him; no glorious pomp and circumstance were there to throw a brightness and a beauty even upon the features and terrors of death. He stood strong in duty, covered by the shield of faith. His frame shaken by disease; the partner of his life struck down by his side; amid the groans of the afflicted and in the shadow of hope's dim eclipse, he planned and executed, with the ability of the bravest and most experienced general, measures which saved the settlement, and secured for liberty and Christianity, a perpetual home and heritage in Africa. Raised up and guided by an Almighty, though invisible hand, to build a city of righteousness on that shore of oppression, before which the makers of idols should be confounded, and those in chains come over* to fall down in worship, and exclaim as they beheld her light, "surely God is in thee," no weapon formed against him could prosper, no wasting destruction by day, or pestilence walking in darkness, had power to defeat the work."†

CHAPTER XIII.

THE COLONY UNDER MR. ASHMUN.

The Prince Regent, which had arrived so opportunely at the Cape, and to whose captain, officers, and crew, the colonists were so much indebted for their aid and protection, when she departed from the Cape, left midshipman Gordon, as we have seen, and eleven seamen, as a kind of guard for the colonists, and to see that the agreement into which the chiefs had entered was fulfilled. But these generous Englishmen had scarcely set foot on the African shore, to assist the feeble colony, when they were swept away by the fell malaria of this climate, so unfriendly to the constitution of white men.

The funeral of midshipman Gordon was attended by nearly all the colonists, and by the officers of several vessels who happened to be in port. Mr. Ashmun announced the melancholy event to Lieutenant Rotheray of the British navy, in a letter of

* Isaiah xlv. 14, 16. † Gurley's Life of Ashmun.

cordial gratitude for the services secured, and tender sympathy for the loss of so promising a young man.

Important services were also rendered to the infant colony by the officers and crew of a Colombian armed schooner, which arrived on the 4th of December, 1822, and remained four weeks at the colony. Her mechanics assisted in putting the settlement into a better state of defence.

Mr. Ashmun's health continued to be poor; it was evidently injured by excessive exertion; so that it was not until February that he was again capable of active service. He felt that much was requisite to be done before the rainy season. Besides the public store, there was but one shingled roof in the settlement. Many of the cabins were without floors, covered with thatch, and afforded a very imperfect shelter. The war had occupied the attention of all the colonists for several months, and deranged all their habits of industry and economy. Provisions began also to run low, and every prospect was gloomy rather than cheering. But the stout-hearted agent was not easily discouraged: as he stood firm in the midst of his little band, when assailed by fifty times the number of his own men, and came off victorious, so now, when disease and famine threatened the little lonely colony, he still put his trust in God. In a letter to the Board he says:—"Our last barrel of salted provisions, is to be opened on next Saturday. But we do not complain. God has not, and will not fail to be our Provider. I have only to regret that the war has put back our improvements nearly a whole year." And again, to the secretary of the society, he says: "Divine Providence has, since my last, been gradually dispersing the clouds which then hung over us. We have opened a trade with a wealthy tribe in the interior for bullocks. They cost fifteen *bars* each.* Our people begin to breathe freely. We still keep up a strict watch at night, but are able with safety to reduce it, so as to make it very little burdensome to the colonists. Our wounded, though unable to labour, are once more moving about with their crutches, and their slings, and we have just begun to build and repair the houses in which ourselves, and the fresh emigrants, (if any arrive,) are to spend the rains. Finally, the progress of the colony is now forwards, and not as it has been for months past, retrograde. My health is nearly restored. I stand a monument of God's

* About eight dollars.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

XIV. Books

3.

A History of Colonization on the West Coast of Africa
by Archibald Alexander, Philadelphia, 1846