

brought from America, and even the precise date of 1570, is assigned for its importation into Britain, high authorities in Botany are still found to maintain the indigenous character of the *nicotiana rustica*, in some parts of the old world, as in northern India, where it is stated to grow wild. DuWalde, (1793.) speaks of tobacco as one of the natural productions of Formosa, whence it was largely imported by the Chinese; and Sava., Olearius, Chardin, and other writers, are all quoted\* to show that the *nicotiana Persica*, which furnishes the famous shiraz tobacco, is not only indigenous to Persia, (an opinion favoured by high authorities in botany,) but that it was used for smoking from very early times. That all the varieties of the *Nicotiana* are not confined to the new world is unquestionable. Of some fifty-eight admitted species, the great majority are indeed American, but a few belong to the newer world of Australia, besides those believed to be indigenous to Asia. It is not surprising therefore, that after all the attention which this subject has latterly, on various accounts, attracted, writers should be found to maintain the opinion that the use of tobacco as a narcotic was known and practised by the Asiatics, prior to the discovery of America. The oriental use of tobacco may indeed be carried back to an era old enough to satisfy the keenest stickler for the antiquity of the practice, if he is not too nice as to his authorities. Dr. Yates in his *Travels in Egypt*, describes a painting which he saw on one of the tombs at Thebes, containing the representation of a smoking party. But this is modern compared with a record said to exist in the works of the early fathers, and, at any rate, preserved as an old tradition of the Greek Church, which ascribes the inebriation of the patriarch Noah to the temptation of the Devil by means of tobacco; so that King James was not, after all, without authority for the black stygian parentage he assigns to its fumes! Professor Johnston—who marshalls various authorities on the Asiatic use of tobacco for smoking, prior to the discovery of America, without venturing on any very definite opinion of his own,—quotes Pallas as arguing in favour of the antiquity of the practice from its extensive prevalence in Asia, and especially in China. “Amongst the Chinese,” says this writer, “and among the Mongol tribes who had the most intercourse with them, the custom of smoking is so general, so frequent, and has become so indispensable a luxury; the tobacco-purse affixed to their belt so necessary an article of dress; the form of the pipes, from which the Dutch seem to have taken the model of theirs, so original;

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\* A. C. M. Exeter. Notes and Queries. Vol. II. p. 154.