

## CIGARS AND CIGAR SHOPS.

**Will the Coming Woman Smoke?—Smoking in New York—Connecticut Seed Leaf Tobacco, Cuban Tobacco and Cigars.**

"Will the coming man smoke?" asks one of our talented writers. Whether he will or not, it cannot be denied that the man of to-day does smoke with no little gusto, and shows no signs of leaving off the practice. In spite of the teachings of George Trask and Dr. Griscom. Three hundred years ago tobacco was first introduced into Europe, and now more than three-quarters of the human race are acquainted with its use. Then there were millions in Asia who chewed the betel nut and smoked and chewed opium, while a few nomadic tribes of wandering savages in America used tobacco. Now tobacco is the universal narcotic the world over, and even in the East, where other and dangerous stimulating substances have been used from an unknown antiquity, it is fast displacing all its rivals. "Will the coming man smoke?" We do not know what will stop him. Royal edicts, priestly anathemas, the essays and hortatory appeals of reformers, have all been tried to prevent it and convince the public that tobacco was a deadly poison, but in vain. Medical men are about equally divided as to whether tobacco is injurious to persons in good health, and until the public really believe this to be the case people will use it. Recently the current of popular and scientific opinion has turned strongly in favor of the use of tobacco; the views of the so-called reformers are looked upon as not being sustained by the experience of mankind, and we find that men live just as long and preserve their faculties to a good old age, in spite of their constant devotion to the quid or the pipe.

### WILL THE COMING WOMAN SMOKE?

A more proper question would seem to be, "Will the coming woman smoke?" The Cuban ladies are said to be great-lovers of the weed, and if the "Queen of the Antilles" ever becomes one of the United States who knows but the ladies of that isle will make the practice fashionable among us? Nothing would seem to be more probable. Smoking is already one of the luxuries which many of our American women love to indulge in, especially in the Southern States, and the practice is not entirely unknown to them in this city; and it would not be inconsistent if the "coming woman," aspiring after all the social and political rights of the other sex, should include the use of the weed as one of the privileges which she proposes to assume.

### SMOKING IN NEW YORK CITY.

If any person thinks that the "coming man" will not use tobacco we certainly do not know what comforting assurances he will derive from the authentic statistics of its production. Upon very good authority we learn that the tobacco grown in the year 1855 in Asia amounted to 392,000,000 pounds, in Europe to 251,844,500, in America 218,250,500, in Africa 21,300,000 and in Australia 714,000 pounds, making a total of 954,139,000 pounds, and to raise all this at the average yield would take about 2,000,000 acres or 3,125 square miles. Perhaps it would be more pertinent to ask how is the "coming man" going to put a stop to it? Here in this city we have 768 cigar shops, doing a good business, selling at an average 100,000 cigars a day, besides what are sold in saloons, hotels and eating houses. Broadway has 78 of these stores, which sell on an average 20,000 cigars a day. Most of these are fifteen cent ones. Those which are sold for ten cents may be good, but now it is an even chance whether a ten cent cigar is made of anything but Connecticut seed leaf tobacco, no matter what Spanish label may be on the box; and it is almost absolutely certain that a cigar which sells for less than ten cents is not fit to use. The prices of cigars vary from five to fifty cents apiece, and some are sold for a higher sum. Probably, they average about thirteen cents each, and reckoning an average of 75,000,000 cigars per annum used in this city, that would make \$9,750,000 expended for this one luxury; and if we add what is spent for smoking tobacco, which is estimated at at least \$750,000 more, that would make \$10,500,000—a sum nearly one half the annual taxes of this city. Our so-called Havana cigars are supposed to be filled with pure Cuban tobacco, but this is far from being the case. With the exception of the highest priced cigars there is usually a considerable quantity of the Connecticut seed leaf, which is used for wrappers, mixed in with the better qualities of tobacco, and can be easily detected by the practised smoker. The only way to be sure of getting a first rate cigar is to pay liberally for it.

### CONNECTICUT SEED LEAF.

During the last twenty years the farmers in the valley of the Connecticut river have made the production of tobacco a specialty, and, with the exception of the Perique tobacco grown in a few parishes in Louisiana, is the highest priced tobacco raised in the United States. Twenty-five years ago the farmers were selling their tobacco for five and six cents a pound; very little pains were taken to produce a first class article, nor was there any sorting of the different qualities of the leaves. But recently the great demand for wrappers of a fine quality has advanced the price, until the crop is now sold for what would once be considered a fabulous sum, and during the last season some of the farmers realized as high as fifty or sixty cents a pound for their best lots. This is not the result of accident or speculation, but because the tobacco growers have displayed more than ordinary care and intelligence in producing it. They make a liberal use of fertilizers and manures, and take the utmost pains to preserve the plants from being destroyed by worms or injured in handling. No mother with her first baby is more particular of its health and nourishment than some of these farmers with their pet crop, and the prices which they have obtained during the last ten years show that this labor is capital well invested. It has advanced the price from thirteen cents a pound in 1850 to fifty cents in 1880, and there is no reason why it should not gradually increase to be a dollar a pound in half a dozen years. It should be added that these prices were obtained by the farmers before the crop had undergone the usual sweating process, which materially enhances its value and lessens its weight. The region which is adapted to growing this kind of tobacco is very limited; it consists of a strip of land on both sides of the Connecticut river, from Middletown to Northampton. The soil is upland, and a light sandy loam, which requires considerable manuring, for tobacco is an exhausting crop and requires the richest ground to bring it to perfection. There are many fields there which have been cultivated with this crop for the last twenty years and as yet show no signs of decreasing productivity. Ohio and Pennsylvania produce considerable seed leaf tobacco, but either on account of the want of care in raising or skill in curing and sorting, those States produce an inferior article to that grown in the valley of the Connecticut. Of the 243,000,000 pounds now produced in the United States the State of Connecticut raises 7,000,000, and this is eagerly sought for all over the country, on account of the soft, silky nature of the leaf, and its adaptation for cigar wrappers. When this tobacco has once passed through the sweating process, which expels a great part of the ammonia contained in the leaf and changes its strong rank flavor to a mild and aromatic one, it sometimes sells by the case from \$1 to \$1 25 per pound. This sweating process causes a radical change in the taste, smell and effects of the leaf, and there is as much difference between unfermented and fermented tobacco as there is between old and new cider, and any smoker will be convinced of this fact if he will compare the flavor of a good cigar with the smoke from a pipe in which ordinary chewing or unfermented tobacco is used. The latter has an intensely strong and fetid smell, owing to the presence of a large quantity of ammonia in the leaf, and reminds one of the odor of burnt hair and horn shavings. We would advise all young and inexperienced smokers to begin with mild cigars and cheroots and let the pipe alone till their nerves and olfactories are accustomed to the weed. It is far more difficult to raise good tobacco than to manufacture a first rate article; the former is dependent in a great measure upon the weather, soil and season, which are subject to a thousand variations which the manufacturer knows nothing of, and he requires an amount of good judgment and experience, which can only be acquired by many years of practical toil and observation. A single hail storm, a severe frost, a few hours' exposure to the sun after cutting or a few foggy mornings after the crop is housed will often do an immense deal of damage to a crop. A successful tobacco grower must always be on the qui vive for the latest improvements and discoveries either in fertilizers or care of the crop, and must never forget that "eternal vigilance is the price of" a first rate article. On the other hand, the manufacturer proceeds by a set of rules and weights, by which he is enabled to prepare precisely the quality which will suit the popular demand.

### CUBAN TOBACCO AND CIGARS.

There is no doubt but the finest tobacco in the world is raised in the island of Cuba, and there are many causes which conspire to produce this result. There is something in the effect of the tropical sun which gives to the leaf a peculiar aromatic flavor, which it is impossible to imitate in a more northern latitude. Chemists tell us that there is less nicotine or the poisonous principle in Cuban tobacco than in that of any other country, and this substance increases the further north the tobacco is raised. The Cuban tobacco of the greatest value, and which is used in the manufacture of our high priced cigars, is grown in the southwestern part of the island, in a district known as the Yuelta de Abajo, although in many other parts of the island tobacco of an excellent quality is produced. This favorite tobacco region of Cuba is confined to a very narrow area, about twenty-seven leagues long and only seven broad, and is bounded on the north by mountains, on the south and west by the ocean. The soil is light and sandy, and its low situation, being protected by the mountains from high winds, is peculiarly favorable to its rapid development. The Cuban planters have within the last few years made many improvements in the cultivation of this crop, and this is one of the secrets of its value. They make a liberal use of fertilizers and manures to prevent it from exhausting the soil; the land is well ploughed and carefully prepared, and during the period of their growth the plants are often watered if the weather requires it. In the preparation of the leaf for market they have some peculiar processes which are not common and probably are entirely unknown in the United States. A wash or mixture, made by boiling tobacco stalks and refuse leaves with certain aromatic drugs, is used to moisten the leaves before packing, by which an increased flavor is given to the tobacco, and ena-

bles it to bring a higher price in the market. Owing to the warm temperature of the island the process of sweating or fermentation is carried on much more rapidly there than in our Northern States, and great care has to be taken that the leaf is not injured during this process. A great deal of the tobacco which is sold for the genuine Cuban product is raised in Central and South America and imported to Cuba, where it is treated as above described and passes for genuine. Cuba is the paradise of smokers; cigars are so cheap there that all classes, men, women, children, negroes and Chinese, smoke almost incessantly, and the extreme mildness of the tobacco, its peculiar preparation and its absence from that strong, rank odor which characterizes tobacco grown in the United States, enable them to indulge in this luxury with impunity. Most of the cigars manufactured in Cuba are made by negroes and Chinese. Everybody who has visited Havana must have noticed the numerous shops and factories where the descendants of Ham and Japheth are seen busily employed in manipulating the fragrant leaves and rolling them into cigars. In this employment the Chinese are very expert; they easily learn the trade, which is, in fact, exceedingly simple and requires only a few days' practice to render one tolerably expert at it. When our manifest destiny politicians succeed in overcoming "the Ever Faithful Isle" (?) as one of the United States, every lover of the fragrant Havana may reckon on a decrease in the price of his favorite luxury, and if this large and influential class of smokers knew how much they were peculiarly interested in the consummation of this event they would be unanimous for the success of the patriot Cuban cause. When this place and Cuba become the favorite winter resorts of the travelling public, then we may expect that Cuban manners and customs will become fashionable, and the practical question for our reformers will be, "Will the coming woman smoke?"