PROCLAMATION!!

Whereas on the morning of the 5th inst a treacherous and cruel attack was made by a band of savages, headed by one Grando, a native of Piccanny Cess, on a settlement of this Republic, known as Fishtown, Grand Bassa Point, who sacked and burned said village, and barbarously murdered nine of its inhabitants; And whereas the said Grando, subsequently, on the morning of the 15th inst—having succeeded in inducing three or four of the Chiefs in that neighbourhood to join him with a large force—made a desperate attack on the Township of Bassa Cove, but was happily repulsed; And whereas the said Grando, and the Chiefs of Tabaccomee, New Cess, and Tradetown are still in arms, and rebelion against the authority of the Government; And whereas it is expedient—information having reached me that the said Chiefs are receiving supplies of munitions of war &c &c from vessels trading on that part of our coast—to interdict all trade and intercourse with the Chiefs and natives, or other persons, residing in the districts of Tabaccomee, New Cess, and Tradetown, that is to say, between Grand Bassa Point on the North west and Tradetown Point on the South east:—

Therefore I Joseph J. Roberts, President of the Republic of Liberia, by virtue of authority in me vested, do hereby interdict and prohibit every species of intercourse whatever with any person or persons residing between the points above mentioned. Any master, supercargo, or other person, in charge of any vessel or cargo, who, having a knowledge of this edict, shall be found violating its provisions, shall be seized and with the vessel, taken into any port of this Republic for legal adjudication.

It is further ordered that all persons having trading factories between the points above named will remove, or cause the same to be removed on or before the 15th day of December next ensuing. Any such owner or owners of factories requiring the assistance of the government to enable him or them to remove said factories, will apply to the Secretary of the Treasury who will supply the necessary aid.

Given at Monrovia this 24th,
Day of November A. D. 1851.
And of the Republic the 4th—

J. J. ROBERTS.

By the President
J. H. CHAVERS
Acting Sec. of State.

LIBERIA HERALD.

MONROVIA, DECEMBER 11th 1851.

Mr Herald - I send you the following extracts from a scandalous letter addressed, by a person in this place, to an eminent philanthropist in London, who, for many years, and more especially within the last few years, has taken great interest in the prosperity of Liberia; and who now feels deeply concerned at receiving such statements respecting the character of a people in whose welfare he has felt the liveliest interest.

As the letter contains so many falsehoods intended to wound the reputation of the whole people of this Republic I think it necessary that you should impart it to the public, that the people may know something of the pernicious statements that have gone abroad respecting them; and how shamefully they are misrepresented and traduced.

These *black* and *infamous* misrepresentations, Mr. Herald, as applied to the whole people of Liberia will doubtless provoke a word or two from you. With respect to the base and scandalous imputations respecting myself, I leave the author to the stings of his own guilty conscience. I, however, here *most solemnly, wholly and publicly deny* all he has written in regard to the Gallinas Country; and also what he has been pleased to state in reference to me, and a certain Frenchman at Grand Cape Mount:—I repeat sir, the statements are basely false, in every particular, and I stand prepared to prove that they are as *malicious* as they are false.

I am Mr. Herald,
Yours &c. &c.

J. J. ROBERTS.

Monrovia Dec. 2nd 1851.

London, July 11th, 1851.

My dear sir:

I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you for a length of time, but suppose that your engagements, like my own, are neither few nor far between. But despite the unceasing demands upon my time, I must *make* leisure to communicate to you some extracts from an important letter recently received here from Liberia.

The letter is dated "Monrovia, February 25th, 1851" and says, "Of the state of society here, I can speak only as I have found it *in Monrovia*. I hesitate not to say, that society here, in its moral and social aspects, especially, is at a low, a *very low* mark. The prevailing principle, in every dealing of man with his fellow-man here—especially with foreigners, chiefly, perhaps, with an Englishman—seems to be to get every thing, if possible, and give nothing in return.—All idea of equivalents seems to be utterly foreign from conception. * * * The version here accepted, teaches, that it is permissible to obtain the effects of others, and then pertinaciously to persist, not in *avoiding* simply, but in actually *refusing* to give an equivalent in return. Hence, when observations are passed as to the odium which the community is bringing upon itself, by countenancing individuals who are notorious for having swindled foreign traders, once and again, out of considerable quantites of goods, or large sums of money, it is unblushingly maintained in defence, that they had a right to get credit, and if captains choose to take their chance to trust any one, it is their affair alone. The English is made the chief nation in this popularized system of frauds, from exaggerated notions of the superabundant wealth of British merchants, and of the overflowing tone of the Englishmen to the negro. * * "Can you wonder that there are some of the British merchants who represent the religion of the Liberians to be hypocrisy; their morality, a pretence; and their vaunted desire to redeem and elevate the African character, a sham? You will not be surprised, I think, after what I have written, to find, in the end, your experimental cotton farm on the St. Paul's, a sadly losing concern. I may not conceal it from you, that, it is not the intention of the people of this Republic, that *you* shall ever make any thing by it. They hope indeed that cotton cultivation will succeed here, because they believe it will be lucrative to themselves; but you may depend upon it, that, as they have got the idea, that money is of no value to the gentlmen interested in that speculation, they will ever charge extravagantly high for their services in connection with it, so as to make it impossible it can ever pay you. You *may* get cotton from Liberia—you may have it constantly, abundantly, and good; but my impression is that if you ever do it will be when the Liberian is the producer, and the Englishman the purchaser merely."

"Of the condition and prospects of the government, I hardly know what to say; for I confess that I some times fear the very worst. The resources of the State are derivable solely from the imposts upon imports; and if, therefore, in consequence of the repeated severe losses to which they are exposed, the foreign traders (the only importers to any extent) are compelled to cease their commercial intercourse with this Republic, bankruptcy must inevitably follow. One would suppose then, that policy, the desire of self-preservation, a principle every where operative, would urge the authorities here to interfere with the commercial transactions of the citizens so far as to compel honesty of dealing. But such is not the case. As a case in point, I may say that there is at the present moment, a French trader at Cape Mount, landing a large proportion of cargo, with the expectation of receiving palm oil in return. President Roberts has been there pending this transaction, and although it seems that the Frenchman told him his prospect, while he very well knew that there had never been one cask of palm oil made or purchased at Cape Mount, he refrained (fearing, as I believe, to offend the two Liberian citizens who are receiving the goods,) to give the Frenchman a hint as to the possibility of his being deceived. These facts were communicated to me by a partizan of President Roberts, who, when I indignantly condemned the unkind reserve of the President, attempted to exculpate his conduct by insinuating that, perhaps, after all, the Frenchman was bargaining for some thing more abundant at Cape Mount than palm oil—meaning *slaves*. But if *this* alternative is to be accepted, what is proved by it? why simply this:—two citizens of the Republic of Liberia are openly receiving a cargo of goods, to supply slaves in return: the President is aware of the whole affair, and although lying in the "Lark" for 24 hours, he does nothing in the premises! I confess that for one, I do not believe *this* of President Roberts. I am afraid that he would connive at fraudulent transactions on the part of Liberians with lawful traders; but I believe him to be sincerely opposed to slave trading. * * * Since then, several other little things have come to light, which are far too personal for me to mention, further than that they all illustrate the observation I made, that from fear of offending a known sharper, he would, by his silence, allow a stranger to be defrauded; thus by withholding more than is meet, laying up poverty and ruin for his country—

"I am bound also to state, that, although the President went up in the "Lark" recently to Gallinas, with the avowed intention of paying for the territory alleged to have been purchased from the Chiefs of that district, not one foot of soil in all the Gallinas country has been purchased by the Liberian Government.

My informant (the partizan of the President already alluded to) declared to me that the utmost the chiefs would concede was the right of sovereignty. They distinctly disclaimed all intention of selling any part of the country."

Much more might be extracted from the letter, but have I not the time. Yet you have the pith of it.

Yours truly

We insert the above extracts from a letter sent to England, dated at Liberia, Feby. 1851, that Liberians may have another evidence of the character, candor and kind feelings of most of the Englishmen, who come among us for the purpose of trade, or who come to *reside* here for any other purpose; and to whom, knowing their querulous, and meddlesome disposition, we endeavour always, to avoid giving any just cause of offense. But even here, we are, not unlikely performing an unnecessary service. For whilst there has been no abatement in the feelings of high respect and veneration, with which we regard the British people as a nation, we have been too long upon the coast, and our intercourse has been too extensive among the visitors to it, not to have undergone, with others besides Liberians, a material modification in our estimate of the character of some of the individuals who compose that nation; so that whilst we still admire and venerate the British government and people generally, for their magnanimity, generosity and high toned philanthropy, we have yet to lament that a people so noble and so generous, should be so wretchedly caricatured & misrepresented by the *de*-humanised specimens that come to this coast, for whom the utmost liberality and charity can entertain no feelings but pity and contempt. But this is the "land of dead Ned" and few can be found to come here, who can find bread and water elsewhere. And if we must be abused, we leave it to others not concerned, to say, whether we should regard it a matter of consolation or regret, that we are abused by those, whose good opinion, where they are known, would render us suspicious, or who owe their bread and butter, and all their personal consequence to the opportunity afforded by our establishment here.

It may be proper to remark that the writer of the odious and abusive extracts, appears from his style, to be superior to that class of visitors and residents, to which we shall have occasion more particularly to refer. We know of but *one* Englishman, who has resided long enough in our midst to ascertain, by his own observation, any thing correctly of the charges alledged; nor had this solitary one, at the date of the letter, been here sufficiently long to obtain the necessary information by actual personal inspection, to justify him in venturing upon the allegation of so grave charges, against a people, every where else persecuted and trodden down, and who, here, in this last place of refort left to them, are struggling for an existence. But as the intercourse of that *solitary* Englishman up to the date of the letter, had, as since it has, been confined to these Captains and traders, his extracts are entitled to no more regard than the old stereotyped villifications. If the writer has stated truth, let him come out manfully, & vindicate and establish what he has said. We challenge investigation. We might very properly record an emphatic negative against every one, or nearly every one of the writer's allegations, and throw him upon the proof of them and rest there without uttering another word: the ordinary rules of society and also of judicial inquiry could demand no more. But in deference to the opinion of our friends abroad, we submit the following remarks.

The state of society in Liberia, or rather Monrovia, may, as the writer remarks—"be at a low,—very low mark" The most of our days have been spent in Liberia; we cannot, therefore, assigh the exact height of the state of society in other places, so as to institute a comparison. Nor would it be wholly equitable to demand, that society here in Monrovia shall be in all respects, what society is, in polished Europe and America. We shall stand acquitted if not vindicated, if on inquiry and examination, society here in its moral and religious aspects, and in its redeeming bearing upon the natives, should compare favorably with society in the settlements, of other nations along the coast. Does the writer know any thing of the state of society in the settlements upon the *gold coast?* Will he point out the features of difference in society there, and society here? There are very striking differences, and if necessary, they can be pointed out. We ask these questions, not for the mere purpose of recrimination, but to provoke investigation, and by the result of that investigation, to make it manifest, that the charges, if true, are more strictly applicable to others than to us, and that being urged against us alone, they have their foundation in a fiendish malice. Are there no swindlers, insolvent debtors, drunkards, hypocrites, and pretenders in London, or Liverpool or Bristol, or Gambia, or Sierra Leone, or Cape Coast. We might infer an affirmative response, as to some of these places at least, if Mr. Redman testified truly, when on oath, he swore, there is not an honest man in Sierra Leone; or if Capt——, an Englishman, spake truth, when he denounced all the merchants there as cheats and swindlers.

We have been led to suppose there are some such in these European cities at least; especially as all the English papers contain reports of trials and convictions, and long lists of insolvencies—and it is yet in our recollection, how, that not long since, the flourishing colony at the Cape of Good Hope, was in an attitude of defiance of the home government, for an attempt to make it a penal colony, & to flood it with criminals from the European portion of the empire. Has the writer heard of a Boolum Shore, of Isles de Loss, of numerous factories up the Port Logo, and Rokell branches of Sierra Leone River—of a Nunez and a Pongas—of the causes which keep the very large portions of their population there; has he learned whether they reside there from choice, or merely to avoid too close familiarity with a certain official called Bailiff? If he is ignorant of these facts, we would advise him to enquire into them, that he may commence the work of reformation at home; and carry it on to completion, ere he utters his righteous malediction upon people abroad. And should he ascertain these facts to be true—namely, that there are in the places we have named, characters of the stamp of those, which in Liberia have roused his indignation, but should yet decline to enter actively and practically upon the work of reformation still if alongside of his denunciation of us, he will put down his condemnation of them, we will award to him the character of a candid, consistent and impartial censor. Now we feel assured that the writer was perfectly acquainted with the truth of all we have openly stated, as also of that of all at which we have hinted.

Why then is he so loud and vehement in abuse of these crimes here, and so perfectly dumb in respect of them elsewhere? Why is bankruptcy and insolvency on the part of Liberia, so loudly talked of by Englishmen—when these same Englishmen pass by the same conduct and condition in their own colonies, in perfect silence? The reason is obvious to us. Change the color of our skin, and what now are crimes of deepest dye, will fade into venial blemishes—will be reported as Englishmens' crimes are reported by Englishmen, in inaudible whispers, except to the ear of a compatriot. But why do these persecutors of Liberia deal in vague and barren generalities—why not come out plainly, and state the sum due the English, by these villianous Liberians? The fact is, Liberians owe English merchants much less than they owe others, and for these reasons; the English confine their trade mostly to the coast, and not to ports of entry; and they have much smaller invoices than the vessels of any other nation, seldom more than will load them with Palm Oil, at native prices. We have been at some pains to ascertain, and there is reason to believe there are not five thousand pounds due by all Liberia, to British merchants: in Monrovia not five hundred. Perhaps the writer of the extracts will inquire and inform us.

But even this aspect of the subject will be softened by a little attention to the character of the English traders who come here; and to the means which they some times adopt in the prosecution of their trade. We will not place ourself in the unenviable position of the writer of the *extracts*—namely that of a wholesale calumniater, by uttering a sweeping condemnation of a whole people: which perhaps we might do with far more justice and truth, of the class we have alluded to, than he has done of us: yet we regret to be compelled to say, that, with few exceptions, the English traders who come here, are from the lowest dregs of English society—are men profoundly ignorant in every thing, excepting only such as relate to the tar-bucket—quadrant and the low species of barter trade, &c; which obtain on this coast—are hostile to every measure of their own government, that has in it the least tincture of liberality or justice—can see no reason nor utility of cruisers on the coast, except to protect them in just such pursuits as they may think proper to follow, and being raised suddenly to a command and responsibility, so much above any thing they ever dreamed of, they foolishly fancy that every one the coast must be ready to pay their persons and their opinions the humbiest deference. They are impertinent, intrusive and curious about matters with

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

XII. Newspapers
B. Liberia Herald

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1851

NEW SERIES NO 2