

It has all along been my intention to leave Barb here, with all that I have embarked in business, but if the scheme of Independence is carried out without immediate annexation to Liberia, I shall remove every thing.

Since the commencement of the Independence agitation, the Colonist have been seized with a spasmodic fit for farming, and are rapidly clearing land, and planting Cotton & Coffee. — There is now one third more land under cultivation than we had last year.

A few months since President Roberts sent the Fishmen off from Grand Bassa, and commenced a settlement at the same place. A regular guard of ten or twelve men was left, and three or four families were settled there. The Fishmen had retired only to Tobacco & Rice, apparently satisfied and disinclined for fighting. After three months, the guard relaxed in their vigilance and were often absent, watching a favourable opportunity eight of the guard being away, the Fishmen surprised the place, & carried it killing ten men, two women & five children, the remainder made their escape to Bassa Cove. Five or six days afterward the same Fishmen united with the entire Bassa tribe and made an attack on Bassa Cove, but was repulsed with great loss. The crews of ten or twelve of the Colonist boats being unawares of danger, were overpowered by Fishmen and killed, and the boats made prize of. Twenty five men from Monrovia have gone to Bassa to keep the natives in check, and soon the entire force of the Republic will be in the Bassa country.

A coloured Englishman named Lawrence, engaged in business for a Liverpool firm, purchased the produce from one of the captured boats, being sensible of the mode of capture and advised the destruction of the boat. President Roberts has him in prison. It is said that Lawrence is a naturalized citizen of the Republic, & that he was married at Bassa. All the information I have obtained of the Bassa Massacre was derived from an Englishman direct from Monrovia, but who brought no letters because he did not intend touching here.

Jan'y 3. 1851. The arrival of the "Morgan Slave" furnishes me with correct news of affairs at Bassa, I am glad to learn that none of the crews of boats were killed.

Respectfully,  
J. M. Smith  
J. M. Smith

Dr. H. G. D. Dec. 15 1851  
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II. Correspondence Received  
A. Letter Books

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