says one of the most enlightened statesmen of our country, "in fifteen or twenty years, the commerce of Liberia will employ a greater amount of American tonnage, than is now employed in the trade carried on with all the northern powers of Europe, to whom we send ministers and agents, and of whose favour and proceedings we are so jealous on account of that trade." "The Americans," says the Westminster Review, "are successfully planting free negroes on the coast of Africa; a greater event probably in its consequences than any that has occurred since Columbus set sail for the new world."

The health of Governor Buchanan suffered severely for several months after his arrival at the colony; but this did not prevent him from entering immediately upon the arduous and complicated duties of his office. The day after his inauguration he commenced the tour of the colonies, and set himself at once to correcting whatever defects were apparent in the colonial system, and placed its administration upon such a footing, that from this time, if never before since the days of Ashmun, we perceive a dignity and order connected therewith which constrains us to yield it that respect and homage which it is natural for us to yield to every regular government. No one can read the despatches, or watch the measures of Governor Buchanan, without feeling at once that he beholds the evidences of a truly great and remarkable character. Almost his first public act was the seizure of a vessel under American colours that had long been hovering on the coast under circumstances which clearly evinced that she was a slaver, and sending her home for trial. This was a bold step, and one exposing himself to much personal risk; "but," says he in explaining this transaction to the General Agent at home, "could you see, my dear sir, as I see, the multiplied miseries that this devilish traffic is daily inflicting upon this unhappy country, you would, like me, forget every pecuniary consideration in your desire to destroy it. At this moment the whole country along the northern bank of the St. Paul's river is involved in bloody wars. Whole districts are laid waste; towns are burned. The old and the young who are unfit for the market, are butchered, and hundreds and thousands are driven in chains to the coast, or compelled to fly the country. Within the past month, a whole tribe, including several kings, have fled their country and come to us for protection. But I cannot tell you the ten-

thousandth part of the evil. Fire, famine, blood, and chains, are the necessary elements of the slave trade, and every conceivable combination of these elements are daily produced in this wretched land. O, my country! how enormous is thy guilt in this matter—how deep thy debt to poor Africa!"

By the same promptness and decision was Governor Buchanan actuated in reference to another measure connected with the same subject, and involving a question equally dubious and equally hazardous, at which ordinary minds would have faltered. We will narrate the circumstances of this occurrence in his own words.

"Little Bassa, as you are aware, has been for years the theatre of considerable business, carried on both by the colonists and foreigners, and the subject of colonial jurisdiction over the country has been the theme of much discussion here and in America. But, though the right of soil claimed by the government here last year was questioned by the Board, (and, in my opinion, justly,) I believe they have never forbid the right of jurisdiction, which has been clearly acknowledged as belonging to the colony in several treaties with the native princes and headmen. On my arrival here in April last, I assumed the right of our jurisdiction over the territory along the seaboard, *as to foreigners especially*, as indisputable, and ordered a slaver who had established himself there, to leave within a given time on pain of having his property confiscated. This trader had been some months here, and had been ordered away in November previous by Mr. Williams, the acting governor, and again a short time before my arrival, both of which orders he treated with contempt. To my message, however, he saw fit to return a very courteous answer, promising obedience, but alleging the want of a suitable vessel to remove his goods, and requesting time for that purpose. I replied that suitable time would be granted on condition that he desisted from the further prosecution of his business, and again positively forbade his buying or selling slaves while he remained there. About the same time an English trader established what is here called a factory for regular trade, and put a small amount of goods ashore in charge of a native factor. Him also I ordered off, and threatened the seizure of his goods in case of refusal. He treated my message with great rudeness, and positively refused to leave. The slaver in the mean time having obtained renewed assurances of pro-

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XIV. Books

3.

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