guidance of the people of that County at the then ensuing election.

I exceedingly regret gentlemen, that the proper Constitutional course, recommended in my Message to the Legislature in April 1857, failed by one vote in the lower house of being adopted at that session by the necessary two third vote. Had the Legislature then provided for so amending the constitution as to have legalized the three representatives for that County for the lower house, the matter would have been set at rest long ago, and much unpleasant, as well as unprofitable discussion, misrepresentation and political agitation would have been obviated. I am decidedly of opinion, that the Legislature ought to either promptly take the Constitutional course for granting that County the three representatives—which they deserve and ought to have had long ago—if in earnest about the matter, or plainly tell them that they are opposed to their having them, and cease further action. The subject should be regarded of too much vital importance to be trifled with. It has been agitated already too unnecessarily long, and some of the people of that county though not as yet able to understand where the blame really lies, are beginning to think seriously that they are being trifled with; and as it is not known to what this matter may lead through bad advice and political intrigue, sound patriotic discretion dictates, that the subject should be promptly, fairly and honorably disposed off.

The year has been remarkable for the arrival of intelligent and enterprising persons of color from the United States, and for the indications of desire, so general on the part of the free colored people of North America to emigrate to Africa, for the purpose of changing their condition, and of assisting to build up in this their father-land a respectable civilized colored nationality.

Among the most eminent of these, is Dr. M. R. Delany, who arrived here about the middle of July, *enroute* for Yoruba, or the great Niger Valley, as one of a corps of gentlemen, designated as the "Niger Valley exploring company," with a view of selecting a suitable locality for the formation of a settlement or colony, by Emigration of persons of color from the U. S. and the Canadas.

The Doctor made a very favorable impression during his stay of two or more months in Liberia. He is regarded as a gentleman admirably adapted, mentally and physically, for the prosecution of so highly interesting a mission.

My having been necessitated to leave on a visit to the leeward in

two days after his arrival, and not having returned before he had left this City for Yoruba, I was prevented from holding such interviews, and having such consultation with him, as were mutually desired.

No Liberian of intelligence and patriotism, can feel indifferent as to the object, and what will be the result of his mission. Whatever may have been, and is still the prejudice of the free people of color of the United States and the Canadas, against the American Colonization Society; however strongly they may have impugned the motives and principles of that Society, to which Liberians feel so very grateful, the feeling seems now to be generally obtaining among them, that as decendants of Africa, we are one people and have a common destiny. And that the feeling is cordially reciprocated by a vast majority of Liberians, is fully demonstrated by the history of Liberia.

If Dr. Delany and many more of the free colored people of North America should prefer, and decide upon settling in that section of our fatherland as an assylum from oppression, and from the unreasonable withering prejudice of what is styled the dominant race, as well as for the purpose of introducing and inculcating the principles of civilization and christianity into the very heart of Africa, we should bid them *God Speed.*

Should they even prefer and conclude to operate entirely independently of us—I doubt however that this is their policy—I would have no fears that their enterprise would detract very materially from the interest of Liberia. I have never doubted, that the future will prove the assertion correct, that a majority of the free colored people of North America will emigrate to Liberia and make it their cherished home, especially as our interior offers to them every advantage that (if not more than, Yoruba can possibly afford.

By communications under date of May and July of this year, received from Dr. Pinney Cor. Sec. N. Y. S. Col. Society, I was informed that that Society had contracted with the enterprising firm of Johnson, Turpin and Dunbar to have constructed for them a small steamer of about Seventy two tons burthen, which they contemplate employing upon our coast mainly as a packet.

The Society was the more induced to take interest in the enterprise, because of the great facilities it will afford to the government and people of Liberia, particularly since the British Mail Packets now touch at Palmas instead of at this port. I have learned since that date, that she was launched on the 13 Sept. and it was contemplated to have her ready for sea by the first of November.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

XIII. Colonization Pamphlets

8. Message of the President of Liberia to the Legislature... Monrovia, 1859