pended essentially on their submission to rightful authority, and obedience to the laws;—and that hitherto, their greatest sufferings had resulted from disrespect to the agents, and disobedience to the orders of the society. He proceeded then in the most pungent and impressive style to represent to them the disorderly course which they had pursued; and especially, held up in its naked deformity, the crime of those twelve, who had openly rebelled, had threatened his life, and had violently and unrighteously seized a part of the public stores. He, moreover, set fully and clearly before them the present deplorable condition of the colony, and the speedy ruin which must inevitably come upon them, if they did not return to a course of industry and obedience. He assured them, that they would not be upheld either by the Colonization Society, or the government of the United States, in their present course of opposition to the agent. In the conclusion, he called upon every well-disposed man to give him a pledge of his submission to lawful authority; and promised for himself, that while he would not consent to possess the mere shadow of authority, he was ready to exert himself to the utmost, to avert the impending calamity. Most of the colonists tacitly assented to the truth and justice of this address; and Mr. Ashmun proceeded to adopt every measure in his power to relieve and preserve the colony. But they afforded him no vigorous support; and he had already communicated to the Board his opinion, "that the evil was incurable by any of the remedies which fell within their existing provisions."

Since the departure of Dr. Ayres, he had heard nothing from the Board of Managers. He had the pain, however, of seeing that his conduct had been held up for censure in one of the public journals of the United States.

The prospects were such, that Mr. Ashmun began to meditate a withdrawal from his present painful situation, where for his services he received calumny instead of remuneration. He therefore, on the 15th of March, addressed a letter to the Board, desiring to be released from any further duties to the colony, which might require his residence in Africa. His letter to the Board, on this occasion, is the effusion of a generous and benevolent mind, deeply sensible that he had not received full justice at their hands; but expressing a confidence in the equity

of their decision, when they should be fully informed of all the existing circumstances in which he was obliged to act.

Being fully persuaded that government, without an armed force, had become impossible, he now determined on a visit to the Cape de Verd Islands, in the hope that a sea voyage might be serviceable to his health; and being unwilling longer to hold an office, the duties of which he had not the power to enforce. Whether he should ever return was in his own mind doubtful; but he took the best measures he could to establish a provisional government during the absence of all the agents. He therefore appointed Elijah Johnson to take charge of the property and books of the colony, with particular instructions as to his duties, until a properly authorized agent should arrive from the United States.

In his fatiguing exertions to prepare for his departure, Mr. Ashmun ruptured an artery in the mouth, which had been injured in a bungling attempt to draw a decayed tooth, and a profuse bleeding commenced which could not be stopped. Advantage was taken of his helpless state by some unprincipled persons in the colony, to rob him of a considerable part of the little stores which he had provided for the voyage, and other property, to the value of a hundred and seventy-five dollars. Before leaving the Cape he left a paper, to be delivered to his successor in the agency; of which, as being characteristic of the man, an extract will be inserted.

"J. Ashmun has cheerfully spent on this Cape nearly two of the best years of his life. He is now about to leave it, probably for ever. He has tried to do his duty—detected himself in occasional errors; and without asking or expecting any recompense from his fellow-men, wishes only to avoid the hard destiny of his predecessors in the agency—the curses and false accusations of those whom it has been his constant aim to serve. His predecessors have been accused of transmitting false accounts of the colony to the Board. J. Ashmun here leaves it on record, that if any man, after his absence, brings this accusation against himself, that man is a slanderer and a liar."

In the same style, the paper goes on to speak of the slanders against former agents for embezzling public property, revelling on the society's bounty, and pinching the people to furnish their own wardrobe and table luxuriously. All such accusations against himself he denounces as false and slanderous; and men-

Maryland Historical Society

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XIV. Books

3.

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