, which not only employs much English shipping, but also brings back to this country products from abroad.

This writer therefore is hostile to the proposal to increase the duty on tobacco, and sums up the disadvantages of the proposal thus : 1. The more the Customs, the less will be the revenue, for, when the duty was 2d. per lb., the King had received more out of the tobacco than when it was higher.

[1] *Advantages of the Tobacco Trade*, 1685 (Brit. Mus. pamphlet).

2. High duties, by making it worth while to take the risk, are a direct incentive to smuggling.

3. Dear tobacco encourages adulterators to flood the market with all sorts of unwholesome substitutes.

4. Within recent years, under wise direction, England has supplanted almost every other foreign competitor in this branch of commerce, but a rise in Customs will lead to planting of tobacco in Ireland, France, Holland and Germany, which countries in turn will themselves develop an illicit import trade with England.

5. A higher duty on tobacco, by discouraging imports, will lessen the purchasing power of the colonials, and thus reduce the demand for English manufactures.

6. With the consequent falling off of trade, which will inevitably follow upon a rise in the duties, many great ships, now engaged in the tobacco trade, will be laid aside, and thus the national sea-power will be diminished.

7. The colonists will carry their tobacco secretly to Holland, Zealand, Hamburg and Flanders, where the duty on tobacco does not exceed ½d. per lb., or if the colonial planters are unable to do this, they will be obliged to quit their present home, and go to the plantations of foreign countries, in which such restrictions are not imposed. Provided they remain within the Empire, having nothing to give

in exchange for English goods, they will turn their hands to the manufacture of those things which are now imported from England, and which give employment to many of the King's subjects.

Though, of course, the forebodings of this pamphlet were not justified by the event—for, in spite of the increased duty placed upon tobacco in 1685, the trade continued to expand—still, the point of view herein expressed is of some interest. It shows that people took the tobacco trade very seriously, and were prepared to scrutinize very carefully any proposal which might affect it adversely.

Parliament granted James II. in 1685 an additional duty of 3d. on English colonial tobacco and 6d. on foreign. But in order to ensure that this would not adversely affect foreign trade, it was provided that on re-exportation these duties would be refunded in their entirety. So the additional duties were not made payable by the importer, who merely gave security for their ultimate payment, but by the first buyer on receipt of the goods. This was abandoned in 1696.[1]

Towards the end of the century a determined and, on the whole, successful attempt was made to develop the tobacco trade with Russia.[2] About the middle of the century the Russia Company had been

[1] Beer, *The Old Colonial System*, I, ch. III, pp. 60–1.
[2] W. H. Scott, *Joint Stock Companies to* 1720, Vol. 2, pp. 65–9.

deprived of its privileges by the Czar, and after 1669 the trade had been carried on by a regulated Company. It was felt that Russia was potentially a very valuable market for English products, particularly for tobacco,[1] for as early as 1681 Lord Culpeper, very much perplexed by the economic condition of Virginia, suggested that "free importation (of tobacco) into Russia would revive our drooping spirits, for we want nothing but a vent."[2] When therefore the Czar visited Western Europe in 1697, the Virginia merchants and others interested in the tobacco trade attempted to secure a grant from him by which they should be allowed to import tobacco into his dominions.

A petition was presented to William Blathwayt (1697), signed by the traders and inhabitants of Virginia and Maryland, praying the King to use his influence with the Czar in order that the prohibition against tobacco in Russia might be removed.[3] This petition bears the signatures of fifty-five of the most considerable people of the two colonies. Both these petitioners and the members of the Russia Company believed that, if

[1] They (the Muscovites) being so eager of tobacco, that the most ordinary sort, which formerly cost not above 9 or 10 pence per pound in England, they will buy at the rate of 14 and 15 shillings." J. Crull, *Ancient and Present State of Muscovy*, 1698, p. 145, quoted in Laufer, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

[2] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial*, 1682.

[3] *Hist. MSS. Comm. Reports*, MSS. of the Most Hon. the Marquess of Bath, Vol. III: The Prior Papers, pp. 148–9.

the English were admitted to the trade, they would soon monopolize it, since the Dutch, who had recently received this same privilege, could not compete with them, because, " our tobacco is much better than any the Dutch have, unless they buy it from us."

Not only were the tobacco traders anxious to open up a trade with Russia itself, but, in addition, were desirous of receiving the right of carrying their goods through Russian territory to Persia and the Far East without paying any duty. It was stated that permission to import tobacco was particularly desired because of the extent of the Czar's territories, the number of his subjects and " their passionate love of tobacco." It was to be pointed out to the Czar that there were obvious advantages to himself in this trade :

1. Tobacco was a great boon, and a cure for fatigue for soldiers, especially in cold countries.

2. If properly regulated, the trade might prove of great value to the Russian exchequer, through the duties which might be imposed upon it. Owing to the great demand for tobacco in Russia it was well known that the merchants would be prepared to pay almost any duty without a murmur. Blathwayt laid this information before the King, who, in turn, ordered it to be sent on at once to the Ambassadors, with his personal instructions that

they should take action thereupon, "the matter proposed being of the greatest consequence to the trade of England."[1]

The King himself mentioned in personal conversation the subject with the Czar when they met early in September at Utrecht, with the result that the English traders were given the privilege they desired.[2]

Scarcely had this privilege been granted, however, when the English traders fell out among themselves. The Russia Company, which was very monopolistic

[1] *Hist. MSS. Comm. Reports*, p. 155.

[2] *Board of Trade, Virginia* 6, no. 25. *Petition of Merchants of Virginia and Maryland to the King.* 10 *Aug.*, 1697.

To the King's Most Excell^t. Ma^tie.

The humble Peticon of the Inhabitants of and Traders to the plantacons of Virginia and Maryland.

SHEWETH

THAT advancing the Trade to your Ma^tie's Plantacons is extreamly well knowne to bee of great advantage to your Kingdome of England,

By encouraging such of your Ma^tie's Poor Subjects as are employed in the Woollen and other Manufactures

By the building of shipps,

Encreasing the Number of Seamen.

And eminently augmenting your Ma^tie's Revenue by using this favorable opportunity of making application to the Czar of Muscovy to permitt the Importacon of Tobacco into his Dominions.

WHEREFORE your Peticoners humbly Pray that your Ma^tie would bee graciously Pleased to give such directions as may prevaile with the Czar to remove the Prohibition on Tobacco and permitt all and every your Ma^tie's subjects to Import Tobacco into all his Territorys; which would unquestionably produce y^e good advantages above mencon'd.

AND your Peticoners (as in Duty bound) shall Ever Pray &c^a.

MICAJAH PERRY
(*and 52 other signatures*).

(Endorsed) Virginia.

in character, was anxious to reap all the advantages of this new development; it therefore attempted to prevent any of the Virginia traders from becoming members of their body, so that all the trade with

Petition of the Virginia and Maryl[d] Traders, praying that means may be used towards the Czar of Muscovy to permit y[e] importation of Tobacco into Country.

Recd. from Mr. Perry, &c. the 10th of Aug., 1697, entr[d]. fol. 36.

Board of Trade, Virginia 6, No. 36.

Memorial of Merchants trading to Virginia and Maryland to the Council of Trade, 1 Feb., 1698.

To y[e] Right Hono[ble] Lord Commiss[rs] of Trade.

A Memoriall of y[e] Merchants Trading to Virginia and Maryland, in behalf of themselves and y[e] inhabitants of y[e] said plantations.

In our Petition to his Majesty when at Loo in August last, Wee humbly Represented the many Advantages that would Accrue to this Kingdom, as well as y[e] Plantations, If a Liberty was Granted to all and every of His Majestyes subjects to Export Tobacco into all the Czars Territoryes; And humbly Prayed his Majesty would be pleased to give such Directions as might be most Proper to obtaine the abovesaid free Trade in Tobacco: To which wee received the favourable Answer, that his Majesty had given the Necessary Instructions to his Ambassadors then at y[e] Hague.

Wee earnestly desire your Advice, & Further Assistance, in y[e] premisses; by recommending the same to his Majesty, that this favourable opportunity of y[e] Czars Presence may be made use of to procure soe Beneficiall a Trade.

Lond[n]. pm[o]. Feb. 1697/98.

MICAJAH PERRY.
E. HAISTWELL.
IN[O] CARY.
THO. LANE.
THOMAS CORBIN.

(Endorsed) Virginia.

Mem[l]. of the Virginia Merch[ts] desiring Endeavours may be used, to obtain liberty from y[e] Czar of Russia, for y[e] importing of Tobacco into his Dominions.

Rec[d]. Feb[ry]. 4th—1697/98
Read
Entred fol. 197.

Russia should be conducted through the Russia Company. The Virginia merchants were therefore driven to carry out the contract which they had signed with the Czar by importing their tobacco into Russia through Holland or Sweden, where they had to pay very heavy duties.[1] These merchants found themselves in the position that, having paid £13,000 to the Czar for their patent, they were prevented by the Russia Company from taking advantage of their privilege. Although in theory anyone could become a freeman of the Russia Company on the payment of a fine of £60, this was not carried out in practice, and by 1694 its membership had fallen from 50 to 12 or 14.[2] An attempt had been made in that year to reform the Company by Act of Parliament, but it proved unsuccessful. In 1698, largely on account of the complaints and petitions made by the tobacco merchants, Parliament again took the subject up, this time successfully, for an Act was passed " since ease of admission would tend to increase the trade for the public good, any subject of the realm should have the right to become a freeman on his paying a fine of £5. Even after this, the Virginia planters did not reap all the profits they had expected from the Russian trade, for in 1705 and 1706 they prophesied their utter ruin,

[1] *The Case of the Contractors with the C'zar of Moscovy for the sole importation of Tobacco into his Dominions*, 1700 ? (Brit. Mus. pamphlet).

[2] W. R. Scott, *ut sup.*

owing to the fact that tobacco was being grown and manufactured in Russia itself.[1] Indeed, in 1705, the Czar prohibited English tobacco imports, in favour of Russian and Turkish supplies.[2] They also protested against the Dutch and Germans who were growing tobacco in their own country, and it is a testimony to their influence and importance that a Commission was appointed to investigate and report on this subject.[3]

Under the Navigation Laws, Scotland was treated as a foreign nation down to the time of the Union, but it is quite clear that this theory was never effectively enforced. From the accession of Charles II. down to the Union there is a continual stream of complaints and expostulation from the Virginia merchants and Customs officials on the subject of the Scottish interloper.

As early as 1661 the Commissioners of Customs were requested to consider the position of Scotland in relation to the Navigation Act of the previous

[1] *Cal. of State Papers: Colonial*, 1705, 1706.

[2] Laufer, p. 61.

[3] There is another pamphlet on the Russian trade, about 1700, entitled *Heads of Some of those Advantages this Nation might enjoy by encouraging the Tobacco Trade to Russia and the Loss it suffers by fetching our Naval Stores from the Suedes' Dominions.* After recounting the usual advantages to navigation, etc., the pamphlet concludes that the Swedish trade is unsatisfactory because "since the Swedes take little of our manufactures we have to pay them in money; while in Russia we could pay with the proceeds of tobacco."

year.[1] In their report they stated " that by allowing the Scots to trade as the English the Customs would be much injured, they bringing in foreign goods without paying alien duties; they might then trade to the Plantations that are absolute English, to the infinite prejudice of his Majesty's duties and of the English who have property there both in goods and land, by whose cost and industry they have been planted. The Plantations are His Majesty's Indies without charge to him raised and supported by the English subjects; they employ above 200 sail of good ships every year, breed abundance of mariners, and begin to grow commodities of great value and esteem, and though some of them continue in tobacco, yet upon the return it smells well and pays more custom to His Majesty than the East Indies four times over. The Scotch would by this liberty overthrow the essence of the Act of Navigation, and they must not be allowed to trade from port to port, for they are strangers and their bond is not sufficient security." As the number of Scottish settlers increased in the plantations, and as Scottish captains came to appreciate the lucrative character of the trade, it became increasingly impossible to enforce the law.

Edward Randolph, Collector of Customs, in his letters to his chief, Blathwayt, frequently refers to

[1] *Cal. of Colonial Papers: America and W. Indies*, 1661, Nov. 6.

the depredations of the Scottish skippers. According to him, between the years 1689–92 over 1644 hogsheads of tobacco were shipped out of one county in Maryland, mainly to Scotland, and there was doubtless a great deal of the same illicit trading between other parts of Maryland and Virginia with that country. To quote Randolph's own words: "I find yt in these 3 years last past there has not been above 5 ships trading legally in all those rivers and nigh 30 Sayle of Scotch, Irish and New Engld men. I humbly inclose to yor Honrs A forg'd Certifte (No. 4) produced to Majr King by Willm Hall of Boston allowed of by Mr. Layfield he clear'd his ship having 110 hds. aboard ye 7th Apr'll 1689 and went to Scotland since wch time to ye 25th May 1692 above 1644 hds has been shipt off by Interlopers out of yt one Coty besides what Makay & Crookshanks are now loading severall Illegale traders are designed this Winter to come to Som'set Coty and Potomoke River their loadings of Tobbo being already agreed for, above 20 Scotch Irish and New Engld Vessells within these 8 months have sayld out of ye Cape with their loading of tobbo for Scotland and Holland & ye man of warr had not discover'd one of them."[1] In short, Randolph and his like were confronted with an impossible task, for it is doubtful whether the whole English navy, if stationed along the coast of

[1] Edward Randolph, *Documents and Letters*, Vol. VII, p. 365 (Prince Society). *Randolph to the Commissioners of Customs or the Virginia Collectors*, CVIII.

Virginia and Maryland, could have prevented this traffic.

Colonel Robert Quary,[1] Judge of the Admiralty in the province of Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, writing home in 1701, protested against the Scottish traders: "Four times the tobacco was made there that year than had been made before, and all of it engrossed by the Scotch, as almost all other trade there was. No one who designed to trade fairly could give the extravagant rates they did, being not less than double what was given in Maryland."

With the Union the Scottish trade entered upon a new phase, and though this period lies outside the scope of the present volume, some mention must be made of it. When the Scottish traders heard of the proposed Union, they took advantage of the lower duties on tobacco imposed by Scotland and imported vast quantities. After the Union they sent it overland into England and disposed of it at rates which, to the English competitors, were impossible. The flooding of the English market produced a great outcry from the merchants of Bristol and other towns, but the Scots, finding this venture so successful, persisted in the trade. They proved such serious rivals to the English that the latter memoralized Parliament on many occasions. The Scots managed to give better prices to the

[1] *Cal. of Treas. Papers*, 1701.

planters, and also to sell at lower rates than their competitors. Bristol, Liverpool and Whitehaven complained that their trade was being ruined, and they did everything in their power to embarrass the Scots. Various charges of illegal and dishonest practices were brought against the Glasgow merchants, all of which they were able to disprove, and they in turn brought counter-charges.[1] With the later stages of this long-drawn-out struggle, which is in itself one symptom of the rise of the northern ports to economic pre-eminence, we are not here concerned.

[1] 1. *The Case of the Merchants trading in Tobacco at Whitehaven, in the county of Cumberland* (written apparently some little time after the Union). 2. *Report to the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury* by Humphrey Brent, one of the Commissioners of the Customs in Scotland, on Frauds in the Tobacco Trade, 1722. (Both pamphlets Brit. Mus.).

Conclusion

During the seventeenth century a variety of factors affected the trade in tobacco. These factors are in themselves so contradictory that it is difficult to trace any consistent policy throughout the period. Under James I. the well-known pro-Spanish leanings of the monarch, coupled with the fact that the Spanish colonies were the sources of the world supply of tobacco, led to the development of a lucrative trade between Spain and England. Later, the development of Virginia and its early difficulties turned the attention of the Virginia Company to the cultivation of tobacco, so that before his death James I. found himself on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand there was Spain and his ancient friendship, on the other, there were the struggling colonies of Virginia and the Bermudas, and he was faced with the task of finding a working compromise between these conflicting interests. The insistent pressure of the Virginia Company, in addition to the still lively popular dislike of Spain, perhaps helped James to follow the dictates of his own economic interest, and so the Spanish trade was destroyed.

During the reign of his son, the colonies were fostered, and in their interest the planting of tobacco in England, already forbidden by James I., was further penalized. Though the first two Stuarts were both opposed to tobacco on moral grounds, they were forced to yield to popular opinion and to their own interests. However loudly they might deplore the vanity of taking tobacco, they nevertheless could not fail to see that, by encouraging shipping it helped to increase the national power.

As the century advanced, the moral objections grew less and less, and everything possible was done to foster a trade which fitted in so completely with the political and economic theory of the time; so that by 1700 tobacco was universally recognized as one of the mainstays of English commerce.

APPENDIX I

A Seventeenth-Century Description of Tobacco-Planting[1]

To make and manage a " Virginia " or " Maryland " Plantation for Tobacco, every hand employed therein must be furnished with an Axe, a Saw, and other Instruments for felling Timber, and grubbing up its Roots.

When the Ground is cleared of Trees and Rubbish, then it is broke up with ploughs and afterwards with Houghs, and Spades, brought into little Hillocks, like those Moles turn up, into every one of which is placed one Plant, so that they grow about three, four, and five feet asunder.

The Tobacco Plants are raised from its seed sowed in Nurseries of Hot-beds skilfully prepared for that Purpose in the Months of January, February, March and April, and are drawn thence and planted in prepared little Hills in the months of May and June, and will be ready for cutting in July or August following: But all the whole time from its planting it is to be carefully watched, and every Plant that is perceived to be dying must be taken away, and a fresh one set in the Hill, from whence the dead or dying Plant was removed.

Tobacco Plants are very subject to be undermined,

[1] *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. 2, pp. 354 *et sqq.* ***An Historical Account of the West Indies.***

eaten and destroyed by a Grub or Worm that breeds about its root, which sometimes, in spite of all the care and skill of its most ingenious Planter, will destroy its whole crop, nor do they escape some Mischief from it; so that a Tobacco Plantation from "January" that they sow the seed till "August" that they cut it is a continual care and Full Labour in Sowing Planting Ploughing Weeding Worming Succouring and Renewing: it has several accidents attending it, till it be cut and carried into the Curing-House, where it is hanged Plant by Plant at an equal Distance, till it become Powder Dry; at which time of the Year that country is subject to great fogs and Mists which makes it become waxy and if it rises again, then it is fully cured, and become fit to be casked; all Sweet-scented requires about three weeks time, and "Oroonokr" about six weeks time; and in about Three Weeks more after its Casking, it shews itself whether it be well cured or no. For, tho' the experience planter knows certainly whether his tobacco be well or ill cured, the Purchaser cannot and may be wronged, if he buys it in less than three weeks time after its casking; for, if it had not been perfectly dried it will certainly rot, perish, and become good for nothing: So that not only the prime cost but the Freight home may be lost: And this the Necessities of the Planter sometimes only occasion, for, by making too much Haste not to lose his Market, many times the whole year's labour and Expectation is totally lost: and the care therein is very great, for there is not a Leaf of Tobacco put on board the ship that is well cured, but has passed at least six and thirty Times through the hand of the

Planter or Labourer : They ship it out from the month of October till April following ; the annual Exportation from all the Tobacco Colonies being a hundred and forty Thousand Hogsheads at four-hundred and fifty Pounds Weight to a Hoghead.

The Plantations are generally made into small Parcels not above eight or ten Hands at a place, being the most beneficial and true Way, both for making the Tobacco and raising Provisions for them, and a Curing House must not be at a Distance from the Grounds where the Tobacco grows.

The Price of every Pound Weight of Tobacco, imported into the Nation before we planted it, was from about four Shillings to sixteen Shillings a Pound, and now the best Virginia is not above seven-pence to the Merchant of which the king has five-pence.

Two-thirds of the Tobacco brought from those colonies is exported to Foreign Markets, which at about three pounds the Hoghead (which is the least the Nation gets by it) amounts to above Two-hundred Thousand Pounds besides the great Quantity of shipping it employs.

It is not so little as a Million the Kingdom saves yearly by our planting Tobacco, so that reckoning the White People in our Tobacco-Colonies to be a Hundred thousand Men, Women and Children, they, one with another, are each of them twelve Pounds a Year Profit to the Nation.

There are, in those Colonies, by a probable computation, about six-hundred thousand Negroes and Indians, Men, Women, and Children, and it would be more could they readily get Negroes from Guinia, every

one of which consumes yearly two-shilling houghs, two weeding houghs, two grubbery-houghs besides Axes Saws Wimbles Nails and other iron Tools and Materials, consumed in Building and other uses, to the value of at least a hundred and twenty Thousand Pounds sterling, in only Iron-work.

The Cloaths, Guns, Cordage, Anchors, Sails and Materials for Shipping, besides Beds and other Household goods consumed and used by them are infinite, nor is the Benefit of them to the Kingdom sufficiently to be explained. Therefore let it suffice, in one Word, to say, that the Produce and Consumption, with the shipping they give employment to is of infinite more benefit to the Wealth Honour and Strength of the Nation, that four times the same number of Hands the best employed at Home can be.

And thus much more I shall say for the Colonies: As they are, to the Nation, the most useful and profitable Hands employed and the best Trade we have, both to the consuming the Woolen-Manufactory of " England " and the Encouraging of Navigation; so those that go thither as servants, if they are industrious and just to their Masters, they live much easier than in England, and much more likely to get estates: of which there are many precedents; and also they have been a great relief to many men (whose misfortunes have forced them to leave their own Country) who by the carrying thither the remains of their shipwrecked Fortunes, have recovered their lost Estate, and very much conduced to that Increase of Wealth to this Nation as well as to the Increase of Shipping which are the only true Bulwarks of this Nation.

(Here follows a description of a Table appended, what 50 negroes and 10 white men can make, tonnage value in England and Custom. The Tobacco section of it is the only part I have quoted.)

An Account of What Advantage Hands employed in the Colonies are to the Nation per annum

	White men	Blacks	Will make	Which is in English Tonnage	Value in England	Pays Custom
Tobacco			C.			
sweet scented	21	50	1430	143	at 7d. per lb. is £4689	at 5d. per lb. is £3340 5s.
Oroonoko	21	50	1712	214	at 5d. per lb. is £3954	at ½d. per lb. is £395 7s.
	42	100	3142	357	£8643	£3735 12s.

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