

except the fact that she was the first to give; but when the History of Liberia shall be written, Maryland's Agency in its regard will not occupy the least important place in the narrative: and it will then be recorded to her lasting honor, that when, in times of trouble, and with an exhausted treasury, she was unable to pay the interest on her public debt, and maintain her reputation at home and in Europe, in this respect, not for one hour, did she withhold or suspend the appropriation she had made, from the feeble Colony established in reliance upon her, and the poor and destitute emigrants, who looked to her for the means of reaching it.

Next in importance, among the events of the past year, to the renewal of the State's appropriation, was the assembling of a colored Convention, in the City of Baltimore,—a matter wholly unexpected by the Board, which they had done nothing to promote, and whose proceedings, conducted, so far as it depended upon the Convention itself, with propriety, intelligence and judgment, cannot but have very important results.

Unquestionably, the great function of Colonization, heretofore, has been to prove the practicability of establishing such Colonies as now exist on the coast of Africa. Its present function is to diffuse information in regard to them, to facilitate emigration thitherward, and, especially, to inculcate throughout the country the true principles upon which Colonization rests, so that, with one heart, all men may feel confidence when they exert themselves in its behalf. But it cannot be denied, that the great agency, which is, ultimately, to accomplish the work, must be that of the colored people themselves. They must become active—they must have Colonization Societies—they must hold Colonization Conventions. When this shall come to pass, Colonization, with such auxiliaries, will carry on the scheme with an energy, to which the past history of the Society will afford no parallel.

Entertaining these views, the Board heard with much satisfaction of the Convention in question. As they had no part in getting it up, so they took no part in its proceedings. No application was made to them for co-operation. Any particular reference, indeed, to Africa was, on more than one occasion, emphatically disavowed. Enquiry seemed the purpose of the meeting: truth the object aimed at; though, throughout the entire proceedings, there appeared to be a pervading conviction, that emigration, to some place beyond the reach of the influences affecting the free colored population here, was a necessity, that could not be overlooked. The Convention, after passing resolutions, which were well and judiciously worded and in a good spirit, and one of which provided for a permanent organization, adjourned to meet in Frederick, on the second Monday in November, 1853. An abstract of its proceedings will be found in the Appendix.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

VIII. Commissions and Reports

D. Reports of the Board of Managers
1852-53