Twelfth Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Maryland State Colonization Society.

THE last Annual Report noticed the sailing of the Barque Globe with 111 emigrants for Cape Palmas, on the 15th of December, 1842; and the Board have now to announce the sailing of the Barque Latrobe, on the 6th of November last, with 72 emigrants for the same place.

By a comparison of the numbers reported to have emigrated annually to Maryland in Liberia, prior to the sailing of the Globe, with the numbers that embarked in the last two expeditions, it will be seen that the average has very largely increased, being 90 for 1842 and 1843, and but 57 for the eight preceding years. The Board can attribute this only to a change of feeling in regard to colonization, which is gradually being wrought, and which is promoted by the temporary return to their old neighbourhoods in Maryland, of citizens of Maryland in Liberia, who, on their visit to this country, are enabled to spread accurate information in regard to the climate, health, and productions of the colony, and the rights enjoyed by its citizens, among the free coloured population here. Patiently, but without doubt as to the result, the Board have for years been looking forward to the arrival of this period, and they see, in the increased emigration here referred to, evidence of its approach. Under any circumstances, it must take a long while to change the home of a people. Affection for the soil, habits, even when they are those of submission to oppression, the dread of change common to most men, conspire in all cases to blind the judgment of him, who would, otherwise, be prompt to recognize the circumstances which made it his interest to emigrate: but when, to these, are added the active efforts of pretended friends, who urge him to remain, who appeal to his prejudices, who avail themselves of his ignorance, who work upon his feelings, and whose agency is in secret where it cannot be counteracted,—in this state of things, it is no wonder that the emigrant for Africa hesitates ere he embarks and gives up that, which, with all its harsh associations, with all its gloomy future, is still his *home*, for a land beyond the sea, of which he knows nothing but through the testimony of others.

The Board of Managers freely admit all this: but they know it cannot last forever; that it will operate less and less every year; that, as intercourse with Africa increases, and the channels of intelligence from that country to this are multiplied, the prejudice against emigration will diminish, until the free coloured population of the state will seek Africa, as the European now seeks America,—without fear or apprehension, but with a full conviction that the new home will be better in a thousand ways than the old one. Then, no heavy outlay will attend the expeditions of the Society. The emigrants will pay their own passage; in Africa they will support their own government; and with the proud consciousness of having founded a nation of freemen, the state, under whose auspices it will have been accomplished, and the State Society may rest from those labours, which for years have been tediously prosecuted, with the conviction that voluntary emigration at the cost of the emigrant will thereafter suffice for the removal of the entire free coloured population from our shores. That this result is slowly but surely coming to pass, the Board have reason to think is proved by the increasing average already referred to.

The emigrants by the Globe all arrived safely in Africa: but a singular fatality seemed to attend one family, in which the Board felt a peculiar interest. Capt. James Lauder, from St. Mary's county, whose emigration was particularly mentioned in the last Report, on account of the elevated and liberal views from which it resulted, died before the arrival out of the

Globe, in consequence of a wound which he received on the voyage, slight in its character at first, but terminating in gangrene. His wife, Margaret Lauder also died before landing, and the family which had thus lost its head, was further diminished by the loss of one child by accident.

What makes the mortality in this case the more remarkable is that it was not the result of the climate, but of accidents to the parties, with the exception of Mrs. Lauder, whose death was a consequence of her peculiar situation. With these exceptions, the emigrants by the Globe were all doing well, at the date of the last advices, and promised to become useful members of the colony.

Since the last Annual Report the Board have been informed by Governor Russwurm that he has succeeded in purchasing Fishtown from the natives, extending thereby the colonial territory considerably to windward, and as far as the settlement of the French at Garroway. Fishtown was a place which the Board had long desired to possess, but which they could not obtain during the life-time of Captain Spence, an English trader, who had for many years resided there, and whose influence with the natives was exerted to prevent them from selling their land. On his death, which happened a year ago, negotiations were commenced by Governor Russwurm, which resulted in the purchase.

The Board have great pleasure in saying that an application which they made to the Navy Department, to have the harbor of Fishtown surveyed by the officers of the African squadron, was promptly acceded to, and orders have been despatched to Commodore Perry accordingly.

This harbor is celebrated upon the coast as one of the very best between the mouths of the Gambia and the Niger, and was all that was wanting to give to the Society a sea-coast line of unequalled commercial advantages.

In the establishment of the colony, it was to have been expected that the entire cost of its maintenance would fall for many years upon the State Society, and the act of the Legislature which made the state's appropriation to the colonization cause, anticipating this, authorized the agents to make the outlay necessary for the reception of emigrants and their support at the colony. In the course of years, however, the colonists have become permanently settled,—have accumulated property—have the comforts of life around them, and present the appearance of an organized and intelligent community. The time has, therefore, arrived when, in the opinion of the Board, they should, like other well regulated communities, *contribute* at least to the expenses of their government: and with a view to their doing this in the least onerous manner, the Board have recently adopted a tariff of duties on imports, which will go into operation about the first of April. The Board have fixed upon the uniform duty of ten per cent. upon the invoice cost of all articles, and in the ordinance upon the subject, have endeavoured to guard, as well as experience elsewhere has enabled them to do, against frauds upon the revenue. This tariff is but an experiment, whose operation will enable the Board, should modification become necessary, and a tariff of discriminating duties appear proper, to act with full knowledge hereafter in the manner best calculated to promote the interests of the colonists.

The duty here mentioned is to be paid by all articles imported into the colony, whether belonging to this Society, missionaries or others—the only exception being in favour of emigrants who, on their voyage out, are permitted to carry with them their property and land it in the colony free of duty. The tariff being moderate, and operating equally upon all, and the revenue derived from it being intended for use within the colony exclusively, the Board entertain no doubt but that it will be cheerfully borne by the citizens, and that it will, by lessening the amount of the Society's funds required for African expenses, enable the Society to act more efficiently on this side of the Atlantic in obtaining and forwarding emigrants.

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)

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