amount of human beings. Here they were ironed and fastened in parallel rows, and crowded together so closely, in loathsome holds, as not to have room for action or for breathing wholesome air. The great aim was, to transport the largest possible number, at the least possible charge, from their native land to the markets for which they were destined. The greediness of cupidity was frequently disappointed and punished in its purposes, by the loss of moieties of whole cargoes of the subjects of this infamous commerce, from want and suffering and disease, on the voyage. How much happier were they who thus expired, than their miserable survivors!

"These African slaves were brought to the continent of America, and the islands adjacent to it, and formed the parent stock of the race now amongst us. They were brought to the colonies, now constituting the United States, under the sanction and by the authority of British laws, which, at an early period of our colonial existence, admitted and tolerated the trade. It is due to our colonial ancestors to say, that they frequently and earnestly, but unsuccessfully, remonstrated to the British Crown against the continuance of the practice. The introduction of slavery into this country is not, therefore, chargeable to them, but to a government in which they had no voice, and over which they had no control. It is equally due to our parent State to advert to the honourable fact, that, in the midst of the Revolutionary war, when contending for her own independence and liberty, she evinced the sincerity of the spirit in which those remonstrances had been addressed to the British throne, by denouncing under the severest penalties, the further prosecution of the slave trade, within her jurisdiction. And I add, with great satisfaction, that the Congress of the United States passed an act abolishing the trade, as early as by their constitution it was authorized to do. On the second day of March, 1807, the act was passed, for which it was my happy lot to vote, the first section of which enacts, 'That from and after the first day of January, 1808, it shall not be lawful to import or bring into the United States, or the territories thereof, from any foreign kingdom, place, or country, any negro, mulatto, or person of colour, with intent to hold, sell, or dispose of such negro, mulatto, or person of colour, as a slave, or to be held to service or labour.' Thus terminated, we may hope for ever, in the United States, a disgraceful traffic, which drew after it a train of enormities

surpassing in magnitude, darkness, and duration, any that ever sprang from any trade pushed by the enterprise or cupidity of man.

"The United States, as a nation, are not responsible for the original introduction, or the subsequent continuance of the slave trade. Whenever, as has often happened, their character has been assailed in foreign countries, and by foreign writers, on account of the institution of slavery among us, the justness of that vindication has been admitted by the candid, which transfers to a foreign government the origin of the evil. Nor are the United States, as a sovereign power, responsible for the continuance of slavery within their limits, posterior to the establishment of their Independence; because by neither the articles of confederation, nor by the present constitution, had they power to put an end to it by the adoption of any system of emancipation. But from that epoch, the responsibility of the several States in which slavery was tolerated commenced, and on them devolved the momentous duty of considering whether the evil of African slavery is incurable, or admits of a safe and practical remedy. In performing it, they ought to reflect, that if when a given remedy is presented to their acceptance, instead of a due examination and deliberate consideration of it, they promptly reject it, and manifest an impatience whenever a suggestion is made of any plan to remove the evil, they will expose themselves to the reproach of yielding to the illusions of self-interest, and of insincerity in the professions which they so often make of a desire to get rid of slavery. It is a great misfortune, growing out of the actual condition of the several States, some being exempt, and others liable to this evil, that they are too prone to misinterpret the views and wishes of each other in respect to it. The North and the South and the West, when they understand each other well, must be each convinced, that no other desire is entertained towards the others by any one of them, than for their welfare and prosperity. If the question were submitted, whether there should be either immediate or gradual emancipation of all the slaves in the United States, without their removal or colonization, painful as it is to express the opinion, I have no doubt that it would be unwise to emancipate them. For I believe, that the aggregate of the evils which would be engendered in society, upon the supposition of such general emancipation, and of the liberated slaves remaining promiscuously

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