

# BULLETIN NO. 139.

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## TOBACCO.

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### INTRODUCTION.

Tobacco belongs to the order of plants commonly known as the nightshade family. Its generic name, "Nicotiana," was given to it in honor of Jean Nicot, French ambassador to Portugal in 1660. When, two years before this, specimens of tobacco had been brought from Mexico to Spain, Nicot secured some of the seeds and sent them to Paris.

There are fifty or more species of the genus *Nicotiana*, but few of them enter into the commerce of the world. The species grown in the Ohio Valley, the one of chief importance, is *Nicotiana tabacum*. The aborigines of America grew tobacco long before the advent of the white man. The French explorers Marquette and LaSalle found it in cultivation and use by the Indians along the Mississippi and Ohio rivers and their tributaries as early as 1669 and 1673. In 1750, nearly one hundred years later, Captain Christopher Gist, an agent for the "Ohio Company," came down the Ohio river and found to-