The soil in our immediate vicinity is much better than that on the American sea-board; equal to any part of the land on the Chesapeake bay; and the farther we have penetrated into the interior it has increased in richness. We have not tried it as yet to any great extent, but the immense quantity of rice shipped from this section of the coast, is a sufficient guarantee of the richness of the soil. Nearly all the garden vegetables with which we were acquainted in America, have been tried in our gardens, and been found to do well; as also small quantities of the American cotton. The natural eatable productions of this country are plantain, banana, sweet potato, cassada, yams, rice, corn, pompions, beans, peas, okra, egg plant, tomatos, sugar cane, pawpaws, palm cabbage and palm oil. This last is no doubt one of the most valuable productions in the world. It is by most esteemed preferable to hog's lard for cooking, and produces as good a light as the fish oil, without that disagreeable smell. All the above productions can be raised in this country to any extent desirable. The animals which we found here are a fine breed of small plump neat cattle, sheep, ducks and fowls. These are all domesticated, and very abundant, and propagate much faster than in America. Wild game is also plentiful, as hogs, deer, bush cats, monkeys and a great variety of birds. We have the best of timber for building and cabinet work. There are inexhaustible quarries of good rock; and five or six hundred bushels of lime have been prepared from shells. We have erected and finished fourteen clapboarded and shingled wooden buildings; ten more are under way, two of which are of stone. We have built a wharf of stone, seventy feet by twenty six; and with pride do we add, that our little village presents an appearance, which would not shame any thirty men to acknowledge it as the result of eight months' labour, either in Africa or America. And under existing circumstances, we candidly declare that we are not disposed to return to the United States.

Another interesting circumstance connected with our situation may be noticed, viz. We are surrounded by numerous tribes of the most intelligent and civilized natives on this coast. They received us with gladness and seem ardently to wish to adopt our habits and manners, and to acquire a knowledge of the arts of civilized life. From them we have received great assistance in procuring timber for the erection of our houses, and from them also has been procured most of the vegetable food of the colony since its establishment; and both labour and provisions have been obtained for less than one half of the cost of the same in America. We have an excellent school in operation, which is not only attended by our own children, but by those of some of the principal natives in our vicinity, and as far as we can judge they have made rapid progress.

That we may not weary your patience, or be suspected of a desire to set forth matters in too favourable a light, we have been thus brief in

our statements. It will naturally be supposed, brethren, that the object of this address is to induce you to emigrate and join us. To deny this would be a gross want of candor, and not in unison with our professions at the outset. We do wish it, and we tender you both the heart and hand of good fellowship.

But here again, let us be equally candid with you. It is not every man that we could honestly advise or desire to come to this colony. To those who are contented to live and educate their children as house servants and lackeys, we would say; stay where you are; here we have no masters to employ you. To the indolent, heedless and slothful, we would say, tarry among the flesh pots of Egypt; here we get our bread by the sweat of the brow. To drunkards and rioters, we would say; come not to us; you can never become naturalized in a land where there are no grog shops, and where temperance and order is the motto. To the timorous and suspicious, we would say, stay where you have protectors; here we protect ourselves. But the industrious, enterprising and patriotic of what occupation or profession soever; the merchant, the mechanic, and farmer, (but more particularly the latter,) we would counsel, advise and entreat to come and be one with us, and assist us in this glorious enterprise, and enjoy with us that liberty to which we ever were, and the man of colour ever must be, a stranger in America. To the minsters of the gospel, both white and coloured, we would say, come to this great harvest, and diffuse amongst us and our benighted neighbours, that light of the gospel, without which liberty itself is but slavery, and freedom but perpetual bondage.

Accept brethren, our best wishes; and praying, that the Great Disposer of events will direct you to that course, which will tend to your happiness and the benefit of our race throughout the world, we subscribe ourselves, Yours, most affectionately,

Jacob Gross,
Wm. Polk,
Chas. Scotland,
Anthony Wood,
Thomas Jackson.

The report being read, it was then moved by James M. Thomson and seconded, that the report be approved and accepted. The yeas and nays were presented as follows:

Yeas.—Jeremiah Stewart, Jas. Martin, Sam'l Wheeler, H. Duncan, Dan'l Banks, Joshua Stewart, Jno. Bowen, Jas. Stewart, Henry Dennis, Eden Harding, Robt. Whitefield, Nathan Lee, Nath'l Edmonson, Ch's Scotland, Nath'l Harmond, Bur. Minor, Anthony Howard, Jas. M. Thomson, Anthony Wood, Jacob Gross, Wm. Polk, Thomas Jackson.

Nays.—Nicholas Thompson, Wm. Reynolds, Wm. Cassel.

N. B. Those who voted in the negative, declared that the statements contained in the report were true, both in spirit and letter, but they preferred returning to America—whereupon the meeting adjourned, sine die.

A true copy of the record of the proceedings. Wm. Polk.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

VIII. Commissions and Reports

D. Reports of the Board of Managers
1835-47