

6. James Oglethorpe, "Persons Reduc'd  
to Poverty May Be Happy in Georgia," 1732

. . . Let us . . . cast our Eyes on the Multitude of unfortunate People in the Kingdom of reputable Families, and of liberal, or at least, easy Education: Some undone by Guardians, some by Law-Suits, some by Accidents in Commerce, some by Stocks and Bubbles, and some by Suretyship. But all agree in this one Circumstance, that

---

Oglethorpe, James. *A New and Accurate Account of the Provinces of South-Carolina and Georgia* (London, 1732; facs. rpt. Savannah, GA: Beehive Press, 1972)

they must either be Burthensome to their Relations, or betake themselves to little Shifts for Sustenance, which ('tis ten to one) do not answer their Purposes, and to which a well-educated Mind descends with the utmost Constraint. What various Misfortunes may reduce the Rich, the Industrious, to the Danger of a Prison, to a moral Certainty of Starving! These are the Poeples that may relieve themselves and strengthen *Georgia*, by resorting thither, and Great *Britain* by their Departure. . . .

Having thus described (I fear, too truly) the pityable Condition of the better Sort of the Indigent, an Objection rises against their Removal upon what is stated of their Imbecility for Drudgery. It may be asked, if they can't get Bread here for their Labour, how will their Condition be mended in *Georgia*? The Answer is easy; Part of it is well attested, and Part self-evident. They have Land there for nothing, and that Land is so fertile that . . . they receive an Hundred Fold increase for taking very little Pains. Give here in *England* Ten Acres of good Land to One of these helpless Persons, and I doubt not his Ability to make it sustain him, and this by his own Culture, without letting it to another: But the Difference between no Rent, and Rack-Rent, is the Difference between eating and starving. If I make but Twenty Pound of the Produce of a Field, and am to pay Twenty Pound Rent for it; 'tis plain I must perish if I have not another Fund to support me: But if I pay no Rent, the Produce of that Field will supply the mere Necessities of Life.

With a View to the Relief of People in the Condition I have described, His Majesty has this present Year incorporated a considerable Number of Persons of Quality and Distinction, and vested a large Tract of *South-Carolina* in them, by the Name of *Georgia*, in Trust to be distributed among the Necessitous. These Trustees not only give Land to the Unhappy who go thither, but are also empower'd to receive the voluntary Contributions of charitable Persons to enable them to furnish the poor Adventurers with all Necessaries for the Expence of the Voyage, occupying the Land, and supporting them 'till they find themselves comfortably settled. So that now the Unfortunate will not be obliged to bind themselves to a long Servitude, to pay for their Passage, for they may be carried *gratis* into a Land of Liberty and Plenty; where they immediately find themselves in Possession of a competent Estate, in an happier Climate than they knew before, and they are Unfortunate indeed if here they can't forget their Sorrows. . . .