This agreement is binding because there was a consideration for it, to wit, the aid given to the colonists in the first instance, and since annually continued to them: but it is an agreement which cannot, in the nature of things, be expected to continue longer than it shall be the interest of both parties to maintain it; and they may be influenced by those high moral considerations which should give it validity according to its terms. This view of the relations of the society and the Colony obviates all the objections that have been urged in regard to the right of the state of Maryland, or a corporation created by it, to acquire property in Africa—objections that may or may not be valid; but which it is unnecessary to discuss. And it places in a clear light the independence of the colony of all questions of peace or war affecting the United States. The colony is not the property of a corporation created by Maryland or of citizens of the State, and, therefore, cannot be seized and held in the event of a war, to which the United States might be a party, as property of a belligerent. The nationality of the Colony depends upon the occupancy of the soil by the organized community for which it and the eminent domain was purchased from the aboriginal inhabitants. The agency of the Maryland State Colonization Society in its affairs is not a matter to affect its character in the eyes

of the rest of the world. It is well known that the United States, the nation from which its people emigrated, lay no claim to it; and the rest of the world can only know it as the germ of a nation struggling into existence under circumstances entitling it to the sympathies of all mankind.

From all this it follows, that the Maryland Colony to which these views are confined is not so connected with the United States or with the State of Maryland or any of them, as to be the subject of hostile aggression on the part of any nation at war with the United States. In this conviction the Board of Managers passed the ordinance of February 3d. 1841, a copy of which will be found in the Appendix. It is not a declaration of independence for the colony; but it is an act, declaratory of well understood principles. The immediate object in passing it, was to furnish to the Governor, in an authentic shape, the views entertained, on the subject by the Board, in the event, then threatned, of a war between the United States and an European power.

In the prosecution of the plan of Colonization it has become necessary to add to the original purchase from the natives, and land has been acquired both to windward and leeward and to the interior. The settlement at Cape Palmas, however, is the only one of any importance on the coast line of Maryland in Liberia. Here, there is a custom-house, and here, trade is carried

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

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

4. June 1838—October 1851

1845