

of Maryland in Liberia would be received into the bosom of that Commonwealth on the same footing as any other of its counties, the Commissioners proceeded to declare their views as to the several provisions which they would expect the Republic to make; and relying on the justice and magnanimity of the Government and people of Liberia, they at once dissolved the Government of the State of Maryland in Liberia, and ceded to the Republic of Liberia all the Public Domain, with all forts, public buildings, and property of every description of Maryland in Liberia, including all jurisdiction and sovereignty of the same. What action may have been taken by the Legislature of Liberia, in reference to this cession, is not yet known here, but it is presumed that it has been accepted ere this, and fully ratified and adopted by all parties.

Without troubling the Board with unnecessary comments on these proceedings, your Committee deem it proper to remark that upon a full consideration of the circumstances which had occurred, and of the position in which the people of Maryland in Liberia found themselves placed, the most wise and prudent measure for them to adopt, even if it were not one of necessity, was for them to unite their destinies with those of the neighboring Republic, and if annexation as a County was, as they believed, the only mode in which such union could probably be effected, they were right in adopting it. Your Committee regret, however, that so important a movement could not have been made with more deliberation, and that the terms and conditions of annexation should not have been previously arranged between the two sovereignties by mutual agreement, before one of them actually dissolved itself. They trust, however, that no ill consequences will result from such precipitate action, and that the Republic will act towards their new county with that justice and fairness, which a sense of what is due as well to the interests as to the character and reputation of the former, would seem to demand.

A copy of the Act of Annexation is herewith submitted. It will be seen, that by the third provision embraced in it, it is declared, "that the stipulations entered into between the State of Maryland in Liberia, and the Maryland State Colonization Society, concluded the 22d day of February, 1854, shall remain unimpaired." Your Committee cannot entertain any doubt that all the rights retained in Maryland in Liberia, by this Society, will be respected and duly protected by the Republic, and supposing this to be the case, important questions will arise for the consideration of this Board, in reference to its future relations, both with the Republic of Liberia, and with the American Colonization Society. With the former, in reference to the property owned by the Society in Maryland in Liberia, and their right to claim lands there for such emigrants as they may send out; or the recognition of the Agent of this Society, should it be found advisable to keep one in Africa, &c. &c. With the American Colonization Society, in reference to the future operations of the two Societies as to sending out emigrants, locating them in Africa, and provisioning them there &c. &c. and whether as regards emigrants from Maryland hereafter, these matters shall as hitherto be under the exclusive management of the Maryland State Society, or whether the change can with advantage be transferred to the American Colonization Society, by arrangement, of course, with that body. On all these points the Committee are not prepared to express an opinion, nor do they suppose that the Board would be willing to act upon them, without fuller and more definite information than is now in their possession. It is therefore recommended, that these subjects be recommitted to a committee, to make the necessary enquiries, and to report at a future meeting of the Board.

The Committee recommend the adoption of the subjoined resolutions.

All which is respectfully submitted,

By order of the Committee,

CHARLES HOWARD, *Chairman.*

Resolved, That the conduct of their General Agent, Dr. Hall, in making a loan to the Republic of Liberia, in order to enable that Government to dispatch immediate assistance to the people of Maryland in Liberia, as well as in making purchases himself of provisions and stores for their relief in the distress in which hostilities with the natives had involved them, meets with the full and entire approbation of this Board; and that all the expenditures made, and obligations incurred by Dr. Hall for the above objects, are properly chargeable to, and are to be met and defrayed by the Maryland State Colonization Society.

Resolved, That a Committee of — be appointed, to report to this Board at a future meeting, after such conference as they may deem advisable with the American Colonization Society, or with the President of the Republic of Liberia, such changes and alterations as they may deem necessary or judicious, either in the organization or mode of action of this Society, in the United States or in Africa, or both.

Adopted, May 14th, 1857.

Dr. Hall to President Benson.

MONROVIA, LIBERIA, February 4th, 1857.

To his Excellency STEPHEN A. BENSON,

President of the Republic of Liberia.

DEAR SIR:—During an interview, which I had the honor of holding with you this morning, you were pleased to express a desire to accede to Gov. Drayton's solicitations for aid of men and munitions of war in the present dangerous position of the State of Maryland in Liberia, and that you would transmit a message to the Legislature, now in session, upon the matter. You however expressed a doubt if they would feel warranted in taking any action favorable to Gov. Drayton's wishes, in consequence of the exhausted state of your treasury, consequent on the recent expensive war in which your government has been engaged. Under the peculiar and pressing circumstances of the case, I feel warranted in the tendering your government a loan of such sum as may be required in fitting out a military expedition in aid of Maryland in Liberia, and to be appropriated thereto, not to exceed eight thousand dollars, with the express understanding and condition, that the aid furnished shall be entirely unconditional, and in no way contingent or dependent upon the annexation of that State to this Republic. On this point I beg to receive the expression of your views previous to my action, as my position in regard to this matter is a very responsible one. May I also take the liberty of asking of you the copy of Gov. Drayton's dispatches, of your message to the Legislature, and of any action they may take in the premises.

With much respect, I have the honor to be,

Very truly yours,

JAMES HALL,

Gen'l Agt. Md. St. Col. Soc.

President Benson's Answer to Dr. Hall.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONROVIA, February 6th, 1857.

SIR:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 4th inst. in which you allude to our interview held on the morning of that date, during which I assured you of the strong desire of this government to accede to the solicitations of Governor Drayton for aid, of men and munitions of war, in their present perilous condition, but that the present pecuniary pressure of this government, (owing to the recent expensive wars) operated as a barrier.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

VIII. Commissions and Reports

D. Reports of the Board of Managers
1858