better days, which they may leave behind.

It is in its connection with this operation, my dear sir, that I consider your projected colony of free blacks as most interesting & important. It ought to be the first step in this splendid career, and to be located with that view. In choosing a situation for it, therefore, the greatest regard ought to be had to its future connection with the Niger. To this end the agent should be instructed to make the most careful enquiries concerning the sources of that river, & its highest or most south western point. He should also obtain the most full & accurate information concerning the rivers that rise in the mountains opposite to its sources, & take their course southwestwardly to the ocean. Their size, the nature of the country through which they flow, the height to which they are navigable for ships & for boats, & the ports at or near their entrances, should all be ascertained with the utmost care & accuracy. That river which combines

combines in the greatest degree the advantages of salubrity, ease of navigation & good neighbourhood, & at the same time brings us nearest to the navigable waters of the Niger, by a good pass over the intervening mountains, is, I apprehend, the proper place for the establishment of our colony.

There is a river called in some maps the Mehurada, which, as there laid down, extends its sources further northeast than any other, & enters the Atlantick about one hundred & fifty or one hundred miles south east of the Sherborough. It deserves, I think, the particular attention of the agent, who should be instructed to make enquiries about it, with a view to all the circumstances which may render it proper for a settlement, and to visit it, should the result of his enquiries offer encouragement.

I make no apology, my dear sir, for the length of this letter, or rather essay. It might no doubt be curtailed with advantage; but it might also, and with more ease, if not to a better