in the iſland of Cuba, Jamaica, Hiſpaniola, and the Baha­ma iſlands. It abounded formerly in the low lands of Ja­maica, but it is now found only on high hills and places difficult of acceſs.

It thrives in moſt ſoils, but varies in texture and grain ac­cording to the nature of the ſoil. On rocks it is of a ſmaller ſize, but very hard and weighty, of a cloſe gram, and beautifully ſhaded ; while the produce of the low and richer lands is obſerved to be more light and porous, of a paler co­lour and open grain ; and that of mixed ſoils to hold a me­dium between both. The tree grows very tall and ſtraight, and is uſually four feet in diameter ; the flowers are or a reddiſh or ſaffron colour, and the fruit of an oval form, and about the ſize of a turkey’s egg.

The wood is generally hard, takes a fine poliſh, and is found to anſwer better than any other sort in all kinds of cabinet ware. It is now univerſally eſteemed, and tells at a good price ; but it is pity that it is not cultivated in the more convenient waste lands of Jamaica. It is a very ſtrong timber, and anſwers very well in beams, joiſts, plank, boards, and ſhingles ; and has been frequently put to thoſe uſes in Jamaica in former times. It is laid to be uſed ſome­times in ſhip-building ; a purpoſe for which it is remarkably adapted, if not too coſtly, being very durable, capable of refilling gun-ſhots, and burying the ſhots without ſplintering.

The ſeed-veſſels are of a curious form, conſiſting of a large cone splitting into five parts, and diſcloſing its winged ſeeds, diſpoſed in the regular manner of thoſe of an apocynum. The ſeeds being winged, are diſperſed on the ſurface of the ground, where ſome falling into the chinks of the rocks, ſtrike root ; then creep out on the ſurface of it, and ſeek another chink, into which they creep and ſwell to ſuch a ſize and ſtrength, that at length the rock ſplits, and is forced to admit of the root’s deeper penetration ; and with this little nutriment the tree increaſes to a ſtupendous ſize in a few years.

The first uſe to which mahogany was applied in Eng­land, was to make a box for holding candles. Dr Gibbons, an eminent physician in the latter end of the laſt and be­ginning of the preſent century, had a brother, a West In­dia captain, who brought over ſome planks of this wood as ballaſt. As the Doctor was then building him a houſe in King-ſtreet, Covent-Garden, his brother thought they might be of ſervice to him. But the carpenters, finding the wood too hard for their tools, they were laid aſide for a time as uſeleſs. Soon after, Mrs Gibbons wanting a candle-box, the Doctor called on his cabinet maker (Wollaſton in Long-Acre) to make him one of ſome wood that lay in his garden. Wollaſton alſo complained that it was too hard. The Doctor laid he muſt get stronger tools. The candle-box was made and approved ; inſomuch, that the Doctor then inſiſted on having a bureau made of the ſame wood, which was accordingly done; and the fine colour, poliſh, &c. were ſo pleaſing, that he invited all his friends to come and ſee it. Among them was the ducheſs of Buckingham. Her Grace begged ſome of the same wood of Dr Gibbons, and employed Wollaſton to make her a bureau alſo ; on which the same of mahogany and Mr Wollaſton was much raiſed, and things of this sort became general. This ac­count was given by Henry Mill, Eſq; a gentleman of un­doubted veracity.

SWIFT (Dr Jonathan), ſo univerſally admired as a wit and claſſical writer of the Engliſh language, was born in Dublin on November 30th 1667. His father was an at­torney, and of a good family ; but dying poor, the expence of his ſon’s education was defrayed by his friends. At the age of six young Swift was ſent to the ſchool of Kilkenny,

whence he was removed in his 15th year to Trinity College, Dublin.

In his academical ſtudies (ſays Dr Johnſon) he was ei­ther not diligent or not happy. The truth appears to be, that he deſpiſed them as intricate and uſeleſs. He told Mr Sheridan, his laſt biographer, that he had made many ef­forts, upon his entering the college, to read ſome of the old treatiſes on logic writ by Smegleſius, Keckermannus, Burgerſdicitis, &c. and that he never had patience to go thro’ three pages of any of them, he was ſo diſguſted at the ſtupidity of the work. When he was urged by his tutor to make himſelf matter oſ this branch, then in high eſtimation, and held eſſentially neceſſary to the taking of a degree, Swift aſked him, What it was he was to learn from thoſe books ? His tutor told him, The art of reaſoning. Swift ſaid, That he found no want of any ſuch art ; that he could reaſon very well without it ; and that, as far as he could obſerve, they who had made the greateſt proficiency in logic had, inſtead of the art of reaſoning, acquired the art of wrangling ; and inſtead of clearing up obſcurities, had learned how to per­plex matters that were clear enough before. For his own part, he was contented with that portion of reaſon which God had given him; and he would leave it to time and expe­rience to ſtrengthen and direct it properly ; nor would he run the riſk of having it warped or falſely biaſſed by any ſystem of rules laid down by ſuch ſtupid writers, of the bad effects of which he had but too many examples before his eyes in thoſe reckoned the moſt acute logicians. Accordingly, he made a firm reſolution, that he never would read any of thoſe books ; which he ſo pertinaciouſly adhered to, that though his degree was refuſed him the first time of fitting for it, on account of his not anſwering in that branch, he went into the hall a ſecond time as ill prepared as before; and would alſo have been stopped a ſecond time, on the ſame account, if the intereſt of his friends, who well knew the inflexibility of his temper, had not ſtepped in, and obtained it for him ; though in a manner little to his credit, as it was inſerted in the College Registry, that he obtained it *ſpeciali gratia,* “ by ſpecial favour;” where it remains upon record.

He remained in the college near three years after this, not through choice, but neceſſity, little known or regarded. By ſcholars he was reckoned a blockhead ; and as the lowneſs of his circumſtances would not permit him to keep com­pany with persons of an equal rank with himſelf, upon an equal footing, he ſcorned to take up with thoſe of a lowe claſs, or to be obliged to those of a higher. He lived therefore much alone, and his time was employed in purſuing his courſe of reading in hiſtory and poetry, then very unfaſhionable ſtudies for an academic ; or in gloomy meditations on his unhappy circumstances. Yet, under this heavy preſſure, the force of his genius broke out, in the first rude draught of the Tale of a Tub, written by him at the age of 19, though communicated to nobody but his chamber fellow Mr Waryng ; who, after the publication of the book, made no ſcruple to declare, that he had read the first ſketch of it in Swift’s handwriting when he was of that age.”

In 1688, being, by the death of Godwin Swift his uncle, who had chiefly ſupported him, left without subſiſtence, he went to conſult his mother, who then lived at Leiceſter, about the future courſe of his life; and, by her direction, ſolicited the advice and patronage of Sir William Temple, whoſe father had lived in great friendship with Godwin Swift. Temple received him with great kindneſs, and was ſo much pleased with his converſation, that he detained him two years in his houſe, and recommended him to king Wil­liam, who offered to make him a captain of horſe. This not ſuiting his disposition, and Temple not having it quickly