

# Virginia's Cure:

OR, An ADVISIVE  
NARRATIVE  
CONCERNING VIRGINIA.

DISCOVERING The true Ground  
of that CHURCH'S Unhappiness,  
and the only true Remedy.

As it was presented to the Right  
Reverend Father in God Guilbert Lord  
Bishop of London [Anglican], September  
2, 1661.

Now publish'd to further the Welfare of  
that and the like PLANTATIONS:

By R. G

1662, \_\_\_\_\_ EXCERPTS

And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preach'd in all the world, for a witness unto all Nations,  
and then shall the End come. Mat. 24. 14.

Is it time for you, O thee, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this House lie waste?  
Now therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your wayes, Hag. 1. 4, 5.

To show the unhappy State of the Church in *Virginia*, and the true Remedy of it, I shall first give a brief Description of the Manner of our People's scattered Habitations there; next show the sad unhappy consequences of such their scattered Living both in reference to themselves and the poor Heathen that are about them, and by the way briefly set down the cause of scattering their Habitations, then proceed to propound the Remedy, and means of procuring it; next assert the Benefits of it in reference both to themselves, and the Heathen; set down the cause why this Remedy has not been hitherto compassed: and lastly, till it can be procured, give directions for the present supply of their Churches.

That part of *Virginia* which has at present craved your Lordship's Assistance to preserve the Christian Religion, and to promote the Building of God's Church among them, by supplying them with sufficient Ministers of the Gospel, is bounded on the North by the great River *Patomek*, on the South by the River *Chawan*, including also the Land inhabited on the East side of *Chesipiack Bay*, called *Accomack*, and contains above half as much Land as *England*; it is divided into several Counties, and those Counties contain in all about Fifty Parishes, the Families whereof are dispersedly and scatteringly seated upon the sides of Rivers; . . . The Families of such Parishes being seated after this manner, at such distances from each other, many of them are very remote from the House of God, though placed in the midst of them. Many Parishes as yet want both Churches and Glebes [tracts of land owned by the church], and I think not above a fifth part of them are supplied with Ministers, where there are Ministers the People meet together Weekly, but once upon the Lord's day, and sometimes not at all, being hindered by Extremities of Wind and Weather: and divers of the more remote Families being discouraged, by the length of tediousness of the way, through extremities of heat in Summer, frost and Snow in Winter, and tempestuous weather in both, do very seldom repair thither.



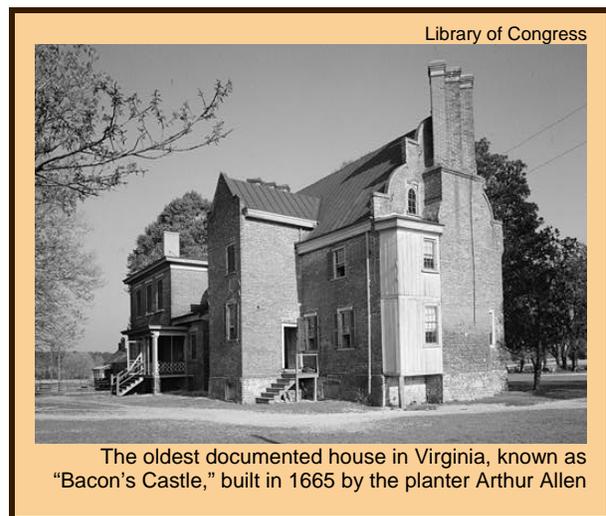
By which brief Description of their manner of seating themselves in that Wilderness, Your Lordship may easily apprehend that their very manner of Planting themselves, has caused them hitherto to rob God in a great measure of that public Worship and Service, which as a Homage due to his great name, he requires to be constantly paid to him, at the times appointed for it, in the public Congregations of his people in his House of Prayer.

This sacrilege I judge to be the prime cause of their long-languishing, improsperous condition . . . But though this be the saddest Consequence of their dispersed manner of Planting themselves (for what Misery can be greater than to live under the Curse of God?) yet this has a very sad Train of Attendants which are likewise consequences of their scattered Planting. For, hence is the great want of Christian Neighborhood, or brotherly admonition, of holy Examples of religious Persons, of the Comfort of theirs, and their Minister's Administrations in Sickness, and Distresses, of the Benefit of Christian and Civil Conference and Commerce.

And hence it is, that the most faithful and vigilant Pastors, assisted by the most careful Church-wardens, cannot possibly take notice of the Vices that reign in their Families, of the spiritual defects in their Conversations, or if they have notice of them, and

provide Spiritual Remedies in their public Ministry, it is a hazard if they that are most concerned in them be present at the application of them: and if they should spend time in visiting their remote and far distant habitations, they would have little or none left for their necessary Studies, and to provide necessary spiritual food for the rest of their Flocks. And hence it is that through the licentious lives of many of them, the Christian Religion is like still to be dishonored, and the Name of God to be blasphemed among the Heathen, who are near them, and oft among them, and consequently their Conversion hindered.

Lastly, their almost general want of Schools for the education of their Children is another consequence of their scattered planting, of most sad consideration, most of all bewailed of Parents there, and therefore the arguments drawn from thence, most likely to prevail with them cheerfully to embrace the Remedy. This want of Schools, as it renders a very numerous generation of Christian Children born in *Virginia* (who naturally are of beautiful and comely Persons, and generally of more ingenious Spirits than these in *England*) unserviceable for any great Employments either in Church or State, so likewise it obstructs the hopefullest way they have, for the Conversion of the Heathen, which is, by winning the Heathen to bring in their Children to be taught and instructed in our



Schools, together with the Children of the Christians. . . .

The cause of their dispersed Seating was at first a privilege indulged by the royal Grant of having a right to 50 Acres of Land, for every person they should transport at their own charges: by which means some men transporting many Servants thither, and others purchasing the Rights of those that did, took possession of great tracts of Land at their pleasure, and by Degrees scattered their Plantations through the Country after the manner before described, although therefore from the premises, it is easy to conclude that the only way of remedy for *Virginia's* disease (without which all other help will only palliate not cure) must be by procuring Towns to be built, and inhabited in their several Counties. . . . Your Lordship will best inform your self in this by consulting with *Virginia's* present Honorable Governor Sir William Berkeley, or their late Edward Diggs Esq.

What way soever they determine to be best, I shall humbly in obedience to your Lordship's command endeavor to contribute towards the compassing this Remedy by propounding,

1 That your Lordship would be pleased to acquaint the King with the necessity of promoting the building Towns in each County of *Virginia*, upon the consideration of the fore-mentioned sad Consequences of their present manner of living there.

2 That your Lordship upon the fore-going consideration, be pleased to move the pitiful, and charitable heart of His gracious Majesty (considering the Poverty and needs of *Virginia*) for a Collection to be made in all the Churches of his three Kingdoms (there being considerable numbers of each Kingdom ) for the promoting a work of so great Charity to the Souls of many thousands of his Loyal Subjects . . . .

3 That the way of dispensing such collections for sending Work-men over for the building Towns and Schools, and the assistance the persons that shall inhabit them shall contribute towards them may be determined here, by the advice of *Virginia's* present or late Honorable Governors . . . .

Fourthly, That those Planters who have such a considerable number of Servants, as may be judged may enable them for it, if they be not willing (for I have heard some express their willingness, and some their averseness) may by His Majesty's Authority be enjoined to contribute the Assistance that shall be thought meet for them, to build themselves houses in the Towns nearest to them, and to inhabit them, for they having horses enough in that Country, may be inconvenienced, as their occasions require, to visit their Plantations. . . .

Fifthly, That for a continual supply of able Ministers for their Churches, after a set term of years, Your Lordship would please to endeavor the procuring an Act of Parliament, whereby a certain number of Fellowships, as they happen to be next proportionably vacant in both the Universities, may bear the name of *Virginia* Fellowships, so long as the Needs of that Church shall require it; and none be admitted to them, but such as shall engage

by promise to hold them seven years and no longer; and at the expiration of those seven years, transport themselves to *Virginia*, and serve that Church in the Office of the Ministry seven years more, (the Church there providing for them) which being expired, they shall be left to their own Liberty to return or not . . . .

These things being procured, I think *Virginia* will be in the most probable way (that her present condition can admit) of being cured of the forementioned evils of her scattered Planting.

