"*Saturday, April 7th.*—This day Tamba and Davis returned; it appears they have been labouring to convince the head-men, that we have not come with any hostile intention.

"*Sunday, April 8th.*—Brothers Andrus and Davis went to old King John's town, for the purpose of holding a meeting. Returned in the evening, and said that they had seen King Ben, and that he would meet us in Jumbo Town, in palaver, the next morning.

"They saw the body of King John, who had been dead four moons, yet not buried; he was laid in state in a palaver-house, dressed in a fine robe, with a pair of new English boots on the feet: a brisk fire is kept burning in the room. His grave is dug, which is eight feet square, for the purpose of admitting the body and the form upon which it lies, together with bullocks, goats, sheep, tobacco and pipes, as sacrifices! O Lord, when shall these superstitions cease!

"*Monday, April 9th.*—This morning the sea very rough. At 11 o'clock we went on shore with a present to the king, as it is impossible to get a palaver with the authorities of the country, without a respectable present 'to pay service' to the king, his princes, and head-men. We met his majesty, King Jack Ben, of Grand Bassa, together with several of his head-men in Jumbo Town, in the palaver-house, with a large concourse of people. After shaking hands with them, we laid down our presents, which consisted of one gun, some powder, tobacco, pipes, beads, &c. His majesty said in broken English, 'me tanke you,' and caused the articles to be removed, and placed under the care of a sentinel, so that his people might not get them before he had divided them equally, as is their custom. This division takes place, that all may 'taste of the good things,' and a contract is made: all who have partaken of the present, are pledged to fulfil on their part.

"The king asked us what we wanted, although he could not have been ignorant of our wishes. We stated our object to be, 'to get land for the black people in America, to come and sit down upon [to occupy]. We told him that the people were very many, and required much territory; that a few white men only would come along, to assist and take care of them; that we should make a town where ships would come and trade with cloth, and guns, and beads, and knives, and tobacco, and pipes; and take in return their ivory, and palm oil, and rice,

and every other thing growing in the fields; that they would not then need to sell any more people, but might learn to cultivate the ground, and make other things to sell for whatever they wanted.'

"We, at last, succeeded in making a favourable impression on their minds; and convincing them that we had no unfriendly motive in visiting Bassa. The palaver was adjourned until the next day. It indeed requires much patience to deal with these children of the forest. We returned on board weary and faint: after partaking of some refreshment, and having implored the divine blessing of Him who has promised to give to his Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, we retired to rest.

"*Tuesday, April 10th.*—This day is expected to be a day of importance, as the palaver will be much larger, and a certain condition will be discussed, which they have urged from the beginning; therefore, we look earnestly for Divine assistance. A small present will be necessary, as there will be more head-men than at any former palaver. At 10 o'clock we were convened. The present was placed before the king, and the usual ceremonies were performed. The king rose up and spoke to the case in the Bassa language, with great energy; his naked arm presented to view from within his robes, which were made of the country manufactured cloth, something in the form of clerical robes. After him, a Krooman by the name of Brown, rose and spoke with much spirit; his speech was interpreted by Tamba; the substance of it was, that we were emissaries from some slave-ship in the neighbourhood, and that we were not friends to them; on which the king and his council withdrew to the shade of a large silk cotton tree, in conclave, for the space of twenty or thirty minutes. They then returned and proceeded in discussing the condition, strenuously urged from the beginning by the king, as the basis on which alone he could accede to our wishes in relation to the lands. We had stated, that we came not with any hostile intentions, and that the character of the settlement was to be unwarlike and agricultural. They demanded of us a positive stipulation, to make *book*, as they term it, that the settlers and agents should act in consistency with this character, and in no way assist the armed ships sent to the coast to suppress the slave trade, by communicating to them any information that might prove injurious to

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XIV. Books
3.
A History of Colonization on the West Coast of Africa
by Archibald Alexander, Philadelphia, 1846