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[M.]

MR. HAMBLETON,
FROM THE COMMITTEE ON COLOURD POPULATION.

REPORT

ON THE

ORDER DIRECTING AN ENQUIRY

AS TO

THE EXPEDIENCY OF REPEALING THE LAW OF 1831-'2,

RELATING TO

The Coloured Population.

By the HOUSE OF DELEGATES,
Read and ordered to lie on the table.
By order,
GEORGE G. BREWER, Clerk.

ANNAPOLIS:
JEREMIAH HUGHES, PRINTER.

1836.

MR. HAMILTON
FROM THE COMMITTEE OF COLoured POPULATION

REPORT

ORDER PRINTING AN ENQUIRY

WITH EXPLANATION OF THE LAWS ON THAT SUBJECT

PRINTED BY

The Coloured Population

By the House of Representatives
Ordered to be printed
By order
GEORGE G. BREWER, Clerk

ANNAPOLIS:
LEITCH & BROTHERS, PRINTERS
1832

Their condition has for more than half a century
attracted the notice and excited the kind-
liest feelings of the Legislature and Philanthropists
throughout the country. It is a condition which
has been conceived

REPORT.

The Committee upon "the Coloured Population,"
to which was referred an order of this House, require-
ing them to examine and enquire into the expediency
of repealing the law of 1831-'2, have had the same
under consideration and beg leave respectfully to

REPORT,

That it has long been reduced to a maxim, approv-
ed by philosophy and attested by experience, that the
existence of separate and distinct castes, forming ex-
ceptions to the general system of policy, adapted to
the community, is an inherent vice in the composition
of society, pregnant with the most baneful consequen-
ces, social, moral and political.

This maxim, the truth of which has not, nor will
not be attempted to be controverted, led the fathers of
our land at an early period of our national existence,
to tax their ingenuity and foresight to devise and pre-
pare a plan, by the gradual operation of which the
people of the U. States might be relieved of that popu-
lation, between whom and themselves, a combination
of causes, moral, social and political, had created
distinctions unavoidable in their origin, but most un-
fortunate in their consequences. This caste of popu-
lation, dead to every generous prompting of ambition,
because debarred of ultimate aim, is now and ever has
been an incubus upon society. Our deepest, warmest
sympathies it certainly has; but whilst it remains
among us little more than these can be extended. The
free black population, a bursè to our slaves, whom
they are constantly corrupting—an evil to the white
population, between whom and them, the law of nature
and of God has drawn lines of distinction, never, never
to be effaced, must, to be happy, to be prosperous, or
to share any of the comforts of life, leave our shores.

Their condition has for more than half a century attracted the notice, and excited the kindest feeling of the Statesman and Philanthropist throughout the country. Method after method has been conceived to ameliorate their condition. The result of all the enlightened reflection, deliberation and legislation upon this subject throughout the Union, has resulted in an almost unanimous opinion that colonization to the coast of Africa, or some other place beyond the limits of the U. States or the Territories thereof, was the only practicable scheme. In 1818 the General Assembly of Maryland, solemnly impressed by a prospective view of the unavoidable results which would ensue in the no distant future, if this class of her population were not provided for in such a manner, as to make their removal consistent with the principles of justice, passed the following resolution,—

“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, that a wise and patriotic policy suggests the expediency on the part of our National Government, of procuring by cession or purchase, a tract of country on the western coast of Africa, for the colonization of the free people of colour of the United States.”

Your committee need not here say, that the General Assembly then did all it could constitutionally do upon this subject, being debarred from more than indirect action upon the case. In 1831, the melancholy issue of the Southampton insurrection, powerfully admonished the citizens of Virginia and other States, that no time should be lost in laying a deep and permanent foundation for their future peace and security. The State of Maryland, containing then, as now, a greater number of free blacks than any other State, and having looked with deep interest, to the result of the scheme of African Colonization, satisfied of its entire practicability ultimately to relieve her of this

degraded population, came forward, and 1831-'2 passed the Law, which the order now before your committee, instructs them to inquire into the expediency of repealing.

The success which has attended the efforts of the Maryland State Colonization Society, acting in conjunction with the Board of Managers appointed by the Executive of the State, under the law last named, has fully satisfied your committee of the wisdom and enlightened forecast of those who passed that law.

The territory secured in Africa by the Maryland State Colonization Society, is 500 square miles in extent—and for climate, soil and productions, every way fitted for the objects of its destination.

The gloomiest era of colonization being now past—a suitable territory provided for the reception of emigrants, bidding and inviting them to its coast by every consideration that can address itself to the most elevated, or even the most selfish principle of the human heart, your committee are at a loss to perceive the ground of the feverish restiveness of many, who profess to have a common object in view, under the operation of the present law. Were no territory provided—but fruitless negotiation holding out to their patriotic hopes, the ultimate purchase of one. Were no emigrant vessels unfurling their sails to the winds, then might there be some ground for uneasiness upon this subject. But when so much has been done—when the means of doing so much more, is just now in the hands of the Agents of Colonization—when the information obtained by emigrants, is just now being diffused among their brethren, your committee cannot but deem that wisdom and enlightened policy dictate unequivocally and decidedly, that the law of 1831-'2, be not repealed.

All which is respectfully submitted,

SAMUEL HAMBLETON, Jr.,

From Com. on Coloured Population.

By order,

BENJAMIN SEEGAR, Clerk.

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when the information obtained by emigrants, is just
now being disseminated among their brethren, your com-
mittee cannot but feel that wisdom and enlightened

policy, would require that they should be directed, that the
law of 1831-2, be not repealed.

All which is respectfully submitted.

Wm. HARRINGTON, Jr.

Trustee of the Maryland State Colonization Society.

Wm. HARRINGTON, Secretary.