
REPORT

OF THE

SECRETARY

OF THE

State Board of Colonization

OF

THE STATE OF INDIANA.

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

INDIANAPOLIS:

JOSEPH J. BINGHAM, STATE PRINTER.

1859.

STATE BOARD OF COLONIZATION.

His Excellency, A. P. WILLARD.

Hon. C. L. DUNHAM, *Secretary of State.*

Hon. J. W. DODD, *Auditor of State.*

Rev. JAS. MITCHELL, *Secretary of the Board.*

REPORT.

To the Honorable Members of the Indiana State Senate, and House of Representatives:

GENTLEMEN:—During the intervening period since we had the privilege of making a report on the subject of African Colonization, a slight check has been given to the growing stream of Liberian emigration by a season of scarcity, resulting from the partial failure of the crops in Liberia. The news of this calamity (to which every country is subject), together with the slanders of designing persons, in charging the Liberian Government with complicity in the late schemes of the French Government, whereby the latter attempted the renewal of the African slave trade, under the guise and name of "African voluntary emigration"—the remonstrance and protests of the Liberian Government and people against this covered slave trade, and their actual resistance thereto, have purged them from all suspicion of complicity therein, and we learn that the French Government has lately abandoned this apprenticeship system, in view of the general opposition caused thereby.

The high price of provisions in Liberia, together with the embarrassed condition of our State Treasury, caused us to refrain from stimulating emigration from this State to Africa; hence, whilst we have received several applications for passage out, we have detained them for the Spring expedition.

The locality or point to which we have recommended emigrants from Indiana, is Robertsville, a new town or settlement at Grand

Cape Mount, of a truly desirable character. A description of it may be found in the Colonization Reports of 1852 and 1853. In relation to the terms on which our emigrants can procure land at that point, we submit the following correspondence between Governor Wright and the President of Liberia. These communications of the Liberian Government have been referred by the State Board of Colonization to this Legislature for final disposition, and President Benson informed of that reference :

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONROVIA, }
January 10, 1857.

His Excellency, Governor WRIGHT:

SIR:—I have the honor to inclose herewith, to your Excellency's address, the copy of a resolution passed by the Legislature of Liberia at this session, responsive to your communication of the 19th April, 1855, addressed to the President of this Republic, on matters connected with the future operations of the Indiana State Colonization Society. Your Excellency will perceive in the resolution that the Legislature have stated the price of lands per acre (marshy lands excepted), for the purpose set forth in your communication, between one and five dollars, at the discretion of the Executive; and as I am no less impressed with the propriety now than I was years ago, that the Government of Liberia should co-operate cordially with the Colonization Societies in the prosecution of the great work of Colonizing the free people of color of the United States to this land, with their free consent, I feel disposed, in carrying out this resolution, to do all I can to facilitate the operations of your Society; and I beg to inform your Excellency that wild lands of mixed quality—such as are usually drawn by immigrants or sold to old settlers by Government—can be bought of this Government by your Society (provided no less than one thousand acres are paid for at any one time) at the rate of one dollar and fifty cents per acre, and this Government defray all expenses of surveying the same and executing deed in fee simple, &c., &c., to the immigrant; or, if this Government is exempted from all expense (it being borne by your Society), the price per acre will be one dollar, which is the minimum price mentioned in the resolution.

In connection with this subject, I beg to inform your Excellency that the settlement of Robertsport, at Grand Cape Mount, is now permanently established, and is a very inviting section of this Republic to immigrants; and I beg further to assure your Excellency that this Government stands ready to carry out the provisions of the resolution already alluded to whenever it shall be your pleasure; and, further, that in case this government shall find it necessary to make any alteration in the price of the lands from what I now state in this communication, notice thereof will be given your Society at least six months before such alteration shall go into effect.

I have the honor to be your Excellency's

most obedient servant,

STEPHEN A. BENSON.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PRESIDENT TO FURNISH THE AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETIES PREMIUM LANDS FOR EMIGRANTS.

WHEREAS, Application has been made to the Government by the Indiana State Colonization Society to negotiate for the purchase of large tracts of lands, for the purpose of distributing the same as bounty lands to persons emigrating from that State to Liberia, as an additional premium to the grants of land already allowed by this Government to emigrants coming to this country; and as this Government is solicitous to encourage the emigration of enterprising men of color to this country, by the employment of all proper means; therefore,

SECTION 1. *It is resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Liberia, in Legislature assembled,* That from and after the passage of this resolution the President shall have authority to negotiate, with any of the Colonization Societies desiring it, to furnish them at a stipulated price, not exceeding five dollars nor less than one dollar per acre—marshy lands excepted—with any quantity of farm lands which they may require for the use of emigrants, as an inducement for them to emigrate.

SEC. 2. Certificates shall be granted to the Society or Societies purchasing lands according to the provision of this resolution, acknowledging the receipt of the purchase money, for which credit has been granted on the book of the Treasury department, for the quantity of land purchased; which lands are to be deeded to emigrants on presentation of certificates signed by the proper officer of the Society making the purchase.

SEC. 3. And further, the President shall exercise his discretion whether the lands disposed of, agreeable to the regulations herein provided, shall be particularly designated, or whether the quantity purchased be merely stated, to be decided by the choice of the emigrants out of any unappropriated lands: it being provided, nevertheless, that no land shall be so certified or conveyed away under these provisions as to give any Colonization Society the exclusive right or privilege of settling any town or village, by having possession of all the farm lands of any village, or adjacent to any town.

M. A. RAND,

Speaker House of Representatives, R. L.

BEVERLY PAGE YATES,

President Senate, V. P. R. L.

Approved December 23, 1856.

STEPHEN A. BENSON.

Permit me to express the hope that those colored men who have nobly emulated the example of their former masters, the colonists of this hemisphere, and have taken their lives in their hands, and now hold lightly the dangers of emigration and colonization, that they may have true liberty—some sixty or seventy of whom are from your own State—permit me respectfully to pray that they may have your sympathy and direct aid. That the people of Indiana are ready

to aid we know, but the question is how to aid so that that aid may be effectual. We will venture to answer this by saying aid the Government of Liberia *directly*, by buying their land at the rate named in the above communication. Thus, whilst providing for such emigrants from this State as may ask aid in land, you foster the Central Government of Liberia, upon the success of which depends the future national existence of the negro race.

There is another measure that will bring aid to Liberia without cost to the State, except the exercise of that influence your position gives. The question I refer to is gradually forcing itself on public attention, and is likely to command national legislation sooner or later—the *suppression of the African Slave Trade by a well directed system of African Colonization*. This measure, it is true, cannot be reached directly by your action, but indirectly it may, through our Congressional delegation. The late unwise movement of a few men in this country to re-open that long proscribed traffic came near resulting in a war with England, who still clings to the absurd policy of an armed blockade of all coasts infested with slave trading. This unfortunate circumstance has had one good effect: it has disclosed the actual strength, or rather weakness, of the party in this country favorable to the abandonment of the noble policy adopted by the fathers of this republic when they declared against the importation of negroes, and protested against the Africanization of this nation, and solemnly declared the slave trade *piracy*! And, further, it has disclosed the agreeable fact that the South of this confederacy is opposed to such a commerce. As a justification of this position, permit me to refer to two representative men of the South, the Hon. Messrs. Cobb and Hammond. The former, as Secretary of the Treasury, was applied to by W. F. Colcock, Esq., Collector of Customs in Charleston, S. C., for authority to grant a clearance to a slave trader. In answer, he plants himself on the long established and wise legislation of the country; and not alone of the country in general, but of Southern States in particular; and in his letter to the above Collector, dated May 22, 1858, he argues the illegality of the trade and forbids a clearance to the vessel in question. The other gentleman, Senator Hammond, of S. C., informs us, in his late speech, that such a movement has been abandoned by the South. He thus discourses on this subject:

“We have it proposed to re-open the African Slave Trade, and

bring in hordes of slaves from that prolific region to restore the balance. I once entertained that idea myself, but on further investigation I abandoned it. I will not now go into the discussion of it further than to say that the South is itself divided on that policy, and, from appearances, opposed to it by a vast majority, while the North is unanimously against it. It would be impossible to get Congress to re-open the trade. If it could be done, then it would be unnecessary, for that result could only be brought about by such an entire abandonment by the North, and the world, of all opposition to our slave system, that we might safely cease to erect any defences for it."

But whether the South has abandoned the scheme or not is a question with which the legislators and statesmen of the sovereign State of Indiana have nothing to do. Is it not their duty, as the representatives of a conservative, moral and independent people, to keep the record of our State filled up with correct policy, and to stand with index finger pointing to the path of safety on all such questions?

But, as a practical people, we should inquire what is the best and cheapest way to remove an evil, to the removal of which we are and have been long committed as a nation. If our statesmen will ask themselves this question, we know the answer will be favorable to African colonization, in place of the armed blockade, as now practiced.

A glance at the expense of the blockade, and the imperfect manner in which the work of kidnapping is restrained, compared with the effect of colonizing the coast of Africa with civilized men, forming such settlements as Liberia, will settle the question in favor of the latter plan. The blockading system costs the nations engaged in it millions annually—the Liberian colonization system has not cost from its commencement to the present time two millions of dollars. Africa has *four thousand miles* of infested coast. Liberia covers *seven hundred miles* of this, and throughout these seven hundred miles this young nation restrains the slave trade and prevents the work of kidnapping. Thus, for the sum of *two million dollars* over *one-sixth* of the whole infested coast has been protected from the slave trade. For less than *ten millions* more, the whole extent of infested coast could be protected from this unnatural traffic. I made a calculation for the report of 1852 which I will now quote. At

that date England had expended \$120,000,000 in the work of suppressing the slave trade by an armed blockade.

It appears from a Parliamentary return just issued that in 1854 twelve ships, with 992 officers and men, were engaged in the suppression of the slave trade on the west coast of Africa; in 1855, twelve ships, with 1,082 officers and men; in 1856, thirteen ships, with 1,222 officers and men; in 1857, fifteen ships, with 1,424 officers and men.

At the Cape of Good Hope: In 1854, four ships, with 475 officers and men; in 1855, five ships, with 775 officers and men; in 1856, three ships, with 760 officers and men; and in 1857, three ships, with 610 officers and men.

North America and West Indies: In 1854 eleven ships, with 1,650 officers and men; in 1855, twelve ships, with 2,466 officers and men; in 1856, fourteen ships, with 2,843 officers and men; and in 1857, nine ships, with 3,363 officers and men.

On the southeast coast of America: In 1854, six ships, with 541 officers and men; in 1855, six ships, with 905 officers and men; in 1856, seven ships, with 1,200 officers and men; and in 1857, six ships, with 1,335 officers and men.

The total deaths on the four stations were forty-eight in 1854 fifty-two in 1855, one hundred and sixteen in 1856, and one hundred and forty-one in 1857. The numbers invalidated were one hundred and thirty-six in 1854, one hundred and ninety-two in 1855, two hundred and one in 1856; and one hundred and seventy-nine in 1857.

In slaves, for whom head-money was paid, were sixty-two in 1854, none in 1855, nineteen in 1856, and three hundred and eighty-four in 1857. In none of the years was any head-money paid for dead slaves.

The annual expense of our own nation at that date was \$300,000. Since that time the United States have spent, at this rate \$2,100,000 on our African squadron—far more than it has cost the Colonization organizations of the United States to create the Republic of Liberia. How long will it be before the cheap and peaceful plan of colonization will be adopted? How long before English and American statesmen will learn the will of Providence on this subject? If they would combine colonization with their blockade they would accomplish the desired object in a few years, and lay, at the same time, the foundation

of an English-speaking nation, that in less than *one hundred years* would give our Christian civilization to that whole continent.

If an attractive and powerful nation could be established in Africa, possessed of our language and institutions, the problem of two conflicting races in this nation would soon be solved—the black would separate from the white, for the spirit of adventure would soon make the colored man as restless as his white neighbor, prompting him to better his condition by emigration. It is true time, much time, must pass before the work we desire can be accomplished, for “time enters into the composition of all great enterprises” and national events, and time must enter into the composition and structure of an English-speaking nation in Africa.

We will close this paper by respectfully requesting the passage of the joint resolution on the subject of the African Slave Trade and Colonization, which was presented last session of the General Assembly, but which, with other matters of much greater importance, was crushed in the conflict and strife of party. That resolution was but a copy of that of 1852, with some amendments for the better.

For the last two years I have had the service and labor of Rev. John McKay, a man of color, who has traveled throughout this State, and who now reports between fifteen and twenty persons who desire to emigrate. He has been paid in part by his collections and in part by me, out of the amount allowed me as Secretary of the State Board of Colonization.

JAMES MITCHELL, Secretary.