

But it cannot be denied, that the convention seemed to find supporters in a minority only of the colored people of Baltimore; and, that, had it not been for the constant presence of the city police, it would not have been able to hold its meetings in safety, in the face of the opposition from colored people that it met with. This was to be regretted; because free discussion is the right of all, and those opposed to it disparage their own opinions by preventing it. But it was not to be wondered at, whatever cause there may have been for censuring those, whose violence required the arm of the law to restrain it. To judge fairly, in a case like this, the Board have to place themselves in the situation of those among the free colored people, who have been resisting every thing that suggested in any shape their removal to Africa, or elsewhere, beyond the United States. The ties of country are independent of color. The love of home is humanity, regardless of race. Colonizationists lose nothing by admitting, that an indisposition to emigrate is natural, and, in a thousand cases, may be praiseworthy. They created not the state of things which in their judgment makes emigration necessary. The circumstances that produce it are, and ever have been, far beyond their control. They express no opinion about the abstract right or wrong of these. But they recognize their existence; and as men, as christians, as observers of the golden rule of doing to others as they would be done by, they have provided homes in Africa, as places of refuge from their consequences; and they advise the free colored people, that, tender as may be the ties to be severed, dear as may be the home to be abandoned, an imperative necessity leaves no alternative but emigration,—not of particular individuals—not to-day or to-morrow—this year or the next—not even of this generation or the next, as a body,—but gradually, from present beginnings, of the entire race, and in the course of time. But although they regret the excitement to which they have referred, the Board believe that, in the end, it will be found to have been useful, in promoting a spirit of enquiry, that cannot but result to the advantage of Colonization.

The Baltimore Convention of 1852, it is believed, will not be the last of those held in the United States to consider the question of emigration. Already in unwonted quarters, the subject is beginning to attract unusual attention. An association has been formed in New York, the object of which is to obtain information about Liberia, to purchase land there, if found desirable, and prepare homes to which the members may remove as occasion and opportunity serve. An agent has visited Africa accordingly: land has been bought; favorable reports have been published, and it is understood that the society is now maintaining an active and efficient organization.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

VIII. Commissions and Reports

D. Reports of the Board of Managers  
1852-53