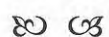


## AMERICAN JOURNEYS COLLECTION



The Discourse of the  
Old Company,  
1625

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## INTRODUCTION

THE government of Virginia under the first charter (1606) was that of a supreme council in England appointed by the king and a subordinate council in Virginia; and neither the Virginia Company nor the settlers had any political authority. Under the second charter (1609), the government was centred in England in a treasurer and council, who selected a governor for Virginia having authority independent of the local council. The third charter (1612) vested the authority in England in the company and, as a consequence, parties arose. On the question of governing the colony, the company soon divided into two factions, — one in favor of continuing martial law, at the head of which was Sir Robert Rich, afterwards Earl of Warwick, and the “Country” or “Patriot Party” in favor of ending the system of servitude. The latter party was led by Sir Thomas Smith, who had been treasurer ever since 1609, Sir Edwin Sandys, Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, Sir John Danvers, and John and Nicholas Ferrar. In 1618 Sir Thomas Smith was deposed from his office, and Sandys made treasurer, which so offended Smith that he joined forces with the court party. After a year Sandys, finding himself an object of disfavor with the king, stepped aside, and the Earl of Southampton, who agreed with Sandys in all his views, was appointed and kept in office till the company’s dissolution. The five years’ rule of the patriot party was a period of extraordinary activity in Virginia affairs, and the plans of Sandys and Southampton were remarkably statesmanlike and far-reaching. But the calamities of epidemics and an Indian massacre, which could not be prevented, made them a prey to all kinds of attack.

At the suggestions of Lionel Cranfield, the crafty Earl of Middlesex, they were induced to apply to King James for the monopoly of the sale of tobacco in England, and they became entangled in a quarrel, which was fanned to a white heat by the intrigues of Count Gondomar, the Spanish minister. The court party took the matter to the king, and after a long agitation the charter was revoked. After this the king appointed a commission, consisting in part of members of the court party, to take charge of Virginia affairs, but on his death, the next year, King Charles, his son, revoked the former royal commission and intrusted affairs relating to Virginia to a committee of the Privy Council, who ignored the Smith party and called the Sandys party into consultation. These last presented a paper in April, 1625, called "The Discourse of the Old Company," in which they gave a full history of affairs, and petitioned to be reincorporated. Charles was not indisposed to grant the request, but postponed the matter from time to time till sentiment in the colony, which once favored the company, became adverse to it, as the Virginians found that they enjoyed a larger degree of liberty under the neglect of the king than under the care of the company.

The document is reprinted, by permission, from the *Virginia Magazine of History*, I. 155-167, 287-302. The last part of it, not narrative, but containing suggestions as to future government, etc., has been omitted. The original is in the Public Record Office in London.

L. G. T.

## THE DISCOURSE OF THE OLD COMPANY, 1625

*May it please your Lop<sup>s</sup>*<sup>1</sup>

WHEN last we attended this Honourable Board y<sup>or</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> required two things at our hands to be presented this day in writing to your Lop<sup>s</sup>.

The first, our opinion touching the best forme of Government to be made for Virginia; the second, as to such contract touching Tobacco w<sup>th</sup> his Ma<sup>tie</sup> as might both uphold his former Revenue, and not be grievous to the Plantations.

Concerning the former of w<sup>ch</sup> propositicons, wee humbly crave leave thus much to deliver w<sup>th</sup>out offence, that it came altogether unexpected to us: who brought w<sup>th</sup> us, a strong and confirmed resolucion, not to intermedle any more in the business of Virginia, so soyled and wronged by the partie opposite, and now reduced to extreame terms allmost past recovery and wherein all our former labours, cares, and expenses had received by the practise and procurement of these men, the undeserved reward of rebuke and disgrace.

Notw<sup>th</sup>standing, whome wee have alwayes found just and hono<sup>ble</sup> and if happily some good may rebound thereby to that now distressed and languishing Plantation, w<sup>ch</sup> hath bin heretofore so deare unto us, and w<sup>ch</sup> gave so great hope of honour to this Kingdome, and might have bin in these tymes of warrly<sup>2</sup> preparations, of so great use and service to his Mat<sup>ie</sup> if it had bin so cherished and strengthened by these men, as when they gayned the government, they pretended and promised, we wised<sup>3</sup> and designed: We here present in all humbleness our deliberate opinion touching the forme of Government

<sup>1</sup> Lordships.

<sup>2</sup> Warlike. England was then at war with Spain.

<sup>3</sup> Wished.

now fittest to be established for the restoring and reviving of that Plantation, if it be possible yet to be recovered. Wherein wee thinke it requisite, that yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> in the first place be truly informed, of the state of that Colony, what before it was, and what now it is, according unto the best advertisements from thence received.

The Plantation now in Virginia, began about the yeare 1606 and continued about twelve yeares under the Governem<sup>t</sup> of the selfe same handes, whereinto it was first intrusted by the Kings Ma<sup>tie</sup> the most Royall founder of this noble worke. The perticular carriages of this first Governem<sup>t</sup> are too long, and would bee too displeasing to yo<sup>r</sup> Lopp<sup>s</sup> eares. But in Generall such it was, as the now Earle of Middlesex then Lo: high Treasurer<sup>1</sup> (being an ancient adventurer and counsellor for Virginia) informed yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> sitting in Counsell the 5th of March, 1622, when he told Alderman Johnson, That in former yeares when he the said alderman was Deputie, and the business was in other hands, it was carried leaudly,<sup>2</sup> so that if they should be called to an accompt for it, their Estates would not answere it.

What his Lo<sup>pp</sup> delivered as his owne censure, was truly the opinion of the whole company of Adventurers here in England: And w<sup>th</sup> them doth the Colonie concure having the last yeare by their Vice admirall sent a writing<sup>3</sup> signed by the hands of the Generall Assembly, and directed to his Ma<sup>tie</sup>, wherein having declared: The manner of Those Twelve yeares Governem<sup>t</sup>, they conclude w<sup>th</sup> these words, full of passion and griefe; and rather then to be reduced to live under the like Government, wee desire his Ma<sup>tie</sup> that Commissioners may be sent over with authoritie to hang us. Of this quallitie was the first Governem<sup>t</sup> And answerable to fforme, were the effects, as the Generall Assemblie having by oath examined the particulars, sett downe in their Declaration directed to his late Mat<sup>ie</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, lord high treasurer from 1621 to his impeachment in 1624.

<sup>2</sup> Lewdly.

<sup>3</sup> This was the paper entitled *The Tragical Declaration*.

1. For People then alive about the number of 400.<sup>1</sup>
2. Very many of them in want of corne, utterly destitute of cattle, swine, Poultry and other provisions to nourish them.
3. As for Fortificacon agaynst a forraigne enemy there was none at all, onely foure pieces mounted, but altogether unserviceable.
4. There was only eight Plantacions, all w<sup>ch</sup> were but poorly housed, and ill fortified agaynst the Savages.
5. Onely one old friggott belonging to the Sumer Ilandes, one shallop, one shippboate, and two small boats belonging to private men.
6. Three ministers in orders and Two w<sup>th</sup>out.
7. No comoditie on foote save Tobacco.
8. The Indians in doubtful Termes.

This as they report was the true estate of the Plantacons at the Twelve yeares end. To w<sup>ch</sup> being added the other condition of the colonie, w<sup>ch</sup> in other writings they expresse:

1. That they lived or rather suffered under Martial lawe.
2. Under a most extorting Governour there whome by 24 bundles of depositions they have accused of strange depredacons.
3. Under most oppressive orders hence, to the breach of all faith and honesty.
4. W<sup>th</sup>out confort of wives or servants.
5. W<sup>th</sup>out assurance of their estates.
6. There beinge no Dividends of Land laid out.<sup>2</sup>
7. W<sup>th</sup>out assurance of their Libties, being violently decteyned as serv<sup>ts</sup> beyond their convenented tymes.

We may truly affirme, that the intencons of the people in Virginia, were no wayes to settle there a colonie, but to gett

<sup>1</sup> At Easter, 1619, about the time Sir George Yeardley arrived, there were one thousand people in Virginia — four hundred on the public plantations and six hundred on the private.

<sup>2</sup> The joint-stock partnership expired November 30, 1616, and Captain Samuel Argall was sent to Virginia with instructions to give every settler his own private dividend. But Argall disregarded his orders and kept the people in servitude until he was superseded by Yeardley. Sir Thomas Smith was, therefore, not fairly responsible for the whole dismal picture drawn above.

a little wealth by Tobacco, then in price, and to return for Englande.

As for the Adventurers here the greatest part were long before beaten out as from an hopeless Action. In w<sup>ch</sup> regard there was ffifteene thousand pounds of mens subscripcons w<sup>ch</sup> by no means they could bee procured to pay in; sundry of them alleaging in their answers in chancery upon their oathes, the misimployment of the monyes, and ill keeping of the accounts. Those few that followed the business, upon some hope to reforme it, were (by the Governours here, for their owne particuler ends as is conceaved, for, to their owne private benefitt it was only sutable) directed to bestowe their moneyes in adventuringe by way of Magazine,<sup>1</sup> upon two comodities onely, Tobacco and Sassafras matters of present proffitt, but no wayes foundacons of a future state. Soe that of a merchantlike Trade there was some probbillitie at least for a while; but of a Plantation there was none at all, neither in the course nor in the intencons either of the Adventurers here or the colonie there.

In this estate and condicon was the action lefte by the First to the second Governm<sup>t</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> began in the yeare 1619 by the choice of S<sup>r</sup> Edwin Sandis for Treasurer. To whome the yeare followinge succeed<sup>d</sup> the Earle of Southampton.

1. Under whose Governm<sup>t</sup> by Gods blessing the Plantation soe prospered as by the end of the yeare 1621 the number of people was encreased, there, to be about Two thousand.

2. The number of Neat cattle, besides Goates and Swine, eight hundred.

3. The number of Housinge was proporcionably encreased, and the manner of building much bettered.

4. The number of Boats was Ten tymes multiplyed, and w<sup>ch</sup> was much more, there were fower Shippes belonging to the Colonie.

5. Ther were sent more than eight able ministers.

<sup>1</sup> Particular merchants would make up a fund and send over a ship with goods to exchange for tobacco and sassafras. This was called a magazine.



6. With great care and cost there were procured men skillfull in sawing Milles from Hambrough.<sup>1</sup>

7. Vigneroones from Lanquedock:<sup>2</sup> In divers places of the Colonie, Vineyards beganne, some of them conteyninge Ten thousand plants.

8. Store of silkeworme-seed sent.

9. And the Iron-workes brought after five thousand pounds expences to that assured perfection, as w<sup>th</sup> in Three months they promised to send home great quantities.

10. Many new Plantations were made.

11. All men had sufficiency of corne.

12. And many Great plenty of cattle, swyne and Poultrie, and other good provisions.

13. The mortalitie w<sup>ch</sup> had raigned the two first yeares, (w<sup>ch</sup> at that tyme was generall over all America) was at last ceased.

14. Soe that by this sodayne and unexpected advancement of Plantation in these things, together with the redresse of all former Grievances: supplies of young women for wives, and of youtnes for serv<sup>ts</sup> being sent them.

15. The bloody Lawes being silenced and their Governemt ordered like to that of this Kingdom.

16. Provisions being made for the mayntennce of Officers that they should not need to prey upon the people: And the like done for the ministers:

17. The libertie of a Generall assembly being granted them, whereby they find out and execute those things as might best tend to their good.

18. The Estates of Land by just Dividends being surely conveyed:

19. A ffree Trade from hense for all sorts of people being permitted, whereby they were eeven to superfluity furnished w<sup>th</sup> all necessities:

The Colony grewe into an opinion that they were the happiest people in the world, w<sup>ch</sup> meeting here at home w<sup>th</sup> the experience of most Noble Demeanor on the Companies part,

<sup>1</sup> Hamburg.

<sup>2</sup> Vinedressers from Languedoc.

agaynst w<sup>ch</sup> Envy itselfe could not finde any shadowe of calumny or offence: the reputacon of this action grew to such an height, as not only the old Adventurers renewed their zeale of their first Loves, but great numbers of new came dayly in w<sup>th</sup> assurance to expend large somes in the business.

And for the Plant<sup>rs</sup> to goe in person, not only here at home Thousands of choise people offred themselves: but out of Ireland went divers shippes, and more were followinge: Three hundred ffamilies French and Dutch in the yeare 1621 made request to the state, that they might plant in Virginia; <sup>1</sup> whither not long before, condemned persons had refused to go with pardon of their Lives.

The great amendment in this and in all other parts of this Action, made the Earle of Middlesex say at yo<sup>r</sup> honob<sup>le</sup> Board, That in these latter tymes the Plantation by the good carriage had thriven and prospered beyond beliefe and allmost miraculously.

This wee cannot but esteeme an hono<sup>ble</sup> testimony proceeding from our most heavy enemy, who had himselfe layde in o<sup>r</sup> way soe many great Rubbs and Difficulties, as hee might well say, It was by miracle wee over passed them.

The first yeare, directly agaynst his Ma<sup>ty</sup> L<sup>res</sup> Pattents, and consequently against Laws, by the judgment of the then Attorney-Generall, exceedingly over burdeninge our Commodity:

The second yeare to the Kings great dammage and abuse of the whole Kingdome procuringe an utter banishment of our Tobacco:

And the third yeare enforceinge us to bring all in, onely to the enrichm<sup>t</sup> of his private friends. But besides these; we were continually struglinge w<sup>th</sup> a most malicious faction w<sup>thin</sup>

<sup>1</sup> They were Walloons, Huguenots, driven from Europe by persecution. Not liking the terms offered by the Virginia Company, they entered into negotiation with the Dutch West India Company, and in 1623 went to New York. Some few, nevertheless, came to Virginia. Among these was Nicholas Marlier (generally rendered Martian), who was the first patentee of the land where Yorktown is now located. He was an ancestor of George Washington.

our owne Body here; yet through all these difficulties did we wrestle by Gods blessing, with the expence of lesse then fflower and twenty thousands pounds of the Public stock. For how-so-ever your Lop<sup>s</sup> have been enformed, the very thruth w<sup>ch</sup> we shall alwayes make good is, that there was not receaved from the Lottaries in the tyme of this latter Governem<sup>t</sup> any more than Twenty one thousand seaven hundred sixty six poundes nyne shillings Two pence. By the expence of w<sup>ch</sup> some together w<sup>th</sup> about Three thousand pounds receaved from the Collections, wee brought the Colony to those Termes wee have related. And if in the Declaration sent to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> the last yeare, the colony have made a right and perfect calculacon, wee affirme unto yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> that in the first Three yeares of this latter Governement the company sent as many shipps in nomber, but of greater burthen; as many people in nomber, but much better provided, as were sent in the first Twelve years. Yet had the latter Governem<sup>t</sup> under Twenty fower Thousand poundes, and S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Smith receaved above Three score and ffifteene thousand pounds, of publique stock. See that wee may truly affirme through Gods blessing w<sup>th</sup> a Third part of the money, and in a fourth part of the tyme, wee brought the Plantation to foure tymes the nomber of men that Sr Thomas Smith left it in, and in all other parts incomparably better.

The Plantation being growne to this height by the end of the year 1621, it pleased God in his secrett judgment to give leave to the enemies thereof, by many powerfull and most wicked meanes to bring it downe agayne to the ground. The first Blowe was a most blowdy massacre, when by the Treacherous cruelty of the savages about 400 of o<sup>r</sup> People were slayne, upon the 22th of March 1621.<sup>1</sup> The terror whereof w<sup>th</sup> the losse of much cattle and other substance, and a sodayne alteracon of the state of all things, so dismaide the whole Colony, as they allmost gave themselves for gone. But then appeared both the love of the Company to the Plantation and their great abilettie

<sup>1</sup> At this time it was usual in England to regard the new year as beginning on March 25. We should date the massacre March 22, 1622.

to goe through therewith: when in supply of this Loss, and for the encouragement of the Colony, they did send that yeare to Virginia 16 ships and 800 people and that altogether at the charges of private Adventurors. For the publique stock being utterly exhaust the yeare before was not able to contribute 500*l.* towards all this charge.

But this cruell Tragedy of the massacre was second<sup>d</sup> by Two other sharpe Calamities in the very neck one of another:

First, scarcitie in the Colony by being putt off from their Grounds prepared, together w<sup>th</sup> the losse of their season and much seed; besides that through the troublesomnes of those tymes, they could not freely imploy themselves in plantinge thereof, no not in those their scanted grounds, many Plantations being drawne into few places for their better defence. W<sup>ch</sup> pestringe of themselves did likewise breed contagious sicknesse; w<sup>ch</sup> being encreased by the Infection brought in by some shippes, there dyed that yeare of mortallitie neere upon 600 more: and the Colony passed much hardnesse in their victuall, by reason of the miscarriage of one of their shippes, w<sup>ch</sup> the Company sett forth w<sup>th</sup> above 500*l.* worth of meale and other provisions: But the shipp being blowne up w<sup>th</sup> Powder at the Summer Islandes, the Provisions were lost, and never came to Virginia.

Notwithstandinge these things were most grievous to the Company here; yett were they no wayes of Discouragement, but rather seemed to add heat to their former zeale: so as by the beginning of the year 1623 there appeared in readinesse and preparation to go to Virginia, double that number of people and Adventurors that any former yeare had carried. When on a sodayne the Plantation itselke was by Captaine Butler in a certayne writinge Intituled The unmaskinge of Virginia, soe fowly disgraced, and the present miseries thereof so farr amplified above Truth, and the future hopes there of so belowe all good meanings derided and villified by divers ill willers of the Action especially some discontented members of the Company, as the greatest part of the intended supplies for New Plantations, gave over, as some of themselves will

testify to yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup>, yet notw<sup>th</sup>standinge, the united Body of the Company did even that year, 1623, send out eleven Shippes, stored w<sup>th</sup> supplies of victuall and provisions: although by many cruell encounters of the opposites, they were so hindered and dejected, directly w<sup>th</sup> Intention to make them abandon the busines. But the welfare of the Plantacon and the mayntennce of their own honour and credit, did prevaile so w<sup>th</sup> the company that though w<sup>th</sup> certainty of their owne extreame loss, they passed in the aboundance of supply, not only the necessitis of the Colony, but even the unreasonable demaunds of their opposite: Having in fower days space that was given them after the notice of the Colonies want, procured the underwriting of fower thousand pounds Adventure: w<sup>ch</sup> the Hono<sup>ble</sup> Board of the privy Counsell was pleased w<sup>th</sup> much Noble favour highly to approve.

As for the people that went that yeare in those eleven ships the nomber was not above 260, and those procured not w<sup>th</sup>out difficulty, so much had the disgrace of the Plantation spread amongst the comon sort of people.

Neither could it be prevented by the companie although they used all possible dilligence; solliciting the Comission<sup>rs</sup> then appointed by his Ma<sup>tie</sup> by a publique examinacon of Captayne Butlers reporte, to clear the truth. But they would by no meanes bee drawne thereunto. As for the companie it selfe, their proceedings and demeanors were so approbriously calumniat<sup>d</sup> as deprived them both of abillitie and credite to doe any good herein: but w<sup>th</sup> much sorrowe to behold how sencibly and dangerously the good opinion of this Action decayed; so that Preachers of note in the Cittie that had begun in this latter Governem<sup>t</sup> to pray continually for Virginia, lefte quite the remembrance of it; finding the Action to growe either odious or contemptible in mens minds: w<sup>ch</sup> yet but a little before was of that esteeme as divers on their death beds gave great Lagacies to the furtherance thereof; and even from the East Indies by way of contribucon, hath bin sent by the ffactors and poore marriners above 1000 marks, so farr was the reputacon of this action spread, by the prosperinge thereof

under the latter Governem<sup>t</sup> and by their zealous and sollicitous endeavours. W<sup>ch</sup> although by the continuall encrease of further suffringes, their pattent being called in question, receaved a sore check: yet not w<sup>th</sup>standing their owne Innocencie giving them courage and hope that they should overcome all w<sup>th</sup> honour and thanks of the state: there were ffive shippes provided for this last yeare, 1624, whereof one of them since the Companies dissolucon hath given over her voyage: the other ffoure have proceeded, although w<sup>th</sup> much difficulty, in regard that a great part of the Passengers that afore intended to goe, fell off. Whereby two of the shippes w<sup>ch</sup> had their comissions from the late companie in May last could not gett away till the end of this last yeare, the one in ffebruary, the other in March last.<sup>1</sup>

Thus have wee given yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> a true Informacon, both of the growth and languishinge of the Virginia Plantacion, in these ffive latter yeares Governemt: wherein no incombrances, no calamities whatsoever could keepe it soe downe, but that it did yearely advance itselfe w<sup>th</sup> a most remarkable growth whilst the carefull Nurse and tender mother the Company was permitted to governe it.

Though contagion and sword destroyed many people: yet whilst the number of new did doubly supply those that fayled it cannot be said, but the action was in a thriving, in a prosperous course; though not in a cleare or easy. Then began it to stand when the Companie was troubled; to stagger, when they were disgrac'd and discountenanced; to sinck, when they were terrified w<sup>th</sup> affreightment of dissolucon; since w<sup>ch</sup> tyme there hath bin nothing at all done towards the recovery of helping it forward, but much towards the hindrenge and bringing it lower.

The poor supply of people and shippes that are gone, are but the remaynder of the late Companies cares and loves. The settlers out of the best of them doe affirme, that if they had not been so farr engaged before the unexpected dissolucon of the late Companie, they would have drawne back their ad-

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, in 1625.

ventures and People. When they shall arrive in Virginia they will not bring either comfort or supply to the Colonie: but only add to their Calamitie, to their grief.

The first Shipp went in August, victualled only for Three months; the next in October; neither of them were arrived the 25th of february last. Whereby they must needs come into Virginia in most miserable distresse.

The other two went out soe meanly provid<sup>d</sup> that however their voyage shall be, they cannot but prove an insupported charge to the Colony, much disfurnished by the victualling of divers shippes lately returned thence, and so ill provided by a deceitful cropp, w<sup>ch</sup> seemed large, but proved scant, as wee dare not acquaint yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> what experience perswades us, That there is like to followe in the Colonie some great distresse for victualls except by speedy supply hence they be relieved.

There is likewise in the Colony a most dangerous want of Powder, so great, as if the savages should but knowe advantage they have thereby they might easily in one day destroy all o<sup>r</sup> people.

There is most extreame want of hose, shoes, and all apparell, even to a dangerous empeachment of their healthes: and that so generall, as the provisions carried in these late shippes, will not as farr as wee can learne, supply the Tenth part of their necessities. The want of such wonted supplies, will undoubtedly much dismay and deject the Colony. But when they shall understand of the Companies dissolucon, for the continuance of whose Governem<sup>t</sup> and the Liberties they enjoyed under them, they were most importunate suitors to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> and that they are returned under those handes w<sup>ch</sup> they so much abhorred:<sup>1</sup> Wee doubt no possible meanes will be found to keepe the greatest and best part of the Colonie from immediatly cominge away. For wee are credibly informed, that some of the chiefs, have already by sellinge of their Estates, made preparacon upon the first notice of the change, to leave the Country. But when further they shall heare the newes

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, under the control of Sir Thomas Smith, the chief manager of the company during the first twelve years.



of the late contract,<sup>1</sup> whereby all their hopes shal be quite extinguished and all possibilitie of subsistance taken from them, wee cannot thinke that any will stay behinde that shall not be kept by force.

But howsoever it shall happen: sure we are that by these alteracons and courses, the mindes of the Planters wil be filled w<sup>th</sup> such Jealousies and suspicions as it wil be a long while ere they wil be reduced to a firm resolucon of setting up the Rest of their Lives and hopes, in the Colony: which w<sup>th</sup> all humble duty we are bold to say hath bin and will ever bee a disposition most pernicious to the establishing of the Plantation: And the overcoming thereof by the Company, we hold to have bin one of the greatest services that they did. This wee conceive to be the state of the Colonie now in Virginia w<sup>ch</sup> though they should be persuad<sup>d</sup> or forced to stay yet w<sup>th</sup>-out supply of others sent hence, they must needs come to nothing in a very short space, although they had noe other enemy.

As for adventuring hence, what by the disgracing of the Action itselfe, and the undeserved sufferings of the late Companie, the businesse is brought to such a stand, as seemes incredible: there being no preparacon that wee can heare of not only of any shipp, but of any man to goe to Virginia whereas comonly for divers yeares before, there were foure or five shippes in readinesse, and as many hundreds of men, at this tyme of the yeare.

So that even in that regard also the Colony will find themselves both in great discomfort and in great danger. For although formerly they had no Forte on the Land to hinder a forraigne enemy: yet especially in the latter tymes, there was such a boundance of shipping comminge and goinge continually to Virginia that there hath binsometymes told seaventeen sayle

<sup>1</sup> The reference here is to a contract authorized by the king, with a Mr. Ditchfield, by which the crop of tobacco, for the first two years, was to be limited to 200,000 pounds, for which he was to pay the planters at the rate of 2s. 4d. per pound for the higher grades, and 1s. 4d. for the lower. Four hundred thousand pounds were not deemed enough at these rates. Bruce, *Economic History of Virginia*, I. 278.



together in James River. Whereby besides that it was a continuall terror to the Natives it would have bin a difficult thinge to endamage the Colonie, w<sup>th</sup>out the power both of many shippes, and many souldiers, W<sup>ch</sup> was amongst divers others, a very mayne securitie and encouragement to persuade men boldly to goe to Virginia. But that and all other helpes being now foyled or much empayred although the number of men be at least Three tymes as many as when wee undertooke the Governem<sup>t</sup>; yet will wee Ingenuously yield, that equall thanks and equall honour will be due to them, who shall now recover and restore it to that prosperous and flourishing estate to w<sup>ch</sup> by Gods blessinge o<sup>r</sup> cares and labours had brought it, untill it was marred by them, who as appeares never loved it, but for their owne indirect ends, w<sup>ch</sup> they have industriously pursued. Thus much touching the present estate of the Plantation, and the late generall decay thereof.

Wherein wee hope yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> will excuse both our playnes<sup>1</sup> and prolixitie, tending to no other end, but only to present unto yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> viewe the cleare state and true neture of the Disease; that so yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> in yo<sup>r</sup> great wisdom may the better discern and provide the proper remedies. Towards w<sup>ch</sup> since yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> have bin also pleased to require some preparative as it were of o<sup>r</sup> opinions: wee will now humbly apply our selves to that consideration w<sup>th</sup>out w<sup>ch</sup> all the rest were but grieffe and labour.

And here first wee are in duety forced to deliver unto yo<sup>r</sup> Lo<sup>ps</sup>, that the restoring, supporting and re advancem<sup>t</sup> of that Plantation, wee hold to bee a worke, though of great necessitie for the honour, yea and service of his Ma<sup>tie</sup>, these tymes considered: yet w<sup>th</sup> all of soe extreame difficultie, that it is not to be rashly and unadvisedly undertaken, but w<sup>th</sup> great circumspection, care, and preparacon, with assurance also of great assistance.

For not to insist much, upon the nature and greatnes of the worke, so remote from the favourers, so vicine<sup>2</sup> to mighty maligners of it: and inded fitter for the power and purse of a

<sup>1</sup> Plainness.

<sup>2</sup> Neighboring.

Great Prince and State, then of private Adventure<sup>rs</sup>, and those allready exhaust and tyred; the wounds w<sup>ch</sup> since that great wound of the Massacre, it hath more lately receaved, from their handes whome it least beseemed, are still so wide and bleedinge, that unlesse his Ma<sup>tie</sup>, and yo<sup>r</sup> Lo<sup>ps</sup> as deputed from him, shall vouchsafe to apply a soveraine hand for the healing of them, wee are resolute of opinion, that it is impossible, the Plantation carried as formerly by private persons, should either prosper or long subsist: Those woundes wee conceive are these. First the generall disreputacon of the Business (Reputation being a principall pillar of all great actions) and that partly by some errors, neglects and disasters, but principally by the late faction, though of a few and small Adventurers yet strongly and strangely inanimated and supported agaynst the great Body of Companie: whereof in fien also by undermining misinformacons they have wrought the Disolucon; and consequently left all, both Adventurers and Planters, in an utter uncertaynty of their Rights, Titles and Possessions: though promise was made that they should be reassured to them, w<sup>ch</sup> these men have neglected to see performed.

Secondly the great discouragem<sup>t</sup> of sundry not of the meanest both Adventurers and Planters, some of them persons, and others also of good qualitie: by whose cares and labours, together w<sup>th</sup> their friends and purses, the Plantation having formerly receaved no small encrease and benefit, to the Planters great comfort and content (w<sup>ch</sup> they have not forborne from tyme to tyme to declare): yet have they by the unjust calumnies and clamors of these men, bin continually prosecuted w<sup>th</sup> all variety of extremitie, to the rewarding of them with evill for their good deservings, and to the disheartening of all other, to succeed in like care and industry.

Thirdly the present extreame povertie and consumpcon of the Plantacion being for want of the accustomed yearly supplies, reduced to that paucetie of men and want of all sorts well neere of necessary provision, that it cannot be restored but w<sup>th</sup> an huge expence, no less allmost then to sett up a new Plantation.

Nowe touching the disreputacon of the Action, and the generall dishearteninge of the Adventurers and Planters, such especially as have spared neither paynes nor expence, for the recovering, supporting and advancinge the Plantation: We humbly crave yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> favourable patience, though wee somewhat enlarge our selves in this place, to present in part the Injustice and greaveousnes of those wounds to the hono<sup>ble</sup> minds and skillfull hands of yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup>: Seeing that in our understandinge the curing of them by yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup>, may be a meanes to revive agayne the generally deaded hearts of both Adventurers and Planters and to adde a new lustre and grace to the Action.

Amongst the many glorious workes of the late Kinge, there was none more eminent, then his Gracious enclination, together w<sup>th</sup> the propagation of Christian Religion, to advance and sett forward a new Plantacion in the new world, W<sup>ch</sup> purpose of his continued till the last, manifested by his Ma<sup>t</sup> many publique and private speeches by divers L<sup>res</sup> of his, and by his sundry Proclamacons, so that their faults are farr the greater, who, as imediatly shal be declared, did maliciously and cunningly pervert those Gracious intencons of his Ma<sup>tie</sup> by scandalizing the Government as it then stood, as neither convenient here nor likely there to advance the prosperitie of the Colonie; and by insinuating assurances, that they themselves would mayntayne that worke by better meanes. Which his Ma<sup>tie</sup> conceavinge (as it was reason) they would not so boldly have promised of themselves, being so great a worke unlesse they had had both knowledge and meanes to goe thorough w<sup>th</sup> it; did also believe: and so they became the undertakers. And now, as it hath bin ever farr from o<sup>r</sup> practize and agaynst o<sup>r</sup> present desires to fall upon the persons of any men, where necessitie and justice of the cause doth not necessarilie require it: yet at this tyme it is impossible to cleare this pointe to yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> without naming some of their persons and particularizing their Actions. About six yeares agoe, when by reason of the apparant misprosperinge of the Plantation, and the fowlness of the Accounts here, (the then Treasurer being Governour

of fflower or ffive other Companies,<sup>1</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> excused his neglect of attending this business,) the Governem<sup>t</sup> of the Companie was translated from S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Smith and Alderman Johnson, into S<sup>r</sup> Edwin Sandis, and after into the Earle of Southampton's hands and their deputies: it is notoriously knowne how they w<sup>th</sup> Captayne Argoll and other friends, partly peradventure through discontent for being removed from their places, but principally through feare, (their accounts, depredacons, Piracies and misgovernem<sup>t</sup> being now questioned before the Counsell and in the Companies Courts) perpetuall disturbed and disgraced by severall wayes, both to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> and to the world, all the present proceedings of the Companie, to the great disheartninge of the Companie here, and no small disadvantage of the Colonie. And of this, and of the bad effects of it, all our bookes and memories are full. But yet by God's assistance, and the unwearied courage of the Companie; wee ridd out this storme. The next blowe, as wee had reason to believe, proceeding by their underhand raysinge of new spiritts, drawne to disturbe us for their owne gayne was the bringing in of new and severall projects concerning Tobacco: w<sup>ch</sup> was for the instant the only comoditie whereby the Planters mayntayned themselves, and so under colour of advancing profit to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> sometimes (as hath been before touched) wee were forbidden to bring in any Tobacco, sometimes to bring in but a small quantitie, and sometimes comaunded to bring in all. W<sup>ch</sup> varying directions did so distract and confound the Adventurers and Planters, that it had in a manner ruyned the Plantation.

But yet by Gods assistance, and the constancy of the Companie, wee ridd out this storme also. The instruments in this worke that especiallie appeared, were the then S<sup>r</sup> Lionell Cranfield,<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jacob and some others: to the extreame damage of the Company, enrichment of themselves, and deceyt of his Ma<sup>tie</sup> as was at large expressed and offered to be proved in the

<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas Smith was presiding officer of the East India, Muscovy, Northwest Passage, and Somers Islands companies, as well as of the Virginia Company.

<sup>2</sup> Afterward Earl of Middlesex and lord high treasurer.

last Parliament. Thirdly by the procuremen<sup>t</sup> of that part, divers scandalous peticons agayns<sup>t</sup> the company in generall, and many in perticuler did putt us to much vexacon and trouble. But their accusacons were so fals, that wee also overcame this Third assault.

After this another stratagem was obtruded upon us, under pretence of friendship and love of the Plantation. The Earle of Middlesex then Lo: high Treasurer of England who in respect of his place, was to take into his consideracon all thinges that had relacon to his Ma<sup>ty</sup>s revennue, did first propound to S<sup>r</sup> Edwin Sandis, and afterwards to the Ea: of Southampton, the Lo: Cavendish and S<sup>r</sup> Edwin Sandis together that the King, he knewe, had by S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Smithes meanes and Alderman Johnsons, and some great friends and instruments of theirs bin strangely possessed agaynst the forme of our Governmen<sup>t</sup>, and the consequences of it: and particularly that they had made such advantage by traducing the names of the Earle of Southampton and S<sup>r</sup> Edwin Sandis, that the business of the Plantacon fared the worse for their sakes. That he had already in Generall spoken w<sup>th</sup> his Ma<sup>ty</sup>e and assured him, that the whispers and relacons of those men, had an eye to their owne safetie, and not the Colonie's good; and that thereupon the King referred the whole consideracon of the Plantation, and what was best to be done, to his care.

Upon this he propounded unto those before named, that the best way to engage the Kinge in his care of the Plantations, and to make it impossible for any hereafter to disturbe the Companie, as they had formerly done, was to thinke of some such meanes, whereby the profit of his Ma<sup>ty</sup>e, and the good of the Plantation, might hand in hand goe together. And to speake truth; though those he spoke w<sup>th</sup> all, were at first very unwilling to swallowe this gilded pill, as having heard of the stile he used in negotiating other businesses of this nature: yet he was so full of protestacons in it, ever pretending the Companies good, and w<sup>th</sup> all procured further intimacon to the Earle of Southampton, that no service of his could be more acceptable to his Ma<sup>ty</sup>e then this now propounded: that upon

these protestacons and assurance they engaged themselves to treat of a contract between his Ma<sup>tie</sup> and the companies. In the making whereof, the said Earle of Midd. remembered not his promised care of the Plantations; but in truth from one degree to another, wrested us to such condicons and such a rate, as was very dammeagh to the Plantacions. But upon serious debate in maney and full Courts, upon the whole matter wee were resolved, considering the protection of the Colonies, and favour promised; and to be free from those frequent projects that in former tymes had soe much wronged and disturbed us, to accept an hard bargayne: conceavinge that though it were not so good as wee desired, and was fitt to have bin offered; yet by it we shall be in a better case and way of benefitting the Plantations, then formerly wee were.

And so in Michealmas terme, 1622, this contract w<sup>ch</sup> began to be treated of in Easter terme, was concluded by the subscription of the Earle of Middlesex his hand, and by sending the company word, that that day the whole Counsell board had given their assent thereunto, w<sup>ch</sup> was the first tyme the Company understood that they had heard of the matter. The contract thus concluded, a great Tempest arose by what secrett cause and underhand procurement, wee may guess, but not affirm. But in a Court of the Company upon the 4th of December following, one Mr. Wrote <sup>1</sup> Cosen Germane to the Earle of Middlesex, (discontent<sup>d</sup> also that he was passed over in the election of Officers) did w<sup>th</sup> a passionate and blasting speech, inveigh agaynst the Contract, and the managing thereof w<sup>th</sup> sallary: agaynst the proceeding in the Treaty of it, as that it had bin unduly and unjustly carried, that men had bin overawed, and that it had bin procured to private ends. Whereof not being able to make any shadowe of prooffe and persisting still in his violent and contemptuous Demeande, upon a full hearinge he was thrust out of the Companie, and upon that ground joyned himself to S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Smith, Alderman Johnson

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Wrote was son of Robert Wrote of Gunton, in Suffolk, England. He was a leading opponent of the Sandys-Southampton faction, and because of his violent language was suspended by them from the company.

and that opposite party and drewe also with him Two more of his Companions, and so now made shewe of a formall party agaynst the Company. But for all this, wee still mayntayned the reputacon of o<sup>r</sup> proceedings. The next of o<sup>r</sup> troubles in order, (proceeding from what secrett cause, that w<sup>ch</sup> follows will give yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> more reason of conjecture, then wee will now affirme) was, that this opposite party then attayned to about 25 in nomber, had some secrett encouragem<sup>t</sup> or other given them, directly to oppugne the Contract; w<sup>ch</sup> as is before declared was so formally made: and gave some reasons in writing agaynst it to the then Lord Tre<sup>r</sup>; who receaving them, gave the company first suspicion of double intelligence and indirectness in his dealinges.

But howsoever, the Earle of Southampton, the Lo: Cavendish, S<sup>r</sup> Edwin Sandis, and some other, being called by the Earle of Middlesex to his Chamber at Whitehall, then thought, that they had given such answers to them, as that his Lop<sup>p</sup> rested satisfied. But his Lop<sup>p</sup> after, speaking w<sup>th</sup> the Earle: of Southampton and the rest before named, told them that they that had opposed, were a clamorous Company, and that to make the business goe current, it were best that their objections and o<sup>r</sup> answers should be heard at the Counsell table. And upon hearing thereof, their accusacons, and o<sup>r</sup> answers, the Earle of Middlesex, who assumed the chief knowledge and care of that business, did in the close of that hearinge use the words formerly rehearsed, of the leaud <sup>1</sup> carriage in former tymes, and of the latter in a manner miraculous recoverie.

A greater testimony of o<sup>r</sup> integritie and their guilt, could not be given. But as the sequall will manifest, and as wee have since found in other of his Lop<sup>s</sup> proceedings, he meant to loose nothing by those words. Howsoever it was, and whatsoever wee suspect, not intending now to dive into those miseries, from that day forward, to the Conclusion of this business he professedly made himselfe the patron to that side, and enemy to the company, for w<sup>ch</sup> wee appeal to yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> better knowledge. Afterwards about that Contract were divers meetings

<sup>1</sup> Lewd.



before the Lords, where it was principally inveighed agaynst by S'r Nathaniell Rich; speaking agaynst the injustice and unconscionableness of it; protesting that he had ever sold his Tobacco for ffive shillings a pound one w<sup>th</sup> another, and that every pound cost him Two shillings six pence in the Sumer Islands: and now to give a Third away to the King and peradventure the price not to be much higher was agaynst justice and conscience. And here by the way, wee humbly crave leave to say thus much, that his conscience now serves him in this new Contract, to force the Planter and the Adventurer to sell their Tobacco, the best sort 2<sup>s</sup>4<sup>d</sup> and the second sort at sixteene pence a pound. But upon that former Demonstrative Argument of his, though it were so fully answered as nothing could be more, yet the Earle of Middlesex took his ground to condemn the contract he had signed, as hurtfull to the Plantacions; and to commaund the companies to thinke of propounding a better, and to bring it in writing w<sup>th</sup>in Two daies: w<sup>ch</sup> was accordingly done: and therein shewed that the hardnesse of this contract, was not by the Companies proposition, but by his Lop<sup>s</sup> pressure. And therefore urged what had bin offered to his Lop<sup>s</sup> at the first; that his Ma<sup>tie</sup> would be contented w<sup>th</sup> a fourth and not require a third of o<sup>r</sup> Tobacco. To w<sup>ch</sup> in great scorne his Lop<sup>p</sup> replied that take Two pence out of six pence their would remayne a Groat. But the last Parliament saw that his best invention, was by adding 3£ to 40<sup>s</sup> to make up ffive pounds. But in conclusion that Contract was dissolved, and a commaund laid upon the Companies by his Lop<sup>s</sup> procurement to bring all o<sup>r</sup> Tobaccos in, under colour that Three pence custom was abated; whereas in truth by his admitting also of all Spanish Tobacco, upon S'r John Wolstenholmes <sup>1</sup> motion wee could not vent a third part of it here: and so by computacon, in respect of the quantitie unvented, wee paid neere doouble as much as before: w<sup>ch</sup> was his only favour to the Plantations.

The contract thus dissolved as publicuely damageable by the incouragement of the Earle of Middlesex, and industry of

<sup>1</sup> A leading member of the company.



the ffive and twenty before menconed, (that so place might be made for this latter contract, so privately beneficiall, for so by the effect it hath appeared): the Governm<sup>t</sup> was now likewise to be questioned and altered, or else they compassed not their ends. Which to bring about, these two wayes were used. First a petition was delivered to his Ma<sup>ty</sup> by Alderman Johnson, in the name of the rest, inveighing against the latter Governm<sup>t</sup> and magnifying the former. And in the end, desiring a commission to examine the proceedings of those last ffower.

This peticon was by the Company at large answered to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> and wee joyned in the point of having o<sup>r</sup> actions examined by the Comission: but w<sup>ch</sup> all thought it just, and desired, that their Twelve years Governm<sup>t</sup> before might be also examined: w<sup>ch</sup> accordingly was ordered. The second means used by them, was to rayse up Captayne Butler, who hasting from the Summer Islands to Virginia, where he stayed but a few weeks, upon his returne delivered to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> a paper called The unmasking of Virginia. The substance of w<sup>ch</sup> was first the dispraise of the country and making of it an unfit place for any English Colony; and next scandalizing the Governm<sup>t</sup> of it, both here, and there. What concerned the colonie, was proved to be false by fforty witnesses: who chaunced to be in Towne then, and had bin often and long in the Colonie: And was endeavoured to be mayntayned by him by two meanes only: one by practizing to gett the hands of Two men unto it, to whome he owed money and deferred payment: who when they heard it read in Co<sup>rt</sup>, protested that they never saw what they sett their hands to, and that Capt: Butler told them it was a Paper, w<sup>ch</sup> he would shew the King for the good of the Plantation: and desired the companies pardon; for whatever was there said was false. Secondly, he would made it to have bin better believed, by a forged L<sup>re</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> hee brought to Sr. John Bourchire from his daughter Mrs. Whittakers:<sup>1</sup> who

<sup>1</sup> Probably the wife of Jabez Whittaker, a member of the council of Virginia and brother of Rev. Alexander Whittaker, formerly of Coxendale on James River.

knew it was not her hand. This was alledgd at the counsell Table: and Capt: Butler answered that she was sick and dictated it to him, and he wrote it. But since, both shee and her husband being come over, they bothe forswear it, and say it was none of her doing nor direction. But howsoever, by these meanes the opposite party thus farre obteyned their ends, that by the Defamation, and this trouble ensuinge, a very great nomber that intended to have gone over, were discouraged.

But yet for all this, the Companie knewe their cause to be just and justifiable, that they did not abandon it: but prepared themselves to give divers charges before the commission<sup>rs</sup>, agaynst<sup>t</sup> divers of the partie opposite; and professed themselves ready to make their owne defence whensoever they should be charged. But whilst the comission sate farther to discourage us, first all o<sup>r</sup> Bookes, and after the minutes of them were sent far away from us; that none of the L<sup>r</sup>es that then came from Virginia were to be seene by us, being all seized on by the Comission<sup>rs</sup>. But touching the rest of the caridge of that comission, because it was at large delivered in Parliment, and offered to be proved, if further proceedinge in that businesse had not bin forborne upon a L<sup>r</sup>e written to the house from His Ma<sup>tie</sup> wee will now to yo<sup>r</sup> Lo<sup>ps</sup> say only this: That whatsoever was brought by us concerninge accounts, depredacon, misgovernement, and divers other crimes, agaynst perticuler persons, was by this comission, (especially directed by the Earle of Midd.) shuffled of for all the tyme, till the comission was even at the end nothing done upon them. And on the contrary, whatsoever could be gathered out of the fragments of L<sup>r</sup>es from discontented persons in Virginia concerning either the place, or governem<sup>t</sup> was diligently collected by them, and receaved by the Earle of Middlesex as a great testimony agaynst us; and would not take those other L<sup>r</sup>es for proof w<sup>ch</sup> wee ever guided o<sup>r</sup> selves by; and came from the Governour and counsell there. And lastly some three dayes before their Comission ended, they putt us on a sodayne to answere to 39 Articles, or else they would take them pro con-

fesso. This they thought for us impossible to doe. But wee deceived their expectacon; and they could not find in the least perticuler, any just ground to make any report agaynst us.<sup>1</sup>

By all this the Earle of Middlesex and that partie, perceaving the companie would not be beaten off a good cause; there was a practise to try whether wee had rather part from the business, or from our mony. Where upon wee were called before the Counsell agayne, and there that side as compassionate affecters of the Plantation, urged the want of corne and other necessities there, and that they were like to perish for want of provisions. The Earle of Midd. replied, it was a matter of so great importance, and concerned the lives of so many of the King's subjects, that if the Companie would not presently take order for sending supplies, the state would call in their Pattent. Whereupon the Companie conceaving that if they did send supplies, their Pattent would not be taken from them, underwritt to a Roule (though they knewe the necessitie was nothing so great) foure thousand and odd pounds, w<sup>ch</sup> was paid and sent: and those Gentlemen that before seemed so zealous, subscribed Twelve pounds, and paid it not. Upon w<sup>ch</sup> comparison wee leave it to yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> to judge w<sup>ch</sup> party was the true father of this child. This then not succeeding according to their desires, certayne obscure persons were found out by the Earle of Midd., to be sent into Virginia, as Comission<sup>rs</sup> for these two ends, as wee have since found. First to sifte out what they could agaynst the forme of o<sup>r</sup> Governm<sup>t</sup> here and there: and next to persuade the people to become Peticon to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> for a newe <sup>2</sup> W<sup>ch</sup> succeeded not according to their expectacon. For by the Colonies Peticons, answeres to those papers that had bin delivered agaynst them, and divers other remonstrances to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> from a Generall Assembly there they shewed the misery wherein they lived, or rather languished

<sup>1</sup> The answer was prepared by Sir Edwin Sandys, Nicholas Ferrar, and Lord Cavendish, who scarcely slept in the interval. Carter's *Ferrar*, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Form of government.

in S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Smithe's tyme; and their happy estate in this latter Government: concluding that if his Ma<sup>tie</sup> intended to alter the Government, and put it into the former hands, their humble suite to him was; That Comission<sup>rs</sup> might be sent over to another purpose before declared. The writings themselves will manifest this more at large. These comissioners thus sent to Virginia, the Earle of Midd. and the rest were not idle in further distractinge the Companie, to give their assent for surrendring their Pattent, and altringe the forme of Governm<sup>t</sup>; and a newe one was proposed. W<sup>ch</sup> according to order they takinge into consideracon, w<sup>th</sup> duetie refused: rendring also in writing the reasons of their refusall. Whereupon a Quo Warranto was directed by the Earle of Midd. suggestion for the calling in of their Pattent.

In the meanetime, to affright men, both from cominge to and much more from speaking in Courts, mens wordes were then carped at and complayned of: and their persons by the Earle of Midd. prosecution, were upon quick hearinge sent to prison.

Yet for all this the Comp<sup>n</sup> stood to their owne Justificacon, and defence of their Pattent. Now Mr. Atturney,<sup>1</sup> according to the duty of his place and instructions given him, urged the misgovernem<sup>t</sup> of the Companie, and consequently the ruine of the Plantation. To w<sup>ch</sup> point we were willinge to joyne issue. But afterwards in o<sup>r</sup> reply to his pleadinge w<sup>th</sup>out further enquiry of the former allegation, advantage was taken upon o<sup>r</sup> mispleading, and in fine w<sup>th</sup>out any farther ground that wee knowe of, the Patent was Trinity terme following, condemned: But for anything that we have yet seene no judgment entered. Yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> by the perticulers before related do see by what courses wee were reduced to this extremitie. One thinge yet wee thinke most necessary to adde; It hath bin said by many, and perticulerly by some principall persons of the opposite partie, that the dissolutions of these Plantacons was part of the Count of Gondomars Instructions. And cer-

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Coventry, knighted in 1617, appointed attorney-general January 11, 1621, lord keeper in 1625, and died in 1640.

taynely wee found his activenes in negotiatinge here, such, that in bringing about his owne ends, he could create here, instruments of o'selves agaynst our selves. Wee say not that he and other Spanish Ministers practised thus amongst us. These two only perticulers, wee crave leave to offer unto yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> Judgem<sup>ts</sup>. When S<sup>r</sup> Samuell Argoll some six or seaven yeares since, was vehemently complayned agaynst by Padre Maestro and the Spanish secretarie then here for Piracie agaynst the Kinge of Spaines subjects in the West Indies he no sooner came home from Virginia, and appeared an opposite to the present Company, who questioned him for divers misdemeanors and amongst others for this; but the heate of the Spanish accusacon did presently cease. Our second observacon is this, yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> cannot but remember, w<sup>th</sup> what extreame earnestnes the Count of Gondomar and afterwards Don Carlo di Coloma,<sup>1</sup> inveighed agaynst Capt. Butler whilst he was in Summer Islands about the Spanish wrack. And so violent were they about it that the Lo: Stewart, now w<sup>th</sup> God, and the Lo: Chamberlaine, were entreated to come on purpose to the Sumer Islands company, about that business. And a comission was directed by the Lords of the Counsell, to examine the truth of the cause in the Sumer Islands. W<sup>ch</sup> Captain Butler having been forewarned by some friends of his left his Governmen<sup>t</sup> before he had leave, and before the arrivall of the Comission: Having first there endeavoured to alienate the minds of the people from the forme of Governmen<sup>t</sup> here. But he was no sooner come home, and delivered to his Ma<sup>tie</sup> The unmasking of Virginia before spoken of, but there was an end of Don Carlo Di Colomas prosecution. Wee have related the particulars; and make no application.

As for the late Comission,<sup>2</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> hath succeeded in the place of the Companies; if wee might have seen the business seriously

<sup>1</sup> Spanish ambassador after Gondomar.

<sup>2</sup> On June 24, 1624, shortly after the decision of Chief-Justice Ley revoking the charter, the king appointed a commission of sixteen persons, among whom were Sir Thomas Smith and other opponents of Sandys and Southampton, to take charge temporarily of Virginia affairs; and on July 15, 1624, he enlarged this commission by forty more persons.

taken into the Grave cares and prosecuted w<sup>th</sup> the Noble paynes of those most hono<sup>ble</sup> personages, whose names are inserted in the sayd Comission: wee should have hoped to have seene some good effect befitting their great and eminent worth. But whilst their more weighty affairs have hindered them the business hath bin principally carried only by those persons that were the chiefe opposers of the late Comp: ffor although there be named divers worthy Gentlemen, and Citizens likewise, in the Comission: yet as wee understand, the most of them have forborne altogether to appeare at any meeting. Wherefore when either in o<sup>r</sup> wordes or thoughts, wee complayne of any proceedings of the late Comission wee alwayes except both all the persons of Honour and indifferency: and only intend those others, whose stomacks were so great, as they durst undertake the overthrowinge of the late Companie; and yet their harts so narrow, as they have not dared to adventure all of them during these Nynne moneths, so far as wee can learne, one five pounds to the advancem<sup>t</sup> or subsistance of the Plantation.

By the publique L<sup>r</sup>es of the Governour, delivered them in July last, they understood of the extreame want of Powder in the Colonie: and were often told from us of the great danger that might ensue thereby: Yet did they neglect the sending of any in the shipp or in the second: but about Christmas, and since in March they have sent a small quantitie, obteyned by his late Ma<sup>ty</sup>s guifts (as wee heare) out of the Tower.

This did not the late Company: who upon notice of the massacre, did by the first ship send 42 Barrels of Powder; for halfe whereof the Officers having disturbed the money, are yet unsatisfied.

Whereas all the fflower shippes now sent, were prepared in the Comp<sup>ys</sup> tyme; these last Comissioners callinge in the Comissions graunted them by the late Company, made them take new as from themselves that so they might glory upon anothers foundacon. But whilst they thus hunted after windy ambition, hindringe the two first shippes from takinge a faire winde; they have bin the causes of all the lament-

able calamities and distresses, w<sup>ch</sup> in so long voyages must needs befall them.

The principal scope of his late Ma<sup>ty</sup>s comission to them, as wee understand was that they should finde a better forme of Governem<sup>t</sup> for the Plantacions advancement; and therein is especially promised the conservacon of every mans right. Intentions worthy the wisdom and Justice of so great a Prince. But as farr as wee can understand these commissioners have done nothing towards either of these ends: But quite contrary to the second.

By an unknown contract, w<sup>ch</sup> themselves will not so much as declare much less are able to defend; they have sought to have amongst themselves, twice as much upon every mans goods, as they will leave to the Owner thereof. And although they say only three of them are Contractors yet wee cannot believe it, having observed the ends of some of them for many years, to have constantly bin bent to the compassinge of some such advantage, as they have now by this bargayne gayned. It is constantly reported that they have liberally given that w<sup>ch</sup> was not their owne, to those who have no right thereto; as namely the Colonies kine to S<sup>r</sup> Samuell Argoll and Mr. Woodall surgeon to S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Smith. But this and all their other proceedings are kept in great secrett: w<sup>ch</sup> breeds suspicion that they have not bin good: else why doe they fly the Light? This is cleane contrary to the use of the late Company: who did all things in publique w<sup>ch</sup> was a cause of as great satisfacon, as this of distaste.

And as in this, so in all other thinges do they proceed cleane contrary to all right in o<sup>r</sup> understandinge. They publish their Intention of employinge S<sup>r</sup> Samuell Argoll and Captaine Butler for Governours agayne in the Plantations agaynst whome the Colony hath professed open enmity. How they should make the Colony encrease by these means, w<sup>ch</sup> will bring home most of them that are there already wee cannot imagine.

Neither are S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Smith nor Alderman Johnson fitt or likely men to reunite the late Companie, or to drawe them



onto any thing for the Plantations advancement, since as the whole world knowes the late Company have not only allwayes conceived extreamly ill of them but in the yeare 1623 putt up publique accusations agaynst them, of very dangerous Consequence. As for the Colony yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> have formerly heard their like opinions.

Nor cann the late Companie conceive Mr. Wrote a fitt Instrum<sup>t</sup> to sett forward the business; whome they thought unworthy to bee of their Societie.

Nor that those who out of pretence for New Englands good, have truly wronged Virginia should now runne right way for the behalfe thereof. Nor in sum that those who have little or no interest in the Plantation should be so sencible of it as were fitt. In w<sup>ch</sup> number wee accompte S<sup>r</sup> Nathaniell Rich; who to our knowledge hath not adventured any thinge for the good thereof but contrary wise hath been so perpetuall a hinderer and disturber of the Action, that the body of the Company, addressed a Peticon of Complainte, to the last Parliament, cravinge justice against him, for his injurious and most unworthy practices.

Nor that they that meane not to adventure anythinge, will be able to persuade others to doe that w<sup>ch</sup> themselves forbear.

Nor that ever they will do the adventurers of the late Companie, right, in matters of their Estates, that have so violently endeavoured to do them wrong in their Honors Reputacons, having intended as themselves wright, a Reformacon and correction of the Original court bookes of the late Companie then possessed by them, if they could have gott into their hands certayne copies of them w<sup>ch</sup> Mr. Necholas Ferrar late Deputy at his owne charges caused to be transcribd.<sup>1</sup> But before there severe order came to him he had delivered his copys to the Earle of Southampton: who sent the comissioners word, that

<sup>1</sup> These copies are the identical volumes now possessed by the Library of Congress (having come to it from the library of President Jefferson) and recently put into print.



he would as soone part w<sup>th</sup> the evidences of his Land, as w<sup>th</sup> the said Copies, being the evidence of his honour in that Service: So by this meanes have the Original Court bookes yet escaped purging: And w<sup>th</sup> all duety wee humbly beseech yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> that they may hereafter be protected from it: And that howsoever yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> shall please for the future to dispose of the Companie, that the records of their past Actions may not be corrupted and falsified.

As for their resolucions of ordering the business, wee cannot say anything, because wee heare nothing, and we doubt they meane nothinge ffor all that wee heare tends only to nothing. They dislike the sending of numbers of men. They professe the reducinge of all trading to a Joynt stock or Magazine: w<sup>ch</sup> courses in o<sup>r</sup> judgements tend directly to the subversion of the Plantation at least to the appropriatinge of it to themselves which to have bin the mayne end of some of them, the late Counsell and Companie for Virginia, have upon strong presumption bin long agoe induced to believe: and therefore have now thought themselves bound to declare it, that yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> in yo<sup>r</sup> Noble wisdomes may make such due prevencon as shall be fitt: Humbly beseeching, that this perticular examinacon of their Actions and persons, may not be interpreted to proceed from private spleene, but only from a sincere desire of the Plantations advancement.

Wee doubt and feare, that we have wearied yo<sup>r</sup> Lop<sup>s</sup> w<sup>t</sup> the large relation of the proceedings of these men, wee meane the partie opposite to the late Companie and Colonie. Whereby as they have laid all kind of Disreputacion upon the Action, and made that in the estimacon of the world vilde and contemptible, w<sup>ch</sup> before was held worthy, beneficiall, and honourable: so by their manifold and incessant practises, to wrong and oppress, to defame and disgrace, by unjust and unworthy aspirions, and contumelies, (and that by word and writing over all the kingdome) the innocency of men zealous for the good of Virginia, for no other fault save only for their love of right and justice; they have bredd a great disheartninge and discouragemt of many the most forward and most constant adventurers

whose industry also and labours bin of great use to the Plantation, All w<sup>ch</sup> being wearied out w<sup>th</sup> their mallice and injuries and loath to spend more of their lives in so unthankfull a service, are humble suitors unto yo<sup>r</sup> Lo<sup>ps</sup>, that they may be spared from all farther employment in this Action. And that if these men will now at length apply themselves seriously to the busines of the Colonies both w<sup>th</sup> their paynes and purses, w<sup>ch</sup> they have hitherto spared and undertake, (w<sup>ch</sup> they owe to his Ma<sup>ty</sup> and the State) the repairinge those ruynes of the Plantation, whereof they have bin the chiefe cause and instruments: the Government thereof may, as it is, be continued in them, giving fitt securitie for so great a debt and duty. For wee protest unto yo<sup>r</sup> Lo<sup>ps</sup> upon our truth and fidelitie that if his Ma<sup>ty</sup> may be served, the Colony secured and cherished, justice duly administred, mens rights and states preserved, innocent men not oppressed, and malefactors not protected and rewarded: wee shall be so farr from envying the glory of their Governement, that extinguishinge for ever the memory of all their former injuries, wee will be ready to doe them all fitt service that they shall require.