

The meanes that they do it with, is with certaine minerall stones, that they carry about them in baggs made for that purpose of the skinned of little beastes, which they convert into good lether, carrying in the same a peece of touch wood, very excellent for that purpose, of their owne making. These minerall stones they have from the Piquenteenes, (which is to the Southward of all the plantations in New England,) by trade and trafficke with those people.

The burning of the grasse destroys the underwoods, and so scorcheth the elder trees that it shrinkes them, and hinders their growth very much: so that hee that will looke to finde large trees and good tumber, must not depend upon the help of a wooden prospect to finde them on the upland ground; * but must seeke for them, (as I and others have done,) in the lower grounds, where the grounds are wett, when the Country is fired, by reason of the snow water that remains there for a time, untill the Sunne by continuance of that hath exhaled the vapours of the earth, and dried up those places where the fire (by reason of the moisture,) can have no power to doe them any hurt: and if he would endeavour to finde out any goodly Cedars, hee must not seeke for them on the higher grounds, but make his inquest for them in the vallies, for the Salvages, by this custome of theirs, have spoiled all the rest: for this custome hath bin continued from the beginninge.

And least their firing of the Country in this manner should be an occasion of damnifying us, and indaingering our habitations, wee our selves have used carefully about the same times. to observe the winds, and fire the grounds about our owne habitations; to prevent the Dammage that might happen by any neglect thereof, if the fire should come neere those howses in our absence.

For, when the fire is once kindled, it dilates and spreads it selfe as well against, as with the winde; burning continually night and day, untill a shower of raine falls to quench it.

And this custome of firing the Country is the meanes to make it passable; and by that meanes the trees growe here and there as in our parks: and makes the Country very beautifull and commodious.

* The reference is to Wood's *New England's Prospect*, p. 13, where also the Indian custom of firing the country in November is described.—*Adams*.