the voluntary contributions of benevolent and charitable individuals. The auxiliary society for the state of Kentucky, which I now address, was organized at the commencement of the present year.

"The American Colonization Society, so constituted, with such objects and such means, shortly after its formation, went into operation. It transacts its business at home, principally through a board of managers, which for the sake of convenience is fixed in the metropolis of the Union, and in Africa, through an agent abiding there, and acting under instructions received from the Board. The society has an annual session in the city of Washington, which is attended by its members, and by representatives from such of the auxiliary institutions, as can conveniently depute them, at which sessions the Board of Managers makes a report of the general condition of the affairs of the society, during the previous year.

"It would be an inexcusable trespass upon your time, to enter into a minute narrative of all the transactions of the society, from its commencement up to this time. Those who choose to examine them particularly, will find them recorded in the several reports of the Board of Managers, which from time to time have been published under its direction and authority. It will suffice at present to say, that one of the earliest acts of the society, was to despatch a competent agent to Africa, to explore its coasts and the countries bordering upon them, and to select a suitable spot for the establishment of the contemplated colony. The society was eminently fortunate in the choice of its agent, as it has been generally in those whom it subsequently engaged in its service. A selection was finally made of a proper district of country, a purchase was effected of it from the native authorities, to which additions have been made, as the growing wants of the colony, actual or anticipated, required. The country so acquired, upon terms as moderate as those on which the Government of the Union extinguishes the Indian title to soil within the United States, embraces large tracts of fertile land, capable of yielding all the rich and varied products of the tropics, possesses great commercial advantages, with an extent of sea-coast, from one hundred and fifty to two hundred miles, and enjoys a salubrious climate, well adapted to the negro constitution, and not so fatal to that of the whites, as many thickly peopled parts of the United States.

"Within that district of country, the society founded its colony, under the denomination of Liberia, established towns, laid off plantations for the colonists, and erected military works for their defence. Annually, and as often as the pecuniary circumstances of the society would admit, vessels from the ports of the United States, have been sent to Liberia, laden with emigrants and with utensils, provisions and other objects, for their comfort. No difficulty has been experienced in obtaining as many colonists as the means of the society were competent to transport. They have been found, indeed, altogether inadequate to accommodate all who were willing and anxious to go. The rate of expense of transportation and subsistence during the voyage, per head, was greater in the earlier voyages. It was subsequently reduced to about twenty dollars, and is believed to be susceptible of considerable further reduction. The number of colonists of both sexes, amounts now to about fifteen hundred.

"The colony, in the first periods of its existence, had some collisions with the native tribes, which rose to such a height as to break out in open war, about four or five years ago. The war was conducted by the late gallant Mr. Ashmun, with singular good judgment and fortune, and was speedily brought to a successful close. It had the effect to impress upon the natives, a high idea of the skill, bravery, and power of the colonists, and having since become better acquainted with them, perceived the advantages of the colony, and gradually acquired a taste for its commerce and arts, no further misunderstanding with them is apprehended, and the colony is daily acquiring a salutary influence over them.

"The colony has a government adequate to the protection of the rights of persons and property, and to the preservation of order. The agent of the society combines the functions of governor, commander-in-chief, and highest judicial officer. The colonists share in the government, and elect various officers necessary to the administration. They appoint annually boards or committees of public works, of agriculture and of health, which are charged with the superintendence of those important interests. It has established schools for the instruction of youth, and erected houses of public worship, in which divine service is regularly performed. And, it has a public library of twelve

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