

should secure to every man, after such a residence among us as shows his actual habitancy, the right to vote in elections, and thus to participate in making the laws by which he is to be governed, taxed, and made liable to punishment. It should prohibit the legislature from burdening this right with odious restrictions in the case of citizens of foreign birth, or any other class. It should take away the power of the legislature to create monopolies, or to tie up the hands of their successors: to grant special privileges in banking or other business to one portion of applicants, not granted on the same terms to all others; or to dictate to individuals how they shall transact their own business, or to give any class of citizens an undue advantage against the free competition of others. It should require the legislature to make laws by which individuals of limited means can associate in a convenient manner for all branches of business. It should enjoin upon the legislature the strictest economy in the public expenditures, fix public salaries upon a scale corresponding with the general incomes of private individuals of equal talent, and secure all the rights of personal liberty, enjoyment and transmission of property, religious liberty, the freedom of speech and of the press, and the right peaceably to assemble for any lawful or virtuous purpose, unmolested by mobs or violence. It should secure a rigid accountability in all offices, by taking away the appointing power from the legislature and giving it to the people themselves, or in some cases to the Governor, providing also for short terms of service in all offices. It should make provision for the support of Common Schools at the public expense, by a tax upon property. It should debar the legislature from granting license, either with or without an excise, to theatres, lotteries, horse-racing, liquor-selling, or any other practice which is immoral in itself or hurtful to the public welfare. It should utterly prohibit slave-holding within our territories,

and require the legislature to provide adequate penalties for any person who should hold a human being as a slave, or as property, on the soil of New Jersey, under any pretext whatsoever.

Such a constitution we desire to see established, and we design to nominate men for both branches of our legislature, at every election, and in each county where practicable, who will, if chosen, aid in passing a Bill for calling a State Convention, for the purpose of forming a Constitution which, when ratified by the people, shall be the just Constitution of New Jersey.

Fellow-citizens,—We have not commenced this system of measures as an experiment, or under the excitement of a transient ebullition of feeling. We have begun, to finish. We expect to pursue our plan steadily, calmly, unawed and unseduced, until we succeed—until we see slavery abolished, and the ascendancy of free principles fully established in New Jersey. Are we not right in so doing? How can we allow mere questions of pecuniary advantage or of party ascendancy to overshadow the great question of Human Rights? The experience of fifty years shows that it is impracticable to maintain a stable policy, or to avert the most ruinous fluctuations, or to secure the real enjoyment of our own rights, or to devise an administration favourable at once to free labor and to slavery, or to secure harmony and UNION at home, or peace and honour abroad, unless slavery is put down. By constitutional, peaceful, and legal means, in kindness both to masters and slaves, it can be put down. And in putting it down we gain the most signal triumph, and add the most impregnable security to republican liberty that history can record.

We feel that we shall succeed. Although we are now few in number and feeble in influence, in the eyes of mankind, we yet are strong in the justice of our cause and the truth of our principles, impregnable in our resolution and our hope, and the God of our

fathers, who is on our side, is more than a multitude of a host. In his wisdom we are wise, and in his strength we are strong, and through his aid we hope to accomplish the greatest reform in government that has ever been achieved without bloodshed.

It is for our countrymen to say, by their votes for or against the Liberty ticket, how soon we shall succeed, or how long we shall have to struggle. By your support and co-operation, the work may be done at once, the sooner the better, and our organization will then dissolve of itself. By your indifference, the struggle may be protracted, and the public mind harassed with this question for years, perhaps for a generation, but the result must come. Let the evils which may flow, the distractions in our councils, the sufferings to our enslaved brethren, the postponement of other important questions which can never be actually settled while slavery remains—let this responsibility fall where it belongs, on those who turn a deaf ear to the call of liberty.

With the most earnest desire for the prosperity and happiness of our nation, and with a solemn pledge to persevere in the maintenance of these principles until success shall crown our endeavors or death call us from our work on earth, the first liberty convention of New Jersey throws its objects and its plans upon the support of the enlightened freemen of the State, earnestly praying that Almighty God will incline every one to unite in this great enterprize for the glory of his name and for the salvation of our beloved country.

Adopted in Convention, A. H. FREEMAN, Pres.

W. F. GARDNER, }
W. H. PILLOW, } *Secretaries.*



