the Spanish factories; the agents of which having bought some of our kidnapped Africans, and refusing to give them up, the colonists, not only took their own people, but the slaves they had collected. These four hundred, who are useful agriculturists, are happily situated, and very contented. The settlements, of which I have spoken, contain an aggregate of two thousand souls, and are in a flourishing condition. * * *

"The means the colony has for defence, at present, consists of twenty pieces of ordnance, and muskets for one thousand men, which may be increased from private stores if wanted.

"There is much hospitality in Monrovia, and among the inhabitants a greater proportion of moral and religious characters, than in your city.

"It has been objected, that the climate is very unhealthy—this is true, as it respects the whites, but erroneous as respects the coloured people. Those from the middle and northern States, have to undergo what is called a seasoning—that is, they generally take the fever the first month of their residence, but it has rarely proved fatal since accommodations have been prepared for their reception: those from Georgia and the Carolinas and the southern parts of Virginia, either escape the fever altogether, or have it very slightly. Deaths occur there, indeed as in other places, but Doctor Mechlin, the agent, assured me that the bills of mortality would show a less proportion of deaths, than those of Baltimore, Philadelphia, or New York.

"I have no hesitation in saying, that I believe Liberia will, in time, become a great nation, and be the means, eventually, of civilizing a great part of Africa, and I should hope the whole of that benighted country."

The Rev. George M. Erskine, a Presbyterian preacher, of uncommon good sense, brought up in Tennessee, went out with his family, whose freedom he had obtained through the liberality of the Christian public. This man took up his residence at Caldwell, and after a month's residence, wrote back a letter which is remarkable for its sober, discriminating remarks. His mind was not of a sanguine temperament; and after surveying the state of the colony, he entertained serious apprehensions, that the colony would be injured by sending out too great a proportion of ignorant, uneducated persons. Of the forty-eight emigrants, who went out with him, he observes, that only seventeen could read, and he expresses strong fears, that instead of

civilizing the natives, the colonists would gradually approximate to their manners. He laments the low state of education in the colony; he therefore most earnestly requests, that enlightened teachers might be sent to Africa.

But he rejoiced, that he had arrived at the field of his missionary labours. "I am," says he, "thankful to the great Parent of heaven, that he has continued to me the same feelings that I had in your country; that is, that I may preach the gospel extensively in Africa. He has brought me into the harvest field, which is indeed white for labour. And as he has brought me here, I hope he will spare my life, and engage my heart and hands in that glorious work: but I submit myself into his hands, to do as to Him seemeth good."

Mr. Erskine's fond anticipations of usefulness in Africa, were, however, disappointed. His wife and daughter first, and then he himself sickened and died, with the fever of the climate. This was a severe shock to the colony, and especially to the Presbyterians.

CHAPTER XX.

AFRICAN EDUCATION—EVENTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

WHATEVER may be said in favour of African colonization, it cannot be denied, that the colony has been carried on to its present state of advancement, with a great sacrifice of valuable men;—men as much distinguished for disinterested benevolence and heroic courage, as any men of their age. Some of them, also, were endowed with genius of a high order, and had minds cultivated by various learning. Pure and fervent piety, also, has been a striking characteristic of most of those self-sacrificing men, who have fallen a prey to the African fever.

In the preceding chapter it was mentioned that Dr. Anderson had gone out to fill the office of colonial physician, left vacant by the advancement of Dr. Mechlin to be colonial agent. Dr. Mechlin, on account of his health, having returned in the same vessel which carried Dr. Anderson out,

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