

of them are, they seem to have proper conceptions of the tendency of such performance.

It is said that "the inconsiderableness of the Colony," has been taken as the ground of an argument against its being admitted under independent State rights. But the argument itself is equally inconsiderable and ridiculous; because Maryland in Liberia in fifty years hence, will not present the sparsely settled Maryland in Liberia of the present date—and besides, at present, she does not command a comparatively inconsiderable area of territory, which I dare say abounds in no inconsiderable amount of resources, which require but more men, and I hardly need say means, as men of enterprise never fail to produce them, to develop them more abundantly.

There is no place in the vicinity of the American Colonies on this coast, sir, that can boast of its commercial advantages more than Maryland in Liberia. These, I do not doubt, are developed in greater abundance in the Republic than here. But even this cannot be admitted as a commercial advantage which she possesses over this place; because directly speaking this settlement has the advantage of a trade flowing into it from the interior, which Monrovia is not blessed with. It is on her coast whence are derived the produce which she annually exports. Her coast trade is certainly an improving one; but the labor of years, and the sacrifice of means have contributed to raise it to the state in which it is now found. My experience when but a boy of thirteen years of age established as a trader at Little Bassa, where I witnessed the ill success of many an adventurer whose ruin was consummated by the perfidy and dishonesty of the natives, assures me of this fact. Now the trade at Cape Palmas is keeping pace with the capital employed in commercial enterprises. For the past six or eight years, the investments being annually enlarged, the productions of the country have been proportionally increasing to meet them; and it seems that the consumption of foreign goods in the country, is regulated by the demand for African commodity. Such being the case, the commercial interests and advantages of this place, alone, entitle her to some consideration.

I feel assured, as the agricultural and commercial interests of the Colony increase, that, its national importance will rise in the scale of independence, and this would be far from complete without independent State action. Founded as these Colonies have been by different Societies, and existing apart from each other in a State of separate rule in which there has never been the most distant connection, county annexation would excite a jealousy in this people to construe the most wholesome laws or regulations made by the Republic for them, into an attempt against their rights and liberty. They would be entitled to a limited representation it is true, but what of that when an action was to be taken on matters contained in the Colony. Such a trifling amount of representation would only rise to become overwhelmed by numbers. It is hardly allowable that the representation from this place would be determined in amount on the principles of native population, as is now the case in the Republic, because such a system would give Palmas a number of representatives little inferior to those of the whole Republic. The native population of Maryland in Liberia is more dense than in the Republic; and if the disparity preponderates at all in favor of the latter, it can be accounted for only by a difference in the amount of their respective territories, which is, I believe, on the side of the Republic.

I believe, sir, as many of our friends in the States do, that the ultimate object of christianized colored people planted on this coast, under the auspices of separate and distinct societies in the United States, is the same. A union between them is inevitable. Their national importance demands it; and in the course of time it must be accomplished. But though their destinies have for their principles the same object, which is to be facilitated by means of a union, it does not argue that the one part is to sacrifice the prerogative of self-rule, and render nugatory its rights and privileges, and the importance consequent on its future growth and improvement, to accommodate itself to the embarrassing conditions fixed and determined by the other. The people of Cape Palmas, are a people themselves. The connections existing between Monrovia and her counties, are close and inseparable; and this is plain as the latter owe their existence and formation to men of the former. They have been governed by the same laws, and have been subject in common to the same rules. Not so with Cape Palmas; she has ever been an independent sovereign State, owing loyalty to none, except a society of gentlemen to whose labors and patronage she is indebted for her present existence. She exercises the right of independent State legislation, and in many cases provides laws for the government of her people. If she is to unite with the Republic, her present State rights ought to be respected, however few her claims may be to independent nationality.

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The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

VIII. Commissions and Reports

D. Reports of the Board of Managers 1852-53