A Study of the Motives, Attitudes, Achievements and Decline of the American Colonization Society from Its Inception to 1840

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A STUDY OF THE MOTIVES, ATTITUDES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY FROM ITS INCEPTION TO 1840

by

Leonard Gittings

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LIFE

Leonard Gittings was born in Aberdare, Wales, April 28, 1904.

He was graduated from Aberdare High School, July, 1919, and from the London Missionary College, London, England, June, 1925. In 1931 he was granted a diploma for studies pursued at the School of Tropical Medicine, Brussels, Belgium.

From the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois he has received three degrees. In May, 1938, he was graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Theology, and in May, 1941, with the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. In May, 1948, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him.

For one year and a half he pursued graduate study in history at the University of Chicago, Illinois. He continued studies in history at Loyola University, Chicago, and was graduated with the degree of Master of Arts, August, 1942.

He has served as a Baptist pastor for ten years, a missionary to the Belgian Congo, Africa, for fifteen years, and as a Professor of Missions and Comparative Religion for five years. He has written numerous articles for religious periodicals and for newspapers, and has lectured widely in the United States, England and the West Indies.

During his stay in the Belgian Congo, he did extensive work in education and Bible translation in several Bantu languages. He is currently a professor at the Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, Berkeley, California.
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EARLY SENTIMENT IN FAVOR OF
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CHAPTER I

EARLY SENTIMENT IN FAVOR OF NEGRO COLONIZATION

The idea that Negroes, especially free Negroes, should be deported and colonized did not thrust itself suddenly into the minds of American statesmen and philanthropists in 1816. Sentiment in favor of colonization had been developing for more than a quarter of a century before the formation of the American Colonization Society. At first it was not a widespread idea, nor was there a very clear notion of what exactly should be done, but before the turn of the nineteenth century more than one prominent American had called attention to the possibility and practicability of a colonization scheme. Thomas Jefferson was one of the first to write about the matter, and even before the United States had come into being as an independent nation, he had been chairman of a committee which, in 1777, had proposed to the Virginia Legislature a plan for colonizing the free colored population of the country. This proposal was to be incorporated into the revised code of Virginia,¹ and the first suggestion seems to have been that a settlement should be established in some of the vacant lands in the western portion of the United States.²

¹Mathew Carey, Letters on the Colonization Society and on its Probable Results (Philadelphia, 1835), 6.
²Ibid.
The Revolutionary War interrupted the development of any plans that might have been carried out, but Jefferson and others continued to be aware of the growing problem of slavery and the free Negro. In spite of the disruption caused by war, Jefferson, in 1778, submitted a bill to the Virginia Legislature designed to prevent any further importation of slaves. Of this bill he later wrote: "This passed without opposition, and stopped the increase of the evil by importation, leaving to the future, efforts for its final eradication."3

Jefferson later expressed his approval of a bill providing for "freedom for all born after a certain day, and deportation at a proper age,"4 although he admitted that the public mind was not ready for the proposition. He analyzes the situation, and at the same time ventures a prognostication in the following words:

Yet the day is not distant when it the public mind must bear and adopt it, or worse will follow. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government. Nature, habit, opinion have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them. It is still in our power to direct the progress of emancipation and deportation, peaceably and in such slow degree, as that the evil will wear off insensibly, and their place be, pari passu, filled up by free white laborers.5

In this analysis, he sees no possibility of integration. The two races must forever be kept apart; it is a kind of natural

4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
law. Because he has become a problem, the Negro must be sent away and be taken off the hands of the white man. Slavery must still continue; emancipation can come only gradually; a system of deportation must be established. Jefferson wished no violent changes, and believed due regard should be paid to the feelings of those who believed in slavery. He avoided giving offense either to his own countrymen who held slaves or to people of other nations who were involved in this matter. On February 12, 1788, we find him writing from Paris to M. Warville, in reply to an invitation to become a member of the society for the abolition of slavery. He expresses his good wishes for the success of the society, but points out that he, as a public servant, must be prudent and not give offense, especially to the people of France, in which country he is now serving as minister of the United States. He evidently does not have deep enough convictions about abolition to become a crusader, although he admits that slavery is an evil.

The first practical steps to colonize Negroes were taken in England. After the Revolution, several Englishmen, among whom were William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, Dr. Fothergill, and Granville Sharp, became concerned over the free Negroes who had found their way to Nova Scotia and England. They promoted the establishment of an African colony for these ex-slaves, and

6Ibid., 12:577.
7John Leyden, Discoveries and Travels in Africa (London, 1817), II, 256.
Granville Sharp may be regarded as the real founder of Sierra Leone. The earliest writings containing definite suggestions on colonization are those which came from the pen of Sharp. The founding of this English colony on the West Coast of Africa undoubtedly created further interest in colonization in the United States.

In 1785, Dr. William Thornton of Washington, D.C. began to exert a powerful influence in favor of colonization, and focused attention on Africa as the most suitable country. Thornton was a versatile individual who was interested in many things. He was a doctor, scientist, writer, public official, and architect, having had a part in the designing of the new Capitol building in Washington. He was also a close friend of George Washington. In 1804, he presented a definite plan of African colonization in a public letter addressed to the people of the United States. He was convinced that "the Almighty ... has destined Africa to be the country of the Blacks," and in a letter to Henry Clay, written in 1816, he outlined his plan as follows:

Let the sovereignty of five hundred miles square be purchased of the natives of Africa, by discreet and competent agents, and let this region be recorded by our Government as a free gift forever to the people who may settle thereon ... After purchasing the country, let it be surveyed in the same manner as our own back countries, and the fee simply be disposed of by degrees, that the Settlers may be kept compact, and be more capable of defending themselves and their flocks from the incursions of the Savages and from the beasts of the wilderness. A form of republican Government would be prepared for them, and they ought for a while to be protected by due force.

8 Address of the Managers of the American Colonization Society to the People of the United States (Washington, 1832), 6.
Every advantage should be accorded them, that an orderly and reasonable people could desire. Public schools and places of worship should be established ... they would be able to instruct their fellowmen in the precepts of divine wisdom. Thus would Slavery, the darkest stain on Christian Professors, be finally rendered subservient to the work of heaven, and the poor Africans be in a manner repaid for the sufferings of their unhappy children. The wilderness would flourish in Arts, Agriculture, and Science, their ports would be open to the whole world, the Native African would be taught the principles of Christianity and be happy, and millions unnumbered ... would bless the Children of the West.9

Following Thornton, other men of note began to display an interest in colonization. Among these were Henry Clay, Elisha B. Caldwell, clerk of the United States Supreme Court, Francis Scott Key, author of the "Star Spangled Banner," and Hezekiah Niles, editor of the famous Niles Weekly Register.10

A precedent had been set for them in the interest shown by the Virginia legislature which had continued to debate, usually, it seems in secret session, the subject of colonizing free Negroes. It had finally reached a decision culminating in definite action in 1800. It passed a resolution instructing James Monroe, who was then Governor of the State, to apply to the President of the United States and urge him to institute negotiations with some of the powers of Europe having colonies on the coast of Africa asking them to grant asylum to emancipated Negroes from America.


President Jefferson responded by approaching the Sierra Leone Company, but met with very little success. The colony, controlled by this private English company, was in a depressed and decaying condition, and those responsible for it had no wish to increase the population with Negroes from America. Jefferson subsequently applied to the government of Portugal, but again met with a discouraging response. The project was, therefore, abandoned as hopeless, and was not revived for a decade and a half.11

It can hardly be said that all of those who manifested a concern for colonization were moved by purely humanitarian considerations. While there was at the turn of the century an increasing anti-slavery sentiment in Congress, as well as among the people of the North, the advocates of deportation were moved quite largely by considerations of self-preservation and by fear of a Negro uprising. The anxiety of the whites had been aroused by the great increase in the number of free men of color, and by the slave insurrections that had taken place. In 1791, half a million slaves had revolted on the island of Haiti. Confusion had reigned for several years, and with the emergence of order in 1801, a Negro government had been established. Hundreds of refugees had reached the United States, and the country realized that warnings of possible insurrections among the slaves in

America were not pointless, when, in 1800 a Negro named Gabriel, of Henrico County in Virginia, planned a far-reaching insurrection. Two years later, Denmark Vesey, a free Negro of Charleston, was hanged before he was able to execute a plot to have the slaves rise, massacre the white population, seize the shipping in the harbor, and, if hard pressed, to sail away to the West Indies. The desperate plan so nearly succeeded that a great distrust of free Negroes was the result, and the desire to get them out of the country increased greatly. Three of the slaves in the Charleston rebellion belonged to the Governor of the State.

During the war of 1812, many Negroes had entered the service of the country and had fought bravely. Many of those who were slaves had endeavored to obtain their freedom by joining the American army or by going over to the British. After the close of the war there were simultaneous outbreaks in Fredericksburg, Virginia, Camden, South Carolina, and other places. Moreover there was an increasing tendency on the part of many whites to blame the free Negroes for these outbreaks.

The number of these was increasing steadily. There had

12 Joseph C. Carroll, Slave Insurrections in the United States, 1800-1865 (Boston, 1938, 48.
14 M'iles' Weekly Register, ed., H. M'iles (Baltimore), XXII, 320.
15 Ibid.
16 Carroll, 74.
been a considerable free Negro population in 1776, and the Revolution had given impetus to manumission. In 1790 there were in the country as many as 59,557 free people of color, 35,000 of whom were living in the South. During the following two decades, the rate of increase of free Negroes exceeded that of slaves, and the proportion of their representation in the black population increased accordingly from 7.9 per cent in 1790 to 13.5 per cent in 1810. After this date, as the fears of the whites increased, greater restrictions were placed upon manumission, and the percentage of free Negroes began to decline. Yet their total number was augmented to a disturbing degree, and by 1850 there were 434,455 free Negroes in the United States, the figure rising to 488,070 by 1860. They were distributed as follows: 83,942 in Maryland, 58,042 in Virginia, 30,463 in North Carolina, 18,467 in Louisiana, 11,131 in the District of Columbia, and 10,638 in Kentucky. In all, there were 250,787 in the whole South. Fifty thousand of these had attained the independence of being heads of families by 1830, while a few thousand other Negro families were reported among the white families as servants. As for the slaves, their number increased from 697,624 in 1790 to 3,953,760 in 1860. Even by 1810 there were already 1,191,362 slaves and 186,466 free Negroes.

18Ibid.
By the middle of the second decade of the nineteenth century, therefore, a determination to solve the Negro problem was beginning to express itself in action among those individuals who had come to the conclusion that the twin problem of the free Negro and slavery could be solved only by colonization, by the removal of people of color from the domains of the whites. Yet there was so far no concerted action, nor was there a very clear idea about what would be done about the slaves. A rather vague optimism prevailed which believed that the problem of slavery would work itself out gradually as the result of economic forces. The general opinion is expressed in the memorial presented by the newly-formed American Colonization Society to Congress in 1821:

The last census shows the number of free people of color of the United States, and their rapid increase. Supposing them to increase in the same ratio, it will appear how large a proportion of our population will in the course of a few years, consist of persons of that description... This is far from constituting an increase in our physical strength; nor can there be a population in any country, neutral as to its effects upon society. The least observation shows that this description of persons are not, and cannot be either useful or happy among us; and many considerations ... beyond dispute, prove that it is best for all the parties interested, that there should be a separation; that those who are now free, and those who may become hereafter, should be provided with the means of attaining to a state of respectability and happiness, which it is certain they have never yet reached, and therefore, can never be likely to reach in this country.

Several of the States, deeply interested in this subject, have already applied to the general government, and concurring with the views of your memorialists, both from considerations of justice towards themselves, and humanity to the coloured people, have expressed to the general government, their desire that a country should be procured for them, in the land of their forefathers, to which such
of them as should avail themselves if the opportunity might be removed . . . They i.e. the writers of the memorial are warranted in declaring, that there are no difficulties which they do not confidently expect will be easily overcome by a moderate exertion of discretion and perseverance. 20

It is not difficult to see the similarity of reasoning in this memorial and the expressed views of Jefferson. There is the same concern over the increase of free Negroes, the same conviction that white and black cannot live together in the same republic, and the same hesitancy to come to grips with the fundamental problem of slavery. The document reveals the widespread interest in some kind of colonization scheme, not only in the South, but also in the North. Among the states which took action about this time, and which passed resolutions approving the formation of a colonization society, the representation is slightly in favor of the North. The states recommending a definite system of colonization through a specially created organization were New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. 21 Of these, eleven instructed their representatives in Congress to "approve and promote in the General Government, measures for removing such free persons of color as are desirous of emigrating to Africa." 22

21A Few Facts Regarding the American Colonization Society, (Boston, 1830), 4.
22 Ibid.
The General Assembly of Virginia again came to the fore. On December 23, 1818, the legislature passed almost unanimously the following resolution:

Whereas, the General Assembly of Virginia has repeatedly sought to obtain an asylum, beyond the limits of the United States for such persons of color as have been, or may be emancipated, under the laws of this Commonwealth, but have hitherto found all their efforts frustrated by the disturbed state of other nations, or by a domestic cause, equally unpropitious, now avail themselves of a period of peace to renew this effort - Therefore, Resolved, That the Executive be requested to correspond with the President of the United States of America for the purpose of obtaining a suitable land on the coast of Africa, or at some other place not within the States or Territories of the United States, to serve as an asylum for such persons...

This was the culmination of years of preliminary thought by men in Virginia, from Thomas Jefferson to Charles Fenton Mercer, who had wished to deal with a class of colored people considered to be "obnoxious to the laws, or dangerous to the peace of society." Forcing the free Negro out of the South by legislation or public opinion had compelled him to move into the North. The communities in the North could not absorb all who came, especially since thousands of foreigners were also coming into the country as immigrants. Hence the free Negro was creating a national problem.

In December, 1816, just when the Virginians were instructing their Senators and Representatives "to exert their best efforts

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to aid in the attainment of the colonization project," a num-
ber of men were meeting in Washington to effect a permanent or-
ganization to deal with the matter.²⁴

We should note that the State of Maryland had also shown
great interest in colonization. Possessing by far the greatest
number of free Negroes among the states, she was vitally con-
cerned, not only with colonization, but also emancipation. It
has been declared that her legislature would have adopted
emancipation in the session of 1831-32, had it not been for the
reaction produced by the Nat Turner insurrection of August, 1830.²⁵

The bill presented at the above session to bring about emanci-
pation failed by the narrowest of margins, and shows the strength
of the sentiment in favor of freeing the Negro to have been con-
siderable in this State. There were, of course, pressing motives
for her action in this question of colonization. There had been
a steady increase in the Negro population within the borders of
Maryland. In 1790 she had 8,043 "free persons of color," and by
1810, when abolitionist activity had made the State more reaction-
ary and slowed up manumission, the rate of increase for free Ne-
groes was even ten thousand a year until 1860. We shall see her
in 1831 passing a bill appropriating $260,000 for the transporta-

²⁴Woodson, The Negro in Our History, 285

²⁵Matthew P. Andrews, Tercentenary History of Maryland
(Chicago and Baltimore, 1925), I, 802.
tion of free Negroes to Africa, and even organizing her own colony on the West Coast of the Dark Continent.

Many people in the South felt that the free Negro was a menace to the institution of slavery itself. Cotton was becoming king, and the large planters wished to avoid any tampering with their slaves. The South realized that the free Negro who had been forced out of the southern states into the North was still a potential threat, and it is probably true that the great impulse in favor of the movement to establish a colony, which appeared in 1816, was due to two forces. First, the effort to drive the Negroes from the South, and second, the attempt to turn them away from the North.

Among Northerners there were strong protests from the communities to which larger groups of Negroes came from the South. But there were also thoughtful men who were moved by a sincere desire to help these unwanted and often wretched beings. From among these came the first definite action leading to the formation of the American Colonization Society. The original steps were taken, not as the result of legislation, but because of the

26 Ibid., I, 804.


28 Great Debates, IV, 29; Woodson, The Negro in Our History, 282.
efforts of one or two individuals. The inauguration of the movement was the work of Dr. Robert Finley, a man who was not a slave owner, and of whose humanitarian motives there can be little doubt. In view of the charges later levelled against the American Colonization Society, and because we are attempting to analyze the motives behind the colonization movement, this fact should be remembered.
THE FORMATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF
THE AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY
CHAPTER II

THE FORMATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE

AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY

The condition of the Negro in the United States had excited the concern of the Reverend Robert Finley, D.D., of Basking Ridge New Jersey, and for several years he had been giving thought to plans for their amelioration. Something of his sentiments and plans are contained in a letter addressed to John P. Mumford of New York in February, 1816, in which he wrote as follows:

The longer I live to see the wretchedness of men, the more I admire the virtue of those who devise, and with patience labour to execute plans for the relief of the wretched. On the subject, the state of the free blacks has very much occupied my mind. Their number increases greatly, and their wretchedness, too, as appears to me. Everything connected with their condition, including their colour, is against them; nor is there much prospect that their state can ever be greatly ameliorated, while they shall continue among us. Could not the rich and benevolent devise means to form a colony on some part of the coast of Africa, similar to the one at Sierra Leone, which might gradually induce many free blacks to go and settle, devising for them the means of getting there, and of protection and support till they were established? Could they be sent back to Africa, a three-fold benefit would arise. We should be cleared of them - we should send to Africa a population partly civilized and christianized for its benefit. And our blacks themselves would be put into a better situation. Think much on the subject ... then write to me.¹

During the following spring he became more and more con-

cerned about this problem, and more free in bringing it to the attention of people of influence in the churches and in the state. By the summer it had become his chief topic of thought and conversation. Although most people with whom he spoke considered the scheme somewhat visionary and impracticable, some of his friends encouraged him to do something to carry his benevolent views into effect. In November he resolved to go to Washington to introduce the subject to public notice. He was convinced that a plan so ambitious could only be carried into effect by being made an object of national patronage.

He arrived in Washington early in December, 1816, and began to make arrangements for a meeting of the citizens. He not only made his views public in writing, but also visited the President of the United States, several members of Congress, including Henry Clay, cabinet members such as William H. Crawford, and other men of prominence in the city. He conciliated some who at first had opposed the whole scheme, and he revealed his own concern by offering to subscribe five hundred dollars for the project out of

2 Isaac Brown, Biography of Dr. Robert Finley (Philadelphia, 1857), 100.

3 Ibid., 2.

4 African Repository, I, 3.

5 Brown, 102.

6 African Repository, I, 3.
his own limited means. 7

On December 21, a meeting was held in the Congressional Hall. Working closely with Dr. Finley in the arrangements for the meeting was his brother-in-law, Elias B. Caldwell, Clerk of the Supreme Court, who had for some time manifested a deep interest in the subject of colonization. 8 Henry Clay was called to the chair, but before taking his seat he addressed the meeting. After stating the object of the gathering ("to consider the propriety and practicability of colonizing the free people of color... and forming an association in relation to that object"), he expressed his own approval of the scheme. It offered America the opportunity to "transmit ... the blessings of our arts, our civilization, and our religion, and the hope that she will extinguish a great portion of that moral debt which she has contracted to that unfortunate continent." 9 But Clay went on to say that it was "proper and necessary distinctly to state, "that he understood it constituted" no part of the object of this meeting to touch or agitate in the slightest degree a delicate question connected with another portion of our country. It was not pro-

7Ibid.


9Brown, p. 103, quoting from the Intelligencer (no date given).
posed to deliberate on, or consider at all, any question of emancipation, or that which was connected with the abolition of slavery. It was upon that condition alone, he was sure, that many gentlemen from the South and West whom he saw present, had attended. It was upon that condition that he himself attended.10

Elias B. Caldwell then addressed the meeting, in which, he said, he found "some of the most distinguished characters of our country." His emphasis was very much that of Henry Clay, with a few religious overtones added. It is evident that he was convinced that deportation was the only solution to the Negro problem. He took for granted that "as for the blacks, it is manifest that their interest and happiness would be promoted by collecting them together where they would enjoy equal rights and privileges with those around them."11 As for objections to the plan, he confessed that he was most surprised at one which seems to be prevalent, "to wit, that these people will be unwilling to be colonized."12

The meeting was then addressed briefly by John Randolph of Virginia and Robert Wright of Maryland, and the assembly turned

10Ibid., 5.
11Ibid., 107.
12Ibid., 112.
to the task of making resolutions. The first resolution was as follows:

That an association or society be formed, for the purpose of collecting information and to assist in the formation and execution of a plan for the colonization of free people of color, with their consent, in Africa or elsewhere, as may be thought most advisable by the constituted authorities of the country.

Two committees were appointed; one to bring the matter before Congress, and the other to prepare a constitution to be presented at another meeting which was called for a week later. On December 28, when the adjourned meeting reassembled, the constitution committee report was presented and adopted. The members of this committee were prominent men, including Francis Scott Key, Judge Bushrod Washington, the nephew of George Washington, Elias B. Caldwell, James Breckinridge, General Walter Jones, Richard Rush, and William B. Worthington. Fifty of those present affixed their names to the constitution as members of what was now called "The American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States."

This meeting of December 28 was held in the Hall of the House of Representatives, and the proceedings had a semi-official character. It should be pointed out, however, that it was

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13Half-Century Memorial of the American Colonization Society (Washington, 1867), 71.
14A Few Facts Respecting the American Colonization Society (Boston, 1830), 3.
15Brown, 116.
16Half-Century Memorial, 7.
composed almost entirely of southern gentlemen. Judge Bushrod Washington was elected president, and of the seventeen vice-presidents only five were elected from the free states. Most of the officers were slave-holders. Among the vice-presidents and managers appear such famous individuals as William Crawford of Georgia, Henry Clay of Kentucky, Generals Andrew Jackson of Tennessee and John Mason of the District of Columbia, and Colonel Henry Rutgers of New York. Dr. Finley was elected one of the vice-presidents. His views on colonization were less influenced by self-interest than those of some of the men with whom he was now associated. His brother-in-law, Elias B. Caldwell, was elected secretary of the new society. A man of kindred spirit with Dr. Finley was Samuel J. Mills, whose name appears twenty-third on the list of fifty signatures appended to the constitution of the society. We shall meet him again.

This constitution has no preamble setting forth the motives which led to its adoption, nor is there any expression of particular opinions or sentiments held by its authors. "There is

17William Jay, An Inquiry into the Character and Tendency of the American Colonization Society (New York, 1835), 11.
18Ibid.
19Brown, 119.
20Half-Century Memorial, 69.
21Ibid., 71.
no one single principle of duty or policy recognized in it," wrote a contemporary. "The members may ... be Christians or infidels; they may be friends or enemies of slavery, and may be actuated by kindness or by hatred towards the 'free people of color.'"22

This omission of all avowals of motive was "probably not without design, and has not been without effect," wrote the same contemporary.23 It enabled the American Colonization Society to enlist the cooperation of at least three distinct groups. The first group was composed of those who desired sincerely to help the free Negroes, to make them a civilizing influence in Africa, and who believed that colonization would accelerate the abolition of slavery. Secondly, there were those who thought that the removal of the free Negro would eliminate the threat to the peace of the slaves and the security of the institution of slavery. And, thirdly, there were those who simply wished to be rid of a troublesome and unsavory segment of the population whose condition could be improved only at great expense, if at all. This mingling of opposed groups was condemned by those who were antagonistic to the aims and work of the Colonization Society.24

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22Jay, Inquiry, 12.
23Ibid.
24G.B.Stebbins, Facts and Opinions Touching the Real Origin, Character, and Influence of the American Colonization Society (Boston and Cleveland, 1853), 21.
Measures were instituted immediately for bringing the subject of colonization before Congress. With all the differences within it, the Society represented a union of diversified forces with a single aim. This concerted action was variously called the Virginia movement, the New Jersey movement, or the New England movement, and to the colonizationists it seemed best calculated to reach all sections of the country. Dr. Finley had succeeded in bringing these forces together, and it is impossible to remain unimpressed by the array of remarkable men whom he and Caldwell induced to meet and to spend the Christmas season of 1816 laying the foundations of one of the most notable organizations in the history of the United States. And it is not without interest that for the first years of its existence the American Colonization Society's president bore the illustrious name of Washington.

We have already pointed out that the Colonization Society was not alone in the desire and attempt to establish an asylum for free Negroes. There were movements also within the various states, and there were those who believed that either or both the national and state governments should make provision for colonization. We have noted the resolution passed by the legislature of Virginia in 1816. It is important also to note some of the resolutions passed by other states about this time.

25 *Half-Century Memorial*, 72.
They reflect a general approval of procuring a colony, and the wording of some of the resolutions is suggestive.

On January 26, 1818, the legislature of Maryland passed the following resolution:

Resolved unanimously, That the Governor be requested to communicate to the President of the United States and to our Senators and Representatives, the opinion of this General Assembly, that a wise and provident policy suggests the expediency, on the part of our national government, of procuring, through negotiation, by cession or purchase, a tract of country on the western coast of Africa for the colonization of the free people of colour of the United States. 26

The Tennessee Legislature did not specify Africa, but they "instructed ... and requested their Senators and Representatives in Congress" to give to the government of the United States all the aid in their power, in devising and carrying into effect a plan which may have for its object the colonizing, "in some distant country, the free people of colour who are within the limits of the United States, or within any of their territories." 27 This has a wide reach!

When the New Jersey Legislature came to deal with the subject, they adopted a little different attitude, as is seen in the following resolution:

Resolved by the Council and General Assembly of the State, That the consideration of a system providing for the gradual emancipation of the people of colour, held in servitude in the United States, be recommended to the legislatures of the several States of the American

27Ibid.
Union and to the Congress of the United States

Resolved; That in the opinion of this Legislature, a system of foreign colonization, with corresponding measures, might be adopted, that would in due time effect the entire emancipation of the slaves in our country, and furnish an asylum for the free blacks, without any violation of the national compact, or infringement of the rights of individuals; and that such a system should be predicated upon the principle that the evil of slavery is a national one and that the People and the States of the Union ought materially to participate in the duties and burden of removing it.28

This was the state of Robert Finley, and its legislature did not ignore the subject of domestic slavery nor emancipation. They did not accept Henry Clay's idea, expressed in his speech to the embryonic American Colonization Society, in which the "Great Compromiser" specifically demands that colonization be completely divorced from any thought or plan for emancipating the slaves.

Two more samples of resolutions passed by northern states, Connecticut and Ohio, show the same type of approach. The resolution of Connecticut reads:

Resolved by this Assembly that the existence of slavery in the United States is a great national evil, and that the People and States ought to participate in the burthen and duties of removing it by all just and prudent measures which may be adopted, with a due regard to their internal peace and mutual harmony; and that a system of Colonization under the National Government may reasonably be deemed conducive to so desirable an object.29

28Ibid., 251.
29Ibid.
In January, 1824, the Legislature of Ohio adopted a resolution recommending the gradual but entire emancipation of slaves, and a system of foreign colonization. They advocated the passage of a law by the general government, with the consent of the slave-holding States, providing that all children born of slaves thereafter be free at the age of twenty-one. Governor Morrow, speaking to the Legislature in 1827, expressed his conviction that since colonization, as understood in Ohio, meant the removal of the whole colored population of the United States, a task of such magnitude required national cooperation. He said: "There is nothing more evident than the inability of the Society aided solely by private charity to carry their whole scheme into effect. If the object shall ever be fully accomplished, it must be by the aid of the strong arm of government. Only with the aid of the state and the national governments could this great project be consummated."  

This idea of Governor Morrow had been expressed by General Charles Fenton Mercer of Virginia at the time of the founding of the American Colonization Society. His plan was colonization by the national and state governments, and late in life he questioned whether more good would not have been done if the

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30 Ibid.

31 "The Movement in Ohio to Deport the Negro", in the Quarterly Publication of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, vol.VII (Cincinnati, 1912), 59.
Society had not been formed. Although he took a leading part in the formation and development of the Society, he came to the opinion that there were in the movement two basically conflicting philosophies. He believed that the Society, which brought northern men into the colonization movement, threw important southern interests "open to the public discussions and acts of a Society spread through the United States, and to the interference of other counsellors and agents than their own Government."32 This caused opposition on the part of some men in the South to the Society.

It is not difficult to trace differences of emphasis by the state legislatures, and there were definite variations of viewpoint among individual colonizationists as to the ultimate purpose of the Colonization Society. G. B. Stebbins, an opponent of colonization, charges several of the prominent leaders of the Society with inconsistency. He denied that Judge Washington, the first president of the Society, was moved by considerations of philanthropy, although the Judge had written of the new society that "we may fairly hope it will lead to the sure but gradual abolition of slavery."33 Stebbins referred to a letter of Washington, written in 1821, in which the Judge wrote that, having learned that his own slaves had come to the belief that,

32Half-Century Memorial, 72.
since he was the nephew of General Washington and president of the Colonization Society, he would now free them, he had called them together and made it clear that he would free none of them. Shortly after, Stebbins asserts, the Judge had arranged for the transportation of fifty-four of his slaves - "not to Liberia, but into the hands of the slave dealer for the New Orleans market." The same author quotes from the speeches of Henry Clay and John Randolph of Roanoke, made on December 21, 1816, at the first meeting of the proponents of colonization. Clay had referred to the purpose of the meeting as one designed "to rid our country of a useless and pernicious, if not a dangerous portion of its population," while Randolph declared that "this meeting does not in any wise affect the question of Negro slavery, but as far as it goes, must materially tend to secure the property of every master in the United States over his slaves."

It is significant that at a meeting of the Virginia Colonization Society in February, 1836, the Reverend W. S. Plumer spoke of the principles of the Colonization Society as Virginia principles. At the same meeting, the Reverend W. Atkinson referred to the common ground on which Virginians and New Englanders had come to stand. Atkinson's words are as follows:

I acknowledge we are indebted to New England for

34 Stebbins, Facts and Opinions ... Touching the A.C.S., 19.
36 African Repository, XII, 114.
many good things, most of all for the excellent men who have become identified with our interests, and imbued with our principles, and form such valuable members of society. But we never received from New England anything so valuable as our colonization principles. These are a portion of the inheritance we have derived from our fathers.37

Stebbins expressed the opinion that the "excellent men" referred to are men from the North who had settled in the South and had become slave owners.38

We cannot tell how the two leading northerners among the founders of the Colonization Society - Dr. Robert Finley and the Reverend Samuel J. Mills - would have worked permanently with the southern members in the vice-presidencies and Board of Managers. Both of these men were not only opposed to the institution of slavery, but were, more than many others, moved by an ardent missionary purpose. Unfortunately, Mills died near the end of 1817, when the Society had been in existence for less than a year.39 He and Ebenezer Burgess had been appointed to represent the Society in Africa and to explore the best location for a colony. He had died on the way home. He had in his student days belonged to a group at Williams College which had given the first impulse to foreign missions through the American Board of Commissioners. He was also an ardent promoter of endeavors to improve the religious and social well-being of settlers

37Ibid., XII, 67.
38Facts and Opinions, 20.
39Fox, American Colonization Society, 53.
on the frontiers of the United States. 40

As for Dr. Finley, he seems to have taken very little part in the work of the Society after its founding, 41 either because he felt that others could now carry on the work he had inaugurated, or because he was not in full agreement with the approach of Henry Clay and the dominant men from the South. He became president of the University of Georgia in May, 1817, and died on the 3rd of November of the same year. 42

Pro-slavery men continued to take the lead in defining the role of the Colonization Society, and it has been pointed out that there were two possible reasons for their stand against emancipation. Either they desired the price of slaves to increase by reducing to a minimum the competition of free Negro labor, or they feared (especially those who held numbers of slaves) that the increasing free Negro element was dangerous to the security of their slave property. 43 There may be an element of truth in both of these explanations, but if we are to judge from the expressed views of the pro-slavery members of the Colonization Society, the main reason for opposition to emancipa-

40 G. Spring, Memoir of Samuel Hills (Boston, 1829) 59,158.
42 Brown, 207.
43 Fox, 30.
tion was the firm and widespread conviction that the free Negro was the source of lawlessness and crime, of social and political insecurity. From all parts of the Union there came declarations concerning the degraded and degrading condition of the free Negro. The opinion was not sectional; it was national. It was stressed in Ohio as much as in Virginia.44 An article in the Christian Spectator, in 1824, presents a dark picture. It was prompted by a report which had been issued by the Prison Discipline Society, and provided some startling information regarding the free Negro population. The article asserted that the chief cause of the frequency and increase of crime was the degraded character of the coloured population. The proportion of colored convicts, even in these states where the colored population was small, showed "most strikingly the connexion between ignorance and vice."45 The Percentage of free Negroes in the penitentiaries of the northern states and cities was extremely high, and the Ohio State Colonization Society in 1827 estimated that the whole amount of taxes paid annually by Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York alone "on the vices of the blacks, would, at the present rates, transport to the land of their fathers, to country and home of their own, four hundred and twenty of those wretched

44 A Brief Exposition on the Views of the Society for the Colonization of Free Persons of Colour in Africa (Columbus, 1827), 81.

45 Ibid., 83.
beings, where they might enjoy the blessings of freemen. In 1825, the State of Pennsylvania had a population of almost 800,000. The number of free negroes was about 26,000, yet one half of the convicts in the state prison were free negroes. The Negroes in Philadelphia, though constituting a small fraction of the population, furnished one half of the criminals. Even the friends of the free Negroes admitted the moral degradation which had taken hold upon this unfortunate group of people.  

The condition of the free Negroes in the face of white prejudice made life difficult for them wherever they went. A foreign visitor, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote:

Whoever has inhabited the United States must have perceived, that in those parts of the Union where the negroes are no longer slaves, they have in no wise drawn nearer to the whites. On the contrary, the prejudice of the race appears to be stronger in the States which have abolished slavery, than in those where it still exists; and nowhere is it so intolerant as it is in those States where servitude has never been known. ... The electoral franchise has been conferred upon the negroes in almost all the States in which slavery has been abolished; but if they come forward to vote, their lives are in danger. If oppressed, they may bring an action at law, but they will find none but whites among their judges ... the same schools do not receive the child of the black and of the European ... in the theatres gold cannot procure a seat ... in the hospitals they lie apart ... The gates of Heaven are not closed against

46 Cyril Pearl, Remarks on African Colonization (1833), 33.


48 Pearl, 33.
these unhappy beings; but their inferiority is continued to the very confines of the other world, when the negro is defunct, his bones are cast aside, and the distinction of condition prevails even in the equality of death.

In the South, where slavery still exists, the negroes are kept less carefully apart; they sometimes share the labour and the exertions of the whites; the whites consent to intermix with them to a certain extent, and although the legislation treats them more harshly, the habits of the people are more tolerant and compassionate... Thus it is in the United States, that the prejudice which repels the negroes seems to increase in proportion as they are emancipated, and inequality is sanctioned by the manners while it is effaced by the laws of the country.49

These facts have been stressed here because it is necessary for us to understand that the condition of the free Negro not only gave the main impulse to the colonization movement, but also awakened a variety of responses among the advocates of the scheme. Some were moved with fear, others with what was practically resentment, while others responded with a compassionate and humanitarian concern. Some saw the free Negro only as a menace, while others saw him as an object deserving of charity. Still others combined something of both attitudes. All agreed that it was good for the Negro and the country that deportation should become an actuality.50

The American Colonization Society quickly set itself to the task of implementing the resolutions which it had passed.


Subscribers had to be enlisted and auxiliary societies had to be established. The support of the government had to be obtained, in order that steps might be taken to establish a colony in Africa. It was not clear whether this venture was to be a private one of the Society or an official effort sponsored largely by the government. Some thought that it could and ought to be both, and the second article to the constitution of the Society takes this view:

The object to which its attention is to be exclusively directed is to promote and execute a plan for colonizing (with their consent) the free people of color residing in this country, in Africa, or such other place as Congress shall deem most expedient. And the Society shall act ... in co-operation with the general government and such of the States as may adopt resolutions...52

Within two weeks of the organization of the Society a memorial was presented to both Houses of Congress.53 It called attention to the condition and prospects of the free Negroes, and emphasized the fact that, for so-called security reasons, important slave-holding states had adopted measures to restrict the further growth of the free Negro population by passing laws prohibiting emancipation within the state. The memorial asserted that Congress had a debt of patriotism and of humanity to provide


52Pearl, Remarks on African Colonization, 11.

some adequate and effectual remedy, by establishing a colony "in some salubrious and fertile region, under the authority and protection of the United States, until it shall have attained sufficient strength and consistency to be left in a state of independence." The subject of colonization in Africa was presented in its various aspects: as a movement for ridding the United States of a separate caste or class, dangerous to the peace and safety of the country; as an important factor in elevating the free Negro, who could never rise to his potential in the United States; and as an outstanding opportunity for the spread of both civilization and Christianity in Africa. The memorial presented the opinion that the civilized powers should commit themselves to the support of the "perfect neutrality of the colony." Reasons were given for favoring Africa, but the memorialists did not "presume to determine, that the views of Congress will be necessarily directed to the country to which they have alluded."

This last quotation reflects the difference of opinion that prevailed, and continued to prevail among colonizationists. For decades there continued to be uncertainty as to whether or not Africa was to be the "Land of Promise" for Negroes. Some were in favor of Africa; some of Haiti; some of Canada; some of

54 Memorial of the President and Board of Managers of the American Colonization Society, in Alexander, 91-97.
55 Ibid., 94.
56 African Repository, XXVII, 259, 260.
South America or Mexico; while others still thought of a colony beyond the Rocky Mountains, or within some other area of the United States. The same uncertainty as to the location of the colony was seen in the Virginia resolution of December, 1816, though subsequent opinions and resolutions by Southern leaders and legislatures were very definitely in favor of removing the free Negro from the territory of the United States.

Henry Clay became an advocate for Africa as the most suitable place for a colony. In 1827, he delivered a speech before the American Colonization Society in the Hall of the House of Representatives, in which he stressed his opinion that there is a kind of "moral fitness" in the scheme of returning Africans to Africa. He referred to the other plans, but pointed out that they have not commended themselves to Colonizationists as a whole. He even saw colonization in Africa as being, perhaps, one of the "great designs of the Ruler of the Universe." The following extracts from the speech give us a great deal of insight into his views:

Of the utility of a total separation of the two incongruous portions of our population, supposing it to be practical, none have ever doubted. The mode of accomplishing that most desirable object has alone divided public opinion. Colonization in Haiti, for a time, had its partisans. Without throwing any impediments in the way of executing that scheme, the American Colonization Society has steadily adhered to its own. The Haitian project has passed away. Colonization beyond the Stony

57Pearl, Remarks on African Colonization, 12.
Mountains has sometimes been proposed; but it would be attended with an expense and difficulties far surpassing the African project, whilst it would not unite the same animating motives. There is a moral fitness in the idea of returning to Africa her children, whose ancestors have been torn from her by the ruthless hand of fraud and violence. Transplanted in a foreign land, they will carry back to their native soil the rich fruits of religion, civilization, law, and liberty. May it not be one of the great designs of the Ruler of the Universe...thus to transform an original crime into a signal blessing, to that most unfortunate portion of the Globe. Of all classes of our population, the most vicious is that of the free coloured. Contaminated themselves, they extend their vices to all around them, to the slaves and to the whites. If the principle of colonization should be confined to them; if a colony can be firmly established and successfully continued in Africa which should draw off annually an amount of that portion of our population equal to its annual increase, much good will be done. If the principle be adopted and applied by the States whose laws sanction the existence of slavery, to an extent equal to the annual increase of slaves, still greater good will be done. This good will be felt by the Africans who go, by the Africans who remain, by the white population of our country, by Africa and America...It is a circle of philanthropy, every segment of which tells and testifies to the beneficence of the whole.59

Since we are seeking to analyze some of the motives and attitudes involved in the colonization scheme, we must pause here and examine some of the elements of Clay's speech. The sentiments he expressed are basically the same as those of his first speech before the Colonization Society, and he continued to expound his views in later speeches.60 He is probably the most representative and eloquent exponent of the southern


60A speech by Clay before the Colonization Society of Kentucky, at Frankfort, December, 1829, African Repository, VI,1.
colonizationist viewpoint. The Colonization Society, through its official periodical, set the stamp of its approval upon him, and expressed the conviction that his speeches gave "an extensive and powerful impulse" to the work of colonization. There are evidences that his views were not shared by other leaders associated with him, and William Lloyd Garrison, the Abolitionist, singled out some of Clay's speeches for special attack.

Clay, in the speech quoted above, stressed in fervent words the missionary and civilizing aspects of African colonization. Yet it was evident that he sought to appeal to those motives which slave owners would approve. He also made some assumptions that could be, and were challenged. The free Negro was said to be so vicious that it was utterly impossible to fit him into American life. He must be removed far from the shores of the United States. He was a menace both to slaves and whites alike, because of his moral degradation. Nevertheless, Clay implied that transportation to Africa would transform him into a highly moral being, who would be able to civilize pagan African tribesmen!

He made no attempt to conceal the fact that the interests of the slave owners were at stake, and he seemed to entertain no doubt that free Negroes would want to leave the United States

61Ibid., 25.

for distant and hostile shores. There was something almost naive in his conviction that nothing but "good will" would be felt by all concerned with this "circle of philanthropy". He was to discover that this was not the case.

We now return to the memorial of January, 1817. When it was brought before the House of Representatives, it was referred to a committee consisting of Messrs. Pickering, Tucker, Comstock, Condict, Taggart, Gilley and Hooks. On February 11, these gentlemen brought in a report to the House, which may be summarized as follows:

After "deliberate consideration," the committee felt that the subject was of "such magnitude and attended with so many difficulties that they presented their views to the House with much diffidence." The colony that was proposed was distinct from the ordinary colonial settlement. It must, of necessity, be placed outside the limits of the United States, and those who went to it could not return to America. The committee did not think it was practicable to place such a colony on American soil, for even if land could be purchased within the limits of American territory, the transporting of colonists would be "vastly expensive, their subsistence for a time difficult, and a body of troops would be required for their protection."63 The fear was expressed that if the colony should become a nation, "quarrels

63 Alexander, 95.
and destructive wars would ensue, especially if slavery of people of colour should continue, and accompany the whites in their migrations.\textsuperscript{64} Therefore, the one land suitable seemed to be Africa, "the native land of the negroes." The committee asked the question: "Will it be expedient to attempt the establishment of a new colony in Africa, or to make to Great Britain a proposal to receive the emigrants from the United States into her colony at Sierra Leone?"

The committee drew up a joint resolution for both Houses of Congress, which was read and presented to a Committee of the whole House. It read:

\textbf{Resolved,} by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That the President be, and he is hereby, authorized to consult and negotiate with all the governments where ministers of the United States are, or shall be accredited, on the means of effecting an entire and immediate abolition of the traffic in slaves. And also to enter into a convention with the government of Great Britain, for receiving into the colony of Sierra Leone such of the free people of colour of the United States as, with their own consent, shall be carried thither ... And should this proposition not be accepted, then to obtain from Great Britain, and the other maritime powers, a stipulation, or a formal declaration to the same effect, guaranteeing a permanent neutrality, for any colony of free people of colour; which, at the expense and under the auspices of the United States, shall be established on the African coast.

\textbf{Resolved,} That adequate provision should hereafter be made to defray any necessary expenses which may be incurred in carrying the preceding resolution into effect.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{64}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{65}Ibid., 98.
However, Congress was not prepared to take action in this matter. There was other business before the House, and the report of the committee was not called up and acted upon during the session. But the Managers of the Colonization Society were determined to push their appeals to Congress, since they felt that their first memorial to the national legislature had awakened the public mind. Their next step was to take independent action in exploring the possibility of establishing a colony in Africa, and to procure a location where it might be planted and prosper.

In October, 1817, a committee was appointed to interview President Monroe, who, during his whole term as President, gave his active support to the Society. The Managers, in the same month, appointed two agents to represent them in Africa. The two were Samuel J. Mills and Ebenezer Burgess, and they were first assigned the task of exploring the West Coast of Africa for the purpose of finding a suitable spot for a colony. The instructions given them by the Society were of a very general nature. They were to embark first for London, and on arrival

66Spring, Memoir of Samuel J. Mills, 134.


68Half-Century Memorial, 73.

69Spring, 133.
there, were to obtain all information possible concerning the
country. They were also to obtain letters of introduction to
the Governor of Sierra Leone, and to other men of influence in
the colony.\textsuperscript{70} From London they were to proceed to the coast
of Africa, make Sierra Leone their base, and visit the coastal
region as extensively as possible. They were to consult with
local chiefs and tribesmen, locate a satisfactory site, and
discover if it might be purchased at a fair price for the pur-
poses of the colony.\textsuperscript{71} The letters of Samuel Mills, written
just before and after his departure, reveal a complete dedica-
tion to the task. With him, at least, the missionary motive
was a dominant one.\textsuperscript{72}

This sending of the two agents was a private undertaking
of the Colonization Society, and the Society bore the "great
expense" of it.\textsuperscript{73} Mills and Burgess arrived in England in
December, and were there courteously received by the Duke of
Gloucester, the Patron and President of the African Institu-
tion.\textsuperscript{74} They also met William Wilberforce, who introduced them
to Lord Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies. Bathurst

\textsuperscript{70}Ibid., 137.
\textsuperscript{71}Ibid., 138.
\textsuperscript{72}Many of his letters written between October, 1817 and
the time of his premature death in May, 1818, are reproduced in
Spring's Memoir, 138-221.
\textsuperscript{73}Second Annual Report of the A. C. S., 5.
\textsuperscript{74}Half-Century Memorial, 74, see appendix I of this
thesis.
gave them letters to the Governor and other officers of Sierra Leone, directing them to aid the two Americans in their explorations.75 On their arrival in Sierra Leone in March, 1818, Mills and Burgess were kindly received and given aid in accordance with the directive of the British Government. But both the English officials and traders plainly revealed their unwillingness to see an American colony established in their vicinity.76

They were, however, received with much less reserve by the Sierra Leone "Friendly Society." This organization had come into being through the influence of Paul Cuffee, an American Negro sea captain, who, in 1815, had taken thirty-eight Negroes from New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Africa, in his own ship, to establish them in Sierra Leone as colonists.77 Cuffee had borne the whole expense himself, spending some four thousand dollars. Mills and Burgess also received aid from a Negro named John Kizzell. Kizzell had been a slave in the West Indies and the United States, and had come to Sierra Leone by way of Nova Scotia after the Revolutionary War. He entered into the plans of Mills and Burgess with great eagerness, accompanied them on their explorations, and introduced them to some of the

75Ibid.

76The Origin and Purpose of African Colonization. An address before the American Colonization Society by President Sleyden of Liberia College, January 4, 1883 (Washington,1883), 9.

77Alexander, 102.
native chiefs, over whom he possessed a good deal of influence.\textsuperscript{76}

The two emissaries of the Colonization Society examined the coast as far as Sherbro, and obtained promises that, on the arrival of colonists, suitable land would be granted them for a settlement. On May 22, they embarked for England on their homeward voyage, but Mills died at sea on June 16, being only thirty-six years old.\textsuperscript{79} Burgess returned home to inform the society that, despite the unwillingness of some of the British, a "safe landing" could be effected and a colony planted only at Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{80}

The Colonization Society now knew that territory could be procured and a colony planted in Africa. But there were only three thousand dollars in the treasury, and receipts at the time amounted to less than one hundred dollars per month. Congress was their one hope. A letter was therefore sent to Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives. It was signed by a committee composed of Elias E. Caldwell, General Walter Jones, and Francis Scott Key, and was submitted to the House of Representatives in January, 1819.\textsuperscript{81} Reference was made to the efforts of the Society in sending out Mills and Burgess, and it

\textsuperscript{76}Half-Century Memorial, 74.

\textsuperscript{79}Spring, 236.

\textsuperscript{80}Facts in Regard to African Colonization, 6.

\textsuperscript{81}Reports of Committees, 27th Congress, 3rd Session, Document No. 283, 223-225.
was pointed out that the Society had originated with private individuals who were moved by philanthropic considerations. The letter reminded Congress that the preliminary expense of exploring a site in Africa had been borne by the Society. Now the time had come when colonization must receive the support of the Federal Government:

"It is now reduced to the single question whether the undertaking shall be adopted and patronized by the Government, so as to become national in its means and objects; or whether its ultimate success is to depend upon the responsibility and exertions of individuals, whose zeal and perseverance ... may be surely counted upon, but whose unprotected exertions and unaided resources, whether of power or of capital, must necessarily be contingent and precarious, if not in their ultimate effect, at least in the acceleration of the results. It is now conceived to be apparent, that, with adequate aid and sanction from the Government, the present generation cannot pass away without permanent, practical, and important benefits from the experiment." 82

The letter concluded with a paragraph indicating that the Society had numerous proofs of the great value of colonization. It also charged that the laws passed by the United States and other nations to control the slave trade were being flagrantly violated by the citizens of the countries concerned.

Congress, however, treated this letter as it treated all the other quite numerous letters and memorials which were presented to it by the Society over a period of years. It referred them to committees which brought in favorable reports year after year. Congress, however, always evaded the responsibility of

82 Ibid.
making a direct appropriation to provide transportation for free
negroes to Africa, or to bear the expense of a settlement to
which they might go. Yet some financial provision was made
available to the Society through other channels of government.
For the influence of the Society was beginning to spread widely.83

President Monroe did not share with Congress the disposition
to leave the matter of colonization in the hands of private
individuals and groups who might be depended upon to act from
philanthropic motives. He took advantage of an Act of Congress
of March 2, 1807, which had prohibited the importation of slaves
after the end of the year. This Act expressly empowered the
President of the United States "to instruct and direct the com-
manders of the public armed vessels, to seize and bring into
ports of the United States, all ships or vessels thereof, when-
ever contravening the act." Such vessels were subject to con-
demnation, "as prizes taken from an enemy in open war," and
their commanders were to receive "exemplary punishment."84 How-
ever, while the importer was punished, the slave so imported
became subject to the laws of the state in which he was found.
Hence, in several of the states, laws were enacted and legal pro-
ceedings devised, under which it was still found profitable to
import slaves while incurring the penalty. The penalty was even

83Thomas Hodgkin, M.D., An Inquiry into the Merits of the
American Colonization Society (London, 1833), 5.

84Second Annual Report of the A. C. S., 16.
evaded frequently. The State of Georgia first interfered with these practices of the slave-traders, and provided a precedent which President Monroe followed in aiding the work of the Colonization Society.

The Georgia Legislature, on December 19, 1817, empowered the Governor to take all imported slaves out of the hands of private speculators, and to sell them at auction for the benefit of the State treasury. If the Colonization Society would undertake to transport them to Africa, then the Governor might aid the Society in any way he thought expedient. This was the first official movement, if not the first suggestion for the return of recaptured slaves to Africa. This enactment by Georgia, and especially its implementation aroused considerable criticism, but the Colonization Society agreed to take such recaptured and confiscated slaves in charge, and to restore them to their native land, provided the government of the United States would assign an agent to the colony. An Act of Congress of April 20, 1818, increased the penalties for those who imported slaves, but such slaves were still subject to the laws of the various states. Africans were still imported into the country, and many realized the inefficacy of the existing laws against slavery.

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8527th Congress, 3rd Session, House Document No. 283, 228.
86Half-Century Memorial, 76, Cf. Infra, 47, 48.
87Andrew H. Foote, Africa and the American Flag (New York, 1854), 112. Foote was an American naval commander assigned to duty off the coast of Africa, 1850-51.
A new enactment was needed by Congress, and in January, 1819, General Mercer procured the drafting of a bill to remedy the evil of slave importation. It passed both Houses, and was approved by President Monroe on March 3. By this Act, all slaves imported into the United States, or even taken at sea by commanders of American ships were to be kept in the custody of the United States Government until they could be removed beyond the limits of the country. It was further provided that the President was to appoint an agent or agents on the coast of Africa to receive any Africans who might be returned to their own soil. The sum of one hundred thousand dollars was appropriated to care for the expense. Thus the government became connected with the Colonization Society. The United States, according to the broad interpretation given by President Monroe to the new law, was now committed to provide for the "reception, subsistence, and protection" of all recaptured slaves until they could be returned to their homes or support themselves. The Act not only made more rigorous the efforts to annihilate the slave trade. It made such measures as those adopted by Georgia less probable, by limiting the power of the individual States to appropriate and sell recaptured slaves. At the same time it made possible joint action by the government and Colonization

90 Facts in Regard to African Colonization, 6.
91 Foote, 112.
Society in Africa. Monroe's interpretation of the law is given in his Presidential Message to Congress on December 17, 1819:

It is enjoined on the Executive to cause all negroes, mulattoes, or persons of color, who may be taken under the act, to be removed to Africa. It is the obvious import of the law that none of the persons thus taken should remain within the United States, and no place other than the coast of Africa being designated, their removal or delivery, whether carried from the United States or landed immediately from the vessels in which they were taken, was supposed to be confined to that coast. No settlement or station being specified, the whole coast was thought to be left open for the selection of a proper place ... The executive is authorized to appoint one or more agents residing there to receive such persons, and $100,000 are appropriated for the general purposes of the law.92

Before proceeding to an investigation of the measures adopted to make this act effective in its application to a colony in West Africa, we must note the rapid development of the Society through its auxiliary societies in the various states, as well as the source of its financial support.

The Board of Managers recognized the need for taking their cause directly to the people. Their early organization provided for (1) a parent organization in Washington, (2) state auxiliary societies as far as possible in every state of the Union, and (3) societies in every county of every state, which were to be auxiliary to the state societies.93 These auxiliary societies spread across the country, and there was a time when they numbered

92 Messages and Papers of the Presidents, ed. James D. Richardson (Washington, 1900), II, 63.

about one hundred and fifty. The efficiency of the national society was further increased by the creation of "Committees of Correspondence," in which were to be found some very influential men. One cannot read the records of the Colonization Society without being impressed with the quality of the men, not only in the national body, but also in the local groups, who lent their names, gave financial aid, and labored to promote the aims and purposes of the movement during its early existence. The first five presidents were all men of note. On January 1, 1817, Judge Bushrod Washington became president. On January 18, 1830, Charles Carroll of Carrollton succeeded him. After Carroll's death, former President James Madison became head of the Society on January 20, 1833. On December 15, 1836, Henry Clay took the presidency, and was succeeded on January 19, 1853, by J.H.B. Latrobe of Maryland.

It should be noted that Henry Clay occupied the presidency for almost two decades until his death in 1852. He was followed by J.H. Latrobe, who continued as president down to the close of the century, and saw the culmination of the changes begun in the time of Clay. Even before the Civil War, the leadership of the Society had passed from the hands of government representa-

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94 Fox, 372.
95 Sixth Annual Report, 68.
96 Half-Century Memorial, 75.
sentatives and southerners into the hands of those who came from private groups and from the North. The vice-presidencies came largely under the control of clergymen,98 and the domination of the movement by southern statesmen became a thing of the past. During the period we are considering, however, some of the most illustrious names of the South are to be found in the annual reports of the state and national societies. An example is Virginia. In 1833, the president of the Virginia Colonization Society was John Marshall, of the Supreme Court, who for many years had been an advocate of the strict application of the law of 1819,99 while among the vice-presidents were John Tyler and James Madison. In the same state, the president of the Loudoun County Colonization Society was James Monroe.100 The potential of this movement in its early years was tremendous, and it is, perhaps, not to be wondered at that colonizationists were at times more than optimistic in their hope that the Colonization Society would provide the one solution to the great Negro problem.101

By 1830 there were fifteen state colonization societies and 111 county and town auxiliaries.102 In 1838, auxiliary societies

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98Ibid., 18.
100Ibid., IX, 24-25.
102A Few Facts Respecting the A.C.S. (1830), 3.
were found in all the states and territories, except Rhode Island, Michigan, Arkansas, and South Carolina.103 Besides this, "a large number of men of distinguished eminence in different parts of the Union had warmly espoused the cause of the Society," while "nearly all the ecclesiastical bodies of the United States had, by resolutions, solemnly expressed their opinion that this Society merits the consideration and favor of the whole Christian community, and earnestly recommended it to their patronage."104

Since Congress continued unwilling to make any appropriation of funds for the work of the Society, the Managers decided to establish a system for obtaining funds for their venture.105 The first procedure was the appointing of thirteen agents, who were assigned the task of arousing interest and collecting money in various parts of the country. Their services at first seem to have been largely voluntary, and among the first agents were Francis Scott Key, General Walter Jones, William H. Fitzhugh, and General C. F. Mercer, all men of note.106 Later, agents were appointed as general representatives of the Society in certain areas, and they became responsible for the promoting of auxiliary societies. They worked with state legislatures, corresponded on

103 *African Repository*, XIV, 100.
104 *A Few Facts*, 4.
105 Ibid., 3.

This whole document is a most valuable source of information on the origin and development of the Colonization Society and its relations with the United States Government.
behalf of the Society, and were responsible for the raising of funds. During the following two or three decades these agencies were the most important sources of revenue for the Colonization Society.107

The second source of revenue was the far-flung system of auxiliary societies, which, within fifteen years of the founding of the Society were found across the country.108 Many thousands of dollars were sent annually by these cooperating groups to the general funds of the parent Society. Among the first auxiliary societies which provided substantial financial aid were the Maryland Society in Baltimore, the Auxiliary Society at Annapolis, and a group of "Members for Life" belonging to the Auxiliary Society of Washington. Among this last group, John Marshall headed the list of distinguished subscribers in 1819.109

Some funds were voted for the Society by state legislatures. This, however, was not found to be a dependable source of income. Maryland and Virginia were the leaders in this matter, but independent action by Maryland in founding her own colony in Africa, and restrictions imposed by Virginia, prevented the Society from receiving much financial benefit from the decisions of these

107 Twenty-Fourth Annual Report (Washington, 1941), 4-5.
Individuals as well as groups were disposed to be generous in supporting the work of colonization. This was shown by the number of private gifts made by people in many parts of the nations, and also by legacies left in wills. Among those who gave substantial sums were John Marshall, Gerrit Smith, Colonel Rutgers of New York, Courtland Van Renssaeler, J. H. McClure of Kentucky, and others. Judge John Workman of New Orleans, Joseph Childers of Mississippi, and former President James Madison left very substantial legacies to the Society, Madison also including a grist mill and lot. The African Repository, official organ of the Colonization Society, contains many references to such gifts, printing long lists of donors. No one reading the information found in the pages of this periodical can doubt the generous spirit and philanthropic motives of people everywhere in the Union at this time. Several financial plans were inaugurated to support the work of the Society. One was the "Transportation Subscription" plan, which aimed at obtaining thirty dollars from a number of different individuals, this being the estimated cost of passage for an adult to Liberia during the first years of the Society's existence. Another plan which was proposed was


111African Repository, XII, 237.

112Ibid., V, 95.
designed to raise $20,000 for the Society by subscriptions of fifty dollars obtained from interested persons. The most ambitious plan was that sponsored by Gerrit Smith, who later left the Society and became an Abolitionist. He advocated the raising of a sum of $100,000 over a ten year period by securing one hundred subscribers who would each pay one hundred dollars annually during that time. Smith himself headed the list of subscribers, and some well-known colonizationists followed his example. Scores of thousands of dollars were raised by this plan. Among other plans was one which had for its goal the purchasing of a ship which the Society could use for transporting negroes to Africa. The estimated cost of such a vessel was $20,000. There was a conviction among many colonizationists at this time that considerable sums of money would soon be at their disposal, especially if Congress could be persuaded to make appropriations for the Society.

Many of the churches became supporters of the work of colonization. They saw in the scheme an opportunity for doing a much needed missionary work in Africa, and they became an important source of revenue for the Society. A statement by the Managers in 1832 reveals the part the churches had come to play in

113 Ibid., V, 129.
114 Ibid., V, 33.
115 Ibid., V, 32.
providing funds, especially through the Fourth of July collections which were taken up by congregations in almost every part of the United States. In May, 1832, one of the Society's representatives wrote:

We need not inform our readers, generally, that the Colonization Society depends, in a great measure, for the means of prosecuting its enterprise upon the contributions made to its funds, in the Churches on the Fourth of July or on some Sabbath near to that day. The Christian community has felt to a great extent, that no charity was so appropriate to the season of thanksgiving for our National Independence and prosperity as that which would confer upon the wretched children of Africa similar blessings... We fervently pray that all the Clergy and Congregations of this land will lay the claims of Africa to heart; that they will feel that her interests are entrusted to their care... Let after ages read upon the monument of our fame, "America glorious in achieving her own Independence, but more glorious as the Benefactress of Africa."

Among the religious bodies which cooperated in giving to the work of colonization was the Society of Friends. The Friends in North Carolina and other states gave specifically to the transportation of free Negroes to Africa. Some of the emigrants they provided for were Negroes who had been "under the special guardianship and protection" of the Society of Friends before their emigration. The Order of Freemasons also took an interest in the venture, and in Maryland the Order sent a cir-

116 *African Repository*, VIII, 94.

cular letter to all the lodges urging support of the Society. Few organizations have drawn together such varied elements in a cooperative task. An interesting evaluation of its significance and appeal is found in a report presented by J. P. Kennedy to the House of Representatives in behalf of the Committee on Commerce:

The Society was founded in December, 1816. It comprised many eminent individuals from the various States; was characterized by its freedom from sectional distinctions; enlisted the aid of men from everywhere in the Union; and was generally received and applauded as a beneficent and highly national undertaking. The colonization venture was thought by now to have demonstrated itself to be "practicable and capable of indefinite extension," and among the public expressions made by active participants in the scheme are statements which reveal moods varying from cautious optimism to the most definite assurances that at last a way had been found to solve what was considered the most serious problem confronting the new American nation. Colonizationists were aware of the variety of motives that were within their ranks, yet it was recognized even by outside observers that "the principal motive appears to be to benefit the Coloured population." The Kennedy report cited above

120 Ibid., 2.
121 Hodgkin, An Inquiry into ... the A.C.S., 6.
admitted that other efforts so far put forth in behalf of Ne-
groes had been "comparatively unsuccessful" to assist that por-
tion of the colored population "which though not loaded with
servile chains, is nevertheless suffering from the pains of
slavery, and, with but few exceptions, reduced to a miserable
and degraded rank in society." The reference is, of course, to
free Negroes.

The emphasis placed upon the social and moral menace pre-
sented by the free Negroes was stressed mostly during the first
years of the colonization movement. Later advocates of the work
of the Society avoided the use of such strong language as that
used by Henry Clay. A moderate statement of a middle position
between that of an extreme antagonist of free Negroes and a per-
son moved by almost pure missionary and humanitarian sentiments
was made by General R. G. Harper, of Maryland. He was one of
the seventeen distinguished men who served as vice-presidents
of the Society in 1823,122 and he stated the objectives of the
colonizationists as follows:

They are, in the first place, to aid ourselves by
relieving us from a species of population pregnant
with future danger and present inconvenience; to
advance the interest of the United States, by re-
moving a great public evil; to promote the benefit
of the individuals removed, as well as those of
the same race that yet remain; and finally, to
benefit Africa, by spreading knowledge and freedom

122 Among these were Henry Clay, William H. Crawford, Daniel
Webster, the President of Yale College, The Bishop of Pennsyl-
van ia, and Generals Harper, Cocke, Mercer, and Mason. See Sixth
Annual Report (1823), 5.
on a continent that now contains 150 millions of people, plunged in all the degradation of idolatry, superstition and ignorance. All these objects are embraced in the vast enterprise in which we have engaged.123

Here again, some eight years after the formation of the Colonization Society, it is clear that General Harper is speaking for those who acted from "a combined motive of benevolence and self-interest."124 He expected that some Negroes would remain in the United States (as slaves), and he thought they would benefit from the deportation of the free Negroes.

At approximately the same time that General Harper made his speech, the Colonization Society issued a statement. It probably states the aims and spirit of the leading colonizationists at that time as clearly as anything we can find. At least it represents the opinions of those who were still committed to the preservation of the institution of slavery. It was evidently made for the purpose of dispelling some misunderstandings which prevailed:

Such is the history of the American Colonization Society. Its design is general - the benefit of the whole African race. Its plan of operation is specific - the establishment on the coast of Africa of a colony of free People of Colour from America. It is not a missionary society, nor a society for the suppression of the slave-trade, nor a society for the improvement of the Blacks, nor a society for the abolition of slavery: it is simply a society for establishing a colony on the coast of Africa:

124Hodgkin, 6.
and so far as any of these other objects are attained by its efforts, they must be attained either as the means or as the consequences of establishing that colony. But limited as are the operations of the institution it appears to us to be the only institution which promises any great or effectual result for the benefit of the Black population of our country. A single glance at the condition of these beings, and at the obstacles which lie in the way of their improvement, is enough to convince us of this. 125

The foregoing was carefully worded to avoid giving any loophole to those who were abolitionists. Yet it is clear that the Society was disturbed by the continued existence of slavery. Hence in the same report an attempt was made to pacify both South and North by the assurance that "the condition of the slave in most parts of the United States in general is as much superior to that of a slave in the West Indies, as the condition of an American farmer is to that of an Irish peasant." 126 This was supposed to bring comfort to abolitionists and slave-owners. At the same time both groups were to understand that the Society would not commit itself to a condoning of slavery as a permanent institution. The Society felt it necessary to make a further statement which does not exactly agree with what had already been said about the happy condition of the slaves:

But there is another still more important character of the condition of our Coloured population, in comparison with which every other circumstance dwindles into insignificance, and from which all that we have already said is only a single necessary consequence; we mean, slavery:

125Seventh Annual Report, 86. ( Italics in the document).
126Ibid., 88.
and on this subject we must express ourselves, briefly, yet boldly. We have heard of slavery as it exists in Asia, and Africa, and Turkey; we have heard of the feudal slavery under which the peasantry of Europe have groaned from the days of Alaric until now; but excepting only the horrible system of the West India Islands, we have never heard of slavery in any country, ancient or modern, Pagan, Mohammedan or Christian, so terrible in its character, so pernicious in its tendency, so remediless in its anticipated results, as the slavery which exists in the United States.127

This is plain language, and would not be well received by the average slave owner in or out of the colonization movement. It is not difficult to trace a struggle of conscience in such documents. The Society was clearly anxious to have people understand that the colonizationists even in the South had confronted the issue of slavery frankly. Some of the "great men of the south," had seen in slavery a moral problem. It was pointed out that Judge Bushrod Washington, who was then president of the Colonization Society, had recently declared slavery to be an "inherent vice in the community."128 Since Thomas Jefferson was still alive, and had once written in favor of colonization, the report drew attention to statements he had made. Among the quotations given were the following:

The whole commerce between master and slave, is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one hand, and degrading submission on the other... .

127 Ibid.
128 Ibid., 89.
The Almighty has no attribute which can take side
with us in such a contest .... I tremble for my country
when I reflect that God is just, and that His justice
cannot sleep forever.129

The report also referred to Jefferson's expressed fear that
the Negroes might rise in revolt and demand their freedom. Act-
ually Jefferson was not a true representative of the slave owner
of the South, nor had he taken any part in the formation of the
Colonization Society. But the colonizationists were laboring
hard to justify themselves in the eyes of both the North and
South. Their recognition of the evil of slavery in a general
sort of way would not seriously hurt them in the South, while
they hoped their words might pacify those who charged them with
pro-slavery sentiments and aims.130

Their protests, however, could not be too convincing while
such an active and noted member of their group as Henry Clay
made the speeches he did. Speaking in Washington on January 20,
1827, Clay insisted that "this Society is well aware... that they
cannot touch the question of slavery."131 He was then a vice-
president of the Society and one of the chief advocates of the
theory that if the free Negroes could be disposed of by a systema-
tic colonization scheme, the slave problem would take care of
itself. He seemed to see a kind of natural law behind the

129Ibid.; Quoted from Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, VIII,
403.

130African Colonization, I, 7.

process. As the population of the country increased, the value of slave labor would diminish because of the superior advantages in the employment of free labor. He declared: "When the value of slave labour shall be materially lessened either by the multiplication of the supply of slaves beyond the demand, or by the competition between slave and free labour, the annual increase of slaves will be reduced, in consequence of the abatement of the motives to provide for and rear the offspring."\textsuperscript{132} There was something almost naively Malthusian about this. To Clay slavery was an economic problem, and neither the Society nor any other group had the right to tamper with it in those States where it was tolerated or established.\textsuperscript{133} His approach to the question was essentially that expressed in the Second Annual Report of the Society. Colonizationists "had no intention of interfering, in any way, with the rights or the interests of the proprietors of slaves." While it was acknowledged that slavery was "a great moral evil," those who spoke for the Society "cherished the hope and belief that the successful prosecution of their object would offer powerful motives and exert a persuasive influence in favour of voluntary emancipation."\textsuperscript{134} The Third Annual Report also expressed "the hope of the gradual and utter abolition of slavery, in a manner consistent with the rights, interests, and happiness

\textsuperscript{132} African Colonization, I, 9.

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 11.

\textsuperscript{134} Hodgkin, 8.
of Society."¹³⁵ This approach was insisted upon as long as men like Clay continued in the leadership of the Colonization Society.¹³⁶ Yet there were evidences of a clash between Clay and other leaders among the colonizationists as early as 1827. Clay seems to have been accused of using the Colonization Society to advance his own political interests.¹³⁷

Yet the rise and development of the American Colonization Society during its earlier years is impressive. In the number and type of people who gave it their support, in the variety of their attitudes and motives, in the fusion of government, social, philanthropic, and religious interests within it, and in the great promise that its first efforts presented, few movements in American history can match it. Year after year, for a quarter of a century, the names of some of the most eminent men in the annals of the United States appear on the lists of its presidents, vice-presidents, Boards of Managers, and subscribers.¹³⁸ Thousands of dollars were subscribed annually by church groups, charitable organizations, and private individuals, including the governors of States in the Union.¹³⁹ Liberia was founded, and hopes were raised that this would be only the first colonizing venture.

¹³⁵Third Annual Report, 29.
¹³⁶Thirty-Sixth Annual Report, 3.
¹³⁷Fox, 83.
¹³⁸See the Annual Reports of the Society.
¹³⁹African Repository, I, 380; V, 362; II, 224-228.
Men in government tried to make colonization a national responsibility, and the Society made constant appeals to Congress for financial support.\textsuperscript{140} State Colonization Societies founded their own colonies, and ardent colonizationists thought that all the Negroes from the country might be deported to Africa.\textsuperscript{141} At first slave-owners worked with abolitionists but most abolitionists later became violently opposed to colonization. Dr. Lyman Beecher, President of Lane Theological Seminary, Cincinnati, though an abolitionist, supported colonization. In a letter to Arthur Tappan, Beecher wrote: "I am not apprised of the ground of controversy between the colonizationists and the abolitionists. I am myself both, without perceiving in myself an inconsistency."\textsuperscript{142}

The Society held together in its early history because of a compromise. Yet one is able to discern from time to time tension. This may be noted at the annual meeting of the Society held in the Supreme Court Room in Washington on February 19, 1825. The guest of honor was General Lafayette of France, who was not only made a member of the Society, but also, by a special resolution, made a vice-president. His name was added to an imposing vice-

\textsuperscript{140}Ibid., II, 388.

\textsuperscript{141}Ohio In Africa, in Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio Quarterly, VI, 101.

\textsuperscript{142}Movement in Ohio to Deport the Negro, in Hist. and Phil. Society of Ohio Quarterly, VII, 75.
presidential list of eighteen other eminent men. 143 Despite the presence of the famous guest, Ralph Randolph Gurley, the Secretary of the Society, rose to present a resolution which revealed an unwillingness on his part to ignore the moral issues of the Negro question. He said that he believed the Society "should trust for its success rather to moral principle, and to its influence on the moral opinions of the country, than to interest or expediency." He was convinced that advancement of the colonization cause would greatly contribute to the wealth and public good of the country; but he asserted that the Society should direct its appeals to the moral feelings of their countrymen. While there was need for "patience, candour, disinterestedness, and resolution," he believed the Society should conceal nothing from public view, but should "tear away every veil, and expose the dark as well as the bright spots in our object." He concluded: "Let us appeal to the moral sense of the community - be calm and uniform - but if our enemies oppose, valiantly encounter them." 144

Other parts of this resolution also contained expressions and a crusading spirit that were not to the taste of men of the pro-slavery persuasion. It is significant that later Gurley, "at the request of one of the Managers," withdrew his resolution. 145

144 African Repository, I, 19.
145 Ibid., 17.
Compromise was the sine qua non of the colonization movement. Its leaders believed they were justified in making concessions of principle if thereby enough strength could be obtained to influence public opinion and enlist government support. But to many people, especially to Abolitionists, it seemed that the biggest concessions were being made by those opposed to slavery.

One of the best summaries of the conflicting elements found in the colonization venture was made by the President of Liberia College in a speech before the Colonization Society on January 14, 1883:

Like all great movements which are the outcome of human needs and have in view the amelioration of large masses of people, it attracted to its support at the opening of its career, men of conflicting views and influenced by diverse motives. Some of its adherents gave one reason for their allegiance, others gave another; and sometimes to the superficial observer or to the cautious opponent, these different reasons furnished grounds for animadversions against the Society. Though it owed its origin to the judicious heads and the philanthropic hearts of some of the best men that ever occupied positions of prominence and trust in this nation, yet there were those who ridiculed the scheme as wild and unpractical. Some opposed it because they loved the Negro; others discountenanced it because they hated the Negro. Some considered that the Society in wishing to give him an opportunity for self-government, placed too high an estimate upon his ability; others thought that the idea of sending him away to a barbarous shore was a disparaging comment upon his capacity, and robbing him of his right to remain and thrive in the land of his birth. To not a few who neither loved nor hated the Negro - but were simply indifferent to him - the idea of transporting a few emancipated slaves to Africa with the hope of bringing about a general exodus of the millions in this country, or of building up a nation in that far-off land of such material, seemed absurd and ridiculous.146

But whatever their opponents thought, those who supported the Society were confident of success as they launched their first colonization project in Africa. And to that we now turn.
THE LIBERIA EXPERIMENT
CHAPTER III
THE LIBERIA EXPERIMENT

We have seen that by the Act of Congress of March 3, 1819, the President of the United States had been empowered to appoint agents to represent the American Government on the West Coast of Africa. We have seen also that the Colonization Society had acted privately in sending Mills and Burgess to Africa to investigate possible sites for a colony. President Monroe, having "taken a lively interest in the subject" of colonization, now initiated steps to make the Act of Congress operative.\(^1\) He appointed Samuel Bacon and John P. Bankson as government agents to reside on the coast of Africa, with instructions to cooperate with the representatives of the American Colonization Society.\(^2\) The President then chartered the ship Elizabeth, and authorized the embarkation of a number of "coloured people of unexceptionable character, who had sometime before contemplated emigrating to Africa."\(^3\) They were placed under the direction of Mr. Bacon, chief agent and Mr. Bankson his assistant. Dr. Samuel Crozer was appointed sole agent of the Colonization Society, and he

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1Journal of Daniel Coker (Baltimore, 1820), in *African Colonization Pamphlets* (Newberry Library Collection No. 2), iv.


was provided with "goods and stores for the purchase of land and the use of the immigrants." 4

The Elizabeth was a vessel of three hundred tons. When she sailed from New York on February 6, 1820, she had on board eighty-eight emigrants from Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York. They had been recommended by the Society, and were considered to be attached to this joint agency of the government. They were entirely subject to its control until they reached their destination and were regularly discharged. They were then to erect cottages for at least three hundred recaptured slaves. 5 The government placed more than $30,000 in the hands of Mr. Bacon to provide for the expenses of the voyage. It also despatched a warship for protection and aid. 6 This sloop, the Cyane, was commanded by Captain Trenchard, who was commissioned to cruise on the African coast and to seize any American vessels he might find engaged in the slave traffic. 7

The official instructions given to the expedition required it to make the Island of Sherbro its first destination, since this had been the site suggested by Mills and Burgess. Either on the island itself or some more eligible spot, the people and

4Half-Century Memorial of the A.C.S., 78.

5Slaves taken from slave ships by U.S. naval vessels and brought back to Africa.


stores were to be landed. When the cottages were erected, the colonists were to proceed to plant and cultivate corn and vegetables, and by their own industry to make themselves self-supporting as soon as possible. Since the Colonization Society expected to purchase lands, its officers drew up and delivered to Dr. Crozer a clear set of rules to be observed in the distribution of lands to the settlers and the general conduct of the colony. The Society was anxious, not only to induce the emigrants to stay, but also to avoid possible causes of dispute. Its desire for equity, as well as for permanency, is manifest in the following rules:

Every man arriving married or marrying in the colony, within one year from its commencement, to receive twenty-five acres for himself, twenty-four for his wife, and ten for each child, as near the town as convenient, and every family is entitled to a lot in the town.

Every single man to receive thirty acres in the country, and a lot in the town.

Minors and females not included in the former classes, to be entitled each to twenty-five acres of land without the town.

Labourers and mechanics, as a motive to industry and good conduct, to receive, at the discretion of the agents, each ten acres in addition to the allotment above specified.

The agents only are entitled to buy or negotiate with the natives for land.

The colonists, in order to hold their lots and lands, must reside in the colony, and cultivate them.

Grants forfeitable by misconduct.

Many of the earliest and most distinguished friends of

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8 Alexander, 115.
9 Ibid., 116.
African colonization, both in and out of Congress, regarded this first venture as experimental, and preliminary to action by the government. At the outset, the Board of Managers expressed the opinion that Congress ought to take under its protection the colony already planted, to make provision for its increase by suitable appropriations of money, and, by authorizing the President to make further purchases of lands from the natives, to provide for its security, internal and external, by such regulations for its temporary government as might be deemed advisable. They wished also that the President be authorized to employ a suitable naval force, "as well for the more effectual suppression of the slave trade as for the purpose of impressing the natives with respect for the establishment." Congress was also asked to make provision for the purchase, from time to time, of suitable territories on the southwestern coast of Africa, for the establishment of other similar colonies, "with due regard to the national resources and to the public good." The Colonizationists had great expectations regarding the growth of their movement. Optimism was also expressed by some of those already in Africa. One of these was John Kizzel, whom we have already seen

11 Ibid.
12 Ibid., 3,4.
aiding Mills and Burgess in 1818. Kizzel wrote to Bushrod
Washington, President of the Colonization Society, not long after
the arrival of the first colonists on the Elizabeth, painting a
glowing picture of the country. He asked that more "people of
colour" be sent. "You cannot send too many," he wrote. "Let
them come and sit down in our valleys, and on our hills, and
near our rivers, and all the country will soon break into song.
The Sherbro country is full of meat and fish, and bread, and
oil, and honey." He desired that people be sent to eat these
good things. Some of the Colonizationists who had never seen
Africa began to dwell almost as extravagantly as Kizzel on the
resources and healthful climate of West Africa.

Among the problems of establishing a group of people in a
new situation is that of preserving unity and good feeling. As
previously noted, provision was made by the United States govern-
ment and the Society for promoting security, stability and some
measure of discipline among the colonists. But in our study of
motives and attitudes, we must take cognizance of the spirit of
the emigrants themselves. Despite the claim by the Society that
they had been careful in choosing the passengers for the Elizabeth,
there was enough of human frailty in the group to create
problems. Trouble started during the voyage, which took from
February 5 to March 9. A quarrel developed between the ship's

14Letter of John Kizzel, in Address of the Board of Mana-
crew and some of the emigrants, which threatened to assume serious proportions. One of the passengers even had a personal encounter with the captain, Mr. Sabor, who sent for his pistols.\textsuperscript{16} 

Secon, the government agent, managed to prevent bloodshed, but during the remainder of the voyage it was evident that a mutinous spirit existed, which might break out and give further trouble if another crisis developed.\textsuperscript{17}

Daniel Coker, the diarist of the voyage, wrote that most of those who embarked in the \textit{Elizabeth} had long contemplated settling abroad. He was hopeful that the emigrants would be able to establish themselves in Africa, become the founders of the first colony, and prepare the way for others to follow.\textsuperscript{18} Coker had been the ordained minister of "a large and respectable congregation of coloured people" in Baltimore. He appears to have been a man of discretion and ability, coming to the front as a very capable leader in the early days of uncertainty and trial.\textsuperscript{19}

Associated with him was another free Negro, Nathaniel Peck, of whom Coker spoke as his son.\textsuperscript{20} He, too exercised a stabilizing influence.

The religious emphasis was strong among the leaders of this

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., 16.

\textsuperscript{17}Alexander, 116.

\textsuperscript{18}Journal of Daniel Coker, v, (Introduction).

\textsuperscript{19}An Enquiry into the \ldots Am. Colonization Society, 7.

\textsuperscript{20}Appendix to Coker's Journal, 45-46.
first expedition. Agent Bacon himself was an Episcopal clergy-
man, and prior to his appointment by President Monroe, had been
active in the work of the Colonization Society in the United
states.21 Amid the cares that began to press upon him, he con-
tinued to preach on board ship and after he arrived in Africa,
laboring almost beyond his strength to help the infant colony.22

One of the officers of the Cyane wrote of him:

Mr. Bacon's health is remarkably good, and he has not
lost any of his sanguine disposition; indeed, I think him
adorably calculated for the employment in which he is
engaged. He labours night and day, with the utmost cheer-
fulness, and appears to be a man possessing the strongest
principles of philanthropy.23

It was an unfortunate loss for the new colony when he died
less than two months after the arrival of the immigrants.

Daniel Coker was also deeply religious, though he was also
very practical. He was by no means deficient in courage, and
was ready to take aggressive measures against the slave traders.

A letter written to Philip E. Thomas of Baltimore, less than
three weeks after the arrival of the immigrants, revealed his
spirit and attitudes. The letter reflected not only his confi-
dence in the future of the colony, but also his determination
to fight for the principles for which it stood. He wrote:

21Alexander, 113.

22Journal of Daniel Coker, 18, 19, 25,27.

23Letters from officers of the Cyane in the "Postscript to
Esteemed friend, - This is to inform you of my good health and safe arrival in Africa. We have had some hardships to encounter, and expect to meet with more; but on the whole I am encouraged. I have sent my journal to the managers of your society. I should write more, but have not time. We are just fitting out a barge to go to Sea-bar. John Kezzel and I was yesterday to see King Sherbro, and heard that there was one hundred Africans then on shore, in irons, and a slave ship waiting to take them in - only waiting for one hundred more. We are going in a barge to try to get them away. I hope that God will aid us; it is a dangerous attempt. I am much pleased with Africa; but I expect to suffer much. Please to send my dear family as soon as possible, and be so good as to that they are provided for, and try to send me something to eat, wear, or as presents. For presents, leaf tobacco, cotton cloth, or calico. I will thank you for some clothing for myself. I would mention several things, but have not time. But anything that is of use in America, is useful here. Please to send me a little tea, coffee, sugar, and molasses. Farewell, I must be gone to see after these poor slaves.24

It is impossible not to be impressed with a man like this, who, though about to depart on a dangerous mission in behalf of captured slaves, wrote calmly of details concerned with his family's emigration and the practical affairs of life. Unfortunately no record has been left to tell what, if any, were the results of the expected clash with the slavers.

Coker, like Bacon, was moved by a definite missionary motive, yet he struck hard at sectarianism. Writing to his "dear African brethren in America", he urged all planning to come to the colony to come with the purpose of avoiding the petty strife in religion they might have known in America:

We wish to know nothing of Bethel and Sharp Street25

24Letter No.VI in Appendix to Daniel Coker's Journal. 47.
25Two rival Negro congregations in Baltimore.
in Africa - leave all these divisions in America. Before these heathens, all should be ... united; and if darkness is driven from this land, it must be by a united effort among Christians... Come in love ... do good, and spread the gospel, for nothing but love and union will do good among these heathens.

Unfortunately for the new colony, not all the emigrants were moved by the same motives of piety, nor did they all have the courage and determination of Coker and Bacon. Consequently, when difficulties began to multiply, some of the newcomers began to display decidedly unfavorable traits of character and conduct.

Several factors worked against the settlement from the very beginning. The time of arrival was unfortunate. It was the commencement of the rainy season, when fever-bearing mosquitoes were numerous. There was a definite lack of preparation and accommodation for the reception of the colonists, and this "threw the agents into a state of great exposure, fatigue, and anxiety." Moreover, the charter under which the Elizabeth sailed gave the agents no authority to detain her more than a few days after her arrival. The site selected for temporary residence was not a healthy one, and sickness began to make

26 Letter No. II in Appendix to Coker's Journal, 42.
27 Ibid., 43.
29 Ibid.
30 Alexander, 117.
31 African Repository, I, 4.
serious inroads into the ranks of the small group of settlers. Within the short space of a few weeks, all three agents and twenty-four of the immigrants were buried in African soil.\textsuperscript{32} A deep gloom settled down over the colony and the colonists experienced the "miseries of carelessness, indolence, and insubordination."\textsuperscript{33} Even in America the general condition of the colony "greatly discouraged the public mind."\textsuperscript{34} When the heavy rains began to fall, the people suffered from lack of shelter, while the natives of the area assumed an increasingly threatening attitude. The settlers were almost defenceless, and the whole venture seemed ready to collapse in "disorder and dismay."\textsuperscript{35} Fortunately, however, the colony was, a few months later, encouraged by the arrival of a "considerable reinforcement of colonists," who were accompanied by Messrs. Andrews and Wiltberger, agents for the Colonization Society, and by Mr. and Mrs. Winn and Mr. E. Bacon, who represented the United States government.\textsuperscript{36} Permission was obtained for the settlers to reside in Sierra Leone until negotiations with the native chiefs could be successfully completed. The efforts to purchase land,

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{32}Remarks on the State of the Colony of Liberia, in Colonization and Abolition Pamphlets (Washington, 1834), 113.

\textsuperscript{33}African Repository, I, 4.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., IV, 216.

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., I, 4, Abstract of a Journal by E. Bacon (Philadelphia, 1822), 3.
\end{footnotesize}
were, however, unsuccessful, and again the existence of the colony appeared in jeopardy. The discouragement of all concerned was greatly increased by the tragic deaths of Mr. Andrews and Mr. and Mrs. Winn.

Dr. Eli Ayres, a physician, was now appointed agent for the Society. Upon his arrival in Liberia in 1821, he began to prosecute the objectives of the Society with a great deal of vigor. He received the support of Lt. Stockton of the United States schooner Alligator, temporarily assigned to the area. Nevertheless, the two men met with considerable trouble and delay before the local chiefs finally ceded a tract of land that included Cape Monterado. The colonists were immediately removed to the new site, which proved to be more healthy and better suited to their needs.37

After superintending the establishment of the new settlement, Dr. Ayres returned to the United States for the purpose of presenting the needs of the colony and obtaining supplies. Before he reached the United States, a ship left American shores having on board fifteen recaptured African slaves and thirty-five colonists, and also the man to whom Liberia probably owes its survival - Jehudi Ashmun.38 Accompanied by his wife, Ashmun arrived at a time when it was uncertain whether or not a sufficient number of colonists could now be found to continue the

37Address of the Board of Managers of the A.C.S. (1832), 10.
38American State Papers, Naval Affairs, I, 1094.
settlement. Moreover, those who were criticizing the venture and those who were discouraged over the early disasters were convinced that "the savage tribes, the diseases of the burning climate, or the combined power of the slave traders ever hovering on the coast" would utterly defeat the enterprise.39 People in America were looking on the whole scheme with "comparative apathy and incredulity."40

Ashmun received a severe blow when his wife, after a dangerous illness contracted just after arrival, passed away on September 15, 1822.41 A few weeks later, while Ashmun himself was still weak from a protracted bout with fever, the natives of the area made an attempt to destroy the colony. On November 8, while the defences which Ashmun had started were still incomplete, and the effective fighting force of colonists consisted of only thirty-five men, some 800 tribesmen launched a furious attack on the settlement. The colonists fought bravely, and managed to repulse the attack. Their muskets and six field-pieces killed a considerable number of the enemy, but the loss among the defenders was serious for such a small company. Three men and one woman were killed, two men and two women seriously wounded, and seven children captured.42 Towards the end of the

39An Address to the Public by the Managers of the Colonization Society of Connecticut, in African Repository, IV, 123.
40Ibid.
41Alexander, 184.
42Address of the Board of Managers (1832), 10.
month, the natives launched another attack, this time with almost twice as many warriors. Again they were turned back by the defenders, who now numbered only thirty fighting men led by the intrepid and resourceful Ashmun. Four days before the second attack, the agent had written to Secretary of the Navy Thompson describing the desperate condition of the colony. He stated that he was in a "weak and sickly condition," and that the colonists were engaged in a "perilous and bloody war with all the native tribes around us." He was negotiating for peace, but feared he would fail. Yet he hoped that "by God's help" the colony could hold out until aid came from some quarter. He expressed the opinion that if one vessel of war had been in the harbor all these hostile movements would have been prevented. He wrote that the spirits and health of the little company were better than could be expected, though the thirty able men were compelled to "stand on arms night and day." He believed that two more guns and twenty-five more soldiers would secure "lasting and universal peace," and enable the people to do the work they came to Africa to do. Then "improvement in husbandry and in the arts would rapidly extend their influence in this part of Africa."  

Happily for the colony, aid was forthcoming. The sound of

43Ibid.
44The letter is reproduced in the American State Papers,
Naval Affairs, I, 1098.
45Ibid.
the cannon on shore had been heard by the captain and crew of
the British schooner Prince Regent, which was passing Cape Mont-
erado at the time. The captain decided to investigate the
cause of the firing, and on discovering the plight of the set-
tlement, he offered all aid within his power. Major Laing, the
famous African traveler, was on board, and through his influence
the chiefs were led to agree to a truce. They consented to re-
fer all matters in dispute between them and the colony to arbi-
tration by the Governor of Sierra Leone. Midshipman Gordon of
the Prince Regent and eleven seamen offered to remain and to see
that the agreement was observed. Before the Prince Regent left,
the captain provided the colonists with a supply of much needed
ammunition. The ship sailed on December 4, leaving the colony
in a much more peaceful condition. From that time the outlook
became a great deal more promising.

Yet the generous Englishmen who had thrown in their lot
with the colonists in the hour of their greatest trial were to
pay a heavy price for their unselfishness. Four weeks after the
departure of the Prince Regent, Midshipman Gordon and eight of
the eleven seamen who had remained with him had found graves in
the colony. Ashmun wrote to the American Secretary of the

46 Alexander, 196; Gurley, Life of Ashmun, 147.
47 Gurley, 148.
49 Gurley, Life of Ashmun, 151.
Navy stressing the fact that the willingness of the British seamen to share danger with the American colonists and the work of Major Laing in securing a truce with the natives had "laid the American Government and the Society under the greatest obligations." He pointed out that the natives had refused to treat with an American, and emphasized that the British had come to their aid at once when called. He felt it necessary to assure the Secretary of the Navy that the British had presented no bills, and that "British mediation shall extend, in this business, to no improper length."51

In the same letter he affirmed that at least 2,000 slaves were still being shipped annually from the region of Cape Mount and Cape Montserado. He believed that just one armed vessel stationed there, and two dozen soldiers ashore, would "divert the traffic elsewhere, and greatly reduce its extent."

The measures adopted by the United States at this time show somewhat more vigor in attempting to deal with the problems of the colony and the slave traffic. The commander of the West India squadron was given orders to detach one or more vessels to cruise along the African coast, occasionally touching at Cape Montserado, "ministering to the wants of the people, and following, in their return, the usual track of the slave ships."52

50 Am. State Papers, Naval Affairs, I, 1099.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid., I, 1094.
government, moreover, took action in the case of a certain Captain Chase, who had brought eleven Africans, none of whom could speak English, into Baltimore aboard his ship. Federal officers, suspecting that the Africans were far from being members of the crew, took them into custody, and launched an investigation of the Captain's violation of the law by introducing them into the country. Through interpreters, the officers discovered that the Africans belonged to tribes in the neighborhood of Cape Montserado, some actually being headmen in their tribes. All eleven were later returned to the United States agents at Montserado for restoration to their people. There is no record of the punishment, if any, meted out to Captain Chase. Information concerning this transaction was passed on to President Monroe in a report from Secretary of the Navy Southard, who at the same time indicated the amount spent by the government of the United States for its agency in Liberia. He wrote: "So far as the Department of the Navy is yet apprized of the expenditures of the agency during the present year, they have amounted to $7,287.43."

The more one studies the records describing the relations of the American Government with Liberia, the more one becomes aware of a certain restraint and uncertainty in committing governmental power to whole-hearted support of the colony, or in

53 Ibid.
54 Ibid. The Report is presented to the Congress with the Presidential Message, December 2, 1823.
undertaking stringent measures to suppress the slave trade. The financial support accorded the venture was niggardly. Both the government and the Colonization Society failed to make provision for Ashmun during the first two and a half years of his stay in Liberia, despite the courage, ability and self-sacrifice with which he had served the colony. He represented at times both the Society and the government. The United States Congress can claim very little honor for the survival of Liberia.

Yet the government, in December, 1822, and early in 1823, made some show of aiding the settlement. Captain Spence in the Crene and Lt. Matthew C. Perry in the Shark were sent to cruise the coast of Africa for short periods, "to carry into effect the intentions of the government in the suppression of the slave trade, and the protection of the agency for liberated Africans established at Cape Mesurado." These two officers seem to have been given no specific orders as to the aid they must provide, and anything they did to help seems to have been done at their own initiative and with such resources as they could find available on the spot. Captain Spence provided materials and skilled labor from his own ship to make possible the erection of a fort, completing, in fifteen days, with the help of the colonists, a stone wall eight feet thick, ten feet high, and 120 feet in

55Gurley, Life of Ashmun, 248.
56Stebbins, Facts and Opinions touching the ...A.G.S., 138.
57American State Papers, Naval Affairs, I, 1094, 1101.
circumference. This, Captain Spence wrote in a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, changed the attitude of the chiefs, who claimed that they had been "over-reached," and denied that they had ever sold Cape Montserado, "the abode of one of their ideal beings of superstitious veneration." The Captain also fitted out the Augusta, a small schooner which had been found deserted and dismantled on the coast. He had placed it under the command of Lt. Dashiels, believing that its presence at that time would aid in the protection of the agency and have some influence in preventing the traffic in slaves over the area. During the time that Captain Spence and Lt. Perry cruised on the coast, they "neither saw nor heard of any vessel under the American flag engaged in the trade." They appeared to be assured that "if citizens of the United States are still employed in that traffic they seem to have been driven to conceal themselves under the flags of other nations."58

Lt. Perry, indeed, seemed to be quite optimistic about conditions in the colony, as well as the suppression of slave trade. He presented, at the close of 1822, a somewhat over-drawn picture of the security of the settlers occupied in the "improvement of the settlements, clearing of land, erecting houses, and perfecting fortifications." He was of the opinion that the next dry season would leave them in "a state comparatively prosperous." He apprehended no hostilities from the natives, and was

58 Ibid., 1094.
"much pleased" by the situation of the colony. He said he did not even hear of an American slaving vessel, and wrote: "I am fully impressed with the belief that there is not one afloat." Matthew Perry is the same officer who, thirty years later, was to become famous in the negotiations which "opened the door" into Japan and inaugurated a new era in that country.

Perry's optimism was not, however shared by Jehudi Ashmun, or by others who knew the true condition of the slave trade at the time. Regarding the colony itself, Ashmun wrote in more somber vein in March, 1823. Things were not going altogether well, for the settlement had again met with "extraordinary reverses." He was glad to have the Augusta, but asked that she be officially commissioned to stop the slavers. He believed, contrary to Perry, that American vessels were engaged in the slave traffic, and in this opinion he had plenty of support. He deplored the poor provision that had been made by the United States government, charging that the colony was not only poor, but despised by the natives and other powers. He asserted that a ship of war had actually been sent by the acting commander of a large naval force employed on the African coast, "to erect a foreign flag in the midst of our settlement, and transfer the jurisdiction of the neighboring coast and the allegiance of our people to his own.

59Letter of Lt. Perry to the Secretary of the Navy, December, 1822, in American State Papers, Naval Affairs, I, 1899.

60Stebbins, Facts and Opinions, 158.
government."  

In May, 1823, Dr. Ayres returned to Africa as principal agent and physician in the colony, accompanied by sixty more colonists. This addition to the ranks of the settlers was most encouraging to those who had endured the first period of severe trial. A few months later the Cyrus arrived with 105 immigrants, and early in 1825 the brig Hunter sailed with another sixty-seven colonists. By March, 1825 there were nearly four hundred people in the Liberia colony. The editor of the African Repository could write about a new spirit prevailing among the settlers:

There is in the colony a prevailing, increasing spirit of obedience, industry, enterprise, and piety. Schools are established, churches are building, government is respected, agriculture receives general attention, and the wilderness is retiring before the face of civilized man.

This change was due, in large measure, to the steadfast labors and devotion of Ashmun. Dr. Ayres was able to remain in Liberia only a few months, because of poor health, and after his departure in December, 1823, a new wave of dissatisfaction passed over the colony. Those most influential among the colonists

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61 Am. State Papers, Naval Affairs, I, 1100.
63 Ibid., 5.
64 Ibid.
65 Gurley, 183.
complained of the distribution of the town lots. Their confidence in the Board of Managers of the Colonization Society and in their agents had become shaken, and a spirit of insubordination prevailed. Ashmun was now forced to take over the responsibilities of chief agent. As he had previously borne the brunt of the conflict with the attacking tribesmen, so now he undertook to deal with the problems of internal discord. Even before Dr. Ayres' departure, one of the leading colonists declared that he and his associates would, after the ship Fidelity left, refuse to submit any longer to government control.66

Before Dr. Ayres sailed, an announcement was made that in June, 1824, all rations which had formerly been supplied to the colonists would cease, except in cases of special necessity. Moreover, there were provisions for only four months when Ayres went on board the ship.

It had also been declared that, unless those who had appealed to the Board of Managers on the question of their lands, should, while their case was pending, cultivate some portion of land designated by the agent, they would be expelled from the colony.67

It would have been easy for Ashmun to have abandoned the colony at this juncture, and he could have done so with a good show of reason. His conduct of the settlement had been

66 Ibid., 185.
67 Ibid., 186.
criticized by rebellious colonists and by members of the Society in America. No definite arrangements had been made to remunerate him for past services, nor had any clear proposals been made for his future support. The bills which he had drawn for the necessary expenses of the colony had been returned, dishonored. He was under no obligation either to the American government or the Colonization Society, but he realized that if he forsook the colony, it might face chaos and possible disintegration. It was about this time that he drew up for himself a set of rules of conduct. Since we are studying motives and attitudes, we should note some of the twenty-five rules by which he proposed to guide his life in the trying position in which he now found himself. Neither the ingratitude of the colonists nor the failure of those in America who should have supported him, could turn him from what he felt was his immediate duty. The rules by which he proposed to live were those which might have been adopted by a man with more leisure and less care, rather than by one far removed from the aids and restraints of civilized life, often sick, and oppressed with difficulty and danger. Some of these principles were:

Never to be guilty of a meanness which my children... would blush to see published as part of a Parent's Biography.
To build on my own foundation, and to study none but the most perfect examples, living or dead.
To regard the contracting of a debt, as a mortgage of personal liberty and moral principle.

68Alexander, 208.
Never to assert, without being able to prove to a 
candid and sensible man, my proposition: never to advise 
unless sure that the neglecter of my counsel will repent 
his folly.

Always to utter my sentiments with precision and 
propriety - even should it cost me some previous re-
flexion.

Let me search after truth ... as to endure in my 
mind no rival prejudices or opinions on any subject. 
To run the risk of being candid, open, sincere. 
Never to commence an enterprise without being as-
sured of its utility; and having undertaken, never to 
abandon it until accomplished. 
To do whatever I undertake in the best possible 
manner, - always allowing for the time and means I can 
employ on the object.

To acquire a style of writing and expression, of 
conception and feeling - of manners and deportment, which 
... shall pass current among the best ranks of people. 
To become master of the written form of Italian ... 
perfectly familiar with the French ... to make Latin 
(written) a second vernacular. 
To continue my inquiries and reflections on whatever 
may engage them, until my information is ... exact, or 
the means of extending it exhausted. 
To vitiate no one of the appetites. 
To be rigorously exact in keeping my pecuniary 
accounts.
To turn every portion of my time to good account. 
To have as little connection as possible with the 
conceited, the overbearing, the pedantic, the blustering. 
In my estimation of others, let ignorance, when no 
opportunity has been had to remove it, be treated with 
kindness and indulgence.69

Gurley later bore witness that Ashmun acquired some of 
these virtues through self-discipline. He certainly had need 
of them in the months that followed.

The year 1824 brought Ashmun and the colony the most severe 
tests, and for a time it appeared as if the whole scheme of the 

69Gurley, 170-172.
Colonization Society in Africa would disintegrate.\textsuperscript{70} After the departure of Dr. Ayres, Ashmun announced that he would take firm measures against insubordination, even at the risk of his life. Yet several settlers avowed openly that they would not aid in the survey of lots to be distributed, would not take part in any public improvements, and would leave uncleared and uncultivated the lands assigned them until a reply had been received from the Board of Managers, to whom they had sent a re- monstrance.\textsuperscript{71} The rule had been established by the Society that every adult male immigrant who was receiving rations from the public store should contribute two days labor each week in work of public utility.

Difficulties in the colony increased because of the problem of obtaining food, particularly rice. Slave vessels "in unusual numbers" were operating off the coast, and their constant demand for rice increased its scarcity and cost. During 1824, the African Institution claimed that 120,000 slaves were exported from the African coast, and gave a detailed list of the names of 218 vessels believed to have been engaged in the trade during that year.\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{70}William Jay, \textit{An Inquiry into the Character and Tendency of the American Colonization and American Anti-Slavery Societies}, New York, 1837, 63.

\textsuperscript{71}Gurley, \textit{Life of Ashmun}, 186.

\textsuperscript{72}Address of the Board of Managers (1832), 14. On the African Institution see appendix 1 of this thesis.
The *Fidelity* sailed, leaving Ashmun alone with his charge of an all-Negro settlement. Immediately twelve of the colonists cast off all restraint, and sought to induce others to defy authority. On December 12 the malcontents staged a riot, forced their way into the public storehouse, and helped themselves from the common stores. Ashmun was unable to prevent them, but on the evening of the same day, he issued a circular to all the colonists, setting forth the criminality of these mutinous proceedings. He stated that a full report would be sent to the Society, and urged the whole settlement to become cooperative and industrious. His firmness calmed the incipient revolt, so that some measure of order prevailed in the weeks that followed. Then, fortunately, on February 13, 1824 the *Cyrus* arrived, bringing 105 immigrants, mostly from Petersburg, Virginia, who were "inferior, as a company, to none of their class in intelligence, industry, and morality."73 They had enjoyed excellent health on the way, had brought supplies and personal property with them, and had cemented a mutual understanding in the group that promised well for the future of the colony. Ashmun described them as "sensible, inquisitive, efficient men."

However, the colony was soon called upon to face another crisis. First, all who had come on the *Cyrus* became ill with fever in less than a month. Then the supply of rice gave out.

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73 Gurley, 187.
But, more serious than all, the spirit of revolt appeared again among some of the colonists.\(^{74}\) The condition of things became so threatening that on March 22, Ashmun called all the inhabitants together and addressed them. Extracts from his speech give us an insight into his own spirit, and help us to understand the relation of the colonists to the Society and the government of the United States. He made it clear that he exempted the group which had come on the Cyrus from the charges and reproaches which he directed against those assembled before him. He told his audience:

There is a mutual contract subsisting between the American Colonization Society and each one of you. By this contract you are bound under the solemnity of an oath to certain duties to the Society - and the Society stands reciprocally pledged, in certain engagements, to you. Your obligations are fully expressed in the articles of the Constitution ... You swore to the Society that you would obey their government and not attempt to overthrow it ... Every blessing you have enjoyed in Africa, the security of your lives, property, and families, is the consequence of this salutary arrangement by which an efficient government was constituted, and this security has always been in proportion to the constancy and fidelity with which you have obeyed and upheld it ... Some of your greatest sufferings have resulted from your disrespect to the Agents, and your disobedience to the orders of the Society.\(^{75}\)

He referred to the announcement that after June 5, 1824 they would receive no more provisions or clothing from the public store. After all, they had enjoyed seven months of pleasant

\(^{74}\) Alexander, 211.

\(^{75}\) Gurley, 191.
weather for cultivating their fields; they had been released from all other work; had been given tools; and had been advised by the agent. Yet some of them had refused to labor, and Ashmun pointed to one man in the group who had that very day announced that he would not work, but take what he needed by force. He stressed the criminality of the conduct of the twelve who had openly rebelled, threatened his life, and seized the public stores. This was rebellion against both the Society and the government.\textsuperscript{76}

He concluded with a stern and determined announcement:

You know that as far as in me lies, I will never suffer another barrel of provisions to enter that Store-House, if liable to be taken out by the hand of plunder and violence. No! the authority of the United States and of the American Colonization Society must be reinstated in all their perfection on this Cape, or you must be dispersed and perish ... I will act no longer the shadow of authority ... Either sustain the authority of the Society and enable it to fulfill the ends of the Colony - or mark it well, the Society will not uphold you in a course which must conduct you to ruin, and themselves to certain disappointment and disgrace.\textsuperscript{77}

His address was assented to outwardly by the colonists, but the disorganization continued. The weeks went by, with no word from the Board of Managers. Ashmun wrote despatches regarding the condition of the colony, indicating that it now faced possible ruin. Depressed and discouraged, he declared that "Government without armed force had become impossible." He decided

\textsuperscript{76}Alexander, 212.

\textsuperscript{77}Gurley, 193.
to send in his resignation to the Board of Managers, planning at the same time a trip to the Portuguese settlement at the mouth of the Rio Grande and also the Cape Verde Islands.

He sailed for the Islands on April 1, 1824, after having first committed the property of the United States, the Colonization Society, and the Baltimore Trading Company to Elijah Johnson as temporary agent. Before sailing, he left behind him a paper to be delivered to his successor. He wished to avoid the "hard destiny of his predecessors in the Agency - the curses and false accusations of those who it has been my constant aim to serve." He stated that the accusations against his predecessors had been: (1) transmitting false accounts of the Colony to the Board; (2) applying stores and supplies sent for the people to their own use; (3) having "rioted and fattened on the Society's bounty," and consumed funds contributed to the Colony; (4) "pinching the people, to furnish their own tables and wardrobes with an unseemly and disproportionate abundance;" (5) trafficking with the natives for personal gain; and (6) carrying away "furniture, little stores, and moveables" when they left. Ashmun asserted that he had not been guilty of these things. Instead, he had spent his own money, given up his own supplies, gone on a limited diet, and worked only for the good of the colony.

78 Ibid., 196.
79 Gurley, 196-198.
The paper reveals the bitterness that had entered Ashmun's soul. He requested his successor to read his declaration to any man who might later charge Ashmun with having failed in his duty to the colony and to the Colonization Society. The depression brought about by the poor state of his health and the constant strain of two years of leadership in Liberia are reflected in this paper. He needed to get away for a rest, although his going was fraught with great danger for the colony at this time.

The remonstrances which had been sent home by some of the colonists, and Ashmun's communications on the disorders, had in the meantime convinced the Managers that immediate and strong measures were required, lest the work of colonization perish and all their hopes fail. On March 30, two days before Ashmun left Liberia, the Managers appropriated five hundred dollars for his annual salary. They also sent a reply to the remonstrants, with a letter addressed to all the colonists. Threatening to abandon the colony unless their agents were respected and obeyed, the Managers asserted their determination to punish offenders.80

During the next few months, the Board of Managers and other representatives of the American Colonization Society revealed to the world that there was a good deal of confusion in their ranks. For example, not long after the Society had asked President Monroe to send someone aboard an armed vessel to investigate

80Ibid., 206.
the serious condition of the colony, the editor of the African Repository wrote in glowing terms of the "lonely beauty" of that "Christian village" on Cape Montserrat. Ashmun, writing of this same period a little later, gave a different description:

About twelve months since, it [the colony] had entirely given way, as the committee are but too well apprised, to a blind and furious excitement of the worst passions, caused by a somewhat unfortunate policy operating on ignorance and invincible prejudice. During my absence for health, the people were obliged to taste some of the bitter fruits of anarchy, and by the singular mercy of God, only escaped those tragedies of blood, which can find no modern parallel, but in the history of the civil murders and devastations of St. Domingo.

This evaluation did not agree with the report made public by the Society a little later. Anxious to gain support for their venture, the Managers allowed the following statement to be made in their official organ:

It is well known that this little community is made up of SELECTED INDIVIDUALS, and that the Board have ever required of those seeking their patronage, satisfactory evidence that their morals were pure, and their habits industrious. Hence this settlement has from its origin exhibited great decency and sobriety...

The attitude of the Society with respect to Ashmun himself about this time also revealed a good bit of vacillation. The letter


82African Repository, I, 5.


of reproof to the colonists for failing to respect the Society's agent had hardly been sent, before the Society again began to entertain doubts about Ashmun. Certain naval officers, who had visited Cape Montserado after Ashmun's departure for the Cape Verde Islands, had allowed their minds to be influenced by the reports of some of the colonists that the agent had been guilty of oppression, neglect of duty, and misuse of the goods committed to him. They had brought home an unfavorable presentation of Ashmun's work, and there seem to have been some members of the Board of Managers who were always ready to criticize him. He represented a different type of colonizationist than Henry Clay and many other gentlemen from the South represented. He fearlessly attacked slavery, thus making himself unpopular with some supporters of the Society. He belonged to those who believed that fighting all forms of slavery was a legitimate and obligatory task of the American Colonization Society.

In view of the uncertain state of their own minds and the alarming condition of affairs in the colony, the Managers asked the government of the United States to urge the President to send someone to Liberia for the purpose of investigating conditions there. President Monroe, responding to their appeal, appointed

85Alexander, 215.
87African Repository, I, 226.
Rev. R. R. Gurley to investigate the state of the agency.\textsuperscript{88} The government was influenced both by the appeal of the Board of Managers and by a report which Dr. Ayres had submitted to Secretary of the Navy Southard after returning from Liberia. Dr. Ayres had stressed the difficulties prevailing in the colony, and had urged the necessity of supplying provisions and goods for the needs of the colonists and for American ships sent to cruise in the area. The Baltimore Trading Company, which had been formed to develop trade with the colony, was dissolving. Hence the settlers were finding great difficulty in obtaining supplies.\textsuperscript{89} The only trade that seemed to be flourishing was the slave traffic, which President Monroe admitted still existed "to a lamentable extent."\textsuperscript{90} He believed it could be exterminated only by the combined efforts of all the maritime nations. A plan was needed to permit naval vessels of any of the powers concerned to deal with slave ships, regardless of the flag they flew.

Dr. Ayres was of the opinion that no more recaptured Africans should be sent to Liberia until better buildings had been erected for their accommodation and the colony had become more stable. He stated that the local natives displayed "much jealousy" against the recaptured Africans, whom they themselves had

\textsuperscript{89}Ibid., 1104.
\textsuperscript{90}Ibid., 1105.
sold into slavery. They evidently feared reprisals when a sufficient number of recaptured and returned slaves would take their place in the new settlements. 91

Towards the end of June, 1824, Gurley boarded the armed schooner Porpoise, under the command of Captain Skinner. On July 24 the ship arrived at the Cape Verde Islands, where Ashmun was still waiting. He came on board to meet with Gurley, 92 and agreed to accompany him to Liberia. On August 13, the vessel cast anchor off Cape Montserado.

As soon as possible after debarkation, Gurley and Ashmun took steps to correct some of the abuses which had prevailed in the colony. They also introduced a Constitution by which the settlements were henceforth to be governed. The people, now in a much more tractable state of mind, seemed ready to submit to any orderly and stable government. 93 With harmony restored, the new regulations went into force immediately. 94 One of the men who threw himself most earnestly into the task of working with Ashmun and restoring confidence among the colonists was a colored

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92 Gurley, *Life of Ashmun*, 209. Gurley's record of subsequent events in the colony is that of an eyewitness. He came to know Ashmun and conditions in Liberia intimately, and on this visit, as well as on a visit made in 1850, he had the confidence of the U. S. government and the Colonization Society.


clergyman named Lott Cary. He had already proved himself a great asset to the colony, although he had, during the period of disension early in 1824, allowed himself to be influenced by some of the rebels against authority. A man of varied talents, he possessed a good deal of courage and administrative ability. During the war with the native tribes in November and December, 1822, he had proved himself one of the bravest of men, lending his vigorous support to the measures of Ashmun during the defense of the colony. He had been chiefly responsible for rallying the hard-pressed little force of settlers when some fifteen hundred African tribesmen rushed upon them.95 Cary had acquired a great deal of knowledge about the care and treatment of disease; consequently, after Dr. Ayres left he had become responsible for the medical care of the colonists. He not only made "liberal sacrifices of his property to assist the poor and distressed," but also devoted his time almost exclusively to the "destitute, the sick, and the afflicted."96 He had publicly deplored his part in siding with the malcontents, and now indicated his purpose to be cooperative with Ashmun. He even requested that no more supplies from the Society's stores be given him.97 He had served the colony without receiving any compensation from either

96Ibid.
97Ibid., 150.
the Society or the government, even when Ashmun was absent.

Gurley did not stay long in Liberia, but before he left, he had learned the true worth of Ashmun and his contribution to the well-being of the colony. He had also received from the colonists the assurance that they would maintain the new Constitution, the one hundred settlers standing together to pledge their allegiance just before Gurley sailed, under orders from Washington, on the boat which had brought him out. The Constitution was really the work of Ashmun, and was subject to ratification by the Colonization Society. The Managers were to appoint the Colonial Agent, who was to be a white man, but all other officers were to be men of color, the most important of whom were to be elected annually by the colonists.

Gurley seems to have found less difficulty in reconciling differences between Ashmun and the colonists than in getting the critical members of the Society in the United States to give their whole-hearted support to him. Gurley was completely convinced of Ashmun's integrity and suitability as agent in the colony, and he was deeply chagrined when some members of the Managers not only refused to accept his evaluation of Ashmun's character, but also expressed their unwillingness to approve the new regulations government of the colony. To what extent pro-slavery opinion

98 Alexander, 217.
99 Address of the Board of Managers (1832), 10.
100 Alexander, 217.
prevailed at this point it is difficult to tell, but there is no
doubt that this issue was before the minds of many coloniza-
tionists. 101

The unfavorable reception of Gurley's report was made known
to Ashmun in a communication sent by the Managers to the agent
himself in Liberia. Ashmun, however, refused to be discouraged.
He continued to send his despatches to the Society, their tone
being much more cheerful. They furnished the Board with "con-
clusive evidence of the zeal, industry, and ability" of their
agent, and gradually their attitude towards him began to change.
The day of his justification was near.

On April 25, 1825, the Managers passed a motion that on the
18th of May they would proceed to organize "a permanent Govern-
ment for the Colony." When May 18 came, they adopted a resolu-
tion expressing their formal approval of a plan of government
already presented by Ashmun. Five days later they unanimously
adopted another resolution, which read:

Resolved, That Mr. Ashmun be appointed COLONIAL AGENT
to the Society; and that Dr. Peaco, the Government Agent,
be authorized and requested, on his arrival in the Colony,
to assist Mr. Ashmun with his counsel; and to be fully
authorized to take upon himself all the duties of the
Colonial Agent, in case of absence, inability, or death
of Mr. Ashmun. 102

On the same day they directed that two thousand copies of


102 Gurley, Life of Ashmun, 245.
the "Constitution, Government, and Laws of the Colony of Liberia, as established by the Board of Managers of the Colonization Society at Washington, May 23rd, 1825," should be printed.

The days of vacillation seemed now to be over. The Colonization Society and its agents were to be supreme in Liberia, and to take the initiative in future developments. Ashmun suddenly found himself enjoying the full confidence of the Board, and his own communications, as well as the literature of the Society, took on a new optimism. About this time he wrote that "peace, order, and industry, with a very unusual attention to matters of religion, prevail among us," and though there was still some "troublesome indisposition" among the colonists, there seemed to be no serious cases of sickness. A new settlement was being formed in the St. Paul's territory, which was more healthy than Cape Montserado. The one serious problem seemed to be the difficulty of getting enough rice, because of "the very great increase in the slave-trade." He feared that the colony would have to be dependent on a supply of provisions from home for a time.

Ashmun had stated his views rather clearly to Gurley, and they are of significance in our study. In Liberia he wished to build up a "State in Africa," that might stand as a model for future colonies ... to develop its powers ... extend its Territory, bind to it in amity, barbarous tribes, and, if possible,
gather them under its protection and the benignity of its laws." He wished further to abolish the slave trade, aid the cause of missions, and secure the adoption by the Society of a policy corresponding to his own, which he believed met the needs of the colony. Finally, he sought "so to demonstrate and exhibit the utility and glory of the scheme of African Colonization, as to unite the American people in an application of the powers of the State and National Governments to consummate the work."

The slave trade continued to flourish, despite the claims of the colonizationists that the colonies of Liberia and Sierra Leone had been responsible for suppressing the activities of the slaving vessels. The traffic was carried on within sight of Monrovia, as many as fifteen ships being at times involved. In July, 1825, it was claimed that contracts were existing for eight hundred slaves to be furnished in the short space of four months, within eight miles of the Cape. Of these, four hundred were to be purchased for two American traders. During the same season, a boat belonging to a Frenchman, having on board twenty-six slaves, all in irons, was upset in the St. Paul's River, and twenty of their number perished. Of this tragic event Ashmun said, "This is one of the lesser scenes of tragedy which are daily

104Life of Ashmun, 252.

acting in this wretched country." He wrote a little later that the purchase money of two hundred slaves "has, this week, been landed in our waters, to the incalculable detriment of the colony, and disgrace, shall I say, of our American Government, or of human nature." He declared that the colony wanted the right, as it had the power, to expel this traffic to a distance. He deplored the fact that "those engaged in it on both sides" were able to persist in the barter of slaves with impunity, despite the protests of the colonists. Even two years later, Randall, the colonial agent who succeeded Ashmun, wrote:

> From all I can learn, I am induced to believe, that the slave trade is now carried on at the Gallinas, between Cape Mount and Sierra Leone, and to the leeward of this place, to a greater extent than it has been for many years.

Ashmun decided the time was ripe to extend the "Colonial possessions" of Liberia. He hoped to gain authority and strength, as well as commercial advantages that would enable the colony to banish the slave trade from that part of Africa. He, therefore, took a trip along the coast from Cape Mount to Trade Town, noting the advantages of the country. On his return, he learned of the depredations of a Spanish schooner near Monrovia. He secured an English brig, placed his colonial militia on board, and led an

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106 Gurley, 268.

107 Afr. Rep., X, 44. He means both buyers and sellers of slaves.

108 Ibid., V, 4; Jay, Inquiry, 57.
expedition against the Spanish slave "factory" nearby. He and his men captured the "factory", sent the Spaniards away, and recovered a number of slaves. The native chiefs promised not to supply the Clarida, the Spanish ship then cruising in the area, with any more slaves. Ashmun and his men later broke up two other Spanish slave factories, and made an offer to the chiefs transacting business with the Clarida of a bounty of ten dollars for each slave they would deliver up to the colonial agent. By this means some 116 slaves were received as freemen into the colony, and a decided check was given to the slave traffic in the area. The hopeful conviction was expressed by the colonists that a new "moral feeling" was at work in the minds of the natives, "derived from intercourse with the Colony, against this detestable commerce." There can be little doubt that the destruction of the Spanish slave-factories at Tradetown had definite effects along the coast as far north as Cape Mount.

By the end of 1825, the colony seemed at last to be making real progress. Consequently, in May, 1826, the official organ of the society, which had just begun publication, printed a long and optimistic report sent to the Board of Managers by Ashmun. The agent outlined rather fully the various aspects of colonial life in Liberia, and expressed great satisfaction with the change

110 A. H. Foote, Africa and the American Flag, 135.
in the colony. The report was actually written in December, 1825, and Ashmun believed that the year then closing had "proved a period of unprecedented and almost unmingled prosperity to the Colony." 112

According to this report, the operations within the colony now made possible a "variety of interests, all of which have been steadily progressive." There had been practically no interruption of activity by sickness. Internal improvements had been carried out, and the "necessaries and comforts of life" were accumulating in an abundance not known before. New resources were being discovered, and "an immense accession of influence and territory has been secured." The foundations of moral and civil liberty, and of a mild and efficient form of government, were beginning to be "fortified by the affections and answerable habits of a free, obedient, and improving people."

The conclusion of this report contained some words of praise for the Colonization Society. 113 At the same time Ashmun declared that it was now necessary for the Society to yield up the work to the government of the United States. He wrote:

To the lasting honour of the American Colonization Society, it has founded a new empire on this continent, of which the basis is Christianity, intelligence, and national liberty;—has conducted it happily through the perilous stages of its inception and early growth; has seen its members in the full possession of the means of

112 *African Repository*, II, 72.

acquiring the comforts of life, and sustaining against any anticipated opposition, the stand to which they are advanced. The Society has demonstrated experimentally to all the world, the soundness of the views with which they appeared before it in 1817-18, without funds, patronage, or a precedent in the annals of the human race. And in having achieved so much, it has, in my opinion, compassed the special design of the institution; and must, from this period, resign up the great work of Colonization, considered as an object of national benefit, to the national patronage.114

The colony was now operating under a system of government approved by both the colonists and the Colonization Society. Inaugurated by Gurley and Ashmun, it had been modified by Ashmun some months after Gurley's return to America, and finally approved by the Society. Its ten articles may be summarized as follows:

All persons born in territory held by the American Colonization Society, in Liberia, in Africa, or removing there to reside, were to be free and to enjoy the rights and privileges of citizens of the United States. The Colonization Society could make the rules until the withdrawal of their agent left the settlers free to govern themselves. The agents would have the governing and judicial power except what they delegated to Justices of the Peace or to other officers. Slavery was forbidden. The common law practiced in the United States was to be applicable. Every settler reaching twenty-one was to take an oath or affirmation to support the Constitution. The Constitution was not to interfere with the "jurisdiction, rights, and claims" of the Agents of the United States over the captured Africans. The

Constitution could only be amended by the Board of Managers.115

In the next year or two there were several modifications of the Constitution. These modifications, Ashmun observed, had grown gradually out of the altered and improving state of the Colony, and were not made without "evident necessity."116 By 1828 the Managers had approved an official system of Civil and Colonial Representatives as recommended by Ashmun. The officers elected annually were a President, two Judges, two clerks for each settlement, a Vice-Agent, two Counsellors, a High Sheriff, a Register, and a Treasurer, for the colony as a whole. Each settlement consisting of not less than sixty families was also to have two Commissioners of Agriculture, two Commissioners to form a Board of Health, and two Censors. The last named were to act as "conservators of the public morals, and promoters of the public industry."117

The Reverend Lott Cary was made Vice-Agent, and the rise of this Negro clergyman constitutes a triumph for those who had put their trust in men like him. Cary had been born a slave near Richmond, Virginia, had taught himself to read and write, and while employed at the tobacco warehouse in Richmond, had saved

115Twelfth Annual Report (1829), 32.

116Ibid., 33.

§50.00 to ransom himself and his two children. We have already seen what an important part he had played in the early defense of the colony and through his service as a lay medical man. Dr. Ayres spoke of him in the highest terms. When Ashmun embarked for the United States in March, 1828, Cary was entrusted with all the duties and responsibilities of the Colonial Agency, and his conduct during the six months in which he stood at the head of the colony, showed him worthy of this confidence. He proved both the strength of his judgment and the worth of his character. We quote the words of appreciation used by a spokesman of the Colonization Society at the time of Cary's premature death in 1829:

The features of Mr. Cary were altogether African. He was diffident, and showed no disposition to push himself into notice. His words were few, simple, direct, and appropriate. His conversation indicated rapidity and clearness of thought, and an ability to comprehend the ... principles of Religion and Government. While the African race is regarded by some as destitute of those qualities, and incapable of those actions, which adorn and dignify humanity ... it has pleased Providence, by another bright example, to vindicate their claims to all the privileges and honours of our nature.

The sudden death of this leader among his own people, not long after the passing of Ashmun, was a great loss to the colony.

120Twelfth Annual Report, 21.
121Thirteenth Annual Report, 5.
which he had served so ably for a decade.

It does not come within the scope of our study to make an analysis of the economic and political development of Liberia, but it is necessary for us to understand something of the hopes and aims which guided both the Colonizationists and the colonists during this formative period. Ashmun came to embody the aims and purposes of the colony in himself, and through the first decade of its existence, he approached the task of developing it with a practical as well as an idealistic viewpoint. His reports dealt with a variety of matters. He wrote of the health of the colonists, and expressed the opinion that both children and adults who had spent above three years in the colony became as healthy as ever they were in America. In fact, they could "acquire for the climate of the country, a strong predilection over every other."\textsuperscript{122}

He was convinced that, in spite of the fears expressed by the Managers concerning the complexity of the governmental system, its practical operations were proving successful. He was disappointed that the agricultural development of the settlements was not what the Society and he had hoped it would be, but he was hopeful that "sturdy farmers" like those who had come out on the Hunter could attain to "respectability and abundance."\textsuperscript{123} He had come to the opinion that, for a time at least, agriculture would hold second place to trade. Yet he urged that the resources

\textsuperscript{122}African Repository, II, 74.

\textsuperscript{123}Ibid., II, 79.
of the country should be used, and asserted that no man who was
willing to build his own house and till his land could fail to
become "as independent, comfortable, and happy, as you ought to
be in this world." 124 He warned of the increasing tendency of
the settlers to give themselves to "trade and day-labor as a me­
chanic," for he believed this to be their "worst dependence" at
this stage of colonial development. 125 He was anxious to encour­
age building and other works of construction, including the con­
struction of small ships for use along the coast. He designed
one vessel himself. 126 He endeavored to assure all who had be­
come doubtful about the success of Liberia that every colonist
who was willing to work hard had ample opportunity to prosper. 127
He was anxious that some well-trained teachers be sent from
America, both for elementary education and for instruction in
the "agricultural and mechanical arts".

Confident because of its new sense of unity and its previous
victories over the Spanish slave traders at Tradetown, the colony
proceeded to assert itself again. The militia was organized into
two corps, an artillery corps of about fifty men and an infantry
corps of forty. In 1826, Ashmun, working with Dr. Peaco, the
agent for the United States with responsibility for recaptured
Africans, and assisted by the crews of two Colombian armed

124 The Liberia Farmer, by J. Ashmun, in Gurley, appendix
No. 7, 65.
125 Ibid.
126 African Repository, II, 84.
127 Twelfth Annual Report (1829), II.
vessels, the Jacinta and the El. Vincidor, led the colonial militia against Tradetown, now well guarded by two Spanish fighting ships. After a sharp fight, the Spaniards were defeated, and several dozen slaves were recovered and added to the 116 taken previously in August, 1825. This, in Ashmun's opinion, contributed more to the suppression of the slave trade in the area north of the Bight of Benin than any other single event, except the enactments of the English and American governments. 128 It was said to have made every slave trader on the coast feel the insecurity of his commerce, and the natives of a great extent of country "sensible that a powerful and resolute enemy to their crimes had gained establishment on their shore." 129 Unfortunately, the determination and uncompromising attitude of the colonists in dealing with the slave trade were not always matched by a similar spirit even among members of the Colonization Society, not to mention the United States government. 130 Ashmun's confidence received a setback in July, 1826 when an active combination was formed between several piratical vessels and native chiefs to restore Tradetown and continue the slave trade. 131

In August, 1826, another crisis arose. Sickness again attacked the colonists, especially those who had recently arrived

128 Gurley, Life of Ashmun, 316.
129 Ibid., 317.
on the brig Vine. This vessel had brought out thirty-four emigrants; a missionary, Reverend Calvin Holton; a printer named Force; and an agent of the Society, Reverend Horace Sessions. These three, with Mr. Hodges, a boat builder from Norfolk, and Dr. Peaco, the United States Government agent and physician, were the only other white men now in Liberia. By August, Holton, Force Sessions, and Hodges had died, and Dr. Peaco, also ill from repeated attacks of fever, had sailed for America. Ashmun wrote in his journal: "It is a most remarkable and affecting circumstance, that the present Colonial Agent is this morning, by the death and departure of his associates and assistants, left for the seventh time, the only white person in the Colony.""132 Yet he rose with sublime courage to meet the demands of the hour. In the next two or three months, though ill with fever, he suppressed another attempt by a faction in the colony to take over control; quelled a panic of fear that suddenly seized the settlers in September; rose from his bed to superintend the launching of a small schooner constructed in the settlement; carried through some delicate negotiations with native chiefs, and directed the construction of twelve public buildings, including some new fortifications.133

About this time, however, Ashmun expressed some rather sharp criticism of tendencies in the colony for which he believed the

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132Gurley, 325; Address of the Board of Managers, 11; Alexander, 224.

133Gurley, 325-332.
Colonization Society itself to be partly responsible. He found a "want of public spirit, and ingratitude for favors received," among the colonists. They had had too much done for them, for their own good, and now depended too much "on the hand of another to feed them." They had become restive, almost mutinous when made to assume burdens for their own "safety, respectability, or social welfare." These attitudes, he asserted, "are the unhappy consequences of the Society's generosity towards the people - at least as respects the majority of them." This criticism was made particularly of the settlement at Cape Montserado. Ashmun thought that settlers should be thrown on their own resources early, as they had been in the new Caldwell settlement. He suggested that new emigrants should be told before they left the United States that they could never rise above the level of the native Africans without a "generous and untiring devotion to the common welfare of the new community they come to form." He was happy that there were some among the emigrants who were "only impressed by these motives, animated by this spirit - and they are worth to the Colony all the rest."134

Emigrants continued to come, and as their number increased, they found favor with the native chiefs who had once opposed them. The chiefs even sought the aid of the settlers in their wars with other tribes.135 This aid the colony refused to give, and urged

134Ibid., 339.
135Foote, 137.
the native rulers to give themselves to peaceful trade. To fur­
ther this trade and encourage industry in Liberia generally, emi­
grants were encouraged to bring with them mechanical tools and
agricultural implements. Ashmun also urged that certain trade
goods be placed with the colonial agent, so that new settlers
could obtain some of them to exchange for African provisions
during the first six months after their arrival.

The cost of bringing out emigrants had declined, and the
editor of the official organ of the Society wrote about this time
to defend the colonizationists against the charge that their work
was beginning to cost too much. He pointed out that the first
settlers who came on the Elizabeth had carried supplies for sev­
eral months, and that the cost had been about sixty dollars for
each individual.\textsuperscript{136} The one hundred emigrants aboard the Cyrus
had carried provisions for more than sixty days, and the cost had
been twenty-six dollars for each person. When the Hunter came,
those on board had supplies for sixty days, and the cost had been
only twenty dollars per person. This seems to have remained
fairly constant for the next few years, so that Mathew Carey could
write to Congressman Charles F. Mercer in 1832:

The passage at present is calculated at about twenty
dollars, and the expense for the maintenance of each emi­
grant for six months at about 15 dollars; making all to­
gether, 35 dollars. But children from two to twelve years
of age are taken at half price, and below two years free
of charge; allowing for a due proportion of children,

\textsuperscript{136}\textit{African Repository}, I, 64.
thirty dollars will be a tolerable fair estimate for passage and support. Moreover, when the situation of the colony becomes better known, and the prejudices which have been industriously created against it are done away, many emigrants will defray their own expenses, and many humane and charitable masters will, as has already taken place, pay the passage of their manumitted slaves.137

In the summer of 1827 an Address was forwarded by a Committee of the inhabitants of Liberia to their colored brethren of the United States. It declared that, in moving to Africa, the settlers had sought civil and religious liberty, and that their expectations and hopes had been realized. The writers asserted that the high mortality of earlier years was over. A few months of residence in Africa now gave them as perfect health as they had enjoyed in America. They spoke in glowing terms of the fertile soil, the opportunity offered to the "virtuous and industrious", and the "comfortable living" they had. They declared they could never have found so much in America. They thus described their new situation:

Our constitution secures to us, so far as our condition allows, all the rights and privileges enjoyed by the citizens of the United States... We are proprietors of the soil we live on, and possess the rights of freeholders. Our suffrages, and, what is of more importance, our sentiments and opinions, have their due weight in the government we live under. Our laws are altogether our own; they grow out of our circumstances, are framed for our exclusive benefit, and are administered either by officers of our own appointment, or such as possess our confidence. We have a judiciary, chosen among ourselves: we serve as jurors on the trial of others, and are liable

137Mathew Carey, Letters on the Colonization Society, Letter No. 5, April 14, 1832, 15-17.
ourselves to be tried only by jurors of our fellow-citizens. We have all that is meant by liberty of conscience... Forming a community of our own in the land of our forefathers, having the commerce, and soil, and resources of the country at our disposal; we know nothing of that de-basing inferiority with which our very colour stamped us in America; there is nothing here to create the feeling on our part — nothing to cherish the feeling of superiority in the minds of foreigners who visit us. It is this moral emancipation — this liberation from worse than iron fetters — that repays us ten thousand times over all that it has cost us, and makes us grateful to God and our American patrons, for the happy change which has taken place in our situations.138

This Address seemed to create a favorable impression in the United States, and further reinforcements began to arrive. Ships of the United States Navy began to visit Liberia more frequently, and the captains of the vessels sent home very encouraging reports of the state of the colony.139 In 1828 several ships arrived with new settlers. On January 15, the brig Doris came with 107 immigrants, principally from Maryland, sixty-two of them being liberated slaves. On the 17th of the same month, the schooner Randolph from South Carolina brought twenty-six Negroes who had all been manumitted by one individual.140 The following month the brig Nautilus arrived with 164 immigrants, mostly from the lower counties of North Carolina. At the fourteenth annual meeting of the Colonization Society in January, 1831, the hopes

138Ibid., i.e. Carey, Letter No.8, 22; R.R. Gurley, Address at the Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Colonization Society (1839), 10.

139Carey, Letters on the Col. Soc., 137; Foote, 137.

140Gurley, Life of Ashmun, 381.
of the colonizationists were high. During the previous three or four years, ship after ship had sailed for Liberia carrying not only free Negroes, but many manumitted slaves.141 There was an increasing conviction that, since the venture in Liberia had showed such definite promise of success, the colony should now be made a territory of the United States. As early as 1825, Rufus King of New York had submitted a resolution to the United States Senate, asking that a fund be created from the sale of public lands in the West to be "inviolably applied" to the emancipation of slaves and the removal of free people of color "to any territory or country without the limits of the United States of America." Both John Marshall of the Supreme Court and James Madison favored the plan of Mr. King.142 Henry Clay, in January, 1832, also introduced a Land Bill which provided for the distribution of the proceeds of the Public Lands among the twenty-four states of the Union, according to their respective federal representative population, "to be applied by the Legislatures of the said States, to such objects of education, internal improvement, colonization of free persons of color, or reimbursement of any existing debt, contracted for internal improvement, as the said


Legislatures may severally designate and authorize."143

The years 1827 to 1832 were bright with hope for the future of Liberia. People all over the United States were rallying to its support. Slave owners were granting manumission to their slaves on condition that they were removed to Africa. Strenuous exertions were being made in and out of Congress to place the colony under the full control and financial backing of the United States. Moreover, many free Negroes had become interested in going to Africa.144 By 1830, almost fifteen hundred emigrants had sailed for Liberia,145 and there was a feeling among many colonizationists that all of the Negroes in the United States could ultimately be transported to Africa.146

By 1832, however, several shadows had fallen across the path of the colonizationists. First came the death of Ashmun, followed by another period of distress and uncertainty in the colony. Then the division that existed in the Society's ranks became apparent when several independent colonies were formed under the sponsorship of various states of the Union.147 To make matters worse, these in the United States who had considered the whole

143Fox, The American Colonization Society, 90-91; African Repository, VI, 91, 163-169.
144Appendix No.10, Gurley, Life of Ashmun, 96; Carey, Letters No. 7, 20-22.
146Ibid., VII, 113; Jay, An Inquiry, 68.
147Fox, The Am. Colonization Society, 110-124; Foote, 146.
scheme of colonization to be visionary and impractical, or a plan under the direction of the southern slave-owners to make slavery secure, began to organize their opposition in a definite and formidable manner. The two main groups who turned against the Society were groups from whom colonizationists had hoped to receive support, namely, the Abolitionists and the free Negroes. Some of the leaders among these had formerly favored colonization, but now abolitionists and colonizationists became arrayed against each other in a bitter conflict. With the exception of the death of Ashmun, these developments and an analysis of them belong to the next chapter. It is fitting, however, that this present chapter should close with an account of Ashmun's passing and with a presentation of an evaluation of him by some of his contemporaries.

Acting on the advice of the physician who was now in Liberia, Ashmun made preparations for a visit to America and went on board the Doris on March 25, 1828. An account of his going was written by Lott Cary, who was served as acting agent after Ashmun's departure:

Never, I suppose, were greater tokens of respect shown by any community on taking leave of their head. Nearly the whole ... of the inhabitants of Monrovia, men,

148Fox, 140.

women, and children, were out on this occasion, and nearly all parted from him in tears, and, in my opinion, the hope of his return in a few months, alone enabled them to give him up. He is indeed dear to this people, and it will be a joyful day when we are permitted again to see him. He has left a written address containing valuable admonitions to officers, civil, military and religious.150

During the passage of forty-seven days to St. Bartholemews, in the West Indies, he suffered a great deal. For two months he stayed in the West Indies, hoping for a complete recovery. His thoughts were still of Liberia, and he wrote of its affairs to the Colonization Society and the Secretary of the Navy.151 Still ill, he finally sailed for the United States, spending almost one month at sea before reaching New Haven on August 10. Two weeks later, on the evening of August 25, 1828, he passed away at the age of only thirty-five years.152 Commander Andrew Foote of the United States Navy, who was later to serve off the Liberia coast in the brig Perry, wrote concerning him:

Of Ashmun it may be said, that he united the qualities of a hero and statesman. He found the colony on the brink of extinction: he left it in peace and prosperity. He trained a people who were unorganized and disunited, to habits of self-reliance and discipline.153

A short while after Ashmun's death, the annual meeting of the Colonization Society was held in Washington, "in the presence of many of the most distinguished men of our country, among whom  

151Gurley, 385.  
152Ibid., 393.  
153Africa and the American Flag, 139.
were Chief Justice Marshall, the Secretary of State, and many Members from both Houses of Congress." It became the responsibility of the author of the Star-Spangled Banner to pronounce the eulogy of the man who had guided the destinies of Liberia through its formative period. Said Francis Scott Key:

The people... were without a leader, and dispirited at the prospect of the unequal contest approaching them. He resolved to share their fate, and encouraged and prepared them for the defence they so nobly sustained. From that moment till his death, it is well known how he devoted all the powers of his mind and body, till he sacrificed health and life to the people he had saved. It is well known how, in the varying circumstances of danger and difficulty in which they were placed, every variety of quality and talent that could be called for, military skill and courage, political sagacity and address, were most conspicuously exhibited in this remarkable man.

A simple, but attractive monument was erected by the Managers of the Colonization Society in the churchyard at New Haven where Ashmun was buried. Liberia was to miss him greatly as she faced an uncertain future. During the next six years approximately two hundred additional free Negroes came to the colony, but the hazards of disease, hunger, and embittered native tribesmen continued. The year 1832-1833 saw a considerable increase in the number of immigrants, the total number for the period being 790, of whom 247 were manumitted slaves. The sending of so large a number involved the Society in expenditures which exceeded

155 Ibid., vii.
156 Sixteenth Annual Report (1833), 15.
their income for the year by several thousand dollars, but the Board of Managers was hopeful that "public liberality" would enable them to fulfill their engagements. They expressed confidence that not only would the new auxiliary societies which were "springing into existence" from Georgia to Maine make further extension of colonization possible, but that the interest being manifested by state legislatures would lead to a committal on the part of the federal government. "It is confidently expected," reads an Address to the Citizens of Ohio, "that the Congress of the United States will, at no distant period, adopt our cause as the cause of the nation."158

Congress continued to be very cautious, however, and such aid as was given financially remained very limited. Secretary of the Navy Southard presented a report to the first session of the Twentieth Congress, which revealed a disposition to cut the expenses of the African Agency in every way.159 In 1831, the value of all United States property in Liberia amounted to only $18,895.160 Moreover, during that year the appropriation for efforts to suppress the slave trade was only $5,000.00. Yet at


159 American State Papers, Naval Affairs, III, 143-147.

160 Ibid., IV, 38.
this time the captains of naval ships visiting the coast of Africa wrote encouragingly of conditions in Liberia. Captain John B. Nicholson wrote to the Secretary of the Navy in 1828 that he had found the colony prospering, and that eight of his crew, whom he described as "colored tradesmen," had asked permission to stay in Liberia. He had allowed them to do so, since they possessed two thousand dollars' worth of money and clothes for their own expense and would be able to establish themselves in their several trades. In 1831, Captain E. P. Kennedy of the U. S. frigate, Java, had found Liberia in a "flourishing and happy state," and declared: "I have no doubt but it will be the foundation of a great empire." In April, 1832, Lt. Commandant Benjamin Page, of the U.S. schooner, Boxer, wrote to Secretary of the Navy Woodbury that though the colonists had recently had to take the field against a combination of the Dey and Gurrah kings, the colony was flourishing and trade was increasing greatly. He stated the number of colonists at this time to be approximately 2,700, among whom were four or five "merchants of note." Health conditions were said to be good, and Dr. Todson, the resident physician, was losing only four out of every one hundred who were attacked with African fever. He praised the schools, and stated that the people generally were given to "morality, industry, and

161 Ibid., III, 149.
162 Ibid., IV, 11.
A brief item of interest related to this period of the history of the Colonization Society concerns the change in presidents. On January 18, 1830, following the death of Bushrod Washington, Charles Carroll of Carrollton became President of the Society. He was the last of the signers of the Declaration of Independence to survive. He had been a constant supporter of colonization. On November, 1832, Carroll passed away at the age of ninety-five, and was succeeded in the presidency of the Society by James Madison, formerly President of the United States.

By 1833, however, a decline of interest was apparent, and it became evident to many that early expectations were not to be realized. Charges of inefficiency were being made even by the friends of colonization, and were now being directed against the Managers of the Society as well as against the handling of affairs in Liberia itself. Reorganization of the Society in an attempt to allay criticism and to unite the independent state Societies which had planted their own colonies in Africa did not

163Ibid., IV, 180.
164Thirteenth Annual Report (1833), 1.
165Ibid.
166Fox, 112. Cf. Infra., Summary and Conclusion.
167Sixteenth Annual Report, xi.
eliminate the tensions. In 1837, while attempts were being made to get agreement upon a "Constitution of General Government for the American Settlements on the Western Coast of Africa," the Mississippi Society established its new settlement, Greenville, on the Sinoe River in Liberia. As a result there were four independent colonies, the others being Monrovia, under the American Colonization Society; Bassa Cove, of the New York and Pennsylvania Societies; and Cape Palmas, of the Maryland Society. They were described by a contemporary as a "mass of conflicting or disconnected organizations, with separate sources of authority, and separate systems of management; without common head or common spirit."

However, it is not necessary for us to give further consideration to developments in Liberia itself. A unity was achieved in 1838, which brought into being the "Commonwealth of Liberia." It was composed of all the settlements, but was still under the domination of the Colonization Society. Then in 1847, the Commonwealth took steps to secure independence, and the Republic of Liberia came into being on July 26th of that year.

169 Foote, 146.
170 Ibid.
171 Alexander, chapter XXXII; Foote, 173, 205; Benjamin Brawley, A Social History of the American Negro, including a History and Study of the Republic of Liberia (New York, 1921), 188-192.
society continued to aid American Negroes to emigrate to the Republic, but hopes for a great chain of colonies across Africa had vanished from the minds of the colonizationists.

REACTION TO THE WORK OF THE
COLONIZATION SOCIETY
CHAPTER IV

REACTIONS TO THE WORK OF THE COLONIZATION SOCIETY

In 1832 there were over 300,000 free Negroes in the United States, yet not more than two thousand had found their way to Liberia. Despite the claims of the colonizationists that many thousands were eager to go to the new colony, there seems to have been no wide movement on the part of the free Negroes to leave the country in which they had been born. An examination of the groups whose departure on various vessels we have noted shows that the great majority came from the South. One careful writer on the subject has noted that "wherever the Negroes had enjoyed freedom in the North, they did not easily embrace the idea of expatriating themselves." Nevertheless, a few interesting letters have been preserved which indicate that there were some who were anxious to start a new life in Africa. An examination of a few of these letters will be of value.

On July 13, 1818, a certain Abraham Camp, of Lamott, Illinois, wrote to E. B. Caldwell, Secretary of the American Colonization Society as follows:

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1William Jay, An Inquiry into the ... American Colonization and American Anti-Slavery Societies, 48.

I am a free man of colour, have a family, and a large connection of free people of colour residing on the Wabash, who are willing to leave America whenever the way shall be opened. We love this country and its liberties, if we could share an equal right in them; but our freedom is partial, and we have no hope that it will ever be otherwise here; therefore we had rather be gone, though we should suffer hunger and nakedness for years. Your honor may be assured that nothing shall be lacking on our part in complying with whatever provision shall be made by the U.S., whether it be to go to Africa or some other place; we shall hold ourselves in readiness, praying that God (who made man free in the beginning, and who by his kind providence has broken the yoke from every white American) would inspire the heart of every true son of liberty with zeal and pity, to open the door of freedom for us also.3

This letter reveals a spirit of mingled resignation and hope. It enables one to understand the feelings of a class of people who were described by a colonizationist as "this mixed and intermediate population of free blacks ... a mighty and growing evil, exerting a dangerous and baneful influence on all around them."4

Another letter of interest was of different type, having been written by John B. Russworm, the first Negro to receive a degree from a college. He had, it seems, been invited to go to Liberia, but wrote to the Board of Managers to decline their "liberal offer."5 He stated that he had consulted many friends,

3Ibid., 2. All letters used by Woodson in this collection were photocopied and verified from the files of the Letters of the Colonization Society.


5Woodson, The Mind of the Negro, 3.
and that all of them had advised him not to go. One of those consulted was C. Stockbridge of Maine, "whose views are considerably altered since his address to you." Stockbridge had evidently been a supporter of colonization, but had changed his opinion, so that he now sought to prevent Russworm from going. Russworm was co-editor of Freedom's Journal when it was launched in 1827 as the first Negro newspaper in the United States, and he continued to serve in that capacity until 1829. He then decided in favor of colonization and went out to Liberia to superintend the expanding system of education. In 1836 he was made governor of the colony of the Maryland Colonization Society, in which position he served efficiently until 1851. He was one of the very few among the more privileged free Negroes of America who went to Africa.

In the African Repository the letters of free Negroes interested in going to Liberia were sometimes published in full, for the purpose of encouraging others. One such letter, written by a "Free Negro of Charleston," whose name is not given, reveals the understandable hesitancy of many Negroes to go abroad. The writer pointed out that some believed colonization ideas sprang from the self-interest of the whites, though undoubtedly it was "aided by a great deal of benevolence." He himself had been

6Frawley, Social History of the American Negro, 161.
7Ibid., 187, 189.
previously deterred from going because of unfavorable accounts of the climate, but he had finally decided to "make the sacrifice." He had heard of the needs of Liberia, and thought he could help. He said he could "turn his hand" as a wheelwright, blacksmith and carpenter, and also had "good ideas of machinery and other branches." He would also become an "addition to the advocates for Religion." There was a certain amount of independence in this man, for he made it clear that he did not expect to go at the expense of the Society. He therefore hoped he would be allowed to "take something more than those who do not defray expenses."9

One of the most illuminating letters, also anonymous, was published as the "Opinions of a Free Man of Color in Charleston", under the date of October, 1832. It was very long, and we can give only a summary of its main features. The writer presented his views under three heads: I. A Brief Inquiry into the propriety of the Free People of Colour migrating to Liberia or elsewhere. II. The Objections urged by many of the Coloured People against emigration. III. The good likely to result to those who may determine to emigrate.10

He referred to the laws against free Negroes which had

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8 *African Repository*, VII, 216.

9 *Ibid*.

already been passed by the states of Virginia, Maryland, Alabama, Tennessee and even Ohio.¹¹ Both the friends and foes of free Negroes desired their removal. What, therefore, was he to do? "I answer," he writes, "honestly, and without hesitation, migrate to Liberia, in preference to any other country, under the protecting hand and influence of the Colonization Society."

His comments on the native people of Liberia are most interesting. Many free Negroes, he said, objected to the "ignorance of the Liberia natives," and asserted that they could never intermarry with such people, "whose complexion is darker than ours." American Negroes going to Liberia, however, did have the opportunity for "civilizing and Christianizing" the people there. In this they could do what the whites have done. But one does not have to intermarry with the natives, said the writer, though "there is no country where you could indulge your own opinions in this respect with more freedom, than in this land of equality." Nevertheless, he suggested that American Negroes should go with their families. He closed his letter with an appeal to the free Negroes of South Carolina, many of whom had almost a monopoly as mechanics and artisans in their state at this time. "Go," he wrote, "as carpenters, millers, wheelwrights, shipbuilders,

¹¹The "Black Laws" of Ohio had been enacted to prohibit the emigration of free Negroes to that state, and to restrict those already there. Woodson, *Mind of the Negro*, 5, footnote. See also *A Brief Exposition of the Views of the Society for the Colonization of Free Persons of Colour in Africa* (Columbus, 1827), 5.
engineers, cabinet makers, shoemakers, and tailors." They could develop more than manual skills in Africa; they could also establish "Colleges ... for the study of Theology, Physic and Law."12

The problems of the free Negro in the North were described in a letter to the American Colonization Society by a "South Carolina Negro." By the middle of the 1830's South Carolina had a law prohibiting a free Negro to return if he should leave the state.13 The writer of the letter given below was a "native born South Carolinian," according to his own description of himself, and he like others from his state, felt exiled in the North. He found that the treatment given him in the northern states was worse than anything he had experienced in the South, at least in his home state. After having traveled extensively in the northeastern states, he wrote:

Although I have visited almost every city and town from Charlestown, South Carolina, to Portland, Maine, I can find no such home — and no such respectable body of colored people as I left in my native city, Charleston. The law in my adopted city, Philadelphia, when applied to colored people, in opposition to white people, is not as good as in Charleston, unless the former has a respectable white witness to sustain him. They cannot rent a house in a court or square occupied by white people, unless it is with the consent of their white neighbors. Property colored people generally transact their business through the agency of white people. We are shamefully denied the privilege to visit the Museum, etc. — all the advantage I can see by living in Philadelphia is, that if my family is sick, I can send for a doctor at any time of the night.


13Woodson, Mind of the Negro ... Letters, 12.
without a ticket.\textsuperscript{14}

Many Negroes who were anxious to go to Liberia found great difficulty in doing so. Some owners of slaves granted manumission to their slaves on condition that they would be sent to Africa, while other owners were willing to release their slaves only if the latter could pay the price of their own ransom. One of the most pathetic series of letters which the Colonization Society received came from a slave named Purell W. Mann. Although he was in bondage to a John Crosby of Richmond, Virginia, he had received some education, and was allowed to serve as a "private African Slave minister" in the Southern Methodist Church connection.\textsuperscript{15} He seems to have been caught between the problem of obtaining his release by purchase and the problem of getting approval from his Methodist superiors. The part played by these superiors, as it is revealed in these letters, is not a very impressive one. Mann had wished to go as a minister among his own people in Liberia. His master was willing to sell him, and Mann now asked the Colonization Society either to buy him or to let him know of "any person or friend, who will buy me and let me work for them, until I can pay for myself." He was willing to work for those who would help him, and to pay off as soon as possible any money they might advance for him.\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{14}\textit{African Repository}, XV, 178-180.
  \item \textsuperscript{15}Letter No.144, in Woodson, \textit{Kind of the Negro...Letters}, 15.
  \item \textsuperscript{16}Ibid., 20.
\end{itemize}
later Mann wrote to the Society again. He stated that his master had previously offered to sell him for half his value. Now, however, the master demanded a price of $450, which was one hundred and fifty dollars more than he had paid for Mann when he had purchased him sixteen years before.\(^\text{17}\) Moreover, the Methodists of the South had now told Mann that they could not send him to Liberia, even if purchased and set free by someone. They advised him to apply to the Methodists in the North\(^\text{1}\). Sometime later he wrote again, and his letter, while restrained, gives a tragic glimpse into the lot of the slave and the despair that filled the heart of this man who so earnestly desired to go to Liberia. How he wished he were a freeman!\(^\text{18}\) He wrote of the interest of other Negroes in colonization, and sadly referred to some who were actually going. The last letter from him pictured him in sad condition. There was still no open door for him into Africa, his children had been scattered, and his "beloved wife" sold.\(^\text{19}\) There is no record of his ever having gone to Liberia.

One of the most important letters on the subject of colonization is a long communication written from Hartford, Connecticut, on July 3, 1851, and published in the *African Repository*. The writer was Augustus Washington, who, seven years before, whilea

\(^\text{17}\)Ibid., 22.
\(^\text{18}\)Letter No. 236, in Woodson, 43.
\(^\text{19}\)Ibid.
student, had advocated a plan for a "separate State for Colored Americans" and had taken steps to negotiate for a tract of land in Mexico. War had blasted any hope of success for these negotiations, and Washington now believed Liberia to be the only logical place for a colony for free Negroes. He had evidently received a good education, and was, as a free Negro, fully conversant with the attitudes of those of his own group. He wrote:

Though the colored people may not appreciate your kind efforts, and those of many other good and true men who pursue your course, we trust you will ... not be weary in well-doing ... I am aware that nothing except the Fugitive Slave Law can be more startling to the free colored citizens of the Northern States, than the fact that any man among them, whom they have regarded as intelligent and sound in faith, should declare his convictions and influence in favor of African Colonization. But the novelty of the thing does not prove it false ... Notwithstanding the different and adverse motives that have prompted the friends of Colonization, they certainly have labored perseveringly and unitedly for the accomplishment of one great purpose.

The above citation indicated that there was a general unwillingness on the part of free Negroes to accept colonization as a way of solving their problems. It showed also the consciousness on the part of contemporary Negro observers that the Colonization Society was moved by "different and adverse motives." The writer went on to analyze the attitudes and the contribution of the groups who had come to the front as professed friends of

20 *African Repository*, XXVII, 259.
the Negro. Of the Abolitionists he wrote:

"They have proposed the immediate emancipation of the slave, and the elevation of free people of color in the land of their birth. None dared stand on their platform if unwilling to endure scorn, reproach, disgrace, lynch law, and even death for the sake of oppressed Americans. Now Anti-Slavery is popular with many Americans, assumes another name, and is converted into political capital. Even Free-Soilism was not so much designed to make room for our liberties, as to preserve unimpaired the liberties of the whites. Abolitionists have accompanied nothing really definite and practical, yet they have divested themselves of personal prejudices, aroused the nation to a sense of its injustice and wrongs to the Negro, broken down many arbitrary and proscriptive usages in their treatment, encouraged the improvement and education of Negroes, and convinced the United States and England that the Negro is capable of uplift, moral, social, political, and entitled to equal rights with others.\(^\text{22}\)

He noted the conflict that had developed between the Colonization and the Anti-Slavery Societies, and remarked that both of them might, perhaps, have done more good if they had wasted less ammunition firing at each other." He believed that the great weakness of the Colonization Society was its formal declaration of the moral and intellectual inferiority of the Negro, and their incapacity to enjoy the rights and prerogatives of freemen in the land of their birth. The Abolitionists had gone to another extreme in declaring that "Colonization was prompted only by hatred to the black race and by love of slavery."\(^\text{23}\) He saw no reason why any hostility should exist between the two societies.

Washington then dealt with some acute questions in the

\(^{22}\)Ibid., 265.

\(^{23}\)Ibid., 266.
relationships of whites and Negroes, especially those connected with the matter of colonization. He pointed out the discrimination against Negroes in society and politics, in mechanical industry, and in the colleges and academies. Of necessity free Negroes had become "consumers, not producers", and he admitted that they "cannot compete with the superior energy and cultivated intellect of long-civilized and Christian Saxons." With a good bit of irony he declared:

Hence, we are driven to the conclusion that the friendly and mutual separation of the two races is not only necessary to the peace, happiness and prosperity of both, but indispensable to the preservation of the one and the glory of the other. If we could build up another powerful Republic as an asylum for the oppressed, we would, at the same time, gratify national prejudices.

Here he exposed the attitude of colonizationists, especially those of the pro-slavery group. It is not surprising to find him asserting that the Negroes exclaim: "God deliver us from our friends, and we will take care of our enemies." He wrote of a "talented colored man" of New York who drew rounds of applause, when in an "earnest harangue against Colonization", he said: "Mr. President, the Colonizationists want us to go to Liberia if we will; if we won't go there, we may go to hell."

Washington concluded his letter with a few sharp thrusts.

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24See quotations from the Christian Spectator of 1824 in A Brief Exposition...addressed to the Citizens of Ohio, (1827), 2, 3.


26Ibid., 268.
He believed that the principal objection of many free Negroes to the work of the Colonizationists had been that "the men who professed the greatest love for them in Africa, did the most to exclude them here from the means of education, improvement, and every respectable pursuit of industry." He wished that the Society itself, "consistent with its leading purpose", had done something for the improvement and education of colored youth. The Society, he declared, seems to have believed that the educating of such youth would make them unwilling to go to Africa. He is convinced this would not have happened. He closed his communication, which is fair and restrained, with a personal and rather bitter note:

During a lifetime of constant struggle and effort, I never received any sympathy or encouragement in obtaining an education nor in aspirations to usefulness from any of the advocates of Colonization, except J. C. Potts of Trenton, New Jersey.27

Washington could have written much more about the attitudes and conduct of some colonizationists towards the free Negroes. The writings and speeches of members of the Colonization Society contained expressions that could not fail to arouse antagonism among the colored population. Here are a few examples:

An editorial in one of the first editions of the African Repository, the Society's official organ, declared:

There is a class among us, introduced by violence, notoriously ignorant, degraded and miserable, mentally diseased, broken spirited, acted upon by no motives to

27Ibid., 269.
honorable exertions, scarcely reached in their debasement by the heavenly light. 28

Gerrit Smith, the Vice-president of the Society, said:

The severe legislation, I will not say that under all circumstances it is too severe... of the slave States which drives their emancipated blacks to the free States, and scatters the nuisance there, attests that we have a share in this evil. 29

In the *African Repository* for 1832 appeared the following paragraph concerning the possibility of there being a "pious, highly cultivated, scientific Negro".

If we were constrained to admire so uncommon a being, our very admiration would be mingled with disgust, because in the physical organization of his frame we meet an insurmountable barrier even to approach to social intercourse, and in the Egyptian color which nature has stamped on his features, a principle of repulsion so strong as to forbid the idea of a communion either of interest or feeling as utterly abhorrent. 30

Another article in the same periodical stated:

Whether we consider it with reference to the welfare of the state, or the happiness of the blacks, it were better to have left them in chains, than to have liberated them to receive such freedom as they enjoy, and greater freedom we cannot, must not allow them. 31

A quotation from an official address of the Kentucky State Colonization Society, reveals the anxiety of many colonizationists concerning the alarming increase of the free Negro population.

28 *African Repository*, I, 68.

29 *Fourteenth Annual Report*, xiii.


It is against this increase of colored persons, who take but a nominal freedom, and cannot rise from their degraded condition, that this Society attempts to provide.32

Many doubted that there could be a moral elevation or an integration of Negroes into American life. Two citations are given here:

We have endeavored in vain to restore them either to self respect, or to the respect of others . . . The people of color must, in this country, remain for ages, probably forever, a separate and distinct caste, weighed down by causes powerful, universal, invincible, which neither legislation, nor Christianity, can remove.33

The official aims of the leading colonizationists in the early 1830's were expressed in the following words:

The moral, intellectual, and political improvement of the people of color within the United States, are objects foreign to the powers of this Society.34

Since they believed this to be the case, many advocates of colonization looked with disfavor on any attempts to ameliorate the condition of free Negroes in the United States or to provide them with educational or other advantages. The following extract makes their position clear:

It must appear evident to all, that every endeavor to divert the attention of the community, or even a portion of the means which the present crisis so imperatively calls for, from the Colonization Society; to measures calculated to bind the colored population to this country, and seeking to raise them to the level of the whites, whether by founding colleges, or in any other way, tends

32Ibid., VI, 82.
33Ibid., VII, 196. An editorial article.
34Ibid., VII, 291.
directly in the proportion that it succeeds, to counteract and thwart the whole plan of colonization.\textsuperscript{35}

The above are only a few samples of the language employed.\ The terms "debased", "degraded", "morbid excrescence",\textsuperscript{36} "nuisance", "abandoned", "vicious", etc., were stock terms used for describing the free Negroes. Such words are encountered constantly in the recorded speeches and the preserved writings of clergymen and laymen alike. They are sometimes strangely mingled with expressions of concern for the good of the Negroes, and with panegyrics on the new life open to them in Africa.\textsuperscript{37} There is always the repeated conviction that their removal is necessary and will somehow transform them. "Even Christianity cannot help the Negro in America."\textsuperscript{38}

In 1826 an article appeared in the \textit{North American Review}, which was immediately reprinted by the Colonization Society as a pamphlet for influencing both whites and free Negroes in favor of African colonization.\textsuperscript{39} It was very long, but represented an earnest attempt to face the issues involved. Yet many of the

\textsuperscript{35}William Jay, \textit{An Inquiry...}, 26.

\textsuperscript{36}Sixteenth Annual Report of the A.G.S., x.

\textsuperscript{37}R.R. Gurley, \textit{Address at the Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Colonization Society} (Philadelphia, 1839), 10.

\textsuperscript{38}Jay, 26.

statements were of the usual nature. "Free blacks" could never be elevated in their present position; their colonization is a matter of national importance; and their "degraded character" makes colonization "indispensable for our own relief" and for the welfare of the Negroes. The writer frankly admitted that "slave-holders are benefited by the removal of the free blacks," but he also emphasized the advantages of colonization for the Negroes. He referred to the English colony of Sierra Leone, with its population of 20,000 Africans, of whom 16,000 were recaptured slaves, as an example of what can be achieved by colonization. He then dealt with the objections raised against colonization in Liberia. Some objected that Negroes could not be induced to go. The writer asserted, however, that there were more volunteers than could be taken. Others objected that the expense of transportation was too great. It is, therefore, pointed out that the Society paid only twenty dollars for each person, and even that could be lowered. Moreover, the novel suggestion was made in this pamphlet that free Negroes should be made to save by law and then pay their own passage. As for the objection to the climate, the writer claimed that the Liberian climate was as good as that of the warm areas of the United States or the West Indies.

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40 Ibid., 4.
41 Ibid., 37.
42 Ibid., 38.
This was written at a time when the death rate in Liberia among whites and Negroes was alarming!

The free Negroes, however, did not make a widespread response to such appeals, though there were two periods when it appeared as if a general movement in favor of colonization might have taken place among them. The first period followed the death of Ashmun in 1828, when for some three or four years the colony in Liberia seemed on its way to new developments and progress. Auxiliary societies and church groups were responding to appeals with considerable zeal. The death blow to this interest, however, came with the founding of the Anti-Slavery Society in 1832, and the launching of a bitter campaign of opposition by the Abolitionists. The second period of interest developed in the fifties when some very prominent Negroes went to Liberia. At this time even in the North, the lot of the Negro became increasingly hard. This interest ceased with the Civil War.

Apart from these temporary demonstrations of interest, however, the majority of the Negroes were unresponsive to the idea of colonization. One of the most bitter expressions of opposition was expressed in a book written by a Negro named David.

43Sixteenth Annual Report, v; Stebbins, Facts and Opinions, 212.
45Woodson, Mind of the Negro ... Letters, 2; See also Letter from Frederick Douglass to Harriet Beecher Stowe, in Woodson, 656.
46Sherwood, "Movement in Ohio to Deport the Negro," 64.
Walker, entitled, *An Appeal, in Four Articles; together with a Preamble to the Coloured Citizens of the World, but in particular, and very expressly, to those of the United States of America*. Walker was the proprietor of a second-hand clothing store in Boston, had received a fair education, and had traveled widely in the United States. He had been born in North Carolina in 1785, of a free mother and a slave father. His book was written in 1829, and became the most widely discussed publication written by a Negro during this period. Article IV in the Appeal was headed, "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the Colonizing Plan". It contained a bitter arraignment of the colonizationists, with special reference to Henry Clay. Here is an extract:

I appeal and ask every citizen of these United States and of the whole world, both white and black, who has any knowledge of Mr. Clay's public labors for these states... Do you believe that Mr. Henry Clay, late Secretary of State... is a friend to the blacks further than his personal interest extends? ... Does he care a pinch of snuff about Africa — whether it remains a land of pagans and of blood, or of Christians, so long as gets enough of her sons and daughters to dig up gold and silver for him? ... Was he not made by the Creator to sit in the shade, and make the blacks work without remuneration ..., to support him and his family? I have been... taking notice of this man's speeches and public writings, but never... have I seen

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47Alice Dana Adams, *The Neglected Period of Anti-Slavery in America, 1808-1831* (Boston, 1908), 93.

48Ibid.

49Brawley, 155; Letter to the Editor of the Liberator by a Negro who signs himself "Leo", in Woodson, *Letters*, 223-224.
anything in his writings which insisted on the emancipa-
tion of slavery, which has almost ruined his country.  

Walker also attacked John Randolph of Virginia and Elias B. Caldwell, Secretary of the Colonization Society, and Clerk of the United States Supreme Court. Of their scheme of coloniza-
tion he wrote:

Here is a demonstrative proof of a plan got up, by a gang of slaveholders, to select the free people of color from among the slaves, that our more miserable brethren may be the better secured in ignorance and wretchedness, to work their farms and dig their mines, and thus go on enriching the Christians with their blood and groans. What our brethren could have been thinking about, who have left their native land and gone to Africa, I am un-
able to say ... The Americans may do or say as they please, but they have to raise us up from the condition of brutes to that of respectable men, and to make a national ack-
nowledgement to us for the wrongs they have inflicted on us.

The Appeal produced a furious reaction in the South. And while public feeling was still running high in that section of the country, William Lloyd Garrison appeared on the scene with his inflammatory Liberator magazine, also published in Boston. A few months later, in August, 1831, the South was seized with panic when Nat Turner's Rebellion took place in Virginia. Many even in the North believed that Walker and Garrison had been responsible for the rebellion, and the editors of respectable

50 Brawley, 158.

51 Ibid.

newspapers began to invoke mob violence. Letters were sent to Mayor Otis of Boston, demanding that Walker be punished, and urging that some law be provided to stop the publication of such "diabolical papers" as those issued by Garrison and Walker.

Although the uprising had been one of slaves rather than free Negroes, public sentiment in the South became inflamed more than ever against the latter. The most severe measures were now contemplated by Southern states filled with fear and agitation. This was especially true in Virginia and North Carolina, where many executions of Negroes took place. Even the editor of the Niles' Register singled out the free Negroes for attack. This paper was usually written in a calm and fair manner, and the editor had previously expressed his opposition to slavery. Free Negroes were now described, however, as the "pests of society," in places like Baltimore (where the Register was published), Philadelphia, New York, Providence, etc., and one editorial stated bluntly that "emancipation without removal adds to the grievance." There were too many "black faces" in the land,

53 Ibid., I, 238.
54 Ibid; Brawley, 159; Niles Weekly Register, 41, 66; The Liberator, I, 167.
55 Niles Register, 41:221.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid., 448.
58 Ibid., 35.
59 Ibid.
and the editor declared his support to the plan of the Colonization Society to get all free Negroes to Africa. He quoted with approval the Richmond Enquirer, which insisted that the free Negroes must be forced to go to Africa. The Enquirer had supported the motion that had been presented by Mr. Faulkner in the Virginia State Legislature, asking that $100,000 dollars be appropriated for the purpose of sending the free Negroes away, even supplying them with tools and other equipment to encourage their going.

In response to this campaign now taken up by the newspapers and periodicals of the whites, the free Negroes also took up their pens. The Liberator speedily became the mouthpiece of the more intelligent among them. Educated Negroes sent letters and articles to its columns, supporting the editor in his stand against colonization. Feeling was running high among whites and Negroes, and some of the latter preferred not to sign their names, especially when they made some very serious charges. When Walker, the author of the Appeal died just after his work had become generally known, some of the free Negroes charged that he had been put out of the way by pro-slavery whites. In the Liberator of January 22, 1831, there appeared a letter from "A Colored Bostonian":

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60 Ibid.
61 Ibid., 268.
62 William Lloyd Garrison, I, 225; Liberator, I, 43.
Having been prompted, by the inquiries of the Journal and Tribune, to make some researches respecting the circumstances of the death of Walker, author of a flagitious pamphlet, so called; I have spared no pains to obtain correct information relative thereto. The result had not been very satisfactory to me, and probably will not be to the public.

The most I can learn is, that some one or more, recently from the south, spread a report in this city that a reward of $3000 was offered by southern planters to any one who would take the life of Walker. The report is believed by many of our population... to be true. Many well-informed persons of color there are, however, who have a strong suspicion that Walker came to his end otherwise than by a usual visitation of the Providence of God. Whether their suspicion be groundless or not, is a question—a question, too, under circumstances hard to be answered... Ought it to be thought a wonder that a man like Walker should fall a victim to the vengeance of the public?63

Incensed by such inflammatory writings, many in the South became more ardent than ever in pressing for colonization. A measure was introduced in the Virginia Legislature designed to effect the compulsory removal of free and freed Negroes by means of annual appropriations. The bill actually passed the House,64 but failed to pass the Senate.65 This anxiety to deport the free Negroes at public expense by both Virginia and Maryland was interpreted by members of the American Colonization Society as a sign of the "great movements" going on in favor of their cause. Their language again becomes somewhat extravagant:

63Letter on the "Death of Walker," in Woodson, Mind of the Negro ... Letters, 222.

64Niles Register, 41:472.

65Ibid., 42:78.
Indeed, the whole American community appears to be awakened, as by one powerful spirit, to the consideration and adoption of measures for the more complete accomplishment of the great objects of the American Colonization Society. 66

Within the Society itself this feeling that their work had the support of the "whole American community" was doubtless strengthened by the knowledge that they had among their vice-presidents at this time a remarkable group of eminent men, including John Marshall, General Lafayette of France, William Crawford, Henry Clay; Daniel Webster, the authors of both the "Star Spangled Banner" and "America", (Francis Scott Key and Samuel H. Smith) and some two dozen other statesmen, educators, and men of wealth and influence. 67 James Madison of Virginia was president. The colonizationists were also encouraged by the fact that while the bitter conflict referred to above was developing, there seemed to be a resurgence of interest among Negroes in the South who wished to go to Liberia. The Managers announced that "not less than one thousand emigrants are now seeking a passage to Liberia." 68 They were doubtless aware that this was a number far below even the number of free Negroes who represented the annual increase in their own group each year, but they did not allow that fact to discourage them. They still hoped for

67 Sixteenth Annual Report, xxii.
68 Address of the Board of Managers (1832), 8.
a great wave of interest that would send free Negroes to Africa by thousands.69 Although they were disturbed by the news that the state of Maryland had inaugurated its own colonization scheme independently of the national society, the Managers of the American Colonization Society believed that Maryland colonizationists were justified in announcing that they could remove the whole colored population to Africa in one generation.70

As a result of the "Southampton Massacres" precipitated by Nat Turner's Rebellion, the state of Maryland not only established stringent laws to deal with slaves and free Negroes, but also threw its support officially on the side of colonization.71 A law was passed providing for three commissioners, members of the Maryland State Colonization Society, whose duty it was to arrange for the removal of free men of color from the state, and even to provide for their establishment and support where it was necessary. An appropriation "not exceeding $20,000" was made for the year 1832. All Registers of Wills and County Clerks were required to furnish lists of manumitted slaves who were to be removed. All those who refused to go to Liberia were to be put out of the state. A slave had the right to refuse manumission if he did not wish to be cast adrift on his own. If

69Sixteenth Annual Report, 10.
70Ibid., 16.
manumitted, he had the permission of the state to hire himself out for the purpose of obtaining money to pay for his removal to Africa.\textsuperscript{72}

This legislation, like other legislation now introduced into the South was severe, but in practice its more harsh provisions were rarely exercised. In only one instance was the Sheriff called upon to remove a manumitted slave beyond the borders of Maryland.\textsuperscript{73} Yet such legislation played into the hands of the opponents of colonization, who stressed its discriminatory aspects.

The Maryland State Colonization Society was authorized by the state legislature to purchase lands in Africa for the purpose of establishing its own colony to which free Negroes and "such slaves as may be manumitted for the purpose" might be sent. It was under this charter that the State Colonization Society proceeded to establish an independent settlement at Cape Palmas.\textsuperscript{74}

The free Negroes, however, in every part of the United States interpreted this interest of the South in colonization to be a scheme by which slavery could be more securely fastened upon the United States. They found confirmation of this even in the reported addresses of leading men connected with the American

\textsuperscript{72}Ibid., 15,16.
\textsuperscript{73}Ibid., 16.
\textsuperscript{74}Ibid., 17; Alexander, \textit{History of Colonization}, 407.
Colonization Society and with those states most willing to give their support and money to the deportation of free Negroes. A few samples will be sufficient to illustrate this. In an address before the North Carolina State Colonization Society is the following:

The very commencing act of freedom to the slave, is to place him in a condition still worse, if possible, both for his moral habits, his outward provision, and for the community that embosoms him; than even that...from which he has been removed. 75

In an address to the Lynchburgh Colonization Society one notes the statement that "policy, and even the voice of humanity, forbade the progress of manumission." 76 It was considered both inhuman and unwise to set the slaves free. Even the Society's official publication sometimes supported this view:

What but sorrow can we feel at the misguided piety which has set so many of them free by death-bed devise, or sudden conviction of injustice. 77

It would be as humane to throw them from the decks in the middle passage, as to set them free in our country. 78

Slavery is an evil entailed upon the present generation of slaveholders, which they must suffer, whether they will or not. 79

The above quotations are taken from articles by colonizationists, and similar citations could be multiplied. A case can,

75 African Repository, III, 66.
76 Ibid., IV, 268.
77 Ibid., III, 193.
78 Ibid., IV, 226.
79 Ibid., V, 179.
of course, be made for the colonizationists. Many of them were sincerely concerned about the condition of the Negroes, and felt it was wrong to emancipate slaves and then leave them to their fate as outcasts and wanderers in the cities of America. They believed the slave was better off cared for by some interested master. Some believed that emancipation should come gradually, and colonization was presumed to be capable of bringing this about. But free Negroes, for the most part, were not ready to credit philanthropic motives to slaveholders, and the Anti-Slavery Movement which was organized in 1832 definitely strengthened their antipathy towards the whole institution of slavery. They became bitterly antagonistic to any compromise with it.

A study of a few more letters written by free Negroes at the time reveals the significance of the Anti-Slavery Society and the extension of the influence of Garrison's Liberator. It is probably true to say that the beginning of the decline in the affairs of the American Colonization Society can be definitely traced to the year 1831-1832. While there had been open opposition to colonization before this, the opposition now expressed by resolutions passed at conventions of colored people. The response of a Negro to the matter of colonization became the

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80These letters are found in Woodson, Mind of the Negro, 159-510.

81William Lloyd Garrison, I, 291; Sherwood, "Movement in Ohio to Deport the Negro", 69.

82Stebbins, Facts and Opinions, 194.
criterion by which his loyalty to his own race was judged. One of the most significant examples of this was John Russworm, to whom reference is made at the beginning of the present chapter. He had at first refused to connect himself with the colonizationists. Later, however, he had gone to Liberia, where he served as editor of the *Liberia Herald* and as a public functionary.

When he wrote the letters given below, he had not been appointed Governor of "Maryland in Liberia", but he had become an ardent advocate of colonization. He had, therefore, incurred the displeasure of some of his former friends.

The letters they wrote against him afford us an insight into the mind of educated, anti-colonization Negro not found to the same degree elsewhere. They reveal the intense feeling which moved the free Negro in 1831 and 1832. Their spirit fits into the tone of Garrison's *Liberator*, in which most of such letters were published.

The first letter is anonymous, being simply signed "R". The writer was evidently an educated man:

Sir - Notwithstanding the many preposterous arguments of colonizationists... in support of their imaginary scheme of civilizing Africa, by draining the people of color from this their original and only home; notwithstanding the many hyperbolical accounts... about that pestiferous climate;— I never felt so indignant at any of their manouvers... as at a piece of composition which appeared in twelfth number of the 'Liberia Herald,' written by its editor John B. Russworm. This John B. Russworm is known, I presume, to every one of us; his ingratitude is but too deeply stamped upon the minds of many... After he subverted the pledge he made to his colored brethren, he left

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83Latrobe, "Maryland in Liberia", 54.
their posterity there is no abiding place on the other side of the Atlantic. Canada will hardly afford them a temporary shelter, against the bleak winds of winter. Before God, we know no other home for a man of color, of republican principles, than Africa.86

A Philadelphia Negro who simply signed himself "C.D.T." took bitter exception to this paragraph:

Read for yourselves, my colored brethren, the language of Mr. Russworm, and then you will be able to judge of the change which this world's goods are calculated to make in the principles of a man. When Mr. Russworm was employed in the editorial department of the Freedom's Journal... he was as much opposed to the colonizing of the free people of color in Africa as I am; but when his patrons failed to support the Journal, he, not being able to live without other subscribers, converted the people's paper to the use of the Colonization Society, by which change he worked himself into their employ...

I have nothing to say against the very laudable efforts of the Society. It has done, and continues to do good, for our enslaved brethren; and the Colony at Liberia is well adapted to the bettering of their unhappy condition. I am glad to see they have friends, who will aid in moving them to that...country. But we who have a right to free suffrages, have no disposition to emigrate either to Africa or Canada. If left to our choice, we would much rather stay at home. It is here we have received our birth, and here we wish to remain...

Mr. Russworm tells us, he knows no other home for us than Africa. If he were in Philadelphia, and would make this assertion to me, I would tell him it was a palpable falsehood, and would prove it by his former editorial documents. I would ask whether Mr. R. would have gone to Africa even for a visit, had he been in flourishing circumstances. I answer, no... It was real necessity that drove him to seek in Africa an abiding home, as he terms it; and as his usefulness is entirely lost to the people, I sincerely pray that he may have the honor to live and also die there.87

The reference to Canada by both Russworm and C.D.T. brings to our attention an interesting experiment in colonization which

86Woodson, Mind of the Negro...Letters, 162.
87Ibid., 163.
was made by the free Negroes themselves in 1832. As the result of action by a Negro convention which met in Philadelphia in June, 1831, and the leadership of some outstanding free Negroes like Austin Steward, Benjamin Paul, Enos Adams, William Bell, Philip Harris, Abraham Dangerfield, Simon Wyatt and Nathaniel Paul, a settlement was established in the District of London, Ontario. It was given the name of Wilberforce, and its founders secured eight hundred acres of land. Within a year of its establishment, the settlement had a population of two thousand Negroes, and many others seemed disposed to join them. The Canadians, however, developed a great deal of hostility to this Negro emigration, and later the settlement declined because of strife among the emigrants themselves.

Nathaniel Paul, formerly pastor of the African Baptist Church of Albany, New York, was for a time the agent of the Wilberforce settlement, and he was authorized to visit Great Britain to solicit aid for the new colony. There was a growing disposition among some leading free Negroes to consider some

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88Brawley, 160.

89Letter of Austin Seward, Chairman of the Board of Managers of the Wilberforce Settlement, in Woodson, Letters, 180-181.

90Brawley, 164.

91Ibid.

92Woodson, Letters, 180-191.

method of colonization, but only in the West Indies, Central and South America, and Canada. Any such colonization was to be voluntary on the part of the emigrants, and was to be directed by the Negroes themselves. Moreover, it was expected that the colored population would continue to multiply in the United States, and that the slaves would be emancipated; There was to be no compromise with the American Colonization Society, and there was a fixed determination to resist colonization in Africa.

In 1832, both America and England were treated to the spectacle of an open fight not only between the representatives of colonization and of abolition, but also a conflict between two different types of colonizationists. On December 31, 1831, Nathaniel Paul had sailed from New York as the agent and representative of the colonists in Wilberforce to the British Court. He was supposed to procure the protection and patronage of the Crown, and arouse the sympathies of the people of England in behalf of the colony. At the time of the settlement of the first Negroes at Wilberforce, the Governor of Upper Canada, Sir James Colebrook, had assured them that they would be entitled to "all the privileges of the rest of His Majesty's subjects." Paul was anxious to capitalize on the rising anti-slavery sentiment

94 Brawley, 165.
96 Sherwood, 73.
97 Ibid., 72.
in England, so that the settlement he represented might attract support from leading Englishmen. He did not, therefore, fail to give Uncle Sam due credit for his 2,000,000 slaves; nor to expose the prejudices of the Americans to our colored race; nor to fairly exhibit the hypocrisy of the Colonization Society, to the astonishment of the people." On his arrival in England Paul had discovered that Elliot Cresson, the well-known Quaker and agent of the American Colonization Society "was making rapid progress in deceiving the English philanthropists". He had therefore set himself the task of counteracting Cresson's influence. Garrison wrote approvingly of Paul's efforts, and was very pleased that the representative of the Wilberforce Settlement had "clogged the chariot wheels" of the "apostate Quaker" Elliot Cresson. He wrote in July, 1832:

It is fortunate for the cause of truth and benevolence that Mr. Paul happens to be in England at this time; and we sincerely hope that he will spare no efforts to expose the base imposition which Cresson is palming upon the generous-hearted Britons. Let them but fairly understand the principles and operations of the Colonization Society, and he will no longer dare to solicit their charities in its behalf. Cresson's assertion, that the Society is engaged to overthrow slavery, is a gross misrepresentation. The Society, through a thousand responsible organs, has protested ab origine that its object is not the emancipation of the slaves, but the expulsion of the free people of color. It is not hostile to slavery in any sense of the term, but gives it protection and nourishment. Mr. Paul's account of the enthusiasm which

98 Letter from Nathaniel Paul to Garrison, in Woodson, Letters, 165.

99 Woodson, Mind of the Negro ... Letters, 163.
pervades the minds of the British people on the subject of abolition is indeed most cheering.\textsuperscript{100}

We must later in our study return to the conflict that took place in England between colonizationists and abolitionists, since it is of great significance.

With the development of the Anti-Slavery Movement, a number of distinguished Negroes came to the fore as advocates of abolition. Several of these should be mentioned. David Ruggles first became known as a "most active, adventurous, and daring conductor on the underground railroad."\textsuperscript{101} He is said to have helped 600 slaves to escape from various southern states into Canada or other places of security. The hardships he endured brought on blindness, but he rose above his handicap and later established a "Water-cure Hospital" in Northampton, by which he maintained himself and family in comfortable circumstances.\textsuperscript{102}

William C. Nell was an active and able organizer of Negro meetings and conventions, a speaker of considerable force, and a diligent worker with facts and documents which he made available to anti-slavery workers. He was appointed a clerk in the Post Office at Boston.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{100}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{101}Samuel J. May, Some Recollections of the Anti-Slavery Conflict (Boston, 1869), 285.

\textsuperscript{102}Ibid., 286.

\textsuperscript{103}Ibid.
Two other lecturers of note were William Wells Brown and Charles Lenox Remond, both of whom traveled widely in Great Britain and America. Remond was probably the best known Negro in the United States prior to the rise of Frederick Douglass. He drew large audiences in England and Ireland, and made it his business to denounce Cresson and Ralph R. Gurley, Secretary of the Colonization Society when they were working in England at the same time as he was. He challenged Gurley to a public debate, but the challenge was not accepted.

Another anti-colonization free Negro whose name is found scattered through the literature on slavery during this period of controversy is James Forten. He had fought for his country in the Revolutionary War, and had later become very wealthy as head of the largest sail-making establishment in Philadelphia in the 1820's. Although no longer young when the anti-slavery conflict broke out, he was the moving spirit in the convention movement among Negroes, beginning with the first meeting in Philadelphia, 1830. His name is attached to a series of resolutions adopted by the Philadelphia Convention, resolutions which expressed the opposition of those present to colonization.

104 Woodson, Letters, 293. A number of Remond's letters are found in this volume, 294-328.


106 May, Recollections, 286; Alice Adams, Neglected Period of Anti-Slavery, 92.

107 Stebbins, Facts and Opinions, 195; Woodson, Letters, 174; May, Recollections, 206.
Whereas our ancestors (not of choice) were the first cultivators of the wilds of America, we, their descendants, feel ourselves entitled to participate in the blessings of her luxuriant soil, which their blood and sweat enriched; and that any measure or system of measures, having a tendency to banish us from her bosom, would not only be cruel, but in direct violation of those principles which have been the boast of this republic.

Resolved, That we view with deep abhorrence the unmerited stigma attempted to be cast upon the reputation of the free people of color by the promoters of this measure, 'that they are a dangerous and useless part of the community', when, in the state of disfranchisement in which they live, in the hour of danger they ceased to remember their wrongs, and rallied around the standard of their country.

Resolved, That we will never separate ourselves voluntarily from the slave population of this country; they are our brethren by the ties of consanguinity, suffering, and wrong; and we feel that there is more virtue in suffering privations with them, than fancied advantages for a season.

Resolved, That without arts, without science, or a proper knowledge of government, to cast into the wilds of Africa the free people of color, seems to us the circuitous route by which they must return to perpetual bondage.

Resolved, That, having the strongest confidence in the justice of God and the philanthropy of the free states, we cheerfully submit our destinies to the guidance of Him who suffers not a sparrow to fall without his special providence. 108

Samuel J. May, the noted abolitionist, records a speech made by James Forten when Forten was entertaining May and some other gentlemen, including two visitors from England, at his attractive home in Philadelphia. In the course of the evening the subject of colonization was introduced, and Mr. Forten made the following observations:

108Stebbins, 195.
My great-grandfather was brought to this country a slave from Africa. My grandfather obtained his own freedom. My father never wore the yoke. He rendered valuable services to his country in the war of our Revolution; and I, though then a boy, was a drummer in that war. I was taken prisoner, and was made to suffer not a little on board the Jersey prison-ship. I have since lived and labored in a useful employment, have acquired property, and have paid taxes in this city. Here I have dwelt until I am nearly sixty years of age, and have brought up and educated a family, as you see thus far. Yet some ingenious gentlemen have recently discovered that I am still an African; that a continent three thousand miles, and more, from the place where I was born, is my native country. And I am advised to go home. Well, it may be so. Perhaps, if I should only be set on the shore of that distant land, I should recognize all I might see there, and run at once to the old hut where my forefathers lived a hundred years ago.\textsuperscript{109}

May evidently shared with Forten "that ineffable contempt which he felt for the pretence of the Colonization Society,"\textsuperscript{110} although May was a man of considerable restraint. A contemporary described him in the following words:

"If ever there was a man, at the same time perfectly courageous and straightforward, and also sweet-tempered and fair to his opponents, it was Samuel Joseph May. One would suppose him to be the last man to be mobbed."\textsuperscript{111}

One more free Negro needs to be mentioned, Robert Purvis. He was one of a large delegation from Pennsylvania that attended the convention held in Philadelphia in 1834 to form the National Anti-Slavery Society, which was really an offshoot of the New England Anti-Slavery Society founded by Garrison and others two

\textsuperscript{109}May, \textit{Recollections}, 287.

\textsuperscript{110}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{111}James Freeman Clarke, \textit{Anti-Slavery Days} (New York, 1884), 36.
years earlier.\textsuperscript{112} Purvis was educated, brilliant, and wealthy, and was so nearly white that he was generally taken to be so.\textsuperscript{113} Had he wished to move away from Philadelphia, he could have lived as a white man, without stigma, yet he preferred to identify himself with his own race, rather than conceal his true origin.\textsuperscript{114}

He seems at times to have been somewhat irritated by the less educated among his own race, and one finds him writing bitterly about the prejudice against different shades of skin color.\textsuperscript{115}

He was a speaker of great eloquence, who also went to England to speak against colonizationists like Cresson. The following account of a meeting he had with Daniel O'Connell is of interest:

I had, at the House of Commons, an introduction to the Hon. DANIEL O'CONNELL. On my being presented to the Irish Patriot as an American Gentleman, he declined taking my hand; but when he understood that I was not only identified with the Abolitionists, but with the proscribed and oppressed colored class in the United States, he grasped my hand, and warmly shaking it, remarked - 'Sir, I will never take the hand of an American, nor should any honest man in this country do so, without first knowing his principles in reference to American Slavery, and its ally, the American Colonization Society.' In reply I remarked that it was asserted in America, that he had caused his name to be stricken off the Protest against the American Colonization Society. Mark his answer: 'He who asserted that, Sir, asserted a lie to the full extent and meaning of the term. I have heard,' he continued, 'that much was made of what I said, in relation to the Americans--their Slavery and their Colonization; but ... I shall express myself more

\textsuperscript{112}John F. Hume, \textit{The Abolitionists} (New York, 1905), 201-203.
\textsuperscript{113}May, \textit{Recollections}, 288.
\textsuperscript{114}\textit{Ibid.}, 289.
\textsuperscript{115}Letter to Garrison from England, in Woodson, \textit{Letters}, 175.
fully and decidedly, in relation to these matters. Get you up a meeting for that purpose, and I will subscribe 5, or more, to defray the expenses.' Such, verbatim, was the language of that fearless advocate for universal freedom. Now, will Cresson dare again to say that DANIEL O'CONNELL erased his name from the British Protest?116

A number of other letters by free Negroes could be presented to show how widespread the opposition to colonization became among them after 1831.117 It became the regular practice at free Negro conventions down to the time of the Civil War to reaffirm their opposition to the Colonization Society in formal resolutions.118 While some Negroes continued to respond to the appeals of the Society, it became evident that colonization was to have increasingly less success among them. Writing of the developments in Ohio, Sherwood has summed the matter up as follows:

Herein lay the essence of the matter. The Negro wished to stay where he was and so opposed any propaganda that contemplated removing him. And since he was the chief factor in this philanthropic project his hostility was bound to react to the detriment of the society. And this explains in some measure why the colonization movement which started out in Ohio so auspiciously was doomed to end in failure.119

Behind the crisis now facing the Colonization Society was the influence of the abolitionist leader, William Lloyd Garrison.

116Ibid., 176.
117Woodson, Letters, 228, 230, 238, 239, 244, 246, 283, 494-505.
118Stebbins, 196-210; Sherwood, 69, 70.
119"Movement in Ohio to Deport the Negro", 73.
It is of interest to trace this man's progress from at least a measure of support for colonization to the most bitter opposition in a comparatively short space of time.

Until March, 1829, Garrison, had been editor of the *Journal of the Times*, which advocated, among other things, "the gradual emancipation of every slave in the republic."120 He had spoken very highly of Henry Clay, American Secretary of State, who was widely known as an ardent colonizationist of the pro-slavery type:

Henry Clay at this moment stands on a highereminence than he ever before occupied. His attitude is sublime--his front undaunted--his spirit unsubdued. It is impossible to read his noble speech without mingled emotions of pride, indignation, reverence, and delight... We believe that nothing but death can prevent his election.121

Garrison announced his support of Clay for the next Presidential election, and in June, 1829, accepted an invitation to deliver an address on the Fourth of July in Boston in the interests of the American Colonization Society. The speech was delivered at the Park-Street Church, and there is some irony in the fact that a hymn written by John Pierpont for the occasion became a somewhat regular hymn sung at anti-slavery (abolitionist) meetings for the next thirty years of conflict.122

120 Editorial from the *Journal*, in William Lloyd Garrison, I, 103.

121 William Lloyd Garrison, I, 122.

122 Ibid., 126. Oliver Johnson, William Lloyd Garrison and His Times; or Sketches of the Anti-Slavery Movement in America (Boston, 1881), 112-117.
When he made this speech Garrison appears to have had somewhat limited information about the Colonization Society. He actually said very little about the Society in his speech, but dwelt forcibly upon the enormities of slavery, the national disgrace and peril of it, and the duty of the free states to assist in its overthrow. Yet towards the close of his address he did make a definite plea for support of the Society:

I call upon the ambassadors of Christ everywhere to make known this proclamation: 'Thus saith the Lord God of the Africans, Let this people go, that they may serve me.' I ask them to 'proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound'—to light up a flame of philanthropy that shall burn till all Africa be redeemed from the night of moral death, and the song of deliverance be heard throughout her borders...I call upon the churches... to lead in this great enterprise... I call upon our citizens to assist in establishing auxiliary colonization societies in every State, county and town. I implore their direct and liberal patronage to the parent society... I call upon the great body of newspaper editors to keep this subject constantly before their readers; to sound the trumpet of alarm, and to plead eloquently for the rights of man...I call upon the American people... to cleanse that worse than Augean stable, the District of Columbia, from its foul impurities. I ask them to sustain Congress in any future efforts to colonize the colored population of the States.

When Garrison delivered this speech, he was preparing to join Benjamin Lundy, the Quaker abolitionist, as associate editor of the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Lundy was an

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123Words of Garrison: A Centennial Collection (Boston and New York, 1905), 66.


125Words of Garrison, 65.
advocate of gradual abolition, while even Garrison had said in July, 1829: "I acknowledge that immediate and complete emancipation is not desirable. No rational man cherishes so wild a vision." Within a short time, however, he had changed his opinion, and before he set out for Baltimore to join Lundy, he had become convinced that "immediate and unconditional emancipation" was the only solution to the slavery problem. He frankly compared views with Lundy, and it was agreed that each should sign his articles in the Genius, and urge the common end in his own way. Yet Garrison did not immediately turn against the Colonization Society. He had been for some time with Lundy before he became convinced that the purposes of the colonizationists were against the interests of the Negroes. When this conviction came to him in the summer of 1830, he decided to return to Boston. He began to lecture not only against slavery, but also against the Colonization Society, and he found two ardent supporters in Samuel E. Sewall and Samuel J. May. With their encouragement he began to publish his Liberator, and in the first issue, which appeared on January 1, 1831, he made a recantation in the following words:

In Park Street Church, on the Fourth of July, 1829,

126 William Lloyd Garrison, I, 140.
127 Words of Garrison, 66.
128 William Lloyd Garrison, I, 140.
129 May, Recollections, 75.
in an address on slavery, I unreflectingly assented to the popular but pernicious doctrine of gradual abolition. I seize this opportunity to make a full and unequivocal recantation, and thus publicly to ask pardon of my God, of my country, and of my brethren, the poor slaves, for having uttered a sentiment so full of timidity, injustice, and absurdity. A similar recantation, from my pen, was published in the "Genius of Universal Emancipation" at Baltimore, in September, 1829. My conscience is now satisfied. 130

There was no direct allusion to colonization in this "Salutatory Address", nor was the American Colonization Society mentioned by name in the first issue of the Liberator. But in the second issue, Garrison, in opposition to Lundy, plainly stated his belief that "the American Colonization Society is wrong in principle and impotent in design", and he promised to "thoroughly sift its pretensions in subsequent numbers of the Liberator." 131 From this time on, he was the implacable foe of colonization, and called upon all those who would aid the Negro to fight against the Society. Alexander, the able and official historian of the West African colonies marks this period, especially 1832, as the critical time:

It was during this year of general prosperity in the affairs of the Colonization Society, that a spirit of unrelenting opposition to the cause, arose from the friends of immediate emancipation; many of whom had once been favourers of colonization. They favoured it in the hope that it would sooner or later come out boldly in opposition to slavery; but finding that the society continued to adhere to its original and declared principles, and that slaveholders were found among their most efficient patrons, they began to denounce the Colonization Society

130 Salutatory Address To the Public, Liberator, I, 7, January, 1831.
in language the most severe and vituperative... The leader in this hostile attack was Mr. Garrison, who published a large book against African Colonization, entitled, Garrison's Thoughts on African Colonization. Of this work, the editor of a paper in the city of New York, says, "The boldness, the magnitude, and the severity of his charges against the society are truly astonishing." This work seemed at once to arouse the feelings of many persons, who with zeal embraced Mr. Garrison's views; among these were found ministers of the gospel, and men and women of irreproachable character. This was the origin of what is now called Abolitionism.132

After the founding of the New England Anti-Slavery Society in January, 1832, Garrison began a systematic work of agitation by tracts and public addresses for the express purpose of destroying the influence of the American Colonization Society.133 In 1832 and 1833 he dealt the Society two blows from which it never fully recovered. First of all he gave himself to what was doubtless his principal task in 1832, the writing of an elaborate exposure of the Colonization Society, entitled Thoughts on African Colonization. Its sub-title described it as an "impartial exhibition of the doctrines, principles and purposes of the American Colonization Society," and the work was mainly composed of extracts from the Society's official reports and speeches.134 It also included in its contents the "resolutions, addresses and remonstrances of the free people of color." It was a powerful document, designed to appeal to


133Words of Garrison, 76; Oliver Johnson, 112-117.

134Ibid.; see Appendix ii of this thesis.
whites and Negroes, and the Colonization Society was made to appear most vulnerable when Garrison placed the conflicting statements of leading colonizationists side by side. As a kind of motto for the work, Garrison used two texts: "Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee;" and "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good." The author developed exhaustively ten points as follows: That the American Colonization was pledged not to oppose the slavery system; that it apologized for the system and the slaveholders; that it recognized slaves as property; that by deporting Negroes it increased the value of slaves; that it was the enemy of immediate abolition; that it was nourished by fear and selfishness; that it aimed at the utter expulsion of the blacks; that it was the disparager of free Negroes; that it denied the possibility of elevating the black people of the country; and that it deceived and misled the nation.

In his preface Garrison sought to clarify the issue between him and the Colonization Society in the following words:

To impair the force of this exposition, the ardent advocates of the Colonization Society will undoubtedly attempt to evade the ground of controversy, and lead incautious minds astray in a labyrinth of sophistry. But the question is not, whether the climate of Africa is salubrious, nor whether the mortality among the emigrants has been excessive, nor whether the colony is in a prosperous condition, nor whether the transportation

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136 Brawley, 127.
of the whole colored population can be effected in thirty years, or three centuries, nor whether any slaves have been emancipated on condition of banishment; but whether the doctrines and principles of the Society accord with the doctrines and principles of the gospel, whether the slave-holders are the just proprietors of their slaves, whether it is not the sacred duty of the nation to abolish the system of slavery now, and to recognize the people of color as brethren and countrymen who have been unjustly treated and covered with unmerited shame. This is the question—and the only question. 137

In his "Introductory Remarks", which occupy thirty-eight pages, Garrison tells how he was brought to a change of mind regarding colonization by examining the reports of the American Colonization Society. He was willing to accept voluntary colonization (such as was taking place in Canada), but he charged that the colony in Liberia had neither been good for the American Negro sent there, nor for the African tribesmen whom the colonizers proposed to civilize and evangelize. He reminded the colonizers of their oft-repeated descriptions of the depravity of the free Negroes, and asked how it is possible for such people to influence another people morally. The new "nation" of American Negroes being sent to Liberia must "first be evangelized in a barbarous land, by a feeble, inadequate process, before it can be qualified to evangelize the other nation." 138 If the estimate of the colonizers were received, there were "two ignorant and depraved nations to be

136Brawley, 127.
137Preface to Thoughts on African Colonization, iii.
138Thoughts on African Colonization, 33.
regenerated instead of one."

In the "Introductory Remarks" he made it clear that he was not attacking individuals, but the Society in collective form. "My warfare," he declared, "is against the AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY," and then went on:

I should oppose this Society even were its doctrines harmless. It imperatively and effectively seals up the lips of a vast number of influential and pious men, who, for fear of giving offense to those slaveholders with whom they associate, and thereby leading to a dissolution of the compact, dare not expose the flagrant enormities of the system of slavery, nor denounce the crime of holding human beings in bondage ... if they shrink from the conflict, how shall the victory be won? I do not mean to aver, that, in their sermons, or addresses, or private conversations, they never allude to the subject of slavery; for they do so frequently, or at least every Fourth of July. But my complaint is, that they content themselves with representing slavery as an evil — a misfortune, a calamity which has been entailed upon us by former generations, and not as an individual CRIME, embracing in its folds robbery, oppression and piracy. They do not identify the criminals; they make no direct, pungent, earnest appeal to the consciences of men-stealers.139

Garrison used extracts from the Society's organ, the African Repository, and the annual reports and writings of well-known colonizationists to confirm his charges.140 He specially criticized Henry Clay, who was now regarded as the open apologist for slavery.141 Clay had not only made some important

139 Ibid., 19. The charges made by Garrison and others are discussed in the summary and conclusion of this thesis, 20
140 Ibid., 44.
141 William L. Garrison, I, 296.
speeches in favor of colonization, but had also about this time introduced into the United States Senate a bill providing for the distribution of the proceeds from the sale of Public Lands among the several states. The money thus acquired was to be applied by the states, at their discretion to "Education, Internal Improvement, and the Colonization of Free Persons of Colour." A number of other anti-abolitionists in the colonization movement were referred to by Garrison. Their names "manifest the Society's strength among the intellectual and moral as well as political leaders of public opinion." The author of the Thoughts spared none of them. He mentioned some of the leaders by name, and then generalized about the whole group:

Of the whole number of individuals constituting the officers of the Society, nearly three-fourths, I believe, are the owners of slaves, or interested in slave property; not one of whom, to my knowledge, has emancipated any of his slaves to be sent to Liberia!! The President of the Society (Charles Carroll) owns, I have understood, nearly one thousand slaves! And yet he is lauded beyond measure as a patriot, a philanthropist, and a Christian! The former President (Judge Bushrod Washington), so far from breaking the fetters of his slaves, actually while holding his office offered a large reward for a runaway female slave, to any person who would secure her by putting her into any jail within the United States.

143 Ibid.
144 William L. Garrison, I, 296.
145 Thoughts on African Colonization, 76; Cf. infra, 219-222 for a discussion of charges against colonizationists.
In the second part of the Thoughts Garrison gathered together a number of protestations made by free Negroes against colonization in Africa. The Negroes, the author asserted were "as unanimously opposed to a removal to Africa as the Cherokees from the council-fires and graves of their fathers." He referred to the resolutions passed by the colored people at their conventions, and denied that the Liberator was responsible for the rise of anti-colonization sentiments among them. "It is my solemn conviction," he wrote, "that I have not proselyted a dozen individuals; for the very conclusive reason that no conversions were necessary."

Friends and foes alike believed that Garrison's writings in the Liberator had helped to create anti-colonization feeling even before the Thoughts on Colonization appeared. The Liberia Herald charged Garrison with having "killed-off many emigrants in his paper." After quoting this, the editor of the Niles' Register observed: "Judging by what we see in the "Herald" and "Liberator", Mr. Garrison seems opposed to everything which may hold out the prospect of benefit to the colored population, unless accomplished by violence." The Register then calls

146 Ibid., 5.
147 Ibid., 8.
148 Niles' Weekly Register, 41:448.
149 Ibid.
attention to the turning away from the colonization scheme which Garrison's writings had produced. 150

Garrison soon realized that the attention which the Thoughts had aroused, not only in America, but also in England, presented him with an opportunity to deal another crippling blow to colonization. England at this time was full of anti-slavery sentiment, and the managers of the Colonization Society resolved, if possible, to capture that sentiment, and with it the financial aid which the British Abolitionists might render. 151 They even endeavored to bring British influence to bear upon the Congress of the United States. 152 Garrison, knowing that Elliott Cresson, the Colonization Society agent, was sparing no effort to present the Society as the special friend of the Negro, and asserting that "the wealth, the respectability, and the piety of the American People" were behind it, 153 resolved to go to England. In this he was supported by the New England Anti-slavery Society, 154 who believed no one was more competent to deal with Cresson than the author of the Thoughts on Colonization.

151 Hume, 130.
152 Niles' Register, 42:97, 98.
153 Hume, 130.
154 May, Recollections, 76.
Garrison sailed on May 2, 1833, and arrived three weeks later in Liverpool. He found the daily press of England taken up with the absorbing topic of the hour - abolition in the colonies. Although only twenty-eight years of age at the time, Garrison was utterly unafraid. He not only plunged at once into the task of counteracting Cresson's influence, but showed complete confidence in his contacts with the leading English Abolitionists, many of whom stood high in the social ranks of the country. His entry upon the scene was described in somewhat elaborate terms by Samuel May, who, with others, had urged Garrison to go to England:

Nothing could have been more opportune than was his arrival in London. He found there most of the leading Abolitionists of the United Kingdom watching and aiding the measures in Parliament about to issue in the emancipation of the enslaved in the British West India Islands. He was invited to their councils, and interchanged opinions freely and fully with them on the great questions, which were essentially the same in that country and our own. It was especially his privilege to become acquainted with William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson and Fowell Buxton and George Thompson, to name no more of the noble host that had fought the battles and won the victory of freedom for eight hundred thousand slaves. He was there when William Wilberforce was summoned to lay aside his earthly life, with his anti-slavery armor... How appropriate that the young leader of the Abolitionists of America, whose work had just begun, should be present... at the obsequies of the veteran leader of the British Abolitionists just as their work was done!156

It is no exaggeration to say that one of the decisive

156May, Recollections, 77.
battles between American colonizationists and abolitionists was really fought on English soil. Until Garrison came to England, many of the English anti-slavery men had been led to believe that the American Colonization Society was intended and adapted to bring about the entire abolition of slavery in the United States. 157 They had, therefore, given it their support, 158 and Elliott Cresson had had high hopes of being able to create a powerful chain of Auxiliary Colonization Societies across England. Just before Garrison had left on his English mission, the Board of Managers of the American Colonization Society had expressed their own satisfaction with Cresson's work in the following words:

The visit of a devoted Friend and Agent of the Society, Elliott Cresson, Esq. to England, and the kind manner of his reception, were mentioned in the last report; and this meeting will be highly gratified to learn that Mr. Cresson has made known extensively the principles and success of this Society to the philanthropic of that kingdom, who have not only listened with intense interest to his statements, but magnanimously come forward with their contributions to the cause which he advocates. We shall more justly appreciate the generosity of the English people in this case, when we consider the deep earnestness with which they are urging measures for ameliorating the condition of the coloured population of the W. Indies, 159 and the amount of funds annually raised by them for that object. Declining all compensation, and defraying even his own expenses, Mr. Cresson has nevertheless laboured with an activity, zeal, and resolution, not to be exceeded; has travelled throughout a

157 Ibid., 76.


159 Note that this report avoids mention of the fact that the English were aiming at complete emancipation.
large portion of England, addressed public meetings in the principal towns, formed numerous Branch Associations, secured the aid of the press, and the favour of thousands of warm hearts in behalf of Liberia. In December of last year, Mr. Cresson remitted £1332 to the Pennsylvania Colonization Society, and in July of the present, £2424 to the Parent Institution... One individual offered to give £500, if nine others could be found who would do the same, and such is his influence in the benevolent circles of England, that it is probable the object will be accomplished. Such liberality shall never be forgotten: and though an ocean separates us from those who have manifested it, yet bonds of sympathy and affection unite them to our hearts; we feel that they are one with us in promoting the great cause of Humanity and of God; and though we cannot expect the happiness of ever personally expressing to them our gratitude, let them be assured that we both admire and would imitate their example.160

At the time of Garrison's departure for England, the New England Anti-Slavery Society had made public announcement that as their agent his task was two-fold. He was to procure funds for the establishment of the proposed "Manual Labor School for Colored Youth," and was to disseminate in England "the truth in relation to American Slavery, and to its ally, the American Colonization Society."161 The announcement had also charged Cresson with deliberately misrepresenting the nature and aims of the Colonization Society, in order to procure "funds to a considerable amount."162 Garrison had been in England only a very short time before he realized that the time was unfavorable

162 Ibid.
for presenting the Manual Labor School project, and that he would have to resort to the boldest of measures if he were to discredit Cresson and the Colonization Society. He decided to attract the attention of all England by challenging Cresson to a public debate. The challenge was contained in the following letter:

To Mr. Elliott Cresson, Agent of the American Colonization Society:

Sir- I affirm that the American Colonization Society, of which you are the Agent, is utterly corrupt and proscription in its principles; that its tendency is to embarrass the freedom and diminish the happiness of the colored population of the United States; and, consequently, that you are abusing the confidence and generosity of the philanthropists of Great Britain. As an American citizen, and the accredited Agent of the New-England Anti-Slavery Society, I invite you to meet me in public debate in this city, to discuss the following Propositions:

1. The American Colonization Society was conceived, perfected, and is principally managed, by those who retain a portion of their own countrymen as slaves and property.

2. Its avowed and exclusive object is the colonization of the free people of color, in Africa, or some other place.

3. It is the active, inveterate, uncompromising enemy of immediate abolition, and deprecates the liberation of the slaves except on condition of their being simultaneously transported to Africa.

4. It maintains that possessors of slaves, in the Southern States, are not such from choice but necessity; and that, of course, they are not, under present circumstances, blameworthy for holding millions of human beings in servile bondage.

5. Its tendency is, to increase the value of the slaves, to confirm the power of the oppressors, and to injure the free colored population, by whom it is held in abhorrence, wherever they possess liberty of speech and the mean of intelligence.
in approbation of the Society. 165

Taking advantage of this announcement, Garrison left London for Bath a few days later and held an interview with Wilberforce himself. This was probably the turning point in the controversy, and Garrison wrote at length about the two interviews he had with Wilberforce. The following official report to the Anti-Slavery Society which had sent him is of great significance:

On the 19th of June, it was my privilege to be introduced to the venerable Wilberforce in Bath... I spent about three hours in his company, during which time his cautious and active mind was very inquisitive on the subject of slavery in the United States, and particularly in reference to the American Colonization Society. I endeavored to communicate, as briefly and clearly as possible, all the prominent facts relating to our great controversy. In expressing to him the grief which was felt by American abolitionists, and particularly by our free colored population, in seeing the name of Wilberforce enrolled among the friends of the Colonization Society, he said that his commendation of the enterprise had been restricted to the colony at Liberia; that, in relying upon the information which Mr. Cresson had given him respecting the flourishing state of that colony, he had been induced to believe that it was aiding essentially in the civilization of benighted Africa; that he never regarded the Society as providing a remedy for slavery; that he viewed with abhorrence the doctrine of the Society denying the practicability of elevating the colored race in the United States to an equality with the whites; and that he had repeatedly contested that wicked position with Mr. Cresson, and told him that he considered it fundamentally false and unchristian. He expressed much anxiety to learn how far Mr. Cresson had made use of his name to give currency to the Society, and desired his son to write down the following queries as he dictated them:

1. How far has Mr. Elliott Cresson made use of Mr. Wilberforce's name? Has he merely stated that Mr. Wilberforce approved of the colony as calculated to benefit Africa; or has he said that Mr. Wilberforce approves of the principle of the SOCIETY — namely, that the blacks ought to be removed for the advantage of America, as well as for their own?

2. Did Mr. Cresson (aware that it must be considered as the fundamental principle of the American Colonization Society, that there is a difficulty, amounting to a moral impossibility, in the blacks and whites living together in prosperity and harmony, as members of the same free community) make it clear to those to whom he professed to state Mr. Wilberforce's sentiments, that the two classes MIGHT AND OUGHT TO LIVE TOGETHER, as one mutually connected and happy society?

3. Has Mr. Elliott Cresson made it publicly known in England, that the American Colonization Society has declared that it considers that colonization ought to be a sine qua non of emancipation?

At his urgent solicitation, I visited him the next morning... After an interview of about five hours... I bade him farewell... I impressed upon his mind... the importance of his bearing public testimony against the American Colonization Society... 'I offer you,' I said, 'no documents or pamphlets in opposition to the Society, upon which to form an opinion of its true character. Here are its Fifteenth and Sixteenth Annual Reports: the former contains an elaborate defence of the Society by its managers... Read it at your leisure, and, judging the Society out of its own mouth, let your verdict be given to the world.166

A few weeks after this interview Wilberforce was dead, and Garrison had returned to the United States. Before he sailed, however, he had rejoiced over the passage of the bill which emancipated 800,000 slaves in the British West Indies. Moreover he carried with him the original of a Protest against British support of the American Colonization Society, which had


We, the undersigned, observing with regret that the American Colonization Society appears to be gaining some adherents in this country, are desirous to express our opinions respecting it.

Our motive and excuse for thus coming forward are the claims which the society has put forth to antislavery support. The opinions are, in our judgment, wholly groundless; and we feel bound to affirm that our judgment and conviction are, that the professions made by the Colonization Society, of promoting the abolition of slavery, are altogether delusive.

As far as the mere colony of Liberia is concerned, it has, no doubt, the advantages of other trading establishments. In this sense it is beneficial both to Africa and America; and we cordially wish it well. We never required of that country to assist us in Sierra Leone: we are enormously burdened by our own connection with slavery; and we do maintain that we ought not to be called upon to contribute to the expenses of a colony, which, though no doubt comprising some advantages, was formed chiefly to indulge the prejudices of American slaveholders, and which is regarded with aversion by the colored population of the United States.

With regard to the extinction of the slave trade, we apprehend that Liberia, however good the intention of its supporters, will do little or nothing toward it, except on the extent of its own territory. The only effectual death blow to the accursed traffic will be a destruction of slavery throughout the world. To the destruction of slavery throughout the world, we are compelled to say, that we believe the Colonization Society to be an obstruction.

Our objections to it are therefore briefly these - while we believe its pretexts to be delusive, we are

167Ibid., I, 361; Liberator, 3:162, 170; Johnson, 130.
convinced that its real effects are of the most dangerous nature. It takes its root from a cruel prejudice and alienation in the whites of America against the colored people, slave or free. This being its source, the effects are what might be expected; that it fosters and increases the spirit of caste, already so unhappily predominant; that it widens the breach between the two races; exposes the colored people to great practical persecution, in order to force them to emigrate; and, finally, is calculated to swallow up and divert that feeling which America, as a Christian and a free country, cannot but entertain, that slavery is alike incompatible with the law of God and with the well being of man, whether the enslaved or the enslaver.

On these grounds, therefore, and while we acknowledge the colony of Liberia, or any other colony on the coast of Africa, to be in itself a good thing, we must be understood utterly to repudiate the principles of the American Colonization Society. That society is, in our estimation, not deserving the countenance of the British public.169

This document indicated a tremendous victory for Garrison, and although on his arrival in America, he was vilified for having encouraged Englishmen to criticize his country, a great wave of sentiment in favor of complete abolition began to spread over the country. During the next few years, some who had been leading colonizationists turned their backs upon the Society and joined the abolitionist movement. They did so for various reasons. Arthur Tappan left because his confidence in the Society had been shaken when he discovered that "ardent spirits" were being sold in Liberia.170 Gerrit Smith became an anti-colonizationist because of the indignation he felt at

169 May, Recollections, 77; Stebbins, 213; William Lloyd Garrison, I, 361.

170 Niles' Register, 47:73.
seeing abolitionists persecuted, particularly in the Utica riots of 1835.\textsuperscript{171} He had been an active member of the Colonization Society almost from its inception, and had contributed many thousands of dollars of his own fortune to its support.\textsuperscript{172} He became a lecturer of exceptional influence in the anti-slavery movement after his defection from the Colonization Society, speaking in favor of abolition both in the United States Congress and on public platforms.\textsuperscript{173} Because of his munificence to the anti-slavery movement, he was described as an "unequalled giver".\textsuperscript{174}

A significant case of conversion to immediate emancipation was that of James G. Birney, who became the candidate for the presidency of the United States in two elections, having been nominated by the Anti-Slavery Party in 1840 and the Liberty Party in 1844.\textsuperscript{175} Born in Kentucky, Birney had moved to Alabama in 1818, where he purchased a plantation which he worked with thirty slaves.\textsuperscript{176} He built up a lucrative practice as Solicitor-

\textsuperscript{171}May, Recollections, 162-170.
\textsuperscript{172}Ibid., 168. See also Appendix II of this thesis.
\textsuperscript{174}Recollections, 170.
\textsuperscript{175}William Birney, James G. Birney and His Times (New York, 1890), 32. This biography by Birney's son provides some valuable material.
\textsuperscript{176}Letter of James G. Birney to Colonel Stone, editor of the New York Spectator, May 2, 1836, in Birney's Life and Times, 422-430.
General of the State of Alabama, and prospered. He became disturbed, however, over the slave question, though he feared that serious tragedy would follow any general and immediate abolition of the system. 177 He was, to his own surprise, invited to accept appointment as an agent of the American Colonization Society in July, 1832. The letter of invitation from Rev. R. R. Gurley, Secretary of the Society, described him as "one of the most distinguished lawyers from the South." 178 After considerable hesitation, Birney accepted, sold his property, gave up his practice, and became the General Superintendent of the Colonization Society for the Southwestern District. 179 His area of responsibility included the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas, and he traveled extensively through these states, "having abundant opportunities for forming an opinion of the real effects of the Colonization scheme upon the institution of slavery." 180 By the time he removed back to his native Kentucky towards the close of 1833, he had taken a new attitude towards slavery. He wrote: "I had already lost much of my first confidence in the efficacy of colonization principles for the extirpation of slavery among us." 181

177 *Birney's Life and Times*, 111, 112.
178 *Ibid*.
181 *Birney's Life and Times*, 427.
He has been described as being about this time," a good representative of many of the Southern slaveholders of the period, who, although firmly convinced that slavery was an evil, did not yet see clearly the true means for its removal."182 He proceeded to assist in the organization of a "gradual emancipation Society" at Lexington in December, 1833,"thinking its principles would be somewhat stronger than those of colonization and would be more effectual."183 Turning also from this because of its "inefficacy to move the hearts of men,"184 he became convinced of the truth of immediate emancipation. He wrote later:

During this winter and the ensuing spring my mind was deeply interested in the whole subject of slavery. I read almost every work I could lay my hands on; I talked much of it in public and in private. In the month of May, 1834, I became so fully convinced of the right of my slaves to their freedom and of my duty as a Christian to give it to them that I prepared... on the first day of June, a deed of emancipation for the six I brought with me from Alabama and had it duly entered of record in the office of the county court of the county in which I lived. They all remained with me, receiving such wages ... as were customary in the country.185

Without delay, Birney then severed his connection with the Colonization Society, and became an abolitionist of the more moderate type. His case is interesting, not only because of his position and later influence, but because he never became

183Birney's Life and Times, 427.
184Ibid.
185Ibid., 428. Letter to Colonel Stone.
an associate of William Lloyd Garrison, of whose methods he did not approve. 186 May says that Birney had been influenced by Garrison's *Thoughts on Colonization*, while some of Garrison's supporters claimed that Birney had been converted to anti-slavery reading a "stray copy" of the *Liberator*, through which a "random shaft" went home. 187 His son denied this, stating that his father had had no contact with the *Liberator* at the time he made his decision known. Although he had read the *Thoughts on Colonization*, Birney had, in a published essay written in 1833, described the *Thoughts* as the "rhapsodies" of Mr. Garrison. 188 William Birney insists that his father's conversion from colonization to anti-slavery principles was "the fruit of personal observation and experience," and his conviction that slavery was undermining the free institutions of the country and endangering the Union of the States. 189 Of James Birney's attitude towards Garrison, the son wrote:

> That he ever approved the peculiar methods of Mr. Garrison is untrue... In 1835, in a speech at Boston, he had deprecated the use of personalities by anti-slavery writers, and the implied estimate of Mr. Garrison was never modified in any of his letters, reports, speeches, or pamphlets... He took pleasure in speaking well of prominent anti-slavery men and of their writings and labors... In regard to Mr. Garrison, however, he was silent... He cultivated social relations with anti-slavery

186 *Birney's Life and Times*, 362.
187 *Recollections*, 205; *Birney's Life and Times*, 109.
188 *Birney's Life and Times*, 126, 363.
189 Ibid., 110.
leaders. For them he kept open house after the fashion of old Kentucky hospitality. Nearly all of them were his guests in New York. Among the few exceptions Mr. Garrison must be numbered.190

About this time, a series of developments took place in Ohio, which drew attention to that state as a center of anti-slavery and anti-colonization activities. Birney became very much involved in these activities, and the whole movement illustrates the new trend even in a state which had been for a while strongly colonizationist.191 The first incident which attracted attention was the upheaval at Lane Theological Seminary, at Walnut Hills, near Cincinnati. The President of the new institution, which had been founded in 1832, was Dr. Lyman Beecher, whose daughter Harriet was to marry a distinguished young professor at the Seminary, and later to become world famous through her Uncle Tom's Cabin. Soon after the Seminary was opened, a Colonization Society was formed among the more than one hundred students, with the approval of the Faculty.192 The publication of Garrison's Thoughts on Colonization and the formation of the American Anti-Slavery Society attracted the

190 Ibid., 362.

191 A Brief Exposition of the Views of the Society for the Colonization of Free People of Colour in Africa (Columbus, 1827); Sherwood, "The Movement in Ohio to Deport the Negro"; Ohio in Africa: Memorial to the Honorable, the Senate, and House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, (January, 1851).

192 May, Recollections, 102; Sherwood, "Movement in Columbus, Ohio", 75, n.
attention of the students. Some of them began to ask questions concerning the charges being brought against the colonization scheme. In February, 1834, a number of the students proposed that a public discussion be held concerning two questions:

1. Whether the people of the slaveholding states ought to abolish slavery at once, and without prescribing as a condition that the emancipated should be sent to Liberia, or elsewhere, out of our country?

2. Whether the doctrines, tendencies, measures, spirit of the Colonization Society were such as to render it worthy of the patronage of Christian people? 193

The students were for the most part mature men, some of them having previously been lecturers for religious and benevolent societies. Their leader was Theodore D. Weld, an extremely able and eloquent individual. 194 The debates were said to have been the most thorough conducted anywhere in the country during this period, and attracted national attention. 195 They provoked a storm of protest among colonizationists and pro-slavery men, so that the Faculty and trustees became alarmed. They not only prohibited the formation of an Anti-Slavery Society among the students, but also required that the former Colonization Society

193 May, Recollections, 103.
194Birney and His Times, 136.
195 Ibid.
be abolished. Rather than submit, about half of the students left the Seminary, several of them becoming noted anti-slavery orators. It was a Pyrrhic victory for the colonizationists.

While the battle was raging at Lane Seminary, a new school was being established in Lorain County in Northern Ohio. The students who had left Lane turned to it with hope, for this new "Oberlin Collegiate Institute," which later became Oberlin College, was to be both abolitionist and coeducational. It developed out of the religious awakening led by Charles Grandison Finney the revivalist, and its founding had been supported by both Abolitionists and Colonizationists. When it became known that Negroes were to be received as students, and that some of the Lane Seminary rebels were planning to enter the theological division, a bitter fight developed. The colonizationist trustees voted solidly against admitting either colored people or the men from Lane. They were defeated only when a tie vote was broken by the chairman who voted with the anti-slavery group. In the next few years, the influence of

196 Ibid.
197 Chadwick, A Life for Liberty, 20.
199 Ibid.
200 Ibid.
the former Lane Seminary men was felt all over Ohio, as well as other parts of the country. 201 Theodore Weld, who had been an agent of the American Colonization Society and had become a close friend of James Birney, exercised a wide influence. 202

We must finally note the bitter struggle that took place between colonizationists and abolitionists at Granville, Ohio, when the area in and around the town became the center of a great anti-slavery controversy. 203 It began in 1835, when a group of Granville residents met to organize an anti-abolition society. On October 28 about three dozen men came together and passed the following resolution:

Resolved that a general meeting on Tuesday the 3rd. of November be called of the citizens of this place and vicinity at 6 of the clock P.M. to express their disapprobation of the proceedings of the Abolitionists and the expediency of reviving and sustaining the Colonization Society. 204

The following Tuesday, the mass meeting was held, and a report of the results was later published. Among the nine resolutions which were approved, the last two are significant in our study. They read:

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201 May, Recollections, 107; Chadwick, 47; Birney's Life and Times, 143.


203 Ibid., 174.

204 Robert Price, "Further Notes on Granville's Anti-Abolition Disturbances of 1836," in Ohio Arch. and Hist. Quart. XLV, No. 4 (October, 1936), 366.
8. Resolved that we consider the unwillingness of the blacks of this country to emigrate to Africa as one of the strongest evidences of that degredation and imbecility which naturally results from their condition while resident among the whites—and that we consider it one of the highest acts of benevolence and philanthropy to endeavour to inform their minds, elevate their views, & inspire them with that spirit of independence & enterprise which would lead them to fly with alacrity to the country of the black man, where only they enjoy the full privileges of free men & the dignity of self government.

9. Resolved that we highly approve of the plan and in general the measure of the American Colonization Society & will support it as far as our influence extends.205

This report, signed by Paul Eager, Sylvester Hayes, Elias Gilman and Walter Thrall, when adopted, became the manifesto of the Anti-Abolitionists of the area. They passed a motion at the meeting of the citizens forbidding the state convention of the anti-slavery group from meeting in Granville.206

The Abolitionists, however, were not easily dissuaded. Granville and Licking County had been aroused by the visitations of Theodore Weld in the early months of 1835, and the anti-slavery men believed this area to be a good one in which to challenge the colonizationists. They could not meet in Granville because of the town's ruling, but they did meet in Ashley A. Bancroft's barn a half-mile north of the town, on April 27 and 28, 1836. A little boy who doubtless looked at these ardent delegates filling his father's barn to overflowing was

205Ibid., 368. Spelling copied from the document.

206Ibid.
Hubert Howe Bancroft, then four years old.207

Granville citizens did not take kindly to the convention. They were not all hostile to the cause itself, but they did not wish the peace of their college town disturbed. The anti-abolition and colonization groups were particularly incensed. They had stirred up opposition against Weld before, in 1835; now they stood ready to arouse antagonistic action against those attending the convention.208 The convention itself seems to have passed off without much outside interference, but when the visitors passed through Granville on their way home on the last day, they were attacked by an infuriated mob.

The fighting finally came to a picturesque conclusion when Birney astride his horse, which the hoodlums had bobbed ridiculously, rode slowly and proudly down through the mob of assailants amid showers of eggs which poured in from every side.209

Such happenings were not uncommon in many northern communities during this decade.210 Colonizationists often led the fight against the Abolitionists.211 Extremists among both

207 Price, "Ohio Anti-Slavery Convention", 175; John Walton Caughey, Hubert Howe Bancroft (Berkeley, 1946), 9.

208 Norman Newell Hill, History of Licking County, (Newark, Ohio, 1881), 446; Henry Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio (Columbus, 1896), II, 80.


210 Ibid., 174.

211 Stebbins, 109, 111, 206; Sherwood, 76; Jay, An Inquiry, 151, 167.
groups took the lead and their speeches and writings became more and more inflammatory.

Attacks against colonization were also now being made by slaveholders, since not all of these were by any means supporters of the American Colonization Society. One of the most powerful pieces of writings against both the anti-slavery group and the colonizationists appeared in the Political Register of October, 1933, entitled, "A Review of the Debate on the Abolition of Slavery in the Virginia Legislature, 1831-32." It was written by Professor Thomas R. Dew, and indicated the change of attitude among many Southerners with respect to slavery in the decade 1830 to 1840. Stirred up by the Abolitionists, and disappointed in the results of colonization, the South began increasingly to defend the institution of slavery. The tension that finally led to the Civil War was mounting. The increasing demand for cotton was also leading some in the South to stress the necessity as well as the right of keeping slaves. Some of Professor Dew's statements reflect a self-interest which at times is positively callous.

In the first part of his essay, he developed the idea that

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212 Fox, American Colonization Society, 155, 156.
214 Clarke, Anti-Slavery Days, 30.
slavery was accepted as right in the Old Testament. Moreover, he justified slavery in America by pointing out that the Africans were much better off than if they were still living in their native land.215 He discussed the proposed plans for abolition which had been debated in the Virginia Legislature, approaching the matter from a strictly economic point of view. He stated that in 1830, there were 470,000 slaves in Virginia, each valued at two hundred dollars. Now, in 1833, the total value of the slaves was $100,000,000. Their removal to Africa or anywhere else would be a serious property loss, and would make Virginia a "waste howling wilderness."216 Slave labor gave "value to soil and habitations in the state." He opposed even gradual emancipation through colonization, not only because of the actual loss to the slaveholders, but also because of the enormous cost of transporting the Negroes to Africa, an expense which would have to be borne by the state.

He described Virginia as a "Negro-raising State for other States." Each year the state produced enough slaves for her own needs and six thousand more for sale outside. This number of six thousand was about the annual increase among the slave population and he was unwilling that even this number should be sent to Africa, as some in the legislature were advocating.217

215 Pamphlets on Slavery (University of California Collection) 6:790.

216 Ibid.

217 Ibid., 791.
He denied that free labor was superior to slave labor, or that free labor would come to fill up the loss made by sending the slaves to Africa. He expressed his opposition to John Randolph's plan that all slaves born after 1840 be raised by their masters, females to eighteen years and males to twenty-one years, and then hired out until they brought in a sum sufficient to pay the expense of sending them away.218

He then dealt with colonization in detail. He insisted that it was "impossible to colonize the blacks."219 There were, to his mind, three main objections. First there were the physical problems, which included the climate of West Africa, the difficulty of "subsistence and conveniences," the ignorance of the Negroes in adapting themselves, the character of the soil, the want of habitations, the necessity of their living together "in multitudes" for defence while agriculture demands that they live separately. Secondly, there were the moral objections. There was the "want of adaptation" by new colonists, the lack of conformity in "habits, manners, tempers and dispositions," so that the people will remain "uncemented and unharmonizing." Then, in the third place, there were national objections, under which he placed the strife possible between the colonists themselves, or between them and neighboring tribes or nations.220

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218Ibid., 797.
219Ibid., 801.
220Ibid.
All the history of colonization, Dew asserted, is filled with difficulty, and he gave several historical examples. He pointed out that there had already been a high loss of life even among the agents of the government and Colonization Society in Liberia. He was sure that any slaves sent there would, because of the high death rate, long for America again. He quoted Ashmun, whom he described as "perhaps the most intelligent and most judicious of colonial agents," who had written of the difficulties and lack of rice. Ashmun was quoted as saying that Liberia was already "over-supplied" with colonists, and for the next two years greater discrimination was needed in the choice of settlers.\footnote{Ibid., 805.}

Dew returned to the economic aspects of the whole matter before he closed his essay. He estimated that the cost of removing even the 6,000 slaves from Virginia at thirty dollars each (which he thought was a low estimate) would jump to \$2,400,000. This, he thought, was enough to destroy the "entire values of the whole property of Virginia."\footnote{Ibid., 807.} As for those who had suggested that Virginia seek aid from the Federal Government and send all the slaves to Africa, he sought to crush them with figures. The 2,000,000 slaves now in the whole country could be purchased by the government only at a cost of \$400,000,000, this being the lowest estimate. And they would
still have to be sent out at great cost to Africa. Even if the annual increase of slaves throughout the whole country (some 60,000) should be sent to Liberia, the cost would be $12,000,000 each year. Moreover, he pointed out that such an arrangement would send the price of slaves up, thus increasing the government cost. He concluded that economically and from other aspects, colonization was a failure. After fifteen years the American Colonization Society still had only 2,000 to 2,500 emigrants in Liberia. Yet their theories, like those of the abolitionists, were fraught with great danger for the South, where slave labor was "even more productive than free labor." 

The Political Register, which published this long pro-slavery essay in full, made its own editorial comments. The editor was opposed to colonizationists and Abolitionists alike and wrote critically about both:

The vice of the present age, is a sickly peripatetic philanthropy, which ... disturbs the peace and good order of society ... Those who are engaged in the crusade against the rights and interests of the slaveholders, have arrayed themselves into two classes, and are waging a warfare of bitter recrimination against each other; each asserting that slavery is a sin; that it is a national curse, a national evil, which they are bound in charity to cure. 

The editor also expressed indignation that a meeting of free blacks in Philadelphia should have been held to ask for

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223 Ibid., 808.
224 Ibid., 830.
225 Ibid., 832.
"equality, the franchise, and equal protection from the Federal Government with any other class of the population." This was to him a preposterous idea. He felt justified, therefore, in supporting Professor Dew and printing his essay, which he thought had demonstrated that the scheme of colonization was impracticable and that the Colonization Society aimed at nothing short of universal emancipation, by urging the slaveholders to free their slaves.

Despite such attacks as these, the colonizationists continued to press their claims, even on the floor of Congress.\footnote{Reports of Committees, 27th Congress, 3rd. Session, H.R. Document No. 283, 879-909.} The Annual Reports of the Society were included in the reports of committees presented in the House of Representatives, and a great effort was made to hold up Liberia as a shining example of a successful experiment in colonization. Several speeches on colonization by well known men were also included in these reports. One by Henry Clay, in 1837, showed that his views had undergone little change since he delivered his address before the newly-formed Colonization Society twenty years before. He reasserted that the Society maintained its policy of not "meddling with slavery", though he also said that it did not seek to perpetuate slavery. He was still against immediate emancipation of the "two or three million" slaves now in the United States. He was hopeful about the success of colonization,
though he admitted that "only a few thousands" had been sent to Africa. He asked that colonizationists persevere, and expressed hope for the "blessing of Providence."227

A speech delivered by John Tyler before the Virginia Colonization Society on January 10, 1838, was also included in this government document, and its statements show that southern colonizationists were not prepared to yield to anti-slavery sentiment. As the new president of the Virginia Colonization Society, Tyler praised the "great men" who had supported it, mentioning by name John Marshall, Henry Clay, John Randolph, William Crawford, and James Madison.228 He extolled the aims of the Society, and proudly asserted that Virginia was the pioneer in colonization. He denounced the abolition movement, and described the American Colonization Society as a great "African Missionary Society", which has ennobled the Negro in Liberia. The Society, he claimed, was "worth more twice told than all foreign missionary societies combined."229

Such speeches were part of the defence which the Colonization Society was making against the attacks being made upon its work. The same defensive attitude was manifest in the Annual Reports of the Society between 1833 and 1840.230 The Society had endeavored to impart confidence in their cause by giving

227Ibid., 957-959.
228Ibid., 960.
229Ibid., 962.
23016th. to 24th Annual Reports, passim.
good reports of the progress of Liberia;231 by announcing that
many "respectable free persons" wished to go there;232 and by
allowing the spread of reports that a line of packets was plan-
med which would provide sailings to Liberia every two months.233
Yet in December, 1838 the Board of Managers admitted that the
total population in all the colonies of Liberia was only
3,150.234 As for "Maryland in Liberia", although the State of
Maryland had become fully committed financially to the support
of the new colony,235 only 300 Negroes had been sent out to
Africa in the five-year period 1833-1838.236

The Society had to face not only the decline of interest
and the increase of opposition at home, but also the disappoint-
ing fact that Liberia had not, as so many had claimed it would,
brought about the cessation of the slave trade on the West
Coast of Africa. The shame of this was increased when it be-
came generally known that American ships were still being used
in this traffic. In October, 1839, the British envoy in Wash-
ington, H. S. Fox, wrote to John Forsyth, United States Secre-
tary of State, concerning numerous official reports and

232Niles' Register, 41:103.
233Ibid., 42:93.
23422nd Annual Report, 1.
despatches which contained "evidence of the surprising and deplorable extent to which the American flag is now being employed for the protection of the inhuman traffic in slaves." 237 A good number of letters were written by British captains during 1838 and 1839, in which the names of American ships engaged in the traffic were listed. The charge was made that new and very fast ships were being built in American ports specially for the slave trade. Several different references are found to the Venus, one of the fastest ships afloat, and one which was said to be capable of carrying eleven hundred slaves. The claim was made that on a recent voyage with a full cargo of slaves, the Venus had brought to its owners a clear profit of $200,000. 238

The controversy between Colonizationists and Abolitionists continued to rage through the next decade, and even after 1850. There were still earnest and influential men who believed that colonization was the way of conciliation for pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces, as well as the one hope of solving the Negro problem. But just as many who had become ardent abolitionists had turned from the colonization scheme, so now many pro-slavery began to lose confidence in its usefulness. Garrisonian Abolitionists were arousing bitter resentment in the South, and pro-slavery men were becoming less disposed to

237 Ibid., 581.

238 Ibid. Various letters included in the report to Congress, 601-612.
compromise on the matter of emancipation. As for the general mass of the people in the United States, they tended to turn from both groups of extremists. In the bitter controversy between the advocates of immediate emancipation and those of colonization, foolish things were said and done. When abolitionist preachers came home from lecturing with their horses' manes and tails shaved -"a colonizationist reply to an abolition lecture" -both movements tended to assume an aspect that was half ludicrous and half lawless.

So long as the aim of the Colonization Society had been to deport the Negro, people were willing to listen to it; but when the friends of colonization and abolition began to quarrel and began to draw the subject into politics the philanthropic and humanitarian aspects of the whole affair seemed to be lost; and with them the cause of colonization.

The controversy was soon to develop into a clear struggle between pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces, and the compromise suggested by colonizationists was ignored or denounced by both sides. Sectionalism became more apparent, as tension mounted. R. R. Gurley, Secretary of the American Colonization Society said what many thoughtful men were thinking in 1839. In a speech at Philadelphia, after having stated that "the operations

239 African Repository, XX, 183.

240 Sherwood, "Movement in Ohio to Deport the Negro", 76; Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio, I, 338.

241 Sherwood, 76.

242 Ibid., 77.
of this society add strength and security to our national union," he went on to say:

Strong and secure as we trust this union is, the discussions, during the last six years, on the subject of slavery, have been such as to alienate, in no small degree, the affections of one half the country from the other, and excite, in the minds of sober patriots and able statesmen, a sense of apprehension of danger. If the bond of federal union is to be sundered, few doubt that differences concerning our coloured population will be the cause. On this subject a fierce conflict of opinion may foretoken, and be hardly less terrible than the shock of arms.²⁴³

²⁴³Address to the Pennsylvania Colonization Society, 17.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

After 1840 the Negro problem in the United States took on new aspects. The abolition movement had become widespread; the demand for cotton had created greater opportunities for those who had slaves to work on their plantations; laws to control free Negroes had become more stringent, especially in the South and the border states; and owners of slaves had in general adopted a more defiant attitude. Calhoun and others had formally accepted slavery as justifiable as well as necessary. Henry Clay, while asserting that he did not favor slavery, was considered an advocate for the South. He had become afraid of the possible consequences of militant abolition, and charged that Abolitionists had injured both whites and Negroes. ¹ He declared that the liberty of Africans in the United States appeared to him "incompatible with the safety and liberty of Americans of European origin."² Therefore he believed that slavery was a "stern and inexorable necessity".

The American Colonization Society still believed in its mission, but it had been compelled to place itself on the defensive. Besides the attacks being made upon it by Abolitionists

¹ African Repository, XII, 10-12; XV, 50.
² Brawley, Social History of the American Negro, 131.
and slave-owners, there were pressures on it from within. Reorganization, which had been spoken of as early as 1834, now became a necessity. State Colonization Societies with their own colonies in Africa were most forward in demanding it. In 1839 this reorganization was effected, introducing into the Society the sectionalism that was developing in the country as a whole. The parent society was weakened, and northern men and state societies became dominant. A look at the Annual Reports published after 1840 reveals the disappearance of the names of some important men from the South.

With this change of control there came a different emphasis as far as aim and purpose were concerned. The original stress had been primarily upon the problem of removing the free Negroes. The solving of this matter they believed to be necessary to national security. The abolition of slavery was not considered a part of their plan. After 1840, however, the Society drew attention to its work as "an aid to the establishment of a model Negro republic in Africa whose effect would be to discourage the slave-trade, and encourage energy and thrift among free Negroes from the United States who chose to emigrate, and to give native Africans a demonstration of the advantages of civilization." From now on national objectives were less interwoven

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3African Repository, XV, 6, 19, 27.
4Ibid., XIII, 35; XIV, 29; XV, 6-7.
5Fox, American Colonization Society, 177.
with philanthropic and missionary motives. The Society began to lose its semi-government aspect. Clergymen and philanthropists, mostly from the North, replaced statesmen and slave owners as vice-presidents and members of the Board of Managers. New York and Pennsylvania became more important than Maryland and Virginia in the deliberations of the Society.6

There was, however, still a general unwillingness to advocate immediate and universal emancipation, though some colonizationists became more anxious to find some way of liberating the slaves. In 1820 they had plainly declared concerning the slave: "It would be better to continue them in a state of perpetual slavery, than to free them, unless they were to be immediately colonized in their own country."7 But in 1840 Ralph R. Gurley, Secretary of the Colonization Society wrote:

My impression is, that, with the consent of the south, the whole system of slavery might with safety be modified, as to place the slave population in a situation to enjoy all the privileges in which men so rude and degraded could find advantage; and, in connexion with the policy of colonization, to prepare them, at no remote period, for entire freedom. Peculiar legislative enactments might, for a season, be indispensable, and of the nature and extent of these, benevolent and enlightened citizens in the south can best judge.8

Such propositions, however, did not meet with a very encouraging response. Although Gurley showed great deference to

6Brawley, 166.
7Elihu Embree, The Emancipator (Joneborough, Tenn., 1820), 3.
8Address before the Pennsylvania Colon. Society, 25.
the opinions of southern slaveholders, they were not now very interested in legislation designed to grant the slave increased social advantages. At the same time Gurley's speech did not please the Abolitionists, since they wished immediate removal of the whole system of slavery. As for the free Negroes, they believed that liberty and social equality were the right of every colored man. Special enactments to grant them limited privileges seemed to them simply to accentuate their social and political inferiority.

Yet Gurley's concern at this time was sincere, and indicated not only his awareness of the cleavage in the ranks of those who wished to help the Negro, but also his earnest desire to find a common meeting ground for all concerned.

Two courses only should in our judgment retard emancipation for a moment — the incapacity of the slave for self-government, and the danger of collision between the coloured and white races, were both free on the soil of the south. By suitable instruction the first may be removed, and colonization for the second affords an adequate remedy. With the consent of the south, most justly, in our opinion, might the national resources be applied to aid the work. By abstaining from measures unconstitutional and dangerous in the judgment of the south to urge onward abolition; by acknowledging that this can only be effected with their free will and consent, by co-operating with them in a plan which, as benevolent to the whole coloured population has received their sanction, and exhibiting an asylum to which the liberated can be sent without injury to the state and infinite advantage to themselves ... by interchanging the sober opinions of the north, in regard to our coloured population, with the philanthropic sentiments of the south, this society effectually promotes the cause of freedom, and presents motives of persuasiveness and power in favour of emancipation ... 1500 slaves, standing as freemen at the will of their masters, on that shore, and property, including the value of those
liberated, exceeding probably $2,600,000, given as a free-will offering to the cause of this society, sustain the truth of our position.9

However, while the reorganization of the Society in 1839 prepared the way for uniting the African colonies as integral parts of the Republic of Liberia in 1847, it did not bring real unity among colonizationists nor increase interest among non-colonizationists. Judge Samuel Wilkerson of Buffalo, New York, was given almost complete control over the affairs of the Society in the United States10 but he became quite discouraged over its financial condition and the indifference or antagonism he encountered.11 Abolitionist attacks continued and petitions were being presented to religious bodies, urging them not to support the colonization scheme.12 Free Negroes who were interested in founding their own settlements were not looking to the Colonization Society or to Liberia. They were purchasing land and establishing settlements in Ohio, Michigan and other free states.13 Ohio had been one of the most encouraging areas for colonizationists. In 1833, a writer in the African Repository had declared that in this state "new and valuable societies

10African Repository, XV, 6-7.
11Fox, 124.
13Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio, I, 355; Woodson, Century of Negro Migration, 25-28.
are springing up by enchantment." Before 1840, however, there had been a great change of opinion. Then when Ohio began to repeal its "Black Laws," the Negroes grew more reluctant than ever to exchange the security of Ohio for the uncertainty and hardships of Liberia. Wealthy Gerrit Smith, the former colonizationist, encouraged this desire of the free Negroes to acquire land in the United States. He gave 3,000 Negroes forty acres each to help settle them on their own small farms. Samuel May, the Abolitionist, was made one of the administrators of this vast gift of 120,000 acres. He wrote of the transaction:

He did me the honor to appoint me one of almoners of this bounty, so I am not left merely to conjecture how much time and caution were put in requisition to insure as far as practicable the judicious bestowment of these parcels of land. The only conditions prescribed by the donor were, that the receivers of his acres should be known to be landless, strictly temperate and honest men.

Nevertheless the Colonization Society continued its work as the country moved closer to the Civil War. Now and then they witnessed a resurgence of interest and they continued to receive encouragement from slave owners who granted manumission to their slaves on condition that they were removed to Liberia. Americans and Englishmen even continued to encourage the formation of

14 African Repository, VII, 117.
16Sherwood, "Movement in Ohio to Deport the Negro", 77.
17May, Recollections, 325.
18African Repository, XVII, passim; XIX, 201; XXI, 145-149.
new colonies in West Africa.\textsuperscript{19} Lands for this purpose were purchased as late as 1850, the new Republic of Liberia cooperating.\textsuperscript{20} Even Abraham Lincoln turned his thoughts towards colonization.

In 1854 he said in a speech:

If all earthly power were given me, I should not know what to do as to the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia, to their own native land. But a moment's reflection would convince me that whatever of high hope (as I think there is) may be in this in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. If they were all landed there in a day, they would all perish in the next ten days; and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough to carry them there in many times ten days.\textsuperscript{21}

Three years later, in a speech delivered at Springfield, Illinois, he said:

A separation of the races is the only perfect preventative of amalgamation ... Such separation, if ever effected at all, must be effected by colonization ... Let us be brought to believe it is morally right, and at the same time favorable to, or at least not against, our interest to transfer the African to his native clime, and we shall find a way to do it, however great the task may be.\textsuperscript{22}

It is interesting to find Lincoln describing Henry Clay, who had been for almost two decades President of the Colonization Society, as "my beau ideal of a statesman".\textsuperscript{23}

During the Civil War Lincoln, faced with the problem of what

\footnotesize{
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{19}"Ohio in Africa", 93.
  \item \textsuperscript{20}Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{21}Letters and Addresses of Abraham Lincoln, in Unit Books, No. 2, (New York, 1905), 76.
  \item \textsuperscript{22}Ibid., 103.
  \item \textsuperscript{23}Ibid., 115.
\end{itemize}
}
to do with freed Negroes, turned again to the idea of coloniza-
tion. In an appeal to the border-state representatives in behalf
of compensated emancipation, he said:

I do not speak of emancipation at once, but of a de-
cision at once to emancipate gradually. Room in South
America can be obtained cheaply and in abundance, and when
numbers shall be large enough to be company and encoura-
gement for one another, the freed people will not be so re-
luctant to go. 24

Here he spoke with something of the naivete of many coloni-
zationists. He took it for granted that several million Negroes
would willingly go to some distant land. South America was not
the only asylum he suggested. At one time he suggested that a
Negro republic might be established in Texas. 25 Other advocates
of colonization were proposing other places of refuge for the
Negro. 26

Long before the Civil War, however, the American Coloniza-
tion Society had become a more or less private philanthropic
organization. The early hopes that its colonies would be planted
all over Africa and grow into a great Negro republic had been
crushed. It had come to occupy a secondary place in the great
struggle between the slaveholding South and the largely aboli-
tionist North. Little or no government support was being given

24 Ibid., 233.

25 Hume, The Abolitionists, 134; L.E. Chittenden, Recollections
of President Lincoln and His Administration, (New York, 1891), 338.

26 Brawley, 165-167.
to it, although colonizationists still urged Congress and the state legislatures to grant their work financial and other aid. They received a little encouragement in 1850, when the Secretary of the Society, Ralph R. Gurley, was sent by the government of the United States on his second visit of investigation to Liberia. Despite Gurley's hopeful report to the Secretary of State, however, Congress made no further commitments.

The different views concerning the aims of the Colonization Society and the various opinions regarding its value were being remembered and reappraised. Gerrit Smith had said in 1831, when he was still a Colonizationist: "The Colonization Society may exert an influence ... which may yet compass the abolition of slavery in our land." Now in the south men were remembering the words of Senator Hayne of South Carolina, spoken on the floor of Congress:

Are not the members and agents of this Society everywhere (even while disclaiming all such intentions) making proclamations that the end of their scheme is universal emancipation? ... Does not every Southern man know that, wherever the Colonization Society has invaded our country a spirit of hostility to our institutions has immediately sprung up?

At the same time Garrisonian Abolitionists and other less radical groups were insisting that the Colonization Society was not only pro-slavery still, but was an organization of and for slaveholders, committed to compulsory deportation of Negroes. James G. Birney showed more moderation in judging the Society he had left. In a speech before the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York, 1837, he declared his belief that though the Colonization Society was wrong in principle, it had been a step in the necessary evolution of anti-slavery.

The equivocal nature of the Society was still objected to by many. Among those who had stressed this weakness of the colonization scheme was John Quincy Adams, who had proved himself a friend of the Negro on more than one occasion:

This project is professed to be formed: 1, without intending to use any compulsion upon the free people of color to make them go; 2, to encourage the emancipation of slaves by their masters; 3, to promote the entire abolition of slavery; and yet, 4, without ... affecting ... the property in slaves. There are men of all sorts and descriptions concerned in this Colonization Society; some exceedingly humane, weak-minded men ... some, speculators in official profits and honors, which a colonial establishment would of course produce; some, speculators in political popularity, who think to please the abolitionists by their zeal for emancipation, and the slaveholders by the ... hope of ridding them of the free colored people at the public expense; lastly, some cunning slave-holders, who see that

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31 Alice Adams, *The Neglected Period of Anti-Slavery*, 201.


33 Birney's *Life and Times*, 268.
the plan may be carried far enough to produce the effect of raising the market price of their slaves.\textsuperscript{34}

Some of the charges which had been made against individual colonizationists were undoubtedly grounded in truth, and the Society was blamed for what many considered to be connivance with the offenders. Bushrod Washington, the first president of the Society, admitted the charges made against him in connection with the sale and transportation to Louisiana of fifty-four "Mount Vernon" slaves.\textsuperscript{35} In a letter to the \textit{Niles' Weekly Register}, September, 1821 he denied the right of any person to decide for him in this matter, and insisted that since slaves were property, they could be sold by their owner.\textsuperscript{36} Later he disposed of his slaves, but only because he found that keeping them was a problem and unprofitable. There had been a rebellion among the slaves on his estate.\textsuperscript{37} No record is to be found of his ever having released a slave or paid his way to Liberia.

Charles Carroll of Carrollton was also a slave owner while he was President of the Colonization Society. Garrison's charge that Carroll held about one thousand slaves under his control could easily have been true, for Carroll was one of the richest men in the country, possessing seventy to eighty thousand acres

\textsuperscript{34}\textit{Memoirs of John Quincy Adams,} ed. Charles F. Adams, (Philadelphia, 1875), 4, 292.

\textsuperscript{35}Judge Washington had inherited the estate of George Washington, his uncle, including Mount Vernon.


\textsuperscript{37}Binney, 25-26.
of land in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York.38

During the years when the anti-slavery movement was developing, almost all the outstanding colonizationists who held official positions in the Colonization Society were owners of slaves. Yet we can find no record of their granting emancipation or sending any of their slaves to Liberia. Such emancipations as were granted were almost exclusively made by men not holding official position. It was not difficult for Garrison to make a case charging the colonizationist slave owners with ulterior motives. He and others believed that pro-slavery men wished only to get rid of the troublesome free Negroes in order to preserve slavery as an institution. He made much of the fact that almost all slaves who were emancipated were compelled to go to Liberia. He found plenty of confirmation in the African Repository itself.39

Garrison could also point to instances of definite unwillingness on the part of colonizationists to improve the condition of Negroes in America. To give one example, an official of the American Colonization Society, a lawyer named Andrew Judson, persuaded the state legislature of Connecticut to pass a law forbidding instruction to Negroes in private schools.40 It was under this law that Prudence Crandall was prosecuted and convicted for opening a


40Nye, William Lloyd Garrison and the Humanitarian Reformers, 63.
school which admitted Negro girls. The case attracted nationwide attention, and the Abolitionists sprang to the defense of Miss Crandall. Nevertheless the authorities were able to close the school.

The specific charges which Garrison sometimes made were not always true, and the African Repository pointed this out from time to time. Even anti-slavery men disagreed with him on some of his extreme statements. Some Abolitionists who were still members of the colonization movement insisted that he misrepresented the true nature of the Colonization Society. Dr. Thomas Hodgkin, an English physician and anti-slavery agitator, warned the American delegates to the Anti-Slavery Convention in London, 1840, against the dissemination of Garrison's anti-colonizationist views. He believed Garrison had gone too far in his criticism.

Ralph R. Gurley, secretary of the Colonization Society was the chief defender of colonization against Garrison. He denied that colonizationists were pro-slavery, but advocated the removal of slavery by peaceful means.

References:

41 Garrison by His Children, chapter X; Brawley, 229.
42 African Repository, IX, 218; X, 125-126; IX, 346-347.
44 Ibid., XVI, 311-313.
Alexander, the official historian of the West African colonies, granted that the Society did not attack slavery openly and would only favor its removal when and if the South approved. Alexander pointed out that there was a difference of opinion within the Society, and that the group was sometimes blamed for the beliefs and practices of individuals.

Arthur Tappan's assertion that "ardent spirits" were sold and widely used in the colony was admitted by Alexander and others, including Jehudi Ashmun. Daniel Coker also deplored the necessity which had arisen for using rum as a gift in "palavers" with chiefs. Rum had been used by Dr. Eli Ayres and Captain Stockton in buying the first land for the Mesurado colony. Large quantities of it were brought to the West Coast of Africa by English and other trading vessels. Ashmun deplored the sale and use of it among the colonists and native inhabitants, but did not see that its introduction and sale could be prohibited. He was of the opinion that the Society had not adopted a clear policy with regard to the matter. This played into the hands of the opponents of colonization, many of whom were associated with the new

46 History of Colonization, 350, 381, 406, 434.
47 African Repository, XIV, 48-49.
49 Ashmun, History of the American Colony in Liberia, 8.
50 Gurley, Life of Ashmun, Appendix, 61.
temperance movements that were beginning to appear in America. Garrison could write about the bad influence of the colony with some show, of reason, though it was manifestly unfair to blame the Society for the trade in rum. Actually, the Society had forbidden the import and sale of "ardent spirits" into Liberia. Ashmun's complaint, however, seems to have been that the Society had not definitely implemented its decision nor been consistent in enforcing the law forbidding ships going to the colony from carrying rum, tobacco and gunpowder for sale.51

The Colonization Society had constantly showed the spirit of hesitancy and compromise which John Quincy Adams had described as inherent in it.52 It had allowed special groups to take advantage of it. When Garrison had first published his charges, the colonization movement was largely under the control of pro-slavery men. Only in 1839 had the Society become much more anti-slavery, for by this time it realized that the South was abandoning it. Yet even then some southern colonizationists sought a way of compromise.

Many declared not only that the colonization movement was based upon equivocation, but that it was entirely impractical and incapable of any wide achievement in solving the Negro problem.53

51Ibid., Letter of Ashmun to the Board of Managers.
52The Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, 4, 292.
53Adamas, Neglected Period of Anti-Slavery, 206.
They pointed to the fact that the Society was never able at any time to raise enough money to pay the expenses for deportation of even a small fraction of the natural increase of Negroes by births. In November, 1839, the total expenditures of the Society since its inception amounted to $349,644, while the indebtedness incurred by the Managers was $70,000. Opponents asserted that the accomplishments in Liberia had not been as impressive as the Colonization Society had expected or claimed. They pointed out that colonizationists themselves had presented conflicting accounts concerning emigration to the colony.

The free Negroes continued their resistance, declaring their conviction that "the primary, secondary, and ultimate object of the American Colonization Society is the exportation of the free people of color from the United States, and thereby to render slave property more secure and valuable." They condemned the scheme now, not only because of what they considered its injustice and discrimination, but also because of its cruelty. The misfortunes and numerous deaths among the first colonists to Liberia were used as evidences of the callousness of a Society which promoted the sending of Negroes to an unhealthy and

54 Fox, 124.

55 M. Carey, Letters on the Colonization Society, 18; Birney’s Life and Times, 117.

56 Resolution of the State Convention of the Colored People of Ohio, Cincinnati, 1852, in Stebbins, Facts and Opinions, 199.
inhospitable land like Africa. The Society constantly defended itself against this charge by declaring that the hardships endured in Liberia were inevitable in colonization anywhere. It claimed that the sufferings of the Negroes in Liberia were less than those experienced by the early settlers in America.

There were still some colonizationists who made little effort to make their scheme more palatable. One example must suffice. In 1853 a certain W. A. Scott delivered an address before the Louisiana State Colonization Society in New Orleans. He declared that the Creator had ordained black and white to live apart. Therefore, he believed that gradual emancipation and migration should continue until not a black man remained in America. He urged that the "overflowing" government treasury should be used to send all free Negroes away at once. He referred to Haiti and Jamaica as examples of "premature and improper attempts to change the condition of the Negroes." He asserted that Liberia alone was pointing the right way, and expressed his conviction that it was the "wisdom and goodness of God" that had ordered the black man to be educated in the United States for his career in the home of his ancestors. He did not doubt that the

57 Sherwood, 73.
58 "Emigration of Free and Emancipated Negroes to Africa", in California Miscellany, 4:1-16.
59 Ibid., 6.
60 Ibid., 11.
61 Ibid., 14.
whole of Africa would yet be regenerated through colonization.

Such harangues, growing more rare in the 1850's, were not sufficient to revive the declining colonization movement. For while the colonizationists endeavored to repair the defenses which the Abolitionists had broken down, and tried to adjust their plans to the new program and organization they had adopted, they beheld the South engaged in strengthening the institution of slavery. James Freeman Clarke described an interview he had with Henry Clay at his Ashland, Kentucky, home before the crisis of 1840. Clay stated that he had hoped to see the end of slavery at least in Kentucky, but he was now convinced that since cotton had become so profitable the southern states would not give up their slaves. Cotton and sugar planters were making money so fast that the price of slaves had increased greatly. Instead of surrendering slaves for emancipation and colonization, they now wanted more. This undoubtedly stimulated the slave trade. Daniel Webster, United States Secretary of State, when presenting his report to Congress in 1850, had to include items showing that the traffic in slaves was very active on the coast of Africa. Between 1845 and 1849, 22 American ships had been employed to fight the slave trade, and these were not considered

62 Anti-slavery Days, 30.
63 Ibid.
64 31st Cong., 1st Sess., Senate Doc. No. 75, 75, 78, 30.
What, then, did the American Colonization Society accomplish? We should first note an evaluation made by the Board of Managers in 1833. It was contained in a report presented to the Society's annual meeting following what was undoubtedly one of the most successful periods of its work. In vindication of the Society the Board of Managers offered the following facts:

1. The Society was founded by the patriotic, the benevolent and pious...

2. The free people of color who have sought its aid, and emigrated under its direction to Liberia, have, according to their own testimony, and the testimony of others, greatly improved their condition and character.

3. Through its moral influence, numerous slaves have been manumitted; and through its agency settled, in freedom and prosperity, in Liberia; while many others are now ready to be consigned to its care.

4. No one has shown, or can show, that the public have experienced detriment from the plans and proceedings of this Society.

5. The native Africans in the vicinity of the Colony, are, in their own judgment, greatly benefitted by its establishment; and disinterested strangers, who have visited them, concur in their opinion.

6. The practicability of the plan of African colonization, on a scale of vast utility, has been demonstrated, and means exist, all admit, for immensely enlarging its results.

Colonizationists claimed a great deal of credit for the increase in manumissions. How many of these would have taken place if there had been no Colonization Society we cannot tell.

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65Ibid., 80. On the international aspects of the slave problem see Appendix IV of this dissertation.

Nevertheless, it is true that a great number of manumissions were definitely connected with the work and influence of the Society. Even if we take only the period from 1830 to 1840, we must admit that the numbers of slaves manumitted by their masters on condition that they be sent to Liberia was impressive. The African Repository during this decade contained numerous references to such manumissions. There can be little doubt that many more slaves would have been emancipated and sent to Africa if the Society had had more funds available. Some masters freed their slaves unconditionally and sometimes at great personal loss, while others offered to do so only if they were reimbursed for the loss. By 1830, more than 200 slaves had been manumitted by their masters; in 1855 the number had jumped to 2,000, according to Gurley; and when the Society celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1867, it claimed that 5,000 had been manumitted and sent to Liberia.

Besides the manumitted slaves, free Negroes had also been sent out by the Society. A good number of recaptured slaves taken from slave ships by the commanders of United States naval vessels had also been sent to Africa. Some of these had remained

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67 Address of the Board of Managers (1832), 7; African Repository, XIV, 63; XVIII, 80.
68 Ibid., XIX, 201.
69 Ibid., XIX, 48; 141-142.
in the colony, while others had been restored to their tribes. In 1840 there were 5,000 "coloured emigrants" in Liberia, not counting those in the independent settlements of the Louisiana, Mississippi and Maryland Colonization Societies.71

To what extent did the Liberia colony destroy the slave trade in its own area? We are probably safe in stating that the claims of some colonizationists regarding this matter were somewhat over-optimistic. During his visit to Liberia in 1850 Gurley admitted that the infamous traffic was still flourishing.72

Just before his arrival one Portuguese ship had been captured by a British naval vessel near Cape Montserado with 1200 slaves on board.73 He declared that the horrors of the "middle passage" were still a grim reality, even along the 350-mile coast of Liberia and Maryland in Liberia. The intermittent raids by Ashmun before 1830, and a raid by Thomas Buchanan, who became governor of Liberia in 1839, undoubtedly deterred some of the slavers and liberated some slaves.74 The slave traffic could not be destroyed, however, until all the maritime nations operating off the coast of Africa were willing to work cooperatively in the task. So far some of the European nations had done little

71Gurley, Address to the Pennsylvania Society, 32-33.
73Ibid., 77. Letter of Captain Trotter.
74African Repository, XV, 277-282.
to restrain the slavers.75

Two questions remain to be considered. First, if the government of the United States and the people of the country had united behind the Colonization Society, could the Negro problem have been solved by deporting all Negroes to Africa or some other place? Many colonizationists believed this to have been within the bounds of possibility, and, as we have seen, even Abraham Lincoln did not preclude such a possibility. Secondly, whether or not all Negroes were deported, could the colonization movement have provided a meeting ground for the pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces throughout the country? Many thoughtful men sincerely believed prior to 1840 that the Colonization Society, which, for more than twenty years had enabled many different types of men to work together for the good of the Negro, could have become a rallying point for a divided nation. If the Society had not come under the control of so many slave owners at the beginning, and if William Lloyd Garrison and his followers had not changed their attitude so radically after 1832, a modified form of colonization might have brought together those who sought the good of the country and the welfare of the Negroes. Unfortunately, however, the Colonization Society, founded to bring the friends of the Negro together, became itself the storm center, and a cause of bitter misunderstanding and conflict.

75 31st Cong., 1st Sess., Senate Doc. No. 75, 75.
If the tensions that developed after 1832 had been avoided, many more and better colonies might have been established in Africa and other places, on a voluntary and more permanent basis. Gradual emancipation might have become a reality, especially as industrialization advanced in the South. The consciences of southerners, undoubtedly sensitive on the subject of slavery in the early part of the nineteenth century, might have become even more sensitive and carried to fulfillment the plans that had been discussed by state legislatures such as Virginia and Maryland. The callousness of men like Professor Thomas Dew of William and Mary College would have been rebuked by a new social consciousness among southern men with respect to the Negro. Passion and pride would not have stung the South into open defense and justification of the whole wretched system of slavery, and the "irrepressible conflict" might never have set brother against brother.
APPENDIXES
APPENDIX I

THE ENGLISH ABOLITIONISTS


Wilberforce was the leader of the anti-slavery forces in England, and more than any other one man was responsible for the passage of the Emancipation Act of 1806, which abolished slavery in the English colonies (P.N.B., XXI, 213). After a somewhat gay and careless youth, he had become deeply religious. His charm, wealth and position as a member of Parliament made him a natural leader, and he exerted his influence in behalf of various humanitarian causes. The Abolition Act, which carried in Parliament by a vote of 283 to 16 led to the founding of the "African Institution," designed to promote the effective application of the measure and the suppression of the slave trade in foreign countries. At first sympathetic to the work of the American Colonization Society, Wilberforce later turned against it, largely through the influence of Garrison when the American anti-slavery leader visited England in 1833.

2. Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846).

Clarkson was one of the most persevering of English anti-slavery agitators. He wrote effectively on the subject (see the impressive list of his writings P.N.B., IV, 455). Possessing a small private fortune, he traveled widely in England and on the Continent of Europe, denouncing slavery. He was somewhat vacillating in his attitude to the Colonization Society, and in 1833 his name was conspicuously absent from the "Protest" signed by the English Abolitionists and placed in the hands of Garrison.


Buxton was a wealthy philanthropist and Member of Parliament. He became closely associated with Wilberforce in the anti-slavery conflict. At first he favored gradual emancipation, then later turned to complete abolition and support of the Emancipation Act. He opposed the Colonization Society after having previously favored it. He was an active member of the African Institution, and continued to fight the African slave trade to the end of his
life, by pressing for a more efficient naval force to deal with slave ships; by urging that treaties be made with native chiefs in Africa; and by encouraging the establishment of legitimate commerce (D.N.B., III, 560).


Sharp was one of the early advocates of the complete liberation of the slaves. He became famous as a philanthropist, pamphleteer and scholar. He was a somewhat eccentric individual who was successively a Quaker, a Presbyterian, a Roman Catholic and an atheist (D.N.B., XVII, 133). He was one of the founders of the English Anti-Slavery Society and the Sierra Leone colony, and helped in the fight for the passage of the Emancipation Act of 1806. His writings cover a variety of subjects, ranging from slavery to New Testament Criticism (see list in D.N.B.XVII,1341). He died before the American Colonization Society was founded.

Note: The above information was taken from the Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 1921-22).
Appendix II

Abolitionists and Colonization

There is general agreement among the biographers of William Lloyd Garrison concerning his influence in destroying the prestige of the Colonization Society. Archibald A. Grimke, in his William Lloyd Garrison the Abolitionist, deals rather fully with this matter. He discusses the change which Garrison underwent in his attitude towards the Society, and he stresses the significance of Garrison's Thoughts on African Colonization. He also evaluates the work of Garrison in England and his "winning of Wilberforce from his neutral position."

Oliver Johnson, a close associate of Garrison, wrote an authoritative work entitled, William Lloyd Garrison and His Times: or Sketches of the Anti-Slavery Movement in America (Boston, 1881). As a contemporary witness, he provides important information on Garrison's attitude and influence in the controversy with the Colonization Society. He credits Garrison with turning "hundreds of ministers" from the Society by his writings in 1832 and 1833.

Goldwin Smith, a British historian and publicist, presents the same conclusion in The Moral Crusader, William Lloyd Garrison (New York and London, 1892). His work is largely based on the voluminous William Lloyd Garrison by His Children.

Russel B. Nye has written a modern evaluation, William Lloyd Garrison and the Humanitarian Reformers (Boston and Toronto, 1955). Though not much in sympathy with Garrison, he presents him as the unquestionable leader of the anti-slavery and anti-colonization movements after 1832.

Two other influential Abolitionists referred to in this thesis are Arthur Tappan and Gerrit Smith. Tappan (1786-1865) acquired a fortune in the dry goods business. He engaged in various forms of philanthropy, and at first was an ardent supporter of the Colonization Society. He turned away from it in the early 1830's, partly because the Society allowed the sale of liquor in Liberia. He became an Abolitionist and was elected President of the Anti-Slavery Society, to which for a period he gave $1,000 a
month. He helped to establish the anti-slavery Oberlin College, and also endowed Lane Theological Seminary, which became involved in the anti-colonization controversy. His brother Lewis was his close associate and wrote The Life of Arthur Tappan.

Gerrit Smith (1797-1874) was a wealthy reformer and philanthropist who gave large sums of money to the Colonization Society during the early years of its existence. He also served as a vice-president, concentrating on projects for raising money for the Society. He became interested in the abolition movement, and as a result of the Utica riots against the Abolitionists in 1835, he joined the Anti-Slavery Society. He was a leader in organizing the Liberty Party in 1840, and was their candidate for President of the United States in 1840 and 1852. He was twice a candidate for the governorship of New York on an anti-slavery platform. In 1853 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as an independent. He was a close friend of John Brown, though he seems to have known nothing of the raid on Harper's Ferry until after it had taken place. The best biography of him is by O.B. Frothingham, Gerrit Smith: A Biography (1878).
APPENDIX IV

INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE SLAVE TRADE

International complications arose out of the slave trade. The United States was not very cooperative in this matter during the middle years of the nineteenth century.

Denmark was the first nation to abolish the slave trade, in 1802. Between 1810 and 1814 England signed treaties with Portugal, Denmark and Sweden; and in 1814 Castlereagh, at the Congress of Vienna, pressed for the abolition of the traffic in slaves. In 1815 the United States and Great Britain signed the Treaty of Ghent, but the United States did not take the provisions against the slave traffic very seriously.

In 1817 Spain abolished the trade north of the equator, and promised entire abolition in 1820. Spain, Portugal and Holland granted limited "Right of Search" to England, but England failed in 1820 to obtain a general abolition of the slave trade by all the nations. Neither could she secure qualified international "Right of Visit." Little effort was made by the United States or the European nations to enforce the statutes already agreed on.

Between 1820 and 1840 the struggle for international Right of Search continued, while the traffic in slaves went on unabated. Great Britain had the navy and was able to police the seas, but the United States would admit no Right of Search even for the purpose of finding out if a vessel had the right to fly the American flag. Hence the trade by Americans was not greatly disturbed. By 1837 American importation of slaves was as high as 200,000 annually, and even in 1847 the number imported was 100,000. Until 1830 the slave trade was carried on largely under the flags of France, Spain and Portugal. In the following decade, however, there was a definite increase of the traffic under the American flag.

By 1835 a large part of the trade was claimed by ships flying the stars and stripes, and between 1830 and 1860 nearly all slaves were being carried in ships sailing under the flag of the United States.

The "Quintuple Treaty" of 1841 between Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, Austria and France recognized the right of Search.
and several of the smaller European powers had previously agreed on "Right of Visit" to ascertain the charter of ships suspected of being in the slave trade.

In 1842 the United States and Great Britain entered into a "cruising convention" under the Ashburton Treaty. They agreed to maintain a joint squadron for the suppression of slavers on the coast of Africa. This broke the deadlock between the two countries, but the United States still refused the full mutual Right of Search, while much of the slave trade continued under her flag. In 1845 the British Parliament adopted the Aberdeen Act, by which all ships suspected of being engaged in the slave trade were to be pursued by English cruisers even within the territorial waters of foreign countries. The traders were to be tried under British laws. Among the disputes arising from this law and its enforcement was one between Great Britain and Brazil. However, on November 14, 1850, the Brazilian parliament adopted a law abolishing the slave trade.

On June 7, 1862, the Lincoln administration made a treaty with Great Britain which granted limited Right of Search and established mixed courts for the trial of offenders at the Cape of Good Hope, Sierra Leone and New York.*

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and other pertinent material related to the achievements and status of the Society. It also includes some important documents concerning Liberia.

Ohio in Africa: Memorial to the Honorable, the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Ohio. Columbus, Ohio, 1851.

This memorial to the Ohio State Legislature was presented by the "Committee of Correspondence" of the Ohio Colonization Society. It contains some interesting historical and economic facts concerning the newly-formed Republic of Liberia. It pleads for state support in promoting further colonization.

II. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS


Volume III contains letters and despatches from agents and representatives of the United States in West Africa.


This volume contains letters from Jehudi Ashmun and from a number of naval officers of the United States Navy on ships cruising the African coast.

"Documents relating to the United States and Liberia." In the supplement to vol. IV of the American Journal of International Law, New York, 1910.


Reports of Committees of the House of Representatives of the

This long document of over 1,000 pages is an exceptionally valuable source for material on the debates, reports and actions related to the colonization movement. It gives an insight into the earnest attempts made by some notable congressmen to obtain government support for the Colonization Society and Liberia.


Chapter I deals particularly with slavery and describes the various schemes proposed to aid manumission.


This report presented by Secretary of State Daniel Webster contains some important documents concerning the slave traffic off the coast of Liberia in the decade preceding 1850.

Messages and Papers of the Presidents. Edited by James D. Richardson, 10 vols. Washington, 1900.

Volume II contains President Monroe's message concerning the slave trade and the plan for Negro colonization.


Twentieth Congress, First Session, House Document No. 99.

Contains the Memorial of the American Colonization Society (1828), and the "Address of the Citizens of Monrovia" of 1827. Also other material related to colonization.

III. LETTERS AND SPEECHES


A eulogy on Ashmun which contains some interesting glimpses into the development of Liberia under his leadership.


A collection of letters by a leading apologist for colonization, addressed to the Hon. C. F. Mercer of the House of Representatives. Contains valuable historical data on Liberia, action taken by Congress and state legislatures, and some letters written by some important statesmen.

Christy, David. *A Lecture on African Colonization.* Cincinnati, Ohio, 1832.

A lecture delivered in the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio by an advocate of colonization.


An important speech which reveals Clay's commitment to a pro-slavery approach to the problem of colonization.


A careful investigation of the whole colonization scheme by a well known physician. Favors Liberia as a place of colonization in opposition to those who advocated colonization in the United States, Haiti or Mexico.


A review of the progress of the colony of Liberia, with a statement of the aims of the Society in the crisis it faced at this time.


A letter written by the Secretary of the Colonization Society just after its reorganization. Contains various documents concerning the progress of African colonization.


General Harper was an ardent colonizationist who worked for the Society both in and out of Congress. His views are those of a southern slave-holder.


Latrobe was president of the Colonization Society from 1853 to 1857, having previously been president of the Maryland Colonization Society since 1837.


An address by the first Governor of the Republic of Liberia (1847-1855). He later became the first President of the College of Liberia.

Woodson, Carter G. The Kind of the Negro as Reflected in Letters Written during the Crisis 1860-1865. Washington, 1926.

A large collection of letters written by free Negroes and slaves, the letters being grouped under headings indicating their subject matter. An extremely valuable source for understanding the thinking of the Negro regarding colonization, slavery and kindred subjects. Published under the sponsorship of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History.

IV. MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS

This was the official publication of the American Colonization Society. It is a very valuable source for letters; reports, editorials and statistics dealing with the work of the Society in Liberia and the United States. For this thesis volumes one to sixteen were particularly helpful.


Embree was an agitator and abolitionist publisher. He first published the Manumission Intelligencer, then began to issue the Emancipator monthly in 1820. He died suddenly after ten issues of the magazine had been published. This collection of his paper, issued at Nashville, 1932, contains hitherto unpublished materials on slavery and colonization under the signature of Embree. He wielded a wide influence for a time.


This monthly was published by the Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade, and for the Civilization of Africa. For this thesis volumes I and II were used.


This weekly abolitionist newspaper first appeared on January 1, 1831, and became the mouthpiece of the anti-slavery movement. It had a powerful influence in creating anti-colonization sentiment. Volumes I and II were chiefly used for this thesis.

The National Register. Published by Joel K. Mead. Washington, 1816.

Gives reports of the first meetings of the Colonization Society in Washington.


Published during the whole period we are considering. A good source for numerous items concerning slavery, anti-slavery and colonization.

Contains several important articles on colonization.

Richmond Enquirer. Richmond, Virginia.

This newspaper was strongly pro-slavery, and in the early 1830's opposed those in the Virginia legislature who worked on behalf of gradual emancipation and colonization.

V. MISCELLANEOUS BOOKS AND ARTICLES


First published in the Christian Spectator, March, 1833. Gives an evaluation of some of the writings for and against slavery during the period of controversy in the early 1830's.


A study of the development of sentiment against slavery.


Presents data on the number of Negroes in penitentiaries of the United States in the early 1830's.


An address by the President of Liberia College before the American Colonization Society. Gives historical data and describes the development of Liberia from its beginnings.

Brawley, Benjamin C. A Social History of the American Negro:

An exhaustive study which includes some valuable data on the problems of the free Negro and colonization before the Civil War.


A careful study, with good chapter references and bibliography.


A sketch of the struggle that led to emancipation in the United States. Contains personal recollections of the author, who was acquainted with many of the New England Abolitionists.


By a leading English abolitionist. Reviews the steps which led to emancipation in the English colonies.


A pro-slavery treatise by a professor at William and Mary College. Opposed to both abolitionism and colonization. Is almost callous in its analysis of the economic aspects of slavery.


Reviews the arguments in favor of the removal of free Negroes.

Frazier, E. Franklin. The Free Negro Family: A Study of Family
Origins before the Civil War. Nashville, Tenn., 1932.

Contains helpful information on population, manumitted slaves and different types of Negro families (racial mixtures, etc.).


Undoubtedly the most powerful work issued against colonization. Makes very skilful use of the ambiguities, contradictions and pro-slavery sentiments in the speeches and writings of colonizationists. Presents also the views of many free Negroes regarding colonization.


A sympathetic evaluation by an English physician.


Written during the period of controversy between colonizationists and Abolitionists. Reviews arguments on both sides; though the author, an anti-slavery northerner, definitely favors colonization. Contains material on conditions in Liberia.


Hume was associated with the abolition movement from his youth, and his book contains interesting sketches of men who were active in the anti-slavery conflict.


A good biographical sketch of William Thornton, the early promoter of the colonization idea in America.

Bitterly anti-colonizationist. A thorough examination of the claims and work of the Colonization Society. Quotes the words of colonizationists to show that they are pro-slavery and opposed to the best interests of the Negro. The author was the son of John Jay, and was active in the anti-slavery movement as a writer and philanthropist.


A fair evaluation of the aims and work of the Colonization Society by an impartial observer.


Contains an interesting list of the delegates attending this convention and of the numerous anti-slavery societies that had been organized in Ohio. Refers to influence of Birney, Weld, Oberlin College, etc.

---"Further Notes on Granville's Anti-Abolition Disturbances of 1836." In above Quarterly, vol. XLV, No.4 (October, 1936).

Describes how the colonizationists fought back against their anti-slavery adversaries.


The Africa Education Society was organized to educate Negroes planning to go to Liberia. This Report describes the objectives and lists the officers of the Society and shows its relationship to the Colonization Society.

Scott, W.A. *Emigration of Free and Emancipated Negroes to Africa* An address before the Louisiana State Colonization Society, New Orleans, 1853.

Pro-slavery in approach. Stresses Liberia as the place of colonization in opposition to other countries. Advocates
the use of government funds to send all Negroes to Africa.


An interesting study showing Ohio as an important center of colonizationist activity.

Stebbins, Giles B. Facts and Opinions touching the real Origin, Character, and Influence of the American Colonization Society. Boston and Cleveland, 1853.

Strongly anti-colonizationist. Contains some important documents showing the opinions of different groups regarding the Colonization Society.


By and ardent abolitionist and supporter of Garrison. Had formerly been a strong colonizationist.


By a competent specialist in the study of the Negro. Deals with the development of Negro life in the United States.


A study of the transplantation of the Negro to the North, the colonization schemes offered as remedies; the success and failure of some Negro movements and migrations.


A careful study of the Free Negro population in the 1830's. Shows its distribution, social condition, and problems.


An analysis of attitudes adopted by different white groups in Maryland, describes Maryland's part in the colonization
movement and the legislation introduced into the state to restrict the free Negro.

VI. BIOGRAPHIES AND MEMOIRS

PRIMARY SOURCES


Ephraim Bacon went to Liberia as agent of the United States in 1822. He died a few months after arrival, leaving behind a journal of his experiences.


The significant meeting of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Convention of 1836 was held in the barn of Bancroft's father, Ashley Bancroft.


Coker was a Negro clergyman who sailed on the Elizabeth with the first emigrants for Liberia. He was the diarist of the voyage, and later furnished details of the early experiences of the settlers.


Gurley was secretary of the Colonization Society for over 25 years, and made two trips to Liberia for the United States government. His biography of Ashmun is based upon personal contact with him in Liberia. This work also includes a very good summary of the life of Lott Cary.

Gurley went to England to try to regain the support of the English Abolitionists after Garrison and others had destroyed their confidence in the American Colonization Society.


Kizzel, a freed slave, had gone to West Africa before the establishment of Liberia. He had considerable influence with some of the native chiefs, and assisted the first colonists who came from America.


May was one of the founders of the Anti-Slavery Society. His work contains descriptions of many leading Abolitionists and anti-colonization individuals, white and Negro. He was a lecturer, clergyman, and educator of ability, and his Recollections are marked by fairness and moderation.


By a leading Presbyterian and writer. He knew Mills personally, and gives valuable information concerning his part in the colonization venture. This Memoir contains some important letters written by Mills from England and Africa.

SECONDARY SOURCES


By the son of James Birney. Gives an evaluation of Birney's influence, and describes his relationships with the colonization movement, abolitionism and the Republican Party.


Presents material showing the connection of the Bancroft family with the anti-slavery movement in Ohio.

Chadwick, John White. A Life for Liberty: Anti-Slavery and Other

Sallie Holley was an important woman abolitionist who had wide contacts with persons in the anti-slavery movement between 1830 and 1860. She was the first woman student at Oberlin College. This book contains some interesting photographs of several leading abolitionists.

Chittenden, L.E. Recollections of President Lincoln and His Administration. New York, 1891.

Chittenden was Register of the Treasury under Lincoln. He presents some interesting information concerning Lincoln's views on colonization.


A thorough and well-documented presentation of the life and work of Garrison. Anti-slavery in tone.


A centennial collection of extracts from Garrison's writings and speeches dealing with various subjects.


One of the best sources for understanding the influence of William Wilberforce and the struggle for Negro emancipation in England.
VII. HISTORIES


An excellent study of attitudes and movements in various parts of the United States. Provides data on the Negroes during the early nineteenth century.


An excellent survey of the colonization of Liberia down to 1840. By a contemporary, a professor at Princeton.

Andrews, Matthew P. Tercentenary History of Maryland. Chicago and Baltimore, 1925.

Compiled from state documents. A dependable work.


Compiled from the authentic records of the Liberia colony during its most critical period.


By a Commander in the United States Navy who cruised off the west coast of Africa in command of the brig Perry in 1850 and 1851. He wrote hopefully of Liberia.


A doctoral dissertation at Johns Hopkins University. Very well written, but somewhat anti-abolitionist in tone.

Hill, Norman N. History of Licking County, Ohio. Newark, 0., 1881.
Howe, Henry. Historical Collections of Ohio. 2 vols. Columbus, 1896.


Contains interesting documents concerning the early laws and treaties of the colony.


A paper read before the Maryland Historical Society, March 9, 1885 and published by the Society. Latrobe was president of The Maryland Colonization Society until he became president of the American Colonization Society.


By an early traveler in Africa who makes some observations on the beginnings of colonization on the west coast.


A history written in connection with the centennial of the Republic of Liberia. Reviews the development of the colonization idea and the early history of the colony.
The dissertation submitted by Leonard Gittings
has been read and approved by five members of the Depart-
ment of History.

The final copies have been examined by the
director of the dissertation and the signature which
appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes
have been incorporated, and that the dissertation is now
given final approval with reference to content, form, and
mechanical accuracy.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy.

6-27-56
Date

Signature of Adviser