# LIBERIA HERALD.

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(FOR OUR COUNTRY.)

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LIBERIA HERALD

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The Liberia Herald is published in Monrovia on the first and third Wednesdays in each month, at Two Dollars *per annum*, payable in advance.

The rates of advertising in the Liberia Herald, are,—

For a single square, one insertion, $ " 75c.
For half a square, one insertion, $ " 50c.
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Voluntary correspondence, containing interesting or important news, solicited from any part of the Republic.

No notice will be taken of anonymous communications; nor will rejected communications be returned.

All communications must be addressed to "Liberia Herald."


## LIBERIA HERALD.

From the Maryland Colonization Herald.

### WANTS OF LIBERIA.

SINCE the founding of this colony, new Republic, she has laboured under some seemingly imperative want, either real or imaginary, either felt by herself or by her many sympathising friends. These wants have been of a general or specific character, prospective or immediate. For years, like Greece, she was in want of a ruler, as one agent of the Colonization Society after another fell under the influence of the climate; then she wanted a constitution and laws; then protection; then missionaries and teachers. All these she has at last found herself capable of supplying without aid. Then she has wanted a steam, water, or wind mill, for sawing and grinding, a horse and ox power, for cultivating the soil, a model farm, a high school, a college, independence, recognition by foreign governments, extension of territory, means of coast defence, navy, &c., &c. Most of these wants were real; some have been, and the others no doubt will, in due time, be supplied; but more important than all, and underlying all these wants, has existed from the beginning, the want of *men*,—intelligent enterprising, good-principled men. Give but Liberia these, and all other things shall be added unto her. We say this *has been* the great want of Liberia; but never the *sine qua non*, until now. Liberia must soon have a material accession of this class of population, or some of the most important benefits to be derived from her acknowledged national independence, will be lost to her forever. Let the question be thrice asked, as was another to the famed Grecian orator "What does Liberia want?" and the answer will thrice be then given—"men, men, men."

Let it not be supposed that we had estimated the characters of the more eminent Liberians, the brave men, who in times of peril, have offered their lives for their country's good, those through whose able conduct the feeble colony of a charitable society has assumed a respectable rank among nations. Their lives and their deeds are matters of history, and need not our humble praise. But Liberia wants, and must have, *more* men. Her few brave and skilful leaders sufficed for the *colony*, but the *Republic* demands many. A brief explanation of the present commercial position of Liberia will show for what special purpose she must have an accession of sterling, business men.

Liberia now includes a coast line of about three hundred miles in extent. To this may be added Maryland in Liberia, which, although not a part of the Republic, may be considered in nearly the same position. Gallinas and Sherbro, which no doubt will soon, if they are not already, be added to the Republic, will make her extent of sea-board near or quite five hundred miles. Commercially considered, this immense extent of coast-line, is one vast harbour or trading port for an almost boundless, rich inland country. There are not ten miles of coast without one or more trading towns and landing places for boats and canoes, large enough to ship off the productions of the country, a breast of which, vessels can anchor in safety at all seasons of the year. The commerce of this "section" of the coast, except the slave trade at Gallinas, Cape mount, New Cesters, and Trade Town, has been mainly in the hands of English, German, and American merchant vessels, at least one half English. Many French and Portuguese vessels trade at the colonies also. The *native* trade, as it is termed, that not transacted at the Liberian ports, or through Liberians, is conducted somewhat in the following manner.

The captain of a vessel, or the agent of some foreign commercial house makes a contract with some native chief, or the head man of a beach town, who allows him, for certain considerations, to land merchandise and in country parlance, *make trade*, at his or their town. A rude thatched hut is constructed for the residence of the trade man, whom the agent leaves in charge, and another for his produce, when purchased. This is what is called *establishing a factory*. After landing what amount or merchandise, oil casks, &c., he may judge proper, the captain proceeds to other places, making in each, similar arrangements. He then, from time to time, visits his factories, taking on board what produce has been collected during his absence, until his merchandise is disposed of, or the vessel becomes fully laden. Sometimes this operation is gone through with by the captain of a single vessel, often by the agent of some foreign house, which may have several vessels in the trade, in which last case, the agent generally remains a year or two at a time on the coast. These are called regular traders. In addition to which, much business is done by transient vessels, as they are termed, those bound on a long voyage to the leeward ports; in which cases, the trade is made by purchase of produce brought alongside by the natives, in canoes and boats. The factors are sometimes intelligent natives from European settlements, sometimes Liberians, often Europeans with native assistants or *trade men*. All this traffic has heretofore been free and uncontrolled, subject to no restrictions or custom-house regulations, excepting such as are imposed by the natives. It has been open to vessels of all nations alike. The Liberians, in their small sloops and schooners, have come in for a share. They have felt, however that they laboured under great disadvantage, from the fact of being obliged to purchase merchandise of their competitors, in the trade, and to sell them their produce, also. We have ever maintained, that, the low rate at which the Liberian could sail their small crafts, in comparison with the current expenses of larger vessels, was more than an equivalent for the above named objection; but this has now ceased to be a question. The Republic of Liberia claims sovereign jurisdiction over the principal part of the coast on which factories have thus been founded, and this jurisdiction has been recognized by those European powers most interested in this trade, and although the United States Government has not, as yet, followed their example, it cannot be supposed she will question the sovereignty claimed by Liberia. Over this coast-line the Rupublic has thrown her commercial laws and custom-house regulations, prohibiting all direct trade between foreigners and the natives, breaking up all factories within the limits of Liberia except those owned or managed by the citizens thereof. Liberia has therefore assumed a heavy responsibility, but a commercial responsibility, and one which must be met, too. There is a demand for foreign articles of merchandise by the native population of Liberia, which must be supplied. Foreign commercial vessels, laden with this very merchandise, demand the African produce in the hands of these natives, and the exchange must and will be made. By the laws of the Republic the Liberian merchant is the medium through which this transfer must take place. If they are competent to the task, well; the Republic becomes rich and powerful. If they are not, the laws must give way to the pressure of circumstances; illegal traffic or smuggling will of necessity ensue, and the government will have to connive at an habitual infringement of its laws, or to modify them: in other words, to *retract!* and allow foreigners to trade directly with the natives as heretofore. Either alternative it is most desirable to avoid.

But the question is, are the Liberians competent to manage and control the commerce of the Coast-line they now possess? We regret to say we think not;—to manage it to the best interests of the Colony, we know that they are not. In connection with, and as agents and factors of foreign traders, they may reap many advantages from their new position, but nothing in comparison with what they might, if supplied with the present and ever great want of Liberia, *men; intelligent, enterprising, commercial, men!*

We regret that we are unable to give any very correct estimate of the value and extent of the commerce heretofore existing between foreign vessels and the natives within the present limits of Liberia. We have no correct data from which to estimate it at this time, but we were well informed as to the number of vessels in that trade in 1840. Since which, it has no doubt nearly, if not quite, doubled, as we well know it more than trebled the ten preceding years.

We judge that in 1840, at least ten vessels obtained cargoes of Palm Oil and Camwood on what is now the Liberia Coast, independent of those which traded at the colonies. Some of these, to be sure, landed part of their cargoes at the colonies and took produce from thence, but the amount so disposed of was more than offset by the transient vessels which traded with the natives in their passage down the Coast. The average tonnage of these vessels we will set down at 200 each, making 2000 tons. They would average a cargo of merchandise of at least $10,000 each, making $100,000 in all. The value of the vessel, at the same amount, would make a capital of $200,000 invested in vessels and cargo, to say nothing of the expense of sailing them. In the above estimate we have put every thing within bounds, and it is made for a period of ten years past. At the present time, supposing the commerce of this part of the Coast to have doubled or even to have increased 50 per cent., the native trade of Liberia, independent of the demands of the settlements, requires a capital of $300,000. What amount the Liberians are able to supply for this purpose, independent of other demands, we will not undertake to say, we can judge better of the amount of their commercial marine and estimate pro rata. We believe at no time have the colonists or citizens owned more than 3000 tons of shipping, probably not that, and estimating their capital in the same proportion, say for shipping $30,000, merchandize for the trade $30,000, total 60,000, and they are then able to assume but one-fifth of the native commerce of of their own territory, independent of that of their ports of entry. Even allowing the utmost advantage of credit, they could not master more


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