

The Phytolacca is a Kind of domestic Plant, for though it be very commonly found in almost every Plantation in North America, from Virginia to New York, both included, and perhaps farther, and propagates itself without any Kind of Culture, yet I never observed it growing in the Woods. It is a large Plant with a strong Stem, sending forth alternately many Branches, and rises, in good Ground, to five or six Feet in Height. The Leaves are large, smooth, juicy, oval, and intire, without any Notchings or Slashings on the Edges, and placed alternately.

The Root is large likewise, and perennial, running deep into the Ground, and dividing into many Branches.

The Flowers stand in erect Spikes on Foot-stalks, arising separately on the Branches. The distinguishing Parts of the Flower and Fruit are as follows.

The Flower cup consists of five whitish-coloured hollow oval Leaves, which continue till the Fruit falls.

It has no Flower Leaves, besides those of the Cup.

From the Bottom of the Cup arise ten Chives with round flat Heads.

The Seed Bud is a little flatter Globe, carrying ten short small Sides, and afterwards turns to a round, flatted, red, juicy Berry, and divided into ten Cells round its Axis, each containing one Seed of the Shape of a Nerey.

The Juice of this Plant is very sharp and corrosive, and for that Reason is never used internally, but is frequently used with Success to take off the Callusity of sinuous Ulcers. The corrosive Parts are to volatile, that when it is thoroughly dried it becomes insipid and inoffensive.

The first Sprouts in the Spring, when it rises with all its Leaves close folded, like a large Asparagus, and boiled, is accounted a great Delicacy, and is frequently eat in the Spring. I have eat it, with out the least Offence to my Stomach or otherwise, and think it the most agreeable to the Palate of any boiled Green I ever did eat. The ripe Berries likewise are eaten by the Birds, and it is probable therefore that they, by ripening, lose their Acrimony.

I have been told likewise, that the Roots roasted, applied as a Poultice to offensive Ulcers, with hard Tumours and Callosity, have dissolved them, when the common Means failed.

Now I wish I could shew, from the peculiar Nature of Cancers, and of the Phytolacca, what Reasons we have to expect a Cure of Cancers from this, more than other Medicines in Use, on such like Occasions; but I cannot tell wherein the Nature of a Cancer consists, whereby it is distinguished from all other Tumours. I may perhaps tell some outward Appearances whereby to distinguish it, but these are far from showing the essential Difference.

Neither do I know in what Manner Medicines operate on the Humours of the Body, and therefore I must leave it to others to shew a *Priori*, why one Medicine is preferable to another in the Cure of a Cancer. I have no Foundation for Reasoning, but from Observation, that this or the other Medicine or Method of Cure, has been beneficial or prejudicial in such like Cases.

However this be, we may observe, that there seems some Kind of Analogy between Cancers and the Tumours made by some Insects, laying their Eggs in Leaves, or the Bark or Fruit of Vegetables, and in the Flesh of Animals. The whole Texture and Composition of the Plant, so far as the Influence of the little Embryo extends, is altered, and the Nature of the Juice likewise. The Embryo seems like a Point, from whence some peculiar Force and Action proceed, so that, upon examining some of them, while these Tumours are tender, there seem to be numerous Tubes and Fibres all tending to or from the Embryo. The Eggs of some Insects lie several Years without any apparent Increase or Alteration, but after they have passed a certain Time, their Life or Force of Vegetation begins, and they encrease greatly in a short Time. Thus it is with the Insect called in America, the Locust, if the common Observation be true, that every fourteenth Year, such numerous Swarms are produced, as to destroy all the young Shoots in our Orchards, and in many Trees of the Wood.

These Locusts, by piercing the tender Shoots of Trees in the Summer, lay their Eggs in them, which turn to Maggots the same Summer, and before Winter creep into the Ground, and there are supposed to remain in the State of a Chrysalis fourteen Years, at the End of which Term they pierce the Bark, and come out in vast Swarms; then they turn to a Fly, bigger than the Drone

Bee. It is certain some Seeds never vegetate till after two Years, and perhaps a longer Time may be necessary to others.

Now it may be supposed, that the Cancer arises from the Egg of some Insect, or Seed of some parasitic Vegetable, which lies (as in the Woman here mentioned) several Years without Increase or Vegetation, but at the End of that Term encreases very fast, and spreads its Parts like Roots, thro' all the adjoining Parts of the Body, and thereby occasions the Obstructions and Swellings of the Vessels. That the Effluvia from this Insect or Vegetable so alter the Humours of the adjoining Parts, that they become corrosive; and if this Insect be like the Polypus, or some other Vegetable, that every Part preserves the Life and Power of Vegetation, so that if they be cut into never so many Pieces, every one of these becomes a perfect Animal or Vegetable of the same Kind, we from thence form some Notion of the Nature of a genuine Cancer, and how such a penetrating volatile Juice, as that of the Phytolacca, may perform the Cure by killing every Part of this Vegetable or Animal, in its farthest Recedes, and that without destroying the Substance or Flesh in which it is lodged. This Conjecture seems the more probable, because Cancers are commonly found in Parts of the Body most exposed to the Air, as in the Face and Womens Breasts, and this Juice is frequently used to destroy Vermin in Ulcers. But my present Purpose does not allow me to descend into Particulars, to show the Propability of this Conjecture, and to take off some obvious Objections to it. I only take the Liberty to propose it to the Curious and Learned, for further Enquiry. New York, Dec. 15, 1750.

PORTSMOUTH, in the Province of New Hampshire, October 9.

His Majesty's Superior Court of Judicature for this Province was open'd, and the following Charge from the Bench was given to the Grand Jury.

Gentlemen of the Grand Jury,
It is both the Right and the Duty of this Court, as a Court of Assizes and General Goal Delivery, at the opening thereof (however it may have been sometimes omitted) to give a Charge to the Grand Jury, both to explain and remind them of their Duty.—The first Clause of your Oath is, "That you shall diligently enquire and true Presentment make of all such Matters and Things as shall be given you in Charge", which not only implies and supposes a Charge will be given you by the Court, but also that it is to be the Subject of your Enquiry; and as it is appointed by the Constitution, it is the general Practice of all the King's Courts, where a Grand Jury is obliged to attend. And if this has been neglected among us for any Time lately past, which was not always the Case, 'tis high Time to revive the Practice, and not to omit any longer, that which should by no Means be neglected at all.

Gentlemen,
You are sensible that civil Government is necessary to the very Being of Society: All Nations and Ages have erected and supported it in some Shape or other; and therefore the grand Question among Mankind has been on this Subject (not whether Government was necessary) but which was the best Form of it: And as to this, no doubt all true Englishmen, will bless themselves in an Apprehension of having the Advantage. We enjoy such a happy Constitution as is unknown to other Nations by Experience: We are not subject to arbitrary Edicts, nor in Danger by partial, despotic Decrees: The People by our Constitution have a Voice in making and executing our Laws; and 'tis pity the People did not make themselves more generally acquainted with the Nature and peculiar Advantages of that Form of Government under which they live.—It is the executive Part of the Constitution we are now concerned with; the King's Courts are the Executors of the Law: And here! see! the Privileges of the People; "Every Subject of Great Britain (as a certain Author expresses) has a fix'd fundamental Right born with him as to the Freedom of his Person, and Property of his Estate, which he can't be depriv'd of but either by his own Consent, or for some Crime for which the Law has impos'd such a Fine or Forfeiture; and no Man can be convicted or attainted of any Crime, before two Juries pass upon him of at least 24 Persons; the one to Present the Offence, the other to try the Truth of that Presentment." You see then, *Gentlemen*, what an important Trust is committed to you by the Constitution: You are

to say, who shall, or shall not, be brought to Trial for Offences committed: On you therefore the due Execution of the Laws in a great Measure depends; and this is not less necessary to the Support of Government, than Government itself to the Preservation of Society; without this, the Law is a dead Letter, and as ineffectual to all the Purposes of Law, as the Picture of Man to the Purposes of Agency: Even the making of Laws would be only a needless Charge, a Burthen on the Society without Benefit, if they are not duly executed; nor can there be a worse Spirit and Temper prevailing among a People, than an habitual Contempt of their Laws, which naturally and unavoidably arises from a Neglect of putting them into Execution: Whether we in this Province are not guilty in this Matter may be easily determined, by considering the Crimes and Vices which prevail and grow fashionable among us, such as would not have escaped condign Punishment in the very Bud, did we all in our respective Stations strictly endeavour, to act up to the Constitution. You, *Gentlemen*, are, or ought to be summon'd from the several Towns in the Province, whereby you must be supposed to have the more Knowledge of what is done. The Grand Jury is called, The Eyes of the County for which they serve; and as we have no distinct Counties, you are design'd as Eyes for the whole Province to detect Criminal Offenders. And were the Grand Juries but duly careful to enquire and examine into such Things, it is hardly conceivable, how so many Offenders should escape Presentments. But however it has been, *Gentlemen*, it's Time we should rouse out of political Slumbers, and set about our Duty in our several Spheres with the more Diligence and Care. We have many good Laws which seem to be quite obsolete; and those too, such as respect what should always be the first Part of your Enquiries; viz. The Honour and Worship of GOD: Legislature has shewn their Concern in this Matter: We ought to take Care it should not be ineffectual. There is a good Act for the better Observation of the LORDS-DAY; pray look into it in the 7th Page of the Province Law, and judge, whether that Law has not been esteemed like an old Almanack; see whether it has been and is duly observed; or have Offenders against it been brought to Trial? and consider, why they have not. There is a Paragraph of an Act against Blasphemy, Page 121. Are there no Offenders of this Kind among us? I wish there were none: I have heard, that in a Company of Revellers in their Midnight Cups the Health of Jesus Christ has been toasted, as the Phrase is: This is Shocking to the Ears of every sober Man! And I hope if this was done, we shall never hear of the like again; or if it should be, that such an Offence may not escape proper Annulment. There is the Law against profane Cursing and Swearing: How comes it to pass, that we hear no more of Convictions upon that Law? Is it because there are no Offenders of this Kind? Whoever is conversant among the People, or frequent in the Streets, can't think that can be the Case: The Fault must lie somewhere: And pray consider, Whether it could be so common a Vice, if those intrusted with the Execution of it were not negligent: But when many of them allow themselves in the frequent Breach of the Act, it is a difficult Task to execute it with a good Grace. But, *Gentlemen*, any of these are liable to be called to Account if you please. There is the Act for suppressing Disorders in licensed Houses, Page 57. Consider, Whether you do not see frequently the Breach of that Act, which gives rise also to many other Disorders. There is an Act for preventing Gaming in Public Houses, which has not been much observ'd, see Page 162.—These Laws, if duly executed, would be much for the public Good; and 'tis strange that they have been so generally neglected.—You will do well, *Gentlemen*, to begin a Reformation: You are diligently to enquire of all Felonies, Riots and Breaches of the public Peace: This you know is your Duty, and need no particular Direction nor Admonition concerning them; only in general, I would say, That as you are appointed to watch as it were against all Invasions upon the Laws and Breaches of the public Peace, you are not to expect a particular Complainant, and wait till then before you present Offences: Nay, 'Tis your Duty to be very careful of a particular Informer, whether it does not proceed from Revenge, Malice, or some sinister View: The Words in your Oath, "You shall present no Man for Envy, Malice, or Hatred," may refer to these Affections in your Informers, as well in yourselves; and therefore you should more diligently enquire here, than in Things which are of your own Knowledge. All Breaches of Penal Laws, and others that relate

to the public Peace and Order, your Enquiry, as well as gainst the Light and Law, fore, *Gentlemen*, recommend that you would make a list of these Things than has been such Offences pass without ally, *Gentlemen*, Look which are generally the S Actions, and take Cogniz there were no such Abettor certainly be less of it commi Upon the whole, In the exhort you, *Gentlemen*, to your remaining Duty, in aforementioned, as well as cur to your Mind; and the to your Business.

LONDON, ON Saturday last the

Mr. Taylor, a Clergyman, a Billment for writing and publishing on the Government, and commend a Person who was Pans and Culloden, in order the traitorous Merits mentioned Alms of People who were ed to his Majesty's Person Trial lasted from Six o'Clock till Seven in the Evening: five Hours, and then found

Mr. Bathurst, the King's Judgment in a most eloquent wherein he took Notice of a for a Libel on the Government the Second, which was not and a long Imprisonment, which, and stood in the Pillory was far from desiring the lition it as a precedent, but Difference of the Times: Regard to the Function of the Mildness of the present Cutes the Law with such to be for the Sake of Cruelty ment is for the Sake of Hon. Baron Clive, who Bench, after representing the most affecting Terms the Breach of these solemn taken, and the evil Tendency nounced the following Sentence be imprisoned two Years, give Security for his good Behaviour himself in a Recognizance for tities in 500 l. each.

BOSTON

Extract of a Letter from Mr. "Yesterday we had the Col. Saltonstall's Brigantine Company drowned, except two who had lash'd themselves and were there preserv'd were taken up. Mr. Gardner with two other Men, and ed. And they are afraid the with all his Company are lo

NEW-YORK

Last Week arrived here C South Carolina, who inform had done a Deal of Damage that Province, and that no from Charles Town they had mily. A Party of Men came up with some of their of 'em, but the rest made the kind them a Hatchet, a T son'd Arrows: Several of ving conceived such dreadful second Attempt of this blood had quitted their Possession Town in Waggon with the The above-mentioned Instrum gier brought with him here.

ANNAP

On Sunday last died, at Town, aged near Seventy, oldest Inhabitant of that Character of a just and honest Last Night we had a br Aurara Borealis, or Northern The River Severn is no People walk across upon it.