A BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF THE
SETTLEMENT AND PRESENT SITUATION
OF THE COLONY
OF SIERRA LEONE,
IN AF RICA;
AS COMMUNICATED BY PAUL CUFFE (A MAN OF COLOUR)
TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK, BOSTON, AND THE PLACES OF THE PEOPLE OF COLOUR IN THE UNITED STATES,
AND SOME ADVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF COLOUR IN THE UNITED STATES.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED,
An address to the people of colour, from the Convention of Delegates of the Abolition Societies in the United States.

NEW YORK:
PRINTED BY SAMUEL WOOD,
NO. 557, PEARL STREET.
1812.
HAVING been informed that there was a settlement of people of colour at Sierra Leone under the immediate guardianship of a civilized power, I have for these many years past felt a lively interest in their behalf, wishing that the inhabitants of the colony might become established in the truth, and thereby be instrumental in its promotion amongst our African brethren. It was these sentiments that first influenced me to visit my friends in this colony, and instead of repenting, I have cause to rejoice in having found many who are inclined to listen and attend to the precepts of our holy religion. Nevertheless, I am convinced that further help will be requisite to establish them in the true and vital spirit of devotion; for although there are many who are very particular in their attendance of public worship, yet I am apprehensive that the true substance is too much overlooked; and by thus misconstruing the form for the substance, that their religious exercise is rendered rather a burden than a pleasure. It is not however my object to extend these observations at present. I merely wish to convey a brief account of the situation of the colony as I found it, hoping the information may prove serviceable and interesting to some of my friends in the United States.
Sierra Leone is a country on the west coast of Africa. Its situation is inviting, and its soil generally very productive. A river of the same name passes through the country, and the land for a great extent on each side is particularly fertile, and with the climate well calculated for the cultivation of West-India and other tropical productions. In the year 1791 an act passed the British parliament incorporating a company called the Sierra Leone Company, whose object was to settle and cultivate these lands, and open a trade with other countries in the products of the soil. The first settlers amounted to about 300 white persons, and a number of five blacks or people of colour from North America, and their experiments in sugar, cotton, &c. soon convinced them that they would be abundantly rewarded for their labour. The promising appearance of the settlement soon attracted the attention of the neighbouring chiefs, who with their subjects generally, became very friendly. The colony is now considerably increased, and continues to be in a flourishing situation. The population at present as taken by order of Governor Columbine in the 4th mo. 1811, is as follows, viz.

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<td>Europeans</td>
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<td>Nova-Scotia</td>
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<td>Maroons</td>
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<td>Africans</td>
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Making together, 1797
Besides which there are 621 Crie Men, so called from their being natives of a part called Crie Country, from which they have emigrated since the establishment of this colony.

These people have not yet been enrolled in the list of citizens, but are generally hired by the inhabitants as labourers. The disposition prevails very generally to encourage new settlers who may come amongst them either for the purpose of cultivating the land, or engaging in commercial enterprizes. A petition, of which the following is an outline was lately presented to his excellency governor Columbus, and signed by several of the most respectable inhabitants, viz.,

1st. That encouragement may be given to all our brethren, who may come from the British colonies or from America, in order to become farmers, or to assist us in the cultivation of our land.

2d. That encouragement may be given to our foreign brethren who have vessels for the purpose, to establish commerce in Sierra Leone.

3d. That those who may undertake to establish the Whale Fishery in the colony may be encouraged to persevere in that useful and laudable enterprize.

There are at this time 7 or 8 schools established throughout the colony. One of these is for the instruction of grown persons, and the others contain together about 220 children, who are instructed in all the necessary branches of education.

The inhabitants have likewise six places of public worship, which are generally well attended. Their times for meeting on the sabbath are at 5 and 10 o'clock in the morning, and at 1 and 6 o'clock in the evening. Also, the week through, many of their meetings are attended at 5 in the morning and 6 in the evening. There was absen-
a society formed some time since for the
farther promotion of the christian religion. I
have met with one of their epistles, which I shall
insert at the close of my communication.
An institution was formed on the 1st of the
12th mo., last for the relief of the poor and dis-
abled. It is now regularly held on the 1st second
day in every month, at which time proper persons
are appointed to take charge of those under the
care of the institution. A general meeting is held
once every six months. Every one can judge of
the happy effect of such institutions as these, in
improving the dispositions and softening the man-
ners of our native brethren.
The colonists have instituted 2 courts, con-
sisting, first, of the
Court of Quarter Sessions, which is held four
times in the course of the year. The governor
always presides as judge, and is attended by a
justice of the peace, sheriff's clerk, constables,
postage of the bailiff and constables. The petit jury consists
of 12 men selected from the Europeans, Nova-
Scotians, and Maroons.
2d. Mayor's Court. This formerly sat on the
6th day of every week; but the time for holding
it has since been prolonged to every three months.
3d. The Court of Requests which is held on the
7th day of every week. The power of this
court is confined to the trial of debts not exceeding
two pounds. 12 men are selected for this pur-
pose, and four out of the number transact the bu-
iness of a sitting.
4th. The Police Court, which is likewise held
on the 7th day of every week, and is constituted
of the same number of persons as the court of re-
quests. Their business is confined to the trial of
persons for disorderly conduct.
Sirs, The Court of Vice Admirlty, which is held as occasion may require.

The inhabitants are governed entirely by the British law, and are generally peaceable and willing to abide by the decisions of their civil magistrates. Governor Columbia lately issued a proclamation in which he offers the protection of these laws to any slave who may arrive in the colony with the consent of his or her owners, and leaves them at liberty to remain or go elsewhere, as they may think proper.

On the 16th of the 3d month, I travelled in amongst the natives of Africa. The first tribe I met with was called the Boilone Tribe. Their king, whose name is George, appeared to be very friendly. He could speak but very little English himself, but had a young man with him by the name of Peter Wilson, who had received his education in England, and appeared to be a man of very good information. This tribe, from what I could gather have adopted the mode of circumcision, and seem to acknowledge by words, the existence of a Deity. So accustomed are they to wars and slavery that I apprehend it would be a difficult task to convince them of the impropriety of these pernicious practices. I gave the king a Testament and several other books, and let him know by the interpreter the useful records contained in those books, and the great fountain they pointed unto.

The Mendingo Tribe professes Mahometanism. I became acquainted with two men of this tribe who were apparently men of considerable learning; indeed this tribe generally, appeared to be a people of some education. Their learning appeared to be the Arabic. They do not allow spirituous liquors to be made use of in this tribe.
They have declined the practice of selling their own tribe; but notwithstanding this, they continue to sell those of other tribes, and thought it right that the trade in slaves should be abolished, as they were made poor in consequence thereof. As they themselves were not willing to submit to the bonds of slavery, I endeavored to hold this out as a light to convince them of their error. But the prejudice of education had taken such firm hold of their minds to admit of much effect from reason on this subject.

ADDRESS.

To my scattered brethren and fellow countrymen at Sierra Leone.

Grace be unto you and peace be multiplied unto you, and Grace be, unto you and peace be multiplied. And May the Lord Jesus Christ, be ye renewed from the Lord, with whom ye stand in the light of the Lord—That pure light which brought salvation into the world, hath appeared unto all men to profit withal. And I would recommend unto you two or three elders, and such wise and sober people of the colony, that you adopt the mode of meeting together once every month, in order to consult with each other for your mutual good. But above all things, let your meetings be opened of the Lord, for he hath told us that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he would be in the midst of them." And I would recommend that you keep a record of your proceedings at these meetings, in order that they may be left for the benefit of the young and rising generations. And earnestly let me press you to preserve all good and useful maxims,
and by so doing you will increase both your temporal and spiritual welfare. Thus the Prince of Peace may be your preserver, in the adverse states of one who, without the Word of God and its manifestation.

PAUL CUFFE.

The following advice, though detached from the foregoing address, appears to be intended to accompany it.

ADVICE.

First. That soberly and conscientiously, with all faithful, be recommended, that no person may be good in all things: doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly.

Secondly. That early should be extended toward the youth, while their minds are young and tender, that they may be preserved from the corruptions of the world, which is prone toward evil ways, following bad company and drinking of spirituous liquors. This may be kept out of idleness, and unadvisedly to be indulged, for this is good to cultivate the mind, and may yet good examples therein themselves.

Thirdly. May be encouraged to discharge their duty with conscientious, may they be brought up to industriously, and their minds be enlightened for the execution of good work, which is required to all that will seek after it. I want that we should be faithful in all things, that we may become the city, being satisfied in those, who have taken the fear and honors of the name, in bringing us from a state of slavery. I must have you in the hands of him who is able to preserve you through time, and in peace, you wish that blessing that is prepared for all those who are faithful unto death.

Farewell. PAUL CUFFE.

Copy of a epistle from the society of Sierra Leone, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ.

Gone be unto you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

We desire to lift up ourselves with that thankful acknowledgment to the Father and fountain of all mercies for the liberty and freedom we enjoy, and our prayer to God is, that our brethren who live in distant lands and are laboring...
beloved brethren, in the Lord, may the power and peace of God rest in all your hearts, for we feel from an awful experience the necessity that many of our African brethren groan under. Therefore, for our souls urged to drive all the snares and perils in Christ, to diligently consider our cause, and in the sure-saints of the holy child for one profess to make merchandize of another. We desire that this may be made manifest to all professors of all Christian denominations who have not abolished the holding of slaves.

We salute you, beloved brethren, in the Lord with sincere desire, that the hope of regeneration may be more and more perfections. It would be a comfort to us to hear from the saints in distant lands; and to receive all who be disposed to come to us with open arms.

Our dearly beloved Brethren, we also salute in the Lord, to be obedient unto your masters with regards kind on God, in which we would implore you to consider, who is just as able in these days to deliver you from the yoke of oppression, as he led in you past brought your forefathers out of the Egyptian bondage. Finally, we recommend the power and peace of God rest in all your hearts. God be with you, and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.


To the free Africans and other free people of colour in the United States.

The conventions of delegates from the abolition societies in the United States, assembled at Philadelphia, have undertaken to address you upon subjects highly interesting to your prosperity.

They wish to see you act wisely of the rank you have acquired as freemen, and yearly as such, to your own advantage, and to justify the friends and admirers of your colour in the eyes of the world.
As the result of our united reflections, we have concluded to express our sentiments in the following articles of advice. We trust that they are dictated by the genuine regard for your welfare, for we view you as Friends and brethren.

In the first place, We earnestly recommend to you, a regular attendance at the important duty of public worship; by which means you will be enabled to pray to your Creator, and, at the same time, promote knowledge, union, friendship, and proper conduct amongst yourselves.

Secondly, We advise each of you, that you have not been taught reading, writing, and the first principles of arithmetic; to acquire them as early as possible. Carefully guard the instruction of your children in the same simple and useful branches of education. Cause them, likewise, early and frequently to read the holy scriptures; they contain, among other great discoveries, the precious record of the original equality of mankind, and of the obligation of universal justice and benevolence, which are derived from the relation of the human race toward one another in common Father.

Thirdly, Teach your children useful trades, or to labour with their hands in cultivating the earth. These employments are favourable to health and virtue. In the choice of masters, who are to instruct them in the three branches of knowledge, prefer those who will work with them; by this means they will acquire habits of industry, and be better prepared for those, than if they worked alone, or under the influence of some idle amusement in their walk. In farming countries, for yourselves or children, with patience, it may be useful to cultivate such persons as are capable of giving you the best advice. Who are honest to be your friends, in order to prevent dangers, being taken up of your ignorance of the laws and customs of our country.

Fourthly, Be diligent in the important callings, and faithful in all the relations you bear; whereby whether as husbands, wives, fathers, children, brothers, sisters, neighbors, or in any other capacities, you have in all your dealings. Remember in your feast and famine, and forget in your family exactions.

Fifthly, Refrain from the use of excitement spirits: the experience of many thousands of the citizens of the United States has proved, that these liquors are not necessary to lessen the fatigue of labour, and to elevate the spirit; and how much less are they necessary than the innocent pleasures of society.

Ninthly, Drain fasting, and exercise, that is, expenses and alleviations; you should habits of discipline and
vice, and thus expose you to deserved reproach among your white neighbors.

Severally, We are to implore upon your minds the above andTenet to the necessity of having your marriages solemnly performed,as to have those registered among all the Indians is in your own interest in future life, and not for the Indian families' advantage. Remember in this you are to look out for your children's interest. When you should be so fortunate as to have a child, in your own place, you should do so that you may have the benefit of your registry, and your claims will be valid and cannot be denied when laid out in bond, in case of your absense.

We are to admonish you, at all times and on all occasions, to behave yourselves in all persons in a civil and neighborly manner, for which you may prevent contemnence, and secure your just demands of all kinds. We humbly beseech you to judge good counsel, that you may follow the advice which has been given to you as a means of moral resources, and overcome many of the difficulties which you may encounter in the general manipulation of matters of trade. As we are yet a young nation, with but few nations to which we can refer, we are obliged to you for the advice you have been given in this matter, which is of the utmost importance to all.

This is a translation of the above, with your consent.

William P. Cope, Secretary.
Philadelphia, January 26, 1855.