Anonymous, â??[On Tobacco, a translationâ?•]

Description

ANONYMOUS

[â??On Tobacco, a translationâ?•]

Sweet charmer of my solitude,
Brilliant pipe, consuming tube,
Who clearâ??st the vapours from my brain,
And my mind from anxious pain!
Tobacco! source of my delight,
When I see thee quit my sight,
And vanish in the purer air,
Like the lightningâ??s quick career,
I see the image of my life below,
And whither soon my breath must go.
By thee I trace, in colours strong,
That man is nothing but a song,
An animated heap of clay,
The jest and sport of but a day;
That as thy smoke I pass away,
An emblem of my own decay.

NOTES:

Title This poem appears without a title in the *Gentlemanâ??s Magazine*, but includes the following prefatory comment: â??Mr. Urban, I send you the following French verses written by a Monk, with the translation. A.P.P.â?•

2 *Consuming tube* A reference to the reed stem pipe, which was developed in the eighteenth-century. These pipes were made with a natural reed stem, resembling a tube, which slips into a bowl.

3-4 In the eighteenth-century, tobacco was used to treat anything from colic to vomit, hernia, rheumatic pains, and various infirmities including anxiety.

Source: *The Gentlemanâ??s Magazine* (April, 1785), p. 308.

Edited by Farnam Adelkhani