

**THE UNITED STATES; AN
ACCOUNT OF PAST
AND CONTEMPORARY
CONDITIONS AND PROGRESS**

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The United States; an account of past and contemporary conditions and progress by John M. Hall

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Edited and Arranged by
JOHN M. HALL

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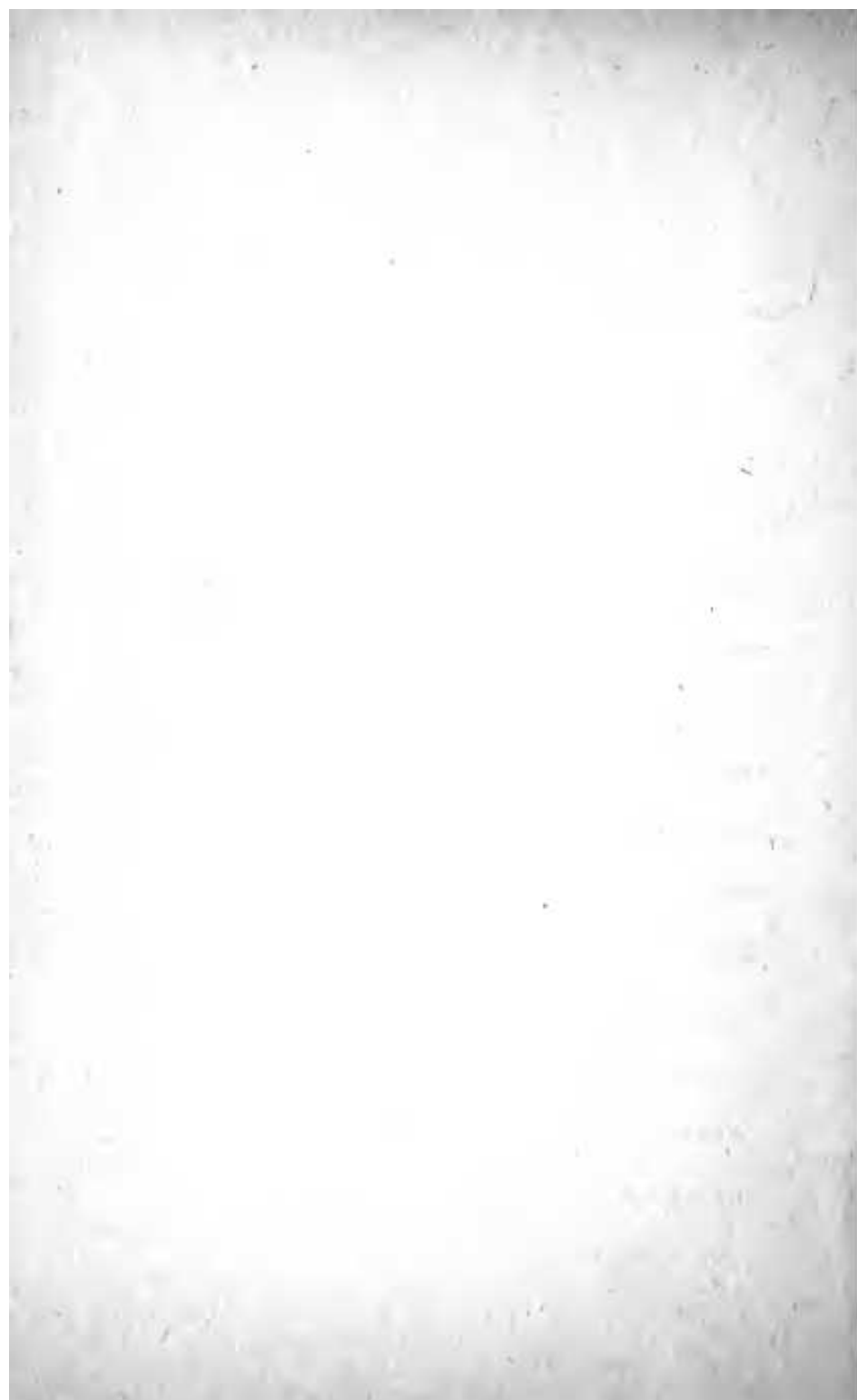
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PREFACE

THE student of some lands anticipates no particular charm in their contemporary history and life, and, therefore, he fastens upon the long past as the time which offers the greatest instruction and pleasure. This is true of Spain and Greece, whose "dead past" is even more vital with power than the living present. They influence the world more by what they have done than by what they are now doing.

There are other lands, hoary with age, whose early history has scarcely a page to arouse enthusiasm, but whose modern day is their brightest and best. Witness a notable illustration in Japan, whose emergence into the modern world and whose marvelous strides are all within the memory of living men and women of seventy years.

There is still another class, whose beginning and their present equally move us by their wonderful record. In this class our own country is the most conspicuous example in all the world to-day. It is like an oak in its prime,—still sound at the root, strong in body, and beautiful in its spreading green top. Such a land has had a golden age in every decade; sometimes in the matchless Plymouth and other colony days, or in the Revolution, or the Civil War, or in the splendors of to-day. This little book traces some

of the characteristics of the last golden age, in many respects the most wonderful of all the decades of American history and effort.

In preparing a course of study on our own country for the members of the Bay View Reading Clubs and for the "solitaire" students, it was felt that it would have a serious defect if a study of contemporary life and times were omitted. And yet, so far as known, there is not a single book on the subject. This contemporary life of ours is not one broad, deep current, but a stream of many currents, each one of which has been especially studied by solitary investigators. No one mind could authoritatively enlighten others on all its activities, but it was realized that another, with a comprehensive and orderly plan, could weave the work of others into a rich and useful fabric. And this is what has been done in this book. While the plan has its disadvantages, on the other hand it gives a work each of whose chapters is the contribution of a specialist. Acknowledgment is made of the generous consent of publishers to use the material, and at the end of each chapter is a key-letter which directs the reader to the last page of the book for the authorship and source of the chapter. License has been taken to correct some parts with the latest statistics and information; also to eliminate unimportant material in the interest of limitation of space; and to do some slight editing in order to unite all the work in a smooth fabric.

J. M. HALL.

THE UNITED STATES

CHAPTER I

EARLIEST COLONIAL HISTORY AND LIFE

A PROPER way to reach a comprehension of our progress and contemporary life is to go back over the road by which we have come, and view the conditions that once existed. Only as we project the picture of the present on the background of the past can we appreciate our wonderful progress. My primary object is to sketch life and customs, but these so often rest in history that I must recall some of the story of the colonial narrative.

It was eighty years after the discoveries by the Cabots before Englishmen made any serious effort to establish homes in North America. And these efforts made successively, with Jamestown as a nucleus, could hardly be called serious, since the promoters had not so much in mind colonization as they had commercial motives. They sought a South Sea passage to the Indies; they coveted gold and silver mines such as those with which Mexico was enriching the coffers of Spain; they looked for a climate favorable for the manufacture of wine; their rage for silk they would satisfy by cultivating the silkworm in