by a true statement of our circumstances, to endeavour to correct them.

"The first consideration which caused our voluntary removal to this country, and the object, which we still egard with the deepest concern, is liberty—liberty, in the sober, simple, but complete sense of the word: not a licentious liberty, nor a liberty without government, or which should place us without the restraint of salutary laws—but that liberty of speech, action, and conscience, which distinguishes the free enfranchised citizens of a free State. We did not enjoy that freedom in our native country; and, from causes which, as respects ourselves, we shall soon forget for ever, we were certain it was not there attainable for ourselves or our children. This, then, being the first object of our pursuit in coming to Africa, is probably the first object on which you will ask for information. And we must truly declare to you, that our expectations and hopes, in this respect, have been realized. Our constitution secures to us, so far as our condition allows, "all the rights and privileges enjoyed by the citizens of the United States;" and these rights and privileges are ours. We are proprietors of the soil we live on, and possess the rights of freeholders. Our suffrages, and, what is of more importance, our sentiments and our opinions have their due weight in the government we live under. Our laws are altogether our own: they grow out of our circumstances; are framed for our exclusive benefit; and administered either by officers of our own appointment, or such as possess our confidence. We have a judiciary, chosen from among ourselves; we serve as jurors in the trial of others; and are liable to be tried only by juries of our fellow-citizens, ourselves. We have all that is meant by *Liberty of Conscience.* The time and mode of worshipping God, as prescribed to us in his word, and dictated by our conscience, we are not only free to follow, but are protected in following.

"Forming a community of our own, in the land of our forefathers; having the commerce, and soil, and resources, of the country at our disposal; we know nothing of that debasing inferiority with which our very colour stamped us in America: there is nothing here to create the feeling on our part—nothing to cherish the feeling of superiority in the minds of foreigners who visit us. It is this moral emancipation—this liberation of

the mind from worse than iron fetters—that repays us ten thousand times over, for all that it has cost us, and makes us grateful to God and our American patrons for the happy change which has taken place in our situation. We are not so self-complacent as to rest satisfied with our improvement, either as regards our minds or our circumstances. We do not expect to remain stationary. Far from it. But we certainly feel ourselves, for the first time, in a state to improve either to any purpose. The burthen is gone from our shoulders: we now breathe and move freely; and know not (in surveying your present state) for which to pity you most—the empty name of liberty, which you endeavour to content yourselves with, in a country that is not yours, or the delusion which makes you hope for ampler privileges in that country hereafter. Tell us, which is the white man, who, with a prudent regard to his own character, can associate with one of you, on terms of equality? Ask *us*, which is the white man who would decline such association with one of our number, whose intellectual and moral qualities are not an objection? To both these questions we unhesitatingly make the same answer: There is no such white man.

"We solicit none of you to emigrate to this country: for we know not who among you prefers rational independence, and the honest respect of his fellow-men, to that mental sloth and careless poverty which you already possess, and your children will inherit after you, in America. But if your views and aspirations rise a degree higher—if your minds are not as servile as your present condition—we can decide the question at once; and with confidence say, that you will bless the day, and your children after you, when you determined to become citizens of Liberia.

"But we do not hold this language on the blessings of liberty for the purpose of consoling ourselves for the sacrifice of health, or the suffering of want, in consequence of our removal to Africa. We enjoy health after a few months' residence in the country, as uniformly, and in as perfect a degree, as we possessed that blessing in our native country. And a distressing scarcity of provisions, or any of the comforts of life, has for the last two years been entirely unknown, even to the poorest persons in this community. On these points there are, and have been, much misconception and some malicious misrepresentation in the United States.

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