*Extracts from an address by Jacob Burnett, Esq. President of the Hamilton County Colonization Society, read at a meeting of the society in Cincinnati, on Tuesday, the 9th of Nov.* 1841.

As far as human intellect can penetrate futurity, or draw conclusions from the past, to ascertain that which is to come, not a ray of light can be discovered, indicative of any change that can improve the social and political condition of our coloured population.—They are separated from us by feelings which are so strong and so deeply rooted, that they cannot be overcome. Experience proves the truth of this position. With here and there an exception, the great mass of the white population manifest the same repulsive feeling and the same sense of superiority, which have characterized former generations. What encouragement is there, then, to hope for a change? Such a change may be expected, when the leopard changes his spots and the Ethiopian his skin, but not before. What then must be done? Is there no hope—no relief for these disconsolate people? Are they to live and die in dispair, bequeathing that, and that only, as an inheritance to their offspring? I answer honestly and sincerely, that if they persist in remaining here, my ingenuity cannot discover or devise a remedy.

The repellancies which have thrown them on the back ground, have not and will not relax. The cause which has brought about their present condition I fear will never cease to operate; and so long as it exists, it must produce its legitimate effects.

Reason, confirmed by experience, conducts to the conclusion that two races of men, so palpably distinguished, not only in personal appearance, but in habits, manners and cast, cannot affiliate, or become a united, harmonious people. An equality of rights cannot exist between them. The strong party will not concede it, nor can the weak party extort it. Every effort of that character must fail and every failure will but aggravate the evil. The visible distinction produced by natural causes, which have operated for thousands of years, must continue and perpetuate the separation existing between the races.

Certainly, no philanthropist can desire to continue the privations to which the man of colour is subjected, and yet every person who exerts an influence to retain him in this country is practically doing so, and is prolonging his degradation and misery. The proposition is self-evident. No course of reasoning can prove it more clearly than the simplest words in which it can be stated that that unfortunate race of men while they continue here, never can elevate themselves above their present grade: and while ocupying that grade, never can enjoy the blessings of real freedom.

They are not only deprived of all the political rights of freemen, but are subjected to the mortifying reflection, that they are esteemed and treated as an inferior race. On the supposition, that this state of things cannot be changed, can he be a philanthropist, a friend to the coloured race, who advises them to continue in this country, and live upon hope never to be realized? Such philanthropy was not taught in the schools with which I have been familiar.

The question then recurs, can these unfortunate people remain where they are with the most distinct hope of bettering their prospects? If not, then another question presents itself, what can they do to improve their condition? Surely, their case is not hopeless. Providence cannot have designed to keep them always in their present degraded state. No, on the contrary, it has provided for them an asylum—a city of refuge—and a multitude of real philanthropists stand ready to aid them in seeking its protection.



The colony of Liberia in their fatherland, one of the most fertile regions of the earth, has been planted for them and their children. The difficulties and privations to which they are now subjected, were foreseen many years ago by FINLEY, MILLS, ASHMUN, CALDWELL, and others, most of whom have been gathered to their fathers. Those men, as if by inspiration, conceived the noble plan of preparing for the unfortunate African found in this country, a safe refuge in the land of his fathers. That plan has been executed by great effort, and with unparalleled success. Aided by the liberal contributions of thousands who feel for the wrongs of Africa, it has resulted in the establishment of a free, independent, republican government, conducted and managed exclusively by people of colour. Travellers, who have visited Liberia, concur in representing it as one of the most flourishing and promising colonies that has ever been formed. Many of them speak in raptures of the industry, order, and sobriety of the inhabitants. They describe the great fertility of the soil, and the ease of procuring not only a comfortable living, but of accumulating wealth. The towns in the colony are well constructed. The farms are well improved, and churches and schools are provided in every settlement. The soil is unusually luxuriant—its products are countless in variety—many of them are spontaneous, and such as require labour, yield to the cultivator abundant returns. The products of the country beyond the wants of the inhabitants, already sustain a large and lucrative commerce, the profits of which are enriching the coloured merchants; and the interior trade with the natives, is increasing and becoming more and more profitable. This traffic, both foreign and domestic, is enjoyed exclusively by the people of the colony, in which there are no white merchants to compete with them. The natural products of the earth and the forest, which now sustain this trade, are said to be inexhaustible, and to constitute a source of wealth which must continue to enrich the inhabitants for ages to come. The most authentic reports made officially to the society, represent the health of the colonists to be at least equal to that enjoyed by the frontier settlers of our Western States, and far greater than fell to the lot of the first adventurers to the colony of Virginia.

One would suppose that such a country as this must secure to its occupants every thing that man can desire—a free government—a mild climate—a rich productive soil—inexhaustible sources of wealth—a flourishing commerce, and a fair security for health and longevity. Such is the country which invites the African of America to its bosom, and is freely tendered to him with all its blessings. The people of colour throughout the United States, I repeat, are now invited to repair to this asylum, and become free independent members of a well organized republic, governed exclusively by people of their own race and colour. None but an enemy can dissuade them from accepting the invitation. Every real friend will advise them to go at once to a country where, and where only, they can enjoy equality of rights and rise to the elevated stand which all benevolent men wish them to occupy. What does the ambition of the coloured man lead him to desire? Is it not to be connected with a community, in which he shall stand on a level with all his fellows; enjoy equal privileges, and claim and receive the same respect and deference, which are accorded to others? Without those rights freedom cannot be a blessing, or rather without them, no man can be said to be free. A freed-man in a country whose inhabitants do not recognize him as an equal, cannot be called a freeman, in the republican sense of the term: and this constitutes the difference between the coloured man of the United States and Liberia. You see the one, degraded and disfranchised, while the other is honoured and respected. Here, the coloured man politically is nothing—there, he is every thing. In Liberia (a name

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

XII. Newspapers
A. Maryland Colonization Journal

2. June 1841 (n.s. I, 1)—May 1861 (n.s. X, 24)

1842