

The Project Gutenberg eBook of Religious Life of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Religious Life of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century

Author: G. MacLaren Brydon

Release date: April 29, 2009 [eBook #28634]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Mark C. Orton, Diane Monico, and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK RELIGIOUS LIFE OF VIRGINIA IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ***

RELIGIOUS LIFE OF VIRGINIA IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The Faith of Our Fathers

By

GEORGE MACLAREN BRYDON

Historiographer of Diocese of Virginia

**VIRGINIA 350TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CORPORATION
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA
1957**

COPYRIGHT® , 1957 BY
VIRGINIA 350TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
CORPORATION, WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

Jamestown 350th Anniversary
Historical Booklet, Number 10

CONTENTS

[Introduction](#)

Chapter		Page
One	Beginnings	1
Two	The Colonists at Worship	6
Three	Making Bricks Without Straw	12
Four	Building a Christian Community	22
Five	The Coming of the Negro	26
Six	Fighting Adverse Conditions	34
Seven	The Last Decade	42

INTRODUCTION

The settlement of Englishmen at Jamestown in 1607 was the outgrowth of a vision of transatlantic expansion which had been growing stronger steadily during the preceding generation. It was in the following of that vision that Queen Elizabeth granted to a group of men headed by Sir Walter Raleigh the authority to establish a colony upon the remote shores of the Atlantic ocean, and out of the plans of this group came the ill-fated colony which was started at Roanoke Island, in what is now the State of North Carolina, in the year 1585. This colony after a life of a few years disappeared: whether destroyed by Indian attack, or by a Spanish fleet which resented the settlement of Englishmen in a land that was claimed for Spain, or by famine or disease, no one knows to this day. The one permanent result was the giving of the name Virginia to their American land in honor of their Queen.

Following the failure of this first effort, a plan was formulated and established by charter given by King James in the year 1606. Under this charter companies were to be formed in order to found two English settlements in America; one to be a colony at some point between the 34th and 41st degrees of latitude, and the other between the 38th and 45th degrees. Both companies had the widespread interest of the English people, and both made settlements in America in the same year, 1607. The Virginia Company established its settlement at Jamestown, from which developed the Colony, and later the Commonwealth of Virginia, as the first permanent English settlement in America. The Plymouth Company made its settlement upon the coast of what is now Maine; but this effort failed and the colonists returned home in the following year. Permanent settlement of New England began in 1620 with the coming of the Pilgrims to Plymouth, Massachusetts. From these two first settlements thus widely separated, but with their common ideal of English civilization and English concepts of freedom and self-government, has grown the American nation of today. This nation, while welcoming all the gifts and values which people of other nations have brought to the enrichment and broadening of our common life, is still basically an English or Anglo-Saxon nation.

Many impelling motives animated the men who organized the Virginia company and labored for the establishment of a colony in America. They wanted of course the expansion of British trade and a wider market for British manufactures; and they naturally hoped for financial profit from their investment in shares of stock in the companies. They planned, also, not merely trading posts in a foreign land as in India and elsewhere, but an extension and expansion of the empire of Great Britain.

A most important part of their plan was to make colonies the answer to a problem which was pressing for solution: the problem of what to do with the increasing overplus of population in many of the cities of England. The danger of a population too great for the land of England to support and feed was a real one. A colony to which England could send her overplus population as part of a greater England was a real solution, and a better one than would be the raising of grain and foodstuff by foreign countries to feed the hungry of Great Britain. That men were thinking along this line appears from the action of certain large towns in paying the expense of the voyage of young people by the score or hundred to Virginia, and from the plan soon after the first settlement, whereby young women of reputable families were sent to Virginia to become wives of the colonists.

And still another motive was the religious one. The Virginia Company kept constantly in the forefront their plan to Christianize the Indians. Their plan as they began to put it into effect included the establishment of parishes and the selection of fit clergymen to go overseas; to establish a University with a college therein for Indians, and to take Indian youths into English families to fit and prepare them for their college. They secured from both King and Archbishop the authority and permission to bring the expatriated Pilgrim Fathers back under the English flag, and give them a settlement in Virginia, a plan which failed after the Pilgrims had started for their promised new home.

CHAPTER ONE

Beginnings

The men who came to Jamestown brought the ideals and ways of life of the mother country; its common law, the enactments of Parliament, the Church of their people; and as shown in the prayer written in England which the commanding officer of the colony was required to use daily at the setting of the watch, they hoped also that the natives of the land might be brought into the

Kingdom of God. They made petition for their own needs, but they prayed also:

And seeing, Lord, the highest end of our plantation here is to set up the standard and display the banner of Jesus Christ, even here where Satan's throne is, Lord let our labour be blessed in labouring the conversion of the heathen; and because thou usest not to work such mighty works by unholy means, Lord sanctifie our spirits and give us holy hearts that so we may be thy instruments in this most glorious work.

It is of real significance that the London Company made its first settlement a parish after the manner of the Church of England, and elected as its first rector the Reverend Richard Hakluyt, one of the most noted clergymen in England, and a man who had captured the imagination of all with his books on travel in far lands. He was expected to remain in England and represent the needs of the colonists and help, perhaps, to select clergymen to go to new parishes which would be formed as settlements developed. The religious aspect of the movement was approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he approved also the selection of the Reverend Robert Hunt who came to Jamestown as the vicar of the parish and the pastor of the colonists.

The London Company made a provision that each new settlement should become a parish with its own rector. The first settlements were established by the Company itself and were called "Cities" after the ideal and pattern of Geneva. That city, the home of John Calvin and of the Calvinistic theology which so strongly influenced the Church of England in the Seventeenth Century, was a self-governing unit in the Swiss Confederation. It consisted of the city and its suburban territory and was the prototype from which the "City" or "Hundred" in Virginia and the "Township" or "town" in Massachusetts were formed.

[Pg 2]

There were four Cities in Virginia: James City, Charles City, The City of Henrico, and Elizabeth City. They were boroughs at the time of the first meeting of the General Assembly of Virginia in 1619, each one electing its own Burgesses. And as counties now, instead of cities, each one elects its own Delegates to the Assembly. There were four "cities," three "hundreds," and four "plantations" represented by Burgesses in the first Assembly in 1619, and each one was a separate parish. Official records have long been lost but the names are known of some six clergymen who were incumbents of parishes in Virginia between 1607 and 1619.

The London Company had a rule that every clergyman who volunteered or was invited to go to a parish in Virginia was to be investigated as to character and fitness, and each one of them was taken by a committee to a church to read the service and preach a sermon as part of the investigation.

It is not generally known, perhaps, but plans for the immediate development of the life of the colonists included the establishment of a university which would set aside one hall or college for the education of Indian youth and another for the education of sons of English families. The London Company in 1618 made a grant of ten thousand acres of land on the north side of the James River and immediately to the east of the present-day City of Richmond. That grant was to be the seat of the University and was to be developed as a group of tenant farms with the college buildings in the center. So great was the interest throughout England in the plan that the King as the temporal head of the Church presented the matter to the whole people of England. In 1617 he wrote the Archbishops of Canterbury and York:

[Pg 3]

Most Reverend Father in God: Right trustie and well beloved Counsellor, we greet you well: You have heard ere this of the attempt of divers worthy men, our subjects, to plant in Virginia, under the warrant of our letters of patent, people of this Kingdom, as well as for the enlarging of our dominions as for the propogation of the Gospel amongst infidells; wherein there is good progress made, and hope of further increase: so as the undertakers of that plantation are now in hand with the erection of some churches and schools for the education of the children of these barbarians, which cannot but be to them a very great charge, and above the expense which for the civil plantation doth come to them, in which we doubt not but that you and all others who wish well to the increase of Christian religion will be willing to give all assistance and furtherance you may, and therein to make experience of the zeal and devotion of our well minded subjects; especially those of the clergy.

Wherefore we do require you, and hereby authorize you to write your letters to the several bishops of the dioceses in your province, that they do give order to the ministers and other zealous men of their dioceses, both by their own example in contribution and by exhortation to others, to move our people within their several charges to contribute to so good a work in as liberal a manner as they may.

Under instructions from the King offerings were to be taken in every parish four times a year for two years, the money collected to be sent to the bishops and by them forwarded to the treasurer of the London Company. The treasurer reported later that more than fifteen hundred pounds sterling had been sent to him, and later he reported additional amounts. In that period three bequests aggregating more than a thousand pounds sterling were reported for the Christianizing of the Indians. Other gifts included a "communion cup with cover and a plate of silver guilt for the bread" with communion silk and linen cloths and other ornaments, all to be placed within a church for Indians to be built under another bequest. This communion chalice and paten are owned today by one of the oldest parishes in Virginia, and are in St. John's Church, of Elizabeth

[Pg 4]

City Parish, at Hampton.

On one of the ships sailing from England to the East Indies an appeal was made by the chaplain in behalf of the university in Virginia and gifts were made in such large amount that when they were sent to Virginia they sufficed for the erection of "a publique free schoole" to be connected with the university. They named it "The East India School." The General Assembly, when it first met in July 1619, adopted a resolution urging English families to take promising Indian youths into their homes to teach them the fundamentals and prepare them for the opening of the college.

The work of establishing the university was already proceeding; land was being cleared; farm houses were being erected; more than one hundred artisans and workmen had been sent from England and the college buildings were under construction when on Good Friday, March 22, 1621/22, the great Indian massacre occurred. A full third of all the English people in Virginia were killed by Indians in one fatal day. The buildings at the university were burned to the ground, and every English man, woman and child in every family of the artisans and workmen was killed. The East India School was burned to the ground. Indeed the only thing that saved the colony from utter extermination was that Chanco, an Indian who had become a Christian, had learned of the plot the night before the massacre and warned the Englishman, Richard Pace, with whom he lived. Pace crossed the James River and warned the residents of Jamestown. So it was that Jamestown and some of the adjoining settlements were warned in time to protect themselves.

The massacre was of course a terrific catastrophe to the whole colony. Outlying settlements had to be abandoned and the colony was engaged in war with the Indians for several years. Then a second catastrophe occurred. King James became dissatisfied with the independent attitude of the London Company and personally secured its dissolution in 1624. He then took control of Virginia as a Royal Colony and he himself appointed the Governor and Council of the colony.

[Pg 5]

This ended all plans for the opening of the university. The King died in the following year and his son, King Charles I, was not interested in a university in Virginia. Nor was he or anyone else interested in sending ministers to the colonial parishes.

The London Company, with a membership including representatives of the Church and the universities, and of business interests and the higher social classes, had the confidence of the people. The King did not. He had their loyalty as their sovereign, but the spiritual and cultural welfare of a colony overseas carried little weight amid the political cross-currents and the self-seeking of a royal court.

CHAPTER TWO

[Pg 6]

The Colonists at Worship

There are several first-hand accounts of religious worship in the earliest days of the Jamestown colony. Captain John Smith wrote of the men at worship in the open air until a chapel could be erected. He describes the scene of a celebration of the Holy Communion, with the Holy Table standing under an old sail lashed from tree to tree, with a bar of wood fastened between two trees as the pulpit, and men kneeling on the ground before their first altar. Services were held daily, according to the rules of the *Book of Common Prayer* which they brought with them: morning prayer and evening prayer everyday, and sermons twice on Sunday and once during the week. The law of the Church required the Holy Communion to be celebrated at least three times during the year; on Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday; and unquestionably this law was observed at Jamestown. Many clergymen celebrated that sacrament oftener. There can be little doubt that the first celebration of the Holy Communion at Jamestown was on Whitsunday, May 24th (old style) 1607, although the first one of which a record remains was held on the third Sunday after Trinity, June 21. That was a special celebration, held for a two-fold purpose, one, that Mr. Hunt had been able to reconcile serious differences between certain elements among the colonists who had been in angry strife with each other, and second, because two of the ships which brought the colonists to Virginia were to set sail on the following morning upon their return trip to England.

William Strachey, writing in a report of the colony in 1610 after Lord De la Warr had arrived as the new governor presents the following picture:

In the midst of the market-place, a store-house, a "Corps-du-Garde", and a pretty chapel, all which the Lord Governour ordered to be put in good repair. The chapel was in length sixty feet, in breadth twenty-four, and the Lord Governour had repaired it with a chancel of cedar and a communion table of black walnut; all the pews and pulpit were of cedar, with fair broad windows, also of cedar, to shut and open, as the weather shall occasion. The font was hewen hollow like a canoa, and there were two bells in the steeple at the west end. The Church was so cast as to be very light within, and the Lord Governour caused it to be kept passing sweet and trimmed up with divers flowers. There was a sexton in charge of the church,

[Pg 7]

and every morning at the ringing of a bell by him, about ten o'clock, each man addressed himself to prayers, and so at four of the clock before supper. There was a sermon every Thursday and two sermons every Sunday, the two preachers taking their weekly turns. Every Sunday when the Lord Governour went to church he was accompanied with all the Councillors, Captains, other officers, and all the gentlemen, and with a guard of fifty halberdiers, in his Lordship's livery, fair red cloaks, on each side and behind him. The Lord Governour sat in the choir in a green velvet chair, with a velvet cushion before him on which he knelt, and the Council, Captains and officers sat on each side of him, each in their place; and when the Lord Governour returned home he was waited on in the same manner to his house.

Reverend Alexander Whitaker, the first rector of the City of Henrico from its foundation in 1611 until his death by drowning in 1617, and who is still remembered as the clergyman who baptized the Indian princess Pocahontas, after her conversion to the Christian faith, described his services as follows:

Every Sabbath we preach in the forenoon and catechize in the afternoon. Every Saturday at night I exercise in Sir Thomas Dale's house. Our Church affaires be consulted on by the minister and four of the most religious men. Once every month we have a communion, and once every year a solemn fast.

This method of daily and Sunday services, as the regular rule of the Church of England, was adopted in Virginia as far as colonial conditions would permit. But apart from Jamestown itself, and the schools which came into existence, there would not be many parishes in which daily services would be feasible. The people lived too far apart on their farms. They might drive or walk three or five miles to Church on Sundays, but could not give the time for that on work-days. The same objection worked against having two services on Sunday. So the custom became general of having a single service in every church and chapel every Sunday. The statement made by Rev. Alexander Whitaker, that he "catechized" every Sabbath afternoon, is illustrative of the usual method of instructing young people of the parish in the Church Catechism as preparation for admission to the Holy Communion. Such "catechetical classes" might be held as frequently on Sunday afternoons as the needs of the parish children, both white and Negro, might require: or perhaps sometimes, as frequently as the zeal, or lack of zeal of the incumbent minister might determine. When in 1724 the Bishop of London sent a questionnaire to every Anglican clergyman incumbent of a parish in America, one of the questions was, "At what times do you Catechize the Youth of your Parish?"

[Pg 8]

They have builded many pretty villages, faire houses and chapels which are growne good benefices of 120 pounds a yeare besides their own mundall [mundane] industry.

So wrote Captain John Smith a number of years after his return to England. There may have been an excess of imagination in describing new and raw settlements as "faire villages," but the salary which was to be paid to the ministers was a provable fact. Tithes from the culture of the land by the parishioners amounted to as much as £120, and the minister had a glebe of 100 acres from the cultivation of which his tenants and servants through "mundall industry" might greatly increase his income.

The London Company had carried to Virginia and fixed for the whole duration of the colonial period the parish system of the Church of England. Under that system each community became a parish and the people of the parish, as the land-owners of the community, supported the church and paid the salary of the minister by tithes from the produce of the land. There was, however, one change from the custom in England. There the tithes of a parish might produce a salary for the incumbent in any amount from ten pounds to hundreds of pounds per annum. In Virginia the amount of the salary was fixed by the General Assembly as a definite quantity of tobacco. There was also a glebe farm and a residence. Those who came to Virginia brought with them their Bible and their *Book of Common Prayer* and the Established Church of England became the Established Church of the Colony.

[Pg 9]

The all-pervading fact to be kept in mind in connection with the development of religious organization in Virginia is that the Church of England itself, during the period from 1600 to the Cromwellian era 1645-1660, was in a turmoil on account of two diverse schools of thought. One school within the Church desired to retain all the ancient forms of creed and worship from past centuries except those which had been perverted under the centuries of Roman Catholic domination. The other school within the Church desired to cast out all liturgical forms and the surplice, and also all power of the bishops. They wished to reduce worship to the forms of Calvinistic theology. There were also many who desired to make the Church broad enough to include both schools. The Calvinistic party was already forming dissenting congregations.

The Brownists, later to become the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, had already been driven out of England; and under King James, who had turned against the Calvinists to support the "high church" party, ecclesiastical courts were being formed to mete out severe punishment to leaders of dissent.

King James had declared he would "harry the dissenters" and force them to conform to the Established Church or be driven from the country. England's answer to that threat was to establish the colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Hampshire; and the constantly growing power of dissent resulted in civil war, in execution of King Charles I, in the era of the Commonwealth; and in the abolition of *Prayer Book* worship for fifteen years from every church and chapel in England.

[Pg 10]

In 1606 when the Virginia Company was organized the Calvinistic party was in power in England, and there were many Calvinists, or Puritans, as they were then called, in the universities and elsewhere. The Virginia Company itself was under the influence of Puritan leaders; so much so, indeed, that this fact was one of the reasons which impelled the King to abolish the Virginia Company. He knew the freedom of self-government which the Company had established in Virginia and he no longer trusted its loyalty to the Monarchy.

From the first settlement in 1607 the policy in Virginia was to let no question arise between high-churchman and Calvinist. The earlier laws required the minister of a parish to question every newcomer as to his religious beliefs, but there is no record of any Protestant dissenter or any Calvinist having been presented for trial before an ecclesiastical court. It is of course known as an historical fact that Sir Edwin Sandys labored long to secure from the King and the Archbishop permission to bring the Pilgrim Fathers from Holland, under the British flag again and establish them as a "hundred" in Virginia. It is of record also that such permission was obtained and that the Pilgrim Fathers set forth for the Chesapeake Bay but were diverted from their course by storms that carried them to a place which they named Plymouth. It is of record furthermore that the Reverend Henry Jacob, who founded the first Independent or Baptist congregation in London, was later forced out and came to Virginia where he found a home and peace until his death.

Reverend Alexander Whitaker, rector of the two adjoining parishes of Henrico and Charles City from 1611 until 1617, was the son of a famous Puritan divine. In a letter discussing conditions in Virginia he said: "I marvaile much—that so few of our English ministers that were so hot against the surplis and subscription come hither where neither are spoken of." Whitaker was rector of two parishes because William Wickham, the minister of one parish, was not of Anglican ordination and could not lawfully celebrate the Holy Communion. After the death of Whitaker the Governor of Virginia requested the London Company to ask the Archbishop of Canterbury to authorize Mr. Wickham to celebrate the Sacrament, "there being no one else." Such authorization to a clergyman of Presbyterian ordination could have been given by the Archbishop at that time as it was permitted then by law. Wickham was not the only minister of Presbyterian ordination who served as incumbent of a parish of the Established Church in Virginia. In a report made to London in 1623 it was stated that in Virginia in 1619 "There were three ministers with orders and two without." The "two without" were unquestionably of Presbyterian ordination.

[Pg 11]

Among the first laws enacted in Virginia was one requiring every minister who came into the colony to take the oath of "conformity" to the Church of England. The law did not include laymen; it was the minister only who was required to take the oath. Later, the laws enacted by the General Assembly required every clergyman coming into the colony to subscribe to the Articles of the Christian Faith according to the Church of England and to be of Anglican ordination. By reason of sheer inability at times to provide sufficient Anglican clergymen for the parishes, clergymen of Presbyterian ordination were permitted to serve in Virginia parishes; and that was true throughout the whole seventeenth century. The last Presbyterian clergyman to hold an Anglican parish in Virginia, Rev. Andrew Jackson of Christ Church Parish, Lancaster County, died in 1710. Throughout the century the law required every citizen to attend the parish church, but there was never an ecclesiastical court in which a layman could be tried, convicted or punished as a dissenter.

CHAPTER THREE

[Pg 12]

Making Bricks Without Straw

The colony of Virginia, after the protective and guiding influence of the Virginia Company was taken away, found itself in an almost impossible situation so far as religious organization was concerned. The leaders of colonial life realized all the more clearly as time passed that King Charles I, who succeeded his father King James I in 1625, was not the least interested in the religious welfare of the colony. America was entirely outside the bounds of any diocese or province in England, and consequently there was no bishop of a diocese, or archbishop of a province with any personal responsibility for the guidance or help of the parishes which were being organized in the colony. The Church in Virginia was left to itself to live or to die. It believed, according to the teachings of the Church, that bishops were necessary for the ordination of men to the ministry and for the performance of the spiritual rite of confirmation, whereby alone under the law of the Church of England baptized Christians could be admitted to the sacrament of the Holy Communion. A bishop was also necessary for the organization and leadership of a diocese, which was the governing body to which every parish and congregation must belong. But no bishop was ever sent by the Church of England to Virginia or to any other part of America throughout the entire colonial period.

The lack of a bishop left the Anglican Church, which was the Established Church of the whole colony, unable to organize for the enactment of its own laws or the management of its own affairs. There being no diocesan organization the clergymen in charge of parishes had no ecclesiastical authority over them. That fact tended to have the effect of making each incumbent clergyman a virtually free lance with no responsibility to an ecclesiastical superior nor community of fellowship with other clergymen in the colony. This condition continued until near the end of the century.

[Pg 13]

The General Assembly of Virginia followed the example of the Parliament of England and asserted legislative authority by laws for the temporal government of the Church. It divided the occupied territory of the colony into parishes and it established new parishes as settlement extended steadily to the westward. Because of this fact there was never any section which was not part of a parish, and the usual rule when a new county was to be created was to establish a new parish covering the territory of the proposed county before the county was created. Church buildings might be far apart in new parishes, but no section of Virginia in which English people were settling was without the established forms of religious worship.

The General Assembly enacted laws directing the election of laymen in every parish as the governing body of the parish in temporal affairs. That group was called the "Vestry." It had authority to buy land for churches, churchyards and glebe farms, to erect church buildings and to build glebe-houses as residences for ministers. It was also charged with the care of the poor and the destitute sick, and orphaned children within the parish, with the duty of providing new homes for these children in responsible families. The money to pay for the land, the buildings, the care of the sick and needy, the salary of the minister, and other parish needs was collected from the parishioners through an annual "tith" of so many pounds of tobacco per poll. The vestry upon occasion also had certain civil duties not within the scope of religious organization.

The setting up of a vestry of laymen as temporal head of the Church in a parish or congregation was first developed in Virginia. It was extended later to other colonies as the Anglican Church spread through them all, and it came over into the life of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. Great as the value of the vestry has been to the whole Episcopal Church, the vestry in Virginia was of still greater value, for by its extension to other colonies and states it has given one of its most distinctive features to the Church of today.

[Pg 14]

In England, with the exception of some few parishes formed within the past century or so, no parish has the right to elect its own rector. The rector is usually appointed by some institution or individual vested with that authority which is called "the advowson of a parish."

Moreover, no diocese in the Established Church of England has the power to select its own bishop. The King as temporal head of the Church appoints the bishops of all dioceses, and that power is exercised for the King by his prime minister. And during the colonial period in America the Governor of every colony other than Virginia and Pennsylvania appointed the rector of every Anglican parish and inducted him into office.

In Virginia the vestries of the parishes fought Governor after Governor until they won the right for the vestry itself to choose the minister to serve in its parish. That right has extended throughout the Episcopal Church today and has gone further so that today the laity of the Church have the right to representation in all diocesan conventions and councils, and in the general convention of the Church. Thus the laity have their part in every election of a clergyman to become the bishop of a diocese.

In the seventeenth century the General Assembly also put into effect in Virginia the constitutions and canons of the province of Canterbury "as far as they can be put into effect in this country." The General Assembly thereby made the "doctrine, discipline and worship" of the Anglican Church of England that of the Church in Virginia as far as it could be done without a bishop.

That was as far as the General Assembly could go. Throughout all the seventeenth century the Established Church of Virginia consisted of a group of parishes without connection with each other and without central spiritual authority. There was therefore no actual power of discipline, either of clergymen or laymen.

[Pg 15]

The situation was made all the more difficult because there was no sure way to secure ministers. When a parish became vacant some layman in the parish would have to write to his business agent in England, or to some friend or relative there and ask that he find a clergyman who would come to Virginia. Parishes, when they became vacant, remained vacant as a rule for a year or more; sometimes very much more. The vestries early adopted the custom of appointing godly laymen as readers whose duty it was to assist the minister by leading the congregation in the responses in the Church service, and in raising tunes for the singing of metrical version of the Psalms. Later, when it was found desirable to erect chapels of ease in populous parishes, enough readers were appointed in every parish to permit one of them to hold morning service each Sunday in each place of worship throughout the parish, while the minister went his usual round of service in each church or chapel upon regular schedule. Except in remote chapels the custom was to have service each Sunday in every church or chapel.

The reader was authorized to conduct morning and evening prayer and to read a printed sermon, or a "homily." He could not celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion. Rather frequently, and especially during the era of the Commonwealth and the reign of Charles II, several adjoining parishes would be vacant at the same time; and at one time about the end of the Commonwealth

period the statement was made that there were only some ten clergymen in Virginia to serve fifty parishes. Under such circumstances the reader was called upon to perform many duties. He might baptize a dying child, conduct a funeral, or perform a marriage ceremony.

There was also in those early days no way of screening out unworthy men who appeared occasionally as clergymen in the colony; men who perhaps had been forced out of parishes in England because of immorality or drunkenness; and occasionally men with forged credentials. Such men were occasionally appointed to parishes by vestries who had no way of learning their true status; and if the man was thenceforth morally decent and had no great fault except occasional drunkenness, he would be allowed to stay on because of the need of a priest to celebrate the sacraments.

[Pg 16]

The vestries protected their parishes from unworthy clergymen by the uncanonical appointment of a minister as incumbent of a parish for a year at a time, rather than present him canonically to the Governor of the colony for induction into the rectorship of the parish. Under the law of England, and under the law of the Church of England, no rector could be forced out of a parish after induction except after an ecclesiastical trial by the bishop or his commissary.

In 1656 John Hammond published a pamphlet entitled *Leah and Rachel*, extolling the attractiveness of Virginia and Maryland as places of residence at that time. He described vividly the difficulties which the older colony had suffered in the earlier years of Charles I. He wrote:

They then began to provide and send home for Gospel ministers, and largely contributed for their maintenance. But Virginia savouring not handsomely in England, very few of good conversation would adventure thither, (as thinking it a place wherein surely the fear of God was not), yet many came, such as wore black coats, and could babble in a pulpet, roare in a tavern, exact from their parishioners, and rather by their dissoluteness destroy than feed their flocks.

Loath was the country to be wholly without teachers, and therefore rather retain these than to be destitute; yet still endeavours for better in their places, which were obtained, and these wolves in sheeps cloathing, by their Assemblies questioned, silenced, and some forced to depart the country.

Another problem which the Church faced in Virginia resulted from the character of the immigrants who came to the colony. It is a well established fact that the men who came in three ships to Jamestown in 1607 were from various strata of society in England. They all entered James River on equality of opportunity and of danger. Some at least had come from the higher classes of society; younger sons, perhaps, or relatives of stockholders in the London Company, attracted to Virginia because of the newness of the adventure and the spice of danger; sons of professional men and men of business, intrigued by a new business life and opportunity; men from the laboring classes and the peasantry of rural sections. But it is extremely doubtful that the Jamestown settlement, after its tragic first years, continued very long to be attractive to young men seeking adventure only. Many of the families of today who boast of their generations of ancestry in Virginia descend from or married into the families of the men and women who came to the colony in these earliest years of settlement, and have ancestors buried among the unknown dead of the Jamestown cemetery and churchyard.

[Pg 17]

There were three sources from which the settlers came; and these sources were more or less in effect throughout the whole of Virginia's first century. First and foremost in numbers and importance were the sons of small farmers and tenant farmers, and younger sons of the laboring classes and small merchants. No matter how large the population may be, always there are positions of employment with a normal wage; but when the younger sons of a mechanic or other working man grow to maturity where there is only one wage-producing employment available to the family, the younger sons must seek a living from other sources. Farms cannot be reduced below the number of acres required to support one family. When that has been done and there are several sons, one of them must inherit the farm and the others must seek a living elsewhere.

The broad acres of Virginia and its equable climate attracted thousands of such younger sons, and also others who had not been successful and sought opportunity in a new land. The settlers came from every section of England, and from the bleak hills of Scotland; from Wales and also from Ireland. The English were mostly from the Anglican parishes of the Established Church. The Scottish new-comers were accustomed to membership in the Established Church of Scotland and they found little difficulty in living within the Established Church of Virginia. Indeed there is no recorded effort to establish a Presbyterian congregation in Virginia until the last quarter of the seventeenth century. So friendly was the feeling between the Anglicans and the Scottish Presbyterians in the Norfolk section that Rev. James Porter of Presbyterian ordination was the incumbent minister of the Anglican Lynnhaven Parish prior to 1676 and until his death in 1683.

[Pg 18]

A second source, certainly in the early years, was the rapidly increasing population of the cities and towns of England. It is of record that in the days of the London Company one town appropriated funds sufficient to pay the expenses to Virginia of a large number of its unemployed, and probably the same thing was done by other towns for their unemployed. Doubtless a little "pressure" was applied in the case of young men who had no occupation and no visible means of support. And shanghaiing, to use a modern term, was not unknown.

A third source from which settlers came developed from the custom which grew up in England of sending to Virginia, and later to all the colonies, persons who had been convicted of law-

breaking. At that time there were some hundred felonies in the English code of jurisprudence for which the sentence of death by hanging could be imposed. These felonies included such offenses as stealing a pig or anything of greater value than a shilling. The ruling classes of England had long realized that punishments were too severe for offenses which today would be misdemeanors; and in the fifteenth century an effort had been made to mitigate the severity of punishment by an amendment of the law of "benefit of clergy." This law was a law of Parliament which had come down from earlier ages of the Church. Under that law an ecclesiastical person, either priest or monk, who was charged with a felony could not be tried by a civil court but was delivered up to the bishop of his diocese for trial in an ecclesiastical court.

[Pg 19]

By the end of the sixteenth century Parliament had amended the benefit of clergy law so that every free male who could read and write, upon conviction of a first offense of felony might plead "benefit of clergy", and upon showing that he could read a verse of Scripture, have the penalty remitted. He was then burned in the hand with a hot iron so that the scar thereby made would be evidence against him if he should plead benefit of clergy a second time.

The benefit of clergy law was early written into the Virginia code and continued in that code until after the Revolution. Harsh as was the law it showed a real effort to ameliorate still harsher laws, and it saved the lives in England and America of many thousands of first offenders. The first verse of the fifty-first Psalm was so frequently presented to be read by some convicted man or boy that it became known as the "neck verse" because it saved a life; and many a kindly official taught a 'teen-age boy that verse so that he could "read" it when it was presented to him.

One of the earliest records of the General Court of Virginia contains the following entry under date January 4, 1628/29:

William Reade, aged thirteen or fourteen years, convicted of manslaughter, when the verdict was read, and William Reade asked what he had to say for himself, that he ought not to die, demanded his clergy, whereupon he was delivered to the Ordinary.

There were many such instances. In Virginia the Governor was the Ordinary and as such had authority to accept the boy's plea, have him read the "neck verse," and thereby permit him to go free "after the burning."

The severity of the laws influenced the courts in many parts of England to permit or sentence an offender to escape death by going to one of the American colonies, and it became the custom to sentence convicted criminals to serve for a period of years in an American colony as an indentured servant. A great number of such "convicts" were sent to Virginia because of the constant demand there for indentured servants to cultivate the fields and for other duties.

[Pg 20]

Many of the convicts became useful citizens of the colony after their terms of servitude ended; but many did not reform and in time became such a menace that for a period after 1670 the General Assembly forbade that any more convicts be brought into the colony.

It can be seen therefore that from the beginning the population of Virginia grew by immigration from various sources and that not all who came to the colony were of the best type. The New England colonies had the advantage that their immigrants came in large part from dissenters from the Established Church of England. They came for "conscience sake," however, and with their concept of theocratic government the New England colonists could make it difficult indeed for immigrants they did not welcome. After Roger Williams had been exiled to Rhode Island and a few Quakers had been hanged on Boston Common, it was made clear to Baptists and Quakers, to Anglicans and to witches that Virginia was a more favorable climate for them than Massachusetts.

In contrast to New England, Virginia was founded and developed as a cross-section of the whole life of the British Isles, with its evil as well as its good; with ideals of freedom of thought which made no attempt to control a man's conscience; and with an ever growing concept of self-government and human freedom as already developed during nearly a thousand years and set out by the common law and the statute law of the race. Virginia was not founded upon any theocratic concept of government under the influence of a priestly class.

The life and community consciousness that developed in Virginia into the distinctive customs and ways of a well organized and firmly established commonwealth were necessarily different from those of the colonies in New England because of the differing conditions under which men lived. In the township system of New England a village normally became the township center and the people lived near enough to each other to enable them to meet frequently; to work and play together; to transact business; and to gossip of neighborhood affairs. In Virginia it was otherwise. In Virginia families lived on separate farms and each farm was of necessity a community within itself. Life was geared to the basic fact that tobacco was the money crop, and also was the real source of the financial strength and stability of the colony. Each family required a farm of sufficient acreage to raise tobacco as well as food-stuff and cattle; and throughout the whole colonial period the genius of Virginian life opposed the development of towns of greater population than was required for a shipping point and a warehouse, for the storing and grading of tobacco, and for a few agents of English and Scottish merchants.

[Pg 21]

Building a Christian Community

John Hammond, in his pamphlet *Leah and Rachel* sketched briefly conditions which existed in Virginia between the "starving time" of 1609-10 and the year 1656. His attempt was to correct an opinion widely held in England of the lawlessness of colonial life. He interpreted the great massacre of 1622 as the end of one phase and the beginning of another. He showed that in each phase there was an inevitable period of laxity of life and disregard of moral and legal conventions which was overcome finally by the better element of citizenry. His writing presents a dark picture of conditions, possibly too dark in some phases; but his picture of the power of the growing colony to establish and maintain general concepts of decency of life and conduct is impressive.

Of the period following the great massacre he wrote:

Receiving a supply of men, ammunition and victuals out of England, they again gathered heart, pursued their enemies, and so often worsted them, that the Indians were glad to sue for peace, and they, (desirous of a cessation) consented to it.

They again began to bud forth, to spread further, to gather wealth, which they rather profusely spent (as gotten with ease) than providently husbanded, or aimed at any public good; or to make a country for posterity; but from hand to mouth, and for a present being; neglecting discoveries, planting orchards, providing for the winter preservation of their stocks, or thinking of anything stable or firm; and whilst tobacco, the only commodity they had to subsist on, bore a price, they wholly and eagerly followed that, neglecting their very planting of corn, and much relied on England for the chiefest part of their provisions; so that being not always amply supplied, they were often in such want, that their case and condition being relayed in England, it hindered and kept off many from going thither, who rather cast their eyes on the barren and freezing soyle of New-England, than to joyn with such an indigent and sottish people as were reported to be in Virginia.

Yet was not Virginia all this while without divers honest and vertuous inhabitants, who, observing the general neglect and licentiousnesses there, caused Assemblies to be call'd and laws to be made tending to the glory of God, the severe suppression of vices, and the compelling them not to neglect (upon strict punishments) planting and tending such quantities of corn, as would not onely serve themselves, their cattle and hogs plentifully, but to be enabled to supply New-England (then in want) with such proportions, as were extream reliefs to them in their necessities.

[Pg 23]

From this industry of theirs and great plenty of corn, (the main staffe of life), proceeded that great plenty of cattle and hogs, (now innumerable) and out of which not only New-England hath been stocked and relieved, but all others parts of the Indies inhabited by Englishmen.

The inhabitants now finding the benefit of their industries, began to look with delight on their increasing stocks; (as nothing more pleasurable than profit), to take pride in their plentifully furnished tables, to grow not onely civil, but great observers of the Sabbath, to stand upon their reputations, and to be ashamed of that notorious manner of life they had formerly lived and wallowed in....

Then began the Gospel to flourish, civil, honourable, and men of great estates flocked in; famous buildings went forward, orchards innumerable were planted and preserved; tradesmen set on work and encouraged, staple commodities, as silk, flax, pot-ashes, etc., of which I shall speak further hereafter, attempted on, and with good success brought to perfection; so that this country which had a mean beginning, many back friends, two ruinous and bloody massacres, hath by God's grace out-grown all, and is become a place of pleasure and plenty.

It may possibly be worthwhile to compare the life of Virginia during its first two generations with the far west of the United States from the gold-rush days of 1849 to the end of the nineteenth century. There again, as in the Virginia of 1607, bona fide settlers of moral ideals and stability of life prevailed in the long run and developed self-governing states which maintained the moral code.

But Virginia had an advantage which the far west of the gold-rush days lacked. Virginia had an Established Church which in spite of its own problems and difficulties created a parish in every section, and provided clergymen as far as they could be obtained. It is granted that some at least of the clergymen were unworthy. The vestries themselves ejected men of that kind and services could be maintained by readers. And so the Word of God was read and prayer was offered regularly; and every man who could read had the Ten Commandments staring him in the face from the tablets on the wall behind the Holy Table. The individual might scorn and sneer but in the end the Law of God became the law of the community.

[Pg 24]

Men came to church in those early days. For one reason, the law of the colony required it and there was the threat of punishment if absence from church was reported to the grand jury. But there was another reason also, even though men and women were compelled to walk five or six miles to attend. That other reason was the loneliness of farm life in the early days of colonial Virginia. The churchyard on a Sunday morning was then the meeting-place of the whole community, and the only place where all could meet on the same level. The only other meetings were when elections were held at the Court House, every three or four years. And men might attend the meetings of the county court; but women could not vote, and they did not go to elections; nor were they apt to attend meetings of the county court except in rare instances when they were engaged in litigation. And the amount of hard liquor consumed on election days and county court days was also a deterrent.

Before the day of parish aid societies and women's guilds, the church service of a Sunday morning was moreover the only meeting to which everybody might come as of right; and while at church the women discussed affairs and neighbors within the church building the men outside walked about or sat on stumps or logs and held their discussions before and after the service hour.

The church with its churchyard was the public forum at which matters of public policy and public interest were discussed. It was here also that business was transacted; and it was here that community spirit of fellowship, of sympathy and of understanding was developed. The colonial government recognized all this by directing that every public communication which had to be brought to the attention of the people as a whole be read to the congregation of every church or chapel in the colony. And the Church recognized the same thing by providing that such announcements should be made immediately after the reading of the second lesson or New Testament lesson in the morning service. The approaching worshipper never knew what interesting announcement might be made at that time; so there was always an element of expectancy and suspense; perhaps an announcement of the banns of matrimony; perhaps the reading of a new law, or of some proclamation by the Governor and Council; perhaps the baptism of a baby, or even a marriage.

[Pg 25]

So it was that men and women of all classes came under the influence of Christian teaching whether they would or no; and the constant teaching and stressing of moral and Christian ideals of life had their effect in changing and improving the character of the community life.



Old Church Tower, Jamestown, Virginia
Photo by Flournoy, Virginia State Chamber of
Commerce



Jamestown Church Communion Service

Chalice and paten given by Governor Francis Moryson, in 1661. Both bearing the inscription: Mix not holy things with profane. Ex dono Francisco Morrison, Armigeri Anno Domi, 1661.

Large paten at the right given by Sir Edmund Andros, Governor, 1694. Inscribed: In usum Ecclesiae Jacobi-Polis. Ex dono Dni Edmundi Andros, Equitis, Virginiae Gubernatoris, Anno Dom. MDCXCIV.

Alms basin, London, 1739. Second on the right. Inscription: For the use of James City Parish Church. Given by the old church at Jamestown in 1758 to Bruton Parish Church.

Courtesy Miss Emily Hall



COMMUNION SERVICE IN USE AT SMITH'S HUNDRED, 1618.

This three piece communion service now at St. John's Church, Elizabeth City Parish, Hampton, Virginia, has the longest history of use in the United States of any church silver. The set, a gift to the church founded in 1618 at Smith's Hundred in Charles City County, was made possible by a legacy in the will (date 1617) of

Mrs. Mary Robinson of London. Smith's Hundred renamed Southampton Hundred, 1620, was practically wiped out in the Indian Massacre of 1622. This communion set delivered in 1627 to the Court at Jamestown for safe keeping, supposedly, then was given to the second Elizabeth City Church built on Southampton (now Hampton) River. The inscription in one line on the base of the Chalice is: The Communion Cupp for Snt Marys Church in Smiths Hundred in Virginia. Hall marks on all three pieces bear London date-letters for 1618-19.

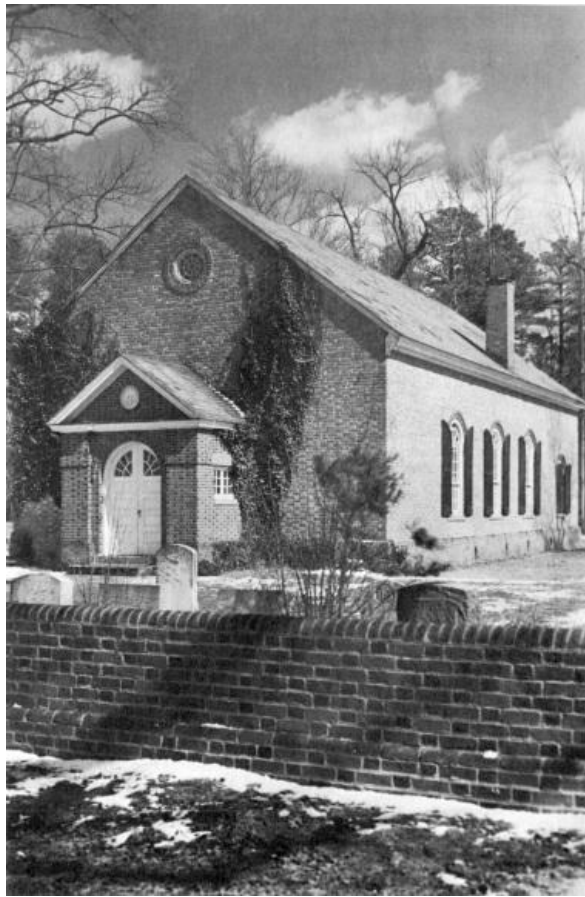
Courtesy Mrs. L. T. Jester and Mrs. P. W. Hiden



The Glebe House, Charles City County, Virginia
Courtesy Valentine Museum, Richmond



Glebe House, Gloucester County, Virginia
Photo by Flournoy, Virginia State Chamber of Commerce



**Christ Church, Middlesex County,
Virginia**

**Photo by Flournoy, Virginia State Chamber of
Commerce**



Merchant's Hope Church, Prince George County, Virginia

Photo by Flournoy, Virginia State Chamber of Commerce



Saint Luke's Church, Isle of Wight County, Virginia
Photo by Flournoy, Virginia State Chamber of Commerce



Saint Peter's Church, New Kent County, Virginia
Photo by Flournoy, Virginia State Chamber of Commerce



Robert Hunt Memorial Plaque
Altar-piece. A bronze bas-relief representing the administration of the first Anglican communion in America, June 21, 1607. George T. Brewster, sc. Gorham Co., founders.
Courtesy Cook Collection, Valentine Museum



Robert Hunt Memorial Shrine
Erected by the National Society of Colonial
Dames of America in the State of Virginia.
Presented to the Diocese of Southern
Virginia of the Protestant Episcopal Church,
June 15, 1922. It was placed in the perpetual
care of the Association for the Preservation
of Virginia Antiquities.
Courtesy Cook Collection, Valentine Museum and
National Park Service

CHAPTER FIVE

[Pg 26]

The Coming of the Negro

A new element came early into the life of Virginia, with permanent and continuous hurt to the welfare of the colony and later to the Commonwealth; an element to which the colony was compelled to adapt itself because it did not have the power to eradicate it after men perceived its danger. It was the element of human slavery.

The first Negro captives were brought into the port of Jamestown in the year 1619. They were brought by a foreign ship then described as a "Dutch" ship, but presumably a Portuguese slaver seeking the enlargement of his market. The Portuguese had developed a market for Negro slaves in the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean where the enslaved Indians proved unable to perform the hard work demanded of them. Unhappily the slavers succeeded in widening their market to include Virginia and the other English colonies of the American continent and in the West Indies.

The first Negroes were brought to Jamestown in 1619 and sold to English masters as indentured servants. As such they were required to serve for a definite number of years and after that they would become freemen entitled to all the benefit of Virginia law. The goal set before them, as before immigrants from France and the Netherlands, was eventual freedom and naturalization as full citizens.

The tragedy of the Negro was that he had been procured by the Portuguese as a captive taken in war between the native Negro tribes, and he came into the life of Virginia utterly ignorant of every British ideal of human freedom and government under constitutional law. He knew nothing of the English language. The indentured Englishman or Scotsman who was sold into service came

[Pg 27]

with inherited knowledge of Anglo-Saxon ideals of civil government and Christian faith; and the one great goal set before him was that he could become a legal citizen of Virginia after he completed his years of servitude. The Negro knew nothing of all this.

There would have been little difficulty if the few Negroes in the first ship had been all who came. The government could have provided for their care and for their instruction in English ideals and the Christian faith. But they were not all who came. The first indentured Negroes proved useful as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and they were capable of far more work in the fields than many of the Englishmen: and so the agrarian needs of the community where all men were farmers made the governmental authorities willing to admit more Negroes.

The authorities must have realized at once that if Negroes were brought into the colony in great number they could not be permitted to become freemen after any period of indenture. That would have brought into the life of Virginia a steadily growing population of men and women who knew nothing of English institutions, or of the English language, or of the Christian religion. The welfare of the colony required that if they were to be admitted at all, they could be admitted only as servants under a permanent status of servitude. So slavery was introduced into the British empire; and in America the enslavement of the Negro was permitted in New England as well as in Virginia, the Carolinas and in Georgia.

That was the first act in the great tragedy of Negro slavery in America. The second was that the enslavement and sale of Negroes proved so profitable that the people of England entered into it by chartering the Royal African Company, with authority to purchase captive Negroes throughout a large portion of Africa which was assigned to the Company for that purpose. At one time at least the King of England owned stock in the Company; and he gave his instruction to the royal Governors of American colonies that they should not permit the passage through a colonial legislature of any act which would interfere with the right to import Negroes and sell them into slavery within the colony.

[Pg 28]

The third act in the tragedy was that after Virginia and perhaps other colonies had made many unavailing efforts to check or forbid by legislation the bringing of more Negroes from Africa, the War of American Independence was fought and won. In the Constitutional Convention of the new sovereign states called to create a Federal Union of them all, the representatives of Virginia and other states fought bitterly for an immediate prohibition against further importation of Negro slaves, only to be defeated by the cotton-growing interests of some states and the shipping interests of others who demanded that the trade be continued for a period of years. And so the Constitution of the United States when first put into effect in the Federal Union permitted for twenty years the importation of captive Negroes from Africa and their sale into slavery.

The increase in the number of Negro slaves in those states where their labor proved profitable brought with it the constant fear of a Negro insurrection; a fear that continued until the ending of slavery in this country. The presence of the Negroes and of English convicts sold into servitude made it impossible upon any large plantation for the women and children of the master's household ever to be left without the protection of a slave-master who had the power of gun and lash to protect them from harm.

The preaching of the Christian faith to the heathen Indians, which was so strongly present in the purposes of the London Company at the first settlement of Virginia, must have been considered when the custom of admitting Negro slaves began but there is no recorded evidence bearing upon that subject. If there had been a bishop in the colony he could have made the conversion of the Negro to Christianity an important part of a diocesan program; but without a bishop nothing could be done in an organized way. The matter was perforce left to the consciences of the incumbent ministers of the several parishes.

[Pg 29]

It must be remembered that every first generation of the slaves had come to America as captives taken in war of one tribe against another. Their languages and dialects included perhaps every language in central and southern Africa; and their unfamiliar languages made it almost impossible for the average citizen or his parson to do much in the way of preaching the Christian faith; except perhaps in the observance of the universal law of kindness.

The birth of slave children, however, removed the barrier of language, for the children were taught English as their native tongue. The children therefore could be taught. All teaching of children, whether children of the master and mistress or those born as their slaves, was considered the duty of the whole family. And the teaching of the catechism and the duties of a Christian life to the slave children was as important a part of the family responsibility in a Christian home as the teaching of the children of the family itself. No clergyman of the Church would be willing to baptize a slave child unless there were responsible sponsors present who would assume the obligation to give steady Christian teaching. So it became a rule of the clergy, or most of them, that the master and mistress in the case of each such baptism must assume the obligation to give the child Christian training. The baptized children could then in early youth be permitted to attend the instruction classes which were held by the incumbent minister for them. The slave child and the master's child would share the privilege of admission to the Sacrament of the Holy Communion when each one had shown sufficient knowledge and understanding of right and wrong, and had been sufficiently instructed in "the things which a Christian should know and believe." No one knows how many or what percentage of slave children in Virginia or elsewhere were baptized, or how many became communicants because no record was kept. But there were enough baptisms to create a new problem.

[Pg 30]

There was no Negro slavery in England, and it was generally understood that when a Negro slave set foot upon the soil of England he became a free man. Somehow that concept of freedom became linked in common thinking with the concept of baptism into the Christian faith; and there arose in practically every slave-holding section of the English colonies a question whether the very act of baptizing a slave child did not set him free from slavery. Because of that question many slave-owners declined to permit the baptism of their slaves until the question was settled, and consequently in every slave-owning colony it became necessary to secure a legislative enactment establishing the legal status of a baptized slave. The question arose in Virginia, and in 1667 the following act was adopted by the General Assembly:

Whereas some doubts have risen whether children that are slaves by birth, and by the charity and piety of their owners made partakers of the blessed sacrament of baptisme, should by virtue of their baptisme be made free; *It is enacted and declared by this Grand Assembly and the authority thereof*, that the conferring of baptisme doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freedom; that diverse masters, freed from this doubt, may more carefully endeavour the propagation of Christianity by permitting children, though slaves, or those of greater growth if capable to be admitted to that sacrament.

The question was settled likewise throughout all the slave-holding colonies of England, and human slavery was written into the laws of the various colonies of the British empire, there to remain until the ideals of the nineteenth century eliminated it from the constitution and the laws of every English-speaking nation.

The following incidents, although they occurred in the first half of the eighteenth century, outside the period covered by this booklet, are yet of such interest in the continuing story of Negro slavery as to be worth recording here.

[Pg 31]

In 1724 the Bishop of London, Edmund Gibson, sent a questionnaire to the incumbent minister of every Anglican parish in the American colonies. Among the questions he asked were two; one inquiring how many "infidels," either Indians or Negroes, there were in each parish; and two, what efforts were being made to convert them to the Christian faith. The answers revealed a serious situation, and the need of more definite and better organized efforts to convert the Negroes.

The first effort made by the Bishop of London was as strong a pastoral letter as he could write upon the need of more earnest effort to bring the Negro slaves into the Christian faith. He also prepared a pamphlet to be used for the instruction of Negroes. His pastoral letter and his pamphlet were sent to every incumbent minister, and copies were given to the heads of families.

Another effort was the organization in England in 1723 by the Rev. Thomas Bray of a company called "Dr. Bray's Associates." Dr. Thomas Bray was the bishop's commissary to the province of Maryland. The purpose of Dr. Bray's Associates was to establish in the colonies schools for the education and Christian instruction of Negro children, and it did a useful work. It did a notable work in the City of New York, and it conducted schools in other places; one of them at Williamsburg, in Virginia.

There was another and most unusual development in Virginia. Under the urge of the Bishop of London's pastoral letter there came a great increase in the number of baptisms of adult Negroes; so sudden an increase as to cause concern to Commissary Blair and to Governor Gooch. In some way a report had spread among the Negroes that ex-Governor Alexander Spotswood, upon his return from a voyage to England, had brought with him an order from the King directing that all baptized Negro slaves be set free. The story, improbable as it was to English ears, was believed implicitly by the Negroes and it brought many of them to their parish clergy seeking for baptism. Time passed and there was no movement to set the baptized Negroes free. They became indignant, for they believed the colonial authorities had ignored the King's order. A plot for a Negro uprising was formed; but the plot was discovered and the ringleaders were punished.

[Pg 32]

Another incident occurred two years later. A woman slave who had been baptized was convicted of manslaughter in the Gloucester County Court which sentenced her to death. She thereupon plead the benefit of clergy. Her plea brought a new problem to the courts of Virginia for until that time no woman and no slave in the colony had ever been permitted to plead benefit of clergy. The County Court considered the plea and the vote was a tie between granting the plea and enforcement of the sentence. The County Court referred the matter to the General Court of the colony; and there again the vote resulted in a tie. The General Court therefore referred the case to the Attorney General of England. Meanwhile, the General Court ordered that the woman's plea be granted, and, in order not to set a precedent in an unsettled question, directed that she be sold out of the colony. At a subsequent meeting of the General Assembly the matter was settled so far as Virginia was concerned by enactment of a law that all persons convicted of a first offense of felony, whether male or female, bond or free, might plead benefit of clergy.

Slavery existed in the American colonies from Massachusetts and Connecticut to Virginia and the Carolinas at the end of the seventeenth century. It was alien to English ideals of human freedom. Yet out of it all one tremendously important fact has come to pass. The Negro came to America from almost every Negro tribe and dialect in central and southern Africa; he came without any connection except his connection with other slaves when more than one were sold to the same master. He came into a highly developed civilization with great organized power of leadership and government; and through the generations of slavery the Negro in America wrought for

[Pg 33]

himself a national and racial consciousness within the sphere of American life. The American Negro today is the most highly educated and the most advanced Negro in the world. As such he has the opportunity to make his own contribution to the culture and the civilization of the world. This their centuries of slavery and repression have brought them.

CHAPTER SIX

[Pg 34]

Fighting Adverse Conditions

The political conditions in England throughout the middle of the seventeenth century bore heavily upon Virginia in religious as well as in civil matters. The period of civil war which began in 1642 lasted until the King was captured by the parliamentary forces, and Archbishop Laud, the hated persecutor of dissenters, was beheaded. After an imprisonment of four years the king was beheaded and Oliver Cromwell reigned as Protector of the Commonwealth. The civil war had lined up the dissenting bodies in England, and the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, against the King and the Church of England.

On the American scene the Puritan colonies in New England were in hearty sympathy with the dissenters in England. In Virginia the government and the great body of the people were in equal sympathy with King Charles and the Established Church. It is true there were in Virginia the goodly number of several hundred Puritan settlers. In the Church also there was some Puritan sympathy among a small group of the clergy. One of these, indeed, the Rev. Thomas Harrison, who became minister of Elizabeth River Parish (Norfolk) in 1640, was presented for trial in the county court in April 1645 "For not reading the Book of Common Prayer, and not administering the sacrament of baptism according to the canons and order prescribed, and for not catechizing on Sunday in the afternoon, according to the Act of Assembly." He was banished to Massachusetts in 1648, where he remained for two years and married. Afterward he returned to England and was given official position in the Commonwealth under Cromwell.

In the heated atmosphere of the times the Puritan group in Virginia took occasion to apply to the Puritan church government in Massachusetts to send three ordained Puritan "missionaries" to their fellow religionists in Virginia, but upon the arrival of the missionaries their ship was met by government officials; the three missionaries sent back to Massachusetts; and the master of the ship was fined for bringing them to the colony. No one in official position in Virginia could escape the conviction that the sending of Puritan ministers to Virginia at such a time, whether upon request of the Nansemond River group or upon suggestion from Boston, was for any purpose other than to foment and organize Puritan opposition to the King. For that reason Puritanism in Virginia came under suspicion, and the Governor, Sir William Berkeley, with the full support of the government and public opinion, treated all Puritans as enemies. He made their situation so intolerable that the entire group accepted an invitation from the proprietor of the Province of Maryland and migrated to that colony. There, given land on the Severn River, they gained control of the provincial government within a few years. The forcing of the group out of Virginia was a political act of defense and was not religious persecution.

[Pg 35]

The English Parliament in 1645 enacted a law abolishing the Church of England as an active organization. The law enacted by Parliament drove every bishop from his diocese, and forbade the use of the *Book of Common Prayer* in any church or chapel in England. The rectors of over two thousand parishes were forced out and their places were filled by Presbyterian and Independent or Baptist ministers.

The General Assembly of Virginia, upon learning the action of Parliament, adopted an act in 1647 requiring the use of the *Prayer Book* in every church and chapel in Virginia each Sunday in the regular forms prescribed in the *Prayer Book*. The Act made further provision that in every parish in which the incumbent minister disobeyed the law and continued disuse of the *Book of Common Prayer*, his parishioners were thereby absolved from paying him any further salary.

[Pg 36]

In England marriage was held to be a religious service to be performed by no one other than a priest of the Church; and Parliament, after abolishing the Prayer Book and the canons of the Anglican Church, was compelled to enact another law making provision for the performance of the marriage ceremony as a civil contract. The new law directed that justices of the local courts perform marriages and record them, if desired, in the court records. The people of Virginia paid no attention to this law except, as far as is known, in one case in Northumberland County. In the year 1656 a man and woman in Lancaster County, instead of going to the minister, if there were one, or to the reader of the parish, went to a county official of Northumberland and were married according to the Act of Parliament. Their marriage was recorded in the court order book and there nine months later the new incumbent, Samuel Cole of Lancaster, found it. He thereupon declared openly that the law of Virginia was in effect in his parish and not the Acts of Parliament. The affair ended when the parson required the wedded couple to consider themselves unwed until he could announce the banns of matrimony for them on three separate Sundays and then perform a Christian marriage. He then took occasion to go to the Northumberland county court and record his certificate of marriage of the couple in the court order book. The two certificates still appear in the order book of the county court of Northumberland County in the following

words:

Certificate of Marriage, 11 Sept. 1656. John Merryday [i.e., Meredith] and Mrs. Ann Nash, als. Mallet, were married by Coll. Jno. Trussell, according to Act of Parliament, 24 August, 1653. Witnesses Geo. Colclough, Leonard Spencer and Jno. Carter. Rec. 20 Sept. 1656.

To all such whom it may concern. These are to certifie that John Meredith & Ann Nash, being three times Published according to Law, were married at Currotomon on the 14th of this instant July, 1657 per mee, Samuel Cole, minister, *ibidem* 20th July 1657 this certificate was recorded.

The colony of Virginia in affairs of both church and state exercised more independence of action under the Commonwealth than it ever exercised before or afterward until the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The General Assembly, after it made a treaty of peace with Cromwell's commissioners, elected the several governors of the colony until the Restoration of Charles Second in 1660 took that authority from them. The Burgesses had agreed to discontinue the use of prayers for the King and the royal family in public services, and the General Assembly enacted a law directing each parish to decide for itself whether it would continue or discontinue the use of the *Book of Common Prayer*. All questions of parish administration were left to the several vestries. If a parish did not wish to use the old form of worship it might use such form as it desired.

[Pg 37]

A number of ministers of Presbyterian ordination, and some openly acknowledged Puritans thereupon came into the colony and these became incumbent ministers of parishes. The last known one was the Rev. Andrew Jackson, incumbent of Christ Church Parish in Lancaster County from some years after 1680 until his death in 1711. He was a godly and devout minister, beloved by his parishioners. Tradition says that he "stood up to read the Psalms, but remained seated when they said the Creed."

For twenty-five or thirty years prior to 1675, to the distress of the Church and the people as a whole, there was a desperate lack of ordained ministers, and inability, to get clergymen from England. Some few, driven out of parishes in England by the Parliamentary victors, did come to Virginia, but never in sufficient number to supply the need. Then, after the restoration of Charles, II, in 1660 and the return of the Anglican Church to active life, there were so many parishes in England from which non-conforming ministers were removed because of refusal to use the *Book of Common Prayer*, that for nearly a decade there were almost no clergymen to send overseas. Conditions did begin to improve, however, before the end of the decade.

[Pg 38]

The improvement increased more rapidly after a new bishop of London came into that diocese in 1675 and manifested active interest in the affairs of the parishes in America.

During the decade 1660-70, shortly after King Charles had been received and crowned King of England, the General Assembly of Virginia made earnest effort to call the attention of the Crown and the people of England to the needs of the Church in the colony. A committee of clergymen was sent from Jamestown to London to present the matter to the King. The committee published a pamphlet telling of the great need and urging a definite programme to help improve religious conditions. Three things ought to be done: first, a bishop should be sent at once to visit the parishes and ordain as deacons devout laymen who had been serving as readers so that there would be at least a deacon in every parish; second, fellowships ought to be established at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge for the support and training of men for the ministry who would agree to serve the Church for a term of years in the parishes of Virginia; third, and most important, a bishop ought to be consecrated to organize a diocese in Virginia and bring the parishes there into the full life of the Anglican Church.

No one knows what influence the pamphlet had in arousing interest. Certainly no bishop was sent to ordain readers as deacons; and no fellowships were established at the universities to train men to serve in the ministry in Virginia. But a movement did start to organize a diocese and consecrate a bishop. This occurred after 1670. The movement won approval and a charter was prepared for the signature of King Charles as the temporal head of the Church. The charter provided that the diocese was to be called the Diocese of Virginia, and Jamestown was to become the see-city where the bishop was to have his "Cathedral." A clergyman was selected by the King to become the new bishop. He was the Reverend Alexander Moray who had fled Scotland with Prince Charles and had gone as chaplain with the ill-fated campaign ending in defeat at the Battle of Worcester in 1652 in which Prince Charles sought to win his throne from the Parliamentary conquerors. Mr. Moray then fled to Virginia and became rector of Ware Parish in Gloucester County.

[Pg 39]

But something happened in 1672 after the King had announced publicly that he had selected Mr. Moray to be bishop. Nobody knows what it was, but the charter was never signed, and Mr. Moray was not made a bishop. There is some evidence that he died just at that time and possibly that caused the plan to fall through.

It would seem probable that the failure of the plan in 1672 aroused the interest of Henry Compton who became Bishop of London in 1675, for in that same year he secured from the Crown authority to select and license men to serve as ministers of the parishes in America. And shortly thereafter a fund called "The King's Bounty" was established, from which each clergyman licensed to serve in America was given twenty pounds sterling to pay the cost of his voyage. This

plan continued until the American Revolution. It did great good, for it gave to every Anglican clergyman in the colonies a bishop whom he felt he knew, and to whom he could write if necessary. The Bishop of London never at any time had any authority whatsoever over the laity of the Church in America, nor over the work of the vestries as temporal heads of the parishes. But his influence with the clergy was of enormous value to their morale.

Ten years later Bishop Compton went farther and secured authority to appoint clergymen as his personal representatives in the colonies; to confer with the clergy; and, if necessary, to remove from their parishes clergymen who had proven to be unworthy men. The commissaries lost their power some sixty years later when a new Bishop of London appointed in 1748 refused to give his commissaries the authority which earlier commissaries had exercised.

The first commissaries, James Blair for Virginia and Thomas Bray for Maryland, made great contribution to the life of the Church of England in the colonies and in England also. Commissary Bray was the moving spirit in organizing three missionary societies in England: the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge; the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; and, in his old age, the society of Dr. Bray's Associates for ministry to Negro slaves in all the colonies. He also instituted a plan for sending libraries of theological books to parishes in the colonies, an enormous help to clergymen in far-off places.

[Pg 40]

James Blair served as Commissary in Virginia from his appointment in 1689 until his death in 1743. His greatest work was the establishment and development of the Royal College of William and Mary in 1693. He raised money for its establishment first by asking pledges from all persons in Virginia who were able to give, and then in England where he quickly gained the active interest of Queen Mary and King William. He secured his charter for the College in 1693 and by 1695 the erection of college buildings was well under way. He served as president of the college until his death in 1743. He steered it through its early difficulties; he fought for it against Governor and Council when necessary; and he brought it to its full status as a College with six professors and more than a hundred students in 1729. He lived long enough to welcome Reverend George Whitefield, the first great leader of the evangelical movement, when he came to Williamsburg in 1740, and had the happiness to learn that his College had won the admiring approval of his visitor. Whitefield wrote in his diary an account of what he saw, and ended, "I rejoiced in seeing such a place in America."

Commissary Blair fought steadily and successfully for the rights and privileges of the clergy, and secured real increase in clerical salaries. He fought also for the right of the vestries to elect the rectors of their own parishes, even as he strove when need was, to secure the removal of the occasional unworthy clergyman.

[Pg 41]

The organization of the College of William and Mary in 1693 was indeed the culmination of the plan of the London Company to establish a University in Virginia. The first effort went up in smoke in 1622. There was another effort in the days of Sir William Berkeley after the Restoration, but the time was not then ripe. But the opportunity came again. Already there were several endowed schools in Virginia: The Syms School in Hampton, the Eaton School, also in that parish, the Peasley School in Gloucester County, and others. Many parish clergymen also became noted for the excellency of their schools. So the College which began in 1693 came to head a group of schools which had already spread through the colony.

From its beginning it held to the ideal of having a School of Divinity to train men for the ministry of the Church of England, as well as a school of philosophy or liberal arts as we now describe it, to train men for secular life and leadership in the colonial life. When the College reached its maturity it had a School of Divinity with two professors, and a School of Philosophy with two, in addition to masters in other departments. It had also a foundation which could support eight men studying for the ministry. From that time until the Revolution a steady stream of candidates went from the College to the Bishop of London for ordination. But that is part of the story of the next century. The beginning came in 1693.

CHAPTER SEVEN

[Pg 42]

The Last Decade

The decade 1690-1700 was an era of steady growth in the religious and cultural life of Virginia. New counties were created as population spread further and further up the great rivers; and parishes increased in numbers as the population grew. The first official list of "The parishes and the clergymen in them" which has survived the wreckage of time was the list of 1680, and the next is the list of 1702. These lists show that in 1680 there were forty-eight parishes and thirty-six clergymen incumbents. In the list of 1702 there were fifty parishes and forty clergymen.

The one most notable event in the religious life of both England and Virginia was enactment by Parliament in 1689 of the Edict of Toleration. That act in the first year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary was the first incident in the movement of the English people through their legislature toward freedom of religion. The Act did not repeal the severe laws against dissent adopted in the reign of King Charles, II, but it did remove the penalties. It took the first

step along a new roadway into human freedom; and the English-speaking world on both sides of the Atlantic hailed it as such.

As it was a law of England, the act did not come into effect in Virginia until it was included within the code of laws of the colony. That was not done until 1699, although the Council of State had approved the act in principle early in that decade. By that time enforcement of law requiring attendance at church every Sunday had been relaxed for it was impossible of enforcement under the conditions of Virginian life. The law was not repealed until late in the eighteenth century and under it every person wherever possible was required to accept attendance at church as the duty of every citizen. In revisal of the Virginia law in 1699 it was provided that every person must attend worship in the parish church at least once every two months. The General Assembly at the same time enacted a new proviso whereby dissenters from the Established Church of Virginia, who could qualify if in England as belonging to denominations or groups permitted under the Toleration Act, were free in Virginia from any penalty for non-attendance at the parish Church if they attended their own places of dissenting worship at least once in the two months period.

[Pg 43]

In 1699 there were three denominations of dissent in Virginia; the Presbyterians, the Baptists and the Quakers. The many thousands of immigrants from Scotland who had belonged to the Established (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland found little to object to in the worship of the Established Church of Virginia, and entered into it without difficulty or objection.

But the Presbyterians from England, as dissenters from the Established Church of that country, and the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who began their immigration to Virginia after the Restoration, brought with them the determination to organize in America as a Presbyterian denomination. They were especially strong in the counties of Princess Anne and Norfolk; and the first Presbyterian congregation in Virginia was organized in 1692 in that area. It is also of interest to note that the Reverend Francis Makemie, who organized the first presbytery in Philadelphia about 1705 and later the first Synod of the Presbyterian Church in America, lived for many years in Accomac County, Virginia.

There was a Baptist minister in the village of Yorktown during the decade 1690-1700 but little is known of his work, nor is it known whether there were then one or more organized Baptist congregations.

The Quakers were the most widely scattered and in numbers probably the strongest of the three groups. They were especially numerous in Henrico County and the eastern section of Hanover County and on the Nansemond river. The Church Attendance Act of 1699 and the Toleration Act of the English Parliament applied to them as to other dissenters, but they were still under suspicion as to their loyalty and also because they continued their early custom of open and violent attacks on the religion and worship of the orthodox Churches. They gave bitter offense by their public announcements in time of war between England and France or between England and Spain that they would give aid and furnish such supplies as might be needed to any enemy fleet which should come with hostile intent into the Virginian waters.

[Pg 44]

While the laws which punished interruption of religious services were still necessary and were enforced, the adoption of the proviso in the Virginian Act of 1699 was a real step forward on the way to the ultimate goal of entire freedom of worship. It made the worship of the dissenters as truly legal as that of the Established Church, and it removed from the dissenters the requirement that they attend the worship of the Anglican Church.

Thomas Story, the noted English Quaker, who wrote and published a journal of his life and work as a Quaker preacher, gives an interesting account of his two prolonged visits to Virginia in 1698/99 and in 1705. In his daily journal for 1705 he comments at every stopping-place, with manifest pleasure, upon the welcome given him and his friends and the freedom of public preaching accorded him wherever he went. He was welcomed and entertained over and again at Anglican homes and he records occasionally the fact that a county sheriff or constable or justice of the county court was present at his preaching. He does not record any instance in which anyone in civil authority in the colony protested against his preaching or attempted to stop him; and the high point of his visit came when the Governor of Virginia, learning of his approach, invited him and his friends to the Governor's mansion, entertained them and gave them fruit to carry with them on their journey toward Philadelphia.

So Virginia came to the end of its first century, having fought through the various adverse conditions which its people found along the way. The colony had come into an era of opportunity and growth with a well established government, a seaborne trade which brought prosperity, and a concept of religion which made room for all forms of the Christian faith that would remain at peace with each other, and as citizens be loyal to their government. As the people approached their first centennial anniversary celebration in 1707 they looked forward with a confidence born of past experience to the new century upon which they were to enter.

[Pg 45]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[Pg 46]

In addition to the titles in the following brief list the reader will find many references to official papers, and other important and useful works, in the author's *Virginia's Mother Church*, volumes

one and two. A great many of the statements herein made are based upon these two volumes.

Anderson, James S. M. *A History of the Colonial Church*. London: 1843. 3 vols.

Andrews, Matthew Page. *The Soul of a Nation, The Founding of Virginia and the Projection of New England*. New York: Doubleday, 1943.

Brydon, George MacLaren. *Virginia's Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which It Grew*. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Historical Society, 1947. Vol. I, 1607-1727; Vol. II, 1725-1814.

Fiske, John. *Old Virginia and Her Neighbors*. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1899. 2 vols.

Goodwin, Edward L. *The Colonial Church in Virginia*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Morehouse Publishing Company, 1927.

With appendix giving list of Anglican clergymen who served in Virginia in the Colonial period.

Hening, W. W. *Statutes of Virginia, 1619-1792*. 13 vols.

Mason, George C. *Colonial Churches of Tidewater, Virginia*. Richmond, Virginia: Whittet and Shepperson, 1945.

Meade, William. *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families in Virginia*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1857. 2 vols.

This is the old standard work upon this subject, and is still of great value, but must be used with the understanding that records and other original sources made available since his day disprove many of his statements about local conditions. This is especially true regarding his statements concerning the unworthiness of the colonial clergy. His expressed conviction that most of them were unworthy morally has been entirely disproved by the evidence of records now available.

Perry, W. S. *History of the American Episcopal Church*. Boston and New York: Osgood, 1899. 2 vols.

—*Historical Collections Relating to America's Colonial Church. Virginia*: Privately printed, 1870.

Swem, E. G. *Virginia Historical Index*. Roanoke, Virginia: Stone Printing Co., 1934-36. 2 vols.

APPENDIX A

[Pg 47]

The following extracts from the Journal of the Life of Thomas Story, during his visit to Virginia in 1698 are indicative of the attitude of the people of Virginia toward religious toleration:

8th Day of the 12th Month, we landed in Mockjack Bay—

Next Fourth Day being the 1st day of the 1st month (i.e. January, 1698/99) we went again by water to a monthly meeting at Chuckatuck, where came our friend Elizabeth Webb from Gloucestershire in England, who had been through all the English colonies on the Continent of America and was now about to depart for England. The meeting was large and the Sheriff of the County, a Colonel, and some of others of note in that county were there, and very sober and attentive.

On the 22nd we had a pretty large meeting at Southern Branch, at the house of Robert Burgess. He was not a Friend by profession, but a Justice of the Peace, and of good account in these parts. There had never been a meeting there before; yet the people were generally solid and several of them tendered; and after the meeting the Justice and his wife were very respectful, and treated us to beer and wine, and would gladly have had us to have eaten with them and lodged in their house that night, but being otherwise engaged in the course of the service.

The next day [several days later] we had a meeting at Romancock, which was large and open. Many persons of note from those parts were there, as Major Palmer, Captain Clayborn, Doctor Walker, and others, all very attentive.

APPENDIX B

[Pg 48]

A List of Parishes in Virginia, and the Clergy in them under date of July 8, 1702.

Parishes and Incumbent Ministers

Charles City County.
Bristol Parish, (part)
George Robertson [Robinson]
Westover Parish
Charles Anderson
Martin's Brandon Parish
Weyanoke Parish
James Bushell

Elizabeth City County
Elizabeth City Parish
James Wallace

Essex County
South Farnham Parish
Lewis Latanè
Sittenbourn Parish (part)
Bartholomew Yates
St. Mary's Parish
William Andrews

Gloucester County
Petsoe (Petsworth) Parish
Emmanuel Jones
Abingdon Parish
Guy Smith
Ware Parish
James Clack

Henrico County
Bristol Parish (part)
George Robinson
Varina als Henrico Parish
James Ware
King William Parish
Benjamin De Joux

James City County
Wallingford Parish
Wilmington Parish
John Gordon
James City Parish
James Blair
Martin's Hundred Parish
Stephen Fouace
Bruton Parish (part)
Cope D'Oyley

Isle of Wight County
Warrosqueake Parish
Thomas Sharpe
Newport Parish
Andrew Monroe

King and Queen County
St. Stephen's Parish
Ralph Bowker
Stratton-Major Parish
Edward Portlock

King William County
St. John's Parish
John Monroe

Lancaster County
Christ Church Parish
Andrew Jackson
St. Mary's White Chapel Parish
John Carnegie

Middlesex County
Christ Church Parish
Robert Yates

Nansemond County

Upper Parish
Lower Parish
Chuchatuck Parish

Norfolk County
Elizabeth River Parish
William Rudd

New Kent County
Blisland Parish
St. Peter's Parish
James Bowker

Northumberland County
Fairfield Parish
John Farnifold
Wiccocomico Parish
John Urquhart

Northampton County
Hungars Parish
Peter Collier

Princess Anne County
Lynnhaven Parish
Solomon Wheatley

Richmond County
Sittènbourn Parish (part)
Bartholomew Yates
North Farnham Parish
Peter Kippax

Surry County
Southwark Parish
Alexander Walker
Lawne's Creek Parish
Thomas Burnet

Stafford County
St. Paul's Parish
Overwharton Parish
John Frazier

Warwick County
Mulberry Island Parish
Denbigh Parish

Westmoreland County
Cople Parish
Washington Parish
James Breechin

York County
Bruton Parish (part)
Yorke Parish
Cope D'Oyley
Hampton Parish
Stephen Fouace
Charles Parish
James Slater

James Blair, Commissary to the Bishop of London
Peregrine Cony, Chaplain to the Governor.

It will be noted that the above list reports fifty-one parishes, or after deducting three which appear as partly in two counties, a total of forty-eight parishes. These covered the whole territory in which English settlers lived. The incumbent clergymen total thirty-five but some five or six of the parishes for which no incumbent was named were very small in extent or population, and looked to the minister of an adjoining parish for services and sacraments. Probably this list includes five or six parishes which were vacant. Because of the great length of time required to secure clergymen from England this fact is evidence of the growing strength and organization of the Church under the influence of the Commissary.

Most of the clergymen who came to Virginia were graduates of the English and Scottish

universities, and brought an element and influence of education and culture to the growing life of the Colony. Dr. Philip Alexander Bruce, in his notable *Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century*, makes the following statement:

If we consider as a body the ministers who performed the various duties of their calling in Virginia during the Seventeenth Century, there is no reason to think they fell below the standard of conscientiousness governing the conduct of the English clergyman in the same age. The early history of the New World was adorned by no nobler group of divines than the group which gives so much distinction from the point of view of character and achievement to the years in which the foundation of the colony at Jamestown was being permanently laid.

[Pg 50]

From the middle of the century to the end as from the beginning to the middle, a large proportion of the clergymen were not only graduates of English universities, but also men of more or less distinguished social connections in England. Outside the great towns in England, or the wealthiest and most populous of the English rural parishes, there was in the course of the century, perhaps no single English living filled by a succession of clergymen superior to this body of men, (i.e., incumbents at Jamestown) in combined learning, talents, piety, and devotion to duty. And yet there is no reason to think that the ability, zeal and fidelity of these ministers who occupied the pulpit at Jamestown were overshadowing as compared with the same qualities in the clergymen who, one after another, occupied any of the more important benefices in York, Surry, Elizabeth City, or Gloucester Counties, or the counties situated in the Northern Neck, or Eastern Shore.... All the surviving records of the seventeenth century go to show that, whatever during that long period may have been the infirmities or unworthy acts of individual clergymen, the great body of those officiating in Virginia were men who performed all the duties of their sacred calling in a manner entitling them to the respect, reverence and gratitude of their parishioners.

Very little is known of the activities of the clergy outside of their professional duties beyond the fact that a great many of them conducted schools at their homes; and these "parsons schools" became a widespread influence for good upon the youth of their day. In the generations before the founding of the College these schools became the great agency throughout the colony for the education of the sons of the gentry, and of the occasional youth of a lesser privileged family who was taken free by the parson, or supported by a school endowment given by some charitable person. In the later days there were many such parish funds. We read of George Washington, in the following generation attending the school conducted by Parson Marye in Fredericksburg, and of his future wife, Martha Dandridge attending another.

It is a notable fact that throughout the whole seventeenth century the ideal shown by the General Assembly was to provide for the clergy an adequate salary for the comfortable home of an educated man. In 1695 when the question of increase in clerical salaries was raised, the House of Burgesses made a report to Governor Andros upon the purchasing value of salaries paid in tobacco, and stated, "They have duly weighed the present provision made for the ministers of this country in their respective parishes together with their other considerable perquisites by marriages, burials, etc., and glebes,—that most if not all the ministers of this country are in as good a condition in point of livelihood as a gentleman that is well seated and hath twelve or fourteen servants." They had previously stated that the tobacco salary of the parson would in normal years in the past yield eighty pounds sterling when sold.

[Pg 51]

In contrast with this salary of the clergymen in Virginia attention may be called to the statement made in England in 1714, that there were in England at that time "5,082 livings under eighty pounds in annual value, of which more than 3,000 were under forty pounds, and 471 under ten pounds. This report was made to show the importance of the fund established by Queen Anne, called Queen Anne's Bounty, for increasing the endowment of these weak parishes."

Transcriber's Notes

Extensive research did not uncover any evidence that the U. S. copyright on this publication was renewed.

The Table of [Contents](#) was added for convenience.

Page [3](#): Guilt is an obsolete form of gilt
(a plate of silver guilt).

Page [16](#): Changed ecclestiastical to ecclesiastical
(after an ecclesiastical trial by the bishop).

Page [23](#): Changed cattel to cattle
(great plenty of cattel and hogs).

Page [50](#): Changed priviliged to privileged
(youth of a lesser priviliged family).

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE
THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE
PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with

which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3

below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™’s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt

status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.