

2015-1 Translation

1- Within the span of a hundred years, in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a tide of emigration - one of the great folk wanderings of history - swept from Europe to America.

(46) This movement, driven by powerful and diverse motivations, built a nation out of a wilderness and, by its nature, shaped the character and destiny of an uncharted continent.

2- (47) The United States is the product of two principal forces- the immigration of European people with their varied ideas, customs, and national characteristics and the impact of a new country which modified these traits.

Of necessity, colonial America was a projection of Europe.

Across the Atlantic came successive groups of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, Scots, Irishmen, Dutchmen, Swedes, and many others who attempt to transplant their habits and traditions to new world.

(48) But the force of geographic conditions peculiar to America, the interplay of the varied national groups upon once another, and the sheer difficulty of maintaining old-world ways in a raw, new continent caused significant changes.

These changes were gradual and at first scarcely visible.

But the result was a new social pattern which, although it resembled European society in many ways, has a character that was distinctly American.

3- (49) The first shiploads of immigrants bound for the territory which is now the United States crossed the Atlantic more than a hundred years after the 15th-and-16th-century explorations of North America.

In the meantime, thriving Spanish colonies had been established in Mexico, the West Indies, and South America.

These travelers to North America came in small, unmercifully overcrowded craft.

During their six-to twelve-week voyage, they survived on barely enough food allotted to them.

Many of the ships were lost in storms, many passengers died of disease, and infants rarely survived the journey.

Sometimes storms blew the vessels far off their course, and often calm brought unbearably long delay.

4- To the anxious travelers the sight of the American shore brought almost inexpressible relief.

Said one recorder of events, “ The air at twelve leagues’ distance smelt as sweet as a new-blown garden.”

The colonists’ first glimpse of the new land was a sight of dense woods.

(50) The virgin forest with its richness and variety of trees was a real treasure-house which extended from Maine all the way down to Georgia.

Here was abundant fuel and lumber.

Here was the raw material of houses and furniture, ships and potash, dyes and naval stores.