

**Daily Democrat**

**WHO INVENTED SMOKING?**

It has been generally supposed that the uses of tobacco were not known outside of America and its islands before the discovery of the western world. While convincing proof to the contrary has not been obtained, the explorations of recent years have raised the question whether the tobacco habit in the fifteenth century was not far more widely prevalent than has been believed. It is learned that among many of the Pacific Islands the natives used tobacco long before they were visited by white men, and there is no tradition among them of a time when their fathers did not understand the culture and uses of the tobacco plant. Throughout inner Africa also the use of tobacco is universally known, and there is every reason to believe that some of the varieties of nicotiana in common use are indigenous. For all we know to the contrary, the savages of Central Africa, who were quite unknown at the time Columbus discovered America, were puffing their pipes long before he made himself famous.

There is no doubt that the discovery of American tobacco had considerable influence upon the tobacco habit in Africa, if it did not actually introduce it. Our common Virginia tobacco was carried far up the Nile to equatorial Africa long before white men penetrated that region. Schweinfurth was the first to discover that this imported plant is in use among several of the Bahr el Ghazal and Welle-Makua tribes; and it is a curious fact that the savages who use this exotic have no native name for it. Each tribe has its own name for the native variety of tobacco, but the appellations of the Africans apply to the imported plant show unmistakably that they are derived, one and all, from the word tobacco.

So far as this large region, at least, is indebted to America for an improved quality of the weed, the obligation seems to be acknowledged in the names given to the article. But the indigenous varieties are far more prevalent, and are largely used even where Virginia tobacco is cultivated. And since the foreign source of the exotic has been so easily discovered in the languages of the people, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that in the greater regions to which it has not extended, and where no foreign influence is discernible, the smoking habit had an independent origin.

It is not at all certain, says the New York Sun, that the white race has a prior claim even upon the invention of the cigar. In all the parts of New Guinea, the largest island in the world, that have yet been visited, tobacco is cultivated, and in some of these districts the humble pipe contributes nothing to the enjoyment of the weed and is not even known. Mr. Macleay saw natives with crude-looking cigars in their mouths, who had never seen a white man before, and thought he had dropped from the sky. Dr. Finck, who some years later explored the coast for hundreds of miles, says the natives of the whole northeast coast of New Guinea, though inveterate smokers, had never heard of a pipe, and returned those which he gave them as articles for which they had no use. He says they roll the partly dried leaves into a rude cigar, and not being blessed with Havanna wrappers, they tie around the cigar a large green leaf from a tree. Doubtless the vilest weeds sold on the Bowery are superior to these products of Papuan ingenuity, which hold fire so poorly that a live coal is always kept at hand to revivify them. But they suit the native taste, and the people seem to regard those who draw tobacco smoke through a pipe-stem as belonging to an inferior order of human beings.

Professor David P. Todd, of Amherst College Observatory, has just received papers from the State Department at Washington appointing him chief of the expedition to observe the total eclipse of the sun, visible December 22d in Southwestern Africa. Professor Todd will be accompanied by a large staff of scientists and assistants, and intends to leave New York for his destination, St. Paul De Londa, in the Portuguese province of Angola, about October 1st.

Speaking of dining, Col. Dudley has not yet eaten that dinner at the White House to which he referred in a letter to a friend. It is but just, however, to state that the Colonel has frequently been within a stone's throw of the White House kitchen during the past few months, but the sound of the dinner bell fell not on his ears.

A New York woman who is suing for a divorce, says her husband has only bought her one new dress in eighteen years. She must be an actress—and she is lucky if she is not obliged to pay for her husband's clothes. The man who won't buy his wife at least two new dresses in eighteen years doesn't deserve to enjoy matrimonial felicity.

A money-order convention between Germany and the United States was recently signed by the German Minister and Postmaster-General Wanamaker. It increases the amount of the money order that can be sent from either country to the other from \$5 to \$100.

For Land madehazacs goto E. L. Power

A representative of a French syndicate has been looking at an island near San Francisco with a view to establishing there a frog farm. According to his estimates an enormous fortune awaits the man who takes hold of the venture in the right way.

In Canada two hundred people have been poisoned by eating zinc-tinctured ice cream. The man who has no ice cream in his stomach, and is not moved by picnics and church fairs is fit for pleasure, strategems and work.

During the past fiscal year this country exported \$120,227,237 worth of bread-stuffs. We do considerable to keep the people of Europe from hunger.

The British Admiralty have ordered two fast cruisers of a new type, to be named the Andromache and Apollo. They will have a displacement of 3,400 tons and a speed of twenty knots per hour. Their armament will consist of two six inch breech loading rifles, fifteen quick firing guns, besides machine guns and torpedoes.

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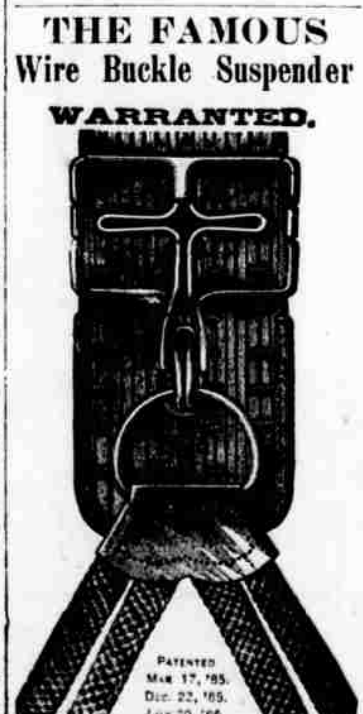
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