



Captain Smith Explaining the Compass.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

THE SETTLEMENT OF VIRGINIA.

If anything connected with the history of America is grand or romantic, it is the struggles of the early colonists to plant themselves, securely and permanently, in an unknown wilderness, far from the realms of civilization, and in continual danger of annihilation from the hostility of savage enemies, the scarcity of provisions, unaccustomed changes of climate, and an entirely new mode of life. These struggles have an inherent interest which will never pass away, because they illustrate great and glorious principles of human action. They not only show singular enterprise and intrepidity, but, in many instances, were prompted by the most elevated moral sentiments. The colonization of the country furnishes some of the most remarkable examples of courage, energy, magnanimity, and faith, which are to be found in the history of mankind. It therefore claims the attention of all elevated minds, and of the young people of America especially, since it presents the toils and sacrifices of their ancestors, by which alone they were enabled to lay the foundation of a great republic. In no subsequent period were such great deeds done, and such lofty virtues generated, if we except the revolutionary contest alone.

BOOK II.

Ch. I.
A. D.
1606.

Difficulties attending the early settlements

Book II. The history of colonization has not only a moral and
Ch. I. romantic interest, but also a philosophical importance.

A. D. We are led to study the causes of that great movement,
1606. and, hence, contemplate those great ideas and principles
The his- which produced emigration. And almost every movement
torical and every principle of the early settlers have had a de-
import- cided influence on the condition and welfare of their de-
ance of cendants. We can trace a connection between the
early co- earliest events and the formation of great institutions. It
loniza- should be the aim of the historian to present these, and
tion. these chiefly; for how insignificant and devoid of perma-
nent interest are the petty jealousies and contests of colo-
nial life, when compared with the spiritual agencies and
great events which are connected with the progressive
development and ultimate expansion of the American
colonies!

Causes But we are obliged, in surveying the progress of colo-
which nization, to examine the settlement of each colony by
led to itself, since different principles animated different settlers,
coloni- and since each colony was planted under peculiar circum-
zation. stances, which have affected the subsequent condition of
the most powerful States. At one time the love of gain,
and, at another, a restless passion for adventure, sent colo-
nists to the new world. Again, the desire to worship
God, unrestricted by civil or ecclesiastical authority, and
still again, a craving for greater civil liberty, were ruling
motives among the emigrants. Sometimes all these prin-
ciples and passions were combined, and operated together;
and, at other times, only some of them were discoverable.
And then they operated with greater or less intensity in
different sections, sometimes producing bigotry, acrimony,
and exclusiveness; and, in other places, favouring gene-
rous equality and toleration. It was religious ideas chiefly
which planted Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maryland,

Carolina, and Pennsylvania; and yet, in all these colo- Book II.
nies, different states of society were produced, although, Ch. I.
in each separate one, the early settlers transmitted to pos-
terity their peculiar sentiments and virtues. A. D.
1606.

The earliest English settlement on the shores of North Roman-
America was Virginia. Its early history is as romantic tic histo-
as that of any of the colonies, but not so sublime, since it ry of the
was colonised by adventurers in quest of mere worldly settle-
and material objects. Moreover, they belonged, for the ment of
most part, to a different class of English society from that Virginia
in which either the Puritans, the Catholics, or the Qua-
kers, mingled. They were more aristocratic, more de-
voted to pleasure, more refined, perhaps, in manners and
taste. They were less religious, not so lofty in their
views, and not so well fitted to endure hardship and
privation.

The condition of England in the early part of the seven- Condi-
teenth century favoured adventure in America. The tion of
prosperity of Spain and Portugal excited emulation and England
the desire of sudden wealth. A redundant population
also sought new means of support. All ordinary occupa-
tions were filled with supernumeraries. Many enterpris-
ing people, who had served in the wars of Elizabeth, were
thrown out of employment. Men of wealth expected to
reap extravagant returns for all capital employed in the
new world, all parts of which were supposed to abound in
the precious metals. Great commercial prospects were
held out by adventurers to the credulous and the sanguine.

In this state of the public mind, James I. granted, in James I.
the year 1606, an ample patent to a company of noble- grants a
men, gentlemen, and merchants, in and around London, charter
for the
settle-
ment of
Virginia
for the exclusive possession of a belt of territory extend-
ing from thirty-four to thirty-eight degrees of north lati-
tude. Whoever paid 1*l.* 10*s.*, about sixty dollars, into

BOOK II. the company's treasury, was entitled to a hundred acres
Ch. 1. of land, and to a hundred acres more when the first lot
A. D. was cultivated. And every emigrant was also allowed an
 1606. equal quantity of land. The colonists were permitted to
Condi- transport, free of duty, for seven years, what arms and
tions provision they required, to search for mines, to coin money,
of the to impose duties on all vessels trading to their ports, and to
charter. enjoy all the ordinary civil and political privileges of Eng-
 lishmen. But this charter was not favourable to the de-
 velopment of liberty. It gave the council in England the
 general superintendence of common affairs; while the su-
 preme legislative authority, and the control of all appoint-
 ments, were vested in the king. The aim of the company
 and of the colonists was money, rather than the extension
 of democratic ideas; and even the welfare of the colonists
 was made subservient to the interests of the patrons at
 home, who sought the means of improving their fortunes.

The first The company gave immediate attention to the settle-
compa- ment of Virginia. Christopher Newport sailed on the
ny of co- 19th of December, with three small vessels and one hun-
lonists. dred and five emigrants, to colonize the unknown wilderness.
 And even these were men peculiarly unfitted for the task.
 They were mostly adventurers, unaccustomed to manual
 labour, and connected with families of consideration. They
 were disunited among themselves, and filled with jealousy in
 view of talents superior to their own. The only man in
 the company fit to rule them was Captain John Smith, and
 of him they were envious and suspicious.

Their The voyage was made by way of the West Indies, and
voyage. lasted four months. It was the intention of Newport to
 land at Roanoke; but a storm drove his ships to the
 Chesapeake Bay, and they anchored at Old Point Com-
 fort, at the mouth of James river. After spending three
 weeks in exploring the river and adjacent country, they

disembarked thirty miles from the mouth of the river, at BOOK II.
 a spot they named Jamestown, in honour of the king,— Ch. 1.
 the oldest English settlement in America.

The government of the infant colony was entrusted to A. D.
 a provincial council, the names of which had been kept in 1607.
 a sealed box during the voyage. Of these, Edward Settle-
 Wingfield was chosen President—an intriguing man, un- ment of
 worthy of his post, and unfit to be entrusted with power James-
 in such an important crisis. Smith was excluded from town.
 the council, in consequence of the jealousy of the Presi-
 dent, although his name was on the list.

While the men were employed in felling trees for their Expla-
 new abodes, Newport and Smith explored the river, and tions of
 visited the residence of Powhatan, just below the falls of Captain
 Richmond. This person was the most celebrated and John
 powerful of the Indian chieftains in that section of the Smith.
 country, and in spite of the murmurs of the savages, over
 whom he exercised almost absolute rule, he received the
 strangers with great hospitality.

In June, Newport returned to England with his ships, Suffer-
 and the inexperienced and divided colonists were left to ings of
 struggle with disease, famine, hardship, and danger. the colo-
 Before September, half of them died, including Gosnold, nists.
 the projector of the enterprise. The marshes and the
 summer heats generated disease among men unaccustomed
 to the climate. Added to these evils, it was soon found
 that the natives were unfriendly. The President, Wing-
 field, was not only incapable of shielding the colonists,
 but even contemplated desertion, and actually embezzled
 the choicest stores. John Ratcliffe was chosen his suc-
 cessor, but was equally incapable; and the government
 fell at last into the hands of the ablest, even Smith,
 who succeeded in imparting a gleam of sunshine into the
 night of gloom and desolation.

Book II. With none of the early colonists are associated more
 Ch. I. talent, enterprise, and courage, than with this remarkable
 A. D. man — a soldier, a traveller, a philanthropist, of decided
 1607. reputation, before he was thirty years of age. He had
 visited most of the countries of Europe. He had fought
 for the independence of Holland, and had also enlisted
 against the Turks. He had been a prisoner in Wallachia,
 and a slave at Constantinople. He slew his taskmaster
 in the Crimea, and returned; after innumerable perils, to
 his native country. No one entered with more enthu-
 siasm than he into the project of colonizing Virginia; and
 it was by his experience and sagacity that the infant
 colony was saved from ruin.

His cap-
 ture by
 the In-
 dians.

His enterprising spirit, however, led him into unneces-
 sary dangers, which nearly cost him his life. One of his
 adventures was attended with circumstances which still
 invest his name with all that is romantic and interesting.
 He had been exploring the wilderness, and was taken
 captive by the Indians. For a time he amused the hos-
 tile savages by showing them the wonders of a pocket
 compass. But, at last, they led him as a victim to their
 chieftain, who decreed his death, as a man dangerous to
 Indian interests. He was dragged to the ground, his
 head placed upon a stone, and the warlike Powhatan stood
 over him with his club. As the fatal blow was about to
 be given, the chieftain's daughter, Pocahontas, a child
 twelve years of age, clasped the prisoner's head in her
 arms, and eloquently besought his life. Her entreaties
 were respected, and the Governor was spared, as if by
 direct interposition of Heaven, for the future welfare of
 the colony.

Poca-
 hontas
 saves his
 life.

When he returned to Jamestown, after seven weeks' absence, Smith found the colony reduced to thirty-eight men, discouraged, desperate, and resolved to abandon it.

But he succeeded in keeping up their spirits until New-
 port arrived with supplies, and one hundred and twenty
 new settlers. These were, unfortunately, like those who
 had preceded them, gentlemen adventurers, unused to
 hardship and disdainful of toil — men whose thoughts
 were upon gold, and not on substantial welfare, and still
 less upon religious ideas. Mistaking some glittering sand
 for the anticipated treasures, they filled one of their ships
 with the useless dirt, and returned to England. Smith
 was wiser; he loaded the other ship with cedar, skins,
 and furs; and these proved more valuable than gold
 itself to the ultimate welfare of the country.

Moreover, he employed himself in making useful ex-
 plorations, and actually visited every inlet, river, and bay
 on both sides of the Chesapeake, making accurate maps
 and charts, and conciliating the Indians by presents and
 kindness. Such a man was a noble benefactor to the co-
 lony over which he presided. But the patentees in Eng-
 land were dissatisfied. They cared but little for his genius,
 and still less for his discoveries. They only wanted a
 return for their investments. Disappointed in this, they
 threatened to desert the colony.

Then were developed the great energies and resources
 of the President. He taught the goldsmiths, and re-
 finers, and vagabond gentlemen, who had hoped to make
 their fortunes, that self-reliance which is greater than any
 pecuniary reward. He accustomed them to fatigue and
 labour, showed them how to protect themselves, and
 induced them to plant corn and build houses.

Still, the patentees were vexed that no gold was found,
 and attributed the failure to the provincial council, which
 of course was more anxious to advance the interests of the
 colony, than enrich greedy merchants at home. They
 therefore applied to the King for a new charter, by which

Book II. all authority should be withdrawn from the colonial rulers.

Ch. 1. It was readily granted, and, in 1609, the territory assigned to the corporation was enlarged by a grant of two hundred miles north and two hundred south of Old Point Comfort,

A. D. 1600. and extending west to the Pacific. The corporation obtained the appointment of all the officers, and the chief command was entrusted to a Governor. Lord De la War received the appointment, which was a good one, this nobleman being as distinguished for virtues as he was for rank.

James I. grants another charter. Lord De la War appointed governor. Under the auspices of so good a man, the greatest eagerness prevailed to colonize Virginia; and nine ships, with five hundred emigrants, departed from England. Only seven of the vessels, however, arrived; and these were freighted with the most unpromising set of men that ever embarked on a scheme of colonization—men without experience or character, broken-down tradesmen, impoverished men of rank, and libertines sent away by parents who wished to avoid the disgrace they entailed upon their families.

Discontents in the colony. Departure of Smith. Such people could only give trouble to Smith, who retained command until the arrival of the governor, or his deputies. The new settlers fomented rebellion, alienated the Indians, and encouraged every species of disorder. Smith was obliged to send the ringleaders to England, and shortly after to follow them himself, in consequence of a wound he had received from the explosion of some gunpowder.

His departure was an incalculable loss. The colonists, unprincipled, discontented, profligate and lazy, were a prey to Indians, to famine, and to disease. So great were their sufferings, and so complete was their despair, that they were about to burn the settlement, and embark in four miserable pinnaces for the fisheries on the banks of

Newfoundland. But the timely arrival of Lord De la War restored hope and confidence, and, under his mild and judicious administration, prosperity again dawned upon the colonists. The rites of religion were observed, industry was exercised, and provisions were garnered for future contingencies.

Lord De la War, unfortunately, was obliged to return, after a brief sojourn, to England, on account of ill-health. He was succeeded, in 1611, by Sir Thomas Dale. This governor was harsh and injudicious, and a rigorous military government succeeded the mild administration of Lord De la War. He was soon supplanted by Sir Thomas Gates, who arrived with a new reinforcement of men and supplies. Such was the miserable state of the colony, that he felt obliged to continue the strict military discipline introduced by Dale. It numbered, indeed, seven hundred men; but these were generally unused to labour or restraint.

The patentees realized no more return under the new charter than under the first one, and, as their object was gain alone, they again applied for another and more favourable patent. This was accordingly granted to them in 1612, and they were invested with the right to all the islands of the coast within three hundred leagues of Virginia. A lottery was also given to them, by which 3000*l.* was realized.

About this time, a domestic event of considerable importance occurred. A scarcity prevailing, Captain Argall was despatched to the Potomac for a cargo of corn. Here he found Pocahontas living in retirement. This noble creature he managed to decoy on board his vessel, carried her as a prisoner to Jamestown, and then basely demanded a ransom from her father. The indignant old chieftain rejected the offer with disdain, and prepared his tribe for

Book II.

Ch. 1.

A. D.

1610.

Arrival

of Lord

De la

War.

Sir Thos.

Dale.

Third

charter

of Vir-

ginia.

1613.

Seizure

of Poca-

hontas.

BOOK II. revenge. An exterminating war would have resulted, had

Ch. 1. not the angry father been soothed by the marriage of his daughter with John Rolfe, who had gained her affections. A. D. 1613. She was converted to Christianity, and gained universal respect for her exemplary virtues. She visited England, where she died prematurely, but not until she had given birth to a son, whom some of the best families of Virginia are proud to acknowledge as their ancestor. It was hoped that the example of Rolfe might have been followed by others, since but few of the colonists were married. But such a union was not to take place. The two races were to remain for ever distinct, and inveterately hostile.

1614. In 1614, Dale resumed the government for two years, during which some useful changes took place respecting the settlement of lands. Until this time, the colonists had lived upon the common stock; and this colonial communism had produced idleness and discontent. It was found that no one would work for the public as he would for himself. The slothful trusted to the exertions of the industrious, and the industrious were discouraged by the idleness of the slothful. Accordingly, the land was divided into lots, and each family was obliged to support its members. Prosperity and industry were the results.

Culture of corn and tobacco. More corn was raised than was needed, and considerable quantities were exported or sold to the Indians. Tobacco was extensively cultivated, and became alike the staple and the currency of the colony. The gold-seekers turned into planters, and, instead of servants of the company, became the proprietors of the soil they cultivated.

1617. But the planters were still subject to an oppressive government, which checked the growth of the colony. And there was a frequent change of governors. George Yeardley succeeded Dale after two years' administration; and, a year after, in 1617, he was supplanted by Captain Ar-

Marriage of Pocahontas.

Dale's administration.

Culture of corn and tobacco.

Oppressive governors.

gall, whose rule was tyrannical in the extreme. Martial law was recognised, and there was no security of life or property. Emigration nearly ceased; for few would embark for a distant colony, where a more oppressive despotism existed than in any of the military governments of the European world. The colonists made so earnest an appeal to the mercenary company at home, that Argall was removed, and Lord De la War consented to supply his place; but this benevolent nobleman died on his outward passage, and the government was again entrusted to Yeardley, who had recently been knighted.

He commenced his administration in 1619 with acts of beneficence. The planters were confirmed in the possession of their lands, the old burdens were removed, martial law was relaxed, and a colonial assembly was called, composed of the governor, the provincial council, and the deputies from the plantations, who were called burgesses.

This infant assembly was the germ of popular liberty in Virginia, and its acts gave great satisfaction. Civil freedom, as well as industry, received an impulse. Twelve hundred new settlers arrived, and among them sixty women, who were speedily provided with husbands from among the colonists. Their influence was most happy. Domestic ties, for the first time, were formed; and virtuous sentiments and industrious habits were cultivated. The colony rapidly increased, and numbered, in 1620, several thousands.

The civil privileges which were obtained by the colonial assembly, were happily confirmed by the company at home. Trial by jury was established, together with the ordinary privileges of Englishmen. The colonists were no longer servants of a commercial corporation, but citizens of a new republic. From this time, the power was virtually in the hands of the Colonial Parliament, which

BOOK II. Ch. 1.

A. D. 1619.

Change of governor.

Yeardley's wise administration.

Colonial assembly.

The colonists obtain civil liberty.

BOOK II. nursed the principles of liberty and the interests of the
Ch. 1. infant settlement.

A. D. About this time, the captain of a Dutch trading vessel
1620. sold to the colonists at Jamestown twenty negroes, whom
he had brought from the coast of Guinea. Their number
increased as the colonists had need of them, and they were
chiefly employed in the cultivation of tobacco. The intro-
duction of African slavery made but little impression at
the time, however pregnant it was with mighty conse-
quences, which it does not fall within the province of this
history to conjecture or discuss.

This great event, however, was insignificant to the
minds of the colonists, compared with a domestic calamity
which nearly proved fatal to the settlement. This was a
war with the Indians, and the first war of any extent
which had thus far taken place. The natives looked with
great anxiety, indignation and jealousy at the growing
encroachments of the English. Their settlements ex-
tended one hundred and forty miles on both sides of
James river; and they tilled the ground in blind confi-
dence of their safety, and with increasing contempt for
the Indians, who had been continually melting away.
There were not over five thousand of them, including fif-
teen hundred warriors, within sixty miles of Jamestown;
and these were unacquainted with the use of fire-arms,
and scattered about in isolated hamlets.

So long as Powhatan lived, he had continued in friendly
intercourse with the invaders. But his successor, Ope-
chancanough, had different views and feelings. He hated,
with the greatest intensity, those foreigners who had taken
possession of the hunting-grounds of his ancestors, and who
treated his people with so much indifference and contempt.
He therefore resolved to exterminate the English wher-
ever they had made a settlement in his extensive territo-

ries. But his tribe was too weak to cope with the invaders
in open warfare. He knew it was only by treachery and
stratagem that his purpose could be accomplished. So,
with impenetrable secrecy, a plot was laid to massacre all
the white people in the colony, without any regard to age
or sex.

The plot was fortunately revealed by a converted Indian
in time to save Jamestown, whose inhabitants prepared
themselves for the attack. But the villages on the river
were not so fortunate. On the 29th of March, 1622, at
an appointed hour, the Indians simultaneously fell upon
the settlements on James river, and barbarously murdered
three hundred and forty-seven people. Moreover, the
massacre was aggravated with all the tortures which
Indian malice and ingenuity could suggest.

This was the greatest calamity which the colony had
ever suffered, and a bloody war was the natural result.
For a while, confusion, desolation and grief reigned
throughout the colony. Public works were abandoned.
Fields were left untilled. Scarcity and sickness added to
the gloom which pervaded the whole settlement. All
plans of industry were abandoned for revenge; and so
terrible was this universal passion, so resolute were the
colonists, that a war of extermination followed. The In-
dians, cunning as they were, proved no match for the
Europeans in duplicity and treachery. They were en-
trapped and slain, and driven like wild beasts from their
ancient domain.

War, famine and disease, had now reduced the colony
from four thousand to twenty-five hundred souls; yet their
disasters were speedily repaired, and their numbers reple-
nished. The English at home, moved with generous
pity, displayed unusual liberality, and sent out new re-
cruits. In consequence, the colony soon recovered from

BOOK II. its misfortunes; but, alas! only to fall into new perplexities.
Ch. 1.

A. D. 1624. The members of the company in England had been disappointed in realizing commercial profit, and their meetings had become scenes of disgraceful faction. Accounts of their angry and bold debates reached the ear of the jealous king, who soon pronounced the Virginia courts to be but a seminary for a seditious parliament. He first attempted to control the elections. Failing in this, he resorted to intimidation, and resolved to annul their charter, but, if possible, in a constitutional manner. He sent commissioners to America, and they reported according to his wishes. An order in council decreed that the privileges of the corporation should be subverted. It refused to surrender its charter. The king then resorted to the writ *quo warranto*, and a servile bench of judges decreed the dissolution of the company, which had thus far expended 150,000*l.* This act, which occurred in 1624, though unjust and tyrannical, operated favourably to the colonists; for a commercial corporation, seeking a return for investments, was not likely to pay much attention to the social and moral advancement of the people whom they controlled.

1625. James I. died before he had completed his schemes for the government of the colony; but Charles I. pursued the arbitrary policy which his father contemplated. He instituted a government which combined the unlimited prerogatives of an absolute prince, with the selfish maxims of a mercantile corporation.

1629. In 1620, he gave the government into the hands of Sir John Harvey, who proved to be both insolent and tyrannical. His administration was so odious, that the colonists complained, and succeeded in securing his impeachment. He was sustained in England, however, and re-

James subverts the company's charter.

Death of James I.

Administration of Harvey.

ceived a new commission. In 1639, he was succeeded by BOOK II. Sir Francis Wyat, and that gentleman again, two years afterwards, by Sir Wm. Berkeley, who favoured the institutions of freedom, though compelled by the king to impose severe restrictions on the commerce of the colony. Many privileges were, however, secured by the colonists, in spite of the tyrannical temper of the king, who was too deeply engrossed with his parliamentary difficulties to bestow much thought on the colony. Berkeley, who filled the office of governor with great ability for thirty-six years, with the exception of a short interval, confirmed the planters in their political privileges, and sustained the institutions of religion, as well as those of liberty.

Virginia, in possession of all the civil and religious privileges it had ever claimed, or which were consistent with royal government, rapidly increased in wealth and population under the government of Berkeley, and continued firm in its allegiance to the cause of Charles I. Zeal for royalty and for episcopacy characterized the aristocratic colonists, until new emigrations and new social institutions modified the temper of the people.

Still, during the long administration of Berkeley, though judicious and benignant, a change gradually took place in social life, which produced popular insurrections, and, when these were suppressed, resulted in a state of society more aristocratic than in other sections of the country.

The difficulties and dangers attending the first period of colonization, had bound the people together, and produced considerable equality of feeling; insomuch so, that the House of Burgesses, the first representative assembly in America, was elected by universal suffrage. All freemen, without exception, were entitled to vote. And even the indentured servants of the colony, when their term

A. D. 1642 to 1670.

Wise government of Berkeley.

Change in the political state of the colony.