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AFRICAN COLONIZATION—ITS PRINCIPLES AND AIMS.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY JOHN H. B. LATROBE, *Pres. of Am. Col. Soc.*

The following Address was delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the American Colonization Society, held at the Smithsonian Institute, in the City of Washington, on the Evening of the 18th of January, 1859. It has since, in pursuance of what appeared to be the wish of the Meeting, and at the invitation of friends of Colonization in those Cities, been repeated in Richmond, Va.—Elizabeth City, New Jersey,—New York, Albany, Harrisburg, Cincinnati and Philadelphia. It is now published in accordance with the resolution of the Anniversary Meeting. Its principal object is to exhibit Colonization in what is believed to be its true aspect,—as a scheme, which, fitted to the circumstances of our country, must rely on the natural course of events for its full development, in a voluntary, cheerful, self-paying emigration of the free people of color to Africa,—the result of their own conviction that they will better their condition by removal, while they, at the same time, establish a separate and honorable nationality, pregnant with the happiest promises.

Forty-two years ago, the Rev. Robert Finley of New Jersey, developed, in the City of Washington, the idea of planting a colony in Africa, that might induce the free people of color "to go and settle there."*

He was moved, he said, by "their increasing numbers and their increasing wretchedness."

Commended by some, ridiculed by others, but proclaiming to all that he knew the scheme was from God, he persevered, until in December, 1816, the American Colonization Society was organized. Here, his existence seemed to culminate. He then went home and died. Before the exploring expedition sailed, he was in his grave. We meet, to night, to report progress in his plan.

We have been gradually advancing in the prosecution of it. If our steps have been unequal, they have been unfaltering. The colony has

*It is not to be inferred from what is said in the text, which has reference to the organization of the American Colonization Society only, that Mr. Finley originated the idea of a Colony, such as was afterwards established, on the Coast of Africa. The idea belongs to others. It was Finley, however, who developed and made it available, as stated above. Brissot, in 1788, travelling in the United States, met Dr. Thornton, who told him of "the efforts which he had made for the execution of a vast project conceived by him. Persuaded that there never could exist a sincere union between the whites and blacks, even on admitting the latter to the rights of freemen, he proposed to send them back," says the traveller, "and establish them in Africa." "He, (Dr. Thornton) proposed," continues Brissot, "to be the conductor of the American negroes who should repair to Africa. He proposed to unite them to the new colony of Sierra Leone. He had sent, at his own expense into Africa, a well instructed man, who had spent several years in observing the productions of the country, the manufacturers most suitable for it, the plan most convenient, and the measures necessary to be taken to secure the Colony from insults," &c., &c., &c.—*Brissot's Travels—Mavor's Compilation*, 19 vol. pp. 190, 261.

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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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