Read the excerpts below and see if you can identify what King James is talking about in this writing

I therefore heartily to pray you to consider….

* First, it is …. {my opinion) [it is used] in the administration of medicine……. Of this argument both the proposition and assumption are false…….
* For the nose being the proper organ and convoy of the sense of smelling to the brains, which are the only fountain of the sense, doth ever serve us for an infallible witness, that odor which we smell be hurtful to the brain……
* the gentry of this land bear witness, some of them bestowing three, some four hundred pounds a year upon this precious stink, which I am sure might be bestowed upon many far better uses.

Have you not reason then to be ashamed and to forbear this filthy novelty?

In your abuse thereof sinning against God harming yourselves both in person and goods…….

custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof nearest resembling the horrible smoke of the pit that is bottomless.

**DID YOU GUESS TOBACCO?**

Historical Information:

Before tobacco became a major cash crop for England and its colonies, many people viewed it as a major social problem in European society. Europeans had been exposed to tobacco as early as 1560 and used it primarily as medicine. At the time people believed that tobacco treated or cured many illnesses, such as headaches, stomach problems, coughs, epilepsy, and cancer. In the following decades, tobacco use among Europeans dramatically increased, not only for medicinal use but also for recreation.

For many rulers in Europe, including King James I, tobacco smoking represented a major social and health problem. English leaders did not make the sale and smoking of tobacco illegal, although many other European countries did, including France, Russia, Sweden, and Switzerland. Instead, King James I tried hard to reduce tobacco usage, even to the point of instituting in 1604 a tax on tobacco of six shillings and eight pence to the existing two shillings per pound tax; this was an increase of 4,000 percent. The price increase, however, did little to reduce English demand for the “noxious weed.”

The attitude of the king and members of England's ruling classes changed when tobacco became a cash crop for its colonies. During the early years of English exploration and settlement of North America, only a nominal amount of tobacco was cultivated and exported. For that reason, in 1604, when King James issued this statement, the main suppliers of tobacco to the English were foreign shippers, particularly Spain.

Not until the 1620s did the English colonies of Virginia and Maryland began to grow and export significant quantities. Accepting the inevitable King James decided the Crown might as well cash in on the popularity of tobacco and the state took control of the industry. Ironically, tobacco cultivation would lay the foundation for the success of England's American colonies.