LIBERIA.

Mr. Seys to Mr. Seward.

[Extract.]

No. 2.]

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

Monrovia, January 3, 1867.

Sir: I have the honor to inform you of my arrival in this city on the night of the 30th ultimo. Early on the morning of the 31st I communicated to the honorable secretary of state of the republic of Liberia this event, (see enclosure No. 1,) and received his reply as copied in enclosure No. 2.

On Wednesday, January 2d, 1867, at 12 o'clock m., in company with the United States vice-consul general, the honorable W. A. Johnson, I repaired to the executive mansion, and in presence of the entire diplomatic corps, the vice-president of Liberia, his honor the chief-justice of the republic, and the members of the cabinet. I was formally presented to his excellency President Warner, and handed my sealed letter of credence from the President of the United States of America.

My short address to the President, enclosure No. 3, was followed by the reading aloud of my letter of credence, and then his excellency's address (see enclosure No. 4) was read by the honorable secretary of state, and the United States minister resident and consul general duly received and accredited.

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I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS.

Hon. William H. Seward,

Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Seys to Mr. Johnson.

MONROVIA, December 31, 1866.

Sir: I have the honor to inform you of my arrival last night in this city, with a commission from the President of the United States of America as minister resident and consul general to the republic of Liberia.

I beg leave to know from his excellency the President of Liberia, through the secretary of state, when it will suit his excellency's earliest convenience to grant me a personal interview, that I may present my sealed letter of credence, a copy of which I now enclose.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS.

Hon. H. R. W. Johnson,

Secretary of State Republic of Liberia.

Mr. Johnson to Mr. Seys.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

Monrovia, December 31, 1866.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your note of this morning, by which you inform me that you arrived last night in this city, with a commission from the President of the United States of America as minister resident and consul general to the republic of Liberia, and
request to be apprised when it will suit the convenience of the President to grant you a personal interview that you may present your sealed letter of credence, a copy of which you have sent me.

In reply I have to acquaint you that the President is now suffering from indisposition, but hopes to be able to grant you an interview on Wednesday, the 3rd of January proximo, on which day I shall be pleased to meet you at the mansion at 12 o'clock m., for the purpose aforesaid.

With the highest consideration, I have the honor to remain your obedient servant,

His Excellency John Sexs, &c., &c., &c.

H. R. W. JOHNSON.

Mr. President: I have the honor to present to you in person my sealed letter of credence to your excellency from the President of the United States of America. I am commissioned as minister resident and consul general to the republic of Liberia.

I beg leave to assure your excellency that I regard this as one of the most auspicious hours of my long and checkered life. Known as I am and have been for so many years to the government and people of Liberia, and feeling no abatement whatever in the deep interest I have ever taken in the welfare and prosperity of this entire nation, it affords me unspeakable pleasure to be the representative of that great people and nation who may justly be entitled the mother country of Liberia. I bear you, Mr. President, the greetings and good wishes of that mother country, and I humbly trust that so long as I shall be accredited near this government, it will be my highest pleasure to cultivate and perpetuate the harmonious relations now existing between the two republics.

Excellency: It affords me much pleasure to receive you in the capacity of minister resident and consul general of the United States of America to the republic of Liberia.

There are few occurrences in the affairs of nations which give more satisfaction than does an event like this—the receiving of a minister sent from a friendly foreign power to strengthen the relations of amity which exist between the two countries. The representative of the sovereign of a great nation, I am happy in recognizing you as the link which shall bind us closer together in friendship, in commerce, and all international relations.

It is with no little degree of felicitation that the government and people of Liberia have witnessed on the part of your government the manifestation of the most lively interest in the affairs of this nation, and a desire to establish and preserve the best understanding between the two governments. It is scarcely necessary for me to assure you that this desire is reciprocated by the government of Liberia.

When this government received the assurance that the amicable relations so happily advanced by Mr. Hanson should suffer no deterioration from the representative appointed to succeed him, it hailed the announcement as another evidence of the concern which your government has for our welfare. But when you, Mr. Minister, are sent to give effect to the desire of your sovereign to advance, on all occasions, the interest and happiness of the two countries, it is with unspeakable pleasure that I welcome you as the representative of the ruler of a great country near the government of Liberia.

And it brightens our joy to see in the representative of this great friendly power one who has been for many years associated with the history of Liberia. For a quarter of a century have you, Mr. Minister, been ordained to promote various interests in Liberia. In the church you were for many years advancing the spiritual welfare of the country, laboring through gloomy periods and dark and anxious nights in those times that tried men's souls, when the seed of civilization and Christianity that had been planted here had just germinated, being watered with the tears and the blood of good and great men, many of whom have been removed from the sphere of earthly duties. You have known the hardships of a new country; you have encountered the storms of the land and the sea, and having, like us, passed through a severe ordeal, you no doubt, like us, bless God that Liberia still stands, and that you have been designated to renew, in a different capacity, your labors in this field of your earlier toils.

Nor have your labors been confined to the church; on other occasions you have served your government in this country, advancing its commercial interests, and assisting to rescue from a cruel bondage and all the horrors of "the middle passage" thousands who were the victims of oppression. And could I so far forget the object which brings us face to face to-day I would refer you to the fruits of our mutual labors, to the signs of encouragement which are seen on every hand, and which makes us confident as to the future. But we cannot refrain from looking another moment into the past. And when reviewing a period of 32 years we come to the time when you first crossed the Atlantic to cast in your lot with us, and find that you have eight times visited this land to assist in the great work in which we are engaged, and that the ninth time you come back to us in the capacity of the representative of your great ruler, we are forced to believe that your destiny and ours are very closely interwoven.
Again I have to extend to your excellency a hearty welcome near the government of Liberia, and an assurance that you shall have accorded to you all the immunities, the respect and high consideration due to one of your exalted rank, and especially to the representative of a government so friendly disposed towards us. For your protection you have not only the guarantees of international law, but also the sympathy and good-will of the government and people of Liberia. For your assurance of the same I pledge you the faith of the republic; and in token that I embrace with all cordiality the great and magnanimous ruler who thus, through you, his representative, places himself in correspondence with me, I extend the hand of friendship and protection to you as minister resident and consul general of the United States of America to the republic of Liberia.

Mr. Seyes to Mr. Seward.

No. 3.]

UNITED STATES LEGATION,
Monrovia, January 5, 1867.

Sir: I have the honor to inform you that after the very distinguished and complimentary reception which was given to me by his excellency the President of Liberia, and his cabinet, an account of which, with several enclosures, will be found in my despatch No. 2, of the 3d instant, I waited officially yesterday in company with Mr. W. A. Johnson, late vice-consul general of the United States on both houses of the Liberian legislature now in session. My visit was most respectfully regarded. In the senate a motion was made and passed unanimously to suspend business of ordinary character, upon which Senator Russell offered the resolution, (see enclosure No. 1,) which was most cordially adopted. Being invited to make a few remarks, I very briefly assured the vice president and honorable members of the senate of the continued friendship and good wishes of the government I had the honor to represent, and of my own personal respect and consideration.

The house of representatives being in committee of the whole at the time of my visit, discussing the “pilot bill” now before that body, no ceremony obtained saving a rising of the entire assembly, and a seat of distinction next to the vacated chair of the honorable speaker of the house, awarded the diplomatic visitor.

I take the opportunity to inform the department that the high, distinguished, and most respectfully kind and cordial reception which I have met with from the government and people of Liberia is most gratifying to me.

I have the honor to be, with the highest consideration, sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

Hon. William H. Seward,
Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

[Enclosure No. 1.]

RESOLUTION passed by the senate of the Republic of Liberia on the visit of his excellency John Seyes, minister resident and consul general from the United States of America to the Republic of Liberia.

Resolved, That the senate of the Republic of Liberia is greatly gratified and honored in receiving among them as minister resident and consul general of the United States the old and tried friend of Liberia and Africa, the Rev. John Seyes.

DAN. J. BEAMS,
Secretary of the Senate Republic of Liberia.

Adopted by the senate January 4, 1867.
Mr. Seys to Mr. Seward.

[Extract.]

Legation of the United States,
Monrovia, January 8, 1867.

Sir: I have the honor to enclose two copies of the message of his Excellency the President of Liberia, at the opening of the legislature now in session.

I take pleasure in calling attention of the department to the fact that the daring violation of the revenue laws of this republic on the part of one Harris, a subject of Great Britain, to which reference is made in the said message, is being duly punished.

An appeal being taken to the supreme court of Liberia from the recent decision of a lower court in which the defendant was found guilty, the final adjudication of the case is still pending.

* * *

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

John Seys.

Hon. William H. Seward,
Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

Message of the President of Liberia to the Legislature in Joint Session, December 6, 1866.

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Liberia:

The expiration of another twelvemonth has brought around the period when it becomes my duty to lay before you a statement of the affairs of the republic, and to recommend such measures as appear to me calculated to enhance the welfare of the nation.

In discharging this duty, I have to invite you to unite with me in rendering unfeigned thanks to our Heavenly Father for the blessings with which the past year has been crowned. The immunity we have enjoyed from these epidemic diseases which have been the scourges of other lands, the bountiful harvests that have blessed the labors of the husbandman, the peace that has prevailed to a great extent within our borders, are unmistakable marks of Divine favor; and for these mercies we should show ourselves grateful by pursuing such a course of conduct as will meet the approbation of the Almighty.

Our relations with foreign nations are satisfactory, with the exception of the northwestern boundary dispute. This question, which has been pending for the last five years, without having yet come to a solution, must be settled before it can be determined which of the two governments—this or her Britannic Majesty's—is responsible for the numerous atrocities which have been committed, as well as for those which are daily being committed by the natives in the territories in dispute. The predatory war waged by the natives in those parts of the country against the peaceful natives living in close proximity to our settlement at Grand Cape Mount, and to the great detriment of that settlement; the vast amount of merchandise introduced from adjoining provinces, without bringing a revenue to the government; the open rebellion of the natives, instigated by unprincipled traders living within the territories claimed by this government, are evils which are likely to continue for a long time, and to affect more injuriously the interests of the republic, unless this question of boundary be at once set at rest. The finances of the government have not been in such a condition as to allow us to occupy those windward territories with civilized settlements, or we might long since have availed ourselves of the surest method of confirming the claim which we have rightfully acquired by fair and honorable purchase. On this subject the government has renewed the correspondence which, two years ago, was broken off by the brief reply of the British government to the last requisition of the Liberian government; and it is to be hoped that the magnanimity and keen sense of justice of the British government will allow the question to be put at rest speedily and amicably.

I have appointed Monsieur L. Carrance consul for the republic at Bordeaux, in France. I have also granted a commission to Señor Semmarti Brogues as Liberian consul at Barcelona and Madrid, in Spain. I felt particular gratification in making this appointment; and in a despatch from the Spanish minister for foreign affairs we are assured that it was hailed by her Catholic Majesty's government as the forerunner of the establishment of friendly and commercial relations between the two countries.

During the year I have granted my exequatur to Samuel F. McGill, esq., consul for Sweden and Norway; also to C. T. W. F. Jaetsen, esq., consul for Hamburg, at Monrovia.
It is with feelings of inexpressible sorrow that I have to announce to you the death of Abraham Hanson, esq., late United States consul general and commissioneer, which occurred in the month of July last, at the location in Monrovia. The death of Mr. Hanson cast a deep gloom over our commercial hopes that a foreign functionary stood higher in the estimation of a people than Mr. Hanson did in that of Liberians, nor succeeded in establishing a better understanding than that which subsisted between Mr. Hanson and the government to which he was accredited. As a gentleman of Christian character, of kind and benevolent disposition, endearing himself to all who knew him, and as a liberal-minded public functionary, Mr. Hanson justly merited every mark of respect shown to him, and his memory claims a prominent place in the affections of this people.

To fill the office made vacant by the death of Mr. Hanson, the government of the United States has appointed William A. Johnson, esq., vice-consul general at Monrovia; and I have accorded to him my exequatur.

The government has been invited to participate in the International Exhibition to be held in Paris during the next year. It will be to me a matter of profound regret if, from any consideration, the government should be compelled to decline the generous offer. Such exhibitions tend, to a great extent, to bring into notice the products and commodities of different countries; and considering the limited commerce of Liberia, notwithstanding her vast but undeveloped resources, we should put forth a vigorous effort to improve the opportunity now afforded the country of exhibiting to the world its rich products.

In the latter part of 1864, we made application to the government of the United States for the purchase of a gunboat. The application was generously responded to, and the sale of a vessel on very liberal terms was provided for. It is expected that this gunboat will arrive here before the adjournment of your present session, and I have, therefore, to request that provision be made for her maintenance during the ensuing year.

A treaty of amity and commerce has recently been negotiated between this republic and the empire of Austria, which I will lay before the senate for ratification.

The postal convention between this government and that of Great Britain continues in operation. Recent arrangements provide that the steamers bearing the monthly mails shall touch at Monrovia as well as Cape Palmas. This gives us increased facilities for communicating with foreign countries. But, in order to have regular intercourse between our settlements, and to prevent those serious delays which too often occur in the operations of the government from want of mail carriage, it is necessary that you provide some sure and economical means for conveying the mails to and from the different settlements along the coast.

A proposition has been made to this government by a wealthy and influential gentleman in France to establish in this city, under the patronage of our government, an international hospital. He petitions for a grant of land suitable for this benevolent object, and a small appropriation to assist in the enterprise. I hope you will take this subject under favorable consideration.

The sea-port towns all over the civilized world could not give a stronger expression of their appreciation of the severe toil and abundant services of seamen than by erecting buildings in their respective localities for their accommodation, when distressed, either from shipwreck, sickness, or other causes. Travellers also to this coast would experience an inexpressible feeling of relief from a knowledge that such an asylum existed for their reception, when assaulted by the diseases of the climate.

It is necessary that vigorous measures be adopted and executed in order to enhance the public revenue. It is true, there is in the paper currency a marked improvement which tends greatly to the advantage of the citizens generally; but it cannot be of material benefit to the government, unless the receipts of the treasury constantly exceed or at least equal the expenditures it may be necessary to make to carry on the government.

While I admit that all unnecessary expenditures should be abolished, I am not inclined to favor the opinion that the expenses generally of the government are a waste, because they make no return in kind for the capital invested. The citizens need protection in the prosecution of their various interests, and this the government should not only have the ability to give, but its ability should be so fully known and seen as to render it unnecessary, except in extraordinary cases, to put it to the test. For this protection the citizens should be willing to pay.

I have for a long time thought that the native tribes residing within the near jurisdiction of the republic could be brought into closer relationship with us, by being required to contribute to the support of the government, and by being allowed such a representation in our national council as will easily commend itself to their comprehension. Such a measure inaugurated among these will induce those tribes more remote to seek to sustain similar relations to us. No desire to exterminate these people and aggrandize their territory brought us here. They are our brethren, deluded though they often appear, and our Constitution expressly declares that their improvement is a cherished object of this government. The government, then, being for mutual advantage, is one that calls for mutual support. The aborigines should assist in the great work we have to perform. Like the civilized population, they should give something in return for the protection and redress which our courts always,
and our armies often, are required to render them. And I doubt not that many of them are now willing to assist; and when they shall have been convinced that the civilization of which the republic is the nucleus must spread far and wide over this continent, enlightening and refining its inhabitants, and raising them in the scale of being, that it is a work designed by the Almighty himself, and cannot be stayed, I am sure they will become willing coadjutors.

I, therefore, recommend that the discretionary powers given to the Executive, in the 5th section of an act regulating taxes and licenses, passed by the legislature in 1858, to require our aborigines to contribute to the support of the government in such a manner as he shall deem best, be made a positive law, to be enforced in common with other revenue laws. There are in these forests men of royal blood, and of minds susceptible of the most exalted ideas of systematic and well-balanced government; and, by a proper appreciation of them, they could be made to sustain to us a much nearer and dearer relation than that of being mere contributors to our treasury.

In connection with the subject of finance, I have to recall your attention to the bill relative to revenue stamps, which was laid before you near the close of the session of 1864.

I have also to suggest that, for each passport issued by the secretary of state, a fee of two dollars be charged, to go into the treasury; that said passport be issued only on the presentation of the treasurer's receipt acknowledging the payment of the fee; and that the receipts be passed quarterly from the department of state to the secretary of the treasury.

Our passport law needs other important amendments. At all times and under all circumstances, the present law allows persons of all characters to obtain passports, simply by giving ten days' notice of their intention to leave the republic, and paying a fee of fifty cents for each passport.

Taking advantage of these easy circumstances under which they can leave the republic, many of a willfully thriftless class, whether long in the country or recent comers to it, go to foreign countries only to find the obstacles to be surmounted by indolent persons more numerous than they are in Liberia. In a short time they become reduced to extremities in the communities they enter. Did they break off their allegiance to the government of the republic, we should save all further concern about them; but, to avoid the duties and responsibilities of citizens of the new state to which they may have gone, they retain their passports and their allegiance, and in this way, to say the least of it, occasion this government irreparable anxiety, as it is often called upon to relieve its destitute citizens.

The patent law in force in the republic should be so amended as to prevent every person filing a caveat in the Patent Office to pay a small fee for the privilege thus secured to them.

I am fully aware that most men in the public service are already required to make some sacrifice; still they should always set examples of patriotism, in order that the citizens generally may be induced to second their efforts the more cheerfully. In this connection I have again to propose to you a recommendation made during the session of 1864, that each member of the legislature receive for his services a salary, not to exceed the amount to which he would be entitled for a session of a moderate length at a reasonable pay per diem.

I have often considered that in the administration of the affairs of a nation, justice requires that burdens imposed should be borne equally by the citizens, or in proportion to each man's ability. In our estimation, the principle does not oppress the classes of citizens—merchants, lawyers, and auctioneers—who pay a license fee for being allowed to follow their various vocations. It is not clear to my mind upon what principle certain classes of our citizens are taxed for procuring a livelihood, while others are exempt.

I have on a previous occasion spoken of the propriety of requiring persons following other trades or professions to pay a reasonable license fee, and I would again bring this subject to your notice.

There is pursued in the country an occupation which, to say the least of it, brings no good either to proprietors or customers. I refer to the distilling of ardent spirits. We are, it is true, under a free government, with a liberal constitution; and while total prohibition may appear to some as an invasion of the rights of citizens, yet I cannot see upon what principle of political economy or justice this trade in distilling ardent spirits has not been encumbered with the lightest tax, while wholesome, unobjectionable occupations pay to support a government which knows that its people are demoralized, but shuts its eyes upon the fact.

Each still erected or in operation in the republic should pay a tax proportioned to the capacity in gallons of the said still.

It would be very far from fulfilling our mission to this country that we continue to demoralize the natives by the abundant sale to them of ardent spirits. It seems clear to my mind that, as in the case of individuals, God holds men responsible for thus putting into the hands of their fellows materials capable of so much harm, inciting them to rapine, murder, and wars; so in our case, as a nation, God will not hold us guiltless of this sin which we have been so long committing, to the destruction of our heathen brethren, as well as ourselves; and surely their blood will He require at our hands, and will hold us chargeable for the evils which these tribes commit under the influence of this destructive drink.

The manufacture of ardent spirits and the traffic in them by other civilized nations should not be argued by us in justification of the republic of Liberia engaging in the same thing. The prosperity of those other governments might have been much more abundant and abiding,
and there would have been committed in them a less number of murders, had there been in them a total absence of ardent spirits. And may not the secret of the slow progress we are making, compared with the great advantages we have of a fertile soil, a uniformly favorable climate, and the enormous percentage of the yield of our crops, and the evanescent character which the accumulations we make from time to time assume, be attributed to the sin of manufacturing and selling rum? Ardent spirits had much to do with the kidnapping and forcing our forefathers from their ancient homes to a land of slavery. It caused the opening in that land of many premature graves, which closed over the mangled bodies and broken hearts of the victims of American bondage. Its fiery breath, now nearly six years ago, blew up in the American republic a terrible rebellion, and greatly marred the beauty of many portions of that wonderful country, causing the death of millions of its citizens. We may not hope to escape similar misfortunes and evils if we persist in manufacturing and selling ardent spirits.

Besides this, the case with which these natives procure fire-arms and ammunition increases the hostilities, and protracts those bloody struggles in which they engage, but which it is our duty to check. The government of Liberia is the guardian of the tribes which have placed themselves under our jurisdiction, and we should advise, admonish, and, if necessary, coerce them into that submission to law and order which they sometimes appear reluctant to yield. And when our civilized communities so far forget their duty to these heathens as to place into their hands the instruments of death, encouraging them to lawless and murderous acts, they too should be restrained by law. I have, therefore, to recommend the placing of a high duty on the importation of fire-arms, powder, and ardent spirits. These articles are by no means essential to the traffic of the country.

There is no subject which more affects the interests of this government than that of the tribes by whom we are surrounded. It must be admitted that the relations we sustain to those aborigines is very different from that held by any other civilized people to the natives of a barbarous country which they have entered. We often find the circumstances attendant on this relation exceedingly embarrassing. These people are our brethren, and yet we sometimes find them in antagonism to us. And then, again, in their own case, another and very important difficulty arises from the fact that there are chiefs under our jurisdiction who have laws—which we find it difficult to abrogate at once—conflicting with our statutes; thus keeping their subjects in constant dread of violating our laws on the one hand, and incurring the penalty of their own code on the other.

I have already referred to the propriety of making these tribes understand the necessity of contributing to the maintenance of this government; and I have now to suggest that there be some restriction placed on the intercourse of the civilized settlers with the natives, defining how far that intercourse shall extend, and when and for what purpose it shall be allowed. Many disturbances, and during the present year several of a serious nature, have arisen, resulting from that unlimited intercourse with the natives which has been continued for years by persons ostensibly engaged in trade, who have gone among these tribes to the demoralizing of themselves and to the great disprofit of the natives.

I am of opinion that persons going among the aborigines to reside should be made to show that they are engaged in some lawful and necessary enterprise, and to give bond and security, to be renewed from time to time, for their conforming to law and conserving the public peace; and whenever it shall appear that such persons are no longer prosecuting lawful business with the natives, they shall be required to withdraw from them; and for being allowed to prosecute trade among the natives they should obtain a license, to be granted on terms which they ought to pay a tax proportionate to the amount of capital invested in such native trade.

I have to inform you that in the month of June last, Prince Boyer, of Trade-town, seized and detained the Hon. J. M. Horace at said place. By this act of Boyer the government was placed in a serious dilemma. To have attempted to force the exasperated chief while Mr. Horace was in his power would have endangered the life of the latter; and the conditions imposed by Prince Boyer on which his prisoner could be released were such as government could not accede to and maintain its dignity and preserve the majesty of our laws.

The government sent a note to Boyer, requiring him to set Mr. Horace at liberty. Mr. Horace has been released. Boyer, however, gives the following grounds of grievance: 1. That an annuity promised him in 1849, and fixed by law, has not been regularly paid him; 2. That after he had become reconciled to the port of entry law, the domestic trade was interdicted to him, simply because it was interdicted by his savage enemies that he was contemplating a descent upon the settlements in Grand Bassa county; 3. That his confessions of repentance for the wrong he had done by refusing, when commanded to do so, to surrender the goods of foreigners detained by him, were spurned by the legislature; 4. That his officers, while on a peaceful mission to the government, were detained at Grand Bassa, and stripped of their insignia; 5. That a present which he sent to the government as assurance of peace was seized at Bassa; 6. That the passage of the law interdicting the domestic trade seemed to be a last resort to crush him; 7. That Senator Horace, by coming within the territory interdicted, violated the law which he himself assisted to make, and that he (Boyer) under the circumstances could not but act according to the natural impulse of a man. He has written to the government earnestly imploring a removal of the interdict.

On the other hand, it is clear that these tribes within our jurisdiction have no right to
indulge in the spirit of reprisals which they manifest either towards ourselves or each other. When they have complaints against the laws or any proceedings of the government, they should set forth their grievances in a proper manner; and no men know better the force and virtue of law than some of the powerful chiefs who preside over these tribes. Neither Prince Boyer nor any other chief has any right to execute our laws, or to set up his authority against the majesty of the republic.

But these chiefs and their subjects have, undoubtedly, certain rights, both natural and political, which should be highly respected by this government and people. And when this is done, and the natives are not provoked by us to the commission of lawless deeds, or instigated by dishonorable foreigners to insubordination, there will subsist between us and them a permanent good understanding and the greatest cordiality of feeling.

Some time in the month of October last, one James Doughlass, of Greenville, Sinoe, was wantonly murdered at Settra Kroo, by a native of that place. Immediately after intelligence of the tragic affair reached the government, I sent down to Sinoe a proclamation interdicting all intercourse with Settra Kroo until such time as satisfaction should be given for the murder committed. By the vessel bringing the legislators to this city, I received a communication from the king and headmen of Settra Kroo, assuring the government that the murderer shall be delivered up to justice so soon as he can be placed in the hands of the Nanna Kroo natives.

Presuming upon another illustration of the might of the British naval force on this coast over the just rights of the republic, one J. M. Harris, a subject of her Britannic Majesty's government, who has for some time kept a trading establishment at Solyma, contrary to the laws of the republic, arrogantly sent, a few weeks ago, his vessel into the little Cape Mount river to prosecute a trade with the aborigines of that place, as if to see how far and with how much impunity he could contravene the laws of the republic. It will be remembered that this vessel is one of the two that were brought into this port from Solyma by the schooner Quall, in 1860, to be tried for trading at that place, contrary to our revenue laws, but was forcibly taken out of our harbor by her Britannic Majesty's cruiser Torch. The vessel having been seized by order of the government, has been brought to this port, and now lies in the river awaiting the investigation of her case by the proper authorities.

Should the republic be compelled to submit to these indignities and infringements of its laws merely because it is too weak to resist successfully the power that would attempt thus to humiliate it, all its efforts to establish a political character here and to disseminate a Christian civilization among the surrounding tribes will prove unavailing, and it must decline until there will be nothing left of it but a heap of ruins.

In connection with the subject of finance, I have further to inform you that the plan proposed by Messrs. Macfarlan & Co., of London, for transacting financial business for this government, and which was adopted by you at your last session, has not been acted upon by that house, they preferring to operate on a totally different basis, merging their proposal into a plan of a bank, of which the details will be duly laid before you.

The revision and compilation of our statute laws, which are at present in such inconvenient publications, require your authorization. I have to solicit an appropriation for this object.

During the year Liberia College has continued in operation. The preparatory department, under the care of Mr. H. R. W. Johnson, has given the greatest satisfaction in the training of its scholars.

In connection with this I am happy to inform you that we have intelligence from the United States of a growing and active spirit of emigration to Africa among the blacks. In a week or two some 500 or 600 will probably be landed on our shores. The attorney general of this republic, now on his way home, made an interesting tour, during the last summer, over a great portion of the western States, and he assures us that, from what he has witnessed among the blacks with whom he came into contact, a steady stream of emigration has just begun. We are doubtless all glad to receive such intelligence; but the question that occurs to every thoughtful mind is, Can Liberia, with her feeble institutions, take up and absorb safely this influx of our down-trodden brethren, unaccustomed as they are to the duties and responsibilities of building up new states? I answer, without hesitation, that we can.

But it becomes us, as legislators and executors of law, to make provisions to guard and perpetuate more effectually the liberties of our country; and among the provisions necessary, a most important and, indeed, indispensable one, is the establishment of an efficient common school system. We have in our statute books many statutes referring to common schools, but they need revision and consolidation. Depend upon it, unless this matter is attended to, our free institutions will be in danger, and probably, at no distant day, wholly subverted. Let knowledge be generally diffused, and we need not fear the debates and discussions which periodically take place among us as to our political affairs.

But the diffusion of education among us will, for some time, be the prudent chiefly upon legislative action in the establishment and maintenance throughout the country, of common schools. The government must here, as in other countries, take this subject into its own hands—a subject which, to my mind, involves the whole matter of what is generally termed popular education, comprising not only schools established by the government, but also mission schools in our townships or within our jurisdiction.
By having the education of the people under some system, I mean something like the following, so as always to keep the subject of education prominently before the people:
1. Let the different counties be divided into school districts, and let the people in those districts be taxed to provide school-houses and help support the schools, the government furnishing a certain amount.
2. Let a secretary of education be appointed to regulate the educational interests of the country, in connection, if thought advisable, with a committee of council. All appointments of instructors to common schools to be made by the secretary, with the advice of the council, and no teachers to be appointed without a certificate of capability from recognized examiners, i.e., any of the professors in Liberia College, or any other well-known instructor.
3. School teachers to be examined twice a year by the secretary of education, or his deputy.
4. Provisions to be made for schools for girls, in which, besides mere book learning, they may be taught domestic economy and general habits of industry. This is a sore and pressing need of Liberia.
5. Children of the aborigines in our settlements and their neighborhood to have the same common rights to education as emigrants, and the government to have the right to establish schools in purely heathen districts.

Our brethren who flee from the United States to this country for freedom find on arriving here a large and superabundant freedom; but they lose the numerous advantages of enlarged education afforded them in their native country—advantages which, since the war, have been increasing in various parts of the states. It is therefore meet and proper that in a system of common schools such as I have just referred to, efficiently established, they should find some compensation for the sacrifices they have voluntarily made.

Before closing this statement, I would request for Jonas Carey a stated pension during his lifetime. He is one of the only three male pioneers of Liberia surviving, and connecting the present with the past. He took part in the memorable battle of December 1, 1829, on the issue of which depended the question whether a Christian civilization should be established on this coast by black colonists from America or not. He is now aged and feeble, and deserves whatever aid or patronage the government can render him.

And now, in conclusion, I beg to assure you of the cordiality and cheerfulness with which I will co-operate with you in any measure for the promotion of the public weal. In all your deliberations, fail not to keep steadily before your mind the great object we should all have in view, viz: the vindication, upbuilding, and honor of the negro race, and the opening up of this great continent to civilization and the arts. Keeping this elevated and glorious aim always before you, your labors will be considerably lightened, and harmony, peace, and fraternal feelings will mark your whole intercourse during the session.

D. B. WARNER.

MONROVIA, December 6, 1866.

Mr. Sey's to Mr. Seward.

[No. 8] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Monrovia, January 24, 1867.

SIR: I have the honor to call the attention of the department to a law passed by congress on the 17th April, 1866, granting the transfer on certain conditions of a gunboat from the United States to the republic of Liberia.

I have the honor to add that so soon as it is possible to render this aid to the government and people of Liberia, so soon will a new era occur in their history of innumerable advantages to the guarding of their coastwise commerce from the depredations of lawless foreigners, the maintenance of their treaties with the native tribes, and the regular and frequent communications between the government and its officials on the coast. Having made myself familiar with all the necessities for such aid from the United States, the benefits to be derived from such a vessel on this coast, and from full and explicit conversations with the President, heads of departments and other influential men of the republic, I beg leave to urge the matter upon the attention of the department.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS.

Hon. William H. Seward,
Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.
Mr. Sey's to Mr. Seward.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Monrovia, January 24, 1867.

SIR: I have the honor to submit to the United States government, for its consideration and action, that which appears to me from the standpoint I now occupy, to be a necessity which the signs of the times most loudly call for—a postal convention between the United States of America and the republic of Liberia.

That this would be of immeasurable and increasing advantage to both countries I beg leave to show by calling attention to the following facts:

1. Most of the letters and papers now coming from and going to the United States from this coast go by the way of England at the enormous postage of 33 cents a single letter of half an ounce and two cents a paper. This could probably be reduced one-half by such a treaty as above.

2. A very large proportion of the exports, at high freights, of this luxuriant and prolific soil, go to England by the regular monthly British mail steamers which ply between Liverpool and the various ports from Gambia to Cameroons. These should all flow into the United States, and would, in a great measure, by such a treaty.

3. Immense amounts of English goods and wares are imported, and fill the stores of Liberia, at a cost above that which many of the said goods, if not all, could be imported from the United States. These should all be made to come from the United States.

4. The formation of a postal treaty between the United States and Liberia, necessitating a monthly line of at least four small steamers to ply between the two countries, would divert all this commerce from Great Britain to the United States; would facilitate the intercourse between the people of Liberia and the many thousands of freedmen of the United States, their own friends and relatives, who are now looking towards the land of their ancestors as their future home; and would thus in every way benefit both countries.

5. In that admirable paper, the report of the Postmaster General of the United States, this paragraph occurs:

"It has always been an erroneous theory in the history of the postal service of the United States that it was established or sustained on the principle of wholly defraying its own expenses out of its own revenues; or, in other words, on the principle that it should be self-supporting. It is a great public necessity to accommodate private citizens; and it will not do to say that no mail route shall be opened or post office established until the business of the proposed route or of the proposed office shall pay all expenses."

The above will apply in an eminent degree to Liberia, whose people came from the United States, whose people have millions of brethren in the United States, and whose labors and industry can be made to subserve greatly the well-being and elevation of those friends and brethren, especially should they desire to immigrate to a republic of their own race.

6. If "Congress has wisely appropriated $500,000 per year to pay for carrying mails from San Francisco to China," and "this money so expended will come back from the China seas in goods, and wares, and merchandise to our own markets,"* I most respectfully submit whether it would not be equally wise to appropriate $100,000 for a similar service between the United States and Liberia.

7. From statistical research it appears that 75 per centum of the postage matter conveyed in the British mail steamers from this coast go to the United States.

8. Though but comparatively a few years since that a postal treaty was

*Postmaster General.
effected between Great Britain and this republic, and a subsidy of £60,000 was commenced with, the enterprise now pays seven and a half per centum dividend.

Any instructions from the department authorizing me to confer with the government of Liberia for taking incipient steps towards a postal treaty, to be drawn up and submitted to both governments for ratification, will receive immediate and prompt attention.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS.

Hon. William H. Seward,
Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Seys to Mr. Seward.

No. 10.]

Legation of the United States,
Monrovia, January 26, 1867.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that a letter addressed to the "Liberian minister at Washington," and enclosed to me by the State Department, reached me by the last British mail.

As there is no such representative at Washington, and not wishing to return it to Mr. Schieffelin, the Liberian chargé d'affaires at New York, with the consent of the authorities here it was opened, and proves to be a letter of some import.

A Mr. Purman, of Marianna, Jackson county, Florida, an intelligent colored man representing a population of 5,000 freedmen, wishes information about Liberia, its resources, climate, and the means of getting here, with a view to immigrating to this country. From a great deal of intercourse with thousands of people of color in Charleston, South Carolina, and much conversation with gentlemen of intelligence, worth, and sterling integrity and devotion to our great country, our country as a whole, "one and undivided," I am persuaded that the tide of immigration is setting toward Liberia with increasing momentum, and that the noble scheme of African colonization, resulting as it has already done, in the rearing up of this interesting republic, this negro nationality developing the immense internal resources of this rich country, and blessing thousands of heathen people with the light of civilization and Christianity, is yet but in its incipient stage of great and glorious success. That the United States government rather favors, than otherwise, the immigration to Liberia of such colored persons as think they can better their condition by coming here, is no more to be doubted than that they favor the emigration of Europeans to the United States. Proof of this patronage of the enterprise on the part of our government has been given from the beginning down to the very last company of emigrants by the Golconda.

With gratitude did the estimable and very efficient corresponding secretary of the American Colonization Society receive the timely supply from the United States government of nearly one hundred barrels of meats and breadstuffs, and the free transportation, with efficient officers to protect them, of his various companies of emigrants from Knoxville, Tennessee, Macon, Georgia, Columbia and Newberry, South Carolina.

If the United States government still favors even now, since all are free to choose their homes, the removal to their father land of such of the freedmen in our country as prefer to leave America for Africa, I take the liberty of submitting whether a regular systematic method of favoring such immigration would not be wise as well as philanthropic and humane.

The American Colonization Society will find it exceedingly difficult to keep
pace, by the voluntary contributions of even its numerous friends, with the thousands of applications for passages to Liberia and help while here. They must either fail in their work, refuse such applicants, or be assisted from some other source.

I have the honor to submit that this matter be taken into consideration by the United States government, and a law passed making an appropriation, as in the case of the thousands of liberated Africans sent to my care in 1860–61, of one dollar per capita for every freedman who voluntarily chooses to leave the United States and settle in Liberia, and that such appropriation, upon proper representation on the part of the American Colonization Society, be paid into the treasury of said society, to be strictly accounted for by them.

I have the honor to be, sir, with the utmost respect, your most obedient servant,

Hon. William H. Seward,
Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

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Mr. Seward to Mr. Seys.

[Extract.]

No. 7.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, April 4, 1867.

Sir: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches Nos. 9, 10, 11, and 12, of January 24th and 26th, and February 5th and 6th, last. Your No. 9 has been referred to the Postmaster General.

As regards the matter treated of in your No. 10, any appropriation of money for the object of facilitating the emigration of freedmen to Liberia would have to proceed from Congress. As that body is now adjourned, it will be impossible to act on your suggestion at present. You will, however, call the attention of the department to this matter again at some future session of Congress, when it shall receive proper action.

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I am, sir, your obedient servant,

John Seys, Esq., &c., &c., &c.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

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Mr. Seward to Mr. Seys.

No. 8.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, April 6, 1867.

Sir: I have received your despatch of the 24th of last January, No. 8, speaking of the importance to the republic of Liberia that the Navy Department should comply at an early hour with the law authorizing the transfer of a gunboat to Liberia. This matter has already been the subject of correspondence between the department and the minister of Liberia to this country.

The law to which you refer enacts that the President is authorized to transfer to the government of Liberia any one of the gunboats now or hereafter included in the Navy of the United States, which may be acceptable to that government; and can, in the judgment of the Secretary of the Navy, be conveniently spared for that purpose. In view of these provisions, the Secretary of
the Navy some time ago offered to the minister of Liberia the choice of several of the vessels which in his opinion could be spared from our navy. None, however, were found by the latter of a character suitable to the necessities of the Liberian government. This circumstance is to be regretted; it does not, however, in the opinion of the department, preclude the possibility of the desired purchase, since the mutations which are constantly taking place in our navy may at some future period render a more suitable vessel available.

In connection with this, I have also to inform you that in January last the minister of Liberia addressed some communications to this department on the above subject, in which he referred to the danger apprehended to his country from the incursions of the native tribes of Africa, and requested from this government the assistance of one of the cruisers of the United States on the African coast. Orders were accordingly issued to Rear-Admiral Goldsborough, commanding the European squadron, to direct the next cruiser sent by him to the coast of Africa to visit Liberia.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

JOHN SEYS, Esq., &c., &c., &c.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Seys.

No. 9.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, April 16, 1867.

Sir: Referring to your despatch No. 9, in which you recommend the negotiation of a postal convention between this country and Liberia, and to the reply of the department of the 4th instant, informing you that the matter had been referred to the Post Office Department, I now transmit to you a copy of a letter from the Postmaster General, expressing his views on the subject, from which you will perceive that in his opinion existing circumstances render such a convention inexpedient at the present time.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

JOHN SEYS, Esq., &c., &c., &c.

Mr. Randall to Mr. Seward.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
Washington, April 12, 1867.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, enclosing copy of a despatch received from the United States minister at Liberia, recommending the negotiation of a postal convention with Liberia, and to inform you, in reply, that until a regular communication by means of steam vessels, plying direct between the United States and Liberia, shall have been established, the conclusion of a postal convention with that country would not secure any advantage to correspondence; and if it is necessary to the establishment and maintenance of a direct line of steamers to obtain a subsidy from the respective governments, this department cannot grant a subsidy without special legislation by Congress authorizing the same, the existing laws restricting the amount of compensation to be allowed for the conveyance of mails by sea to the postages on the mail transported.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALEXANDER W. RANDALL,
Postmaster General.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.
Mr. Seys to Mr. Seward.

Legation of the United States,
Monrovia, May 11, 1867.

Sir: I have the honor to inform you that nothing has transpired here worthy of official correspondence since my despatch No. 15, save the regular biennial presidential election.

His excellency President Warner having long since declined continuing as a candidate for the office, three other distinguished citizens were nominated by their respective parties.

The Hon. E. J. Roye, chief justice of this republic, was first in the field. Judge Roye is from Ohio, educated in one of the colleges of that State; came to Liberia as a merchant in 1846, and is one of the wealthiest men in the nation. Rev. J. S. Payne, of the Methodist Episcopal church, but a supernumerary, and without any parochial charge, is another candidate for the presidency. Mr. Payne came to Liberia with his parents when quite a little boy, grew up here, became a man of letters under the care and tuition of the mission schools of the Methodist Episcopal church, and is the author of a treatise on “Political Economy,” said to be unsurpassed even by judges in the United States.

Dr. James Moore, the third aspirant for the office, emigrated from Baltimore, Maryland, in 1852, where he had some practice among persons of color, and continued that practice here. He was afterwards appointed judge of the court of quarterly sessions for this county, in which he served many years, and then retired to the farming country up the St. Paul’s river, and engaged in large agricultural pursuits.

The election came off on Tuesday last. The returns from the leeward counties are not in, and will not be before the mail closes this afternoon. From the present returns there is ground to believe that there will be no majority of vote for any one candidate, in which case the whole matter of selecting from the three will devolve on a joint ballot of both houses of the legislature, to be held in December.

It is matter of deep regret to the better class of citizens that during the election in this city on Tuesday there was much of drunkenness, many fights, several persons badly injured, and already one death. These were chiefly among the recaptured and liberated Congos, now naturalized citizens of the republic, and possessing the elective franchise.

I have the honor to add, in conclusion, that my health is most excellent and likely to continue so; and that I am with the utmost respect,

Your obedient and humble servant,

John Seys.

Hon. William H. Seward,
Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

Correspondence with the Liberian Legation.

Mr. Schieffelin to Mr. Seward.

[Extract.]

Legation of the Republic of Liberia,
Yonkers, New York, March 22, 1866.

Sir: I see by the newspapers that a resolution has been offered in the House of Representatives of the United States “to discontinue an arrangement made with Great Britain to keep a naval force on the coast of Africa,” on the assumption that the slave trade has now ceased.
I have before me two letters from Liberia recently received, one from W. S. Anderson, dated 5th January, 1866, giving an account of a journey made last year about ninety miles, in a straight line, interiorward from Monrovia, in which he says he found the native towns barricaded against wars which were then prevailing, the sole object of which was the capture of men, women, and children; the other from President Warner, urging me to endeavor to procure, by purchase on a credit or otherwise from the United States government, a small gun steam vessel of not over one hundred and twenty tons, and intimates that the slave trade has not yet been suppressed within the lines of the Liberian coast by the forces employed by America and England, but would be if Liberia had such small vessel.

I beg leave to recall to your notice a part of the note which I had the honor to address to you on the 1st of November last, as follows:

You are aware that the late and lamented President Lincoln recommended to Congress to sell a small gun-boat to Liberia. I have been informed that a bill to do so was passed by one house, but that Congress adjourned before action on it was had in the other.

The United States having been at great expense in maintaining vessels on the coast of Africa, to suppress the slave trade, permit me to ask (in consideration of the fact that the use of a small gun-boat by the government of Liberia would enable them more easily to keep 500 miles of coast entirely free from that trade) whether the United States could consistently lend, until by act of Congress it could sell to Liberia on a credit, a small gun-boat of about one hundred tons, and thereby promote one of its own cherished objects to so great an extent at so much smaller cost than can be effected in any other manner.

I have the honor to be, with the highest consideration, sir, your most obedient servant,

H. M. SCHIEFFELIN.

Mr. Schieffelin to Mr. Seward.

LEGATION OF LIBERIA,
Yonkers, New York, January 11, 1867.

SIR: It having been ascertained that there is no suitable sailing vessel in the United States navy, nor any suitable steam vessel, that can (in the judgment of the Secretary of the Navy) be spared for the purpose of being transferred to the government of Liberia, according to the late act of Congress, their liberal act towards Liberia cannot be made available. Of this fact the Liberian government was not yet, at last dates, apprised; while, in addition to former pressing reasons for desiring it, another still more imminent has arisen.

The government has information that the several tribes along the seaboard, being dissatisfied with the interference of "port-of-entry" laws with trade with foreign vessels on the coast, have concerted plans for attacking and carrying, by force of arms and starvation, Sinou and Bassa counties, (about two-thirds of all the Liberian coast;) and the government of Liberia, not yet aware of the disappointment which next mail, probably ere this, has brought them, instructs me that it is urgently necessary that the gun-boat should be there as early as possible, and to put forth all my endeavors that no time may be lost.

Under these circumstances may I ask if the United States government will extend to Liberia the assistance of one of her cruisers on that coast.

I have the honor to be, with the highest consideration, sir, your most obedient servant,

H. M. SCHIEFFELIN.
Mr. Schieffelin to Mr. Seward.

LEGATION OF LIBERIA,
Yonkers, N. Y.; January 25, 1867.

Sir: Since mailing my note of this day, I have received a letter from the President of Liberia, in relation to the draught of the gun-boat, hoping, however, that I have ere this received her, &c., &c.

This letter is dated December 12th, (nearly two months later than the one immediately previous, in which mention is made of the native tribes having concerted plans of attack, &c.,) and does not allude to the hostile intentions of the native tribes, only advising me of having written two letters on the subject of the gun-boat.

This may be owing to the fact that the letter was short and hurried on account of the mail going a day earlier than was expected, but still I think it would not have omitted allusion to the subject had any serious attack occurred, or been then instantly apprehended.

I therefore deem it due that I should immediately inform you of the circumstance, indicating, possibly, less apprehension of danger to the Liberian settlements along the coast than at the previous date.

I have no other reason for supposing that the need of the assistance of a United States cruiser is less, but apprehend it will be rather greater, when the native tribes become informed, as they will be or are ere this, that Liberia will not receive the expected gun-boat.

The visit of a United States cruiser for the purpose of aiding the Liberian government if necessary would doubtless be a great and important support to her authority, and contribute to prevent the native tribes from combining to attack the small civilized settlements along their extended coast.

With the highest consideration, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

H. M. SCHIEFFELIN.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Schieffelin.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, February 5, 1867.

Sir: Referring to the late correspondence which has passed between your legation and this department on the subject of the danger apprehended by your government from the native tribes of Liberia, I have the honor to enclose for your information a copy of a letter of the Secretary of the Navy, stating that Rear-Admiral Goldsborough, commanding the European squadron, has been instructed to direct the next cruiser, sent by him to the coast of Africa, to visit Liberia.

I avail myself of this occasion to offer to you the assurances of my high consideration.

H. M. SCHIEFFELIN, Esq., &c., &c., &c. WILLIAM H. SEWARD.
Mr. Welles to Mr. Seward.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, January 18, 1867.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, enclosing a copy of a note addressed to you on the 11th instant by the representative of Liberia, requesting this government to extend to Liberia the assistance of one of our cruisers on that coast.

A copy of Mr. Schieffelin's communication will be sent to Rear-Admiral Goldsborough, commanding the European squadron, within the limits of whose command Liberia is situated, for his information. One of his vessels has recently been cruising on the African coast, and it is quite likely may have visited Liberia.

In relation to the subject of transferring a vessel to the government of Liberia, I would state that we have vessels, one of which might be transferred, but they were not acceptable to the agent.

Very respectfully, &c.,

GIDEON WELLES,
Secretary of the Navy.

Hon. William H. Seward,
Secretary of State.