

LIBERATED AFRICANS.

L E T T E R

FROM THE

ACTING SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

IN ANSWER TO

The resolution of the House of the 19th ultimo, transmitting reports from Agent Seys in relation to care of liberated Africans.

JANUARY 7, 1863.—Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 6, 1863.

SIR: In obedience to the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 19th ultimo, I have the honor to communicate herewith copies of all the reports received from the Rev. John Seys, United States agent at Monrovia for liberated Africans, which refer to the care taken of the recaptives by the authorities and people of Liberia.

I am, sir, with much respect, your obedient servant,

J. P. USHER,
Acting Secretary of the Interior.

Hon. GALUSHA A. GROW,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,
Monrovia, October 31, 1860.

SIR: I had not the honor of receiving your despatch until late in the evening of the 29th, and though very much indisposed, scarcely able to leave my bed, I hasten to reply by the Bonito to sail to-morrow. I was not favored with a line from the Hon. Secretary of the Interior by either of the three ships chartered by the American Colonization Society to bring to these shores the recaptives carried into Key West by the United States vessels-of-war. I was nevertheless permitted to see the charter party entered into between yourself and that society, and the various instructions given to the different officers connected with the transportation of the Africans here.

On consulting with the agents of the American Colonization Society and the agents who accompanied the ships, it was deemed advisable for me to accom-

pany the *Star of the Union* to *Linor*. This, in the midst of taking care of and providing for the 1,483 recaptives who had just been brought to this port in the prizes *Storm King* and *Erie*, was scarcely to be expected, but I did go and spent a few days supervising the landing and housing of the Africans by that ship.

As the *Castilian* was then at Cape Mount, and the South Shore at Basso, it follows I could not be at either of those places at the time, but must depend on the report rendered me by the agents of the American Colonization Society, all of whom I can rely upon.

The Rev. Mr. McLain having requested of me an account of the number landed, the deaths which had occurred, the sexes, &c., I did so forward to him an official certificate by one of the four prizes lately brought into this port. I now have the honor to report that no change has occurred since I wrote to Mr. McLain, and I will enclose duplicate copies of the certificate which I sent him.

I am in correspondence with the agents of the American Colonization Society at the places named, and I regret to say that their complaints to me are very unfavorable. The Liberian government has seen fit to order the superintendants of those districts or counties not to grant land on which to locate these Africans, but insists on their being kept on the few acres surrounding the receptacles at these places.

It will be easily seen that no habits of industry, no useful employment, no work can be done by hundreds of persons crammed into such a limited space. This, added to the fact that the United States agent was most peremptorily informed that the first prize could land her recaptives only on the condition that a compact be entered into by him on the part of his government and the authorities of Liberia to pay into the treasury of the latter the same sum per capita which the Hon. Secretary of the Interior of the United States had contracted to pay the American Colonization Society for the recaptives from Key West, will show the feeling of this government to this importation of Africans.

As I had the honor to inform the Hon. Secretary of the Navy, sending him the entire correspondence, so I now report to you that I, in my reply to President Benson, quoted the article in the compact by which these colonies assumed self-government, with the consent of their patrons, the American Colonization Society, (article 4,) and then went ahead landing every cargo, but, as a matter of courtesy and respect, requesting permission first, which has been granted 'in every case since the first, and granted unconditionally. It affords me much pleasure to have the honor of informing you that the recaptives of the notorious *Echo* brought here by the *Niagara* in November, 1858, are, with a few exceptions, alive and well, making rapid improvement in the arts of civilized life, and many of them regular attendants on the worship of God, and members of Christian churches.

The base and unfounded slander perpetrated against the people of Liberia by a certain correspondent of Key West I am happy to be able to refute. That any of the "Echoites" were ever taken back to Congo, sold again, and recaptured in the *Wildfire* or any other slaver, is as notorious a falsehood as that correspondent ever invented. Allow me to say that 200 Africans were landed here from the *Niagara*, some 70 having died on the way; of those 10 died from disease and emaciation soon after landing, and on my arrival here on the 24th December I found 190. Those were well taken care of by the American Colonization Society, and after a proper time bound out by the authorities of Liberia to the citizens generally. The President insisting on a distribution of these people among the different counties, 30 were sent to Grand Cape Mount, 30 to Grand Basso, 25 to Sinoe, 30 to Cape Palmas, and the balance, 75, kept in "Monrovia" and the rural settlements up the river. I went down the coast myself with them. Now, of all these people we can give account, to the best of our knowledge, based upon careful scrutiny and research. The people of

Cape Palmas are alive, well, contented, and improving rapidly. This has been said by the Rev. Mr. Hoffman, and published, and Bishop Burns would have furnished me with a written statement of a similar character, but the unexpected despatch of the Bonito and her sailing to-day prevents him. The people of Grand Cape Mount are alive and well. One man found a wife in the cargo of the Erie, and it was a rare gratification to me to let him have her immediately. At Sinoe two have died; their graves can be pointed out to the "correspondent at Key West," and if he ever visits us he would learn that two of these Congoes of the Echo are married to American wives. Of those left here two deaths occurred, as far as my knowledge extends; one boy, who had been attached to the family of the Rev. John Roberts, and one girl, bound to a Mr. Ajins, who died of small-pox. The remainder are to be seen and known, giving evidence of the wisdom and humanity of that government who at such an outlay snatched them from endless bondage, and sent them here to be free and happy. The sheer ignorance of the Key West correspondent will appear when it is told that Congo river is some 1,968 miles from Monrovia; that the value of fifty slaves would be expended in journeying by land from here to take one back to be resold; that the journey would be dangerous in the extreme to any Liberian; and, lastly, that to go by sea to carry a slave is an impracticability. No vessel trading between this place and Congo river—and if any did—no one would take a Liberian and his human chattels at any price.

I would enlarge, but am suffering from severe indisposition, and have been so for several days. I shall have the honor of writing again soon, meantime subscribe myself, with profound respect, your obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

Hon. JACOB THOMPSON,

Secretary of the Interior, United States.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,

Monrovia, October 26, 1860.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that I wrote to you fully by the bark Cora, informing you that I had drawn on you for three thousand eight hundred and twenty-five dollars and ninety-eight cents, (\$3,825 98,) for the support of the recaptives by the Storm King and Erie, but that the pressure of business, growing out of the arrival of, and care to be bestowed upon, the people of the Cora, prevented me from forwarding my accounts. I now have the honor to submit them up to the 29th September, and partially up to October 31. Such is the state of things in this community, growing out of the immense addition of three thousand Africans to our population, that it is impracticable to do up business as regularly and systematically as in other places, and under other circumstances.

1st. I cannot obtain money for drafts to pay regularly.

2d. The better class are not desirous to be paid until when convenient.

3d. Many cannot wait until the quarter is up and must be paid monthly, that they may have means to feed the Africans in their care.

4th. Clothes cannot be given to all, for want of material to furnish them. This, of necessity, will cause the expenditures necessary for one month to lay over and run into another. Still, however, an exact account shall be kept of all expense incurred. I find that by strict economy the sum, *per capita*, for clothing can be less than that I submitted in my last.

I have the honor to inform you that I have drawn on you this day for \$——, the several drafts to individuals specified below. Our native Africans are gone—

rally well; some few deaths, have occurred among the people of the *Cora*, and some too feeble to be given out are yet at the American Colonization Society's receptacle. The multitude of applications for these persons by the citizens of Liberia cannot be described, and so far as I can learn by vigilant observers, in whom I can confide, are generally well treated.

In many instances a praiseworthy rivalry seems to exist, as to whose recapitatives shall look better and appear better dressed. In several families, and on some farms, care is taken to teach them to read. Girls are taught to sew; and I have already become cognizant of the fact that some are making rapid improvement in these arts of civilized life; in one case a girl from the *Erie* has made her own dress. I may not at the same time forget to state that some have been ill used, and I had to take them away and put them in other and better hands. These, be it said to the honor of the people of Liberia, are rare, exceedingly rare instances. Among the most pleasing and affecting events of interest connected with the providential capture of these hundreds of poor exiles from home and friends are the cases of recognition of relatives; brothers and sisters discover each other in the different cargoes that arrive, rush to each other's arms, and beg not to be separated. A husband finds a wife whom he had been torn from, and little imagined she would so soon follow him to a land of freedom and comfort.

I conclude by saying that it is the fervent prayer of the Christians of Liberia, and all its well-informed citizens, that success may continue to attend the efforts of the American squadron on this coast, until every slaver shall be caught and the brutal traffic abandoned.

I have the honor to be your most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

Hon. ISAAC TOUCEY,

Secretary of the Navy United States.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,

Monrovia, February 19, 1861.

SIR: I had the honor to receive your communication, by the ship *M. C. Stevens*, of Baltimore, containing a copy of the contract which had been entered into by the United States government and the American Colonization Society respecting the future disposition and care of the recaptured Africans taken by our vessels-of-war and brought into this port.

I have the honor to inform you that a contract having been formed between the above-named society, through their special commissioner, Dr. James Hall, of Baltimore, and the Liberian government, virtually makes over to the latter all the privileges, immunities, and appropriations secured to that society by the United States government.

In consequence of this new arrangement, I have, in accordance with the views and wishes of the special commissioner named above, transferred to the Liberian government the liberated Africans and all stores and effects of theirs in my possession. I have the honor to enclose a list of the number of recapitatives thus put under the care of the Liberian government, and, in conformity with my instructions, shall continue the inspection of their condition, and report from time to time accordingly.

Not having the honor to receive any instructions whatever respecting the particular department on which I should draw, I have continued, as at first, to issue my drafts on the honorable Secretary of the Navy, advising him of the same from time to time. In consequence of this, my accounts with the United

States government for expenditures, up to December 31, 1860, which are now made out, with the necessary accompanying vouchers, shall be sent to that department.

I beg leave to inform the honorable Secretary of the Interior that the amount of my drafts to November 27, 1860, was \$11,150 13½; that I have drawn, up to January 31, 1861, for \$20,676 81; making a total of \$31,826 94½, the entire amount of expenditures for liberated Africans to the close of the year 1860.

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

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

Hon. JACOB THOMPSON,

Secretary of the Interior, United States.

List of liberated Africans transferred to the Liberian government January 1, 1861.

From Storm King and Erie.....	1, 295
From Cora.....	634
From Bonito.....	632
From Castilian, (Key West).....	272
From South Shore, (Key West).....	218
From Star of the Union, (Key West).....	296
Total.....	<u>3, 347</u>

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

U. S. AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS, *Monrovia.*

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,
Monrovia, October 31, 1860.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that the hermaphrodite brig Bonito, a prize to the United States steam-frigate San Jacinto, came into this port on Saturday evening last, the 27th, with 617 recaptured Africans, under the command of Lieutenant Foster, United States navy, aided by Lieutenant Broome, of the United States marine corps. So soon as official report was made to me, I immediately began to make arrangements for landing them on the following Monday morning, with the exception of the sick, who required medical aid and more room. These I had landed very early on Sunday morning and put under the care of Dr. H. J. Roberts. I am happy to say there were but twenty of these; the rest, as reported, being in good condition. On Monday, by 1½ p. m., the whole 616 were landed and safely housed in the large and commodious receptacle of the American Colonization Society. One boy was taken ill and died before he could land; his remains were, nevertheless, landed and interred. Lieutenants Foster and Broome have exhibited a degree of care and watchfulness over these unfortunate creatures which is deservable of praise. For sixteen nights during the passage from the Congo river to this place, these humane and energetic young officers were deprived of rest and sleep, in constant attendance on the poor Africans. Their care and nursing were rewarded, in that only six died. Two committed suicide by refusing all nutriment whatever. Neither persuasion nor force could make them take food. Two died of disease, one fell down the hatch and broke his neck, and one died in the harbor, as before mentioned. I have prepared receipts in triplicate for these liberated slaves, and

shall make every possible effort to despatch the Bonito to-morrow. I must here call the attention of the honorable Secretary of the Navy to the startling fact that this immense and overwhelming influx of naked and homeless savages among a small community, where neither food nor raiment can be found in sufficient quantities for their immediate care and comfort, is a matter calling for serious consideration. The people of the Cora had been as judiciously distributed as an advisory committee of several gentlemen who sat with me for several days could effect. Twenty only were left when the Bonito came in, and the applications from the citizens of Liberia for this latter importation are numerous; but it is to be feared that, however wisely they may be distributed, and however ample the sum I give *per capita* to those who take them, the larger portion of the people of Liberia cannot furnish in advance the food and clothing for such large addition to their households, and I cannot supply them, for neither money nor clothing can be had for drafts.

To add to our present prospect of immense surplus population, the Josephine, I am advised, may be expected daily with five hundred more. I had the honor to write to you on the 26th, and anticipated that the various bills against this agency would be brought in and my drafts drawn; advised you thereof, leaving blank the sums.

I was taken ill that next morning, have been confined to my bed for three days with severe indisposition, had to do business with the officer of the Bonito by my bedside, and the accounts have not been sent in nor adjusted; of consequence no drafts are drawn but one in favor of John H. Paxton for eighty-five dollars (\$85.)

I write now exceedingly feeble, and most of the time have to dictate to an amanuensis.

I have the honor to be your most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

HON. ISAAC TOUCEY,

Secretary of the Navy, United States.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,
Monrovia, September 3, 1860.

SIR: I had the honor to inform you, by the hand of Lieutenant A. K. Hughes, commanding the brigantine slaver, prize to the United States steam-frigate San Jacinto, of the capture of that vessel off the Congo river with 619 slaves on board, their arrival here, (less three who died on the passage to this port,) and their delivery to me. I also informed the department that whilst we were landing the recaptives from the brigantine, supposed to be the notorious Storm King, of New York, the ship Eric, prize to the United States steamer Mohican, arrived with 867 recaptured Africans, (thirty having died on their way here,) under the command of Lieutenant J. W. Dennington.

I have now the honor to inform you, by an opportunity occurring to Baltimore, that so soon after the landing, housing, and providing for these unfortunate exiles from home and friends as it was possible to effect it, I have, with the efficient aid of a large committee of reliable and responsible citizens of Liberia, selected from the different settlements in this country, distributed these Africans among the farmers and householders on terms which I submit to the United States government for approval until I shall receive definite instructions. I pay for each African taken up the river and put out among the farmers and cultivators fifty cents per week, and twenty-five cents for those remaining in this city. I also furnish each with two suits of clothes, which shall not average more than five dollars to each

person, and furnish, as bedding, one blanket, or African country cloth, worth from eighty cents to one dollar.

This has given general satisfaction, and even when added to the expense of landing, paying subordinates, agents, interpreters, doctor bills, house rent, school teachers, &c., I am under the impression will fall short of the sum *per capita* paid by the United States government to the American Colonization Society for the support of those from Key West.

I have the honor to report the arrival here last Saturday of the South Shore, with 254 on board, (108 having died on the way,) and the arrival, as I am informed by despatches from Cape Mount, of the Castilian at that port with her complement, (ninety-one of whom died on the passage,) and this morning the Star of the Union has anchored in our roadstead with her proportion of these people en route to Sinoc. Thus the three ships chartered by the American Colonization Society have all arrived on our coast.

Hoping to be instructed definitely and explicitly in reference to the further care and support of these recaptured Africans, and others who may be sent here by the very efficient squadron you have appointed on this coast—a squadron whose success already exceeds all hitherto accomplished by the United States government in suppressing the slave trade—I submit this communication to your consideration.

I shall keep a particular and succinct account of all expenditures for the relief of these Africans, and at the end of this quarter, September 30, draw on the honorable Secretary of the Navy for the amount up to that date. Should I, for want of definite instructions in the premises, *err* in drawing on the wrong department of the government, subsequent instructions will be gratefully received and such error corrected.

I have the honor to be your most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

Hon. ISAAC TOUNCEY,

Secretary of the Navy, United States of America.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,

Monrovia, October 16, 1862.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that the bark Cora, of New York, a prize to the United States flag-ship Constellation, was brought into this port on Sunday evening last, the 14th instant, with 694 recaptured Africans on board, under command of Master Thos. H. Eastman. After an official communication with the President of Liberia, held early yesterday, I proceeded to make arrangements for landing the said Africans, and by 8 a. m. to-day the whole number were landed, receipts, in triplicate, prepared for the commander of the prize, and every facility rendered for despatching the Cora on the 18th.—This addition—this large addition to the 1,400 by the Storm King and Erie, renders the duties which devolve upon me not only onerous and complicated, but exceedingly difficult and perplexing. I have purchased all the material suitable for clothes for these nude and emaciated creatures which the stores afford here, as well as all which the vessels have brought in, and yet I have not supplied two-thirds of the large number thrown on my care. Money cannot be had to accommodate me in paying the varied sums due the 400 or 500 persons among whom these thousand of Africans are distributed and supported. The circulating medium of Monrovia (paper money and specie) are both inadequate to the demands, and the utmost inconvenience is consequently sustained. To meet, in some manner, the exigency, I have to issue due bills, which, when they accu-

multate in the hands of any one merchant or citizen, I redeem with drafts on the Hon. Secretary of the Navy.

I have the honor, therefore, to advise the department that I have drawn to the amount of \$3,825 98 up to September 29, 1860, and would forward, by the Cora, my accounts and receipts; but while preparing them this late arrival has rendered it impossible. Besides which, the entirely incomplete state of the bills due, companies partially clothed, persons only paid in part, large numbers yet undistributed, render it impossible to furnish the Hon. Secretary with such a specific account as will soon follow by the bark Medi, of New York. A list of the drafts alluded to I enclose, and hope that they will be duly honored.

I have to inform the department that a number of our recaptives have wandered away, under the idea of returning to their own country. Several have been retaken and brought back, and are contented. In one day 25 were thus apprehended. One man hung himself in a fit of mental despondency, and some 40 have died. As a general thing, however, all have found good homes among the citizens, and I can readily find many more homes for the large company by the Cora.

The committee, who sat several days apportioning out the Africans, demand pay. They are poor, were from the upper settlements, and had to pay board. I hesitate until I know officially the appropriation made for these recaptives; nor do I increase, though urged to do so, the small allowance I have made *per capita* for those by the two former prizes. I submit, most respectfully, the propriety of sending to me, insured, a box of specie, in five dollars and quarter eagles, to the amount of \$25,000 or \$30,000 to meet the emergency of the case, as well as a large quantity of common domestics, material for the wear of these unfortunate fellow-beings.

The people of the Cora, with few exceptions, are in good condition; and I take great pleasure in testifying my admiration of the kind and humane treatment of Master Eastman and Midshipman Hall to them, and to the skill and management of these officers in making the passage in the short time they did from the place of capture.

Any instructions which the Hon. Secretary may see fit to favor me with, and any directions as to the better performance of these complicated duties, will be gratefully received and appreciated.

I have the honor to be your most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

Hon. ISAAC TOUCEY,

Secretary of the Navy, United States.

Drafts on the Hon. Secretary of the Navy.

1860.		
Sept. 25.	In favor of P. D. Yates	\$1, 266 86
29.	In favor of J. H. Chavers	100 00
	In favor of C. P. Clarke	343 84
	In favor of H. E. Fuller	70 00
	In favor of A. F. Johns	143 00
	In favor of McGill Bros	790 00
	In favor of G. Moore	1, 062 28
	In favor of Mary Anderson	50 00
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		3, 825 98
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UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,
Monrovia, October 17, 1860.

This certifies that the agents of the American Colonization Society in Liberia have received the number of liberated Africans specified in the following list, and, to the best of my knowledge, are carrying out the contract entered into with the United States government for their support.

Ship.	Place.	Total.	Remarks.
Castilian	Cape Mount..	285	Of these the agent has made no report of sex or age.
South Shore.	Bassa	218	Of these 233 were landed, 15 died since, leaving—adults, 90; from 10 to 17 years, 128.
Star of the Union.	Sinoe	320	Arrived with 334; 10 were drowned in landing, and 4 died subsequently, leaving 320; of these, 190 were men, 114 women, 10 girls under 14, 5 boys, 1 infant.
Grand total.		823	

JOHN SEYS,
United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

UNITED STATES OFFICE FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,
Monrovia, August 24, 1860.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that the slaver *Storm King*, a prize to the United States steam frigate *San Jacinto*, arrived in this port on Tuesday p. m., August 21, with six hundred and sixteen recaptured Africans, under the command of Lieutenant A. K. Hughes, United States navy.

So soon as official communication could be held between the commander of the prize and myself, late the same evening, arrangements were made by me for the landing and support of the said liberated Africans; and the next morning, notwithstanding very heavy rains during the early part of the day, I repaired on board, and, with good and comfortable boats, began to disembark this large number of wretched victims to a most inhuman traffic. I found them, men, women, boys, and girls, all in an entire state of nudity; but owing to the unremitting care of Lieutenant Hughes, and the very efficient young officers under his command, Midshipmen McCook and Ewing, the Africans had greatly recruited and improved since their capture on the 8th of August, and I found them in a condition vastly superior to any similar cargo of slaves ever brought into this port. Too much cannot be said in praise of Lieutenant Hughes for his kindness to these suffering fellow-creatures, his energy and zeal in getting to this port in so short a time, and his constant vigilance over the crew of the notorious *Storm King*.

Every principle of humanity, decency, and purity, being at variance with the idea of landing among the civilized and refined Christians of Monrovia these

naked savages, I despatched on shore an order for several hundred yards of common calico, and afforded each a covering, at least, in which to land.

While engaged on board the *Storm King* in landing the Africans, a large ship was signalized from the leeward, soon rounded Cape Mesurada, came to anchor, and was boarded by Mr. Ewing, by order of Lieutenant Hughes. The information was soon announced that she was the *Erie*, of New York, a prize to the United States steamer *Mohican*, with nearly nine hundred recaptured slaves on board, under command of Lieutenant John H. Dunnington, United States navy, assisted by Midshipman Todd and ten men, forming the entire prize crew.

Communication being had officially with Lieutenant Dunnington, I prepared to receive, house, and otherwise take care of this immense and unprecedented addition to our population in this place.

On boarding the *Erie* the next day, no language can describe the wretched and emaciated condition of these unfortunate beings. More than thirty had died since the capture, and no doubt the mortality would have been much greater but for the care of Lieutenant Dunnington and Mr. Todd, who, with only ten men to work a large ship, three prisoners to guard, and consequently as much to do as commonly falls to men under such circumstances, yet found time, night and day, to feed and take care of the sick and dying.

By 8 o'clock a. m. to-day the entire complements of both vessels, nearly if not quite 1,500 souls, were all landed safely and provided for.

I have the honor to inform the department that, so soon as possible, I informed the president of Liberia of the arrival of the *Storm King*, (see document No. 1,) and most courteously requested permission to land the recaptured Africans. His excellency's reply with the entire correspondence up to date I have the honor to forward copies of; to all of which I had the speedy, prompt, and definite attention and instruction of the United States government, that so soon as possible I may be advised as to the course I am to pursue.

The spacious receptacle of the American Colonization Society being most kindly put at my use by their agent here, H. W. Dennis, esq., has been of much service to me; but it could only accommodate the people from the *Storm King*, and with the utmost difficulty could I procure untenanted houses in Monrovia for the large number by the *Erie*. I have had to rent five or six houses for their use.

An influx of 1,500 persons into a place like this, where there is not often a large overplus of breadstuffs and meats, obliged me to make formal and official requisitions of Lieutenants Hughes and Dunnington for all the remaining stores of the *Storm King* and *Erie*, to both of which they have kindly responded, and will take my receipts.

The recaptured slaves by the *Erie* requiring medical aid forthwith—two died immediately after landing—and the prisoners on board the *Storm King* being very ill, I employed Dr. Roberts to accompany me on board, and subsequently to attend the Africans. I am happy to report that one of the prisoners, already given up by the surgeon of her Britannic Majesty's steamer *Lynx* then in port, has been much restored under the care of Dr. Roberts, and the utmost attention is paid by him to the Africans.

Nothing can exceed the kindness and willingness of the citizens of Liberia to aid in the reception of, and attention to, these people; and though the majority of them are not able without some remuneration to support them, yet, with that aid which the government of the United States so benevolently affords, there is every reason to hope that these liberated slaves by the *Storm King* and *Erie* will prove as docile, industrious, and worthy citizens of Liberia as those by the *Pons* and *Echo*.

I am fortunate in being able to report that, as it was impossible for me to attend in person to the wants of so large a number of persons located in different parts of the city, I succeeded in obtaining the services of the Hon. B. R. Wilson,

judge of the quarterly court of this county, to superintend the recaptives by the Eric, and his own son-in-law, Henry Fuller, esq., to take charge of those by the Storm King. These efficient gentlemen, with a number of Congoes from the Pons and Echo, who are employed by me as interpreters and overseers, assist me much in the multifarious duties connected with my office.

It will be necessary, for many reasons which may be adduced, to place out these Africans in the families of the citizens of Liberia as soon as possible, the more especially as by reliable intelligence we may expect daily the arrival of the liberated slaves from Key West, and there will be no room in the buildings now employed in Monrovia for all.

It will be my policy, in view of the intentions of the United States government respecting liberated Africans, to employ teachers, form schools, and make it obligatory on those who take these natives in their care to send them, at least part of every day, to school.

In accordance with my letter of instructions accompanying my appointment in 1857, and never rescinded, it will be my duty to keep an accurate account of all expenditures for the support of these Africans, forward the same to the department at the end of each quarter, with proper vouchers and receipts, and draw for the same.

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

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

HON. ISAAC TOUCEY,

Secretary of the Navy of the United States.

No. 1.

Correspondence between the Reverend John Seys, United States agent at Monrovia for liberated Africans, and the president of Liberia, in reference to the recaptives of the Storm King and Eric, slavers captured by the United States steamers San Jacinto and Mohican.

UNITED STATES OFFICE FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,

August 22, 1860.

SIR: I have the honor to inform your excellency that six hundred and fifteen or twenty recaptured Africans arrived in this port last evening in the brigantine Storm King, a prize to the United States steamer San Jacinto. Captain Dornin, in his official despatch to me as the United States agent for liberated Africans, sends them to me under the command of Lieutenant Hughes, of the San Jacinto.

From the perfect understanding had between your excellency, Flag-Officer Inmann of the United States squadron on this coast, and myself—an understanding fully matured and confirmed in a subsequent interview between the honorable Secretary of State and myself—I have the honor to request your excellency's permission to land the same liberated Africans in this place, with the assurance from me that they shall all be fed, clothed, housed, and otherwise taken care of, for one year, at the entire expense of the United States government.

I shall be most happy to have your excellency's counsel and dictation in reference to the distribution of the said Africans throughout the country, as well as among the citizens of Liberia.

Your excellency's reply at the earliest possible period will be duly appreciated.

I have the honor to be, your excellency's most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

His excellency S. A. BENSON,

President of the Republic Liberia.

No. 2.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, *Monrovia, August 22, 1860.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of this day's date, directed to the president, conveying to him the intelligence of the arrival in this port last evening of the brigantine *Storm King* with 615 or 620 recaptured Africans, a prize to the United States steam frigate *San Jacinto*; and you inform the president that Captain Dornin, her commander, has, in an official despatch, sent them under the command of Lieutenant Hughes, of *San Jacinto*, to your care as the United States agent for liberated Africans, and you now solicit permission of this government to be allowed to land the said recaptives in this place, with the assurance that they shall all be fed, clothed, housed, and otherwise taken care of for one year at the expense of the United States government.

In reply, I have the honor to remark that the government and people of Liberia feel the liveliest interest in the effectual and humane efforts that are being employed by the United States government for the suppression of the slave trade on this coast, and in view of what this government regards a just sense of propriety, and in accordance with the claims of humanity, will do whatever it can in facilitation of this object; and I embrace the present opportunity to state explicitly, though concisely, the policy this government is now forced to adopt, owing to the great and unprecedented influx of recaptured Africans (wild heathens from various tribes) there will likely be in Liberia, which is in substance, that these recaptives must be placed immediately upon being landed in charge and under the supervision of this government, and a contract entered into by which this government will have the assurance and be placed in possession, as occasion may require, of a similar amount per head for the support, &c., &c., of said recaptives, as has been allowed by the United States to the American Colonization Society per head for feeding, clothing, sheltering, &c., &c., of the three prizes of recaptives taken on the coast of Cuba in the months of April and May of the present year.

A moment's reflection will no doubt convince you of the propriety of this course. These recaptives must have good and prompt training, not for one year only, but for several years, in which case they will likely prove a blessing to Liberia; otherwise a great evil to this republic and to themselves.

The President has instructed me to present his views to you on the subject of the support and training of the recaptives, and he feels assured that none but this government can organize and carry out a system adequate to carry them through the desired and absolutely necessary training to fit them for the full enjoyment of the privileges of citizens of a free country.

The greater portion of these recaptives must of necessity be located on public lands, under teachers and instructors, for several years, on the manual labor system, the plan of which will have to be organized by, and under the exclusive supervision of, this government, so that there may be no failure in their being properly trained up to become in due time good and industrious citizens of the republic.

In this work, this government claims to be infinitely more interested than any government or body of people can possibly be; it is, therefore, a work that cannot be intrusted to another.

If the amount allowed per head by the United States government for shelter, food, clothing, &c., &c., be not sufficient to carry them through the necessary training, regarded indispensable by this government, we will have to tax ourselves and supply the deficiency.

Presuming these views will be deemed by you fair and reasonable towards

the government which you so nobly represent, and will meet with your concurrence, you are at liberty to land the recaptives from the Storm King at your own convenience.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,
JOHN N. LEWIS.

No. 3.

UNITED STATES OFFICE FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,
August 23, 1860.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, yesterday, of your communication of the 22d, and would have replied but for my absence on board the prize Storm King, now in port.

I have perused with the utmost attention the views of his excellency President Benson, as contained in your despatch, and feel deeply to appreciate the readiness of this government in co-operating with the United States government and the American Colonization Society in their most laudable and noble efforts to arrest the nefarious slave trade. These assurances on the part of this government are in perfect keeping with the articles of compacts entered into between what then were only colonies of Liberia and the American Colonization Society, at the time the former became an independent and sovereign people. In that compact, Article IV, now before me, it is expressly stated that "recaptured Africans shall be admitted as heretofore, the United States government making provision for their support."

In view of this, the United States government has uniformly made provision for any and all recaptured Africans brought into this republic, and keeps an agent, who has been duly accredited at the government of Liberia for this purpose, on the spot.

Under these circumstances, the making provision for, and the taking care of, all liberated Africans coming into Liberia, so as that they shall not be any burden or expense whatever to the government or people of Liberia, will be carrying out the letter and spirit of the compact referred to above; and more than this the United States government has given no pledge to do, nor can their agent, in the absence of any special instructions in the premises, venture to assume the responsibility of doing.

I am compelled, then, to decline entering into any contract that the United States government will pay any sums of money to this government, or make any arrangement with it based on any contract made with the American Colonization Society in the case of the Africans captured on the coast of Cuba. I know not what that arrangement is, nor have I any instructions to make the capture of slaves on the coast of Cuba any criterion, so far as their expenses are concerned, for the expenditure of means to support the recaptives sent to me by the United States squadron now on this coast.

I beg leave, however, to assure his excellency President Benson that the entire correspondence which I have the honor to hold with the government in this matter shall be submitted by the very first opportunity to the United States government, and I shall urge their immediate definite instructions in the premises. I need not add that it will be my pleasure, as well as duty, so soon as I receive such orders, to carry out whatever arrangement the United States government may see fit to make with the government of Liberia.

Meantime the recaptives by the Storm King, and 800 more who arrived yesterday afternoon in the ship *Eric*, prize to the United States steamer *Mohican*, of which I have the honor to inform the government officially, and beg leave to land, shall all be taken the very best possible care of that the place and the

facilities of the place will admit. As the colonization receptacle cannot hold all, I am renting houses, and the citizens are ready to take and board, in small numbers, such as they may select, as in the case of the Echoites, for which they shall be satisfactorily remunerated.

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

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

Hon. J. N. LEWIS,

Secretary of State, Republic of Liberia.

No. 4.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, *August 23, 1860.*

SIR: President Benson requests the pleasure of an interview with you at his office to-day at half-past three o'clock.

I have the honor, &c., &c.,

JOHN N. LEWIS.

JOHN SEYS, Esq.,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans, Monrovia.

No. 5.

UNITED STATES OFFICE FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,

August 24, 1860.

SIR: I regret exceedingly that, in consequence of my absence on board the prize Erie until a late hour yesterday, I did not receive, until it was long past the appointed hour, your note requesting me to meet his excellency President Benson in a private interview at 3½ o'clock p. m.

I now take an early opportunity to say that at any hour to-day which may suit his excellency it will afford me pleasure to wait on him.

I have the honor to be, with high esteem, your most obedient servant,

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

Hon. J. N. LEWIS,

Secretary of State, Republic of Liberia.

No. 6.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

August 24, 1860.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of to-day's date, referring to the one I had the honor of transmitting to you yesterday, in which the President's request was conveyed for the pleasure of an interview with you; but as that note did not reach you "until it was long past the appointed hour," the interview did not take place.

I have to tender to you the thanks of the President for the expression of regret, which your note contains, at not having received my note in time, and to

remark, that the occasion which gave rise for the seeking of the interview has been superseded.

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

JOHN N. LEWIS.

JOHN SEYS, Esq.,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR LIBERATED AFRICANS,
At Monrovia, December 23, 1861.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, on the 20th instant, of your despatch of July 20, and very much regret its long and unaccountable delay in reaching me, the more especially as several opportunities were afforded for its conveyance by vessels from two or three American ports.

I have to tender to the department my apology for the error which occurred in the superscription of my despatch of May 13. I was very much indisposed at the time, and my clerk confounded the names of the cabinet, and thus made the blunder.

I hasten to reply, by the return of the vessel which brought me your communication, to the various topics embraced in it, and would here observe that the "official order of the President of May 2, 1861, devolving upon the Department of the Interior the execution of the act of March 3, 1819, and all subsequent laws for the suppression of the African slave trade," I have never seen the copy sent to me, not having come to hand.

Permit me now, in replying to you, to call attention, consecutively, to the points in question:

Condition of the recaptives now in Liberia.

In addition to my official reports forwarded from time to time, I would here say that I am more and more convinced of the wisdom of that policy which provided this asylum, and now avails itself of its capabilities for the future care, training, and christianizing of recaptured Africans. I must confess that when, between August and November, 1860, so many thousand of these emaciated savages were thrust upon us, I had my doubts as to the issue, and my fears, first, as to whether they could be provided for here as well as elsewhere; and secondly, as to the effect on the people of Liberia—the effect morally and politically. But the test has demonstrated, beyond all doubt, that this is the home for them. That many died, especially on the *Nightingale*, was to have been expected; they would have died anywhere; no human skill or agency could have saved these mere living skeletons, or revived these dry bones. But the survivors are here; over 3,000 are merged in the population of Liberia. No one sees the evidence of such a mighty influx of hungry, starving, emaciated savages as were thrown upon these shores last year. Fed and fat, clothed and happy, learning rapidly all the manners, civil customs, and language of these American-born Christian blacks, the mind of the observer at once goes back to the days and the times of the founders of the Colonization Society, who conceived and planned the mighty scheme, by which not only the free blacks of the United States could make a home here in their fatherland for themselves, but could go before and prepare a home for the thousands of their race, who, torn away from their native place and friends, could, when recaptured by a Christian nation of white philanthropists, be sent here and be made free and happy. The most strangely successful and marked providential results of the

labors of the framers of the noble structure excite in us the uttermost wonder and admiration.

Here, too, and nowhere else under the sun, these liberated Africans can become parts and parcels of the body politic, members of the political, national superstructure, not now *to be raised*, not now experimenting as to its capability for self-government, but already a Christian republic, an independent and sovereign people, acknowledged as such by many of the most powerful and wise nations of the earth. These Africans evidence, too, a degree of mental capability which, I am of opinion, will compare favorably with other branches of the human race; and here those capabilities have a soil and an atmosphere in which to develop themselves, nowhere else to be discovered.

Of my own boys I will say nothing, but will adduce one or two instances of the vast improvement of these *protéges* of American benevolence taken from other families.

Messrs. Payne & Yates have a Congoe youth; (one of the Cora's boys,) who is *boss* or headman of their steam saw-mill, at Marshall, on the Junk river. While spending an evening, not long ago, at the residence of Hon. J. J. Roberts, the ex-president of Liberia, that gentleman's intelligent lady called a little fellow, (Benjamin Coats,) who, after a bow by no means ungraceful, repeated from memory the whole decalogue, the apostles' creed, and a little hymn, "I want to be an angel."

Shall others captured by our cruisers be sent here?

By all means let them come: let all, *all* come. One of the most remarkable evidences of the capabilities of Liberia, its soil, its fruitfulness, and the industry of its agricultural population to meet and take care of these thousands of newcomers, is the fact that, notwithstanding the immense number brought in last year, the short crop of rice, the failure in the usual amount of foreign bread-stuffs, (because of the war of the United States,) not one single article of Liberian production was raised in the price during the season. To my great surprise—agreeable surprise—the farmers sprung to it; the supply was equal to the demand; and who does not see that these natives themselves, becoming attached to the domiciles and plantations of these Liberian farmers, will soon—nay, they are doing it now—aid in the cultivation of this rich soil, and, as producers themselves, provide for any number of their people who may be sent here by the United States government, the almoners of the bounty of the great Jehovah, in whose ears the wrongs, the cruel wrongs, and consequent cries of the oppressed negro have found a hearing. My heart bounded within me at the assurance of the honorable Secretary of the Interior that "the most vigorous measures are being put into execution for the suppression of this odious trade." Let it be so. Renew the squadron; send out to our coast such men as Inman and Taylor and Armstrong and Le Roy and others; and let thousands more of poor stolen Africans be recaptured, made free, and sent to Liberia.

Under all the circumstances, the Liberian government have carried out, in good faith, the contract with the American Colonization Society, and perhaps no wiser plan could have been adopted. True, President Benson has not been able, notwithstanding all his efforts, to effect the erection of all the receptacles, and the establishment of as many schools as it is intended to have erected and established, and as this government is bound to do, but it will be done; and I would here say most emphatically it is my decided opinion that nowhere else on the face of the earth could the United States government find a place where the same expenditure of money, the same amount of effort, the same care for, would result in the same amount of good, physically, morally, politically, and spiritually to the Africans taken by our cruisers as in the republic of Liberia. And should the question arise as intimated in the despatch of the honorable

Secretary of the Interior, in what other respects can these Africans be benefited, or what more can be done for them, I would most humbly suggest a more liberal policy in the provision for them, in order especially to their education.

One hundred dollars a year *per capita*, taking into account that first year of suffering, sickness, and emaciation, with the numerous expenses attendant thereon, will leave but little to pay for tuition after that first year; and if we would make these people useful members of this growing Christian republic, we must send them to the ballot-box *understandingly*—not the mere tools of partisans; they must be educated. A year and a half at the rate hitherto appropriated, or \$150 *per capita*, and but one year's care, would be an improvement, which would tell wonderfully to their future advantage. I suggest this for your consideration, with all due deference. If these people are to aid in building up a great "negro nationality," to use the favorite term here, let the means be afforded them to educate the savages we send them just from the wilds and wildernesses of this "terribly dark place of the earth."

Shall the slaves liberated in the United States be sent to Liberia?

Will the honorable Secretary pardon me if I take the liberty of dividing the question, and, as an American citizen, accompany my oath of allegiance, now being sent duly executed to the State Department, with the question, Shall they be liberated? Shall those poor oppressed bondmen, now that their owners have taken up arms against their country's government and flag, and by all the rules and laws of civilized nations are liable to confiscation, with all other *goods* and chattels and property of rebels and traitors; shall these, coming within the lines of the armies of freemen, coming on the soil of freemen, kneeling and imploring the protection of freemen, be caught and tied and sent back to bondage and to death? "*Forbid it, heaven.*" No, sir; now is the time for the United States of America to show to the nations of the earth, to the world, that she will "do what is right, though the heavens fall."

Let them, as fast as they claim the protection of our noble country and its government and flag, be adopted and made *free*, and then sent to Liberia. I speak calmly, dispassionately, understandingly, and from a stand-point few have had the opportunity to occupy as I have for many, many years. If this be the home, the only safe home for the recaptured Congo, how much more for the Americo-African! His brethren and relations are already here; they all speak the same language. There are millions of acres of land, rich, fertile, almost inexhaustible, well watered, well timbered, in a climate mild, adapted to the raising of the countless numbers of vegetables, fruits, and grains indigenous to the torrid zone—a country which no part of the world, no, not India nor the islands of the Pacific, not the West Indies nor South America, can excel as a field for sugar, cotton, coffee, cocoa, indigo, &c., but where all these may be raised in any quantity, with free labor cheap always at hand, and where, if anywhere in the world, a poor man, other things being equal, may become a rich man.

Add to this a government of their own making, a constitution founded on that of the United States, a commerce with the nations of the world increasing every year, and where, sir, can we find any place so well adapted as Liberia for an asylum for these Africans whose misfortunes have or may throw them upon the protection of the government of the United States? There is room enough on these shores and in the rich interior country for all you may send.

Is it advisable and advantageous to establish any relations between the government of the United States and that of Liberia; and if so, what should those relations be?

This is a most important question, but yet one on which my humble opinion being asked, I answer most readily and unhesitatingly.

It is both highly advisable and most advantageous to establish forthwith relations between the government of the United States and Liberia; and,

First. By acknowledging her as an independent and sovereign nation, under the name and title of the *Republic of Liberia*. This has been done by England, France, Prussia, Belgium, the German States or Hanseatic republic, and the empire of Brazil. That it has not been done yet by the United States is the wonder of all the Christian world.

These blacks and colored persons were born in America, and she is about the last to acknowledge or recognize them as a nation, though other and foreign nations have long ago done it. For many years the then colony was fostered and supervised by the American Colonization Society, its founders. At last, old enough and strong enough to take upon themselves self-government, they declared their independence. They have maintained it, and maintained it nobly. It is no longer an experiment. They have demonstrated to all the world beyond any ground for reasonable doubt that the black man is capable of self-government; that a Christian republic of black and colored men has been established on this coast, the admiration of the civilized world, the hope of Africa, and the only sure way by acquisition of territory along the coast and interior-wise of putting an end forever to the accursed slave trade. The incalculable advantages to the United States in acknowledging their independence, and thus having a good and sure home for the immense number of slaves who will throw themselves upon your protection, would fill a volume of large size.

Secondly. If such a course be deemed inexpedient, *as yet*, the obstacles in the way of which having, nevertheless, been removed, as I shall show in the sequel, then let such treaty stipulations be entered into between the United States government and Liberia as shall remove those discriminating duties from her vessels and productions which have driven away her commerce from your shores. The Liberians have borne this discourtesy, nay this injustice, for a long time. Our vessels come here on the same footing, and pay no more than the vessels of nations having commercial relations with Liberia—nations who have acknowledged her independence. But when the Liberian flag appeared in New York, in the case of the brig *Euselina N. Roye*, there was no reciprocity of a friendly character, and the discriminating duties were put on. The friends of Liberia remonstrated; the American consul here, as commercial agent, remonstrated, entreated, but in vain. The Liberians—and who could blame them—at their legislative session in 1860-'61, passed an act and put on 10 per cent. additional duties on American vessels and products. This act was to go into effect January 1, 1862, if signed by President Benson. It was a long time before he did sign it. We all hoped 1861 would bring about a change, but not so—the United States did nothing—it became a law; and its effects will be most disastrous to both countries if it goes into operation.

I have petitioned the Liberian government to rescind, or at least to suspend, the operation of this law till 1863, having great hope as to what 1862 may bring forth.

Thirdly. To facilitate the removal of all slaves, contraband of war, slaves made free by the United States government, and all free persons of color wishing to emigrate to Liberia, let the United States government establish a line of packets monthly or semi-monthly between some portion of the United States and Liberia. Let those be steamers, and let them ply continually between the

two countries, bringing emigrants, freight, the mail, passengers, &c.—a great and invaluable convenience and blessing to both lands. This I claim not as an original thought. Mr. Staunton, of Virginia, spread this plan most elaborately before Congress years ago, but nothing was done.

Fourthly. Let the United States government enter into stipulations with this government that they shall receive all American emigrants, *provide* the head of each family with — acres of land, afford them medical aid during one year after their arrival, &c.; and they, on the other part, agree to furnish a free passage to every such emigrant, the means of subsistence, and \$100, less or more, to every family to build a house on the land furnished them by Liberia; lesser points to be considered when such treaty shall have been drawn out. All this to be done through the medium of the now existing American Colonization Society, or, if there be international relations between the two governments, then directly with the Liberian authorities without any third party whatever in the premises. The latter course, no doubt, being preferable to Liberia.

Fifthly. In the case of recognition, let a regular consulate be established here—the officer, whoever he may be, being also United States agent for liberated Africans, and so blending the two in one as to meet the letter of the law. Some one competent to the duties of a consul and acquainted with the wants and claims of these poor recaptured Africans may be found.

Permit me to advert to a few of the advantages accruing at once to the United States as well as to Liberia, in the event of the recognition of the independence of the latter, or by such treaty stipulations as may remove those oppressive discriminating duties. We shall have a home for the black population of the United States made every way desirable to the free and intelligent. White men, United States citizens, may then come here and do business, as other white men do of other nations, on their own responsibility and in their own name—a *vast advantage*.

Again: American citizens, capitalists, could obtain any quantity of land by lease for almost indefinite periods, and embark in the culture of cotton, sugar, coffee, not necessarily compelling a residence here, but frequent visits to, and supervision of, their agents overseeing such cotton or sugar plantations.

To Liberia such an influx of population; such investment of capital; such frequent and regular intercourse with America; such importation of artisans, of implements, of seed; such development of her internal resources now unavailable for want of capital; such a field of labor for her naturalized African population; all this we may see at a glance would be the building up and perpetuation of this Christian republic of black men on the shores of poor, hitherto neglected, Africa that would render her a blessing to millions yet unborn.

The great difficulty hitherto in the way of Congress in the proposed recognition of the independence of Liberia was the nervous fears of extreme southern members that, in such an event, a black man would be sent to represent Liberia at Washington. Such was never the intention of the Liberian government. It was not their policy in Europe. Hon. Mr. Gurney formerly, and now Mr. Ralston, have been their representatives in England; Mr. Dupont and others in France and elsewhere. I cannot imagine it would be desirable on their part to have it otherwise in Washington. And although I would not like to be implicated any way in the insult offered to them in a requirement that this should be a *condition*, yet I am strongly of the opinion—knowing them as I have done for years—that some American citizen would be commissioned to act as their representative; and I judge from the past, the Rev. William McLain having been appointed years ago as especial ambassador in certain cases supposed to require a representative.

I conclude with an apology for the undue length of this communication. But the honor conferred upon me in your despatch in the following words, “any

information or suggestions which would tend to aid the department in fully discharging its trust in this regard will be acceptable," must be my excuse.

I have the honor to be, with distinguished consideration, your most obedient, humble servant,

JOHN SEYS,

United States Agent for Liberated Africans.

Hon. CALEB B. SMITH,

Secretary of the Interior, United States.

