MEMOIRS

OF

GRANVILLE SHARP, ESQ.

COMPOSED

From his own Manuscripts,

AND OTHER

AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS IN THE POSSESSION OF HIS FAMILY

AND OF THE

AFRICAN INSTITUTION.

BY PRINCE HOARE.

WITH

OBSERVATIONS ON MR. SHARP'S BIBLICAL CRITICISMS,

BY THE

RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

"INTIMINATIS.......HONORIBUS."


IN TWO VOLUMES.

Vol. II.

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HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1828.
Some disasters, however, had attended the reinforcement sent by the Myro, and numerous obstacles still opposed themselves to the security of the colony, but not sufficient either to damp the courage and perseverance of its founder, or wholly to destroy the satisfaction which he derived from the success of his last effort.

G. S. to the Hon. John Jay, President of the Society at New York for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, &c. and protecting such of them as have been liberated.

[EXTRACT.]

(In answer to a Letter dated Sept. 1, 1788, inserted vol. i. p. 376.)

"Sir,

"March 7, 1789.

"I am truly sensible of the honour conferred upon me by the Society at New York for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, &c., and request you, Sir, to return my sincere thanks for so great a mark of their favour, and approbation of my poor endeavours in the same charitable cause which they patronize. I ought, indeed, to have made my acknowledgments much sooner; but I was then in daily expectation of the arrival of a small ship, the Myro brig. Captain Taylor, which I sent out last June to the coast of Africa, with some poor Negroes and other Settlers, to the new settlement at Sierra Leone; and as I had heard that there are also many poor Negroes at New York, and other parts of America, who wish to find a comfortable settlement on the coast of Africa, and that the States were inclined to provide them with shipping, I thought it right to defer my answer, until I should be able (by the return of the Myro) to give some more authentic account of the present state of that settlement; because my only views in promoting it seem to be perfectly similar
to the declared purposes of your Society; for I wished that the Province of Freedom, on the Mountains of Sierra Leone, might become a happy asylum for the liberated Negroes of America and the West Indies, as well as of the Black poor sent from England.—It is but within a very few days that I have received the long-expected letters from the settlement, and the diary of Captain Taylor's proceedings.—I am sorry to inform you, that the accounts are much more unfavourable than I had reason to expect: thirteen persons out of thirty-nine, whom I sent by the Myro, are dead; and almost all the passengers had been ill. This, however, I still find, is not to be attributed altogether to the climate, but to a total neglect in clearing the underwood near the settlement, and to the want of judgment in the Settlers, who have built their houses and huts on swampy ground, near the bottom of a hill, instead of the top of it, where Captain Thompson, who conducted the first Settlers, pitched his tent: for that gentleman assured me that he found a much cooler and fresher sea-breeze at the top of the little hill, than even on board his ship, which lay out at some distance from shore; and that there are some very high hills, on which all degrees of climate are to be found. It seems, also, that too free a use of strong liquors (notwithstanding the earnest warning I gave to the passengers of the Myro concerning the fatal intemperance of the former Settlers) is still to be reckoned among the causes of continued impediment and sickness. I do not yet repent, however, of the great expense I have been at in assisting the settlement; for I still hope that it may be maintained, and improved by a little prudent management.

"Great numbers of the dispersed Settlers returned on the arrival of the Myro; and King Naimbanna, one of the most powerful chiefs in that neighbourhood, who before
refused to sign the former deed of purchase for the land, and lately, just before the arrival of the Myro, had even given the Settlers warning to quit the settlement, has now formed a solemn covenant with Captain Taylor in behalf of the Settlers; and, in consideration of the presents received as the stipulated price of re-purchase, has signed a complete deed of resignation to the Settlers for ever, of all the land before granted by King Tom, whose successor, since his death, has also signed the deed, with some other chiefs: so that my sending the Myro has really saved the settlement. But King Naimbanua has reserved to himself a duty of fifteen bars, to be paid by all ships which water in the Bay: each bar is worth about 8s. 4d.

"Captain Thompson likewise informs me, that the distance from St. George's Bay (formerly called Frenchman's Bay), where the new settlement commences on the west side, to Gambia Island, the eastern boundary of it, is above twenty miles: so that the new territory is really much larger than the whole island of Barbadoes, being twenty miles each way, or full four hundred square miles of land, covered with noble forests of timber and perpetual verdure.

"When Captain Taylor left the settlement last September, the number of people was still about one hundred and thirty in all; and I have no doubt they will gladly receive any free Negroes that the States of America shall be pleased to assist with passage, provisions, and necessaries for defence and establishment; provided that such new Settlers will promise to observe and maintain the present laws and regulations of the settlement, which are founded on the Common Law of England.

"I have not yet been able to hear of any other part of the African coast that is equally fit for a free settlement; and I am well aware that your States may probably be.
unwilling to incur any considerable expense in supplying a territory with inhabitants, who must be required to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Crown of England; the first purchase of the lands, as well as the second, having been made in the King's name. But as the Government of England permits the Settlers to make their own laws (i.e. such as are not inconsistent with the Common Law of England), to hold their own courts, assemblies, folk-motes, &c. to choose their own chiefs and officers, and to keep up a free militia amongst themselves,—the settlement, on such conditions, must of necessity be perfectly free.

"For your further information, I send you the printed Regulations.

"Having incurred a very large expense already in the new settlement, I cannot afford it any further pecuniary assistance at present; but I shall be very happy to use my best endeavours to promote the kind reception of all such free Negroes, or other persons, as the States of America, or your Society, shall think proper to send thither; provided they have no objections to the Regulations.

"I am, with great respect, Sir," &c. &c.