

himself bought one of 157¹ *carats*, rude; and that, when cut, it retain'd 94¹ *carats*: And, that he bought another of 63 *carats*, &c. *An Extract of some Observations, to be met with in the Journal des Scavans; concerning the Lake of Mexico; and a strange sort of Rey, growing sometimes in certain parts of France.*

1. **T**He Lake of *Mexico* hath this of extraordinary and perhaps peculiar, that part of its water is Sweet, and the other part Salt; which make it believed to be derived from two sources, whereof the one holds sweet water, the other comes from some mineral and salin Earth, found in the hills, through which this water passeth, and is impregnated with the salt which is dissolved in its course: Or, if it hath no peculiar source, it must be, that that, which makes part of the Lake salt, is the bottom or the Earth under the water, being in that place full of salt: which is confirm'd by Experience, much Salt being made of it every day, of which that City drives a great trade with remote parts, even the *Philippines* themselves, whither it is transported in considerable quantities. That part of the Lake which is sweet, is still and quiet; the salt part is agitated and moved according as the winds blow. The sweet water is very good and wholesom, breeding plenty of little fishes. That which is mov'd, is bitter-salt, breeding no fish at all. The sweet water is higher than the other, and falls into it. The water of the Salt part is seven leagues long, and as many leagues broad, and hath above 22 leagues in compass. That of the Sweet water is near as big; and the whole Lake contains about 50 leagues in compass. Formerly there were near 80 Towns seated round about this Lake, some of which contain'd 5000 Families, and some above 10000. At the present there may be a matter of thirty Burroughs and Villages, of which the greatest holds not above 500 Houses; all the rest having been ruined by the revolutions in that Country.

2. Some years since, *M. Perrault* related to the R. Academy of *Paris*, that travelling through *Sologne*, he had been informed by some Physicians and Chirurgions of that Country, that the *Rey* was there sometimes so corrupted, that those who did eat of the bread which had much of this corrupted grain in it, were seized on by a Gangrene, some in one part, some in another, some losing a finger, others a hand, others a nose, &c. and that this Gangrene was not preceded by any fever, nor inflammation, nor confide-

considerable pain; as also that the Gangren'd parts fell off of themselves, without any need of separating them by any remedies or instruments.

We have view'd some of these grains of *Rey* thus degenerated. They are black without, and pretty white within, and when they are dry, they are harder and closer than the natural good grain. They have no ill taste. I have found some of them, that had hanging at their basis a substance of a hony-tast and consistence. They become much longer in the ear, than the other. There are some of them that are 13 or 14 lines long, and two lines large, and at times you will find 7 or 8 of them in one ear. It may be seen in examining these Ears, that they are not bodies of another kind, generated among the grains of *Rey*, as some pretend; but that they are true grains of *Rey*, having their coats like the rest, wherein may be distinguish'd the place of the germen and of the furrow.

Monf. *Bourdelin* having acquainted us, that 1674 there hapned many the like accidents at *Montargis* from the same cause, the Company gave M. *Dodard* order to inform himself about it: He accordingly caused to be brought to him some Ears of this *Rey*, and the Company found the grains of them altogether like those they had seen formerly. He sent notice hereof to several persons, among others to M. *Bellay*, chief Physician to her Royal Highness *Madamoiselle*, and to M. *Dubé* a famous Physician at *Montargis*. He hath also entertained therewith M. *Tuillier* Dr of Physick of the Faculty of *Angiers*, a very knowing and very curious person, who hath imparted to him a Letter of M. *Chatton*, an old and expert Chirurgion at *Montargis*; whence he saith he hath learned the particulars following;

Rey doth in this manner degenerate in *Sologne*, *Berry*, the country of *Blaise*, and *Gastinois*, and almost every where, especially in light and sandy land. There are few years but some little of this ill grain grows. When there is but little, the ill effects of it are not perceived. It grows plenteously in wet years, and most of all when after a rainy Spring there follow excessive heats.

The constitution of the Air or of the Rains, which impress this malignity in the *Rey*, is rare, there having been found none at *Montargis* but thrice in 38 years, and there having been but few distempers of it the second time, because there was but little of that corrupted grain.

The bread made of the Rey which holds some of this corrupted corn, tastes neither worse nor better than other. The Rey thus corrupted hath its effects chiefly when 'tis new, yet not till it hath been used a considerable time.

These effects are, to dry up the milk in women; to cause sometimes malign Fevers, accompanied with drowziness and raving; to breed the gangren in arms, but most in legs, which ordinarily are corrupted first, and to which this distemper fastens it self, as the Scorbut doth.

This corruption is preceded by a certain stupefaction in the legs; upon which follows a little pain, and some swelling without inflammation, and the skin becomes cold and livid. The gangrene begins at the center of the part, and appears not at the skin but a long while after, so that people are often obliged to open the skin to find only the gangrene lurking under it.

The only remedy for this gangren is to cut off the part affected. If it be not cut off, it becomes dry and lean, as if the skin were glued over the bones, and 'tis of a dreadful blackness, without rottenness.

Whilst the legs are drying up, the gangren ascends to the shoulders, and one knows not, which way it communicates it self.

We have as yet not lighted upon a specifick remedy against this evil. There is some hope of preventing it by hot Spirits and volatill Salts. The *Orvietan* and ptisane of *Lupins* do considerable good to the person distempered. Poor people are almost only subject to these evils.

M. Twilker writes *M. Dodard* word, that in the year 1675. he saw much of this cornuted grain among the Rey of the Country of *Gashinois*, and that the Country-people told him, that there was much more of it this year, than the last year, and that it caused great disorders: And yet 'tis certain, that this Summer hath rather been cold than hot, and that there hath not been any considerably intemperate weather this year, but excess of wet. *M. Dodard* avers, that he hath seen much of this black grain among the Rey upon sandy grounds, and the grains and ears he hath brought thence, appear'd to the said Company altogether like those which *M. Dubé* sent from *Montargis*.

Mean time, it may be doubted whether these gangrens are the effect of this corn eaten, and whether the corruption of the Rey, and that of the parts in the bodies of men are not accidents

dents equally derivable from the same constitution of the Air, and independent the one from the other. But, if this gangren seizeth only on those that eat Rey-bread, and comes not upon them but in such years when there is much Rey corrupted, it seems to be certain, that this corrupted Rey is the cause of this gangren. To assure our selves the more of it, the Company gave order to make bread both of this Rey a'one, and of the same Rey mingled in different proportions with good Rey, to observe the different effects of this Rey and of these different mixtures upon brutes of different kinds. And to omit nothing that may serve to know the causes of this corruption; M. *Marchand* hath been desired by them to cause some of that sandy earth where it grows to be brought, and to plant in it some grains of Rey not corrupted, and to water them very much during the Spring, to see, whether there be some particular cause of this corruption besides the superfluous humidity. And to give occasion the better to know, wherein consists this corruption, they have desired M. *Bourdelin* to make a Chymical analysis of this *corrupted* Rey, which they intend afterwards to compare with the Chymical analysis they have made of *good* Rey.

Whilst these Experiments are making, I shall tell you (saith M. *Dodard*) that M. *Tuillier* has assured me, that in the year 1630, which was fatal to the poor of the Countries subject to these evils, he being at *Sully*, and having understood by a Physician and Chirurgeon, that the corrupted Rey was the cause of the gangrens that were then very frequent, being desirous to satisfy himself, whether this grain was indeed the cause thereof, he gave of it to several Animals, that died of it.

The Company intends to examine very strictly this sort of Rey that shall be brought them from several parts, thereby to furnish the Magistrate with instructions to prevent those evils that may be caused by this corrupted corn, and to use such precautions as they shall judge necessary; of which the chief may be, to advertise the people of this evil, and to oblige them to sift the Rey, and to forbid the grinders of corn, to grind any Rey that has such grains in it, which is to easie to know, that there can be no mistake in it.