

sufficiently clear evidence that smoking was unknown to Europe before the discovery of this continent. Spain doubtless first enjoyed the novel luxury; probably—at the latest,—not long after the commencement of the sixteenth century. The year 1560 is assigned for its introduction into France, and most commonly that of 1586,—in which Admiral Drake's fleet returned from the attack on the west Indian Islands—for its reaching England. But though in all probability only beginning at these dates to attract special attention, the custom of smoking tobacco can scarcely be supposed to have remained unknown to the Spaniards before the close of the fifteenth century, or to have failed to have come under the notice both of French and Englishmen at an early period thereafter. When at length fairly introduced into England, it met with a ready welcome. So early as 1615, we find the popular poet, Joshua Sylvester following in the wake of the royal counterblast, with his:—"tobacco battered, and the pipes shattered about their ears that idly idolize so base and barbarous a weed, or at leastwise overlove so loathsome a vanity, by a volley of holy shot thundered from Mount Helicon."—tolerable proof of the growing favour for the "weed." The plant itself was speedily brought over and cultivated in various districts, till prohibited by an act of Parliament; and Pepys, in his Diary,—referring to Winchcombe, in Gloucestershire, where tobacco is affirmed to have been first raised in England,—under the date, September 19th, 1667, mentions the information communicated to him by his cozen, Kate Joyce: "now the life-guard, which we thought a little while since was sent down into the country about some insurrection, was sent to Winchcombe, to spoil the tobacco there, which it seems the people there do plant contrary to law, and have always done, and still been under force and danger of having it spoiled, as it hath been oftentimes, and yet they will continue to plant it."*

Another entry of the same indefatigable diarist, furnishes evidence not only of the early faith in the anti-contagious virtues of tobacco, but also of the no less early mode of using it in England according to a fashion which is now more frequently regarded as a special prerogative of young America. On the 7th of June, 1665, Pepys notes that the first sight of the plague-cross, with its accompanying solemn formula of prayer, moved him, not to a devotional ejaculation, as might perhaps seem most fitting, but only to chew tobacco! "The hottest day," he writes, "that ever I felt in my life. This day, much against my will, I did in Drury Lane, see two or three houses marked

* Pepys' Diary, 4th Edition. Vol. III., p. 252.