

The territory which the American Colonies are to embrace, is too great to confine all legislative action at one place. It will affect the very life and principles of pure republicanism, and introduce an aristocracy which will prove the bane of all Liberia. This may sound a little extravagant; but a right to control once given, will never cease to be exerted until the only men fit for offices of State, can be found in the metropolis, Monrovia. This would revolutionize the Maryland Colony, and reduce it to the condition of a trading spot where factories were kept, and a limited farming operation conducted by a few determined men who had loved the "green land" of their homes "too well" to remove.

You are undoubtedly aware, sir, that in this Colony there are exigencies constantly arising, which require action. To unite as a county it would be transferring this important right; it would shew a disregard to the principles of free government, the source and centre of human liberty, and it would nullify the very object for which the means of the State of Maryland have, for years, been contributed.

The people of the Republic themselves cannot be insensible to the evil consequent on the investing of so much power in one man's hands. Truly, the importance of the matter, at present, owing to the age of the place, may not strike them forcibly. But it will be seen and felt, by and by, when the Republic will in point of population and possessions, be truly, what she nominally now is, independent. To attempt the remedy of an evil then of long standing and of such magnitude, would occasion a revolution as appalling as any, now extant in the annals of France.

These hints, illustrate the views entertained of a future union with the Republic, throughout the Colony. I write them without the knowledge of the people; and only do it so you may see that all you have said in your communication, is coincided with. I have the pleasure of remaining your obliged and ob't serv't,

W. A. PROUT.

JNO. H. B. LATROBE, Esq. *Baltimore.*

BALTIMORE, *November 20th, 1852.*

DR. SAMUEL F. MCGILL, *Acting Governor of Maryland in Liberia.*

Dear Sir,—Your dispatches of the 12th July were received this morning. The sailing of the "Linda Stewart" to-morrow affords an opportunity of an immediate reply.

Along with this letter you will find copies of the Report of the Committee to whom was referred the question of the independence of the Colony, together with the resolutions passed thereon by the Board, at its meeting to day.

You will see that the question, certainly a very momentous one, is referred to the Colonists themselves; and as they are the most deeply interested in it, upon them will rest the responsibility of deciding it.

It is not impossible, judging from the tone of your dispatches now before me, that there may be some among the voters, who, influenced by the renewal of the State's appropriation, may vote against independence under the impression, that for six years at least, things will be permitted to go on in the old way, the Society continuing to pay the civil list, and to afford all the facilities that have heretofore been found so convenient. Should there be any such persons, however, it is proper that they should be disabused on this head. At the end of twenty years, the Colony, if ever to stand alone, ought to be able to stand alone without help. And so far as the Society are concerned, the experiment as to the ability so to stand, is about to be made—*independence or no independence—the appropriation of the State being confined exclusively to the transportation of emigrants and office expenses on this side of the Atlantic, and any aid given to the Colonists in the payment of their civil list being taken from such voluntary contributions as can be obtained in this country. On this point you cannot speak to the Colonists too emphatically.* As Colonists, or as Citizens of a free Republic, they must now throw aside the garb of infancy and stand and walk as men. Whatever may be the responsibility which will rest on the Board, in coming to this conclusion, they have determined to assume it. Indeed, the feeling of the Board leans to aiding them more if independent, than if still Colonists. The amounts mentioned in the report of the Committee, show the extent to which the Board will go; and in no event, I think I can safely say, will they go further.

Hereafter the Board will confine the appropriation of the State, as already said, to the transportation of emigrants, including the support of such as require it after

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

VIII. Commissions and Reports

D. Reports of the Board of Managers 1852-53