(Private) Harper August 1. 1848

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Dr. James Hall.

Dear Sir

The condition and prospect of our Colony were fully made known to you at the date of the last departure of the Liberia Packet from this place; since which there has been no perceptible alteration for the better.

Our attempts at settling the war palaver between the Cavalla & has been unsuccessful. I went down myself for this purpose, and met with a very bad reception from the River people. I was not permitted to remain in their Town unless my design of "talking the War palaver" was either disavowed or abandoned, as I would not consent to this I was compelled to leave their Town, or risque an assault with only four men to aid me. One of my colleagues saved me the trouble of deciding, by clamorously insisting upon our departure. We left them in the night, and returned to Half Cavalla

King Freeman and people are opposed to making peace, and secretly used their influence to thwart our attempt, thus rendering nugatory all of our effort for this desirable object.

We still suffer from the want of Rice, Potatoes, &c I have managed thus far to distribute a small portion of the scanty stock of breadstuffs rec.d by the packet to the most needy, but it is now out. The Natives have commenced gathering their early rice crops, small quantities of which is sold in the Straw for which we pay ten times more than the old prices. The Colonist have been active in planting potatoes &c, these will not be fit for use under two or three months. There was not a mature potato of the Public Farm in June last, all that were then planted but unfit for use have been stolen by the starving Colonist. I have since had the entire grounds replanted, and have besides cleared off and planted in Cassava the public land around Mount Salman; from two to four months must expire before we can expect the product.

There is more land now under cultivation by the Colonist than there ever has been, since the establishment of the settlement at any one period: our sufferings impel us to exertion, and serve to teach us a useful lesson for the future.

Altho' our affairs look rather gloomy at present I do not despond, the Colonist are orderly and quiet, they know that it is not in my power to afford an immediate remedy for existing evils, indeed all things considered they are even cheerful. You may rest assured of one thing we will not starve. The people have subsisted for the last two month ~~exactly~~ principally on Palm Cabbage — the constant use of this together with the exposure to which the most are subjected in travelling about in the interior in search of Rice has been productive of much and severe disease, so that the mortality will be correspondingly increased

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received
A. Letter Books

10. 1847--1848--1849

1848