

Leah and Rachel, or the Two Fruitful Sisters Virginia, and Mary-land

The Country [Virginia and Maryland] is very full of sober, modest persons, both men and women, and many that truly fear God and follow that perfect rule of our blessed Saviour, to do as they would be done by; and of such a happy inclination is the Country, that many who in England have been lewd and idle, there in emulation or imitation (for example moves more than precept) of the industry of those they finde there, not onely grow ashamed of their former courses, but abhor to hear of them, and in small time wipe off those stains they have formerly been tainted with; yet I cannot but confesse, there are people wicked enough (as what Country is free) for we know some natures will never be reformed, but these must follow the Fryers rule, *Si non caste, tamen caute*,¹ for if any be known, either to prophane the Lords day or his Name, be found drunk, commit whoredome, scandalize or disturb his neighbour, or give offence to the world by living suspiciously in any bad courses; there are for each of these, severe and wholesome laws and remedies made, provided and duly put in execution. I can confidently affirm, that since my being in England, which is not yet four moneths, I have been an eye and ear witsse of more deceits and villanies (and such as modesty forbids me to utter) then I either ever saw or heard mention made of in Virginia, in my one and twenty years abroad in those parts.

And therefore those that shall blemish Virginia any more, do but like the Dog bark against the Moon, untill they be blind and weary; and Virginia is now in that secure growing condition, that like the Moon so barked at, she will passe on her course, maugre all detractors, and a few years will bring it to that glorious happiness, that many of her calumniators will intercede to procure admittance thither, when it will be hard to be attained to; for in smal time, little land will be to be taken up; and after a while none at all; and as the Mulberry Trees grows up, which are by every one planted, Tobacco will be laid by, and we shall wholly fall to making of Silk (a Sample of 400*l.* hath already been sent for England, and approved of) which will require little labour; and therefore shall have little use of Servants; besides, Children increase and thrive so well there, that they themselves will sufficiently supply the defect of Servants: And in small time become a Nation of themselves sufficient to people the Country: And this good policy is there used; As the Children there born grow to maturity, and capable (as they are generally very capable and apt) they are still preferred and put into authority, and carry themselves therein civilly and discretly; and few there are but are able to give some Portions with their daughters, more or lesse, according to their abilities; so that many comming out of England have raised themselves good fortunes there meerly by matching with Maidens born in the Country.

And therefore I cannot but admire, and indeed much pittie the dull stupidity of people necessitated in England, who rather then they will remove themselves, live here a base, slavish, penurious life; as if there were a necessity to live and to live so, choosing rather then they will forsake England to stuff New-Gate, Bridewell, and other Jayles with their carkessies, nay cleave to tyburne² it selfe, and so bring

confusion to their souls, horror and infamie to their kindred or posteritie, others itch out their wearisom lives in reliance of other mens charities, an uncertaine and unmanly expectation; some more abhorring such courses betake themselves to almost perpetuall and restlesse toyle and druggeries out of which (whilst their strength lasteth) they (observing hard diets, earlie and late houres) make hard shift to subsist from hand to mouth, untill age or sicknesse takes them off from labour and directs them the way to beggerie, and such indeed are to be pittied, relieved and provided for.

I have seriously considered when I have (passing the streets) heard the several Cryes, and noting the commodities, and the worth of them they have carried and cryed up and down, how possibly a livelihood could be exacted out of them, as to cry Matches, Smal-coal, Blacking, Pen and Ink, Thred-laces, and a hundred more such kinde of trifling merchandizes; then looking on the nastinesse of their linnen habits and bodies, I conclude if gain sufficient could be raised out of them for subsistence, yet their manner of living was degenerate and base, and their condition to be far below the meanest servant in Virginia.

The other day, I saw a man heavily loaden with a burden of Faggots on his back, crying, Dry Faggots, Dry Faggots; he travailed much ground, bawled frequently, and sweat with his burthen: but I saw none buy any, neer three houres I followed him, in which time he rested, I entered into discourse with him, offered him drink, which he thankfully accepted of, (as desirous to learn the mistery of his trade) I enquired what he got by each burden when sold? he answered me three pence: I further asked him what he usually got a day? he replied, some dayes nothing some dayes six pence; some time more, but seldome; me thought it was a pittifull life, and I admired how he could live on it; And yet it were dangerous to advise these wretches to better their conditions by travaile, for fear of the cry of, a spirit, a spirit.³

The Country is not only plentifull but pleasant and profitable, pleasant in regard of the brightnessse of the weather, the many delightfull rivers, on which the inhabitants are settled (every man almost living in sight of a lovely river) the abundance of game, the extraordinary good neighbourhood and loving conversation they have one with the other.

Pleasant in their building, which although for most part they are but one story besides the loft, and built of wood, yet contrived so delightfull, that your ordinary houses in England are not so handsome, for usually the rooms are large, daubed and whitelimed, glazed and flowered, and if not glazed windows, shutters which are made very pritty and convenient.

Pleasant in observing their stocks and flockes of Cattle, Hoggs, and Poultry, grazing, whisking and skipping in their sights, pleasant in having all things of their own, growing or breeding without drawing the peny to send for this and that, without which, in England they cannot be supplied.