It may not be amiss to give you a brief detail of a palaver held upon this subject as it will serve in a measure to show you how much of reason persuasion & force are necessary in order to carry a point with these people. Having suffered severely from their almost continued depredations & finding no hopes of a change of affairs from the authority of the King & Rod Men I collected a grand palaver & depicted to them in the strongest possible manner our severe sufferings from this cause. & the injustice of their proceedings. & forcibly impressed upon them the necessity I should be under of proceeding to extreme measures of restriction or reprisals, & the mutual injurious effect that must ensue to both parties from such a course. I told them that I should begin by making reprisals for all articles provide to be stolen by natives whether the thief could be detected or not. throwing the business of detection & proof upon them altogether. Having made my proposals they required time to consider upon it: & after talking the palaver in their own town some five hours returned & made the following objections to my proposition. They acknowledged that we suffered severely from this cause. that they were sensible a great part was committed by their people. that the course heretofore pursued was nothing like a remedy or prevention. & that they were willing inasmuch as I was a white man & had superior knowledge to them, to abide by such laws as I should make, to remedy the evil, not repugnant to reason & justice. But that what I had proposed was new to them, that they could not answer by their people who had visited the white man's country that any loss of that nature were ever made. That as we were one people & under one flag, I had no right to make one class, more than another suffer for all the thefts. That had we been two different tribes having no political connexion: & could prove that their people had injured our persons or property they would be bound as a people to make restitution. That in case I should make any loss appear, a reasonable penalty for the crime. & they drew the proper course for detecting & punishing the thief. they would accede

to it and support it. They demanded that same course should be pursued with them as with our own people. That a Constable should be appointed & a court held in like manner as if an American Colonist was to be tried for the like offence. It a course of reasoning like this then was our demurring. & accepting of their proposals I agreed to try this course for six months. & in case it proved in a great degree effectual to adopt it as permanent. but in case their Constables were remiss in their duty or there was any open opposition to the full exercise of their authority among their people, I would at the end of six months make reprisals for all loss which could be reasonably attributed to their people. — I accordingly appointed six Constables & six Justices of the Peace & explained to them their duty when acting in their second official capacities. When any individual fell under suspicion, notice was immediately to be given to one of the Justices who provided for the person accused & if the nature of the evidence warranted it, bound over to appear at the next court of quarterly Sessions: where after such cases as might occur between the Colonists had been tried a court would be formed by the Agent & three of the better Justices & the case properly investigated. & Justice rendered. This law went into operation about six months previous to my leaving the Colony & quite a number of cases had been tried in this manner, & in fact all cases where there could be the least evidence adduced of guilt: ~~[illegible]~~ I never have in any one instance found the Constables or Justices remiss in doing their duty, or the offender supported by any in resisting the free execution of judgment. The instances of theft had also become comparatively quite rare & in fact no considerable one accrued, until I was absent on a visit to Cape Mesurado, & then on I left Sparks perhaps was faithfully prosecuted. I would not wish to be understood as expressing a belief that this business is, or will soon be entirely done away with. for this not to be expected; but the above

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received
A. Letter Books

3. 1836