













PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

GENESEE CO. ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,

COMMENCED AT BATAVIA, MARCH 16,

AND

CONCLUDED AT WARSAW, MARCH 23, 1836:

WITH THE

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR

THE PRECEDING YEAR.

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WARSAW:

PRINTED FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

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## PROCEEDINGS, & c.

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The first annual meeting of the Genesee County Anti-Slavery Society, pursuant to previous public notice, convened in the Court House, in the village of Batavia, Wednesday, March 16, 1836.

At 1 o'clock, P. M. the President of the Society, SAMUEL F. PHENIX of Perry, took the chair, pro tem.

The meeting was opened by prayer, by the Rev. Joseph Elliot of Wyoming.

Rev. JOSEPH ELLIOT of Wyoming, and S. M. SLOAN, Esq. of Darien, were appointed Secretaries, pro tem.

The Secretaries proceeded to take the names of delegates in attendance.

On motion,

*Resolved*, That Mr. Huntington Lyman, agent of the American Anti-Slavery Society, Howard Bosworth of Buffalo, and Rev. Messrs. Sly of Riga, and Salmon of Angelica, and all other friends of the cause of immediate emancipation, be entitled to take seats with the Society.

The following committees were then appointed by the chair:

*On Declaration of Sentiment and an Address*:—Messrs. Young of Warsaw, Clark of Bethany, Tufts of Perry, Rev. Messrs. Scovel of Covington, and Wilcox of Castile.

*On Resolutions*:—Messrs. M'Kay of Warsaw, Andrews of Perry, H. Lyman, Rev. J. Elliot of La Grange, and D. Bailey of Darien.

*On Nomination of Officers*:—Messrs. Bronson of Warsaw, H. Phœnix of Perry, Freeman of Pembroke, Gibson of Bergen, and Wolcott of Java.

The proceedings of the meeting were now interrupted by the entrance of a committee of 50 persons, in behalf of the citizens of the village of Batavia, accompanied by about 80 or 100 men and boys. This committee, by their chairman, Daniel H. Chandler, Esq. read to the meeting the following preamble and resolutions, adopted at a meeting\* of the citizens of the village of Batavia, held in consequence of the contemplated meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society; and also the resolutions of the said committee of fifty:

"At a meeting of the citizens of the village of Batavia and its vicinity, held at the Court House, on the 12th of March inst., which meeting was called for the purpose of considering the propriety of a meeting proposed to be held by the Abolition Society of the county of Genesee, at the Court House in this village, on the 16th inst., in pursuance of a notice published in the newspapers: HENRY HOLDEN was called to the chair, and H. D. CHANDLER appointed secretary.

\* The following is a copy of the notice calling the meeting:

### "CITIZENS OF BATAVIA, ATTEND!"

"The Citizens of Batavia, without distinction of party, are desired to meet at the Court House this afternoon, at 2 o'clock precisely, to take into consideration what measures it is necessary to adopt with reference to the proposed Meeting of abolitionists, to be held in this Village on Wednesday next. Let all opposed to fanaticism, and who value the existence and perpetuity of the Union, attend.

"March 12, 1836.

ANTI-FANATICISM."



"The object of the meeting having been stated, on motion, it was

*Resolved*, That a committee of five be appointed to present to the meeting resolutions expressive of the opinion of this meeting on the subject for which it was convened; and Wm. Davis, F. Follett, A. Van Tuyl, Timothy Fitch and D. H. Chandler, were appointed such committee.

*Resolved*, That this meeting adjourn to meet half an hour hence at the Court House.

"The meeting met pursuant to adjournment, when the committee reported the following resolutions:

"Whereas the Society for the county of Genesee, for the immediate Abolition of Slavery in the United States, has given notice that it will hold a meeting in this village during the coming week, for the purpose of transacting business and of hearing an address, and, as this meeting believes, for the purpose of propagating its opinions and of agitating the question of slavery in that part of the country opposed to the measures and principles of the said Society: therefore

*Resolved*, That whatever may be the object of the meeting of the said society, that we are utterly opposed to its being held in this village; and that in the opinion of this meeting, none but those who are reckless of the public weal; regardless of the common bond of union by which the states are cemented; and anxious more for broil, anarchy and insurrection, than for union and national quiet, would at such a time as this, propose so dangerous a topic for discussion, as that which involves the constitutional rights of the Slaveholding States.

*Resolved*, That our Constitutional rights are to be exercised discreetly and temperately, and that no good citizen who yields obedience to the constitution, would willingly hazard its perpetuity by any act which should embroil the various members of which the Union is composed.

*Resolved*, That as citizens of Batavia, independent of the abstract question of slavery, and the avowed objects of the Anti-Slavery Society, most sincerely deprecating any disturbance of the peace and tranquility of our village, we cannot suppress the apprehensions we entertain of the consequences that may result from the holding of the contemplated meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society in this village.

*Resolved*, That a committee to consist of fifty persons be appointed to wait upon the Abolition Society, if it should meet in pursuance of the notices given, and make known to it the proceedings of this meeting, and request that no proceedings be had by the said Society: Whereupon the Chair appointed the following persons as such committee:

"Aaron Vanclève, Timothy Fitch, Nathan Follett, James P. Smith, Moses Taggart, Homer Kimberly, John Cotes, jr., Wm. Sever, John Lowber, Horace Sever, James Milner, Abraham Van Tuyl, Charles A. Lowber, John S. Ganson, Joseph W. Churchill, Erastus B. Seymour, Wm. H. Webster, Chauncey Kirkham, Henry Little, Walter M. Seymour, Samuel C. Holden, Wm. S. Mallory, Henry Tisdale, John Chatfield, Wm. Davis, Adam Getty, Alva Smith, Albert Hosmer, John Merrill, Joel Allen, Frederick Follett, J. A. Clark, Truman Hurlburt, John Wilson, Pardon C. Sherman, Stephen Grant, John Foot, J. A. Smith, Isaac A. Verplanck, Albert Smith, Bissell Humphry, Ezekiel Hall, Ebenezer Mix, Cornelius V. N. Lent, David E. Evans, Wm. Manly, Charles M. Russell, James D. Merrill, Thomas Cole, Isaac M. Joslin, Marshall Leonard, Erastus Smith, Thomas Tufts, Benjamin F. Towner, Russell L. Smith and Burlman Gilbert.

*Resolved*, That the chairman and secretary be added to said committee.

*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to prepare a copy of the proceedings of this meeting, and solicit the citizens of this village to subscribe the same, if the same shall be approved: Whereupon the chair appointed Isaac A. Verplanck, Timothy Fitch and Henry Tisdale such committee.

*Resolved*, That this meeting adjourn, to meet again at the Eagle Tavern on Tuesday evening next, at seven o'clock.

"H. HOLDEN, Chairman.

"D. H. CHANDLER, Secretary."

The reading of the above proceedings was succeeded by a short speech by the chairman, in which he stated that the citizens had no confidence in the good intentions of the abolitionists, who were presumed to be insincere in their professions, &c. &c.; and that therefore they (the citizens) could not be responsible for any flagrant acts which might be committed.

Having thus discharged the trust committed to them, they gave notice

that they would retire to the Eagle Tavern, and await the reply of the meeting.

A copy of their proceedings being requested and furnished, it was, on motion,

*Resolved*, That the communication of the committee, on behalf of the citizens of the village of Batavia, be referred to a select committee of five, to report thereon as soon as may be, to this meeting.

The following named gentlemen were appointed said committee: Hon. Henry Brewster and Seth M. Gates, Esq. of Le Roy, Gen. John D. Landon of Castile, Messrs. William Patterson of Warsaw, and H. Lyman.

The chairman and some few others of the committee of fifty, then withdrew.

The meeting then proceeded to the correction and completion of the roll of members; on which the remainder of the committee of the *peaceable citizens* of Batavia, assumed a hydra-headed form, and demanded that all proceedings of the meeting, as well as those of the committees on nominations, resolutions, &c. should be stayed, until after the report of the select committee. This demand was disregarded by the committees, who respectively retired for the transaction of business. The President, however, so far acceded to the demand, as to declare that no business relating to the sentiments of the Society should be attempted; but stated that the completion of the roll, and the election of officers, could injure no man's morals, though, as charged upon the abolitionists, their sentiments *were* dangerous. He then directed the Secretaries to proceed to call the roll.

Whereupon the mob committee gave the signal to their auxiliaries, the men and boys in the gallery; and a noise commenced, which effectually prevented any further business, until the report of the select committee was announced, at about 5 o'clock.

Previously to making their report, the chairman, Judge Brewster, called for the reading of a paper in the hands of F. C. D. M'Kay, Esq. who had been deputed by the Executive Committee to select a place, and obtain a house in some of the villages of the county, where the Society could hold its anniversary exercises without molestation. [The paper, which was drawn up by Mr. Chandler, will be found embodied in the report of the select committee.]

The secretary of the select committee, S. M. Gates, Esq. then read the following report:

The Anti-Slavery Society of Genesee county, convened at the Court House in Batavia, pursuant to public notice, March 16, 1836, having been waited upon by fifty gentlemen of the village of Batavia, who, by D. H. CHANDLER, Esq. their chairman, presented to the convention the resolutions adopted at a meeting of the citizens of Batavia, and also made certain verbal communications, intimating that the society have not credit with the citizens of Batavia, for the good intentions by which they profess to be actuated—do respectfully reply to said committee:

That the members of this Society express their sense of the courteous manner in which the committee of fifty have discharged their duty; and they would not knowingly do any thing which should manifest a want of proper respect for the citizens of Batavia.

This meeting was not appointed here, until after a consultation with respectable citizens of this village, and which induced the belief that it would result in no serious objections on the part of the citizens, or be made the occasion of excited feeling, or lawless acts. The good reason there was for such belief, will readily be seen by reference to the following written statement, drawn up voluntarily by D.

*President*—Hon. HENRY BREWSTER, Le Roy.

*Vice Presidents*—WILLIAM PATTERSON, Warsaw,  
SETH M. GATES, Le Roy,  
CHARLES FREEMAN, Pembroke,  
CHESTER WELLS, Byron,  
Rev. JESSE ELLIOT, La Grange.

*Recording Secretary*—S. M. SLOAN, Darien.

*Corresponding Secretary*—JOSIAH ANDREWS, Perry.

*Executive Committee*—SAMUEL F. PHŒNIX, Perry,  
F. C. D. M'KAY, Warsaw,  
Rev. JOSEPH ELLIOT, Wyoming,  
Doct. WELLS, Attica,  
ISAAC C. BRONSON, Warsaw,  
J. GIBSON, Bergen,  
Rev. J. B. WILCOX, Castile.

As no farther business could be transacted in consequence of the noise and disturbance of the intruders, the meeting, at about 6 o'clock, adjourned to meet at Warsaw, on Wednesday the 23d instant, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

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WARSAW, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1836.

Met pursuant to adjournment. At 11 o'clock, the meeting was called to order. Hon. HENRY BREWSTER, President of the Society, in the chair.

Meeting opened by prayer, by Rev. Samuel H. Gridley of Perry.

The Secretaries of the Society not being present, A. W. YOUNG and F. C. D. M'KAY were appointed Secretaries pro tem.

On motion of H. Phœnix,

*Resolved*, That a roll be made of the members present to-day.

The Constitution of the Society was then read by A. W. Young.

The proceedings of the meeting at Batavia, including the resolutions and doings of the committee of fifty, were then read by S. F. Phœnix; and the substance of the answer thereto by the committee of five, (the answer itself not being present,) was stated by H. Lyman.

The meeting adjourned to meet in half an hour.

TWO O'CLOCK, P. M.

Meeting opened by prayer by Rev. Mr. Chamberlain of Perry.

An Address was then delivered by Gen. John D. Landon.

On motion of E. Pomeroy, Esq. an expression of the meeting in relation to the principles contained in the Address being called for, the audience manifested their assent to the same, by rising, unanimously.

The report of the Executive Committee was then read by the chairman of the board.

The report of the committee on Address and Declaration of Sentiment was received: the Address was referred to the committee of publication, and the Declaration of Sentiment was read by the chairman of the said committee, and accepted; and the same was adopted as a preamble to the Constitution of the Society.



The committee on Resolutions reported the following, which were adopted :

*Resolved*, That the holding of man as a chattel; is a sin ; contrary to the principles of republicanism ; opposed to the great law of love ; and forbidden by the pure precepts of religion and morality.

*Resolved*, That as each state in our valuable union has the sole right to legislate upon the subject of slavery, in all cases, within its own territorial limits and jurisdiction, any interference on the part of the general government to abolish slavery in any state, by law, would be both undesirable and unconstitutional.

*Resolved*, That while legislation must be the ultimate means used to abolish slavery, in any state, moral suasion is the only weapon that can be wielded by us to effect so desirable an object.

*Resolved*, That as slavery is a sin, it ought immediately to be repented of and forsaken ; and that whatever danger may be apprehended from the immediate abolition of slavery, the danger lies only in its *continuance*.

*Resolved*, That to admit slavery to be a sin, and yet to deny the duty of its immediate abolition, is an impeachment of the Divine Character ; charging the Great Lawgiver with the inconsistency of condemning and justifying sin at the same time.

*Resolved*, That the existence of the slave trade and slavery in the District of Columbia, is a foul blot on our country, and ought immediately to be wiped away ; and that the freemen of the non-slaveholding states are accountable for their farther continuance.

Whereas the constitution of this state declares, that no law shall be passed to "restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press:" therefore

*Resolved*, That the right freely, and in a proper manner, to discuss the question of slavery, or any other sin, or subject, is fully guaranteed to every citizen of the state.

*Resolved*, That the question now presented to the American people for their consideration and decision is, whether slavery shall be immediately abolished, or continue until oppression shall have driven the slave to assert his rights by resort to physical force.

*Resolved*, That by the 10th article of the Treaty of Ghent, the United States stand pledged to exert themselves to effect the entire abolition of the traffic in human flesh ; and that while this sinful traffic is continued within the District of Columbia, our nation (if opposed to its abolition) stands convicted, at the door of the Capitol, of a refusal to redeem its plighted faith.

*Resolved*, That the spirit of disorder and riot which so alarmingly prevails throughout our country, should be attributed to the countenance and support which the low and degraded receive from men otherwise respectable and meritorious.

*Resolved*, That the course that has been pursued, in relation to discussing the subject of slavery, by the citizens of numerous places, and by some individuals who hold places of honor and trust, as officers under our state and national constitutions, is to be deprecated as having a tendency to muzzle the press ; bring a stain upon our free institutions ; prevent free discussion in general ; and, if persisted in, to deprive us of the liberties achieved by our Revolutionary forefathers.

*Resolved*, That the doctrine of immediate abolition is the dictate alike of humanity, patriotism and christianity ; and those, who in the face of the light, and arguments and facts, now spread out before the public eye, are determined to advocate American Slavery, or apologize for its continuance, ought to disclaim that sense of justice, and that sympathy for the poor and the oppressed, without which christianity, or patriotism, or humanity, is but a name—a mere carcass without the spirit.

*Resolved*, That it is the appropriate work of this generation to carry out the declared self-evident principles of Human Liberty, as proclaimed to the world by our patriot fathers ; and should we, their descendants, neglect the temporal and eternal interest of two and a quarter millions enslaved countrymen, through fear of offending the oppressor, it would prove us unworthy our birthright, and recreants to our God and our country.

H. Chandler, Esq. your present chairman, and subscribed by him and the other gentlemen whose names are appended, and also by reference to the verbal and written statements of opinion in relation to the meeting, made to F. C. D. M'Kay, Esq. previous to the appointment of the meeting, and which have been furnished by him, as follows :

"It having been suggested that the Genesee County Anti-Slavery Society are desirous of holding their first annual meeting in the village of Batavia, at a short day hence; and we, the undersigned, having been applied to by the Agent of the said Society, for an expression of opinion in relation to the holding such meeting, state as follows: That although we doubt the policy, in general, of the advocates of immediate abolition, and many of their measures for effecting the objects which they profess to have in view; yet we are utterly opposed to any measures, the tendency of which would interfere with the individual rights of any citizen, or which should abridge the expression of opinion in an orderly and quiet manner.

"DANIEL H. CHANDLER,  
 "PHINEAS L. TRACY,  
 "RICHARD SMITH,  
 "BENJAMIN PRINGLE,  
 "H. U. SOPER,  
 "J. V. D. VERPLANCK,  
 "J. D. MERRILL."

"*Batavia, March 5, 1836.*

"I subscribe to the above sentiment, but as a matter of policy, should not recommend a meeting to be held at this time.

T. CARY."

"Hon. David E. Evans said, when consulted as to the propriety of holding the anniversary at Batavia, that he had not the least objection to the meeting being held, though he believed the abolitionists were doing no good.

"E. C. Dibble, Esq. said in substance the same.

"Dr. Choate, the same.

"I. A. Verplanck, Esq. approved of the sentiment of the paper signed by Mr. Chandler and others, but thought it bad policy to hold the meeting.

"Mr. Stephen Grant said, the sentiment of the paper was good, but said nothing as to the propriety or impropriety of holding the meeting.

"Justices C. M. Russell and J. G. Hoyt refused to sign the paper, though they approved the sentiment it expressed, and said they should, as a matter of course, use their official authority to prevent a disturbance, in case it should become necessary."

Such being the circumstances under which the appointment was made, we feel sensibly embarrassed, in adopting a course of action in the present emergency.-- On the one hand, we feel sincerely anxious to yield to the wishes, or even the *prejudices* of the citizens of this place. On the other hand, we feel that we are your neighbors, your friends, as we had supposed; citizens of your own county, and of a *free country*, having sacredly guaranteed to us, by our laws and constitution, the *unqualified right* peaceably to assemble and deliberate upon such matters as *we* may deem important to the best interests of our common country; and we cannot consistently with our views of self-respect, and the sacred rights and privileges of citizenship, consent to acknowledge the right of any persons, or body of men, few or many, to molest us when assembled, or to require us to cease our deliberations; and we cannot but express our surprise that the citizens of Batavia should allow themselves to be so excited as to come out with railing accusations against a body of between one and two hundred of their fellow citizens from all parts of the county, quietly assembled in a county building, and all for the heinous offence of not **THINKING** like themselves!

This Society has done nothing, and intends to do nothing, to contravene the laws of the land, or the real interests of any portion of the union. The committee have deemed it quite proper, without hearing our views, and evidently in great ignorance of them, to condemn us, and profess themselves to entertain widely different sentiments. This, as all must see, decides nothing: it at most only shows that this society and the committee of fifty entertain different opinions.

But admitting that we are wrong and the committee right, this society has yet to learn that the axiom of one of the fathers of our republic, that "Error of opinion may be safely tolerated, where truth is left free to combat it," is not true in its ut-

most latitude. If the citizens of Batavia fear contamination from the principles of anti-slavery, they have only to decline attendance upon our meeting, and most assuredly they will suffer no defilement. We *compel* no one to attend, and certainly it is not very complimentary to the good sense of the *undisturbed, unagitated* population of the village, to suppose they are incapable of judging for themselves upon the propriety of their attendance. Are we required to adjourn in haste, lest all Batavia should embrace the abhorrent doctrines of abolition? Is there a consciousness that truth is mighty, and must prevail?

Nothing is more evident from the resolutions presented by the committee, than that the citizens passing them, are not well informed as to the real sentiments of abolitionists; and this society hereby disclaims all and every intention of interfering with the constitutional rights of any portion of the people of this union, of exciting the slaves to insurrection or acts of violence and murder, or any other acts directly or indirectly calculated to produce anarchy and confusion; and they deny that the accredited publications of the American Society have any such tendency.

If the present meeting had been allowed to proceed in its business, the society had hoped their principles would have been better understood. Had the society anticipated the opposition which is now made, its officers might have made other arrangements for the meeting, and it is singular, as these proceedings of the citizens were some time maturing, that they were not kind enough to apprise the officers of the society of such opposition.

The society cannot otherwise reply to the insinuation, that their motives are not such as they profess, than to refer the committee to their conduct as citizens of the county and members of the communities in which they reside, which, after all, furnishes one of the safest tests of motives and intentions. But "it is a small thing to be judged of man."

On the whole, therefore, this society does not feel called upon to yield to the request of the citizens of Batavia, as presented by the committee, and we would suggest to the committee that inasmuch as *no possible injury* can accrue to the citizens, if they refrain from attending our meeting, and inasmuch as the committee declare that they would *deeply regret any acts of violence and discord*, whether they will not feel bound, as good citizens, to exert themselves *in good faith*, to prevent the acts of disorder which they *profess* to deprecate; and thus give us a *practical demonstration*, that they are governed by the best of motives, whether we are or not. Should fifty as respectable citizens as those who have waited upon us, thus act, the result can be easily anticipated.

The report having been read, it was, on motion,  
*Resolved*, That the report be accepted and adopted.

It was also, on motion,

*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to wait on the chairman of the committee of fifty, and communicate to him the answer of the meeting.

The committee appointed for this purpose, consisted of F. C. D. M'Kay and S. M. Gates, Esquires, and Gen. Landon.

The chairman of the Committee on Nominations then reported the following list of officers for the meeting and the ensuing year, who were unanimously elected:



*Resolved*, That the formation of Local Societies in the several towns in the county of Genesee, should be encouraged, as of great importance in carrying into entire effect, the object of this Society.

*Resolved*, That as our hope of success is in the blessing of God accompanying the truth, we will press upon all christians the propriety and importance of attending the Monthly Concert of prayer for the peaceful and immediate abolition of slavery.

*Resolved*, That while this Society disclaims all participation in, and connexion with, any political party, we will ever remonstrate against any doings of either of the political parties of the day, which have a tendency to abridge our rights.

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committee be instructed to enquire into the expediency of establishing a Press in the county of Genesee, that will advocate the freedom of speech, of the press, and the inalienable rights of man; and in case said Committee shall deem it expedient to establish said press, we pledge ourselves to raise the sum of One Thousand Dollars for its support the first year.

*Resolved*, That the following persons be appointed delegates to represent this society at the next anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, to be held in the city of New York, the 12th day of May next, viz: Isaac C. Bronson, Augustus Frank, R. W. Lyman, S. Constock, F. C. D. McKay, Roswell Gould, Charles Freeman, J. S. Lambright, John B. Halsted, Charles O. Shepard, J. G. Pierce, K. Gillet, James Gibson, — Andrus, (Bergen,) Jason Lathrop, Ezra Scovel.

*Resolved*, That this Society is bound to render special thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God, for the unanimity and quiet and christian spirit, which have pervaded our present meeting, and the proceedings in which we have been permitted to engage.

*Resolved*, That the proceedings of this meeting be signed by the Chairman and Secretaries, published, and extensively circulated in this county.

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## ADDRESS.

*Fellow-Citizens of the County of Genesee:*

We address you upon a subject of deep interest. The voice of two and a half millions of our countrymen—our brethren—groaning under a hopeless and cruel tyranny, cries to us for relief. Though born in the same land, and endowed with the same inalienable rights as ourselves, they have been robbed of these rights, and made the victims of an oppression, unparalleled for its enormity, by the practice of any other nation, barbarous or civilized.

The subject of American Slavery is beginning to awaken the public attention. In what light soever it is viewed, it presents a repulsive aspect. Like all other evils, it grows more inveterate by time; and, unless seasonably checked, its extirpation will be rendered impossible. It has grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength, till it is become an evil of fearful magnitude.

And is it true, that slavery possesses a stronger hold in this country than it has done at any former period of our national existence? Unquestionably. The time was when the evils of slavery were universally acknowledged; and when the subject could be freely and familiarly discussed.—Societies, to encourage and hasten its abolition, were formed in the slave, as well as the free, states. At the head of these societies, were some of the purest and most distinguished patriots the nation could boast. They sought to accomplish their object as do the friends of equal rights at the present day; yet we do not learn, either that they were charged with med-

itating the dissolution of the union ; or with meddling with a matter that did not concern them. Most zealously did they advocate the rights of the slave ; yet they were neither stigmatized as fanatics, nor charged as disorganizers and incendiaries. Pure, disinterested benevolence was supposed to be their governing motive. The names of Franklin, Jay and Edwards, are alone sufficient to rescue from reproach the abolitionists of the eighteenth century.

Fellow-citizens : *we* profess to be actuated by similar motives. The emancipation of the millions of our brethren, bound down under a galling and relentless despotism, and their restoration to those rights to which, by the laws of God and nature, they are entitled, is the great object of our association and our labors.

The work before us is indeed a formidable one. Opposition, in a variety of shapes, attends us on every side. But this opposition can never deter abolitionists from their purpose. And why? Not, as some erroneously imagine, because they are impelled by a blind fanaticism, which is reckless of consequences. No. They have examined the subject in all its bearings ; and they are firmly persuaded that their principles are founded in TRUTH. They feel assured that their cause has the favor of Omnipotence ; and that, consequently, its ultimate triumph over human opposition is certain. Here is the ground of their confidence. Thus believing, they invite their fellow-citizens to a close and candid scrutiny of their principles. Having no personal interests to be subserved, they desire that their sentiments should be brought to the light ; and if they shall be found not to be based upon truth and justice, or even good policy, they will be cheerfully abandoned.

But it is worthy of remark, that wherever the right of discussion has been most freely exercised, there, invariably, have the principles of abolitionism gained ground with the greatest rapidity. No wonder, therefore, that their opponents shrink from discussion. Slavery cannot bear the light. The only means by which its advocates hope to perpetuate its existence, is to bar the door against discussion. With regard to any other cause, this would be deemed conclusive evidence of its weakness ; and any attempt, by legislation, to infringe the right of men freely to speak or publish their sentiments on any other subject, would meet the universal execration of a republican community.

It is deemed proper on this occasion, to give a more particular statement of our sentiments, which, plainly as they have at all times been declared, are nevertheless very imperfectly understood ; and are often greatly misrepresented :

“ We hold these truths to be self-evident : that all men are created equal ; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness : That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” And therefore that all laws by which one man is made the property of another, is a flagrant violation of the law of God, and repugnant to every principle of justice.

The sentiments of abolitionists are further set forth in the 2d and 3d articles of the constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and are as follows :

“ The objects of this society are the entire abolition of slavery in the United States. While it admits that each state in which slavery exists,



has, by the constitution of the United States, the exclusive right to legislate in regard to its abolition in that state, it shall aim to convince all our fellow-citizens, by arguments addressed to their understandings and consciences, that slaveholding is a heinous crime in the sight of God; and that the duty, safety and best interests of all concerned, require its immediate abandonment, without expatriation. The society will also endeavor, in a constitutional way, to influence Congress to put an end to the domestic slave trade; and to abolish slavery in all those portions of our common country which come under its control, especially in the District of Columbia; and likewise to prevent the extension of it to any state that may hereafter be admitted to the Union.

“This society shall aim to elevate the character and condition of the people of color, by encouraging their intellectual, moral and religious improvement, and by removing public prejudice; that thus they may, according to their intellectual and moral worth, share an equality with the whites, of civil and religious privileges; but the society will never, in any way, countenance the oppressed in vindicating their rights, by resorting to physical force.”

These, fellow-citizens, are our sentiments, and these the means by which we seek to effect the abolition of slavery in the United States. We ask, what is there in the principles here avowed, fanatical or incendiary?—What is there in all this that is unconstitutional? or that can justify the present unconstitutional warfare upon the freedom of the press?

Let us for a moment examine the character of that precious institution for whose safety so deep a solicitude is manifested! The character of American Slavery is by a great portion of the community very imperfectly known.

The Louisiana code defines a slave to be “one who is in the power of a master to whom he belongs. The master may dispose of his person, his industry, his labor; he can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire any thing but which must belong to his master.”

By the laws of South Carolina, “slaves shall be deemed, taken, reputed and adjudged to be chattels personal in the hands of their masters and possessors, to all intents and purposes whatsoever;” and that “all their issue and offspring, born, or to be born, shall be, and they are hereby declared to be and remain forever hereafter absolute slaves, and shall follow the condition of their mother.”

Slave laws, not satisfied with protecting existing slavery, provide for reducing free persons to hereditary bondage. In several of the states, fines are imposed on free negroes; and if they cannot pay them, they are sentenced to perpetual slavery, and their children after them. In most of the slave states, if a negro cannot *prove* that he is free, he is by law sold at public auction as a slave for life. This is both law and practice in the District of Columbia, and with the sanction of Congress. In no civilized country but the slave states, are children punished for the crimes of their parents; but in these, the children of free blacks, to the latest posterity, are condemned to servitude for the most trivial offences, and often for the most innocent acts of their ancestors.

A master may punish his slave at pleasure; and if the slave, while suffering chastisement, shall offer to resist his master, he may be killed.

In South Carolina, if a slave be killed “on a sudden heat or passion, or by undue correction,” the murderer is to be fined, or imprisoned six months.

Slaves are compelled to labor fifteen hours a day; while the laws forbid that criminals in the penitentiaries shall be required to labor more than ten hours a day.

The slave is denied the right of owning any property. Should property of any kind come into his possession, it may be taken from him by any person. In several of the states, fines are imposed upon the masters for permitting their slaves to work for wages on their own account, or to raise cotton, or keep stock of any kind. Slaves may, like cattle, be leased or mortgaged, or sold on execution.

A slave is not entitled to the protection of law. As he is not allowed to appear in a court of justice, he has no redress of grievances. The life of a slave may be taken with impunity. Although the murderer, on conviction, suffers death; yet, the testimony of slaves not being admitted, he escapes the penalty of the law, if he be careful to perpetrate the crime in the absence of white men.

In Georgia, a slave, for striking a white person, is, for the first offence, punished at the discretion of the justice, not extending to life or limb; for the second offence, he suffers *death*.

The most cruel and inhuman punishments are inflicted for acts not criminal, and which, in many instances, the slave does not know to be forbidden by law. In Georgia, any person finding a slave without license off the plantation, or without the limits of the town to which he belongs, may inflict upon his bare back twenty lashes. In other states, the punishment is at the discretion of the justice. If more than seven slaves shall be found together in the highway, each of them is subject to twenty lashes.

In cases of crime, slaves are denied the right of trial by jury, in several of the states; in others, it is granted in capital cases only.

The laws forbidding mental instruction to slaves, are, if possible, still more odious. It is perhaps generally known, that severe penalties are inflicted upon the whites for teaching negroes, free as well as slaves, to read or write.

The reason assigned for these laws is, that education tends to excite dissatisfaction in the minds of the slaves, and to produce insurrection and rebellion.

The marriage relation is not recognized among the slaves. The husband and wife may at any time be separated, and sold in the market. Although they may be formally married, they enjoy no legal rights in the marriage state. Neither has a slave any legal authority over his child.— Thus is the slave, in almost every respect, reduced to the level of a brute.

But the worst feature of American Slavery is yet to be named. Slaves are accountable beings. And yet they are, in this land of "gospel light," practically denied access to the word of life. It is generally believed among us, that though slaves may not read the scriptures, they enjoy extensively the benefit of religious instruction. But a reference to the slave laws, will show their religious advantages to be very limited.

In Georgia, any justice of the peace may, at his discretion, break up any religious assembly of slaves, and may order *each slave present* to be "corrected without trial, by receiving on the bare back, twenty-five stripes with a whip, switch or cow-skin."

In South Carolina, slaves may not meet together for the purpose of "religious worship," before sunrise or after sunset, unless the *majority* of

the meeting be composed of white persons, under the penalty of twenty lashes well laid on." As it will be rather difficult for the slave to divine before he goes to the meeting, how many blacks, and how many whites will be present, and of course which color will have the "majority," a due regard for his back will keep him from the meeting.

In Virginia, all evening meetings of slaves at any meeting-house, are unequivocally forbidden.

Slaves do, it is true, to some extent, enjoy the means of religious instruction. They may attend church on the sabbath. But to this there is little inducement to the slave. Such is his ignorance, that most of the sermons he may hear, are to him a dead letter. Not being permitted to read the Bible, slaves are lamentably destitute of religious knowledge, being scarcely a single remove from a state of perfect heathenism. Oh, what awful responsibility rests upon those who thus trifle with the souls of their fellow men! keeping them ignorant of that God to whom they are accountable, and of that gospel through which alone "life and immortality are brought to light."

Here, fellow-citizens, we have a faint picture of slavery as it exists in this country. Can a more wicked and heaven-daring system of oppression be conceived? Well might the illustrious Jefferson, that distinguished advocate of the inalienable rights of man, exclaim, in view of slavery: "I tremble for my country, when I reflect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever." Considering it among possible events, that at some future day an exchange of situations between the white and colored population of this country would take place; and that it might become probable by supernatural interference, most truly did he say, "The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest." 'The uniform dealings of God with oppressors in all ages of the world, forbid the idea that his judgment will not ere long overtake this guilty nation.

What a system of stupendous fraud and oppression is that of American Slavery! What a despotism! Let Americans no longer profess to be shocked at the favorite doctrine of eastern monarchists, "*the divine right of kings*," while they support among themselves a species of tyranny incomparably more odious, and more destructive of human rights, than any that is practised in the old world. The vassals of the Russian Autocrat, and even of the Turkish Sultan, are free men, compared with the slaves of republican America! Degraded and oppressed as are the subjects of these tyrants, they have, to some extent, the power over their own lives and persons and property; and though the rights of conscience are much restricted, they possess the privilege of being instructed fully in the principles of their own religion; which, corrupt as it is, does not authorize such a system of injustice as that which is practised by the pretended friends of civil and religious liberty in this country, who impiously claim for this system of legalized wrong and outrage, the sanction of the religion of the American's bible—a religion which breathes a spirit of peace, and good will to men; and which expressly commands all men to deal justly and love mercy; "to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free." When will men—christians!—cease to pervert the truths of the Bible, in order to justify an institution which originated in selfishness, and which is sustained by robbery and blood?

Who among the despots of the east would not blush to advocate the



right of one man to hold exclusive property in another? It is left to the people of *free, republican* America, to exhibit to an astonished world, the hypocrisy of professing to be the exclusive friends of the inalienable rights of man, while they practically invade the dearest rights with which man is endowed by a benevolent Creator. How long shall we continue to be held up to the scorn of surrounding nations? While we justly boast of a form of government surpassing, at least in its theory of republican equality, that of any other, it is confidently believed, that the example of no other nation contributes more, at the present day, to retard the progress of republican principles.

In the very territory chosen as the seat of the National Government, are its citizens legally authorized to kidnap and imprison their fellow freemen, and to sell them into perpetual bondage. On this consecrated spot, over which the representatives of a free people have exclusive jurisdiction, men are by law *licensed*, for a specified sum of money, to carry on their unholy traffic in the bodies and souls of their fellow men! "Tell it not in Gath!"

Who can portray all the evils consequent upon such a system? Its influence upon the slave is corrupting in the highest degree. Ignorance, one of the inseparable concomitants of slavery, is always the parent of vice. It is utterly incompatible with the existence of correct moral principle. It incapacitates the slave for deciding between right and wrong.—He cannot be governed by those noble motives by which a freeman is actuated. He gives full license to his evil passions; because he has no reputation to lose. Licentiousness, which naturally results from the absence of the marriage relation, prevails to a very great extent, among the slave population. But it is not confined to them; this abomination of abominations is practised not less extensively among the free population, and is not limited to color.

Another consequence of slavery is, that it renders free labor disreputable, and creates unnatural distinctions in society. The cultivation of the earth being that species of labor which is performed by slaves, free laboring men are looked upon by the aristocratic slaveholder with disdain. In consequence of this prejudice, multitudes of young men, instead of securing to themselves an honorable and competent livelihood by the cultivation of the soil, crowd themselves into the professions, already filled to overflowing, and fail of success.

The following extract from a speech of Mr. Leigh, in the Virginia Convention, shows in what estimate the laboring man is held by the southern aristocracy:

"There must be some peasantry, and as the country fills up there must be more, that is, men who tend the herds and dig the soil, who have neither real or personal capital of their own, and who earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow. They, by this scheme, are all to be represented, but none of our slaves, and yet in political economy the latter fill exactly the same place.

"I ask gentlemen to say, whether they believe that those who depend on their daily labor for their daily subsistence, can or do ever enter into political affairs? They never do, never will, never can."

Is it to be supposed that there will be an industrious and prosperous white population where such anti-republican sentiments prevail?

Believing slavery to be sinful, abolitionists hold that it ought to be im-

mediately abandoned. The only effectual remedy for the evils of slavery is its immediate and total abolition. To this plan, however, there are a multitude of objections. But with other evils, so with slavery: the sooner it is abolished, the better.

A more favorable period will never arrive. Slaves can never be in a better condition to be emancipated than they are at present. It is idle to suppose that they can be *prepared* for freedom while they remain in slavery. Judging from the progress they have made during the last fifty years, in the process of preparation, when will they be fit to enjoy liberty?—The first step towards their preparation to enjoy the blessings of freedom, is to give them freedom. Release them from their prison of moral darkness; let them enjoy the light of science and of revelation; restore to them their inalienable rights; and you will have removed every obstacle to their becoming qualified for freedom.

But it is said our course is unconstitutional! it is forbidden by the compact between the North and South; and as the constitution recognizes slavery, we may not interfere with the rights of the South. We ask the objector, what article or section of the constitution prohibits men from speaking their sentiments? Nay, what privilege is more explicitly and unequivocally granted by the constitution, than that of writing and speaking on *all* subjects, slavery not excepted?

But we are charged with an unwarrantable interference with the sacred right of property. The right to hold slaves is a legal right. So, also, is the right of the rum dealer a legal right; but does it hence follow that it is unconstitutional or unlawful to persuade him to abandon a traffic which spreads misery and death among his fellow men? And is it not the constitutional right of the friends of humanity, by means of associations or otherwise, to interfere with the right of property, by discouraging all men from the use of the poison? We have yet to learn that it is an illegal interference with the right of property, to endeavor, by argument and persuasion, and expostulation, to effect the abolition of any evil. Did we seek to accomplish our purpose by any other mode, we might indeed be justly obnoxious to this charge; and we should then probably be told that we should be tenfold more likely to succeed by first convincing the slaveholder of the enormity of his guilt, by calling public sentiment to bear upon the subject; and by argument and reason to persuade him voluntarily to relinquish his unjust practice.

Still we are told that no good can possibly result from our efforts; they only tend to exasperate the slaveholder, and drive him to the practice of greater cruelty towards the slave. Wonderful kindness! There is, then, it seems, a degree of cruelty which can move the feelings of even the apologists of slavery! But we do not believe that masters will become more cruel and rigorous in their treatment of their slaves. Sensible that the public eye is upon them, they will rather be inclined to practise greater clemency, and thus deprive the abolitionists of one of the weapons they now wield with no small advantage against slavery.

Again, we are told that the propagation of our sentiments will excite insurrections among the slaves. And there are those who do not charge us with bad *intentions*, who nevertheless profess to believe that such is the *tendency* of our measures. It would not be strange if the misrepresentations of our opponents should cause insurrections. If the slaves should be made to believe that abolitionists teach the doctrine that it would be

right for the slaves to cut their masters' throats, and that they would be countenanced in attempting to obtain their freedom by force, then might there be danger of insurrection. But if the slaves learn the real views of the abolitionists, they will wait till their deliverance is peaceably effected. Besides, our publications are not addressed to the slaves. Our opponents are challenged to point out a single instance in which a paper has been directed to the slave. And what if it had been? Papers might with equal propriety be directed to the unlettered cattle of the south. But admitting they were able to read them, they cannot procure them except through the hands of the masters themselves. And is it to be supposed that the masters would throw them into the way of their slaves? But were every slave in the union to have free access to our publications, and made acquainted with their contents, instead of exciting insurrections, they would have a directly contrary tendency. The slave would learn that abolitionists would deprecate any and every act of hostility on his part, as tending only to protract his oppression, and retard the day of his deliverance. We have little hope that slavery will ever be abolished, but by the voluntary consent of the slaveholders. Hence our addresses and appeals are made to them, and not to their slaves.

"But if you persist," say our opponents, "the union will be dissolved." Especially does the south in this way appeal to our fears. But who will dissolve the union? The *abolitionists* love the union too well to do any thing that would endanger its perpetuity. They can, moreover, have no conceivable motive for so doing. But the south, the south will surely withdraw, if this warfare against slavery does not speedily cease. But what possible motive can the south have for dissolving the union? Will they by such an act escape the odium which the north attach to slaveholding? Will it not be looked upon as still more disreputable? But what can the south hope to gain by a separation? They have nothing to gain, but every thing to *lose*. Would their property be rendered more secure? While the compact remains, the north is bound to surrender their fugitive slaves. But let the compact be broken, and the moment the slave passes the division line, he becomes his own property. Where, too, would be their security against insurrection? If they are now in danger from this source, what would be their apprehensions when they had no longer the pledge of the nation to protect them? For a moment, imagine the south in the capacity of a distinct and separate nation. Suppose there should be a rising of the blacks in any portion of their territory. How would the insurrection be put down? Would a call be made upon the northern portion, or upon one of their sister states for assistance? Such application would be unavailing. They would receive an answer, probably, somewhat as follows: "Brethren, we indeed pity your condition, and we would fain fly to your rescue; but what will be our own condition? Who will remain to protect our own homes and firesides? We cannot consent to leave our wives and children to the tender mercies of an oppressed foe, a foe instigated by a spirit of revenge, and retaliation for grievous wrongs." As the slave population is continually gaining upon that of the white, the danger would be constantly increasing; and it is by no means chimerical to suppose that, at no distant day, the order of things would be entirely reversed. The soil would be owned by the blacks; and if the whites themselves should not become the property of the blacks, it would be because the latter would be actuated by a stronger sense of humanity and justice than *their* oppressors had been.



But it is asked, would it be safe to emancipate the slaves, and let them loose upon the community? We reply first, that we do not propose to let them loose, in the sense in which our opponents understand the term, letting loose. We are indeed for loosing the bands of oppression, and for entirely and immediately abolishing the relation of master and slave. But while we would do this, we would place them under the strong restraints of the law. We would deal with them precisely as we do with white citizens. We would make them answerable for every violation of the law and of good order in society. But there are many who fear, after all, that the slaves, if emancipated, would wreak their vengeance upon their masters. But what does history teach us on the subject? Among the numerous instances of immediate and unconditional emancipation which it records, not a solitary case has realized the previous fears of those who opposed the measure as unsafe or inexpedient. The safety of emancipation has been most signally tested, very lately, in the Island of Antigua, where, on the first day of August, 1834, liberty was proclaimed to the entire slave population, consisting of fifteen slaves to one white man. Not one case of insurrection has as yet occurred; and the blacks are rising in respectability; and education and civilization are rapidly advancing among them. But had we no example of this kind before us, we should consider immediate emancipation the only safe and proper remedy for slavery. If slavery is wrong, and an offence against God, it is our duty to abandon it at once. And who is he that dares so to impeach the character of a wise and benevolent Creator, as to suppose that he has connected evil consequences with the performance of a plain and positive duty? In other words, that it is not the duty of his creatures to do what he tells them is right?

But, again, admitting all we have said, you ask, "what do you hope to gain by your operations in the free states? Public sentiment is correct at the north. There are here no advocates of slavery." We answer, we have much to do here. But, we do not admit that public sentiment is correct at the north. No general expression of public opinion has yet been given against slavery—at least not such an expression as the slaveholders can construe into a deep detestation of the *practice* of slavery.—On the contrary, we daily hear men sympathizing with the slaveholder in the insecurity of his right of property in his fellow man, and join with him in denouncing those who alone are endeavoring to put an end to this abominable traffic in human flesh. But we have already indubitable evidence that abolition societies do have effect at the south. What has produced the present commotion there? This shows that our efforts at the north are felt, and deeply felt, throughout the whole dominions of slavery. Even though they should succeed in their attempt to induce the government to place its imperial veto upon the exercise of our constitutional right to send our publications among them, it would avail them nothing. Let us get public sentiment right here, and slavery will not long find a footing at the south.

The present controversy with slavery has given rise to another important question—a question which, there is but too much reason to fear, will, in its issue, vitally affect our constitutional liberties. One of the dearest rights which any people can enjoy—a right, in fact, without which other rights cannot long be maintained, is the liberty of speech and of the press. This right has been most violently assailed; and the warfare against it is

continued with unabated vigor, on the part of the advocates of slavery.— And do the people discover in this no cause of alarm? *All* men have hitherto enjoyed the right to speak and publish their sentiments on *all* subjects. Abolitionists, it would seem, are to be prohibited from the enjoyment of this right, which is possessed alike by Christians, Jesuits, Infidels, Atheists and Mahometans. That is, all men may speak and print their sentiments on every subject but that of the *inalienable rights of man!* This is the right which, of all others, should be the last to be attacked.— And strange, indeed, it is, that the people can witness, with such manifest unconcern, this flagrant attempt to destroy the very bulwark of their liberties. But three short years since, the right of free discussion was inviolate. Who would have ventured the prediction, that within so short a period, the Executive of the nation, and the Executives of half a dozen of the states of this union, would call in the aid of legislation to suppress the discussion of any subject—especially the subject of HUMAN RIGHTS!— Look at the language of some of these public functionaries:

Says Gov. M'Duffie, in his official message: "The laws of every community should punish this species of interference with *death without benefit of clergy.*"

Gov. Everett of Massachusetts, holds the following language: "Whatever by direct and necessary operation is *calculated* to excite an insurrection among the slaves, has been held, by highly respectable legal authority, *an offence* against the peace of this commonwealth, which may be prosecuted as a  *misdemeanor at common law.*"

Gov. Marcy of New York, says: "Without the *power to pass such laws*, the state would not possess all the necessary means for preserving their external relations of peace among themselves."

These sentiments have found a hearty response in a large portion of the American people.

In view of these facts, let it no longer be said that abolitionists have nothing to do at the north. Wherever such sentiments prevail, the friends of liberty cannot rest upon their arms, and be guiltless.

Friends of emancipation! what is our duty at the present crisis? Shall we renounce our principles, and yield the contest to slavery? We answer, No: What though we fail in the struggle? Our duty is plain, and we dare not recede. But we know if we are true to our principles, we shall *not* fail. The only danger lies in forsaking our principles. We have already accomplished much. Our principles are rapidly advancing. They are sustained by the Bible and our consciences. Let us continue to propagate our sentiments. Men may for a while disregard them; but they cannot always resist the truth. Prejudice will at length give way to conviction; and all men will think and act alike on this subject. Slavery, that broadest, foulest blot upon our country's honor, will be removed; and we shall be, what we profess to be, a nation of freemen.

HENRY BREWSTER, President.

A. W. YOUNG, }  
F. C. D. M'KAY, } Secretaries, pro tem.



## DECLARATION OF SENTIMENT.

Believing that God hath made of one blood, all the nations of men; that with Him there is no respect of persons; and that He requires of all that they should do unto others as they would others should do unto them: and holding, with the venerated signers of the Declaration of our Independence, "these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"—we believe American Slavery to be incompatible with the laws of God, the requirements of the gospel, and in direct opposition to the healthful influences of all republican institutions—that it is a system of injustice and oppression, calculated, in its very nature, to sow discord in our national councils; to impoverish and enfeeble slave-holding states; to bring honest industry into contempt, and to make the poor an easy and continued prey to the lawless passions of the avaricious, the rapacious and licentious—that it begets and fosters an aristocratic spirit, besetting the pampered lordling of despotism, rather than American citizens—that wherever it prevails, it breathes a moral and political pestilence, alike destructive to the endearments and purity of domestic and social life, and to the privileges and principles of republican freemen—that its continuance, in this boasted land of freedom, in the view of all enlightened nations, pronounces our Declaration of Independence the "poetry of philanthropy," rather than the dictates of common sense and common justice: Therefore, we hold that duty unto God our Creator, and love to our fellow men, as well as the character, the destinies and safety of our common country, demand its entire, immediate and universal abolition.

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## CONSTITUTION

OF THE

### GENESEE COUNTY ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

ARTICLE I. This Society shall be called the Genesee County Anti-Slavery Society, auxiliary to the New York State Society.

ART. II. The object of this Society is the entire abolition of slavery in the United States. Its aim shall be, to convince all our citizens, by arguments addressed to the understanding and conscience, that slavery is a great crime in the sight of God, a constant transgression of his holy law, and that the best interests of all concerned, require its immediate abandonment.

ART. III. This Society shall aim to elevate the character and ameliorate the condition of the people of color, by encouraging their intellectual, moral and religious improvement; but it never will, in any way, countenance a resort to physical force to obtain their freedom.

ART. IV. Any person who assents to the principles expressed in the foregoing articles, and signs this Constitution, and is not a slaveholder, may be a member of this Society, and shall be entitled to vote at its meetings.

ART. V. The officers of this Society shall be a President, Vice Presidents, a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer and an Auditor.

ART. VI. The Society shall, at its first meeting, and always thereafter, at its Annual Meeting, elect an Executive Committee, to consist of not less than five members, and not more than seven, who shall have power to enact their own by-laws, meet upon their own adjournment, fill any vacancy in their body, employ agents, direct the Treasurer in the application of all moneys, and call special meetings of the Society. They shall make arrangements for all the meetings of the Society, make an annual written Report of their doings, and shall hold stated meetings and adopt the most energetic measures in their power to advance the objects of this Society.

ART. VII. All the officers of this Society mentioned in the 5th article, shall be

*ex officio* members of the Executive Committee; but a majority of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum to transact business.

ART. VIII. The President shall preside at all the meetings of the Society, or in his absence, one of the Vice Presidents, or in their absence, a President pro tem. The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Society.—The Recording Secretary shall notify all meetings of the Society and of the Executive Committee, and shall keep records of the same. The Treasurer shall collect the subscriptions, make payments at the directions of the Executive Committee, and present a written and audited account, to accompany the annual report.

ART. IX. The annual meeting of this Society shall be held each year at such time and place as the Executive Committee may direct, when the account of the Treasurer shall be presented, the annual report read, appropriate addresses delivered, the officers chosen, and such other business transacted as shall be deemed expedient.

ART. X. All the meetings of this Society shall be opened and closed by prayer.

## TREASURER'S REPORT.

<i>Receipts as follows:</i>		Bro't up,	\$125 50
Of H. Phœnix,	\$20 00	Cash,	10 00
Josiah Andrews,	10 00	Russel Calkins,	3 00
S. F. Phœnix,	20 00	W. Howard,	1 00
E. Pomeroy,	5 00	Lucas Jones,	1 00
Rev. F. J. Bliss,	2 00	J. G. True,	1 00
J. B. Halsted,	5 00	Ziba Hurd,	2 00
N. Chedester,	2 00	G. Wells,	5 00
E. C. Bells,	2 00	J. S. Lambright,	1 00
Calvin Waldo,	50	S. Lapham,	1 00
Isaac Mace,	50	Thomas Lapham,	1 00
C. O. Shepard,	10 00	John Calkins,	1 00
C. Freeman,	1 00	Rev. E. Scovel,	5 00
Silas Rawson,	5 00	Jabez Ward,	5 00
R. W. Lyman,	10 00	Horace Goodale,	50
Augustus Frank,	10 00	Cash,	25
W. Chapin,	1 00	Rev. Samuel Gridley,	5 00
S. Fisher,	1 00	Le Roy Society, by their	} 25 00
Hewel Kinne,	2 00	Treasurer, S. M. Gates,	
F. C. D. McKay,	10 00	Samuel Bronson,	3 00
John Muger,	1 00	Leman G. Tufts,	75
Daniel Lee,	50	William Potwine,	1 25
John Windsor,	2 00	Thomas Potwine,	1 25
I. C. Bronson,	2 00	Daniel Rowley,	25
A. Gregg,	50	Rev. Jesse Elliot,	1 00
Roderick Chapin,	50	Charles Tallman,	50
Henry Daniels,	25	Rev. Hosea Fuller,	50
Gideon Rodd,	50	Ebenezer Witter,	50
Henry Bush, Jr.	50	William H. Conklin,	50
Mrs. A. Bush,	50	F. T. Olney,	25
Lorenzo Smith	25	Christopher Jones,	50
Carried up,	\$125 50	Total receipts,	\$203 50

### DISBURSEMENTS.

Paid over to John Rankin, Treasurer of the American Anti-Slavery Society, as per his receipt, by order of the Executive Committee, } \$200 00

Balance remaining in the Treasury, } \$ 3 50

JOSIAH ANDREWS, *Treasurer Gen. Co. A. S. S.*

*Perry, March 15, 1836.*

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

## GENESEE COUNTY ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

Though in reviewing our efforts, as a Society, for the past year, from their effects we may have but little cause for exultation, we have much to cheer and encourage us in the holy object for which we have associated. Owing to the protracted absence of some of our most efficient officers, and other causes which it would be unnecessary to mention here, we have not made those systematic efforts which the magnitude of the cause demands. But individual effort has not been made in vain.— Soon after the organization of this Society, your Committee invited some of its members to act as occasional agents, in organizing town societies, obtaining subscribers to anti-slavery publications, and disseminating information in regard to the views, principles and designs of the abolitionists. We are happy to state, that although their labors have not been confined to this county, through their agency fifteen societies have been formed, thousands of publications have been paid for by individual subscribers, or purchased for gratuitous distribution, and the sum of Two Hundred Dollars collected and paid to the Treasurer of the American Anti-Slavery Society, as pledged for the county of Genesee, by our delegate, S. F. PHOENIX, at the anniversary of that society in May last. One of the principal reasons why more societies have not been organized in this county, the past year, has been, we are gratified to know, an unwillingness on the part of our agents and other active friends, to form them, until the principles of Anti-Slavery were thoroughly inculcated, and were understood by the generality of the community in their respective local precincts. However, from the quality and quantity of the seed which has been sown, by daily observation and constantly accumulating evidence, which it were impossible to misapprehend or distrust, we are prepared to say, that even now the fields are whitening to the harvest. While some towns are coming up slowly and cautiously, yet understandingly, we are confident from their well known patriotism and philanthropy, that even though they may come last, they will not in the event prove least in this hallowed work.

We would gratefully acknowledge the labors of that eminently devoted friend of humanity, Rev. AMOS A. PHELPS, Agent of the American Anti-Slavery Society, whose efforts during a necessarily limited visit to this county, the past summer, were crowned with that success which is ever attendant on the presentation of truth in christian love and firmness, and with holy zeal and undissembling frankness. But shall it be said such efforts elicit boisterous threats and lawless violence? We would inquire, in what age of the world similar causes produced not similar effects? Have not the great principles of truth, righteousness, justice and humanity, ever been obliged to stem the current of popular phrenzy, and spread their first sweet influences amid oppressions and persecutions? At a special meeting of the Society, holden at Le Roy, in August last, we beheld with regret, evident demonstrations of a disposition to prevent free discussion. It was not the circulation of an anonymous handbill, calling on the inhabitants of this county "*opposed to the fanatical proceedings of the abolitionists,*" to assemble at the same time and place at which our meeting was appointed, evidently designed to intimidate and overawe—it was not the harmless threats and ravings of a few misguided individuals, nor even the wanton and flagitious interruption of our meeting, that caused this regret, or filled our hearts with solemn and fearful forebodings. But when we saw men whom the people delight to honor—men whom we, without party distinction, have been accustomed to look upon as pillars to our most valued institutions, and whose influence is acknowledged both in church and state—when we saw such men countenancing lawless violence, to deprive us of one of the dearest rights of man, the liberty of speech, and, if not directly aiding and abetting, what is equivalent, palliating and justifying it, and refusing to yield their influence, conceded to them by their fellow citizens, for the preservation of law and order—when



we became aware of these facts, we were led seriously to enquire, where are the landmarks of our fathers? We beheld with shame and confusion, that while we have been apologizing for, and sanctioning slavery at the south, gags and manacles had been secretly forging for us, at the north. And it is well! God be praised, that there are so many incentives to the duty of "remembering those that are in bonds as bound with them."

We cannot revert to the public Journals of this county, without bearing decided testimony against the course pursued by them, without distinction, in relation to the character and doings of abolitionists. Through their columns, we have been represented as sowing the seeds of disunion and bloody strife. But let it be remembered, that in sustaining these wonderful discoveries, they adduce not the sayings and doings of abolitionists themselves, but the sayings and doings of their opponents. While they have, with avidity, spread before the public, messages and public documents, denouncing abolitionists, they have studiously precluded from their columns such unanswerable arguments and justifications as are contained in the PROTEST of the American Anti-Slavery Society against certain portions of the President's Message, and the letters of GERRIT SMITH and ALVAN STEWART, addressed to Gov. Marcy. When they have arraigned abolitionists, individually, before their self-constituted supervision, even then they have refused their columns to exhibit their sentiments or defence. These facts are not characteristic of the press of Genesee county alone. The American press has been considered a faithful index of the intelligence, the patriotism and morality of the nation. Look at our index! While the sun of liberty proclaims almost high noon throughout the greater part of christendom, our lagging index still declares that here the morning watch hath not expired. While the press in some degree indicates, in a far greater it directs and controls public sentiment. Aware of this fact, in their struggle for political ascendancy, the two contending parties of the day seem disposed to trample under foot every right, whether human or divine, and through a hireling press, whose feelings of patriotism are gauged by feeling in the pocket, inculcate and disseminate principles and doctrines which, if uttered fifty years ago, would have consigned their promulgators to perpetual infamy and silence, or, if it were possible, have called forth a stern rebuke even from the bloody graves of the patriot martyrs of the revolution. We feel constrained to ask, what constitutes the difference, whether some tyrant, through treachery and blood, seizes upon supreme authority, or a republican of modern times, gains the ascendancy by stifling the groans of captive millions, and by flattery and perversion, corrupts his own constituents, and, to attain his short-lived power, juggles them out of their dearest rights! In one case, the people are the victims of power, in the other, they are the victims of their own excited and unwary prejudice; and in both, the people are the victims, and human rights the prey.

A mercenary press is the vehicle of such corruptions and such abuses. The people alone possess corrective power. While they will continue to patronize such journals, and pay for being duped, it is well they should be timely warned that the consequences will ultimately fall upon those who are the primordial abettors of the evil. The avidity with which subjects of temporary expediency are discussed, while the weightier matters of the law, justice, judgment and mercy are overlooked, must argue to every discerning, candid mind, that something is radically wrong.—Human rights must not be investigated at the south—slavery is there—at the north, different reasons are assigned in different sections—in one, the reason is decisive—our trade is with the south—in another, we have applied for a bank, rail road or canal charter, and we fear it would affect our interest in the legislature, or such discussion may affect the election of a favorite candidate; and thus poor human rights are scouted from the land. While we would not object to a due attention to local institutions and public improvement, we would say, that when these are weighed in the balance against human rights, they shrink into airy nothing. As was observed, the people alone possess the remedy. Therefore let patrons look well to the character of the journals they sustain. For when the public press of this nation shall labor as zealously to expose the wrongs of outraged humanity, and vindicate the inalienable rights of man, as they now do to obtain local advantages, promote

party prejudices and party purposes, public sentiment will spontaneously announce the year of jubilee to all whom God hath made of one blood, throughout our wide domain.

While we remember the mighty obstacles abolitionists were called upon to encounter, when, two or three years since, with but a solitary exception, no paper espoused the cause of the suffering and the dumb—when scarce a voice within the borders of this mighty nation, pleaded for God's suffering poor—when the sympathies of this people were lavished upon the oppressed in every quarter of the globe, except our own—when a cruel prejudice steeled the heart of man against his fellow, and priest and people, with one consent, conspired, without remorse, without rebuke, to brutify the image of their God, and to pronounce that a *thing*, which God pronounced a soul—when we remember these things, and now behold state and county and town societies abounding and multiplying on every hand, the press, the pen, the human voice beginning to assume the trumpet tone and show the people their transgressions, we feel to magnify the Lord, and to exclaim, "what hath God wrought!" We cannot fail to remind you of that wondrous overruling Providence which hath made the machinations of our opponents one of the greatest means of furthering this cause, and of doing what abolitionists had failed to accomplish—that is, of awakening the entire people of this nation to the dangers entailed on us by slavery, thereby showing unto man again and again, "that the Lord is wonderful in council and excellent in working;" that "He seeth not as man seeth," and that even "the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain."

JOSIAH ANDREWS, *Chairman Ex. Com.*

## NAMES OF DELEGATES,

INCLUDING THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AT BATAVIA AND WARSAW.

<b>ALEXANDER.</b>	John S. Sayles,	<b>ELBA.</b>	Albert Elmore,
John Simons,	L. M. Cook,	C. H. Stratton,	Charles Grannis,
Joel A. Simons.	James H. Sisson,	P. S. Church,	Seth M. Gates,
<b>BATAVIA.</b>	J. D. Landon,	John Lambertson, jr.	Cyrus Thompson, jr.
Samuel A. Warner,	M. Lucas,	<b>GAINESVILLE.</b>	Hinds Chamberlain,
Levi Loomis.	J. B. Wilcox.	R. M. Smith,	Jacob Newman,
<b>BETHANY.</b>	<b>CHINA.</b>	John Dunning,	Abner Dodge,
James Clark,	R. W. Lyman,	J. M. Bulloo,	T. W. Thompson,
Harvey Butler,	Abel Jackson,	W. C. Cole,	Samuel R. Clifford,
John Boyington,	Elnathan Wing.	Anson Card,	Henry Brewster,
Wm. W. Smith,	<b>COVINGTON.</b>	Jehiel Towner,	— Morgan,
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H. D. Gifford,	Nathan Miller,	Charles Richardson,	Russel Pratt,
Abner Hull.	Abner Whitney,	John G. West.	Lucius Thatcher,
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Daniel Huntington,	Seth W. Payne,	C. Bryant,	Elliott Stanley.
Hinsdale Gilbert,	James Thompson.	Milo Warner,	<b>MIDDLEBURY.</b>
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