

**TOBACCO: ITS HISTORY, CULTIVATION,
MANUFACTURE, AND
ADULTERATIONS. ITS USE CONSIDERED
WITH REFERENCE TO ITS INFLUENCE ON
THE HUMAN CONSTITUTION**

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Tobacco: its history, cultivation, manufacture, and adulterations. Its use considered with reference to its influence on the human constitution by Andrew Steinmetz

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ANDREW STEINMETZ

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AND ADULTERATIONS.

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ON THE HUMAN CONSTITUTION.

BY

ANDREW STEINMETZ, Esq.,

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

L O N D O N :

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1857.

"A custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fumes thereof nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless."—THE MOST HIGH AND MIGHTIE PRINCE JAMES, BY THE GRACE OF GOD KING OF GREAT BRITAIN. *Anno Domini*, 1616.

"Thy quiet spirit lulls the lab'ring brain,
Lures back to thought the flights of vacant mirth,
Consoles the Mourner, soothes the couch of Pain,
And breathes Contentment round the humble hearth;
While savage Warriors, soften'd by thy breath,
Unbind the Captive hate had doom'd to death."

THE REV. WALTER COTTON.

"Bread or Tobacco may be neglected, but reason at first recommends their trial, and custom makes them pleasant."—LOCKE.

P R E F A C E.

“ Have you not set mine honour at the stake,
And baited it with all the unmuzzled thoughts
That tyrannous heart can think ? ”

Twelfth Night, iii. 1.

In the ‘Times’ paper of Friday, Feb. 9th inst., the following notice appeared in the column of minor facts and memoranda:—

“ IS SMOKING INJURIOUS TO HEALTH?—An interesting discussion is now going on in ‘The Lancet’ upon the effects of smoking. The use of tobacco has, during the last half-century, greatly increased in England, and has now become an almost universal practice. This question, in which the leading members of the medical profession are taking part, must not only greatly interest the public, but may very materially affect the revenue of this country, when it is known that the income derived from the consumption of tobacco was last year upwards of 32,192,943*l.*—the duty on which was more than 5,220,000*l.* This return is independent of cigars, which was about 150,000*l.* An able article on the tobacco question appears in ‘The Lancet’ of the present week by Mr. Solly, F.R.S., of St. Thomas’s Hospital, which will be read with interest by all inveterate smokers.”

Having vigorously and robustly lived in this category—an inveterate smoker—for the last twenty years of my life, the question concerned me nearly. That the tide of this “interesting discussion” was running against “inveterate smokers,” indeed against the gentle weed, was but too apparent from the notice. I had lately read a ridiculous pamphlet, by a Mr. Lizars, against tobacco. Could that pamphlet have originated the “discussion”? I thought not; for it had seemed to me, perhaps erroneously, to belong to that class of publications by which credulous men are entrapped into the hands of those who pretend to know infallibly the cause of their secret and other ailments, and ultimately find themselves in a position which few like to disclose for the benefit of the public. But perhaps some “new discovery” had been made by these men of the lancet? Perhaps this Mr. Solly, *populi contemnere voces solitus*, has at last been enabled to establish an overwhelming BEWARE against the universe in the matter of smoking! . . .

I procured the ‘Lancet,’ read Mr. Solly’s

“able article,” and found it in substance a mere reproduction of Mr. Lizars in his pamphlet; the same old charges which, two hundred years ago, were found frivolous and unsupported by fact.

“Veterem rane cocinère querelam!”

I know not whether Mr. P. B. St. John be still in the land of the living: if it be not contrary to his wishes I hope he is, were it only to grin sardonically at the fulfilment of a prophecy which he made some thirteen years ago, as the “Old Smoker,” *vates sacer*, in ‘Bentley’s Miscellany.’

“How many times,” he exclaimed, “in the swamps of the Far West have I escaped malaria, yellow fever, ague, perhaps death, by the unsparing use of the weed! and yet, doubtless, ere long some new Father Mathew will open a crusade against the article! We opine, however, that the *vapourings* of the anti-tobaccoites would turn out a *bottle of smoke*.”*

Mr. Solly, F.R.S., has constituted himself the Father Mathew of this crusade, and the field of his operations is—the universe.

Vain, unprofitable waste of words and nervous

* See ‘Bentley’s Miscellany,’ March, 1844.

energy, if it does not put money in the till of the 'Lancet'! He may reproduce the contents of the hundred volumes which have been written against tobacco; he can add nothing which was not said before; the weed defies him, will bear the brunt of his battle, will conquer him and reign on for ages, until a superior to it shall take its place as a social and moral modifier.

Parliament may fearlessly proceed to cut down the D Schedule of the income-tax without dreading a diminution in the patriotic aid of *Nicotiana*. And,* if of two countries, with an equal amount of population, the wealthiest and most highly civilised will consume the greatest weight of *soap*; if it be no exaggeration to say that we may fairly judge of the commercial prosperity of a country from the amount of *sulphuric acid* it consumes; we may most assuredly add, that the consumption of tobacco will always advance with the increase of population, in spite of medical or any other humbug.†

* Liebig, 'Letters on Chemistry,' Letter III.

† It appears that our population-increase of last year was at the rate of a thousand a-day. The doctors in the 'Lancet'

"That most extraordinary plant tobacco," says Dr. Paris, "notwithstanding its powers of fascination, has suffered romantic vicissitudes in its fame and character. It has been successively opposed and condemned by physicians—condemned and eulogised by priests and kings—proscribed and protected by governments; whilst at length this once insignificant production of a little island, or an obscure district, has succeeded in diffusing itself through every climate, and in subjecting the inhabitants of every country to its dominion. The Arab cultivates it in the burning desert—the Laplander and Esquimaux risk their lives to procure a refreshment so delicious in their wintry solitude—the seaman, grant him but this luxury, and he will endure with cheerfulness every other privation, and defy the fury of the raging elements; and in the higher walks of civilised society, at the shrine of fashion, in the palace, and in the cottage, the fascinating influence of this singular plant commands an equal tribute of devotion and attachment." *

Were Dr. Paris alive I opine he would think this movement of Mr. Solly and his confraternity

face this fact with a newspaper report of a great diminution in the normal increase of the population of France, and actually ascribe it to the use of tobacco! But sauce for a goose is sauce for a gander, and our thousand a-day is a tolerably rich one, in spite of tobacco-juice. If the doctors and others would like to get some wholesome knowledge on the important subject of population-increase, I beg to refer them to Dr. Lévy's '*Traité d'Hygiène Publique et Privée*, ii. 736 *et seq.*, just published at Paris. Many a smoker with a large and increasing family would, perhaps, be glad if the fumes of tobacco could diminish his superabundant energies.

* *Pharmacologia*, p. 81.