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|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| FRENCH. | { | 52. Fishermen. { Coasts frequented.
Results. | | |
| | | 53. Verazzani. { Coast explored.
Claim. | | |
| | | 54. Cartier: River discovered. | | |
| | | 55. Huguenots. { Settlement in South Carolina.
Settlement in Florida. | | |
| | | 56. De Monts and Cartier. { First permanent settlement.
Quebec founded. | | |
| | | 57. Traders and Missionaries. { Region claimed for France.
Heroism of missionaries. | | |
| | | 58. La Salle. { Discovery of mouth of Mississippi.
Attempt to plant settlement. | | |
| | | 59. Territory Claimed. | | |
| | | 60. Indifference of English: Causes. | | |
| | | 61. Hawkins: Description of Florida coast. | | |
| ENGLISH. | { | 62. Sir Francis Drake. { Hatred of Spanish.
Pacific coast visited.
Circumnavigation of globe. | | |
| | | 63. Water Route to India. { Success of Portugal.
Success of Spain.
Attempts of English. | | |
| | | 64. Efforts to find a Northwest Passage. | | |
| | | 65. Gilbert. { Secures charter.
Attempts at settlement. | | |
| | | 66, 67. Raleigh. { Charter.
Voyage of exploration.
Attempts at settlement. | | |
| | | 68. Gosnold. { Route.
Attempt at settlement. | | |
| | | 69. London Company. { Grant obtained.
First permanent settlement. | | |
| | | 70. Territory Claimed. | | |
| | | DUTCH. | { | 71. Holland in 16th and 17th Centuries. |
| | | | | 72. Hudson. { Purpose of voyage.
River discovered. |
| 73. West India Company: Settlement. | | | | |
| 74. Territory Claimed. | | | | |
| SWEDISH. | { | 75. Gustavus Adolphus: Settlement planned by him. | | |
| | | 76. Territory Claimed. | | |

THE COLONIAL PERIOD.

FOUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH COLONIES.

79. **The True Beginning of Our History.**— In the establishment of the first permanent English settlement in America, we find the true beginning of our country's history. All that comes before this has been preparatory—like the clearing off of stones, trees, and undergrowth from a piece of land preparatory to building a house. Adventurous sea captains, daring soldiers, enterprising traders, and gold hunters have passed and repassed before our eyes in the preceding pages. Now the scene changes, and the curtain rises upon the log-cabin home of the settler with its background of growing crops. Heretofore Spaniards and Frenchmen have been the most conspicuous figures; now Englishmen are to play the leading part. We shall see how the courage, endurance, and genius for self-government of these Englishmen overcame every obstacle and wrested from other nations the control of the continent.

THE SOUTHERN COLONIES.

VIRGINIA.

80. **The Founders of Virginia.**— Sixteen years after the disappearance of Raleigh's last colony on Roanoke Island, a movement was begun that resulted in the first permanent English settlement in America. Two men stand out prominently as the leading spirits in this enterprise,— the one already famous as a sailor and explorer, the other as a soldier and adventurer. Their names were Bartholomew Gosnold and John Smith.

Captain Gosnold, we have already learned (§ 68), made the first direct voyage across the Atlantic, and sailed along the New England coast. He was now eager to plant a colony in the milder climate farther South.

Captain John Smith was both writer and fighter, and one of the greatest adventurers in an adventurous age. While yet a boy he left his home, and enlisted as a private soldier in the wars of Holland. Joining the forces against the Turks, he was captured and made a slave. He killed his master and escaped



Captain John Smith.

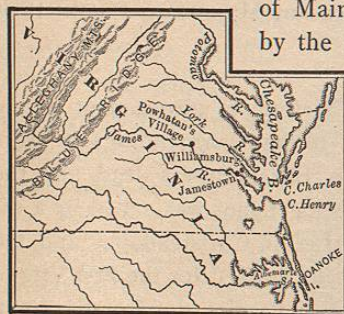
to Russia, and thence when only twenty-five years of age, returned by way of Germany, France, Spain, and Morocco to England. The Virginia enterprise drew Smith and Gosnold together, and they became warm advocates of the scheme for establishing a colony.

81. The London Company.—The expensive failures of Raleigh had discouraged all attempts at colonizing

Virginia, and no private person was now willing to furnish the necessary means for undertaking another settlement. There were in England at this time, however, several great trading companies that were growing rich from their commerce with distant lands. The success of two of these—the Muscovy Company and the East India Company—induced a number of merchants and prominent men to embark with Gosnold and Smith in a similar enterprise. Accordingly two new companies were organized with authority from the king to establish colonies in America and control the commerce of the new

settlements. These companies were known as the London and the Plymouth Companies, from the residence of their principal stock-holders, and they were granted in equal parts the vast region between the parallels of 34° and 45° , or what is now the southern boundary of North Carolina and the middle of Nova Scotia. The southern half of this grant was given to the London Company, and was called South Virginia; the northern half to the Plymouth Company, and called North Virginia.

82. The First Settlement.—Colonists were sent out by both Plymouth and London Companies the same year (1606). The Plymouth Company attempted a settlement on the coast of Maine, but the place was abandoned by the colonists after the first winter.



Settlements in Virginia.

The London Company was more successful. In the last days of the year, a little fleet of three vessels, under the command of Captain Christopher Newport, set sail down the Thames for South Virginia. Captain Gosnold commanded one of the vessels, and John Smith was among the passengers. After a stormy voyage they entered Chesapeake Bay, giving the names of the two eldest sons of the king to the capes that guard its mouth. Sailing up the river known to the Indians as the Powhatan, but called by the colonists the James River in honor of their sovereign, they chose a flat peninsula on its northern bank as the place for their settlement. Jamestown was the name these loyal Englishmen applied to their group of huts. The year 1607 marks the date of this; the first permanent English settlement in America—just one hundred and ten years after Cabot's great discovery.

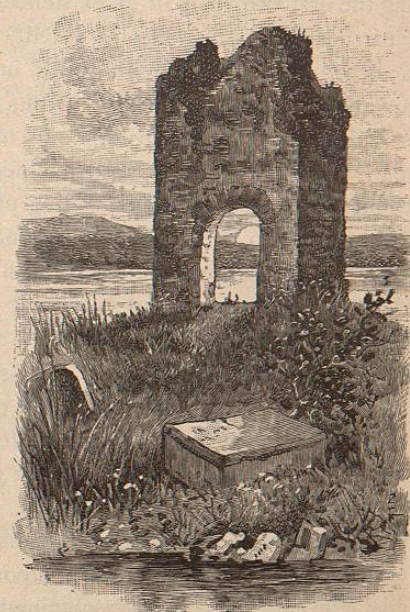
83. The First Colonists. — There were one hundred and five persons in the little company that laid the foundations of Jamestown. More than half of the whole number were “gentlemen” unused to manual labor, — and so were poorly fitted for the rough life of the wilderness. The colonists were either unmarried men or else they had left their wives and children behind. Consequently they did not look upon their cabins as homes in the true sense of the word. Most of them expected to find gold and pearls, and in a short time to return to England loaded with riches.¹ Some were influenced by a desire to convert the Indians; others were fond of adventure, and wished to extend the English dominions in America. All slept under the trees in the pleasant May weather until their log cabins were built.

84. The First Charter. — The form of government of the colonists was as poorly adapted to their surroundings as were the settlers themselves. Queen Elizabeth was dead, and the reign of James I. had begun. King James was called by a wit of the time, “The most learned fool in Christendom,” and the complicated form of government he devised for the first Virginians seems to justify the epithet. Besides the London Company there were to be two governing bodies called “Councils,” one residing in England, appointed by the king, the other, a subordinate Council in Virginia, appointed by the English Council. The Company was empowered to coin money and collect taxes. Perhaps the worst provision was that which required all the products of the colonists to be brought to a

¹ In a popular English play of that period, one of the characters, speaking of Virginia, is made to say: “I tell thee golde is more plentifull there than copper is with us; and for as much redde copper as I can bring I’ll have thrice the weight in golde. Why, man, all their dripping pans are pure golde, and all the chains with which they chain up their streets are massive golde; all the prisoners they take are fettered in golde; and for rubies and diamonds they goes forth in holy dayes and gather ’em by the seashore to hang on their children’s coates and stick in their children’s caps.”

public store-house, and there apportioned by an officer as they were needed. Thus, as no man could enjoy the products of his own labor, there was no reward for industry, and laziness was encouraged.

85. Troubles. — More than once it seemed that the failures at Roanoke Island were to be repeated at Jamestown. The place was low and unhealthy. Malaria arising from the marshy banks of the river caused slow fevers which swept away more than half of the colonists before the first summer was ended. In the beginning of 1608 two more ship-loads of immigrants were sent over by the London Company. The mad search of the newcomers for gold caused the cultivation of the soil to be neglected, while the wretched plan of a “common store-house” encouraged idleness. In the winter of 1609–1610, provisions were entirely ex-



Ruins of Jamestown.

hausted, and the starving colonists began to live on roots and acorns, and skins of horses. One man, driven to insanity, killed his wife for food. The horrid deed was discovered and he was burnt to death as a punishment. Still the suffering continued. The miserable survivors in despair resolved to abandon Virginia and return to England. They buried their

cannon, and embarking in two ships floated down the river and out of sight of the huts of Jamestown. Fortunately before proceeding far they met Lord Delaware with a fleet and bountiful supplies. All returned to the deserted settlement, and the colony was saved. The next year more colonists arrived, and the settlement of Henrico (now Richmond) was founded.

86. The Great Deliverer.—In the perils of the colony during the first two years of its existence, there was one man whose clear head and strong arm repeatedly saved the settlement from destruction. Captain John Smith, under the absurd charge of an attempt to make himself "King of Virginia," had been at first deposed from his position as a member of the Council by his jealous associates. He demanded a trial by jury, and was triumphantly acquitted, his leading prosecutor being compelled to pay him two hundred pounds damages. Disgusted with the incapacity of their rulers, the colonists finally made Smith president of the Council, and entrusted the management of their affairs to him. "No persuasion," writes an old chronicler, "could persuade him to starve." Assembling all the settlers, he addressed the idlers thus: "I protest, by that God that made me, you shall not only gather for yourselves, but for those that are sick; and he that will not work shall not eat." The stern soldier's orders were obeyed, and at once there was a change for the better. To supply their immediate wants Smith led an expedition to the most important village of the Indian chief Powhatan, and by force obtained a supply of corn from the Indians. The savages regarded the bold captain with fear and admiration, and as long as he remained in Virginia gave but little trouble.¹ But for Captain John Smith the Jamestown

¹ In his "Generall Historie of Virginia" Captain Smith relates that on one of his exploring expeditions he was taken prisoner by the Indians and sentenced to death, but that his life was spared through the entreaties of Powhatan's little daughter, Pocahontas. This same Indian maiden was afterward married to John Rolfe, one of the settlers. Rolfe and his bride visited England, where "Lady Rebecca," as Pocahontas was called, was received with honor at the court, and her beauty much admired.

colony would in all probability have perished, and the history of English settlement in America would have been changed.

87. The Indians.—Powhatan was the great chief of the Virginia tribes east of the mountains. The influence of John Smith, and the marriage of the old chief's daughter, Pocahontas, to Rolfe, made Powhatan the firm friend of the whites, and during his lifetime the savages were at peace with the settlers. Under Powhatan's successor, Opechancanough, two plots were formed to destroy the colonists by attacking all their settlements at the same time. The first plot was carried out in 1622, when over three hundred defenseless whites were murdered. The settlers hastily assembled, attacked the savages furiously, hunted them as if they were wild beasts, and drove them far to the frontier. The second massacre came twenty years later. Governor Berkeley raised a troop of horsemen, routed the Indians and captured Opechancanough. The old chief was nearly blind from age, and so infirm that he had to be carried on a litter. Yet his mind was vigorous and his spirit unbroken. The governor expected to send the captive chief to England, but he was murdered by one of his guards. After this Virginia had little to fear from Indian attacks.



Tobacco Plants.

88. Tobacco Culture.— We have seen how the Indian custom of smoking tobacco excited the wonder of the first English explorers of America (§ 61, footnote). Sir Walter Raleigh made the practice fashionable at the English court, and it soon became general throughout England. The soil and climate of Great Britain were not suited to the growth of the plant, so the fashionable

English smokers had to depend upon the uncertain crops of the Indians for a supply for their pipes. (Cigars were not known, and tobacco-chewing was rare.) Soon after the Jamestown colony was firmly established, John Rolfe began the systematic culture of tobacco. He succeeded so well, and found such a ready sale for his crop, that Governor Yearley directed the general attention of the colonists to the production of the plant. Tobacco culture soon became the chief occupation of the Virginians. Every year thousands of hogsheads of the valuable product were exported to England. All other occupations were neglected, and the tobacco industry became an important element in the material, political, and social history of Virginia.

89. The First Assembly and Constitution.—In the first five years of her existence Virginia had three different charters. The third charter abolished the London Council, and allowed the Company to govern their colony directly. A resolution was passed by the Company granting to the Virginians the right to choose for themselves a "General Assembly" to make their laws. Every freeman was allowed to vote, and two "burgesses" were elected from each "plantation," or settlement. The laws of the Assembly were to be approved by the London Company before they could be binding. The first Assembly consisted of twenty-two members. It met at Jamestown, 1619, and was the first law-making Assembly chosen by the people that ever met in America.

Two years later (1621) the colonists were granted a *written constitution*, defining their rights and providing for regular meetings of the Assembly.¹

¹ This first American constitution was the work of Sir Edwin Sandys, one of the ablest friends of Virginia. He had been chosen treasurer of the company against the wishes of King James, who is said to have remarked, "Choose the devil if you will, but not Sir Edwin Sandys."

90. Wives for the Settlers.—The wise heads in the London Company realized that their colony would never succeed as long as the settlers looked wistfully back to England as their home. So the plan was devised of sending out from England numbers of young women as wives for the Virginians, to make homes for them in the wilderness, and thus awaken in the men an interest in the prosperity and good government of the colony. The young women were to be of good character, and the cost of the passage of each (one hundred and twenty pounds of tobacco) was to be paid by the man who chose her as his wife. The damsels, too, were not to be "enforced to marry against their wills." This curious plan succeeded finely. When the first ship-load of ninety maidens arrived at Jamestown, a crowd of young men and old bachelors who were fortunate enough to have the required amount of tobacco, assembled to greet them. Courtships were made in short order. As soon as a man made satisfactory arrangements with a partner, he paid for her passage, and they were married at once. There was no trouble in finding husbands for all, and the ninety brides were so well pleased that they wrote back home and persuaded sixty more maidens to come over, and make sixty more lonely bachelors happy.

91. The First Slaves.—The same year that marks the meeting of the first Assembly and the beginning of free government in Virginia, was also the beginning of African slavery in this country. In 1619 a Dutch vessel sailed up the James River and offered for sale to the planters twenty negroes captured on the coast of Africa. The slaves were bought and put to work on the tobacco plantations. Their labor was found profitable, and when others were brought over a ready sale was found for them. In a few years slaves were found in greater or less numbers in all the American colonies.

92. Fall of the London Company.—King James did not like the spirit of liberty and opposition to royal power that was displayed in the great meetings of the London Company. He sent a committee to Virginia to inquire into the affairs of the colony. The Assembly refused to submit their records; and when the king's commissioners bribed the clerk to surrender them, the Assembly punished their faithless servant by cutting off his ear. But, as everybody expected, the obstinate king carried his point. The charter was annulled, and the London Company, that had controlled the colony for seventeen years and had laid the foundation of free government, was dissolved. Virginia became a royal colony and passed under the direct control of the king (1624).

93. The "Old Dominion."—About the middle of the seventeenth century Oliver Cromwell led a revolution in England against the authority of the king. The armies of Charles I. (the successor of James I.) were beaten, and the king was tried and beheaded by his subjects. For eleven years England was under the rule of a "Lord Protector" instead of a king, while the late king's son, afterward Charles II., was a wandering exile. During this period many of the king's followers fled to Virginia, among them John Washington, the great-grandfather of George Washington, and also the ancestors of Jefferson, Patrick Henry, the Lees, Randolphs, and other families afterward prominent in history. The sympathies of the Virginians were with the royalists, and these exiles were warmly welcomed. In one of her charters, Virginia was called "His Majesty's Ancient Colony and Dominion of Virginia." For this reason, and because of her loyalty to the exiled monarch, Virginia received the name of the "Old Dominion."

94. Bacon's Rebellion.—Though loyal to the King, the colonists grew more and more discontented with the oppressive

laws of England and the misrule of the governors. During an Indian attack, Governor Berkeley ordered the troops that were ready to march against the savages to disband,—probably because an Indian war would interfere with his profits from their trade. The people chose Nathaniel Bacon, a young and popular planter, as their leader, and without waiting for authority from the governor, they marched against the Indians and defeated them. In the meantime Berkeley declared Bacon and his men rebels. Bacon's party then met and signed an oath to resist the governor and any forces that might be sent over from England, until the king should be informed of the true state of affairs. Civil war followed between the adherents of Bacon and those of the governor. Bacon's party was successful, and the governor was driven out of Jamestown. A new Assembly met and passed a number of laws for the relief of the people. In the midst of his success, however, Bacon died of fever caused by exposure. No leader was found to take his place, and his party fell to pieces. Berkeley returned to Jamestown and, seizing the government, began to take vengeance upon those who had opposed him. King Charles II. finally removed him from office,¹ remarking, "The old fool has taken away more lives in that miserable country than I have for the murder of my father."

95. Settlement of the Valley.—The region between the Blue Ridge and the Alleghany, known as the "Valley of Virginia," was settled by a class of people different from the colonists on the banks of the James. The first wave of immigration into this section came from Pennsylvania, and was composed of Germans and Scotch-Irish, who were attracted by reports of the fertility of the soil. Later, numbers of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, seeking greater religious freedom, came

¹ For thirty-five years Berkeley had been a leading figure in Virginia history, having held the office of governor during the greater part of this time.

from eastern Virginia to the upper valley, and many families were brought direct from Scotland and Ireland. The large tobacco plantations, so numerous east of the mountains, were not found in the valley; so in their manner of life, as in their religion, the Virginians of this section differed from their Church-of-England neighbors beyond the mountains.

96. Later History of the Colony. — By the close of the colonial period the struggling settlement on the banks of the James had grown to a prosperous colony of over half a million inhabitants. On account of the unhealthfulness of its site, Jamestown was abandoned, and Williamsburg became the capital. This town was founded on the spot where Bacon and his men had taken the oath to resist the king's troops. Its streets were planned in the form of a W and M, in honor of William and Mary. Here William and Mary College, the principal seat of learning in the Southern colonies, was located. Under Governor Spotswood, the pirates of Chesapeake Bay were routed, and their famous leader, "Blackbeard," was killed. Spotswood established the first iron furnace in Virginia, and did much to develop the resources of the colony.

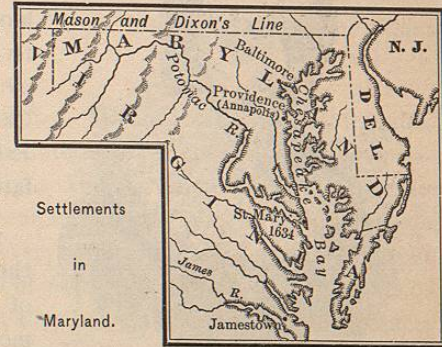
97. Summary. — Virginia, the oldest English colony, was founded at Jamestown in 1607, by the London Company, a mercantile body that wished to extend its trading operations by forming settlements in America. The charter obtained from King James I. provided a wretched form of government. Sickness, starvation, and quarrels brought the settlement to the verge of ruin. John Smith saved the colony from destruction. Young women were brought over from England as wives for the settlers. The importation of needy adventurers ceased, and a stream of immigration from the best classes of England flowed into the colony. The use of tobacco was learned from the Indians, and the culture of the plant became so profitable that it formed the universal occupation of the settlers. In the year 1619, the first colonial assembly met. In the same year the first African slaves were introduced. Seventeen years after the founding of Jamestown King James dissolved the London Company and made Virginia a royal colony. The misrule of Governor Berkeley led to the civil strife

known as "Bacon's Rebellion," which was brought to a close by Bacon's death. Throughout the colonial period Virginia held a leading position among the English colonies.

MARYLAND.

98. Settlement. — Twenty-seven years after the settlement of Jamestown, two English ships sailed into Chesapeake Bay bearing men and supplies for the founding of a new colony north of the Potomac.

They sailed up the broad bosom of the Potomac, entered a small tributary near its mouth, and landing, established their first settlement, which they called St. Mary's (1634). Land was purchased from the Indians, together with



part of the growing crops. The Indian women taught the settlers how to make "hoe-cakes" of corn meal, and the Indian men helped them to hunt the deer. A large proportion of the settlers were laboring men. More fortunate than its Virginia neighbors, the new colony escaped the perils of starvation and Indian massacres, and was soon firmly established.

99. The Founders of Maryland. — These colonists were sent out from England by Cecil Calvert. George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, was a rich English nobleman and a member of the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholics were at that time persecuted in England, and George Calvert wished to found a refuge in America for his brethren. He first tried Newfoundland, but found the climate there too severe. He

then went to Virginia with a number of followers. On his refusal to take the "Oath of Supremacy" (acknowledging the king of England as the head of the Church) the Virginians requested him to leave their colony. Returning to England, he obtained from his friend, King Charles I., a grant to that part of Virginia lying north of the Potomac. The new



George Calvert, First Lord Baltimore.

colony was to be called Maryland, in honor of Henrietta Maria, wife of the king. Just before his charter was issued Lord Baltimore died. His son, Cecil Calvert, the second Lord Baltimore, carried out his father's plans.

100. The Government of the Colony. — The charter of Maryland contained a more complete grant of power than that of any other colony. The proprie-

tor, as Lord Baltimore and his successors were called, was authorized to make all necessary laws, with the consent of the freemen; and these laws were to be binding without the approval of the English king or Council. The colonists were to be free from taxation by the crown, and were to enjoy all the rights of Englishmen. The king only asked, as a token of allegiance, two Indian arrows every year.

101. Territorial Disputes. — There was much dissatisfaction among the Virginians on account of the fact that the Maryland grant embraced territory included in their charter. William Clayborne, a member of the Virginia Council, had established a trading post on an island in Chesapeake Bay

within the disputed limits. When the Maryland authorities demanded that he should pay for a license to trade, he raised a body of troops and resisted. He was defeated, however, and his property seized. Clayborne fled to Virginia, and afterward went to England to make his complaint to the king. The king, however, decided against him.

After Pennsylvania was founded, a dispute arose between that colony and Maryland as to the boundary between them. The present line was finally agreed upon, and was called "Mason and Dixon's Line," from the two surveyors by whom it was laid off.

102. Religious Troubles. — Though Maryland was founded as a refuge for oppressed Catholics, yet Christians of every denomination were welcomed. Her government was the first in the history of the world under which complete toleration was granted to Christians of every belief.¹ During Cromwell's rule in England, the government of Maryland passed into the hands of Protestants. Sad to say, they began to persecute the Catholics, and civil war followed. The Protestants under Clayborne, who was now at the head of the Puritan party, were successful, and the Governor of Maryland was compelled to flee from the colony. After the death of Cromwell, Lord Baltimore's authority was again established and religious toleration was restored.

103. Changes in the Government. — In 1692, King William annulled Lord Baltimore's charter, and for twenty-five years Maryland remained a royal colony under the control of governors appointed by the king. The capital was moved from St. Mary's to Providence, afterward called Annapolis in honor of the queen. The fifth Lord Baltimore, having changed his religion, was recognized as Proprietor, and under his son the

¹ In 1638 William Lewis was fined one hundred pounds of tobacco for abusing Protestants, and forbidding his servants to read Protestant books.