

The views entertained by the Board having been made known to the Colonists, a meeting was held by them in February, 1853, in pursuance of a proclamation to that effect, issued by the Governor, when a unanimous vote was given in favor of the establishment of a separate and independent government. Delegates were elected, to a convention to frame a Constitution, and two Commissioners were appointed to visit Baltimore, for the purpose of arranging with this Board what were to be the future relations between the Society and the new State. The Convention met, and on the 29th of March, 1853, finally agreed upon a Declaration of Rights and a Constitution, which were submitted to the people, and were by them adopted and ratified, with the exception of one provision, which will hereinafter be more particularly noticed.

At the commencement of the year 1854, Messrs. William A. Prout and William Cassell, the Commissioners appointed, arrived in this City. Conferences were held by them with the Board: various interesting documents and communications, explanatory of the views and wishes of the Colonists, were considered, and after a free interchange of opinions, articles of agreement were entered into which settled, on all the points which it seemed at the time at all necessary or desirable to establish, the future relations of the Maryland State Colonization Society with the people of Maryland in Liberia.

The Commissioners returned to Cape Palmas; and their constituents ratified their acts, and on the 29th day of May, 1854, solemnly and formally adopted the Constitution and form of government, under which Maryland in Liberia has, since that day, rightfully claimed to take her stand among the Nations of the Earth, as a Free, Sovereign and Independent State. Early in the following month, their officers were elected, and on the 8th of June, Mr. William A. Prout, who had been duly chosen to fill that station, was inaugurated as Governor of the State.

By a bold innovation on all the customs and common law of the Coast, the Board of Managers in the original foundation of their Colony, had succeeded in purchasing the Territory of Cape Palmas, without either giving to the Natives presents of ardent spirits, or paying in such articles, any part of the consideration for the purchase. In pursuance of the same policy, a prohibition of the use of, or traffic in liquors was made a fundamental article of the Charter given to the Colonists. It was, therefore, with deep regret, that the Board discovered in the proceedings of the people on the adoption of the Constitution framed by their convention, a disposition on the part of a majority, to depart from this policy, by rejecting a similar prohibitory article in the Con-

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