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COLONIZATION

OF THE

FREE COLORED POPULATION

OF MARYLAND,

AND OF

SUCH SLAVES AS MAY HEREAFTER BECOME FREE.

STATEMENT OF FACTS,

FOR THE USE OF THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET REFLECTED ON
THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

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STATEMENT OF FACTS.

Reasons for removing and colonizing the Free People of Colour.

It is unnecessary to explain to the citizens of Maryland the evils of a colored population: they see and feel them daily. The most palpable, however, are the following. *First.* The employment of slaves tends to make labour disreputable, and thus to produce indolence, and consequently poverty and vice, among the free; and as all slaves are colored, the employment of colored labourers, even where free, creates or sustains the same prejudice against honest industry. The difference, therefore, between the value of land and improvements, and the wealth and comfort of the people, in those places where all the inhabitants are white, and those where they are not, is too striking to be denied. *Secondly.* Colored labourers exclude an equal number of whites, who would gladly be industrious and sober, if they could find employment; and thus, for a multitude of freemen, who, while they contributed to the wealth and beauty of the land, would also be ready to defend it in case of need, is substituted a class, who can feel but little interest to exert themselves for the permanent improvement of the country, and who are rather to be distrusted, perhaps, than relied upon for protection. *Thirdly.* The existence of a colored population among us is inconsistent, to a great degree, with our republican professions. Not to mention the slaves, there is a part of that population which we call

free, and yet allow them hardly any freedom. We never can allow them more, for the public prejudice, or sentiment, opposes; and as they never can mingle with us, they must always be a distinct, and consequently a subordinate caste.

The remedy for these evils.

The truth of the above remarks is so manifest, that it cannot be contested; and every man of sense, whether he be white or colored, who reflects upon the subject, must see there is but one remedy for the enumerated evils. That remedy is removal. As it is clearly impossible for the whites to remove, who are the vast majority, and possess the government, the soil, education, &c. &c., it follows that the colored population must remove, beginning with those that are now free, and continuing with those that may hereafter become so.

Experience has already proved, that where the free people of color shall begin to be removed, many slave-holders who would never consent to give their slaves freedom and let them remain here, will manumit them on condition of their going away. Merely to manumit them would not always be a benefit. They can never be but nominally free; their previous habits disqualify them often for proper exertions here for their own support; their low and hopeless rank in society deprives them of all honorable ambition. For these reasons, it seems to be decided by the public sentiment, that to inspire them with a proper feeling of emulation, they must be placed in a state of society where they will enjoy equal rights in every respect.

It may therefore be confidently asserted, that there is but one remedy: the gradual removal of the colored population, beginning with the free. If that population are wise, they will, for their own sake, be anxious to go: and if they are really solicitous for the welfare of those of their race who are in bondage, let them listen to their friends, and be persuaded that emigration affords the only hope

of deliverance. Benevolence and wisdom among the whites are maturing this great scheme for their advantage; and let them not set themselves against it!

How to apply this remedy.

Mr. Jefferson having, in 1777, and Dr. Thornton in 1787, suggested the idea of colonizing the free colored population of the United States, and the Legislature of Virginia having recommended it in 1801, and again more pressingly in 1816, a Society was formed in Washington in December, 1816, through the efforts of the Rev. Dr. Finley, of New Jersey, and other benevolent men, for carrying the plan into execution, by procuring a territory on the Coast of Africa, and removing to it such free coloured persons as might be disposed to go.

American Colonization Society, and its Auxiliaries.

The Society received this name; and to aid in its great undertaking, Auxiliaries were then or have since been formed in the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri; and besides these, there are more than two hundred County and Town Auxiliaries.

The members of these Societies contribute each a small sum, occasionally or at stated periods. In eight years, from 1821 to 1828, the amount thus collected was \$82,164; and in the three years, 1829-30-31, about \$75,000. The sum increases every year.

This conclusively proves that the American people are sensible of the merits of the plan, and are willing to support it. But a stronger proof is the fact, that the Legislatures of fifteen States have passed resolutions approving the object of the Society, and

recommending its general adoption. These States are New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. Similar resolutions passed one branch of the Legislature of Louisiana.

A large number also of the most distinguished men of our country, in every part of the Union, have espoused the cause. Among them are Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Chief Justice Marshall, Judge Washington, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Henry Clay, William H. Crawford, Bishop White, R. G. Harper, &c. &c. They are too numerous to name.

Nearly all the ecclesiastical bodies, of every religious denomination in the United States, have by resolutions solemnly expressed their opinion that this Society merits the consideration of the whole Christian community, and earnestly recommend it to their patronage.

Founding of the Colony.

In December, 1821, Dr. Eli Ayres, with Capt. Stockton, of the United States Navy, purchased from the natives the whole of a territory called Montserado, on the south west coast of Africa, in the name of the Society. The first settlers arrived at the Colony in June, 1822; and in that year, Mr. Ashmun took charge of it, as Agent or Governor, in the place of Dr. Ayres, whose health had obliged him to return. To their zealous and persevering efforts in its infancy, the Colony is greatly indebted for its prosperity and success. Dr. Richard Randall, of Maryland, succeeded Mr. Ashmun. The present Agent or Governor is Dr. Mechlin.

Description of the Colony.

1st. *Name and locality.*—It is called LIBERIA, because it is the home of the Freed. It is in about the sixth degree of North latitude,

and extends a considerable distance along the coast and indefinitely into the interior. From time to time, additional territory is procured from the natives, by purchase, as opportunity offers or inducements present themselves; and two important districts, called Grand Bassa and Cape Mount, have recently been acquired in this way. There are several rivers, of which the principal are the Montserado and St. Paul's; the former being three hundred miles in length, and the latter half a mile wide at its mouth. The chief town, called Monrovia after the late President of the United States, where most of the settlers reside, stands in a delightful situation on a high point of land, which juts out into the sea. The houses are substantially built of wood and of stone. There is a smaller town, called Caldwell, on the St. Paul's; and a third, called Millsburg, fifteen or twenty miles higher up; and settlements are about to be made at other eligible places. The whole population of the Colony is upwards of 2000.

2ndly. *Fertility and agriculture.*—The Colonists themselves, in an address to the free people of color in the United States, August, 1827, say “a more fertile soil and a more productive country, so far as it is cultivated, there is not, we believe, on the face of the earth.” Dr. Randall says, that the land on both sides of Stockton Creek (which connects the Montserado and St. Paul's), is a rich light alluvion; equal, in every respect, to the best on the Southern rivers of the United States. Mr. Ashmun thus enumerates the animals and products of the country: Horses, cattle, sheep, goats, swine, ducks, geese, chickens, and Guinea fowls, in abundance; fish in the greatest plenty; plantains, bananas, vines, lemons, oranges, tamarinds, mangoes, cashew, prunes, guava, pine apple, grape, cherry, and a species of peach; sweet potatoe, cassada, yams, cocoa, ground nuts, arrow root, egg plant, okra, every variety of beans and peas, cucumbers and melons, pumpkins, &c. &c.; rice, Indian corn, Guinea corn, millet, pepper, excellent coffee, sugar, cotton and indigo. Indeed, sugar, cotton, coffee, and indigo grow wild.

3rdly. *Climate, and health of the settlers.*—In the early years of the Colony, want of good houses, the great fatigues and dangers of the settlers, the discouragements they met with, their ignorance of the proper mode of living, and of the best remedies, aided the other causes of sickness, and produced great mortality. But those times are past and forgotten. Their houses and circumstances are now comfortable; they are abundantly supplied with medical assistance; and for the last five or six years (as stated in the address of the Colonists in 1827), not one person in forty, from the middle and Southern States, has died from change of climate. The effect is most severely felt by those from the Northern States, or from mountainous parts of the middle States; but experience has proved that, with ordinary prudence, no danger is to be apprehended even by persons from those places, who are sober and have no radical defects of constitution. As the country becomes more thickly settled and better cultivated, it will, like all other new countries, become more healthy. From the past mortality or present sickness, no discouragement will be felt by those who have read an account of the early attempts to found Colonies in this favored land; from which we shall make some extracts a few pages further on. Dr. Randall says, in his letters, that he considers Monrovia as healthy as any of our Southern cities; and Capt. Stockton wrote that he honestly thought, after personal examination and reflection, that the climate presented those obstacles only which are natural to a tropical soil, uncleared and uncultivated, and that he believed nothing could prevent success but limited means, bad counsels, or feeble efforts.

4thly. *Commerce.*—Francis Devany, Sheriff of the Colony, an emancipated slave, who went to Liberia seven or eight years ago, testified before a Committee of Congress, May, 1830, that he had accumulated property to the amount of \$20,000; and that Waring, another Colonist, had sold goods to the amount of \$70,000 in a year. Several of the Colonists own small vessels, with which they trade

along the coast. Their foreign commerce is chiefly with this country and England, and their internal trade with the natives. They now export dye woods, ivory, hides, gold dust, palm oil and rice, which they purchase from the Africans, by barter. In exchange, they receive from this country, which is their principal market, cotton cloth, tobacco, ready-made clothing, powder and arms, and all manufactured articles required in civilized communities. The nett profits on the two articles of wood and ivory, passing through their hands, from January 1st to June 15th, 1816, were \$30,716. In 1830, eight vessels traded to the Colony from Philadelphia alone; one of them bearing a cargo worth \$25,000. In the Liberia Herald of January 22d, 1832, (a newspaper published at the Colony,) the marine list announces the arrival, in three weeks, of two ships, two brigs, one galliot, three schooners, and two sloops, from England, Scotland, the United States, and the Coast; and the departure, during the same time, for various points, of one ship, six schooners, and one sloop. The exports of 1831 were \$90,000. It is in contemplation to establish a regular line of monthly packets from some port in the United States. There can be no doubt that, as the Colony grows, a commerce lucrative both to it and to us will increase and flourish in the same degree.

5thly. *Literature and education.*—From the beginning, education has been promoted as far as practicable. In 1827, six schools were already in successful operation, and others have been established in each of the towns of Monrovia, Caldwell, and Millsburg; so that every child in the Colony receives an education. There is also a Colonial Library, and, as before mentioned, a monthly newspaper, edited by Mr. Russwurm, one of the Colonists.

6thly. *Religious state.*—On this point, the accounts from all quarters are very edifying. Capt. Sherman, who visited the place in 1830, writes: "There is as much hospitality to be found in Monrovia, and among the inhabitants, a greater proportion of moral and religious characters than in Philadelphia. I never saw a man

intoxicated, nor heard any profane swearing during the three weeks I was among them. The Baptists have three, and the Methodists five preachers, all intelligent colored men, merchants and traders, residing among them." Capt. Abels, who visited the place in 1832, writes: "All my expectations with regard to the aspect of things, the health, harmony, order, contentment, industry, and general prosperity of the settlers, were more than realized. I saw no intemperance, nor did I hear a profane word uttered by any one. Being a Minister of the Gospel, on Christmas day I preached both in the Methodist and Baptist Churches, to full and attentive congregations of from three to four hundred people in each. I know of no place where the Sabbath appears to be more respected than in Monrovia." Mr. Devany, in his examination before a Committee of Congress, says: "Some instances of intemperance have occurred; but the habit is confined to two persons only. There are three churches, frame buildings; one of them with a steeple. One, not yet finished, belongs to the Presbyterians. Divine service is attended three times on Sundays, and also on Thursday and Friday evenings. In five years, only five persons were committed for misdemeanour." Gov. Mechlin writes, that "as to the morals of the Colonists, I consider them much better than those of the people of the United States; that is, you may take an equal number of the inhabitants from any section of the Union, and you will find more drunkards, more profane swearers and sabbath-breakers, &c., than in Liberia." C. N. Waring, one of the Colonists, writes in 1831: "Since Capt. Sherman left us, there have been nearly one hundred added to our church. Monrovia may be said to be a Christian community; there is scarcely a family in it, that some one or the whole do not possess religion."

7thly. *Government, and physical condition.*—The Colony belongs to, and is under the immediate control and jurisdiction of the Board of Managers of the American Colonization Society, who are elected at the annual meetings of the Society, and reside in Washington.

They appoint the Agent or Governor, who is a white man; and no other white man can reside there without their permission. The Vice-Agent, High Sheriff, &c., are colored men. They are governed by just and equal laws, like ours; and elect their officers themselves. The form of government is Republican; and they may become separate and entirely independent of this country, whenever they may think it for their interests to be so.

Capt. Sherman writes in 1830: "The adult male inhabitants consider themselves *men*, and know how to enjoy the blessings of a free institution. They are now as patriotic Americans as our forefathers were loyal subjects of the Kings of England. Should they receive no further aid from this country, they will, nevertheless, in my opinion, attain to greatness eventually." Capt. Nicholson, of the United States Navy, writes in 1828: "All the Colonists with whom I had any communication, expressed their decided wish to remain in their present situation, rather than return again to the United States. I cannot give you a better evidence of the prosperity of the Colony, than by mentioning that eight of my crew (colored mechanics), after going on shore, two several days, applied for and received their discharge, in order to remain as permanent settlers. The appearance of all the Colonists indicated more than contentment. Their manners were those of freemen, who experienced the blessings of liberty, and appreciated the boon." Capt. Kennedy, of the United States Navy, writes in 1830: "I sought out the most shrewd and intelligent of the Colonists, many of whom were personally known to me, and by long and wary conversations endeavoured to elicit from them any dissatisfaction with their situation, if such existed, or any latent desire to return to their native country. Neither of these did I observe. On the contrary, I thought I could perceive that they considered that they had started into a new existence; and that, disencumbered of the mortifying relations in which they formerly stood in society, they felt themselves proud in their attitude, and seemed conscious, that while they were founders of a new empire, they were prose-

cuting the noble purpose of the regeneration of the land of their fathers." Capt. Abels writes in 1832: "Nothing struck me more than the great superiority in intelligence, manners, conversation, dress, and general appearance, in every respect, of the people, over their colored brethren in America. Among all that I conversed with, I did not find a discontented person, or hear one express a desire to return to America. Most of the settlers appear to be rapidly acquiring property. There are about two hundred buildings in the town of Monrovia, extending along Cape Monserado for about a mile and a quarter. Most of these are good substantial houses and stores (the first story of many of them being of stone), and some of them handsome, spacious, painted, and with Venetian blinds. I have several times dined with the Colonists, and I think no better tables could be set in any part of the world. We had every thing that heart could desire, of meats, and fish, and fowls, and vegetables, and wines, &c." The progressive improvement of the Colony is truly gratifying. In a letter dated February 16, 1832, an intelligent Colonist, who had just returned from a visit to the United States, says: "During my absence the general improvement has been astonishing; but Monrovia has partaken most largely of this spirit, though Caldwell and Millsburg are fast advancing." In one year, the number of comfortable wooden and stone dwellings built in Monrovia alone, was fifty-five.

Sthly. Means of defence.—There are six volunteer companies, well armed and drilled, containing five hundred men; besides a respectable number of militia not in uniform. There are a fort, and twenty pieces of cannon; an armed schooner; and arms and ammunition to equip one thousand men. This is amply sufficient to beat, without an effort, any force the natives might bring against them. But there is no danger from that source, as the natives are submissive and attached.

Suppression of the Slave Trade.

It is universally admitted that the most effectual way of abolishing this horrible traffic, is to establish colonies of civilized men along the Coast of Africa, and institute a regular and lawful commerce with the natives. If, by exchanging the products of their own industry, they can obtain the European and American fabrics and productions which they desire, they will gladly abandon a system that inflicts such terrible evils on themselves. Capt. Nicholson says in his letter in 1829, that "the slave trade has no doubt received a more effectual check since the establishment of the Colony of Liberia, than for a century before." Before that time, there were several slave factories within a few miles of Monrovia, all of which have been completely broken up. That detestable trade is no longer openly carried on for a distance of upwards of two hundred miles along the Coast of Liberia. A late English writer thus mentions the subject: "Nothing has tended more to suppress the slave trade in this quarter than the constant intercourse and communication of the natives with these industrious Colonists. The American Agent, Mr. Ashmun, took every opportunity and means in his power to extinguish a traffic so injurious in every way to the fair trader; and at Cape Montserado good and correct information was always to be obtained of any slave vessels on the Coast within the communication or influence of the Colony. This active, respectable, and intelligent man, is since dead; but his spirit still actuates all his people."

Civilization and Conversion of the Natives to Christianity.

The same English writer above quoted, says: "The character of these industrious Colonists is exceedingly correct and moral, their minds strongly impressed with religious feelings, their manners serious and decorous, and their domestic habits remarkably neat

and comfortable. Wherever the influence of this Colony extends, the slave trade has been abandoned by the natives, and the peaceful pursuits of legitimate commerce established in its place. A few Colonies of this kind scattered along the Coast, would be of infinite value in improving the natives. They would much sooner acquire their confidence and esteem, as not exciting that jealousy which foreigners always cause; and the very example of their own race, thus raised in the moral and social scale, would be the strongest motive to induce others to adopt and practise those qualities by which they were rendered so much more comfortable and happy. Should no unfortunate event retard the progress of those Colonists, and no baneful vices be introduced among them, there is every reason to hope they will diffuse cultivation and improvement in Africa to a considerable extent, as they have already done, on a limited scale, as far as their influence has reached."

Besides the Colonists, there is a village of re-captured Africans, found on board of slave ships by our citizens, and re-conveyed to their native shores. They are one hundred in number. One of the Colonists thus mentions them in a late letter: "They seem fully to adorn the Christian character. They have built themselves a small house of worship, at which they meet regularly on the Lord's day, and twice in the week, for prayer."

Many tribes in the vicinity are earnestly desirous of receiving religious and other instruction. One of them contains a population of one hundred and twenty-five thousand, speaking the same language. Several have put themselves under the protection of the Colony; and one hundred children of native chiefs are attending School in Liberia. Frequently, instead of abiding by their own laws and usages, they prefer having their disputes referred to the Colonial tribunals, and cheerfully acquiesce in their decisions.

The Agent, in a former letter, remarked: "You can have no idea of the favourable impressions we have made on the natives of the country. They are constantly sending messages, requesting us

to settle at different points of the Coast, from Cape Mount to below Trade-town, and means only are wanting to enable us to occupy any portion of the Coast between these two points."

Cape Mount has since been purchased from the natives; and it is worthy of remark, that the only consideration required by them was, that we should make a settlement on the land, and establish Schools for the education of their children. "This they strenuously urged," says the Agent in his last despatches, "as many of them had acquired the rudiments of a common English education in the Colony, and were anxious to secure the same advantages to their countrymen. The young men were enthusiastic in our cause, and many went forward and told the kings that, unless they granted our request, they would abandon the country. They say, as soon as we have established a settlement, they will join it, become Colonists, and subject themselves to the same laws by which we are governed." This is about one hundred miles from Monrovia.

During a recent visit of the Agent to some native towns, nearer to the Colony, eight or ten chiefs, after consultation with each other, united in the request that they might be received and treated as subjects of the Colony.

Exertions of Maryland.

At the late General Assembly, the Maryland State Colonization Society was incorporated for the purpose of promoting the removal and colonization of the free people of color. It acts in harmony with the American Colonization Society at Washington, and co-operates with it in this great cause; confining its efforts, however, to our own State. It has employed an Agent; and is proceeding to form, through him, Auxiliary Societies in every County, so that the public and the colored people may be well informed on the subject, and the exertions of the friends of the scheme, being united, may be more effectual. The funds raised by it will be devoted to providing

emigrants with books, medicines, clothes, implements of agriculture, tools, furniture, and such other articles as they may stand particularly in need of.

At the same Session, the General Assembly, speaking the voice of the people, appropriated a liberal sum of money* for the purpose of removing such of the free colored people as may wish to go, and such slaves as may hereafter become free; and appointed three managers to superintend the expenditure of the fund. The State of Maryland may therefore be considered as having entered upon this great enterprise in earnest; and it would seem to be the duty of every good citizen to support and aid her in an undertaking not less necessary than it will be glorious. This can be best done, by making the colored population aware of the advantages which the settlement at Africa offers to all who may seek an asylum there, by explaining to them the views and objects of the Colonization Society, and by aiding all who may wish to remove to the Colony.

*\$200,000.

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