

In the year 1620, some English people, called puritans, arrived at Plymouth in Massachusetts and made the first settlement in New-England. They came to America, principally, freely to enjoy their own peculiar religion. They were about one hundred in number.

The place where they happened to land had been deserted by the Indians, on account of a fatal disease that had prevailed there several years before. The puritans divided themselves into nineteen families, and each family built a small house. Several Indians had been discovered in the woods, but they fled as the white people came near them.

But one day an Indian came among them, and surprised them by exclaiming, "Welcome, Englishmen! Welcome Englishmen!" His name was Samoset; he had learned to speak English of some fisherman that he had seen. He was a good friend to the English, and persuaded Massassoit to come and see them. Massassoit was a great chief, or Indian King, and he made an agreement with the English to be at peace with them, and not to injure them.

I have now told you of the three first settlements made in North America—Virginia, New-York, and New-England. These settlements were called colonies. They met with a great many difficulties; sometimes they were afflicted with fatal sickness; sometimes their crops of grain were cut short, and they were visited with famine; sometimes they were involved in the miseries of a war with the Indians. But, notwithstanding all these trials, these colonies flourished, and others were established.