

the habit of calling the *niopo* or *curupa* tree-tobacco) has been cultivated from time immemorial by all the native people of the Orinoco; and at the period of the conquest the habit of smoking was found to be alike spread over both North and South America. The Tamanacs and the Maypures of Guiana wrap maize-leaves round their cigars, as the Mexicans did at the time of the arrival of Cortes. The Spaniards have substituted paper for the leaves of maize, in imitation of them. The poor Indians of the forests of the Orinoco know as well as did the great nobles at the court of Montezuma, that the smoke of tobacco is an excellent narcotic; and they use it not only to procure their afternoon nap, but also to put themselves into that state of quiescence, which they call *dreaming with the eyes open*, or *day-dreaming*. The use of tobacco appears to me to be now very rare in the missions; and in New Spain, to the great regret of the revenue-officers, the natives, who are almost all descended from the lowest class of the Aztec people, do not smoke at all. Father Gili affirms, that the practice of chewing tobacco is unknown to the Indians of the Lower Orinoco. I rather doubt the truth of this assertion, having been told that the Sercucumas of the Erevato and the Caura, neighbours of the whitish Taparitos, swallow tobacco chopped small, and impregnated with some other very stimulant juices, to prepare themselves for battle. Of the four species of *Nicotiana* cultivated in Europe\* we found only two growing wild; but the *Nicotiana loxensis*, and the *Nicotiana andicola*, which I found on the back of the Andes, at the height of eighteen hundred and fifty toises (almost the height of the Peak of Teneriffe), are very similar to the *N. tabacum* and *N. rustica*. The whole genus, however, is almost exclusively American, and the greater number of the species appeared to me to belong to the mountainous and temperate region of the tropics.

It was neither from Virginia, nor from South America, but from the Mexican province of Yucatan, that Europe received the first tobacco seeds, about the year 1559.† The

\* *Nicotiana tabacum*, *N. rustica*, *N. paniculata*, and *N. glutinosa*.

† The Spaniards became acquainted with tobacco in the West India Islands at the end of the 15th century. I have already mentioned that the cultivation of this narcotic plant preceded the cultivation of the