

some other plant for the true tobacco; for although tobacco was subsequently extensively cultivated for a number of years, it has not apparently survived as a colonist. Jones, however (Proc. and Trans. Nov. Scot. Inst. Nat. Sc., 1873, p. 266), mentions that he was informed that tobacco plants are sure to spring up where old stone walls are taken down.

In the *Historye of the Bermudaes or Summer Islands*, edited by General Sir J. Henry Lefroy, there is early mention (p. 3) of some of the principal vegetable productions of the islands, notably of the "many tall and goodly cæders, infinite store of palmitoes and numbers of mulberry trees." There is also a good description of the prickly pear, and the "wild olive" is frequently mentioned. Whether this was the European olive run wild, or the native shrub (*Forestiera porulosa*) belonging to the same natural order, is uncertain. Another interesting fact is the reference to the "poisonous weed" [*Rhus toxicodendron*], showing that it is not a plant of recent introduction. The description of it is unmistakable.

Between these early records and the beginning of the present century we have gleaned no information of importance or interest on the vegetation of the Bermudas. Indeed, the botanical history of the islands may be said to have begun in 1806, when François André Michaux visited them. The American vessel in which he had taken a passage to the United States for the purpose of collecting seeds of forest trees for the French Government was seized by the commander of the British man-of-war "Leander," and Michaux, the only passenger, was taken on board the latter vessel. She put into the Bermudas for water, and during her stay of a week Michaux was permitted to land; and he took advantage of the opportunity to study the vegetation, subsequently publishing<sup>1</sup> the results of his observations, the substance of which is worth reproducing here, as the earliest notice of the vegetation of the islands by a botanist. It was written on board the "Leander" on her way from the Bermudas to Halifax; hence it is necessarily imperfect, and in some points inaccurate. St George was the only island traversed by Michaux, and what follows relates to that alone.

Three parts of the island were covered with wood; the rest was partly cultivated and partly so barren as to be uncultivable. The plants natural to the country were little varied, and although Michaux made only a few hasty walks, he believed that he could state with some degree of certainty that the number of species did not exceed 140 or 150. "Among these plants," he says, "we find several of the Old World which have not the appearance of having been carried thither, such are *Verbascum thapsus*, *Anagallis arvensis*, *Mercurialis annua*, *Leontodon Taraxacum*, *Plantago major*, *Urtica urens*, *Gentiana nana*, *Oxalis acetosella*,<sup>2</sup> &c." Michaux further notes the palmetto, the poison vine, the sage-bushes (*Lantana* spp.), a pretty verbena, and a small *Medicago*. The last was the commonest

<sup>1</sup> Notice sur les Isles Bermudes, et particulièrement sur l'Isle Saint Georges, in *Annales du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle*, Paris, 1806, t. viii. pp. 356-364.

<sup>2</sup> The two last names were almost certainly written without thought, and probably for *Erythraea* and *Oxalis corniculata*.