A LIBERIAN MERCHANT.

We see the following paragraph coming through a paper of a neighboring City, and may be thankful to get a notice of our friend Johns into our City papers even at this. But a few years since Mr. J. was a common porter in one of our dry good stores; his success ought to encourage the many in that condition now—to go and do likewise.

From the Philadelphia Ledger.

WESTERN AFRICA AND ITS COMMERCE.

The inteligence from Liberia, for some time past, affords great encouragement to the friends of the African race. There appears to have been solid and rapid progress in all the elements which constitute a vigorous Commonwealth and a free and enterprising people. This little Republic, composed of colored men from our own country, with such of the aborigines as have attained to a respectable standing in the habits of civilized life, have already done much to establish the capability of the black man, the spread of civilization and pure religion, and for the extinction of the accursed slave-trade. The statesmanship of President Benson and other dignitaries not only saved their seaboard from the evils of the French immigration system, but it is likely to lead to its entire abandonment as soon as the present contract shall have been completed with the French Government. Liberia is also opening to the world a large and exceedingly lucrative lawful commerce. The last "Herald" received from Monrovia, announces the addition to the Liberian trading marine, "during the last week, of two new vessels, averaging two hundred tons," and that "the Hamburgh schooner Liberia, well known as Godell's schooner, has been purchased by the firm of Payne & Yates." It also reports the arrival of "the new and fine schooner James Hall—built in Baltimore for the firm of McGill Brothers here. The captain of the J. Hall will take the Moses Sheppard, another vessel of the McGills', to Plymouth, England, for repairs." Several Liberian vessels have arrived in the United States with cargoes of Liberian produce—The American Presbyterian of this city, in its issue of the 15th instant, thus describes an interview in a sister city with an African merchant.

"We may mention an accidental, but very agreeable meeting, which occured to us with a merchant from Monrovia, a Mr. A. F. Johns, just arrived in Baltimore, after a five years' absence from this country, a man apparently of pure African extraction, born and bred in Maryland, who emigrated several years ago to Liberia. He came bustling into the counting-room of one of the largest merchants in Baltimore street, with his invoices, drafts, &c., and with every appearance of an active, driving, prosperous business man; wiry, keen, ready in his address, his manners excellent, with only that slight over-doing of the thing which seems natural to his race. In fact, if we should call him a colored yankee, we should perhaps best convey the impression he made. Evidently he realized that he belonged to a country in which his manhood was recognized. We were shown his invoice, which consisted of palm oil, used in making adamantine candles; camwood, used in dyeing; ivory, and 100 pounds of African coffee, an article which commands the highest prices in the market. Here, we thought, are at least the beginnings of a nobler intercourse between our own and that oppressed country—the foreshadowing of a great oppressed and prosperous traffic, which shall occupy the energies of the Africans, and develop the slumbering resources of that dark, mysterious and sin smitten continent, which shall follow up the daring explorations of Christian travellers, supersede the outrageous traffic in the bodies of men, and perhaps, aid in solving the problems connected with the removal of slavery in our own land."

The commerce of Western Africa exceeds in value $20,000,000 annually, and hundreds of vessels sail along its coast, belonging to almost every nation. The great majority of them, however, belong to British merchants. What is the proportion of American interest in this trade, and what is our Government doing to open it up to our people, and to foster it and protect them in its prosecution?

Let us hope that our statesman will take hold of this subject, and seek to have Liberia trade and shipping put on the same footing which that power extends to ours. Deeply will Africa's productiveness effect the markets of the world. Let us get and retain an interest in the commerce of this mighty continent. Our people want the productions of Africa to come to America, and American manufactures to reach Africa. Ought not their wishes to be heeded by those in authority?

ACT OF REPEAL.

We have obtained from Mr. Spencer, clerk of the Court of Appeals, a copy of the Act repealing all laws affecting the Colonization Society, reserving only its charter and a per capita appropriation for emigrants actually sent from the State, not to exceed five thousand dollars in any one year.

We cannot complain of the action of the Legislature, or view it otherwise than liberal under the circumstances. True, we would have advised a *special* appropriation, sufficient to cover the actual, necessary expenses of the office, or organization in Baltimore, and to pay the salary of the agent and physician in Africa, in all not exceeding $5000 per annum, and then a *per capita* appropriation to cover the actual expense of each emigrant, not to be restricted in amount.

We believe a large majority of the people of the State would vote for an act with such provisions. We have seldom conversed with a person upon the subject, who did not express a wish that *all* should be sent who are willing to go, and at the State's expense.

The great objection to a continuation of the general appropriation, is the fact, that the colored people of the State are indisposed to emigrate—will not go—and it is no wonder that people are averse to expending money with no proportional result. It must be recollected, however, that colonization implies more than the bare removing of these people; of which it is not necessary to enlarge. It is enough to say, that all but the removal of the people of color has been effected. In its broadest sense, we can say, A WAY HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR THEM!

As the law now stands, we have little apprehension that it will be objected to, by any party or parties, even the successful aspirant to office and power, with all the pledges of *retrenchment* binding on him, cannot conscientiously meddle with the Colonization Act as it now stands. The universal feeling throughout the State is, send all who want to go, *at any cost.*

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

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A. Maryland Colonization Journal

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