

REPORT ON ANNEXATION AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE COLONY.

The Committee to whom was referred, at a meeting of the Board on the 27th July last, "the whole subject of the future condition of the Colony and its annexation to Liberia," respectfully submit the following report.

From the communications received from the Colony during the past year, and from all the information that could be obtained from other sources, your committee are satisfied that the time has arrived when it is the desire of the Colonists that a material change should be made in the relations heretofore existing between them and the Maryland State Society, and that their best interests require that such a change should be effected. On many accounts it would have been desirable that these relations should remain on their present footing until the Colony should have numbered a larger immigrant population, and by a further development of its resources, have been prepared to assume a more commanding position as an independent nation. But the entire political separation which has taken place between the old Colony of Liberia and the parent Society, and the recognition of the power, and the making of treaties with it, as an independent and sovereign power by England and France, has given to it a prestige which does not attach to our Colony; and your committee are convinced, that from this cause, it will continue to attach to itself by far the greater part of the most enterprising, and the best informed emigrants from this country, and even those from our own State, until the citizens of Maryland in Liberia, shall have assumed the same position, by becoming entirely independent of all foreign jurisdiction.

Your committee having arrived at the conclusion that the best interests of the Colony require that its political subordination to this Board be now terminated, and that it should become an independent community, entirely self-governed, have considered with much anxiety what are to be the results of such a change in its condition. It would be extremely gratifying if it could be previously so arranged, that on the consummation of the independence of Maryland in Liberia, this infant State should associate herself with her elder sister, the neighboring Republic of Liberia, on terms which would be agreeable to, and would promote the interests of the citizens of both.

It seems evident to your committee, that the welfare of all the American settlements in Africa will imperatively prescribe their union at an early day under one federal system, similar in its general principles to that under which the United States have grown and prospered. If those settlements remain as separate and distinct communities, it is much to be apprehended, that ill feeling, jealousy and rivalries, will spring up, leading to results that cannot be too strongly pictured or deprecated, whilst on the other hand, the vast extent of Territory, and the immense population which, it is confidently expected, will, within comparatively a very few years be embraced in their limits, forbid the idea that they could prosper, or even continue to exist, if incorporated into one great Republic, governed by a single legislative power, having charge of all their local and domestic, as well as their general and foreign concerns. But whilst your committee have no hesitation in expressing this opinion, they regret that they feel constrained to report, that in their deliberate judgment it would be impracticable to make any satisfactory arrangement on this head; and that, from what they are satisfied to be the prevailing public opinion, both in Liberia and at Cape Palmas, it would be injudicious to attempt to make the independence of the latter at all contingent upon the adoption of any course of action whatever in reference to its future relations with the former. They therefore recommend to the Board to take measures to aid the Colonists in organizing for themselves a separate and independent government, humbly trusting that the same providence which has, as we think, so manifestly extended his beneficent protection to the great enterprise of Colonization, will continue to watch over and bless it; and that under his merciful guidance, the fathers of the new nations which seem destined to spring up on the long benighted shores of Africa, may be endowed with wisdom to adopt all such measures as are best calculated to promote their sure and lasting interests.

Your committee having arrived at these conclusions, nothing remains but to ascertain whether they meet with the assent and approbation of the Colonists in Africa, and if so, to arrange with them what shall be their future relations with this Board, and the Society it represents. Having carefully examined the proceedings of the American Colonization Society in reference to the organization of the inde-

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The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

VIII. Commissions and Reports

D. Reports of the Board of Managers 1852-53