

- I. *An Account of the Cinnamon Tree in Ceylon, and its several Sorts. Communicated by the Chief Inspector of the Cinnamon Trade and Manufacture in that Island to Albertus Seba, a noted Druggist at Amsterdam. Translated by the late Dr. Scheuchzer, F. R. S.*

THE first and best Sort of Cinnamon, which grows in great Plenty in *Ceylon*, and is peculiar to that Island, is call'd by the Natives *Rasse Coronde*, which is as much as to say, sharp, sweet Cinnamon. 'Tis this choice Sort, which is exported Yearly by the *Dutch East-India-Company*, by whom it hath been prohibited under severe Penalties, that no other Sort whatever should be mix'd with it.

The second Sort is call'd *Canatte Coronde*, that is, bitter and adstringent Cinnamon; for the *Ceylonese*, in their Language, call Cinnamon in general *Coronde*, and *Canatte* signifies bitter and adstringent. The Bark of this Tree comes off very easily, and smells very agreeably when fresh, but hath a bitter Taste. It is an Advantage to us, that it doth not grow in great Plenty hereabouts, because else one might easily mistake it for a better; as indeed, in general, it requires a good deal of Skill and Attention so to distinguish the Cinnamon Trees from each other, as not to choose now and then a worse Sort for the best. The Root of this second Tree yields a very good sort of Camphire.

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The third Sort is call'd by the *Ceylonefe*, *Cappe-roe Coronde*, which is as much as to fay, Camphorated Cinnamon, becaufe it hath a very ftrong Smell and Taffe of Camphire. It grows plentifully enough in the Ifland, but not in the Eastern Parts of it: However, they find Means now and then to fend it over privately, and fell it to the *Danes* and *Englifh*, who come to Trade upon the Coafts of *Cormandel*; for as long as there is but one Port in the Ifland left open, abundance of this fort of bad Merchandize may be exported. Befides, there is a fort of a *Canella*, growing upon the Continent of *India*, about *Goa*, which is very like this fort of Cinnamon Tree, though it hath nothing of the true Cinnamon. The fame fort of *Canella* agrees in many Things with the *Canella Malabarica Sylveftris*, a wild Cinnamon Tree, growing upon the Coafts of *Malabar*. And although with regard to the Shape of the Tree, and the outward Appearance of the Bark and Leaves, there is very little Difference to be obferved between thefe two forts of *Canella*, and the above-mentioned firft and good fort of Cinnamon, yet the latter is vastly fuperior in Richnefs, Virtue and Sweetnefs.

The fourth Sort of Cinnamon is called by the *Ceylonefe*, *Welle Coronde*, that is, the *Sandy Cinnamon*, becaufe upon chewing it, one feels as it were, Bits of Sand between the Teeth, though in Fact there is nothing Sandy in it. The Bark of this Tree comes off eafily enough, but is not fo eafily roll'd up into a fibular Form, as other forts of Cinnamon are, being apt to burft open and to unfold it felf. It is of a fharp and bitterifh Taffe, and the Root of it yields but a fmall Quantity of Camphire.

The fifth Sort is called *Sewel-Coronde*, *Sewel* in the *Ceylonefe* Language signifies mucilaginous, or glutinous. This sort of Cinnamon acquires, in drying, a very considerable Degree of Hardness, which upon chewing of it sufficiently shews it self. It hath otherwise but little Taste, and an ungrateful Smell; but the Colour of it is very fine, and it is not many Years since I first took Notice, that the Natives, who are all Blacks, mix a good deal of this mucilaginous Cinnamon along with the first and best Sort, the Colour of both being very much alike, excepting only, that in the good Sort there are some few yellowish Spots appear towards the Extremities.

The sixth Sort is called by the Natives *Nieke Coronde*, the Tree which bears it, having a good deal of Resemblance to another Tree, which is by them called *Nieke Gas*, and the Fruit it bears *Nieke*. The Bark of this sort of Cinnamon Tree, hath no manner of Taste or Smell, when taken off, and is made use of by the Natives only in Physick. For by roasting of it they obtain a Water and Oil, which they anoint themselves withal, thinking thereby to keep off all sorts of noxious Fumes, and Infections in the Air. They likewise express a Juice out of the Leaves of it, which they say cools and strengthens the Brain, if the Head be rubb'd with it.

The seventh Sort is called *Dawel-Coronde*, that is, Drum-Cinnamon, in *Low Dutch Trommel-Caneel*: The Reason of this Appellation is, because the Wood of this Tree, when it is grown hard enough, is light and tough, and that Sort, of which the Natives make some of their Vessels and Drums, which they call *Dawel*. The Bark is taken off, when the Tree

grows as yet, and is of a pale Colour: The Natives use it in the same Manner with the sixth Sort.

The eighth Sort is called *Catte-Coronde*, that is, the thorny or prickly Cinnamon; *Catte*, in the *Ceylonefe* Language, is a Thorn, or Prickle; accordingly this Tree is very prickly. The Bark is in some Measure like Cinnamon, but the Leaves differ very much, and the Bark it self hath nothing either of the Taste or Smell of Cinnamon. The Natives use the Root, Bark and Leaves of this Tree in Physick, applying them in Form of Cataplasms, to Tumours and Swellings from a thick corrupt Blood, which they say it cures in a short Time.

The ninth Sort is called *Mael Coronde*, or the Flowering Cinnamon, because this Tree is always in Blossom. The Flowers come nearest to those of the first and best Sort, called *Rasse Coronde*, but they bear no Fruit, which the other doth. The Substance of the Wood becomes never so solid and weighty in this, as in the other Cinnamon Trees above-mentioned, which have sometimes eight, nine, or ten Feet in Circumference. If this everflowering Cinnamon Tree be cut, or bored into, a limpid Water will issue out of the Wound, as it doth out of the *European Birch Tree*, but it is of no Use, no more than the Leaves and Bark.

The Inhabitants of *Ceylon* say, that there is still another Sort of Cinnamon, which they call *Toupat Coronde*, or the three Leave Cinnamon. It doth not grow in that Part of the Country which the *Dutch East-India Company* is possess'd of, but higher up towards *Candia*. Having never seen it my self, I will also, out of regard to Truth, say nothing farther of it.

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And thus, Sir, I have given you, I hope, a satisfactory Account of the several Sorts of Cinnamon Trees growing in this Country. I can assure you, that you are the first to whom I ever communicated so particular a Description; for having been for almost these fifteen Years last past, employ'd as chief Inspector of the Cinnamon Trade and Manufacture here, I have with much Pains and Attention, so strictly enquired into this Matter, that at last I found out all the several sorts of bad Cinnamon, which were formerly mix'd with the true and good one; and have been able to shew Samples of the Bark, Root and Leaves of every one of them to our Directors, who thereupon, to shew their Satisfaction, that a Thing of that Consequence was at last, after many laborious Searches discovered, and thinking it a Thing well worth a farther Enquiry, were pleas'd to augment the Yearly Salary annex'd to this Office.

It now remains, that I should inform you, in how many Years the Cinnamon Trees grow ripe enough, and become fit to have the Bark stript off. And here I will confine my self only to the first and best Sort, which is Yearly exported by the Company, and what I shall mention of it, may serve at the same Time to answer in some Measure such Queries as might be made about the others.

All the several sorts of Cinnamon Trees, the best as well as the rest, must grow a certain Number of Years, before the Bark is fit to be taken off: With this Difference however, that some of the Trees of the same sort, as for Instance of the first and best, will ripen two or three Years sooner than others, which is owing to the Difference of the Soil they grow in; those for In-

stance, which grow in Vallies, where the Ground is a fine whitish Sand (and there are many such Vallies in the Island of *Ceylon*) will in five Years Time be fit to have the Bark taken off: Others on the contrary, which stand in a wet slimy Soil, must have seven or eight Years Time to grow, before they are ripe enough. Again, those Trees are later, which grow in the Shade of other larger Trees, whereby the Sun is kept from their Roots: And hence also it is, that the Bark of such Trees hath not that Sweetness and agreeable Taste observable in the Bark of those Trees which grow in a white Sandy Ground, where with little Wet they stand full exposed to the Sun, but is rather of a bitterish Taste, something adstringent, and finells like Camphire.

For by the Heat of the Sun's Rays the Camphire is made so thin and volatile, that it rises up and mixes with the Juices of the Tree, where it undergoes a small Fermentation, and then rising still higher between the Substance of the Wood, and the thin inner Membrane of the Bark, it is at last so effectually diffused through the Branches and Leaves, that there is not the least Footstep of it to be perceived any where. Mean while that thin and glutinous Membrane, which lines the Bark on the Inside between it and the Substance of the Wood, attracts and sucks in all the purest, sweetest, and most agreeable Particles of the Juice, leaving the thick and gross ones, which are push'd forward, and serve to nourish the Branches, Leaves, and Fruit.

What I here mention, is conform to my own Observations, and I have often had Occasion to prove this Fact to curious Persons by the Things themselves. For if the Bark be fresh taken off, that Juice which
remains

remains in the Tree hath a bitterish Taste, not unlike that of Cloves. On the contrary, if you taste the inner Membrane of the Bark, when fresh taken off, you'll find it a most exquisite Sweetness, extremely agreeable to the Taste, whereas the outward Part of the Bark differs but very little in Taste from the common Trees; which shews plainly that all the Sweetness of it is owing only to the inner Membrane. But when the Bark is laid in the Sun in order to its being dried and wound up, this Oily and agreeable Sweetness of the inner Membrane communicates and diffuses it self also throughout the whole outward Part of it (which however hath been first stripp'd, when as yet upon the Tree, of its outermost greenish Coat) and imbues it so strongly, as to make the Bark a Commodity, which for the Fragrancy of its Smell, and the Sweetness of its Taste, is coveted all over the World.

It may not be amiss to take Notice also, how many Years the Cinnamon Trees, when they are once come to a full Maturity, will continue in that State, so that the Bark, when taken off, shall have lost nothing of its Sweetness and Virtue. And in order to clear up this Point, it must be observed, that the Bark may as yet be taken off from Trees which have stood fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen Years, according to the Quality of the Soil they stand in: But beyond that Time they grow thicker, and lose, by Degrees, their Taste and agreeable Sweetness, which makes the Bark have more of the Taste of Camphire: Besides, the Bark is then grown so thick, that if it be laid in the Sun, it will no longer shrink and wind it self up, but remain flat.

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And here it may be thought a fit Subject of Enquiry, how it comes to pass, that considering what vast Quantities of Cinnamon have been exported from this Island, and sold all over the World, by the *Europeans* as well as Natives, not only for these two hundred Years last past; and since the Way thither by the *East-Indies* hath been found out by the *Portuguese*, but for several Centuries before (for it was discovered and known long before) I say, how, considering this, it comes to pass, that there are yet such Numbers of good Trees fit to be Bark'd, remaining in the Island and growing there every Year? Now in order to solve this Question, several Authors, who describ'd the island of *Ceylon*, committed a considerable Mistake, when they assure their Readers, that when the Bark hath been stripp'd off the Tree, it grows again in four or five Years, and becomes fit to be stripp'd a second Time. I can assure you, Sir, that this Assertion is entirely contrary to the Course of Nature and Observation: Nor do I believe, that there is any one Tree whatever in any Part of the World, which, if it was entirely stripp'd of its Bark, could subsist and grow any longer: That Part at least, where the Bark hath been taken off, will quickly grow dry, and so die away; but the Root in the mean while remains entire and in good Condition; and this shews the Reason why there is such a Number of Trees fit to be Bark'd every Year. For although the Cinnamon Trees, after the Bark hath been once taken off, is cut down to the very Root, as they do in *Europe* Oaks, Birch-Trees, Alders and Willows, yet the Root will quickly push forth new Shoots, which will ripen in a short Time, I mean in five, six, seven or eight Years, some sooner, some later, and then yield their Quantity

tity of the Bark. Hence it appears, how far the old Roots are instrumental to the Growth and Plenty of Cinnamon Trees, but the Fruit which falls from the Trees, contributes very much towards the same End: And it is particularly owing to a certain kind of wild Doves, which from their feeding on the Fruit of the Cinnamon-Tree, they call *Cinnamon-eaters*, that these Trees grow so plentifully in this Island; for the Doves, when they fetch Food for their young ones, flying here and there, disperse vast Quantities of the Fruit all over the Fields, which occasions the Rise of many thousand young Trees, which one shall see here and there along the Roads in such Quantities together, that they look like a little Wood. So plentifully grows this excellent Tree in this Island; I call it excellent, because indeed I don't know of any other that is preferable to it. I need not point out to you what remarkable Footsteps of Divine Providence the History of the Cinnamon Tree affords to an attentive Eye.

There is hardly any thing so universally grateful, and esteemed by all Nations, as true Cinnamon. The Oil drawn out of it by Fire is reckoned one of the strongest Cordial Medicines: The Camphire which comes out of the Root, is likewise of great Use in several Distempers, as are also the Oil of Camphire, a very costly Thing, the Leaves of the Tree, and the Oil distilled out of them; and lastly, the Fruits with their Oil. In short, there is no Part of the Cinnamon Tree, but what is of some singular Use or other in Physick. I purposely avoid speaking of the large Gains the Company makes by the yearly Export of this precious Commodity.

*Some Additions to the foregoing Account, by
Albertus Seba. F. R. S.*

AS a farther Explanation of this curious Account of the Cinnamon Trees, it will not be amiss to subjoin the following Observations. Having some Years ago bought out of the *East-India* Company's Warehouses at *Amsterdam*, a considerable Quantity of Cinnamon Leaves, or *Folia Malabathri*, pack'd up in several large Chests, I happen'd to find in one of them the Flowers of the Cinnamon, as big as the *Italian* Bean-flowers, and of a blue Colour; I chanced likewise to meet with the Fruit. But I could not find either in any of the other Chests.

In 1722 and 1723, I bought of the same Company the Oil, which is expressed out of the Fruit of the Cinnamon Tree, as also that which is boil'd out of them, which is of a very good Consistence and white, and is by the *East-India* Company called Cinnamon Wax, because the King of *Candia* causes Candles to be made out of it, which for their agreeable Scent, are burnt only by himself and at his Court. However he permits his Subjects to express the Juice out of another Fruit, not unlike the Fruit of the Cinnamon Tree; but this Juice being only a thin fat Substance, like Oil of Olives, they cannot burn it any otherwise but in Lamps.

The *Indians* use this Cinnamon Wax also in Physick, and give it inwardly in Luxations, Fractures, Falls, Contusions and Bruises, that in case any inward Part be touch'd or bruised, it may by its Balsamick

Virtues heal them. They give it also in Bloody Fluxes to one Dram or a Dram and a half. Outwardly applied, it makes the Skin more beautiful, smother and softer, than any one known sort of Pomade.

The Leaves of the Cinnamon Tree yield also an Oil, which is of a bitterish Taste, resembling Oil of Cloves mix'd with a little good Oil of Cinnamon. It is called *Oleum Malabathri*, or Oil of Cinnamon Leaves. It is an Aromatick, and is reckoned an excellent Remedy in Headaches, Pains of the Stomach, and other Distempers.

The Oil of the Root of the Cinnamon Tree is, properly speaking, an Oil of Camphire, the Roots affording a good Quantity of Camphire. About two Years ago, or somewhat longer, I bought a Bottle of it of our *East-India* Company at my own Price. There were several Bottles together in a Box, upon which was wrote in Low Dutch *Dese Oliteyten syn tot een geschenk nyt Candia geschikt*; that is, *these Oils were sent as a Present out of Candia*, which shews that they are genuine, without any Adulteration; accordingly they are very much esteemed. If this Oil be distilled in Glafs Vessels, there comes over along with it, that sort of Camphire which the *Indians* call *Camphire Baros*, or Camphire of *Borneo*, which shoots in thin transparent Chrystals, forming a beautiful Variety of Trees on the Recipient, not unlike those, which in very frosty Weather are to be seen upon Windows. This sort of Camphire is of very great Efficacy in Physick, and is gathered and kept for the King of *Candia* his own Use, who esteems it an excellent Cordial Medicine. But not only the Camphire of *Baros*, but also the Oil of Cam-

phire, which is drawn out of the Roots of the Cinnamon Tree, is a very great Cordial, if taken inwardly: It strengthens the Stomach, expels Wind, and hath been found of great Use in arthritick and gouty Disorders: It is also a Diuretick. The Dose is ten or twelve Drops upon a bit of Sugar, or in a proper Vehicle. Outwardly it is applied in all arthritick Pains from Cold and Obstructions, being rubb'd on the affected Part with a warm Hand, and it will presently lessen the Pain, and by Degrees take it off. It is now about six and thirty Years since, serving in the Shop of Mr. *Nicolas Dumbstorff* at *Amsterdam*, that Gentleman was then so cruelly afflicted with arthritick Pains, that he could have no Rest neither Night nor Day; and although he called in the Assistance of several noted Physicians, and tried abundance of Medicines, yet he could find no Relief, till he was advised to cause himself to be anointed with the Oil of the Root of the Cinnamon Tree; of which he then happen'd to have a good Quantity by him. I remember very well, that I anointed him my self, rubbing the Oil on all the affected Parts with my Hand warm'd by holding it to an Oven, and this I did twice every Day for an Hour together. And though, when this Cure was first begun with him, his Hands and Feet were by the Convulsions and the Violence of his Pain so contracted, that they grew quite crooked, and were full of Nodes, yet in a Fortnight's Time he grew so much better, that he could sleep well at Nights, feeling neither Pains nor Cramps. In about six Weeks Time he could walk about his Room, whereas before the Anointing he was not able to stir either Hand or Foot. This Anointing was continued for about three Months, when the Patient not only recover'd of that

that violent Indisposition, but continued free from the Gout ever after, and lived about fifteen Years in a very good State of Health. And this I cannot only affirm to be true of my own certain Knowledge; but also, that since that Time I have advised several People in his Condition to do the same with as good Success. Several Physicians have wrote largely of the Virtues of common Camphire, but there are as yet many hidden Qualities in this excellent Medicine. Thus, for Instance, I can affirm, that in all Burnings, by Fire or otherwise, in any Part of the Body, and the Pains occasioned thereby, I have not yet met with any better and surer Medicine than this following.

*Rx. Spir. Lumbricor. terrestr. cum Spir. Vini
rectificat ʒxij. Camphor. ʒij. M.*

No sooner is a Bandage, or Compress, dipp'd into this Spirit, applied to the affected Part, but it will give instant Relief, and so effectually check the Inflammation, that it will creep no farther. But the Application of it must be continued till the Pain is quite gone, and the *Ulcus*, if there hath been any, is dried up. If the Exulceration is got deeper, and the Wound must be kept open, two Ounces of Camphire dissolved in *Oleo Hyperici*, mix'd with a Pound of the common *Unguentum Cerussæ*, applied according to Art, will quickly and effectually heal it, as I have often experienced.