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SOME VARIETIES OF TOBACCO RECOMMENDED FOR THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

By F. Charlan, Chief of the Tobacco Division.

Tobacco growing is one of the most profitable undertakings that can be carried on in those parts of the Province of Quebec where the season is sufficiently long, so that there is not much danger of serious frost from June 1 to September 15. In order to obtain the best results it is necessary for the nights to be comparatively warm.

The zone of successful tobacco culture is thus limited by the first ranges of the Laurentians to the north, and stretches as far east as Three Rivers and as far south as the American boundary. The wooded regions in this area, where the nights are much too cool, are not included.

This area contains a stretch of land suitable for tobacco growing, large enough to take care of the present and possibly the future needs of the native tobacco industry, but it is necessary to use some judgment in choosing, according to the locality, the most appropriate variety to grow, while the particular use to which the harvest is to be put must also be kept in view.

Speaking generally, the tobacco grown in the Province of Quebec may be divided into three classes:—(a) Industrial pipe tobacco, (b) pipe tobacco grown for the personal use of the grower, and sometimes for the local trade, and (c) cigar tobacco.

Industrial Pipe Tobacco.

This class is represented by heavy yielding varieties such as the Connecticuts, Broad Leaf and Seed Leaf, General Grant and Blue Pryor. In this class Canello holds a place apart because of the smallness of its leaves. Selective experiments have been carried on with the Connecticut and General Grant varieties by the Tobacco Division, and some well fixed types which appear to give entire satisfaction have been successfully established. Up to the present, Blue Pryor has not been in such great demand, and, as far as is known at present, there is no well defined type of Canadian Blue Pryor in existence.

The Connecticut, General Grant and Blue Pryor varieties are planted about the same distances apart, about three feet by two feet. For the Connecticuts, a light, well-drained soil is preferable, and a large, relatively thin leaf, capable of being made into light pipe tobacco, is looked for.

The General Grant variety may be grown on a little heavier soil, but it may also be successfully grown on light, open soil. The leaf, however, is accustomed to the leaves of this variety being relatively thick, provided that the colour is good, that is, if it is sufficiently matured. Blue Pryor grows a thicker, more pointed and slightly narrower leaf than the Connecticuts. It is sometimes grown in relatively heavy soil, but this should be well drained if a reasonably heavy yield is desired.

These are the three varieties maturing most slowly, that can be grown with any certainty of success, in the Province of Quebec.
Canelle matures very quickly. It may sometimes be planted from the 1st to the 15th of June and harvested in August, after, in some cases, only 60 days growth. It is planted at short distances apart, sometimes one foot by two feet. Under these conditions, and in spite of the plants being very small, a satisfactory yield per acre can be obtained, and in view of the higher prices generally paid for this variety of tobacco, Canelle is one of the most profitable varieties that can be grown, especially where sufficient manual labour is available for the planting to be done by hand.

**Canadian Tobaccos.**

Among the varieties known as Canadian tobaccos, grown especially for the personal use of the grower, a very large number of varieties may be named: Petit Havana, Tabac Canadien, Tabac Rouge, etc., etc. In reality, among the Havanas, there is only one variety which is properly acclimatised to this country, namely, Petit Havana. This is a very early maturing variety, but gives a yield in weight per acre scarcely superior to Canelle. It is very hardy and can accommodate itself to a great variety of soils; if planted closely a satisfactory yield per acre may be obtained, amounting sometimes to 1,000 pounds. It is easy to cure, which makes it an ideal type to be grown in a small way. Its aroma, while nothing like that of Canelle, is very agreeable and it holds the fire well, which makes it an ideal pipe tobacco.

The other designations have been given to varieties generally put on the market by merchants who have, for example, called some varieties Grand Rouge which are nothing but Havana Seed Leaf, Comstock Spanish, or some other variety. It is therefore possible to obtain big Tabac Rouge by growing these last varieties and harvesting them at full maturity.

The varieties known as Tabac Belge and Little Dutch may also be added to this group. These are varieties maturing relatively early if topped early. They give leaves of an average development, with a special aroma and a light taste, yielding easily 1,000 pounds per acre. Manufacturers do not use these varieties much because of their relatively high price.

**Cigar Tobaccos.**

This name covers all varieties utilised during the last few years for the production of cigar binders. The chief of these is Comstock Spanish, which is very rough resembles Havana Seed Leaf and Connecticut Havana. Although it is possible to distinguish the taste of Comstock Spanish from that of Connecticut Havana, it is difficult to note any difference in this regard between the latter and Havana Seed Leaf.

Connecticut Havana, Havana Seed Leaf and Comstock Spanish, although specially adapted for the production of cigar binders, above all the Comstock, also gives excellent tobacco for the leaf trade. It has already been noted that from these varieties are selected the tobaccos known as Grand Canadien, Tabac Rouge, etc.

They mature relatively early, and, if planted early, during the first twelve days of June, may be harvested at the end of August. They are planted 2½ feet by 1½ feet apart.

Although Comstock Spanish is a variety especially adapted for binder tobacco, only the best leaves are used for this purpose, that is, those which are of the proper size and quality. The leaves which are too short for this purpose, usually growing at the top of the plant, are generally heavier and are sometimes used as filler. Naturally the waste and lower leaves, either being too ragged or not having enough body to be properly fermented, are put to other uses. They are used generally for ordinary pipe tobacco.

While the size and texture of the leaves of Comstock Spanish permit of their being used as binders or fillers, real filler tobacco can also be successfully grown in the Province of Quebec. The result of trials carried on with Zimmer Spanish, both in the Yamaska Valley and in the northern counties of Montcalm, L'Assomption,
Deux Montagnes, Joliette, etc., leaves no doubt on the subject. Canadian Zimmer Spanish is a little thinner than the American variety of the same name, but it has a milder taste and a finer aroma. The attention of the packers and cigar manufacturers of Canada should be drawn to this native filler. Zimmer Spanish is planted at the same distances apart as Comstock, 24 feet by 14 feet.

Up to the present, experiments with directly imported Cuban varieties have not given the results which were hoped for. From these, fragrant tobaccos can easily be obtained, the strength varying according to the season; being light when grown on very light soils or in wet seasons, and a little stronger when grown in warm or normal seasons or on heavier soils. In the opinion of some manufacturers who have tried Canadian Cuban tobaccos, grown either from imported seed or from seed of the first Canadian generation, these varieties have some future as fillers. However, the yield per acre is small, rarely being above 600 pounds, which, unless these tobaccos can command a higher price than that generally paid for fillers, will discourage the grower for a long time. The growing of these varieties in a small way, however, is recommended, on account of their aroma, which allows them to be used for the same purpose as Cannelle, although they are used for an entirely different purpose in their native country. Cubans should be planted as closely as possible, 24 feet by 1 foot apart.

From an industrial point of view, however, the Cuban varieties are worthy of attention, for it has been proved that a great proportion of the yield of Cuban tobaccos grown in Canada consists of thin leaves, which, although they are small, are capable of being used as cigar wrappers. If they were used for this purpose it would be possible for the manufacturer to accept them at a price which would render their cultivation profitable.

**SUMMARY.**

In the part of Canada that has been delimited above, the following varieties may be grown fairly successfully:

- The Connecticut, General Grant and Blue Pryor, pipe tobaccos;
- Comstock Spanish, Connecticut Havana and Havana Seed Leaf, for cigar fillers;
- Zimmer Spanish, one of the best varieties of filler tobacco that can be recommended for Canada at the present time;
- All Canadian tobaccos such as Cannelle and Petit Havane;
- Varieties east, only the more early maturing varieties may be grown. The varieties first given above should not be grown here, but attention should be given to those maturing earlier although their leaves are smaller. From the character of the applications for seed received at Ottawa, it would appear that some growers are deceiving themselves as to the quality of their harvests. The general tendency seems to be to grow varieties giving a heavy yield, although, because of unfavourable climatic conditions, it may be impossible for these to attain their full development. This is not the most serious result, the gravest is that these varieties, besides not developing as they might do under favourable climatic conditions, also yield products inferior in taste and aroma. Under these circumstances it would be much better to cultivate smaller, earlier maturing varieties of tobacco, which will have a chance to ripen and furnish leaves having a better taste. This is a point which cannot be too strongly emphasized in so far as that part of Canada extending east of Three Rivers, or, at the most, east of Quebec, is concerned.