THE
CONSTITUTION
OF THE
NEW-JERSEY
SOCIETY,
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY;
TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,
EXTRACTS FROM A
LAW OF NEW-JERSEY,
Passed the 2d March, 1786, and
SUPPLEMENT TO THE SAME;
Passed the 26th November, 1788.

"We hold these Truths to be self-evident; that all men are
created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with cer-
tain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and
the pursuit of Happiness."

Declaration of Independence.

BURLINGTON,
PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY, BY
ISAAC NEALE,
M,DCC,XCIII.
WHEN we consider the principles which animated our forefathers to fly from tyranny and persecution, and seek an asylum in this then inhospitable, though now favored land: When we contemplate our situation as citizens of a free and enlightened government, in full possession of the inestimable blessings of civil and religious liberty, and peculiarly favored by that high degree of political prosperity, to which Providence hath been pleased to conduct us: When we reflect that we are beings of one nature, acknowledging one common parent; we conceive it to be our duty to consult and promote the happiness of our fellow men, however diversified, by colour, rank, or religion. It is our boast, that we live under a government founded on prin-
ciples of justice and reason, wherein, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are recognized as the universal rights of men; and whilst we are anxious to preserve those rights to ourselves, and transmit them inviolate, to our posterity, we abhor that inconsistent, illiberal, and interested policy, which withholds those rights from an unfortunate and degraded class of our fellow creatures. Under a full conviction of the truth of these principles, which we are desirous to promote and carry into effect, by all constitutional and lawful means, the subscribers do agree to associate themselves, under the title of the New-Jersey Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and adopt the following constitution.

I. There shall be an annual meeting of the society on the first third day, called Tuesday, in the month of October, at the Court-House in the city of Burlington, of which public notice shall be given by the secretary.

II. The officers of the society shall be a president, two vice-presidents, a treasurer, and one secretary, all of whom shall be chosen at the annual meeting in October——by ballot.

III. In all meetings of the society, the president, or in his absence, one of the vice-presidents
shall preside: All acts of the society shall be subscribed by the president or one of the vice-presidents.

IV. There shall be an acting committee consisting of five persons, to be elected annually, from among the members in such counties, as from time to time shall be agreed upon, at annual or special meetings; the duties of which committees, shall be to carry into execution, the resolves of the general meeting; to admit persons members of the society; and generally to promote the views of the institution, making report of their proceedings at the general meetings, for approbation or rejection.

V. Special meetings shall be called at the city of Burlington, when three acting committees shall apply in writing, to the president or either of the vice-presidents for the same.

VI. It shall be the duty of the treasurer, to keep all the monies and securities for monies, belonging to the society; to state all the receipts and expenditures of the society in a book to be provided for that purpose; to pay all orders for monies signed by a majority of any acting committee, provided that the sum does not exceed twenty-four dollars, unless the president or one of the vice-presidents,
may allow a greater sum upon application for that purpose. Before he enters upon the duties of his office, he shall give bond to the president, with security, to be approved of by the president, in the sum of five hundred pounds.

VII. Every person, when admitted, shall subscribe this constitution, and pay into the hands of the treasurer, or of the acting committee admitting him, one dollar, and shall, at every annual meeting afterwards, contribute the sum of one dollar, for the purpose of defraying the contingent expenses of the society. If he shall neglect to make such annual payments for two years, he shall, after three months notice, given by the acting committee of the county, of such delinquency, cease to be a member.

VIII. No alteration shall be made in the constitution, nor shall any law of the society be made or altered, until the meeting after such law or alteration shall have been proposed, except such laws or alterations as may be proposed to be made at a meeting to be held on the second day of the fifth month next, called May.

IX. The members subscribing this constitution, shall elect the officers of the society, who shall continue in office until the first annu-
al meeting to be held in the month of October next.

Burlington, 27th of the 2d Month (February) 1793.

The Present Officers of the Society.

President,
JOSEPH BLOOMFIELD.

Vice-Presidents,
WILLIAM PARRET,
RICHARD HARTSHORNE.

Treasurer,
WILLIAM COXE, Jun.

Secretary,
ROBERT SMITH, Jun.

Acting Committees.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY,
John Bayard; Hugh Davids,
Ambrose Copeland; Elijah Pound.
Joseph Shotwell,

ESSEX,
Jeffre Clark; John Webster, Jun.
Joseph Stackhouse; William Shotwell, Jun.
Jeremiah Shotwell

MONMOUTH,
Richard Wain; William Hartshorne.
Edmund Williams,
MORRIS,
Hartthorne FitzRandolph, Isaac Hans.
Henry Moore,

SUSSEX,
Thomas Anderson,
Samuel Lundy,

CHRISTIAN SCHMUK,
WILLIAM RYERSON.

HUNTERDON,
James Ewing,
Moore Furman,
PETER GORDON,

John Potts,
George Bullock,

BURLINGTON,
Peter Shiras,
Thomas Newbold,
Burgis Allison,

John Hoskins,
Robert Pearson.

GLOUCESTER,
Franklin Devanport,
Thomas Stokes,
JOSEPH SLOAN,

John Kelly,
Thomas Carpenter.

SALEM,
John Wistar,
Allen Congleton,
Edward Burroughs,

Clement Hall,
Isaiah Shinn.

CUMBERLAND,
John Sheppard,
John Reeves,
ELI ELMER,

ELIHANOTHAN DAVIS,
ELI BUDD.
EXTRACTS,

From a Law of New-Jersey, passed the 2d March, 1786, and Supplement to the same, passed the 26th November, 1788.

"An ACT to prevent the importation of slaves into the State of New-Jersey, and to authorize the manumission of them under certain restrictions, and to prevent the abuse of slaves."

"WHEREAS the principles of justice and humanity require that the barbarous custom of bringing the unoffending Africans from their native country and connections into a state of slavery, ought to be discountenanced, and as soon as possible prevented; and found policy also requires, in order to afford ample support to such of the community as depend upon their labor for their daily subsistence, that the importation of slaves into this state from any other state or country whatsoever, ought to be prohibited under certain restrictions; and that such as are under servitude in the state ought to be protected by law from those exercises of wanton cruelty too often practised upon them, and that every unnecessary obstruction in the way of freeing slaves should be removed; therefore,"——-

Sect. 1. Inflicts a penalty of £.50 for bringing slaves into New-Jersey, imported from Africa since 1776.

Sect. 2. Inflicts a penalty of £.20 for bringing slaves into New-Jersey who have not been imported since 1776.
Sect. 3: Provides, that persons who shall remove to take a settled residence in New-Jersey, shall not incur the penalties aforesaid (except they bring such slaves as shall have been brought from Africa since 1776.) nor to foreigners or others, having only a temporary residence, from bringing and employing their slaves as servants during such stay, and such slaves shall not be sold or disposed of in the state.

Sect. 4. Penalties recovered by township collectors, to be paid into the treasury.

"Sect. 5. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful for any owner, master or mistress of any negro or mulatto slave, to manumit and set free such slave by executing a writing under hand and seal, certifying such manumission, and also obtaining a certificate, signed by two of the overseers of the poor of the township, and any two justices of the peace of the county, wherein the said master or mistress may reside, in the words or to the effect following:

County, ʃ.

We do hereby certify, that on this day of in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and of the township of in the said county of brought before us, two of the overseers of the poor of said township, and two of the justices of the peace of said county, his or her slave named who on view and examination appears to us to be found in mind, and not under any bodily incapacity of obtaining a support, and also is not under twenty-one years of age, nor above thirty-five: In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands the day of one thousand seven hundred and
And recording such certificates in the clerk's office of the county in which the said master or mistress shall then reside, provided such slave shall not, when set free, be under the age of twenty-one years, nor exceed the age of thirty-five years, the master or mistress, giving the freedom in such case, shall forever thereafter be exonerated and acquitted from all costs and charges which may arise for the support of the slave so manumitted, excepting their proportion of any tax that hereafter may be assessed for the support of the said slave.

"Sect. 6. And be it further enacted, That the legal settlement of every slave, manumitted as aforesaid, that shall or may be likely to become a public charge, shall, and the same is hereby declared in all cases whatsoever, to be in that township in this state where the master or mistress manumitting such slave may have a legal settlement at the time of such manumission; and that no possession, duty or employment of, or taxes paid by, a manumitted slave, shall procure a settlement otherwise than herein above-mentioned, any law, usage or custom to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding."

Sect. 7. Repealed by the supplement.

"Sect. 8. And be it further enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for the grand-jury of any county in this state, to indict any person for inhumanly treating and abusing his or her slave; and if, upon the prosecution of any such indictment, the said master or mistress shall be convicted of the offence, the court before whom such conviction shall be had, may impose such a fine for the offence as in their discretion they shall deem proper, not exceeding five pounds for the first, and ten pounds for the second offence; which fine, when recovered, shall be
paid to the overseer of the poor for the use of the township in which the said master or mistress shall reside.”

Sect. 9. Blacks or Mulattoes manumitted in other states, not to travel in this state.—If employed, concealed, or suffered by any persons to reside on land, &c.: penalty of £5 a week.—And, those manumitted in this state, shall not travel without the township or county where manumitted, without a certificate of their freedom, from two justices, countersigned by the clerk of such county, under the seal of the court.

SUPPLEMENT.

Sect. 1. Inflicts a forfeiture of vessel, appurtenances, and cargo, fitted out for the slave-trade.

Sect. 2. Such forfeited vessels, &c. to be sold, and monies arising on the sale, to be paid, 7-8ths to the state, and 1-8th to the person who shall make the seizure.

Sect. 3. Master of vessels resisting persons attempting to seize, to forfeit £50, half to the state, and half to the prosecutors.

"Sect. 4. And be it further enacted, That no negro or mulatto slave shall be removed out of this state, whose place of residence has been therein for twelve months immediately preceding such removal, with a design and intention that the place of abode or residence of such slave shall be thereby changed, without his or her consent, if of full age, testified upon private examination before a justice of the peace of the city or county in which he or she shall reside, or, being under the age of twenty-one years, with-
out his or her consent testified in manner aforesaid, as also
without the consent of his or her parents, if any there
be, to be testified in like manner, whereof the said justice
shall make a record, and deliver to said slave a copy there
of, containing the name, age, condition, and then place
of abode, of such slave, the reason of such removal, and
the place to which he or she is about to go; and if any
person or persons whatsoever shall sell or dispose of any
such slave to any person out of this state, or shall send or
carry, or cause to be sent or carried, any such slave out of
this state, without having obtained all such consent as by
this act is required, testified in the manner aforesaid,
every such person or persons, his or their aiders and
and abettors, shall severally forfeit and pay, for every such
offence, the sum of twenty pounds, to be recovered in
any court of record where cognizable, with costs of suit,
by any person who will sue for the same, one moiety to
the plaintiff, and the other moiety to the use of the poor
of the township from which such slave be removed. Pro-
vided nevertheless, that nothing in this act shall be con-
strued or understood to make any person or persons liable
to the above penalty who may or shall remove to and re-
side in any of the neighbouring states, and take his, her or
their slave or slaves with him, her or them, anything to
the contrary notwithstanding.

"Sect. 5. Be it further enacted, That all criminal of-
ences of negroes and mulattoes, as well slaves and servants
as free persons, shall be enquired of, adjudged, corrected
and punished, in like manner as the criminal offences of
the other inhabitants of this state are and shall be enquired
of, adjudged, corrected and punished, and not other-
wise, any law, usage or custom to the contrary in any
wise notwithstanding."

"Sect. 6. And be it further enacted by the authority.
aforsaid, That every person or persons within this state, who shall be the owner or owners of any Negro or Mulatto slave or slaves, servant or servants, for life or years, born after the publication of this act, shall cause every such slave or slaves, servant or servants, while under the age of twenty-one years, to be taught and instructed to read; and every owner or owners of any such Negro or Mulatto slave or slaves, servant or servants, who shall neglect or refuse to cause his, her or their slave or slaves, servant or servants, to be taught and instructed as aforesaid, shall forfeit and pay the sum of five pounds, to be recovered by action of debt, before any justice of the peace within this state, by any person or persons who shall or may prosecute for the same.

Published by order of the Society,

ROBERT SMITH, JUN. SECRETARY.