when the people of their colony should assume the exercise legislative functions, copying, for this purpose, the provisions of the ordinance for the government of the north West territory, so admirable and so well tested: and the committee see no sufficient reason why the State Society should assent now to any general system of legislation in Africa, before the time fixed by the society for the establishment of the colonial legislature has arrived.

There is another objection to the constitution that strikes the committee. Throughout, it vests the supreme executive power in the hands of the chief Magistrate of Monrovia, and places him at the head of the legislative and judicial branches of the government, and recognizes as the dominant power, here and in Africa, the American Colonization Society.

So far as the colonies in Africa are concerned, the committee are inclined to consider the American Colonization Society only in the light of a society, which, like the State Societies of New York, Pennsylvania & Maryland, has a colony on the coast of Africa; the elder brother certainly, but not entitled to

claim, either for itself in this country, or for its colony in Africa, any paramount power. The committee make these remarks with great and most sincere respect; but still, they are decidedly of opinion, that the three societies should meet on this subject as equals; and that any system to be adopted should be the result of joint deliberations, and should be carried out, where necessary, by a joint action. The committee see no reason for the apportionment of power recommended in the constitution. The settlements of Monrovia owe their greater population to the fact of their having been the longest established, and not to any peculiar advantages belonging to them; for, indeed, there is much reason to doubt, whether the position of Monrovia is the best that can be selected, and whether, in time, Monrovia itself will not be surpassed in population and prosperity, by other settlements. This may not be the case, but surely, while, as all must admit, it is yet doubtful, and at this early period, it is premature to determine where shall be the capital of Liberia, and where the centre of its power.

There is another reason which the com-

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

I. Minutes
A. Records of the Meetings of the Board of Managers

3. January 1835--June 1838

1837