

"Sir Humphrey Gylberte and his enterprise  
of colonization in America."  
(Boston, 1903, Publications of the Prince  
Society, Vol. 29, pp. 43, 169, 170, 174.)

P. 169.

E 186  
P 85



LETTER  
OR  
STEPHEN PARMENIUS  
TO  
RICHARD HAKLUYT.

Written in the Port of Saint Johns, Newfoundland the Sixth  
day of August, 1583.

TO THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER RICHARD HAKLUYT AT OX-  
FORD, IN CHRISTCHURCH, MASTER OF ARTS, AND PHIL-  
OSOPHE, HIS FRIEND AND BROTHER,<sup>1</sup>



HAD not purposed to write vnto you, when the  
promise of your letters came to my mind: You  
thought in June last to have followed vs your-  
selfe, and therefore I had left order that you  
should be advertised of my state, by Master  
Doctor Humfrey: but so you would not be satisfied: I will  
write therefore to you almost in the same words, because I  
have

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Parmenius, the writer of  
this letter, was a Hungarian, a native  
of Buda, a city situated on the western  
shore of the Danube opposite Pesth.

In 1583 it was under the dominion of  
Turkey, and Parmenius doubtless found  
the atmosphere of England far more  
congenial. He was a scholar and a

Modern angol fordítását lásd: Quin-  
Cheshire p. 169-173, latin eredetű.

A latin level ó-angol fordítás

have no leifure at this time, to meditate new matters and to vary or multiply words.

The 11. of June we fet faile at length from England in good earnest, and departed, leauing the hauen and land behind vs at Plimmouth: our Fleete consisted of five shippes: the greatest, which the Admiral's brother had lent vs, withdrew herself from vs the third day, we know not upon what occasion: with the rest we failed still together till the 23. of July: at which time our view of one another being intercepted by the great mists, some of vs sailed one way, and some another: to vs alone the first land appeared, the first of August, about the latitude of 50. degrees, when as before we had descended beyond 41. degrees in hope of some Southerly windes, which notwithstanding neuer blew to us at any fit time.

It is an Island which your men call Penguin, because of the multitude of birdes of the same name. Yet wee neither sawe any birds, nor drewe neere to the land, the winds seruing for our course directed to another place, but wee mette altogether at that place a little before the Hauen, whereunto

. by

man of literary tastes. Captain Haies calls him a "learned man," an "orator," and a "poet." An intimate friendship had sprung up between him and Richard Hakluyt, then a young man, about thirty years of age, a resident of Oxford, who had the year before published his first work entitled *Disasters Voyages touching the Discoverie of America and the Islands adjacent unto the Same*. This was followed in after years by numerous publications of a similar character for which the historical student is under lasting obligations. In joining this expedition for western discovery and col-

onization, it seems to have been understood that Parmenius was to be its historian, and this letter was apparently an instalment of the complete work which he intended to present on his return to England. He undoubtedly wrote in Latin because he was not fully master of the English tongue. Hakluyt published in his *Voyages* the original letter in Latin, together with an English translation, which we here present to the reader. Parmenius perished in the wreck of the *Delight*, August 29, 1583.



by common Councill we had determined to come, and that within the space of two houres by the greate goodnesse of God, and to our great joy. The place is situate in Newfoundland, betweene 47. and 48. degrees called by the name of Saint Iohns: the Admirall himselfe by reason of the multitude of the men, and the finalnesse of his ship, had his company somewhat sickly, and had already lost two of the same company, which died of the Fluxe: of the rest we conceiue good hope. Of our company, for I joined myselfe with Maurice Browne, a very proper gentleman, two persons by a mischance were drowned, the rest are in safetie, and strong, and for mine owne part, I was neuer more healthy.

We arrived at this place the third of August: and the fift the Admiral took possession of the Countrey, for himselfe and the Kingdome of England: having made and published certaine Lawes, concerning religion, and obedience to the Queene of England: at this time our fare is somewhat better, and dantier, then it was before: for in good sooth, the experience of so long time hath taught vs what contrary winds wee haue found, and what greate trauell wee may endure hereafter: and therefore we will take such order, that wee will want nothing: for we found in this place about twenty Portugall and Spanish shippes, besides the shippes of the English: which being not able to match vs, Suffer vs not to see hunger starued: the English although they were of themselves strong ynough, and safe from our force, yet seeing our authoritie, by the Queenes letters patents, they shewed vs all maner of duety and humanitie.

The maner of this Countrey and people remaine now to be spoken of. But what shall I say, my Good Hakluyt, when

when I see nothing but a very wilderneffe: Of fish here is incredible abundance, whereby great gaine grows to them that trauell to these parts: the hooke is no sooner throwne out, but it is eftsoones drawne vp with some goodly fish: the whole land is full of hilles and woods. The trees for the most part are Pynes and of them some are very olde, and some yong: a great part of them being fallen by reason of their age, doth so hinder the sight of the land, and stoppe the way of those that seeke to trauell, that they can go no whither: all the grasse here is long, and tall and little differeth from ours. It seemeth also that the nature of this soyle is fit for corne: for I found certaine blades and eares in a manner bearded, so that it appeareth that by manuring and sowing, they may easily be framed for the vse of man: here are in the woods bush berries, or rather straw berries, growing vp like trees, of great sweetnesse. Beares also appeare about the fishers stages of the Countrey, and are sometimes killed, but they seem to bee white, as I coniectured by their skinnes and somewhat lesse than ours.

Whether there bee any people in the Countrey I knowe not, neither have I seene any to witnesse it. And to say the trueth, who can, when as it is not possible to pass any whither. In like sort it is vnknowne, whither any mettals lye under the hilles: the cause is all one, although the very colour and hue of the hilles seeme to haue some Mynes in them: we moued the Admirall to set the woods a fire, that so wee might haue space, and entrance to take view of the Countrey, which motion did nothing displease him, were it not for feare of great inconuenience that might thereof infue: for it was reported and confirmed by  
very



*Stephen Parmenius.*

173

very credible persons that when the like happened by chance in another Port, the fish neuer came to the place about it, for the space of 7. whole yeares after, by reason of the waters made bitter by the Turpentine, and Rosen of the trees which ranne into the rivers upon the firing of them.

The weather is so hote this time of the yeere, that except the very fish, which is layed out to be dried by the sunne, be euery day turned it cannot possibly bee preferued from burning: but how cold it is in the winter, the great heapes, and mountaines of yce, in the midst of the Sea haue taught vs: some of our company report, that in May, they were sometimes kept in, with such huge yce, for 16. whole dayes together, as that the Islands thereof were threescore fathoms thicke, the sides whereof which were towards the Sunne, when they were melted, the whole masse or heape was so inuerted and turned in manner of balancing, that that part which was before downward, rose vpward, to the greate perill of those that are neere them, as by reason we may gather. The ayre vpon land is indifferent cleare, but at Sea towards the East there is nothing els but perpetuall mists, and in the Sea it selfe, aboute the Banke; for so they call the place where they find ground fourty leagues distant from the shore, and where they beginne to fish, there is no day without raine. When we haue serued and supplied our necessitie in this place, we purpose by the helpe of God to passe towards the South, with so much the more hope euery day, by how much the greater the things are, that are reported of those Countreys which we go to discouer. Thus much touching our estate.

Now



174 *Letter of Stephen Parmenius.*

Now I desire to know somewhat concerning you, but I feare in vaine, but specially I desire out of measure to know how my Patrone master Henry Vmpton doth take my absence: my obedience, and duetie shall alwayes bee ready toward him as long as I liue: but in deede I hope, that this journey of ours shalbe profitable to his intentions. It remaineth that you thinke me to be still yours, and so yours as no mans more. The sonne of God blesse all our labors, so farre, as that you your selfe may be partaker of our blessing.

Adieu, my most friendly, most sweete, most vertuous Hakluyt: In Newfound land, at Saint Johns Port, the 6. of August, 1583.

Yours,

STEPHEN PARMENIUS OF BUDA.

