

Books and Authors

Bruce's "Economic History of Virginia"

Some conception of the industry expended in the compilation of this work may be obtained from a glance at the list of manuscript records which have been consulted. The list includes the land patents in the office of the Register at Richmond, the records of the counties of Henrico, York, Lower Norfolk, Elizabeth City, Surry, Middlesex, Lancaster, Rappahannock, Accomac, and Northampton, the Ludwell, Randolph, Byrd, Fitzhugh, and General Court manuscripts in the possession of the Virginia Historical Society, and the Winder, MacDonald, and Sainsbury papers in the Virginia State Library. These manuscripts, supplemented by an equal abundance of printed documents, have yielded an extraordinary mass of information concerning the natural resources of colonial Virginia in the seventeenth century and concerning the number, wealth, and industries of its inhabitants. In the hands of a less competent writer, so great an abundance of detail might have proved a source of embarrassment. But in the hands of Mr. Bruce, the accomplished Secretary of the Virginia Historical Society, it has been made to subserve the purpose of a somewhat full discussion of the economic policy of the English Government in respect of Virginia and of the natural causes which gave a peculiar direction to the economic development of the colony. The result is an excellent work, which, although a pioneer in its department, is not likely to be soon superseded.

Among the topics treated with census-like fullness are the physical character of aboriginal Virginia, the agricultural development of the colony, the modes of acquiring title to land, systems of labor (free and slave), the domestic economy of the planter, foreign and domestic manufactured supplies, money, and towns.

Virginia was England's first colony. It is, therefore, pertinent to inquire, What were her reasons for breaking with the past and embarking on the policy of colonization? The reasons urged in the public prints of the period may be summed up under nine heads: (1) It was thought that North America, like South America, abounded in gold. (2) It was supposed that the passage to the South Sea ran through Virginia. So important were these considerations that Ralph Lane, speaking of the Carolina coast, admitted "that the discovery of a gold-mine by the goodness of God, or a passage to the South Sea, or some way to it, and nothing else, can bring this country in request to be inhabited by our nation." The letters patent of 1606 reserved a share of the anticipated find of precious metals for the Crown, and the order in council framed for the guidance of the colonists directed the manner in which the search for the precious metals should be conducted. Efforts to reach the South Sea by way of the rivers of Virginia were kept up until a better knowledge of the geography of the country demonstrated the futility of the search. (3) It was believed that Virginia could supply most, if not all, the commodities which the English were compelled to purchase from foreign nations. Tar, pitch, rosin, flax, cordage, masts, yards, timber, and other naval stores, also glass and soap ashes, were imported from Russia and Poland. Copper was imported from Sweden; iron and steel, figs and raisins, from Spain; wine, salt, and canvas from France; silk and velvet from Italy; and spices from the East. The acquisition of these articles was subject to numerous casualties and interruptions. The fickleness of the population and government of Muscovy was notorious. Trade in this quarter could be carried on only at one season of the year, and was obliged to meet the growing competition of the Dutch. Moreover, the King of Denmark might at any time increase the tax on foreign ships passing in and out of the Baltic. The trade with Turkey, in addition to being subject to the sentimental objection, which had extraordinary force in that age, of being carried on with barbarous infidels, was exposed to unusual risks in the passage to and from the Levant, many hostile peoples sweeping the intervening seas with their craft. The trade with Italy was exposed to similar perils. Spain, the traditional enemy of England, was in the habit on the slightest provocation of seizing the English merchant fleets in her harbor. Furthermore, the English children, servants, and factors who were employed in Spain and Italy were forced, it was said, to submit to the Catholic Church. If the articles enumerated could be produced in Virginia, all these difficulties would be avoided. (4) It was desired to obviate the necessity for exporting coin. The statesmen of the period dreaded an unfavorable balance of trade. The trade of a colony was, by the universal practice of the age, restricted to the mother country. Colonists were compelled to

accept the manufactures of the home country in return for their raw products. Trade of this nature did not require the intervention of coin. (5) It was desired to create a market for English woollens. English woollens were of a coarser texture than the Dutch, and found little favor in foreign markets. It was further urged (6) that a colony would promote the growth of English shipping by swelling the volume of ocean freight; (7) that it would furnish a vent for the surplus population of England; (8) that it would raise a barrier in the West against the Spanish power; and (9) that it would tend to propagate Christianity among the Indians.

After the futility of the search for gold and for the passage to the South Sea had been demonstrated, the most potent reason for maintaining the colony was the desire of obtaining a safe and constant supply of the commodities mentioned above. Skilled workmen were sent over for the purpose of instructing the colonists in the manufacture of glass, pitch, tar, soap ashes, naval stores, etc. But it soon became apparent that the staple of the colony was destined to be tobacco.

The first Englishman to cultivate tobacco in Virginia was John Rolfe, the husband of Pocahontas. He began the experiment in 1612, and four years later tobacco had become one of the staple crops of the colony. In spite of adverse legislation, it soon absorbed the almost exclusive attention of the colonists, for no other product found so safe and remunerative a market. The innumerable navigable rivers and inlets of tidewater Virginia permitted ocean vessels to touch at every plantation, and the planter had only to open his warehouse to dispose of his crop and receive his supplies in exchange.

Tobacco, however, exhausted the soil after a few crops. Every planter was therefore compelled to be an extensive landholder. Plantations of ten thousand acres were common. This produced little inconvenience in a new country, but it gave a peculiar direction to the economic and social life of the colony. The planter and his household constituted an independent community, complete in itself. The necessities of life were either produced on the plantation or obtained from abroad. There was no need of co-operation among neighbors, as in New England, and this circumstance prevented the establishment of manufactures. The absence of manufactures discouraged the growth of towns.

The culture of tobacco favored the expansion of slavery. The demand for cheap labor to clear away the forests and prepare the ground for the increasing crops of tobacco was greater than the supply. Indentured servants were imported from England. They were practically slaves for a term of years. But when their terms were served they might establish plantations of their own. Negro slaves were cheaper and more tractable laborers, and eventually supplemented the indentured servant.

Slavery tended to perpetuate the system of large plantations, inasmuch as it furnished a constant supply of cheap labor. One of the results of the abolition of slavery has been the breaking up of the large plantations. The planter dependent on free labor cannot afford to let the larger portion of his land lie fallow. The productiveness of ground once broken is maintained by fertilizers. Intensive cultivation has taken the place of extensive, and the tendency is towards constantly smaller holdings in the possession of men who till the soil with their own hands.



Recent Novels

The Damnation of Theron Ware, by Harold Frederic, has been printed in England under the title "Illumination," and has had the honor of being praised by Mr. Gladstone as one of the most remarkable novels of the day. It is, indeed, quite out of the ordinary run of fiction, and is sure to excite discussion. It has little plot, and nothing that could fairly be called a love-story. From beginning to end its theme is the moral degeneration of a young Methodist minister. This man has at the outset a blameless character, high aspirations, and the gift of oratorical fervor. Intellectually he is crude, and morally he is untried. Failing to be appointed to a wealthy city church, as he had hoped, he is sent to a small town, and finds his church people hard, unsympathetic, mean in money matters, and with the ideas of a bygone day. While smarting under his disappointment he falls in with three persons who are vastly his superiors in knowledge both of books and of the world—Father Forbes, a Catholic priest, who rules his parish with absolute sway, and follows his own tastes in art, literature, and science without much regard to the theories of the Church; Dr. Ledsmar, a great naturalist and Assyriologist, and (outwardly at least) a cynic; and Celia Madden, the highly educated daughter of an Irish peasant who has attained wealth by his own exertions. Celia plays at being "Greek," is a marvelous musician, has a suite of rooms filled with Greek statues and wonderful decorations, and, in fact, is the one character in the book that is somewhat overdrawn and incomprehensible. These people are at first pleased and greatly amused with Mr. Ware's ingenuousness and ignorance—he thinks George Sand is a man, and proposes to write a great book on Abraham, based on the discovery that as a citizen of

¹ *Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century*. An Inquiry into the Material Condition of the People, based upon Original and Contemporaneous Records. By Philip Alexander Bruce. 2 Vols. Macmillan & Co., New York. \$6.

Ur he was a Chaldean. But the result of Mr. Ware's partial "illumination" is that he becomes conceited, fatuous, skeptical, hypocritical, and in the end is ready to go any lengths to secure his own comfort and prosperity. At last he follows Celia to New York, and proposes to elope with her (he has an estimable and charming wife). Thereupon he receives such an introduction to himself as must have crushed any less self-occupied person; in his case it leads first to a prolonged spree, then to his leaving the ministry, and finally to his departure for the West, where he buoyantly hopes to become a great political orator. The minuteness with which the man's degeneration is followed out is extraordinary. In force and suggestiveness Mr. Frederic has done much his best work in this book. Several of the minor characters are sketched with wonderful distinctness—notably Mr. and Mrs. Soulsby, the professional revivalists and debt-raisers. The underlying note of the story is morally tragic rather than pessimistic, but it is relieved with much grim humor. (Stone & Kimball, Chicago.)

Mr. F. Marion Crawford has never displayed greater deftness in telling a simple, straightforward love-story in such a way as to rivet the reader's attention than in *Adam Johnstone's Son*. The tale is modern in the fullest degree; there is nothing inherently improbable in the situations; yet the originality of the plot is singularly striking and bold. A husband and wife having been divorced, both make second marriages; a son of the one and a daughter of the other by these second marriages meet in ignorance of the facts, and in the end love one another. This is the bare situation; how Mr. Crawford handles it is what makes the story a fascinating one. Both Adam Johnstone and his son are men "with a past," and the inevitable question as to the world's way of looking differently at men and women who have violated the moral law is constantly suggested, but never directly argued out. Mr. Crawford, with the privilege of the novelist, makes both men essentially lovable and true to their own standards of honor; in real life it more often happens that such men deteriorate in all points when once they have thrown aside ultimate standards of morality and replaced them by the world's conventionalities. The few characters of the story are all drawn with admirable clearness, and the analysis of motive is keen and consistent. We think that none of Mr. Crawford's recent novels have been better adapted to please and interest a large circle of readers than this slight story. (Macmillan & Co., New York.)

Mr. S. R. Crockett is always at his best, we think, in depicting homely Scotch country life and character, rather than in stories of romance and adventure. The bent of his genius is rather towards Barrie than towards Weyman. For this reason we like *Cleg Kelly* better than some of his more ambitious, semi-historical novels. As the sub-title shows, this is the history of an Edinburgh street arab, homeless, mischievous, brave, honest (according to his own standards, which, all things considered, are reasonably high), keen-witted, faithful, and capable of sacrifices, though as far removed from sentimentality as can be conceived. Cleg has many amusing and thrilling adventures, and throughout we follow him with breathless interest. The rough and ready fun of the narration is capital. There are a few errors of taste which should have been edited out. Some of the secondary characters are well brought out; others not. It was a great pity that Mr. Crockett should have thought it necessary to have wrought into the latter part of his story a preposterous, melodramatic tale of cheap horrors which is not at all blood-curdling, but merely ridiculous. A retired General (insane) who keeps the embalmed corpses of his former mistress and her betrayer in coffins in a steel-clad strong room, where he sleeps nightly for twenty years in a third coffin, is quite out of place in Mr. Crockett's writing, and belongs rather to the Pepper's Ghost Show which Cleg and his friends were wont to enjoy. (D. Appleton & Co., New York.)

Mr. Gabriel Setoun is another commendable writer of the new Scottish school. *Robert Urquhart* has been hailed with joy by Mr. Barrie because it contains, not the regulation "dominie," but a modern Scotch school-teacher, one of hundreds of admirable young men who are doing good work in the cause of education. Mr. Setoun always writes with sound feeling and full knowledge of his subject. His stories move rather slowly, and one could wish the humor and pathos to be a little more strongly emphasized; both are present, however, and both are genuine. (F. Warne & Co., New York.)

Max Pemberton's *A Gentleman's Gentleman* reminds one of Thackeray's vastly more artistic relation by a valet of his master's villainies. In this case the valet is quite as much a rascal as his master, and might better be called his accomplice than his servant. The stories are sensational and, as being placed in our own time, not always probable. Some are, however, told cleverly. (Harper & Brothers, New York.) On the whole, if we are to study criminology, we prefer the leadership of Mr. Doyle's Sherlock Holmes or Mr. Arthur Morrison's "Martin Hewitt, Investigator," to that of Mr. Pemberton's scoundrel. Martin Hewitt is obviously modeled after Sherlock Holmes, and his methods are the same. But it must be admitted that the crimes he discovers are highly original, and fully as difficult to puzzle out as those of the beloved Sherlock. Many great men, we are told, relax their minds by reading detective stories in leisure moments. For that purpose Mr. Morrison's tales called *Martin Hewitt's Chronicles* can conscientiously be recommended. (D. Appleton & Co., New York.)

To carry the war into Africa presupposes a victory. Such is the policy of Miss Vida D. Scudder in her little work, *The Witness of Denial*. The author's wide reading and familiarity with literature are brought to bear upon the religious question, and she shows in a brilliant way that modern thought in the case of agnostics is a testimony to the deep religiousness of the present day. She is quite right in her assertion that this is a doubting age because men are earnest

about the great religious questions. If they were indifferent, there would be fewer doubts. The triumphant optimism of the book reminds one of the spirit of Robert Browning's writings. Her criticisms of the religion of humanity and of the religion of morality are clever, not to say conclusive. Altogether it is a book to which we accord the heartiest welcome. (The F. H. Revell Company, New York.)

The first volume of the *American Lectures on the History of Religions* is the one by T. W. Rhys Davids on Buddhism. These lectures have been arranged for by an association organized for the purpose in 1892. The lectures are to be delivered before such societies as the Lowell; Brooklyn, and Peabody Institutes, the University Lecture Association of Philadelphia, and some of our colleges and universities. Dr. Davids is a recognized authority on the subject of Buddhism, and gave this course of six lectures at Boston, Brooklyn, New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Cornell. The book is probably the best, as it is the latest, exposition of Buddhism for the popular reader.

The second volume of Adolf Holm's *History of Greece* is concerned with the events of the fifth century. The plan upon which this work is constructed has already been described in our notice of the first volume. The second volume in its execution falls in no way behind its predecessor. The author's grasp and power of comprehension are remarkable, and his materials are the product of the most recent historical and archaeological research. (Macmillan & Co., New York.)

Literary Notes

—Of Nathaniel Hawthorne, his daughter, Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, says: "Those who thought him too silent were the bores whom he desired not to attract."

—An important collection of letters is to be published in "Cosmopolis." It is made up of the correspondence of Tourguéneff, and includes letters to Mme. Viardot, Flaubert, Dumas fils, Guy de Maupassant, M. Zola, and others.

—By a slip of the pen we last week credited Dr. Andrew D. White's "History of the Warfare of Science with Theology" to the wrong publishers. It is, in fact, published by Messrs. D. Appleton & Co., of this city. It is our purpose to treat this important work more fully at a future time.

—The "Chap-Book" is to remain in Chicago, in spite of various reports to the contrary. It will have on its title-page H. S. Stone & Co., instead of Stone and Kimball as before. This means that there will be no great change in its policy. Mr. Herbert S. Stone continues as editor, and Mr. Harrison G. Rhodes as assistant editor.

—Mr. Augustine Birrell had amusing proof recently, says an exchange, of the slender foundations on which literary fame rests, for he was introduced to the Chairman of a meeting as "the author of that amusing book 'Vice Versa.'" Mr. Birrell did not deny the charge, for, after all, as he said afterwards, both "Vice Versa" and "Obiter Dicta" are Latin, and, in any case, it was a compliment to be thought to be the author of so capital a book as Mr. Anstey's.

—"On a Bee Line," the engaging account of a wild-bee hunt in the Highlands of the Hudson, which was printed in *The Outlook* about a year ago, reappears in a modest little book of sketches which the author, Dr. A. R. Ledoux, has just issued through the Looker-On Publishing Company, of this city. The book takes its title, "Princess Anne," from the chief story of the volume, a dramatic tale of the Great Dismal Swamp. Dr. Ledoux is an expert whose name is well known in scientific circles, but his little volume is an illustration of the fact that the scientific spirit and the literary spirit are not so incompatible as the prejudiced partisans of each sometimes seem to suppose.

—There seems to be no end to the cipher stories which can be found in Shakespeare's works by those who have the requisite ingenuity and imagination. Dr. Orville W. Owen, of Detroit, has sent out a little book addressed to the Masonic fraternity, of which he says: "In deciphering the Shakespearean plays (1623 folio edition), and other works of Bacon, for the preparation of 'Sir Francis Bacon's Cipher Story,' I have found unmistakable evidence that the author of them was not only a Mason of high degree, but that he placed in the plays a large portion of the Masonic ritual. Francis Bacon, the author of the plays, was a Master Mason, and claims to have been Grand Master of the Orient and a Rosicrucian Knight, and hidden within his works are directions by which it is not difficult to travel into Illyria."

—In the preface to the volume of the new edition of Mr. Thomas Hardy's works, which contains the "Wessex Tales," the author chats cheerfully about some of the rather gruesome incidents of the stories. We quote from the London "Chronicle":

He remarks that some apology may seem necessary for the occurrence of two hangmen in one volume of stories. But then, he points out, the details of executions bulk large in the traditions of a rural locality—they become so much local color. As a boy, Mr. Hardy was privileged to speak to a man who once applied for a hangmanship—that is the novelist's only standing. During this man's sighs of disappointment at not getting the job, the future writer on Wessex used to marvel in a boyish way at the ambition, but he never questioned its nobleness. In the same light vein, Mr. Hardy strikes other notes of his boyhood reminiscences. In those days he was flattered by knowing an old woman who, for the cure of some eating disease, had been taken in her youth to have her "blood turned" by a convict's corpse, in the manner described in one of the "Wessex Tales." Again, he learned from an old man that one method of concealing the mouth of a pit used for storing smuggled liquor was to plant an apple-tree in a bag or a box over the mouth of it. This old fellow had much to say of the labor of smuggling, and not much as to its gross rewards.