to do & I believe forthwith despatched a messenger. Nothing could more be done until the return of the messenger & I spent the day in receiving dashes from the head men of the small towns in the vicinity, of which I believe there are five, dependent on Porro. I also sounded the River for some distance up & down & found from 4 to 7 fathoms; not less than the former in any place. ~~The river, here~~ It is about 200 yds broad at Porro. — During the first night ~~of the first day~~ of my stay at this place we were favoured with a grand serenade. Being well strung in my hammock I was enjoying sweet repose for the disturbances of the previous night at Beplea, when I was assailed by the most tremendous din, the strangest concord of discords, the most direful chaos of sounds that ever offended the ear of mortal. I shall not attempt to analyze or describe this uproar, nor its effects on me. My first impulse was, of course to make ready ready for an onset. For I supposed that the Grand Devil & all his imps, instigated by our Holy-loving friends had determined to take advantage of our situation & fall upon us. However I was soon undeceived by our native boys, who informed me that it was the Grand Devil going his rounds to keep the town in order, that an additional dozen or so of fiddlers were added to his bands that night in honor of the "Nations Guest." They soon approached the house in which we lodged & after playing sundry airs, demanded Tobacco. This was granted only on condition that they would cease to charm any more. On the next morning, Wednesday Oct 21st the messenger returned stating that King Gu-no-a could not attend the palaver, that I must first visit his town. I now understood the whole matter. They hoped to get more dashes by dividing the palavers, & retaining me in each town as long as possible. After breakfast King Yarnah assembled the head-men & laid the matter that he would take it upon himself & people to talk the palaver without King Gu-no-a & that they were then ready to hear what I had to say. It may not be



amiss briefly to describe to you the general conduct of this palaver as it was one of the most perfect specimens I have ever witnessed. & I believe I have never as yet troubled you with the details of one. That you may have a more correct idea of it, I will give it you in all the English that was used on the occasion. The place for holding a palaver is generally under some large tree, & on this occasion was covered with the shade of an enormous one, close to the town palaver house. The whole assembly was first divided into two parts, the one consisting of King Yarnah & his men & the other of Yor with Dirant his train of Natives & Colonists, & the head men of King Yarnah's country. King Yarnah was surrounded by the head men of his own town, such as Town Governor, Grand Devil Priest, orator &c. They were in common dress & uncovered. On his right in regular order sat all the Governors of his small towns, backed by their soldiers with gun furnished muskets. All communication with the King & assembly is made through the Orator, who while speaking or being addressed occupies the centre of the open space between the parties. When the orator or any one commences speaking or finishes a sentence, & when he finishes his speech, he commands attention by crying out Bateo one time or three times three times; he is responded to by the whole assembly with Bateo at each time, with more or less vehemence as his remarks are acceptable or otherwise. This has a very imposing effect & adds much to the dignity of the assembly. The orator now commanded attention & after a few words to the King, approached me & said, You be white man, you done come see country, pose you how words for peak. Black man ready for hear what he be.

True, I have words for peak, no more he no be all same country man palaver, he be white man words I go peak, no country man words get go side to him, he be our grand palaver, he never come this country first time. Your old father never been palaver all same I go peak. Pose you hear him properly he do you goods plenty. Pose your heart no be goods

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received
A. Letter Books

2. 1834--1835

1835