Agency House, Cape Palmas,
May 13. 1846.

Jno. H. B. Latrobe Esq
Pres.t Md S. C. S.

Dear Sir,

As the servant of the Board it is my humble duty to advise them of the course of events in their colony. Difficulties have arisen lately on the part of the large traders, Dr Mefill & Bowen about the collection of the 5% ad valorem duty. They contend that to arrive at this, it is only necessary for the collector to receive 2½% on gross sales; or as they mystify it 5% on half amount of sales. They contend further, that the first collector: McFarland (who has been discharged from his offices of Storekeeper & Collector for gross neglect) received his duties at these rates: ergo, the new Collector J. H. Stewart has no right to follow any instructions from any quarter, to the contrary — but to receive his duties, above all the time that by this system, the revenue is defrauded of at least 25%.

In reply, I assert that such were not my instructions to McFarland: nor did he thus collect duties when he first entered into office. Twice has he collected them from Capts. Hunt & Ricketson — once from Capt Sellmith in my office — and these gents. were kind enough to give the invoice prices of all goods sold in the colony. Capt. Hunt went so far as to pay the duties himself — also Capt Lawlen, I am told. There are honorable men who would give the revenue her full duties, in spite of their commission merchants.

On the other hand 9/10 of traders refuse to give the invoice price of their goods and what is to guide the collector in such cases? Are not the rates of invoice given by the honorable men first named — or is he to collect 2½% on gross sales? If I understand my instructions from the Board, they are opposed to any thing like this — considering it in the light of an Excise duty

of truth there is in these reports of course time alone can discover. Most sincerely is it to be hoped that war may be averted, inasmuch as in case it shall break out again, it will be far the most serious that has ever been known in this region, as it will, on opposite sides, the whole Grebo tribe.

Mrs Payne who sends kind regards to you, begs that you will inform Mrs G. Krebs Sager on Columbia street a friend & connexion of hers, of opportunities of writing from Baltimore. With kind regards to Mrs R. Bowman for yourself, I am very respectfully Yours

J. Payne

Rev. J. H. Latrobe
Pres. Md Col. Soc.

Ship
For James Hall,
Colonization Rooms,
Baltimore, Maryland
U. S. America.

Pr Brig Belmont
to Capt. Lawlen

PROVIDENCE
MAY 28

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Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received
A. Letter Books

9. 1845—1846

1846