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OUR COUNTRY IN THE YEAR 1700

Thus organized, the twelve colonies [in 1700] contained the elements of our country as it is to-day.—*Richard Frothingham.*

Introduction.—The account of English colonization on the Atlantic coast has now been brought down to the end of the seventeenth century. What was the result of a hundred years of colony-planting? You have learned how the country looked in the year 1600. What kind of a country was it in the year 1700? What changes had taken place in America between the time when John Smith, in 1607, first sailed into the Chesapeake and the time when William Penn, in 1701, bade his colony a last farewell?

61. The Area of Settlement in 1700.—By the year 1700 the dense forests directly along the Atlantic coast had, for the most part, disappeared, the wild beasts had been driven inland, and the savages had been taught to let the settlers live in peace. All along the seaboard from Nova Scotia to Florida there were thriving communities of white men. It is said that in 1700 it was possible for one to ride on horseback—it would not have been possible in a wheeled vehicle—from Portland in Maine to the southern boundary of Virginia, and to sleep each night in some good-sized village. Such were the results of a hundred years of hard work, of wood-chopping, building, plowing, and planting.

But the settled country along the seaboard in 1700 was still only a very narrow strip of land. In some places the strip was only a few miles wide, and its greatest width was hardly more than a hundred miles. The western boundary of the settled country was the *frontier line*. East of this line men lived in an orderly, civilized manner, and life and property were safe. West of the Frontier Line were the great dark woods, where the only