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American Colonization Society.

The First Annual Report.

Washington, Rapine, 1818. 49 pp.

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THE

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR COLONIZING

THE

FREE PEOPLE OF COLOR,

OF THE

UNITED STATES;

AND THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING

IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON,

ON THE FIRST DAY OF

JANUARY, 1818.

WASHINGTON CITY:

PRINTED BY D. RAPINE, CAPITOL HILL.

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1818.

The Constitution of the American Society, for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States.

Article I.—This Society shall be called, “The American Society for colonizing the free people of color of the United States.”

Article II.—The object to which its attention is to be exclusively directed, is to promote and execute a plan for colonizing (with their consent) the free people of color, residing in our country, in Africa, or such other place as Congress shall deem most expedient. And the Society shall act, to effect this object in co-operation with the general government, and such of the states as may adopt regulations upon the subject.

Article III.—Every citizen of the United States, who shall subscribe these articles, and be an annual contributor of one dollar to the funds of the Society, shall be a member. On paying a sum not less than thirty dollars, at one subscription, shall be a member for life.

Article IV.—The officers of this Society shall be, a President, thirteen Vice Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Recorder, and a Board of Managers, composed of the above named officers, and twelve other members of the Society. They shall be annually elected by the members of the Society, at their annual meeting on the last Saturday of December, and continue to discharge their respective duties till others are appointed.

Article V.—It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Society, and of the Board of Managers, and to call meetings of the Society, and of the Board, when he thinks necessary, or when required by any three members of the board.

Article VI.—The Vice Presidents, according to seniority, shall discharge these duties in the absence of the President.

Article VII.—The Secretary shall take minutes of the proceedings, prepare and publish notices, and discharge such other duties, as the Board, or the President, or in his absence the Vice President, according to the seniority, (when the Board is not sitting) shall direct. And the Recorder shall record the proceedings and the names of the members, and discharge such other duties as may be required of him.

Article VIII.—The Treasurer shall receive and take charge of the funds of the Society, under such security as may be prescribed by the Board of Managers: keep the accounts and exhibit a statement of receipts and expenditures at every annual meeting, and discharge such other duties as may be required of him.

Article IX.—The Board of managers shall meet on the first Monday in January, the first Monday in April, the first Monday in July, and the first Monday in October, every year, and at such other times as the President may direct. They shall conduct the business of the Society, and take such measures for effecting its object as they shall think proper, or shall be directed at the meetings of the Society, and make an annual report of their proceedings. They shall also fill up all vacancies occurring during the year, and make such by-laws for their government, as they may deem necessary, provided the same are not repugnant to this constitution.

Article X.—Every Society which shall be formed in the United States to aid in the object of this association, and which shall co-operate with its funds for the purposes thereof, agreeably to the rules and regulations of this Society, shall be considered auxiliary thereto, and its officers shall be entitled to attend and vote at all meetings of the Society, and of the Board of Managers.

THE
FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

THE Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color held its first anniversary, on Thursday, the first day of January, 1818. in the Chamber of the House of Representatives ; and it will be worthy of note, if on no other account, from the fame and talents of the individuals, whose influence and exertions have been blended to atchieve the objects of the society. Nor can any subject more justly ennoble the efforts of genius, than the interests of an institution grasping so wide a field of patriotism and humanity. But to those patrons of it, by whose gracious endeavors it was begun and advanced, it must have been eminently gratifying to find, in the report of the proceedings of the past year, such abundant proofs of its prosperity and improvement. The concurrence of every part of the country to strengthen and establish it, leaves no doubt that the warmest wishes of the philanthropist will be satisfied with the success of its issue. The succeeding publications, however, will best illustrate the views and resources of the Society.

The meeting was opened by the Hon. BUSHROD WASHINGTON, with the following perspicuous and elegant address :

“ It is with peculiar satisfaction that I meet the founders and patterns of the American Colonization Society, after the experience of a year has ascertained that their wise and benevolent purpose will be seconded by the voice of our common country.

From every quarter of the United States, the aspirations of good men have been breathed to Heaven for the success of our future labors.

The resolution of Virginia, soliciting the aid of the General Government, in effecting a similar object, which had passed the popular branch of her Legislature by a very large majority, before the organization of this Society, received, shortly after, the almost unanimous sanction of her Senate.

Auxiliary Societies have been formed in many parts of the country, and in the populous cities of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, for the purpose of co-operating with the parent society established at the seat of the General Government ; and many similar associations await only the measures which the President of the United States may be expected to take, in pursuance of the request of Virginia, to embody themselves, and to combine the resources of the Union, for the completion of our comprehensive and benevolent design.

Among a small, but opulent society of slave-holders in Virginia, a subscription has been raised, by the zealous exertions of a few individuals, of such magnitude, as to illustrate the extent of the funds which we may hope hereafter to command, and to induce a confident hope that our labours will be awarded by the willing contributions of a generous and enlightened people.

Other public spirited individuals have forborne to make similar efforts, until the success of our preparatory measures shall have been clearly ascertained.

The Society have engaged two agents to explore the western coast of Africa, and to collect such information as may assist the Government of the United States in selecting a suitable district on that continent for the proposed settlement. The performance of this preliminary duty has been confided to Samuel J. Mills, and Ebenezer Burgess, gentlemen possessing all the qualifications requisite for the important trust confided to them ; and their report may reasonably be expected before the next annual meeting of the Society.

The addition which has recently been made to our stock of knowledge of that continent, to which every eye is directed as the proper theatre of our future labours, is highly encouraging to that enlarged and benificent plan, which associates the political emancipation and future comfort of an unfortunate class of men, with the civilization and happiness of an afflicted, oppressed, and degraded quarter of our globe.

Amidst these encouraging prospects, I cannot forbear a momentary tribute of regret to the memory of a man, to whom Africa is indebted for a vindication of her capacity for moral and intellectual improvement, and the world for an illustrious

example of disinterested benevolence. This event is the more to be deplored, as the death of cap. Paul Cuffe occurred after his usefulness had been recently manifested, by the restoration of fifty of his countrymen to the land of their forefathers; an act which must afford to every christian society fresh cause of gratitude to that God who inspired this generous African, to execute the counsels of universal benevolence.

An effort has been unfortunately made to prejudice the minds of the free people of color against this institution, which had its origin, it is believed, in an honest desire to promote their happiness. A suggestion has been made to them, which this society disclaims by the terms of its constitution, that they are to be constrained to migrate to the country which may be selected for the seat of our colony. No suspicion can be more unfounded. It is sanctioned by no declarations or acts of this Society, from which alone our intentions can be candidly inferred.

As little can be apprehended by the proprietor, who will not voluntarily avail himself of the opportunity, which this settlement will afford him, of emancipating his slaves, without injury to his country. The effect of this institution, if its prosperity shall equal our wishes, will be alike propitious to every interest of our domestic society; and should it lead, as we may fairly hope it will, to the slow, but gradual abolition of slavery, it will wipe from our political institutions the only blot which stains them; and in palliation of which, we shall not be at liberty to plead the excuse of moral necessity, until we shall have honestly exerted all the means which we possess for its extinction.

In the magnificent plans now carrying on for the improvement and happiness of mankind, in many parts of the world, we cannot but discern the interposition of that Almighty power, who alone could inspire and crown with success these great purposes. But, amongst them all, there is perhaps none upon which we may more confidently implore the blessing of Heaven, than that in which we are now associated. Whether we consider the grandeur of the object, and the wide sphere of philanthropy which it embraces; or whether we view the present state of its progress under the auspices of this society, and under the obstacles which might have been expected from the cupidity of many, we may discover in each, a certain pledge, that the same benignant hand which has made these preparatory arrangements, will crown our efforts with success. Having, therefore, these motives of piety to consecrate and

strengthen the powerful considerations which a wise policy suggests, we may, I trust, confidently rely upon the liberal exertions of the public for the necessary means of effecting this highly interesting object."

The Secretary, E. B. CALDWELL, Esq. then proceeded to read the annual report of the Board of Managers, as follows :

"The Managers of the American Society for colonizing the free people of color of the United States, in submitting to the Society their first report, are encouraged to persevere in their efforts from an increased confidence as well in its practicability as in its importance. In a plan of such magnitude, involving the happiness of many millions ; and the success of which, while it cannot fail to create a general interest, might conflict with established prejudice, circumspection and delicacy become essential to its progress. The first step of the Board of Managers was to present a memorial to Congress at their last session, which, with the report of the committee to whom it was referred, is now laid before the society. The nature and novelty of the subject, not less than the mass of business which engaged the deliberations of that body, did not permit them to pursue the report. On the adjournment of Congress the Board adopted suitable measures to promote the views of the Society, without waiting the lapse of another session. No efficient and decisive measures could be adopted until it was ascertained where the most suitable situation could be procured on the west coast of Africa, for planting the proposed colony ; and although the Managers collected much interesting and useful information, and such as gave them great encouragement to proceed, it could not supply the place of that which must be obtained from their own agents upon the spot. It was, therefore resolved, shortly after the rising of Congress, to appoint an agent to visit and explore a part of the west coast of Africa. Upon further deliberation, and considering the importance of the mission, the variety of objects to which the attention of a single agent would be directed—the danger of having the main object defeated by the casualties to which he might be exposed, as well as the importance of concert and co-operation in many difficulties which might occur, it was thought advisable to increase the number to two. The managers, accordingly, after having received the most satisfactory testimony of their zeal, ability, and other qualifications, appointed Mr. Samuel J. Mills and Mr. Ebenezer Burgess Agents of the Society for this purpose.

It was supposed that much useful information might be procured in England, and the enquiries of the agents much facilitated by calling there on their way to Africa. The members of the African institution in England have been for many years engaged in the laudable work of meliorating the condition of the long neglected and much abused Africans, and possess great influence in that country, and particularly in the colony of Sierra Leone. A letter was, therefore, addressed by the President to that body, in hopes that the high character of benevolence which characterizes the conductors of that institution, and the similarity of the objects of its pursuits, would lead them cordially to co-operate in the great designs of this Society, and to give our agents all the aid in their power. This letter, and the instructions and commissions of the agents, are annexed to this report, for the information of the Society. The agents sailed from this country the middle of November last.

The raising of funds to meet the expenditure necessary for effecting this object, has occupied much of the attention and labors of the Board of Managers; and a still further increase of our resources will be essential to its completion. Nor do we fear that the American community will suffer an object of so much importance, and of so high a character of benevolence, to fail for the want of necessary pecuniary aid. We are happy to state that auxiliary Societies have been formed in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Virginia, and Ohio, and the Board have received information of the intention of forming other societies in different parts of the country. The extension of these auxiliaries is of the first importance, as it is by their means the public mind must be enlightened on the great and important objects of the Society, and it is through them, in some measure, the necessary funds must be drawn for its support. In the prosecution of a plan which was likely to attract the public attention to subjects of deep interest and great delicacy, it was expected that much jealousy would be excited, and many fears and prejudices would be awakened. Persons acting from the most opposite and contradictory views and principles, have been arrayed in opposition to the Society, from a mistaken apprehension of its tendency, as well as of the motives of its members. But, in the midst of these difficulties, which jealousy and prejudice have raised to impede our course, we are encouraged by the decided approbation of many of the most intelligent of our fellow-citizens, in different parts of the country, among those the most distinguished for

whatever is great or good, and by almost all who have taken pains to investigate and examine the subject. The more the public mind becomes informed, the more decided and general will be its approbation; and we already number among our patrons many whose dispositions were at first neutral, if not unfriendly.

The objectors to the Society are generally those who acknowledge the importance and utility of establishing the proposed colony, but suppose it impracticable; and they refer principally, 1st. To the difficulty of procuring a proper situation for the colony. 2d. The supposed repugnance of the colonists. 3d. The expense of emigration. The first objection is assuming a difficulty without proof, and will be best answered by the report of the agents, who have been sent to explore the country. The managers are enabled at present to state, that, from information derived from various sources, they are persuaded that a situation can be procured in Africa with the approbation, and secured from the hostility, of the neighboring nations, which will possess, such fertility of soil, and salubrity of climate, as to make it an inviting situation to the people of color in this country.

2. The objection on the part of the coloured people, it is readily seen, springs from first impressions, and is the result entirely of ignorance and misapprehension? As these are removed, and their minds are informed upon the subject, the phantoms which their alarmed imaginations had conjured up, gradually disappear; and when they learn that the land of their fathers is not cursed by a perpetual and unvarying sterility, nor inhabited by the most sanguinary and ferocious savages, that instinctive principle which binds it to their affections, is soon seen to unfold itself; and though the Managers have learned with surprize and regret that their fears have been awakened in some places, by persons claiming their confidence as their peculiar and avowed defenders and benefactors, they still believe that the diffusion of juster opinions, founded on undoubted facts in relation to the state of things in Africa, and the advantages of a settlement there, will make it very generally if not universally the place of their decided preference. The Managers are the more confirmed in this opinion from their knowledge of the approbation of many of the most intelligent among the people of color to the plan of the society, notwithstanding the alarms which had been created, and the misapprehensions which had been excited, and that many of those, who were at first violent in their opposi

tion, have become as decidedly friendly, upon learning the real motives, intentions, and objects of the society.

The Managers have ascertained that there are numbers of the highest standing for intelligence and respectability among that class of people, who are warmly in favor of the plan, from a conviction that it will, if accomplished, powerfully co-operate in placing the situation of their brethren here and in Africa, in that scale of happiness and respectability among the nations of the earth, from which they have long been degraded. Offers of service have been received from many worthy and influential individuals of their own color, and from a number of families from different parts of the U. States, to be come the first settlers in the colony, whenever a suitable situation shall be procured. The Managers can with confidence state their belief, that they would have no difficulty in procuring individuals among them worthy of trust and confidence to explore the country if necessary, and to plant a colony of sufficient strength to secure its safety and prosperity. This being accomplished, there can be no difficulty in presenting its importance to their brethren, in such a manner and with such unquestionable testimony, as must command their fullest confidence. Without detailing the variety of information received by the Board on this subject, the Managers cannot omit the testimony of capt. Paul Cuffee, so well known in Africa, Europe, and America, for his active and enlarged benevolence, and for his zeal and devotedness to the cause of the people of color. The opportunities of capt. Cuffee, of forming a correct opinion were superior perhaps to those of any man in America. His judgment was clear and strong, and the warm interest he took in whatever related to the happiness of that class of people is well known. The testimony of such a man is sufficient to outweigh all the unfounded predictions and idle surmises of those opposed to the plan of the Society. He had visited twice the coast of Africa, and became well acquainted with the country and its inhabitants. He states that upon his opinion alone, he could have taken to Africa at least two thousand people of color from Boston and its neighborhood. In the death of Paul Cuffee the Society has lost a most useful advocate, the people of color, a warm and disinterested friend, and Society a valuable member. His character alone ought to be sufficient to rescue the people to which he belonged from the unmerited aspersions which have been cast on them. The plan of the Society met with his entire approbation, its success was the subject of his ardent wishes, and the prospect of its usefulness to the native Africans and their descen-

dants, in this country, was the solace of his declining years, and cheered the last moments of his existence.

3d. The objection urged on the score of expenditure in transporting so many persons to Africa, has been arrayed in all the imposing forms of figures and calculations. There is a material error in estimating the expence of removing each individual, by the same ratio which may be incurred in the removal of the first colonists, without making any allowance for the thousands that will be enabled to defray their own expences.

The advantages of the progress of the colony must have been equally overlooked; as it may be expected soon to become sufficiently established and flourishing, to offer immediate employment to those who come among them, and who will be able to work and provide for their own subsistence. In addition to this, much may be expected from the augmented value of the land in proportion to its settlement.

Our western countries present the best comment on this subject. An emigration to Africa, will be attended with less expence, and the emigrants will be exposed to less inconvenience, and to fewer difficulties, when the colony is established, than many of the emigrants to the western country now encounter—and yet we find thousands coming even from remote parts of Europe to the interior of America, without the means and advantages which thousands of people of color possess in this country, and that they often rise to respectability and independence, and even to wealth.

The Managers cannot pass the occasion, without noticing the death of the Reverend Doctor Finley, one of the Vice Presidents, during the past year. The deep interest which he took in the success of the Society, and the zeal he displayed in its formation, are well known to many present. In his last sickness, he was much gratified upon receiving information of the progress of the Society, and of its prospects of success. It gave consolation and comfort to his last moments. When we view the Society in this early stage of its proceedings, as animating the hopes and cheering the prospects of the dying christian who had been engaged in its service; when we view it as consecrated by the prayers of the pious, may we not be led with humble confidence to look to the good hand of an overruling Providence to guide its deliberations? May we not expect that the benedictions of millions yet unborn shall bless its anniversary?"

On motion of Mr. CLAY, a letter of Thomas Jefferson, late President of the United States, was read, which he under-

stood was in the hands of some one present, and would show that the importance of such an institution had been long since duly appreciated, and had received the approbation of that illustrious individual,

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Copy of a letter from Thomas Jefferson, late President of the United States, to John Lynd.

MONTICELLO, JAN. 21, 1811.

SIR,

You have asked my opinion on the proposition of Ann Mifflin, to take measures for procuring, on the coast of Africa, an establishment to which the people of color of these States might, from time to time, be colonized, under the auspices of different governments. Having long ago made up my mind on this subject, I have no hesitation in saying, that I have ever thought that the most desirable measure which could be adopted for gradually drawing off this part of our population. Most advantageous for themselves as well as for us ; going from a country possessing all the useful arts, they might be the means of transplanting them among the inhabitants of Africa ; and would thus carry back to the country of their origin the seeds of civilization, which might render their sojournment here a blessing, in the end, to that country.

I received, in the *last* year of my entering into the administration of the general government, a letter from the governor of Virginia, consulting me, at the request of the legislature of the State, on the means of procuring some such asylum to which these people might be occasionally sent. I proposed to him the establishment of Sierra Leone, in which a private company in England had already colonized a number of negroes, and particularly the fugitives from these States during the revolutionary war : and at the same time suggested, if that could not be obtained, some of the Portuguese possessions in South America as most desirable.

The subsequent Legislature approving these ideas, I wrote the ensuing year (1802) to Mr. King, our minister in London, to endeavour to negotiate with the Sierra Leone company, and induce them to receive such of these people as might be colonized thither. He opened a correspondence with Mr. W—— and Mr. Thornton, secretary of the company, on the subject ; and in 1803 I received, through Mr. King, the result ; which was, that the colony was going on in but a languishing condi-

tion; that the funds of the company were likely to fail, as they received no return of profit to keep them up; that they were then in treaty with the government to take the establishment off their hands; but that in no event should they be willing to receive more of these people from the United States, as it was that portion of settlers who had gone from the United States, who, by their idleness and turbulence, had kept the settlement in constant danger of dissolution, which could not have been prevented, but for the aid of the Marroon negroes, from the West Indies, who were more industrious and orderly than the others, and supported the authority of the government and its laws.

I think I learned, afterwards, that the British government had taken the colony into their own hands, and I believe it still exists.

The effort which I made with Portugal to obtain an establishment from them, within their colonies in South America, proved also abortive.

You inquired further whether I would use my endeavours to procure such an establishment secure against violence from other powers, and particularly the French. Certainly, I shall be willing to do any thing I can to give it effect and safety.

But I am but a private individual, and could only use endeavours with individuals. Whereas, the national government can address themselves at once to those of Europe to obtain the desired security, and will unquestionably be ready to exert its influence with those nations to effect an object so benevolent in itself, and so important to a great portion of its constituents. Indeed, nothing is more to be wished than that the United States, would themselves undertake to make such an establishment on the coast of Africa.

Exclusive of motives of humanity, the commercial advantages to be derived from it might defray all its expences; but for this, the national mind is not prepared. It may perhaps be doubted whether many of these people would voluntarily consent to such an exchange of situation, and but few of those who are advanced to a certain age in habits of slavery would be capable of governing themselves: this should not, however, discourage the experiment, nor the early trial of it. And propositions should be made with all the prudent caution and attention requisite to reconcile it to the interest, the safety, and prejudice of all parties.

Accept the assurance of my respects and esteem.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Mr. MERCER, then rose, and said he was happy to have it in his power to inform the Society, that the sentiments of our present Chief Magistrate were not less friendly to its benevolent object than those of his predecessor, whose letter had been just read. It was, said Mr. Mercer, through a very interesting correspondence between Mr. Monroe, then governor of Virginia with Mr. Jefferson, that the general assembly had first solicited the aid of the government of the United States, to procure an asylum for our free people of color. Nor was the sentiment which prompted this effort in the councils of Virginia, confined to a few individuals, distinguished for the extent of their political views, or by romantic feelings of benevolence. The resolution to which the address of the President had just called the attention of the Society, passed the popular branch of the legislature of Virginia with but *nine* dissenting voices out of one hundred and forty six, and a full quorum of the Senate, with but *one*. It was, in fact, but a repetition of certain resolutions, which had been unanimously adopted by the same legislature, tho' in secret session, at three antecedent periods, in the last seventeen years. It was truly the feeling and voice of Virginia.

Many thousand individuals in our native state, you well know, Mr. President, are restrained, said Mr. M. from manumitting their slaves, as you and I are, by the melancholy conviction, that they cannot yield to the suggestions of humanity, without manifest injury to their country.

The rapid increase of the free people of colour, by which their number was extended in the ten years proceeding the last census of the United States, from fifteen to thirty thousand, if it has not endangered our peace, has impaired the value of all the private property in a large section of our country. Upon our lowlands said Mr. Mercer, it seems as if some malediction had been shed. The habitations of our fathers have sunk into ruins; the fields which they tilled have become a wilderness. Such is the table land between the valleys of our great rivers. Those newly grown and almost impenetrable thickets which have succeeded a wretched cultivation, shelter and conceal a banditti, consisting of this degraded, idle, and vicious population, who sally forth from their coverts, beneath the obscurity of night, and plunder the rich proprietors of the valleys. They infest the suburbs of the towns and cities, where they become the depositories of stolen goods, and, schooled by necessity, elude the vigilance of our defective police.

It has been suggested, said Mr. M. that resources will be wanted to give success to our enterprize. Let its commencement be but propitious, and it will eventually prosper to the extent of our most sanguine wishes. The great obstacle to be surmounted, will arise not from the sordid propensity of the slave-holder, but from the imperfect means within our reach of transporting and early providing for the numerous colonists who will present themselves to our charity or be tendered to our acceptance by their present masters.

The laws of Virginia now discourage, and very wisely, perhaps, the emancipation of slaves. But the very policy on which they are founded, will afford every facility to emancipation, when the colonization of the slave will be the consequence of his liberation.

I have Mr. President, offered these hasty remarks under the impression that some of the facts which they disclose may have been unknown to the Society. It has my most fervent prayers, and shall command my utmost efforts for its success, which requires, to insure it, nothing but our united, zealous, and persevering exertions.

On motion of Mr. CLAY,

Resolved, unanimously. That the thanks of the Society be presented to the Board of Managers, for the able and satisfactory manner in which they have discharged the duties assigned to them by the Society; and that they be requested to furnish a copy of the first report of their proceedings for publication.

Mr. CLAY rose to submit a motion which he had hoped some other gentleman would have offered. It was a vote of thanks to the Board of Managers. He would not be restrained from proposing it by the official relation in which he stood to the Board, because, although he was ex-officio a member, he had really participated very little in its valuable labors, and therefore could not be justly reproached with proposing thanks to himself.

Whilst he was up, he would detain the Society for a few moments. It was proper again and again to repeat, that it was far from the intention of the Society to affect, in any manner, the tenure by which a certain species of property is held. He was himself a slave-holder; and he considered that kind of property as inviolable as any other in the country. He would resist as soon, and with as much firmness, encroachments upon it as he would encroachments upon any other property which he held. Nor was he disposed even to go as far as the gentleman who had just spoken, (Mr. Mercer) in say-

ing that he would emancipate his slaves, if the means were provided of sending them from the country. It was also proper to repeat, that it was equally remote from the intention of the Society, that any sort of coercion should be employed in regard to the free people of color who were the objects of its proceedings. Whatever was proposed to be done was to be entirely voluntary on their part.

It has been said that the plan of the Society is impracticable and Utopian. Why? How have the descendents of Africa been brought to the shores of America? By the most nefarious traffic that ever disgraced the annals of man. It has been, it is true, the work of ages. May we not, by a gradual and persevering exertion, restore to Africa that portion of her race among us, that shall be liberated? He would not, he could not believe that man, in the pursuit of the vilest cupidity, in the prosecution of purposes of the most cruel injustice, which had constantly marked the African slave trade, could accomplish more than might be attained in a cause which was recommended by so many high, honorable, and animating considerations. Such was the cause in which this Society is engaged. The Christian, of whom unwearied constancy is the characteristic; the philanthropist; the statesman who looks only to the safety and the happiness of his own country; in short, all good men, will find motives for engaging their co-operation or their wishes in behalf of the society. Its object is not impracticable. Scarcely any thing—nothing is beyond the power of those who, in the pursuit of a just purpose, approved by good men, and sanctioned by Providence, boldly and resolutely determine to command success.

But the persons, the amelioration of whose condition is the object of the Society, will not, it is said, accept the proffered favor. Mr. C. believed at first, that, from want of information, very few of them would—not perhaps one in a hundred, in the interior. He was inclined to believe, however, that a number amply sufficient for the commencement of a colonial establishment would go. These would be drawn principally from the cities, which would act as a sort of depot from the country for the colony. Let five in a hundred only, of that portion of our population, be induced to migrate, and a number abundantly sufficient to begin with will be obtained. The first difficulties obviated, and all will be obviated. Let the colony be once firmly established and in prosperity, and all the obstacles will disappear. Why should they not go? Look at the earliest history of man; follow him through all his subsequent progress, and you find him continually migrating.

What is the motive of this unceasing change of abode? To better his condition. What brought our fathers voluntarily to these shores, then savage and forbidding, not less savage and forbidding perhaps than those of Africa itself? To render themselves more happy. This word happiness, Mr. C. said, comprised many items. It comprehended what was hardly less important than subsistence, political and social considerations. These the men of color never can enjoy here, but are what he would find in the contemplated colony. And can there be any thing, to a reflecting freeman, (and some among the class of persons to whom he alluded were doubtless capable of reflection) more humiliating, more dark and cheerless, than to see himself, and to trace in imagination his posterity, through all succeeding time, degraded and debased, aliens to the Society of which they are members, and cut off from all its higher blessings?

Further, several of the slave-holding states already had, and perhaps all of them would, prohibit entirely emancipation, without some such outlet was created. A sense of their own safety required the painful prohibition. Experience proved that persons turned loose who were neither freemen nor slaves, constituted a great moral evil threatening to contaminate all parts of society. Let the colony once be successfully planted, and legislative bodies, who have been grieved at the necessity of passing those prohibitory laws, which at a distance might appear to stain our codes, will hasten to remove the impediments to the exercise of benevolence and humanity. They will annex the condition that the emancipated shall leave the country; and he has placed a false estimate upon liberty who believes that there are many who would refuse the boon, when coupled even with such a condition.

But Mr. C. said, he would not longer digress from the object of his motion. He was persuaded he would meet the unanimous concurrence of the Society in the proposition that its thanks be tendered to the Board of Managers for the able and satisfactory manner in which they had executed their duties.

On motion of Mr. KEY,

Resolved, unanimously, That the thanks of the Society be presented to the President of the Society, for his aid and influence in promoting the objects of the Society; and that he be requested to furnish a copy of his address for publication.

On motion of Mr. BAYARD,

Resolved, unanimously, That the thanks of this Society be presented to the members of those Auxiliary Societies that have been formed in various parts of the United States, to forward the plan and to contribute to the funds of this institution.

On motion of Mr. HERBERT,

Resolved, Unanimously, That the future annual meeting of this Society, be held on the last Saturday of December.

The Society then proceeded to the appointment of officers for the present year, when the following persons were elected:

The Hon. *Bushrod Washington* was unanimously elected President.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

Hon. William H. Crawford, of Georgia.

Hon. Henry Clay, of Kentucky.

Hon. William Phillips, of Massachusetts.

Col. Henry Rutgers, of New York.

Hon. John E. Howard,

Hon. Samuel Smith,

Hon. John C. Herbert,

} *of Maryland.*

John Taylor, of Caroline, Esq. of Virginia.

Gen. Andrew Jackson, of Tennessee.

Robert Ralston, Esq.

Richard Rush, Esq.

} *of Pennsylvania.*

Gen. John Mason, District of Columbia.

Samuel Bayard, New Jersey.

MANAGERS.

Francis S. Key,

Walter Jones,

John Laird,

Rev. Dr. James Laurie,

Rev. Stephen B. Balch,

Rev. Obadiah B. Brown,

Benjamin G. Orr,

John Peter,

Edmund I. Lee,

William Thornton,

Wm. H. Fitzhugh,

Henry Carroll.

Elias B. Caldwell, Esq. Secretary.

John G. M. Donald, Recording Secretary.

David English, Treasurer.

To Samuel J. Mills and Ebenezer Burgess.

You have been appointed the agents of the “Board of Managers of the American Society for Colonizing the free

“people of color of the United States” for the purpose of visiting England and Africa, on a mission of inquiry.

The object which you will keep in view while engaged in this mission, is to obtain that information which will enable the Board to concert their future measures with a prospect of succeeding in their design. Your general conduct will be governed by the following instructions.

1. You will make the necessary preparation for leaving this country, and embrace the first favorable opportunity which shall present, for England.

2. Upon your arrival in London you will present your instructions and letters to such gentlemen as shall be named by the Board, and to others to whom you may have letters of introduction.

3. You will endeavor to procure information from those gentlemen relative to the state of the west coast of Africa, the best means of prosecuting your enquiries when you arrive there, and to obtain letters of introduction from the proper persons to the Governor of the Sierra Leone Colony, and to any other gentlemen on the coast who may probably aid you in your object.

4. When you have made the necessary preparations, which you are requested to do with the least possible delay, you will embark for the coast of Africa. You will make the Sierra Leone colony, with the approbation of the governor thereof, your principal station while you remain on the coast.

5. You will make yourselves acquainted with the Sierra Leone Colony, particularly of its history, progress, improvement and prospects, with a view to furnish such information as may be useful in forming a colony on the coast.

6. You will visit the coast above and below the colony of Sierra Leone, to as great an extent as shall be deemed expedient, and give a description of that part of the coast visited by you; and endeavor to procure as much information as possible of other parts of the coast, and of the interior. And we would particularly direct your attention to the climate, soil, and healthiness, of the country, and its fitness for agricultural improvements, as it is in contemplation to turn the attention of the new colonists mostly to agriculture. As connected with this object, you will procure all the information in your power as to the extent of the rivers on the coast, their sources and how far navigable, the mountains and general face of the country, and finally every thing that may be considered interesting and useful to the Society, to enable it to form an opinion as to the most eligible spot for the colony, and the prospect of success when established. It would be particularly desirable

to ascertain the character of the different nations or tribes on the coast, and more especially of those in the neighborhood of the place you may recommend as a proper situation for the colony.

7. You will direct your attention particularly to the Sherbro country, which country it is expected you will visit. By means of native interpreters you will endeavor to consult with the native chiefs of the different tribes and explain to them the design which the board have in view. Should circumstances permit, you will obtain from them a pledge that they will promote the designs of the colony, should one be established, and that as far as they have the possession of the county, that a section of it shall be given up to the government of the United States, or the Society, at a fair price, should Congress or the Board hereafter make the request; for the purpose of colonizing the free people of color, as the Board propose.

8. After you shall have completed your inquiries and as far as possible attained the object of your mission, you will return to America direct or by the way of England, as shall be deemed proper. It is desired that you would return direct to this country, unless the inducements to revisit England are strong.

9. You will obtain as particular and accurate an account of the territories and their limits, claimed by the different European nations, on the west coast of Africa, as possible; together with the character of the different nations on the coast, and in the interior, and the boundaries of their territories. On your return you will present to the Board a full account of your expedition, and of the information procured by you, and improve every opportunity which may present to inform the Board of your progress.

10. You will keep an account of your expenses for the inspection of the Board.

In addition to these instructions you will be furnished with copies of the constitution of this Society, and of the memorial of the board of managers, which was addressed to the Congress of the United States, during their session of 1816 and 1817.

BUSHROD WASHINGTON,

President of the American Colonization Society.

E. B. CALDWELL, Secretary.

Washington, Nov. 5th, 1817.

To Samuel J. Mills and Ebenezer Burgess.

GENTLEMEN.—

The Board of Managers of the American Society for colonizing the free people of color of the United States, have appointed you their agents on a mission to explore a part of the west coast of Africa, for the purpose of ascertaining the best situation which can be procured for colonizing the free people of color of the United States. You will act in conjunction as much as possible; but should you be separated to forward the objects of the mission, or by a dispensation of Providence, you will act as if you had a separate commission, taking care, in case of acting separately, not to let your engagements interfere with each other. The situation to which you have been called, is one of great importance and responsibility, and will require from you the greatest diligence, skill and prudence, as the success of the benevolent designs of the Society may, in a great measure, depend upon your mission. General instructions will be given with this commission, but very much must be left to your own discretion and prudence, on which the Board place the greatest reliance. The objects of the Society are of that enlarged benevolence, affecting, as they believe, not only the temporal and spiritual interests of thousands of our fellow-creatures in this country, but in Africa likewise, that they calculate upon the cordial aid and co-operation of the philanthropist of every clime and country, whose assistance you may need in the prosecution of your design; and they are the more sanguine in their calculations for this friendly support, from the attention which this class of the human family have received from the most distinguished individuals in Europe, and particularly in Great Britain. But whilst we thus say “be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,” and recommend you to the benevolent and feeling stranger, your principal reliance will be on Him who has made of one blood all the nations of the earth, and in whose hands are the hearts of all the children of men, to turn them as he pleaseth. May he be your protector, and preserve you from “the arrow that flieth by day,” and “the pestilence that walketh in darkness,” and “the destruction that wasteth at noon day.” May that “Saviour who is to receive Egypt as a ransom, and Ethiopia and Seba to himself”—who hath promised to “call his sons from far, and his daughters from the end of the earth,” “make for you a way in the sea” and in “the wilderness,” and “a path in the mighty waters,” that all

may issue to His honor and glory, and the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom.

BUSHROD WASHINGTON,

President of the American Colonization Society.

E. B. CALDWELL, Sec'y.



To his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, Patron and President of the African Institution.

I have the honor to inform your Royal Highness that an association of a number of persons, residing in various parts of the United States, has been recently formed at the city Washington, under the denomination of "The American Society for colonizing the free people of color of the United States." The object of this institution, indicated by its name, is to promote the colonizing of those persons, with their own consent. In the accomplishment of that object, it is necessary to determine upon a proper country wherein to plant the proposed colony. Africa, and particularly the western coast of it, has, with this view, hitherto principally engaged the attention of the Society; and, in order to acquire all the information which it may be material to possess, in fixing its judgment on that important point, it has deputed to Europe and to Africa the bearers hereof, Samuel J. Mills and Ebenezer Burgess.

Aware that the African institution has been long occupied with schemes of benevolence, connected with Africa, and the people and descendants of Africa, the American Society has directed me to address your Royal Highness, as the Patron and President of the African institution, and respectfully to solicit any aid and assistance which it may be convenient to render to those deputies, in the business with which they are thus charged. These gentlemen will promptly afford any further explanations which your Royal Highness may require, relative to the nature and prospects of the American Society.

I am sure that it would be quite unnecessary to trespass further upon the time of your Royal Highness, in expatiating and insisting upon the benefits which may result from the successful establishment of the contemplated colony, to the colonists themselves, to their descendants, and to Africa. Restored to the land of their fathers, and carrying with them a knowledge of our religion, of letters, and of the arts, may they not powerfully co-operate with the benevolent and enlighten-

ed efforts of the African institution, in the introduction into Africa of christianity and civilization? If the exertions of the two institutions are directed in channels somewhat different, they both have the same common character of humanity and benevolence—the same common aim at meliorating the condition of the race of Africa. From this affinity in object, the American Society cherishes the hope of friendly intercourse, and an interchange of good offices with the African institution.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, your Royal Highness's obedient servant.

BUSHROD WASHINGTON,

President of the American Colonization Society.

Address of the Synod of Tennessee, to the Society for the Colonization of the Free People of Color in the United States.

To the Hon. Bushrod Washington Esq. President, &c.

RESPECTED SIR,

Through you the Synod of Tennessee embrace with lively pleasure an early opportunity of congratulating the society formed at the capitol of our nation, and consisting of so many of our distinguished statesmen and fellow citizens, for the colonization of the free people of color among us, who may accede to their plan. We congratulate you on the noble and important object for which you are associated, on the providential signs of our times which signally favor your efforts, and on the wide spread and growing impression upon the public mind, that your success is connected with the best interests, not only of the people of color, but of our country and mankind. If it is important that legal equality should accompany liberty, that Africa should receive the gospel, and that the evils of the slave trade should be overruled for her final enjoyment of the blessings of civilization and knowledge, liberty and religion, then it is important that your design should be encouraged. We wish you, therefore, to know, that within our bounds the public sentiment appears clearly and decidedly in your favor, and that the more vigorously and perseveringly you combine and extend your exertions on the plan you have adopted, the more you are likely to be crowned with the approbation of the people as well as with the higher rewards of doing good. As ministers and disciples of him who proclaims light to them that sit in dark

ness, peace to a jaring world, liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, we anticipate the glorious day, when men shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest in all lands ; when every one shall sit under his own vine and under his own figtree, having none to molest or to make him afraid ; when the rod of the oppressor and the tears of the oppressed shall be known no more ; but all men shall do unto others as they would be done unto in similar circumstances. This glorious change in the state of the world we expect will be brought about by the instrumentality of men under the blessing of God. While, then, the heralds of salvation go forth in the name and strength of their divine master to preach the gospel to every creature, we ardently wish that your exertions and the best influence of all philanthropists may be united, to meliorate the condition of human society, and especially of its most degraded classes, till liberty, religion and happiness shall be the enjoyment of the whole family of man.

Nashville Church, Oct. 3d, 1817.

A true copy from the Records of the Synod of Tennessee.

CHARLES COFFIN, *Stated Clerk*

Since the meeting of the Society, the following resolution has unanimously passed the Legislature of Maryland.

BY THE HOUSE OF DELIGATES, January 26th, 1818.

Resolved, unanimously, That the governor be requested to communicate to the President of the United States and to our Senators and Representatives in Congress, the opinion of this General Assembly, that a wise and provident policy suggests the expediency, on the part of our national government, of procuring through negociation, by cession or purchase, a tract of country on the western coast of Africa, for the colonization of the free people of color of the United States.

By order.

LOUIS GASSAWAY, *Clerk*

Copy of a letter from a respectable gentleman in Vincennes in the State of Indiana, to the Hon. Bushrod Washington, President of the Society for the Colonization of Blacks.

SIR,

Having been informed through the medium of the newspapers of the formation of the society to which you do honour as president, but either not being informed of, or having forgotten the name of the society, I take the liberty to address this letter to you, requesting you to send it to the secretary or other proper officer, whose business it is to receive communications.

I feel a deep interest in your society, and highly approve the patriotic and benevolent motives which have induced its formation, and with every American citizen feel a pride in seeing the name of *Washington* at its head.

To aid its views I am prompted to send the following information. There are in this vicinity between fifty and a hundred free people of colour, who have by my means heard of your society, and are desirous of going to Africa, to help in forming a settlement or colony, should one be attempted. They live on the *Wabash*, on both sides ; some in the *Illinois* territory, and some in *Indiana*. They are in general industrious and moral. Some of them have landed property and are good farmers ; and some can read and write. They are sensible of the existing degraded condition in which they are placed by our laws, respecting the right of suffrage, and other disabilities.

If your society has formed a constitution, they wish to see it, as well as the consequent regulations, and they wish to be informed how soon any settlement or colony will be commenced.

Be pleased sir, to forward the constitution and other information to me, and I will communicate it to them. I will also aid the society in removing the people of colour from this, to the place of embarkation, and in any other manner in my power.

With best wishes for your success in your patriotic and humane labours, I have the honour to be sir,

Your devoted and obedient

Humble servant

Vincennes, 16th Oct. 1807.

*Extract of Letters written by Capt. Paul Cuffe to Mr. Mills:
Westport, 8th mo. 6th inst. 1816.*

ESTEEMED FRIEND,

I do not expect to send a vessel to Africa this ensuing winter, when I went last to Africa, I was somewhat disappointed in not having a special license from the British government.

My correspondent William Allen, of London, a member of the London African institution, wrote to me to come to London, and engage with them, and keep open a communication between England and Africa. I have informed him that my wish is for the good of the Africans generally. If we could open a circular rout from Africa to England, and thence to America, I feel disposed to be made use of in any way that appeared most advantageous, I have not had any returns.

The people I carried out to Africa, were well received and had land granted them, they much want at Sierra Leone, a good mill wright, a saw mill is necessary, also a rice mill for cleaning rice.

COPY OF CITATION.

Colony of Sierra Leone, 25th of March.

Mr. Perry Locke. You are hereby summoned and required to appear at the ensuing general session of the peace, which will be held at the Court Hall in Freetown, on Wednesday the 10th day of April, at the hour of ten in the forenoon, there to serve as a grand juror: herein fail not at your peril.

W. D. GRANT, *Sheriff.*

Perry Locke was one of the passengers that I carried out, he made great complaint to me, because he was called upon, I told him he complained in America because he was deprived of these priviledges. And then he murmured because he was thus called upon; go and fill thy seat, do as well as thou canst. I mention this, that others may see, that they have equal rights in Africa.

P. C.

Westport, 1st mo. 6th, 1817.

RESPECTED FRIEND,

The population of Sierra Leone in 1811, was 2000, and about 1000 in the suburbs. Since that time they have not been numbered, but the colony according to my judgment, from 1811 to 1815, had much improved, the soil for cultivation is not very flattering, but it is advantageously

situated for a town, and ship navigation. The coast of Africa abounds with rivers, the great river Gambia, according to the best information given me is very fertile, as is the Island Burso at the mouth of said river, but they are said to be sickly to the northern constitutions. There is a river about 50 leagues south of Cape Sierra Leone, called the Sherborough, good navigation, and soil excellent.

Agreeable to information given me by a citizen of Sierra Leone the citizen has ever been desirous that a settlement should be established at that place, with those people that may come from America, he is a man of good character. The great River Congo, near the equator, its powerful population and goodness of soil, I hope will not always be neglected. I much approve of a vessels being sent as thou has mentioned.

In 1815, I carried out to S. Leone, nine families, 38 in number, and in 1816, I have had so many applications, that I believe I might have had the greater part to have carried out of Boston and the vicinity. I should think about Christmas, would be the most healthy season for a vessel to arrive on the coast. As to the length of the voyage, it would depend on the extent of discoveries to be made. I think from twelve to eighteen months, provided the voyage should extend to the Cape of Goodhope and the Tristan Islands.

I should suppose that one vessel would be sufficient for visiting the coast ; as to the force necessary, thou art the best judge. I think that the government of Great Britain, would not receive large numbers of every description of people of colour at their colony. Were the U. States to undertake to settle a colony in Africa, it would be best to have good characters until the colony was well established. The English would not probably admit a free trade at Sierra Leone, unless they made a neutral port of it.

I should suppose that all those people who are willing to go to Sierra Leone, would have no objection to settling a new colony, thirty eight in number went out with me, their expense was estimated at one hundred dollars per head ; but were there a larger number, they could be carried out for sixty dollars--the expense of thirty of the above number was borne by Paul Cuffe, the others paid their own passages. In addition to the above expense, I furnished them with provisions to the amount of 159l 8s 3d sterling, all this was done without fee or reward, my hope is in a coming day.

PAUL CUFFE.

Baltimore, August 20th, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

Ever since I received your letter of July 11th, requesting the communication of such ideas as had occurred to me, concerning the proposed plan of colonizing the free blacks in the United States, with their own consent, and indeed from the time of our short interview at Washington, when you first mentioned the subject to me, I have kept it constantly in view, and revolved it much in my mind. Hitherto however, I have been prevented from putting my thoughts on paper, or even digesting and reducing them to method, by various interruptions, arising in part from accident, and in part from professional engagements, in the midst of which I am obliged at last to write. This may interfere very much with the order of my ideas, but will not I trust occasion any material omission. Nor do I apprehend much inconvenience from the delay : Since the preparatory measures for the first step in this great enterprise, the institution of a mission to the south western coast of Africa, to explore the ground, and seek out a suitable situation for the establishment of the colony, are not yet I believe entirely completed.

Although you confine your request to the communication of my ideas, concerning the manner and means of accomplishing this great design, it will not I trust be improper or unreasonable, to throw out by way of preface and introduction, some hints on its usefulness and practicability, which have long engaged my attention, and are susceptible I think of very full proof. To many, and especially to you, this I know is quite unnecessary ; but great numbers of our countrymen, including many persons of good sense, considerable influence and the best intentions, may have serious doubts on these two points, which it is of great importance to remove, in order to gain their zealous co-operation. Towards the attainment of so desirable an object I wish to contribute my mite, for which this seems to be a fit occasion.

In reflecting on the utility of a plan for colonizing the free people of colour, with whom our country abounds, it is natural that we should be first struck by its tendency to confer a benefit on ourselves, by ridding us of a population for the most part idle and useless, and too often vicious and mischievous. These persons are condemned to a state of hopeless inferiority and degradation, by their colour ; which is an indelible mark of their origin and former condition, and establishes an impassable barrier between them and the whites. This barrier is closed for ever, by our habits and our feelings which per-

haps it would be more correct to call our prejudices, and which whether feelings or prejudices, or a mixture of both, make us recoil with horror from the idea of an intimate union with the free blacks, and preclude the possibility of such a state of equality, between them and us, as alone could make us one people. Whatever justice humanity and kindness we may feel towards them, we cannot help considering them, and treating them, as our inferiors; nor can they help viewing themselves in the same light, however hard and unjust they may be inclined to consider such a state of things. We cannot help associating them, in our feelings and conduct, nor can they help associating themselves, with the slaves; who have the same colour the same origin and the same manners, and with whom they or their parrents have been recently in the same condition. Be their industry ever so great and their conduct ever so correct, whatever property they may acquire, or whatever respect we may feel for their characters, we never could consent, and they never could hope, to see the two races placed on a footing of perfect equality with each other: to see the free blacks or their descendants visit in our houses, form part of our circle of acquaintance, marry into our families, or participate in public honours and employments. This is strictly true of every part of our country, even those parts where slavery has long ceased to exist, and is held in abhorrence. There is no state in the union where a negro or mulatto can ever hope to be a member of congress, a judge, a militia officer, or even a justice of the peace: to sit down at the same table with the respectable whites, or to mix freely in their society. I may safely assert that Paul Cuffe, respectable intelligent and wealthy as he is, has no expectation or chance of ever being invited to dine with any gentleman in Boston, of marrying his daughter whatever may be her fortune or education to one of their sons, or of seeing his son obtain a wife among their daughters.

This circumstance, arising from the difference of colour and origin between the slaves and the free class, distinguishes the slavery of America from that of every other country, ancient or modern. Slavery existed among almost all the ancient nations. It now exists throughout Asia, Africa and America, and in every part of the Russian and Turkish dominions in Europe; that is in more than three fourths of the world. But the great body of the slaves, every where except in north and south America, are of the same race origin, colour and general character with the free people. So it was among the ancients. Manumission therefore, by removing the slave

from the condition of slavery, exempted him from its consequences, and opened his way to a full participation in all the benefits of freedom. He was raised to an equality with the free class, become incorporated into it with his family, and might by good fortune or good conduct soon wash out the stain, and obliterate the remembrance, of his former degraded condition.

But in the United States this is impossible. You may manumit the slave, but you cannot make him a white man. He still remains a negro or a mulatto. The mark and the recollection of his origin and former state still adhere to him; the feelings produced by that condition, in his own mind and in the minds of the whites, still exist; he is associated by his colour, and by these recollections and feelings, with the class of slaves; and a barrier is thus raised between him and the whites, that is between him and the free class, which he can never hope to transcend. With the hope he gradually loses the desire. The debasement which was at first compulsory, has now become habitual and voluntary. The incitement to good conduct and exertion, which arises from the hope of raising himself or his family in the world, is a stranger to his breast. He looks forward to no distinction, aims at no excellence, and makes no effort beyond the supply of his daily wants; and the restraints of character being lost to him, he seeks regardless of the future to obtain that supply, by the means which cost him the least present trouble. The authority of the master being removed, and its place not being supplied by moral restraints or in incitements, he lives in idleness, and probably in vice, and obtains a precarious support by begging or theft. If he should avoid those extremes, and follow some regular course of industry, still the habits of thoughtless improvidence which he contracted while a slave himself or has caught from the slaves among whom he is forced to live, who of necessity are his companions and associates, prevent him from making any permanent provision for his support, by prudent foresight and economy, and in case of sickness, or of bodily disability from any other cause, send him to live as a pauper, at the expence of the community.

There are no doubt many honorable and some very distinguished exceptions; but I may safely appeal to the observation of every man, at all acquainted with the class of people in question, for the correctness of this picture.

Such a class must evidently be a burthen and a nuisance to the community; and every scheme which affords a pros-

pect of removing so great an evil must deserve to be most favourably considered.

But it is not in themselves merely that the free people of colour are a nuisance and burthen. They contribute greatly to the corruption of the slaves, and to aggravate the evils of their condition, by rendering them idle discontented and disobedient. This also arises from the necessity under which the free blacks are, of remaining incorporated with the slaves, of associating habitually with them, and forming part of the same class in Society. The slave seeing his free companion live in idleness, or subsist however scantily or precariously by occasional and disultory employment, is apt to grow discontented with his own condition, and to regard as tyranny and injustice the authority which compels him to labour. Hence he is strongly incited to elude this authority by neglecting his work as much as possible, to withdraw himself from it altogether by flight, and sometimes to attempt direct resistance. This provokes or impels the master to a severity, which would not otherwise be thought necessary; and that severity, by rendering the slave still more discontented with his condition, and more hostile towards his master, by adding the sentiments of resentment and revenge to his original dissatisfaction, often renders him more idle and more worthless, and thus induces the real or supposed necessity of still greater harshness, on the part of the master. Such is the tendency of that comparison which the slave cannot easily avoid making, between his own situation and that of the free people of his own colour, who are his companions, and in every thing except exemption from the authority of a master his equals: whose condition, though often much worse than his own, naturally appears better to him; and being continually under his observation, and in close contact with his feelings, is apt to chafe goad and irritate him incessantly. This effect indeed is not always produced, but such is the tendency of this state of things; and it operates more extensively, and with greater force, than is commonly supposed.

But this effect, injurious as it must be to the character and conduct of the slaves, and consequently to their comfort and happiness, is far from being the worst that is produced by the existence of free blacks among us, a vast majority of the free blacks, as we have seen, are and must be an idle worthless and thievish race. It is with this part of them that the slaves will necessarily associate, the most frequently and the most intimately. Free blacks of the better class, who gain a comfortable subsistence by regular industry, keep as much as possible

aloof from the slaves, to whom in general they regard themselves as in some degree superior. Their association is confined as much as possible, to the better and more respectable class of slaves. But the idle and disorderly free blacks naturally seek the society of such slaves, as are disposed to be idle and disorderly too; whom they encourage to be more and more so, by their example, their conversation, and the shelter and means of concealment which they furnish. They encourage the slaves to theft, because they partake in its fruits. They receive secrete and dispose of the stolen goods; a part, and probably much the largest part, of which they often receive, as a reward for their services. They furnish places of meeting and hiding places in their houses, for the idle and the vicious slaves; whose idleness and vice are thus increased and rendered more contagious. These hiding places and places of meeting are so many traps and snares, for the young and thoughtless slaves, who have not yet become vicious: so many schools in which they are taught, by precept and example, idleness lying debauchery drunkenness and theft. The consequence of all this is very easily seen, and I am sure is severely felt in all places, where free people of colour exist in considerable numbers. That so many resist this contagion; that the free blacks themselves, as well as the slaves, do not become still more generally profligate; is a strong and consoling proof that the race possesses a fund of good dispositions, and is capable in a proper situation and under proper management, of becoming a virtuous and happy people. To place them in such a situation, to give them the benefit of such management, is the object of your noble enterprize; and surely no object is more entitled to approbation.

Great, however, as the benefits are, which we may thus promise ourselves, from the colonization of the free people of colour, by its tendency to prevent the discontent and corruption of our slaves, and to secure to them a better treatment by rendering them more worthy of it, there is another advantage infinitely greater, in every point of view, to which it may lead the way. It tends, and may powerfully tend, to rid us gradually and entirely, in the United States, of slaves and slavery: a great moral and political evil, of increasing virulence and extent, from which much mischief is now felt, and very great calamity in future is justly apprehended. It is in this point of view, I confess, that your scheme of colonization most strongly recommends itself, in my opinion, to attention and support. The alarming danger of cherishing in our bosom a distinct nation, which can never become incorporated

with us, while it rapidly increases in numbers, and improves in intelligence; learning from us the arts of peace and war, the secret of its own strength, and the talent of combining and directing its force; a nation which must ever be hostile to us, from feeling and interest, because it can never incorporate with us, nor participate in the advantages which we enjoy; the danger of such a nation in our bosom, need not be pointed out to any reflecting mind. It speaks not only to our understandings, but to our very senses: And however it may be derided by some or overlooked by others, who have not the ability or the time, or do not give themselves the trouble, to reflect on and estimate properly the force and extent of those great moral and physical causes, which prepare gradually and at length bring forth, the most terrible convulsions in civil society; it will not be viewed without deep and awful apprehension, by any who shall bring sound minds and some share of political knowledge and sagacity, to the serious consideration of the subject. Such persons will give their most serious attention to any proposition, which has for its object the eradication of this terrible mischief, lurking in our vitals. I shall presently have occasion to advert a little to the manner in which your intended colony will conduce to this great end. It is therefore unnecessary to touch on it here. Indeed it is too obvious to require much explanation.

But independently of this view of the case, there is enough in the proposed measure to command our attention and support, on the score of benefit to ourselves.

No person who has seen the slave holding states, and those where slavery does not exist, and has compared ever so slightly their condition and situation, can have failed to be struck with the vast difference, in favour of the latter. This difference extends to every thing, except only the character and manners of the most opulent and best educated people. These are very much the same every where. But in population, in the general diffusion of wealth and comfort, in public and private improvements, in the education manners and mode of life of the middle and labouring classes, in the face of the country, in roads bridges and inns, in schools and churches, in the general advancement of improvement and prosperity, there is no companion. The change is seen the instant you cross the line, which separates the country where there are slaves, from that where there are none. Even in the same state, the parts where slaves most abound, are uniformly the worst cultivated, the poorest, and the least populous; while wealth and improvement uniformly increase, as the number of slaves in the

country diminishes. I might prove and illustrate this position by many examples, drawn from a comparison of different states, as Maryland and Pennsylvania, and between different counties on the same state, as Charles County and Frederick in Maryland; but it is unnecessary; because every body who has seen the different parts of the country, has been struck by this difference.

Whence does it arise? I answer from this; that in one division of country the land is cultivated by freemen, for their own benefit; and in the other almost entirely by slaves, for the benefit of their masters. It is the obvious interest of the first class of labourers, to produce as much and consume as little as possible; and of the second class to consume as much and produce as little as possible. What the slave consumes is for himself: what he produces is for his master. All the time that he can withdraw from labour is gained to himself: all that he spends in labour is devoted to his master. All that the free labourer, on the contrary, can produce is for himself: all that he can save is so much added to his own stock. All the time that he loses from labour is his own loss.

This, if it were all, would probably be quite sufficient, to account for the whole difference in question. But unfortunately it is far from being all. Another and a still more injurious effect of slavery remains to be considered.

Where the labouring class is composed wholly or in a very considerable degree of slaves, and of slaves distinguished from the free class by colour features and origin, the ideas of labour and of slavery soon become connected, in the minds of the free class. This arises from that association of ideas, which forms one of the characteristic features of the human mind, and with which every reflecting person is well acquainted. They who continually from their infancy see black slaves employed in labour, and forming by much the most numerous class of labourers, insensibly associate the ideas of labour and of slavery, and are almost irresistibly led to consider labour as a badge of slavery, and consequently as a degradation. To be idle, on the contrary, is in their view the mark and the privilege of freemen. The effect of this habitual feeling, upon that class of free whites which ought to labour, and consequently upon their condition, and the general condition of the country, will be readily perceived by those who reflect on such subjects. It is seen in the vast difference between the labouring class of whites in the southern and middle, and those of the northern and eastern states. Why are the latter incomparably more industrious, more thriving, more orderly, more comfortably situated, than the former? The effect is obvious, to all those

who have travelled through the different parts of our country. What is the cause? It is found in the association between the idea of slavery, and the idea of labour; and in the feeling produced by this association, that labour the proper occupation of negro slaves, and especially agricultural labour, is degrading to a free white man.

Thus we see that where slavery exists the slave labours as little as possible, because all the time that he can withdraw from labour is saved to his own enjoyments; and consumes as much as possible, because what he consumes belongs to his master: while the free white man is insensibly but irresistibly led, to regard labour the occupation of slaves as a degradation, and to avoid it as much as he can. The effect of these combined and powerful causes, steadily and constantly operating in the same direction, may easily be conceived. It is seen in the striking difference which exists, between the slave-holding sections of our country, and those where slavery is not permitted.

It is therefore obvious that a vast benefit would be conferred on the country, and especially on the slave holding districts, if all the slave labourers could be gradually and imperceptibly withdrawn from cultivation, and their place supplied by free white labourers. I say gradually and imperceptibly; because if it were possible to withdraw suddenly and at once, so great a portion of the affective labour of the community, as is now supplied by slaves, it would be productive of the most disastrous consequences. It would create an immense void, which could not be filled. It would impoverish a great part of the community, unhinge the whole frame of society in a large portion of the country, and probably end in the most destructive convulsions. But it is clearly impossible; and therefore we need not enlarge on the evils which it would produce.

But to accomplish this great and beneficial change, gradually and imperceptibly; to substitute a free white class of cultivators for the slaves, with the consent of the owners, by a slow but steady and certain operation; I hold to be as practicable as it would be beneficial: and I regard this scheme of colonization as the first step, in that great enterprize.

The considerations stated in the first part of this letter, have long since produced a thorough conviction in my mind, that the existence of a class of free people of colour in this country is highly injurious, to the whites the slaves and the free people of colour themselves: Consequently that all emancipation, to however small an extent, which permits the persons emancipated to remain in this country, is an evil, which

must increase with the increase of the operation, and would become altogether intolerable, if extended to the whole, or even to a very large part, of the black population. I am therefore strongly opposed to emancipation, in every shape and degree, unless accompanied by colonization.

I may perhaps on some future occasion develope a plan, on which I have long meditated, for colonizing gradually and with the consent of their owners, and of themselves where free, the whole coloured population, slaves and all : but this is not the proper place for such an explanation, for which indeed I have not time now. But it is an essential part of the plan, and of every such plan, to prepare the way for its adoption and execution, by commencing a colony of blacks, in a suitable situation and under proper management. This is what your society propose to accomplish. Their project therefore, if rightly formed and well conducted, will open the way for this more extensive and beneficial plan, of removing gradually and imperceptibly, but certainly, the whole coloured population from the country, and leaving its place to be imperceptibly supplied, as it would necessarily be, by a class of free white cultivators. In every part of the country this operation must necessarily be slow. In the southern and south-western states it will be very long before it can be accomplished, and a very considerable time must probably elapse, before it can even commence. It will begin first, and be first completed, in the middle states ; where the evils of slavery are most sensibly felt, the desire of getting rid of the slaves is already strong, and a greater facility exists of supplying their place, by white cultivators. From thence it will gradually extend to the south and south west ; till by its steady constant and imperceptible operation, the evils of slavery shall be rooted out from every part of the United States, and the slaves themselves and their posterity shall be converted into a free civilized and great nation, in the country from which their progenitors were dragged, to be wretched themselves and a curse to the whites.

This great end is to be attained in no other way, than by a plan of universal colonization, founded on the consent of the slave holders, and of the colonists themselves. For such a plan that of the present colonization society opens and prepares the way, by exploring the ground, selecting a proper situation, and planting a colony, which may serve as a receptacle a nursery and a school for those that are to follow. It is in this point of view that I consider its benefits as the most extensive and important, though not the most immediate.

The advantages of this undertaking to which I have hitherto adverted, are confined to ourselves. They consist in ridding us to the free people of colour, and preparing the way for getting rid of the slaves and of slavery. In these points of view they are undoubtedly very great. But there are advantages to the free blacks themselves, to the slaves, and to the immense population of middle and southern Africa, which no less recommend this undertaking, to our cordial and zealous support.

To the free blacks themselves the benefits are the most obvious, and will be the most immediate. Here they are condemned to a state of hopeless inferiority, and consequent degradation. As they cannot emerge from this state, they lose by degrees the hope and at last the desire of emerging. With this hope and desire they lose the most powerful incitements to industry, frugality, good conduct, and honourable exertion. For want of this incitement, this noble and ennobling emulation, they sink for the most part into a state of sloth wretchedness and profligacy. The few honorable exceptions serve merely to shew, of what the race is capable in a proper situation. Transplanted to a colony composed of themselves alone, they would enjoy real equality : in other words real freedom. They would become proprietors of land, master mechanics, ship owners, navigators and merchants, and by degrees school masters, justices of the peace, militia officers, ministers of religion, judges, and legislators. There would be no white population to remind them of, and to perpetuate, their original inferiority ; but enjoying all the privileges of freedom, they would soon enjoy all its advantages, and all its dignity. The whites who might visit them, would visit them as equals ; for the purposes of a commerce mutually advantageous. They would soon feel the noble emulation to excel, which is the fruitful source of excellence, in all the various departments of life ; and under the influence of this generous and powerful sentiment, united with the desire and hope of improving their condition, the most universal and active encitements to exertion among men, they would rise rapidly in the scale of existence, and soon become equal to the people of Europe or of European origin, so long their masters and oppressors. Of all this the most intelligent among them would soon become sensible. The others would learn it from them ; and the prospect and hope of such blessings would have an immediate and most beneficial effect, on their condition and character. For it will be easy to adopt such regulations, as to exclude from this colony all but those who shall deserve by their conduct to be admitted.

thus rendering the hope of admission a powerful incentive, to industry, honesty, and religion.

To the slaves the advantages, tho' not so obvious or immediate, are yet certain and great.

In the first place they would be greatly benefitted by the removal of the free blacks, who now corrupt them, and render them discontented : thus exposing them to harsher treatment, and greater privations. In the next place, this measure would open the way to their more frequent and easier manumission ; for many persons who are now restrained from manumitting their slaves, by the conviction that they generally become a nuisance when manumitted in the country, would gladly give them freedom, if they were to be sent to a place where they might enjoy it, usefully to themselves and to Society. And lastly, as this species of manumission, attended by removal to a country where they might obtain all the advantages of freedom, would be a great blessing, and would soon be so considered by the slaves, the hope of deserving and obtaining it would be a great solace to their sufferings, and a powerful incitement to good conduct. It would thus tend to make them happier and better before it came, and to fit them better for usefulness and happiness afterwards.

Such a colony, too, would enlarge the range of civilization and commerce, and thus tend to the benefit of all civilized and commercial nations. In this benefit our own nation would most largely participate : because having founded the colony, and giving it constant supplies of new members, as well as its first and principal supply of necessaries and comforts, its first connections would be formed with us, and would naturally grow with its growth and our own, till they ripened into fixed habits of intercourse friendship and attachment.

The greatest benefit, however, to be hoped from this enterprise, that which in contemplation most delights the philanthropic mind, still remains to be unfolded. It is the benefit to Africa herself, from this return of her sons to her bosom, bearing with them arts knowledge and civilization, to which she has hitherto been a stranger. Cast your eyes my dear sir on this vast continent. Pass over the northern and north eastern parts, and the great desert, where sterility ferocious ignorance and fanaticism seem to hold exclusive and perpetual sway. Fix your attention on Soudan, and the widely extended regions to the South. You see there innumerable tribes and nations of blacks, mild and humane in their dispositions, sufficiently intelligent, robust active and vigorous, not averse from laborer or wholly ignorant of agriculture,

and possessing some knowledge of the ruder arts, which minister to the first wants of civilized man. You see a soil generally fertile, a climate healthy for the natives, and a mighty river, which rolls its waters through vast regions inhabited by these tribes, and seems destined by an all wise and beneficent Providence, one day to connect them with each other, and all of them with the rest of the world, in the relations of commerce and friendly intercourse. What a field is here presented for the blessings of civilization and christianity, which colonies of civilized blacks afford the best and probably the only means of introducing!! These colonies, composed of blacks already instructed in the arts of civilized life, and the truths of the gospel; judiciously placed, well conducted, and constantly enlarged; will extend gradually into the interior, will from commercial and political connections with the native tribes in their vicinity, will extend those connections to tribes more and more remote, will incorporate many of the natives with the colonies, and in their turn make establishments and settlements among the natives, and thus diffuse all around the arts of civilization, and the benefits of literary moral and religious instruction.

That such must be the tendency of colonies of this description, if well placed well formed and well conducted, cannot I think be reasonably doubted. Such a colony has already been established, with satisfactory success, and flattering prospects. But it may be doubted perhaps whether the situation has been fortunately chosen, with respect to all the objects that ought to be kept in view; and it is still more questionable whether a sufficient supply of colonists, of a proper description, to give it the extent necessary for rendering it in any considerable degree beneficial, can be drawn from the sources on which it must rely. It is in the United States alone that such colonists can be found, in any considerable numbers. In the choice of a good situation too, on which so much depends, we have far more assistance from recent discoveries, and the extension of geographical knowledge in that quarter of the globe, than was possessed by the founders of that colony. We have the benefit of their experience, of their discoveries, and even of their errors; which we may be able to correct or avoid. Useful therefore and meritorious as their establishment certainly is, we may hope to render ours far more extensively beneficial.

An objection of some plausibility is frequently urged, against this scheme of colonizing the free people of colour, which it may be proper in this place to notice. These people it is said, especially the industrious and estimable part of them,

will not go to the new colony. That many of them will decline to go at first, and some always, cannot be doubted. It is even probable, and may be safely admitted, that but few of them now think favourably of the project: for men, especially ignorant men, venture unwillingly upon great changes, the extent nature and consequences of which they are little capable of understanding. But it by no means follows that the same unwillingness or hesitation will continue, after the ground shall have been broken, the way opened, & a settlement formed. In the first instance none will engage, but the most industrious intelligent and enterprizing, who are capable of discerning the advantages of the undertaking, and have resolution and energy enough to encounter its first hardships and risks. This is the case with all colonies, and especially those formed in distant unknown or unsettled countries. Some resolute and adventurous spirits first embark; and they open and prepare the way for others. It is stated and believed, on evidence better known to you than to me, that a sufficient number of such persons stand ready at this time to commence the colony, as soon as the necessary previous arrangements can be made. I have no doubt of the fact, not only from information, but from general reasoning on the human character, and my knowledge of many individuals among the free blacks. When this first step is taken, and in most enterprizes the greatest difficulty lies in the first step; when a settlement of free blacks shall have actually been formed, the way opened, and the first difficulties surmounted; others will soon be disposed to follow. If successful and prosperous, as it certainly will be if properly conducted, its success will quickly become known to the free blacks, in every part of the country.

However distrustful of the whites, they will confide in the reports made to them by people of their own colour and class. The prosperity of the settlement, and the advantageous condition of the settlers, will soon be universally understood and believed; and indeed will be far more apt to be exaggerated than undervalued. The most ignorant and stupid of the free people of colour will speedily understand, or believe, that in the colony they may obtain a state of equality opulence and distinction, to which they can never aspire in this country. Hence the desire to join their friends and equals there, may be expected soon to become general among them: nor is it too much to hope and anticipate, that this desire will speedily grow into a passion; that the difficulty will be not to find colonists, but to select them; and that the hope of being re-

ceived into the favoured number, for whom it may be practicable to provide annually, will ere long become a most powerful and operative incentive, to industry sobriety and general good conduct, among the whole class from which the selection will be annually made.

Having detained you thus long, my dear sir, much too long I am afraid, with these preliminary observations on the benefits which may be expected from this undertaking, I proceed now to the manner of carrying it into execution. I shall not however treat this branch of the subject in its whole extent, for which this is not the proper place; but shall confine myself to the objects more immediately in view at this time; the choice of a proper situation for the first settlement, and the circumstances to which the attention of the agent who is to be sent out for the purpose of exploring the ground, ought chiefly to be directed.

The first of these circumstances is salubrity; with a view to which the vicinity of low and marshy grounds, of swamps, and of rivers which are apt to overflow their banks, ought to be carefully avoided. High situations, open to the sea, or washed by rivers with high and steep banks, should be sought. Mountains in the vicinity, and in the direction from which the winds regularly blow, are much to be desired; and great attention should be paid to the abundance of brooks and springs, and to the quality of their water. On all these accounts an elevated and uneven surface ought to be preferred, though less fertile than the flat low grounds. Too much attention ought not to be paid, in the first settlements, either to great fertility, or the convenience of navigation. The first establishment should no doubt be within a convenient distance from a good port, but need not be close to it; nor ought to be so, unless the immediate vicinity should be much more healthy, than such situations usually are. The settlement must be entirely agricultural at first, and will long perhaps always continue so, in a very great degree. Commerce there, as in our own country, must and will soon grow out of agriculture; but the first settlements ought to be made with a view to the latter, far more than to the former. Contiguity to a good market for agricultural productions, is indeed a very important incitement and aid to agricultural industry, and therefore a very important circumstance in the location of an agricultural colony; but it is far from being the most important, and care must be taken to prevent its being too much regarded.

Nor ought any thing in this respect to be sacrificed to

great fertility ; which is most frequently found in low flat and unwholesome situations. A good soil, well adapted to the cultivation of wheat, Indian corn or maize, and cotton, is all in this respect that ought to be desired : and such soils are found in places possessing every advantage of good water, with a dry and pure atmosphere. Wheat and Indian corn are the best articles of food, and the soils that produce them are fit also for various other grains and vegetables, useful for food and of easy culture ; especially the sweet potatoe and various kinds of pulse, which thrive well in hot climates. As an object of tillage, with a view to exportation, cotton is by far the best, because it thrives well in high and healthy situations, of a light soil, may be cultivated to advantage on small farms, and requires little labour which cannot be performed by women and children.

Attention should also be paid to suitable streams for the erection of grist mills, saw mills, and other water works, which will be almost indispensable to the colony in its infant state, and of great utility at a more advanced period. Fortunately such streams abound most, in the countries best adapted in other respects to agricultural settlements.

The character condition and disposition of the natives will also require very particular attention ; it being of the greatest importance to gain and preserve their good will, so as to cultivate and cement a free and friendly intercourse with them, obtain from them assistance and supplies, and gradually communicate to them the knowledge and habits of civilized life. For this essential purpose we should not only avoid the neighbourhood of fierce and warlike tribes, but that of very large and powerful ones ; who will be much more unmanageable and dangerous than small ones, in many points of view.

It would also be best to select a situation as distant as possible from Sierra Leone. There would no doubt be some advantages, at first, in a close neighbourhood ; but they would probably be soon overbalanced, by the jealousies and collisions which could hardly fail to take place, between two colonies established under different governments, and with different views and interests in many important points. This is an objection to Sherborough river ; probably not insurmountable, but sufficient to turn the scale in favour of a more distant position, possessing in other respects equal or nearly equal advantages.

If indeed an arrangement could be made with the British government, for an union and incorporation of the two colo-

nies, or rather for the reception of our colonists into their settlement, it might deserve serious consideration. There would no doubt be many advantages, at first, in sending them to a settlement already formed, where the first difficulties have been surmounted, and a regular government exists. But this is matter for future deliberation. We ought now to search out a fit place for ourselves ; for it is doubtful whether an incorporation would be agreed to by the British government, and far from being certain that the best place has been chosen for their establishment. When these points shall have been ascertained, and we know what prospect there is of obtaining a suitable situation elsewhere, a negotiation may be opened, if then thought advisable, for uniting the two colonies.

There will always be one strong objection to the incorporation. The British colony will be for a long time retained in the colonial state, subject to a foreign and distant government ; and when ripe for independence, will probably be compelled to seek it by force of arms. The nature and habitual policy of that government will almost necessarily lead to this result. Our colony, on the contrary, ought to be republican from the beginning, and formed and fashioned with a view to self-government and independence, with the consent of the mother country, at the earliest practicable period. It is thus only that it can be most useful to the colonists, to Africa, to us, and to the general cause of humanity.

It would, however, be premature at present, to decide on the question of incorporation ; and therefore with a view to this interesting part of the case, the agent should be instructed to investigate most carefully, the progress and present state of the Sierra Leone settlement, and to ascertain as exactly as possible all the circumstances of its locality, as relates to health, fertility, objects of culture suitable to its soil and climate, navigation, the nature of the country in its vicinity, the character situation and strength of the neighbouring tribes, and the facilities of communication with the remote and interior parts of the continent.

One very important circumstance, in the selection of a suitable place for our settlements, to which the attention of the agent ought to be particularly directed, still remains to be brought into view. I mean the facility of communication with the Niger, that mighty river, which seems destined to supply the link of connection, between the interior of Africa and the civilized world.

I take the question relative to the lower course and termi-

nation of the Niger to be now satisfactorily settled. The discoveries of Park in his last journey, compared and connected with the information derived from Mr. Maxwell and others, concerning the river Zayr, improperly called the Congo, from the name of a little district at its mouth, to say nothing of Sidi Hamets narrative as given to us by Captain Riley, which deserves great attention, authorize us I think to conclude, that these two rivers are the same : in other words that the Niger, after having traversed the interior of Africa four thousand miles, falls under the name of the Zayr into the Atlantic, south of the equator : thus laying open that vast continent to its inmost recesses, and bringing its immense population into contact with the rest of the world. There is some doubt and much contrariety of opinion on this point, and this is not the place for entering at large into the discussion. Fortunately a decision of the question, which cannot be absolutely decided till the course of the Niger shall be pursued to its termination, is not necessary for our present purpose ; for whether this great body of waters, collected in a course of two thousand miles, be lost according to the opinion of some, in the sands marshes and lakes supposed to exist in the centre of Africa ; or, as others have imagined, be discharged into the Mediterranean through the Nile, a river of a more elevated bed, and hardly a tenth part as large ; or being arrested in its progress eastward, toward the Indian ocean, by the elevated country in which the Nile has its sources, is driven through the feeblier barrier of the mountains on the south, and thrown off to the southern Atlantic ; it is still the only avenue into the interior of Africa : and a noble avenue it is. At Bammakoo, where Park struck it in his last voyage, he states it to be a mile wide. From thence to Houssa, a distance of between six and seven hundred miles, its course has been satisfactorily ascertained. Throughout this great extent, in which it receives many large streams, and flows through a fertile country, its current though strong is smooth and even, uninterrupted by cataracts or shoals. As it advances eastward, it recedes more and more from the coast, and thus becomes more and more difficult of access. Settlements therefore on the Atlantic, formed with a view to commercial intercourse with the vast countries on the Niger, and those more distant to which it leads, must be placed as near as possible to its upper waters, where they first begin to be navigable for boats.

These waters probably approach much nearer the Atlantic than has hitherto been believed. We have seen that at Bam-

makoo, the highest point to which it has yet been traced, it is a mile wide : as large as the Susquehanna at its entrance into the Chesapeake bay. It must therefore be a very considerable stream, much higher up : that is much further to the southwest, and consequently much nearer to the Atlantic. It has its source in the western part of a chain of mountains, which runs from west to east, nearly parallel with that part of the coast of Africa which extends from Sierra Leone to the Bite of Benin. These mountains separate it from the rivers which, rising on their southern side, fall into the Atlantic, in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone. Their sources no doubt approach very near to those of the Niger : Probably no great distance divides its navigable waters from theirs. Such a river, with a good port at or near its mouth, and a fertile country on its banks, would present the proper situation for a colony, planted with a view to the civilization of Africa, by the commerce of the Niger.

The course of such a commerce would be, to ascend the Atlantic river as far as possible in boats, with the commodities wanted for the interior consumption ; and to establish at that point a place of deposit, from whence the merchandize would be sent over land to the Niger, and down it to the various markets below. The returns would go up the Niger to its highest navigable point, where a town would soon arise. From thence they would pass by land to the place of deposit on the other side of the mountain ; and there be put into boats, for transportation down the river to the shipping port. If the Niger should be ascertained to continue its course to the ocean, an intercourse would gradually be extended down to its mouth, where a great commercial city would arise ; and to this mart the return cargoes purchased above would gradually find their way, down the stream. Thus an immense circle of commerce would imperceptibly be formed, embracing the whole course of the Niger, and the vast countries which it waters and lays open, and connecting them all with each other, and with the whole commercial world. For a very considerable time this commerce would be confined to the countries far up the river, near to its source ; where settlements would first be formed, and civilization would commence. As the communication between these first settlements and those on the Atlantic became more and more safe easy and expeditious, by means of intermediate settlements good roads and improved inland navigation, colonies and trade would extend further and further down the river. Other settlements would soon be commenced at its

mouth. At last these two branches would meet and unite, in a commerce vast as the stream on which it would be borne, and as the continent which it would civilize enlighten and adorn.

Ages indeed may be required, for the full attainment of these objects. Untoward events or unforeseen difficulties may retard or defeat them: But the prospect however remote or uncertain is still animating, and the hope of success seems sufficient to stimulate us to the utmost exertion. How vast and sublime a career does this undertaking open, to a generous ambition, aspiring to deathless fame by great and useful actions! Who can count the millions, that in future times shall know and bless the names of those, by whom this magnificent scheme of beneficence and philanthropy has been conceived, and shall be carried into execution? Throughout the widely extended regions of middle and southern Africa, then filled with populous and polished nations, their memories shall be cherished and their praises sung; when other states, and even the flourishing and vigorous nation to which they belong, now in its flower of youth, shall have run their round of rise grandeur and decay, and like the founders of Palmyra Tyre Babylon Memphis and Thebes shall no longer be known, except by vague reports of their former greatness, or by some fragments of those works of art, the monuments of their taste their power or their pride, which they may leave behind.

It is in connection my dear sir with this great operation, that I consider your proposed colony of free blacks as most interesting and important. It ought to be the first step in this splendid career, and to be located with that view. In choosing a situation for it, therefore, the greatest regard ought to be had to its future connection with the Niger. To this end the agent ought to be instructed, to make the most careful enquiries concerning the sources of that river, and its highest or most southwestern point. He should also make every effort to obtain the most full and accurate information, concerning the rivers that rise in the mountains opposite to its sources, and take their course southwestwardly to the ocean. Their size, the nature of the country through which they flow, the height to which they are navigable for ships and for boats, and the harbours at or near their mouths, should all be ascertained with the utmost care and accuracy. That river which combines in the greatest degree, the advantages of salubrity soil navigation and good neighbourhood, and at the same time brings us nearest to the navigable waters of the Niger, by a

good pass over the intervening mountains, is I apprehend the proper place, in itself, for the establishment of our colony.

I say in itself: because a place combining all those advantages may still be very unfit for our purpose, if it lie within the claims of any European power, or too near any of their settlements. It should therefore be a particular object of the agents attention, to ascertain the situation and extent of those claims, and the distance between any European settlements, and such place as may appear suited to our views. Enquiries concerning the territorial claims of European powers can best be made in London; but it is in Africa alone that such information, when obtained, can be applied to the object of the intended mission.

There is a river called in some maps the Mesurada which, as there laid down, extends its branches further northeast than any other, and enters the ocean about one hundred or one hundred and fifty miles southeast of the Sherborough. It deserves I think the particular attention of the agent, who should be instructed to make enquiries about it, with a view to all the circumstances which may render it proper for a settlement, and to visit it, should the result of this investigation offer encouragement.

The river Nunez or Noones also merits particular regard. It empties itself into the Atlantic in latitude 10° . 1° North, about one hundred and fifty miles Northwest from Sierra Leone. It has a very good harbour at its mouth, and carries from six to eight fathom of water about twenty miles up to a bar, over which there is however three fathom, or eighteen feet. After passing the bar the water continues from five to eight fathom deep, to a point about fifty miles up from the mouth. From thence to the falls about fifty miles higher up, it is said to admit vessels of one hundred and twenty tons. The country around and above the falls is represented as elevated fertile and healthy; abounding in game, well supplied with excellent timber, and watered by numerous streams large enough for mills. Indian corn, and all sorts of pulse and garden vegetables, are said to grow luxuriantly. Cattle abound so much, that an ox is sold for a dollar. The country below yields rice, Indian corn, and all the usual tropical productions. The natives are represented as peaceable and friendly, and the principal chief, who resides about ninety miles up the river, a little below the falls, and whose authority extends down to the mouth, and far into the interior, is said to be a man of sense and abilities, of a mild and humane character, and fa-

avourably disposed towards the whites, and especially the Americans. He speaks English perfectly well. This place would seem therefore to deserve the particular attention of the agent and the society. In addition to its other advantages its upper waters approach near to those of the river Grande; a very important and interesting feature of African Geography, as respects commercial intercourse with the interior, and the extension of civilization by means of colonies of civilized blacks.

These, my dear sir, are the hints that I thought I might venture to suggest to you, on this most interesting subject. I make no apology for the length of my letter. It might no doubt to be curtailed with advantage. But it might also, and with more ease, if not to a better purpose, be very much enlarged: for I have touched briefly on less important topics, and altogether omitted some which belong properly to the subject, but did not seem to require immediate attention. Such as it is I submit it to your consideration, with the hope that it may be of some use, in the preparatory arrangements which you are engaged in making.

With the best wishes I am dear sir

Your most obedient servant,

ROB. G. HARPER.

ELIAS B. CALDWELL Esq. }
Secretary of the Colonization }
Society of the United States. }