

## *"capable of great Improvements still"*

Rev. Hugh Jones

## *The Present State of VIRGINIA*

1724\_\_EXCERPTS

Hugh Jones was an English clergyman called to serve in Virginia for two years as a "Mathematical Professor" in the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. On his return to England he discovered that "few people . . . have correct notions of the true state of the plantations [colonies]." Thus in 1724 he published *The Present State of Virginia* to inform his English audience of the colony's government, peoples, economic and religious state, etc., and to promote his plan to transport the English "poor and vagabonds" to Virginia as a non-African labor supply.

## **INTRODUCTION**

When I considered the great Benefit that arises to the Public from the large colony of *Virginia*, I observed that though it be thus advantageous, yet it is capable of great Improvements still, and requires several Alterations, both with Regard to its own Welfare, and the Interest of *Great Britain*. Observing moreover, that few people in *England* (even many concerned in public affairs of this kind) have correct Notions of the true State of the Plantations, and having been eagerly applied to frequently by Persons of the greatest Figure, Experience and Judgment in political and national Concerns, for Information concerning all the Circumstances of *Virginia*, I was requested to digest methodically and publish what I knew and thought of these Matters; and being in a great Measure enjoined to it by a *noble Patron*, I have here complied with his Commands, with the best of my Knowledge and Judgment. . . .

## **PART II.**

### *Ch. 3. Of the Situation and Nature of the Country of Virginia, and its Coasts, &c.*

**U**NDER the Meridian is extended the Expanse *Bay of Chesapeake*, esteemed one of the noblest and safest Bays in the World. . . .

There are belonging to *Virginia* four principal Rivers (neither of them inferior upon many Accounts to the *Thames* or *Severn*) that empty themselves into the Bay after they have glided some Hundreds fromwards the Mountains, the Western Bounds of *Virginia*. . . .

Into these Rivers run abundance of great *Creeks* or short Rivers, navigable for *Sloops*, *Shallops*, *Long-Boats*, *Flats*, *Canoes*, and *Piraguas*. . . .



Because of this Convenience,<sup>1</sup> and for the Goodness of the Land, and for the sake of Fish, Fowl, &c., Gentlemen and Planters love to build near the Water, though it be not altogether so healthy as the *Uplands* and *Barrens*, which serve for *Ranges* for [live] *Stock*. . . .

Thus neither the Interest nor Inclinations of the *Virginians* induce them to cohabit in Towns, so that they are not forward in contributing their Assistance towards the making of particular Places, every Plantation affording the Owner the Provision of a little Market, wherefore they most commonly build upon some convenient Spot or Neck of Land in their own Plantation, . . .

**Ch. 4. Of the Negroes, with the Planting and Management of Indian Corn, Tobacco, &c. and of their Timber, Stock, Fruits, Provision, and Habitations, &c.**

. . .

The *Negroes* are very numerous, some Gentlemen having Hundreds of them of all Sorts, to whom they bring great Profit; for the Sake of which they are obliged to keep them well and not overwork, starve, or famish them, besides other Inducements to favour them, which is done in a *great Degree* to such especially that are laborious, careful, and honest; though indeed some Masters, careless of their own Interest or Reputation, are too cruel and negligent.

The *Negroes* are not only increased by fresh supplies from *Africa* and the *West India* Islands, but also are very prolific among themselves; and they that are born there talk *good English* and affect our Language, Habits, and Customs; and though they be naturally of a barbarous and cruel Temper, yet are they kept under by severe Discipline upon Occasion, and by good Laws are prevented from running away, injuring the *English*, or neglecting their Business.

***“some Masters, careless of their own Interest or Reputation, are too cruel and negligent”***

Their Work (or Chimerical hard Slavery) is not very laborious, their greatest Hardship consisting in that they and their Posterity are not at their own Liberty or Disposal, but are the Property of their Owners; and when they are free, they know not how to provide so well for themselves generally; neither did they live so plentifully nor (many of them) so easily in their own Country, where they are made Slaves to one another, or taken Captive by their Enemies.

The Children belong to the Master of the Woman that bears them; and such as are born of a *Negroe* and an *European* are called *Molattoes*; but such as are born of an *Indian* and *Negroe* are called *Mustees*.

<sup>1</sup> The river and creek system, and the coastal wetlands, which allow shipments to be delivered by water to plantations built near the coast.

## *The Present State of Virginia*

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Their Work is to take Care of the *Stock*, and plan *Corn, Tobacco, Fruits*, etc. which is not harder than *Thrashing, Hedging, or Ditching*. Besides, though they are out in the violent Heat, wherein they delight, yet in wet or cold Weather there is little Occasion for their working in the Fields, in which few will let them be abroad, lest by this means they might get sick or die, which would prove a great Loss to their Owners, a good Negroe being sometimes worth three (nay four) Score Pounds Sterling, if he be a Tradesman; so that upon this (if upon no other Account) they are obliged not to overwork them, but to clothe and feed them sufficiently, and take Care of their Health. . . .

### ***Ch. 5. Of the Habits, Customs, Parts, Employments, Trade &c. of the Virginians; and of the Weather, Coin, Sickness, Liquors, Servants, Poor, Pitch, Tar, Oar, &c.***

THE *Habits, Life, Customs, Computations, &c.* [etc.] of the *Virginians* are much the same as about *London*, which they esteem their *Home*; and for the most Part have contemptible Notions of *England*, and wrong

Sentiments of *Bristol* and other *Outports*, which they entertain from seeing and hearing the common Dealers, Sailors, and Servants that come from those Towns and the Country Places in *England* and *Scotland*, whose Language and Manners are strange to them, for the *Planters*, and even the *Native Negroes*, generally talk good *English* without *Idiom* or *Tone*, and can discourse handsomely upon *most* common Subjects; . . .

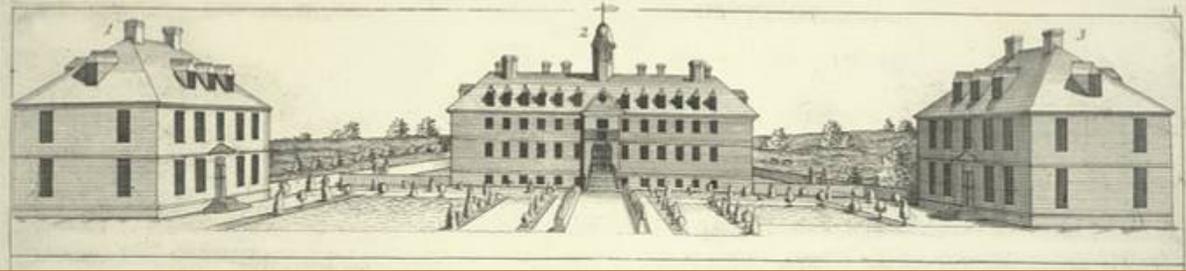
Thus they have good natural Notions and will soon learn Arts and Sciences, but are generally diverted by Business or Inclination from profound Study and prying into the Depth of Things, being ripe for Management of their Affairs before they have laid so good a Foundation of Learning and had such Instructions and acquired such Accomplishments as might be instilled into such good natural Capacities. Nevertheless, through their quick Apprehension, they have a Sufficiency of Knowledge and Fluency of Tongue, though their Learning

for the most Part be but superficial.

***“They are more inclinable to read men by Business and Conversation than to dive into Books”***

They are more inclinable to read Men by Business and Conversation than to dive into Books and are, for the most Part, only desirous of learning what is absolutely necessary in the shortest and best Method. . . .

They are not very easily persuaded to the Improvement of useful Inventions (except a few, such as Sawing Mills); neither are they great Encouragers of Manufactures, because of the Trouble and certain Expense in Attempts of this kind, with uncertain Prospect of Gain; whereas by their staple Commodity, Tobacco, they are certain to get a plentiful Provision; nay, often very great Estates.



College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, founded 1693, detail of engraved copperplate, ca. 1740

Upon this account [for this reason] they think it Folly to take off their *Hands* (or Negroes) and employ their Care and Time about anything that may make them lessen their Crop of Tobacco. . . .

As for Education several are sent to *England* for it, though the *Virginians*, being naturally of good Parts (as I have already hinted), neither require nor admire as much Learning as we do in *Britain*. Yet more would be sent over, were they not afraid of the Small-Pox which most commonly proves fatal to them. . . .

Thus the Youth might as well be instructed there as here by proper Methods without the Expense and Danger of coming hither, especially if they make Use of the great Advantage of the *College* at *Williamsburgh*, where they may (and many do) imbibe the Principles of all human and divine Literature, both in *English* and in the learned languages [Greek and Latin].

By the happy Opportunity of this *College* may they be advanced to religious and learned Education, according to the Discipline and Doctrine of the established *Church of England*, in which Respect this *College* may prove of singular Service and be an advantageous and laudable Nursery and strong Bulwark against the contagious dissensions in *Virginia*, which is the most ancient and loyal, the most plentiful and flourishing, the most extensive and beneficial Colony belonging to the Crown of *Great Britain*, . . .

***“Virginia may be justly esteemed the happy Retreat of true Britons and true Churchmen”***

If *New England* be called a Receptacle of Dissenters [i.e., Puritans] and an *Amsterdam* of Religion, *Pennsylvania* the Nursery of Quakers, *Maryland* the Retirement of *Roman Catholics*, *North Carolina* the Refuge of Run-aways, and *South Carolina* the Delight of Buccaneers and Pirates, *Virginia* may be justly esteemed the happy Retreat of *true Britons* and *true Churchmen* [i.e., Anglicans] for the most part, neither soaring too high nor drooping too low, consequently should merit the greater Esteem and Encouragement.

The common Planters, leading easy Lives, don't much admire Labour or any manly Exercise except Horse-Racing, nor Diversion except Cock-Fighting, in which some greatly delight. This easy Way of Living, and the Heat of the Summer, makes some very lazy, who are then said to be Climate-struck.

The Saddle-Horses, though not very large, are hardy, strong, and fleet, and will pace naturally and pleasantly at a prodigious Rate.

They are such Lovers of Riding that almost every ordinary Person keeps a Horse; and I have known some spend the Morning in ranging several Miles in the Woods to find and catch their Horses only to ride two or three miles to Church, to the Court-House, or to a Horse-Race, where they generally appoint to meet upon Business, and are more certain of finding those that they want to speak or deal with than at their Home.

No People can entertain their Friends with better Cheer and Welcome, and Strangers and Travellers are here treated in the most free, plentiful, and hospitable Manner, so that a few Inns or Ordinaries on the Road are sufficient. . . .

There is no Danger of wild Beasts in traveling, for the Wolves and Bears which are up the Country never attack any unless they be first assaulted and hurt; and the Wolves of late are much destroyed by Virtue of a Law which allows good Rewards for their Heads with the Ears on, to prevent Imposition and cheating the Public, for the Ears are crop'd when a Head is produced.

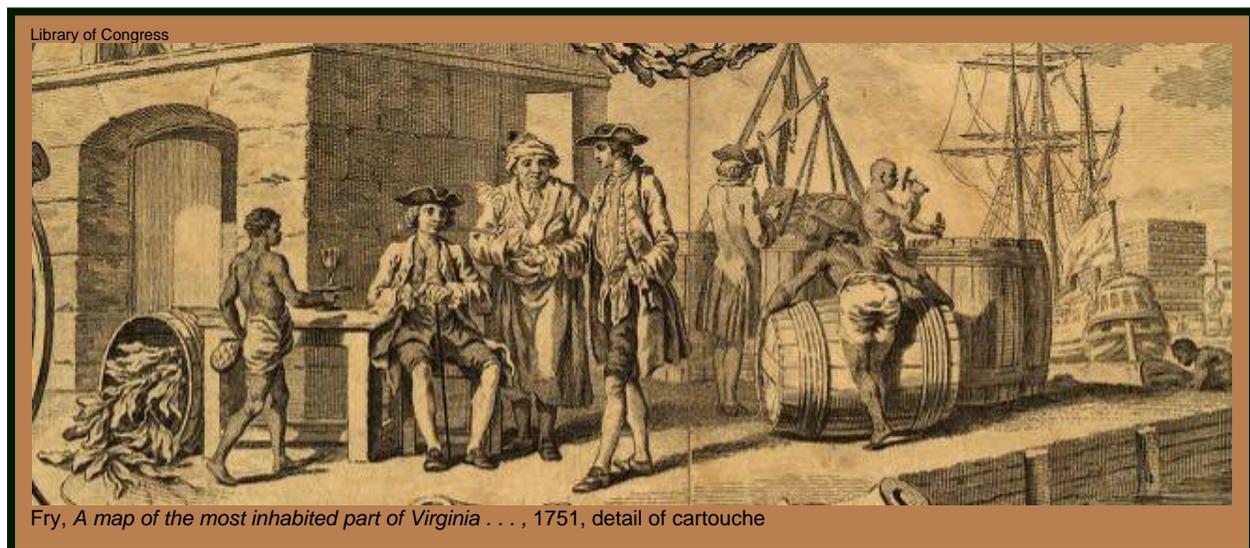
The worst Inconveniency in travelling across the Country is the circuit that must be taken to head Creeks, &c., for the main Roads wind along the rising Ground between the Rivers, though now they much shorten their Passage by mending the Swamps and building of Bridges in several Places; and there are established Ferries at convenient Places over the great Rivers; but in them is often much Danger from sudden Storms, bad Boats, or unskillful or willful Ferrymen, especially if one passes in a Boat with Horses, of which I have great reason to be most sensible by the Loss of a dear *Brother* at *Chickohomony Ferry* in Feb. 1723/4 [1734]. . . .

Though they are permitted to trade to no Parts but *Great Britain*, except these Places, yet have they in many Respects better and cheaper Commodities than we in *England*, especially of late Years; for the Country may be said to be altered and improved in Wealth and polite Living within these few Years, since the Beginning of *Colonel Spotswood's* Government, more than in all the Scores of Years before that, from its first Discovery. The Country is yearly supplied with vast Quantities of Goods from *Great Britain*, chiefly from *London, Bristol, Liverpool, Whitehaven*, and from *Scotland*.

The Ships that transport these Things often call at *Ireland* to victual [get provisions] and bring over frequently white servants which are of three kinds.

1. Such as come upon certain Wages by Agreement for a certain Time.
2. Such as come bound by Indenture, commonly called *Kids*, who are usually to serve four or five Years; and
3. [T]hose Convicts or Felons that are transported, whose Room they had much rather have than their Company, for abundance of them do great Mischiefs, commit Robbery and Murder, and spoil Servants that were before very good. But they frequently there meet with the End they deserved at Home, though indeed some of them prove indifferent good. Their being sent thither to work as Slaves for Punishment is but a mere Notion, for few of them ever lived so well and so easy before, especially if they are good for anything. These are to serve seven and sometimes fourteen Years, and they and Servants by Indentures have an Allowance of Corn and Clothes when they are out of their Time, that they may be therewith supported till they can be provided with Services or otherwise settled.

With these three Sorts of Servants are they supplied from *England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland*, among



which they that have a Mind to it may serve their Time with Ease and Satisfaction to themselves and their Masters, especially if they fall into good Hands. . . .

Besides *English Goods*, several Merchants in *Virginia* import from the *West-Indies* great Quantities of Rum, Sugar, Molasses, &c. and Salt very cheap from the *Salt Islands*,<sup>2</sup> which Things they purchase with Money, or generally with Pork, Beef, Wheat, *Indian-Corn* and the like.

In some of the poorer Parts of the Country abounding in Pine, do they gather up the *Light-wood*, or Knots of the old Trees, which will not decay, being piled up (as a Pit of Wood to be burnt to Charcoal) and encompassed with a Trench, and covered with Earth, is set on Fire; whereby the Tar is melted out, and running into the Trench is taken up and filled into Barrels, and being boiled to a greater Consistency becomes Pitch.

Of Pitch and Tar they send Home great Quantities, though not near so much as *North Carolina*, which formerly was the *South Part of Virginia*, but has long since been given away to Proprietors, though the Bounds between the Colony of *Virginia* and the Government of *North Carolina* are disputed, so that there is a very long *List of Land fifteen Miles broad* between both Colonies (called the *disputed Bounds*) in due Subjection to neither, which is an *Asylum* for the Runagates of both Countries. . . .

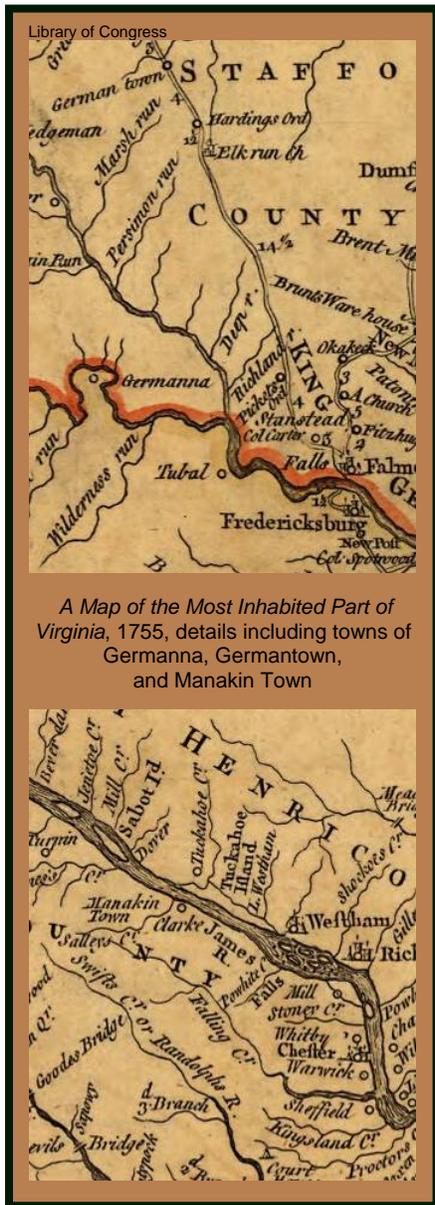
Here are also vast Quantities of *Iron Ore* and various Kinds of *Minerals*, whose Nature and Virtues are as yet undiscovered.

*Moses's Words of Exhortation to the Israelites for Obedience to God's Laws, Deut[eronomy]. viii. 6, 7, 8, 9,* may be applied to the *Virginians*, and particularly when he saith that God had brought them into a Land whose Stones are Iron; and for what we know the following Words may also be applied to them, when he saith out of the Hills of that Land might be digged *Brass*, for which there is no small Prospect and Expectation; and in all Probability there may be found the nobler Metals of *Gold* and *Silver*, if we did but search for them in the Bowels of the Earth, if we would but be at the Expense and Trouble to seek for them.

Why may not our Mountains in *America*, for what we know, be as rich as those of *Mexico* and *Peru* in the same Country? Since the little Hills so plentifully abound with the best of Iron, for the digging, melting, working, and Exportation whereof Providence has furnish'd us with all wonderful Conveniences, if we would add but a little Expense, Art, and Industry.

**Ch. 6. Of Germanna, the Palatines, Wine, Hemp, Flax, Silk, Sumac, Trees, Fruits, Coals, the Tracts of Land, Health, Militia, the Manaccan Town, Titles, Levies, Burgesses, Laws, and general Assembly.**

Beyond *Col. Spotswood's* [iron] Furnace, above the Falls of *Rappahannock River*, within View of the vast *Mountains*, he has founded a Town called *Germanna*, from some *Germans* sent over thither by *Queen Anne*, who are now removed up farther. Here he has Servants and Workmen of most handicraft Trades, and he is building a Church, Court-House, and Dwelling-



<sup>2</sup> Turks Islands in the Caribbean.

House for himself; and with his Servants and Negroes he has cleared Plantations about it, proposing great Encouragement for People to come and settle in that uninhabited Part of the World, lately divided into a Country [colony].

Beyond this are seated the Colony of *Germans* or *Palatines*, with Allowance of good Quantities of rich Land, at easy or no Rates, who thrive very well and live happily and entertain generously. . . .

Up *James River* is a Colony of *French Refugees*, who at the *Mannaca Town* live happily under our Government, enjoying their own Language and Customs. . . .

Most Land [in Virginia] has been taken up and seated [settled], except it be high up in the Country. . . .

Though now Land sells well there, in a few Years it will be more valued since the Number of Inhabitants increases so prodigiously, and the *Tracts* being divided every Age [generation] among several Children . . . into smaller Plantations, they at Length must be reduced to a Necessity of making the most of and valuing a little, which is now almost set at Nought. . . .

The *General Assembly* has Power to make Laws or repeal such others as they shall think most proper for the Security and Good of the Country, provided they be not contradictory to the Laws of *England* nor interfering with the Interest of *Great Britain*. . . All Laws that the *King* dislikes upon the first Perusal are immediately abrogated.

***“All Laws that the King dislikes upon the first Perusal are immediately abrogated.”***

Thus in State Affairs Liberty is granted and Care is taken to make such Laws from Time to Time as are different from the *Laws* in *England*, whenever the Interest or Necessity of the Country, or the Nature of the Climate and other Circumstances shall require it.

### ***PART III. Of the State of the Church and Clergy of Virginia.***

**T**HOUGH Provision is made, and proper Measures are taken to make Allowances and Alterations in Matters of *Government*, *State* and *Trade*, yet in Matters of *Religion*, there has not been the Care and Provision that might be wished and expected. . . .

Every Minister is a kind of *Independent* in his own Parish, in Respect of some little particular Circumstances and Customs to which they are often occasionally obliged; but this Liberty without Restraint may prove of bad Consequence hereafter when the bad Tenets and Disciplines of any *heterodox*, *libertine*, or *fantastical* Persons may plead *Prescription* for their Establishment [doctrine for their church] and be difficult to be eradicated.

In most Parishes are *Schools* (little Houses being built on Purpose) where are taught *English* and Writing. But to prevent the sowing the Seeds of Dissension and Faction, it is to be wished that the *Masters* or *Mistresses* should be such as are approved or licensed by the Minister and Vestry of the Parish, or Justices of the County; . . .

As for *baptizing Indians and Negroes*, several of the People disapprove of it, because they say it often makes them proud and not so good Servants. But these and such Objections are easily refuted, if the Persons be sensible, good, and understand *English*, and have been taught (or are willing to learn) the *Principles of Christianity*, and if they be kept to the Observance of it afterwards, for *Christianity* encourages and orders them to become more humble and better Servants, and not worse than when they were *Heathens*.

But as for *baptizing wild Indians and new Negroes*, who have not the least Knowledge nor Inclination to know and mind our Religion, Language and Customs, but will obstinately persist in their own *barbarous Ways*, I question whether Baptism of such (till they be a little weaned of their savage Barbarity) be not a *Prostitution* of a thing so *Sacred*.

But as for the *Children of Negroes* and *Indians* that are to live among *Christians*, undoubtedly they ought all to be baptized, since it is not out of the Power of their Masters to take Care that they have a Christian Education, learn their Prayers and Catechism, and go to Church, and not accustom themselves to lie, swear and steal, though such (as the poorer Sort in *England*) be not taught to read and write, which as yet has been found to be dangerous upon several political Accounts, especially Self-Preservation. . . .

## APPENDIX

It being observed by some Gentlemen of Distinction that in the foregoing Account of *Virginia* I hinted at some Things wherein Addition, Alteration, or Improvement of some Methods and Laws seem'd absolutely requisite for the Advancement of Religion and Learning, and the promotion of Arts and Trade, it was therefore thought not improper to annex the following Schemes upon those Subjects, wherein I deliver my Sentiments in as free and plain a manner as I can . . .

### ***SCHEME I. Of Education in Virginia.***

THE Royal Founders of *William and Mary* College, with Prospect of doing the greatest Good for the Colonies of *Virginia* and *Maryland*, conferred this princely *Donation* upon them; . . . But though it has found such unexpected Success and has proved of very great Service already, yet it is far short of such Perfection as it might easily attain to by the united Power of the Persons concerned about this important Foundation.

For it is now a College without a Chapel, without a Scholarship, and without a Statute. There is a Library without Books, comparatively speaking, and a President without a fix'd Salary till of late; A Burgess without certainty of Electors, and in fine [short], there have been Disputes and Differences about these and the like Affairs of the College hitherto without End.

These Things greatly impede the Progress of Sciences and learned Arts and discourage those that may be inclined to contribute their Assistance or Bounty toward the Good of the College. . . . [Jones continues with recommendations for improving the College of William and Mary.]

### ***SCHEME II. Of Religion in Virginia.***

It is an Opinion, as erroneous as common, that any sort of Clergyman will serve in *Virginia*, for Persons of immoral Lives or weak Parts and mean Learning not only expose themselves [preach publicly] but do great Prejudice to the Propagation of the Gospel there; and by bad Arguments or worse Example, instead of promoting Religion, become Encouragers of Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality. . . . Neither do they want quarrelsome and litigious Ministers who would differ with their Parishioners about insignificant Trifles, . . .

Clergymen for *Virginia* should be . . . Persons that have read and seen something more of the World than what is requisite for an *English* Parish. They must be such as can converse and know more than bare Philosophy and speculative Ethics, and have studied Men and Business in some measure as well as Books. They may act like Gentlemen, and be facetious and good-humour'd, without too much Freedom and Licentiousness. They may be good Scholars without becoming Cynics, as they may be good Christians without appearing Stoics. . . . [Jones continues with recommendations for the clergy and parish management in *Virginia*.]

### ***SCHEME III. Of Arts, Projects, Inventions, and Manufactures in Virginia.***

It is an undoubted Truth that in the Multitude of Inhabitants consists the Welfare, Riches, and Power of any People, especially when all center in Obedience to the same civil Power, and unanimously join in the Encouragement of Trade and industriously unite in the Improvement of their Manufactures; . . .

For these Reasons should *Virginia* be better stocked with Inhabitants, and more useful Arts and Projects be promoted there than hitherto have been. Not that this would be in order for the public Good of *Virginia* alone, but of all the *British* Empire in general, in that there might be employed all the idle and superfluous persons who, for want of Employment or Aversion to Business, prove as dead Members of the whole Body, or else by Immorality and Villainy prove noxious to others, destructive to themselves, and a Scandal to Mankind.

What Shoals of Beggars are allowed in *Great Britain* to suffer [allow] their Bodies to rust and consume with Laziness and Want? And besides Strowlers, what Number of Poor are burdensome to most Parishes? How do our Streets and Highways swarm with Rogues, and how are we over-stocked (as they say) with vast

Numbers of  
People of all  
Trades and  
Professions? But  
for all and more

***“the Servants and inferior Sort of People . . . are the poorest, idlest, and worst of Mankind, the Refuse of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Outcast of the People.”***

than these might Work enough be found in our Plantations [colonies], where they might be employed in the Benefit of their Country for the Advantage both of the temporal and spiritual Concernments by being kept to Business and getting Money in an honest Way. . . .

For these Reasons, such Persons of Sense and Resolution as have entered into Projects for Improvements in the Plantations (who have evinced us that all Schemes are not Bubbles) have been obliged for the generality [most part] to make use of the worst and vilest of Mankind for the Execution of the noblest and most useful Undertakings, though indeed continually several People of Sense, Virtue, and Fortune, entertaining tolerable good Notions of these Affairs, have embarked themselves and Families in such laudable and useful Designs. But for the generality, the Servants and inferior Sort of People, who have either been sent over to *Virginia* or have transported themselves thither, have been and are the poorest, idlest, and worst of Mankind, the *Refuse of Great Britain* and *Ireland*, and the *Outcast of the People*.

These Servants are but an insignificant Number when compared with the vast Shoals of *Negroes* who are employed as slaves there to do the hardest and most Part of the Work, the most laborious of which is the felling of Trees and the like, to which kind of Slavery (if it must be so called) our Wood-Cutters in *England* are exposed, only with this Difference: that the *Negroes* eat wholesomer Bread and better Pork with more Plenty and Ease; and when they are Sick, their Owners' Interest and Purse are deeply engaged in their Recovery, who likewise are obliged to take all the Care imaginable of the Children of their slaves for their own great Profit; so that the *Negroes*, though they work moderately yet live plentifully, have no Families to provide for, no Danger of Beggary, no Care for *the Morrow*.

But to me it seems to be more Prudence and Charity for our own Poor and Vagabonds to be there employed and provided for than for us to maintain and use such great Numbers of *Africans*. If we can do better without them, certainly we should forbear importing so many (though this may interfere with the Interest of some) since it would advance the Good of the Public; and that we may be without them is plain, since we have Rogues and Idlers enough of our own to do the same Work, to which if they were compelled by mild Methods, it would ease the Public of a great deal of Charge, Trouble, and Loss, and would highly tend to the Advancement of the temporal and spiritual Happiness of our Poor, and be very instrumental in the Suppression of the Theft and Villainy, and for the Reformation of the most profligate. Thousands of poor, honest, unfortunate People of all Trades and Occupations might be there employed for the Support of themselves and Interest of Trade, that can find neither Work nor Maintenance for themselves and Families at home; and such as had rather stroll or steal here might be confined by mild Force to moderate Labour there, sufficient to support themselves and benefit their Employers. . . . [Jones continues with recommendations for implementing his plan to transport the “poor and vagabonds” to serve as a labor supply in *Virginia*.]

## SCHEME IV. Of Trade in Virginia.

THE Projects before laid down might be put in Execution without any Impediment to the planting of Tobacco, Corn &c., in the methods that are now practiced, and without any Loss to the present Virginia Trade and Income to the Crown . . .

. . . Instead of being a Hindrance to the present Customs and Methods, it [Jones's plan] would promote the Interest and Trade both of *Great Britain* and *Virginia* and the other Plantations. Would it not be for the good of Thousands of unfortunate People, besides for the Benefit of *Virginia*, if Farmers were there well settled and Husbandry [raising crops and livestock] carried on regularly, and all sorts of Grain and Grass brought to Perfection, if greater Quantities of good Cider and fine Spirits were made there, not only for their own Use but for Transportation to the *West-Indies*, nay, and through *England* to the *Turkish* Dominions where Wine is prohibited? How cheap might Ships be there victualled with the best Provision, and what Quantities of barrelled Pork and Beef might be exported from *Virginia*, with *Indian* Corn, Wheat, Rye, &c. and be sent to several Ports of the World where such Things turn to very good Account for the Merchant and Farmer? Many indeed have been balked in *planting* and *husbandry* there; but such have been chiefly *Londoners*, who are Strangers to Country Business. Any Person may conceive the great Profit and Use to Trade in General, by having the Marshes turned into Meadows, the Rivers confined to deep Channels, by Passages being contrived at the *Falls*, and the upper Parts of the Rivers being made navigable.

*England* is the Mart and Storehouse whither the Manufactures and vendible [saleable] Goods of *Virginia* for the most Part should be sent; and after the *English* have culled what they like and have Occasion for, surely they are so skillful in Merchandise that they could vend to other Countries the Overplus of these Commodities and reap sufficient Profit for their Pains. Thus suppose we should have more of the following Things than our own Use requires, certainly they might easily and profitably be disposed of to others such as the leather and woolen Manufactures, hempen and flaxen Goods, Pitch, Tar, Timber for Ship and House-Carpenters, and Cabinet-Makers, Joiners, &c., such as Oak, Deal, Walnut, Hickory, Cedar, Cypress, Locust, and the like, with Masts, Yards, Ships, and all Sorts of naval Stores, with Planks, Clapboards, and Pipestaves; and also Hops, Wine, Hoops, Cask, Silk, Drugs, Colours, Paper, Train Oil, Sturgeon, with various Sorts of Stones, Minerals, and Ores, with Cord, Wood, and Coals, and Metals, particularly Iron; which last, if it meets with proper Encouragement, will soon be made extremely useful to the Public. . . .

These Projects would tend to the great Interest of the Plantation as well as the Good of Thousands of poor or idle *English*, and the advantage of the *English* Dominions and Trade in general; and besides the Benefits above-mentioned, we may further observe that by such Means our inferior People that now are clothed with Rags, being promoted to Circumstances that would afford it, would yearly expend vast Sums in good Apparel, Household Goods, &c., which they must be supplied with from *Great Britain*, whereas now that are not only useless but even are noxious Branches of our Society, to which Class we may reduce at least (I believe) 1/20 Part of our People who might thus be put in a Method, not only to maintain

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*Enter'd in York River.*  
Aug. 5. Ship Falcon, of London, Halden Young, Master, from London, but last from Guinea, with 348 Slaves, some returned Goods, and 14 lbs. of Elephants Teeth.

*Clear'd out.*  
Aug. 4. Ship Gooch, of London, Charles Friend, Master, for London, with 572 Hogheads of Tobacco, some Skins, and Staves.  
--- 5. Ship Martin, of Bristol, William Beale, Master, for Bristol, with 401 Hogheads of Tobacco, some Iron, Staves, and returned Goods.  
--- 8. Ship Braxton, of London, Thomas Danfie, Master, for London, with 304 Hogheads of Tobacco, some Skins, Iron, Staves, and Plank.  
----- Scooner Darby, of North-Carolina, Sarvant Ballard, Master, for James River, with Pork, Corn, Wax, Tallow, &c.  
--- 17. Scooner Grampus, of Virginia, John Briggs, Master, for Boston, with 900 Bushels of Peate, 600 Bushels of Corn, 180 Bushels of Wheat, 400 Feet of Walnut Plank, 300 Pipe Staves, and 1 Hoghead of Madeira Wine.  
--- 21. Brigantine Greenock, of Greenock, John Orr, Master, for Greenock, with 195 Hogheads of Tobacco, 5500 Barrel Staves, and 600 Feet of Oak Plank.

Williamsburg,

Merchant ship arrivals and departure, York River, as reported in the *Virginia Gazette*, 25 August 1738

themselves handsomely and live well but likewise by their Consumption of Goods would support Thousands of Families in the Manufacturing of such Commodities as they may have Occasion for. And the addition to our Public Riches which would be required in the Advancement of the Fortunes and Estates of all these mean People would arise from the Increase of our foreign Trade in supplying other Countries with those Commodities, many of which we now even buy ourselves, so that in Reality these Folks might be maintained and provided for well at the Expense of Foreign Nations without the least Charge or Contribution (in effect) of our own Fellow-Subjects. . . .

The Extent, the Wealth, the numerous Inhabitants, the Hands employed, the Goods consumed, the Duties and Customs occasioned by the Plantations, especially such as *Virginia*, are well worthy the most serious Consideration, and claim the greatest Favour and Encouragement in the Trade and Manufactures of those Places, which are vastly larger than all his *Majesty's* Dominions in Europe, and in time may become as considerable, they being at present one of the chiefest Causes and main Supports of our Trade, and bringing as much Money into the Treasury and the Purses of Merchants and other People as most other Parts of the World to which we trade. . . .

There can be no Room for real Apprehension of Danger of a Revolt of the Plantations in future Ages. Or if any of them should

***“There can be no Room for real Apprehension of Danger of a Revolt of the Plantations in future Ages.”***

attempt it, they might very easily be reduced by the others; for *all of them* will never unite with one another; for though all the Plantations agree in this, that they all belong to and depend entirely upon *Great Britain*; yet they have each Views different from one another, and as strenuously pursue their separate Interests by various and distinct methods. Besides, they can't possibly be without *Great Britain*, to which they owe their being at first made Colonies and afterwards have been always supported, maintained and employed by it. They can't live without this *Mart* for their Manufactures and Market, for Supply of Goods that they want, where they have a great Interest, from whence they are descended, to which they are united by Blood, Religion, Language, Laws, and Customs, and also they have and may always expect to find greater Favour and Encouragement and Protection in *England* than from any other Nation in the World. The Plantations cannot possibly subsist without some Trade, Correspondence, Union, and Alliance in *Europe*, and absolute Necessity obliges them to fix these perpetually in *Great Britain*. Upon which, as upon a Stock, they are engrafted, spring forth, blossom and bear Fruit abundantly, and being once lopped off from it, they would soon wither and perish. Thus is it the Interest and Safety, as well as the Duty and Inclination of the Inhabitants of our Plantations, always to be subservient to the Government of *England*, by which they are planted, protected, supported, assisted, and encouraged.



English tobacco labels for Virginia tobacco, 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, reproduced in F. W. Fairholt, *Tobacco, Its History and Associations*, 1859 New York Public Library