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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND CONVENTION OF DELEGATES FROM THE ABOLITION SOCIETIES ESTABLISHED IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES ***

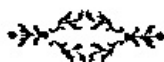
**MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE SECOND
Convention of Delegates
FROM THE
ABOLITION SOCIETIES**

Established in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE SEVENTH DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN
HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIVE, AND CONTINUED, BY
ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE FOURTEENTH DAY
OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.



PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNR. NUMBER EIGHTY,

MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE SECOND
Convention of Delegates.

Philadelphia, Wednesday, January 7th. 1795.

Agreeably to the recommendation of the Convention, held in this city last year, a number of Delegates, from the several Abolition Societies in the United States, assembled, this day, at the City Hall, when, by the credentials produced, it appeared, that the following persons had been chosen to represent their respective Societies in this Convention:

Connecticut Society.

Jonathan Edwards,
Uriah Tracy,
Zephaniah Swift.

New-York Society.

John Murray, junior,
William Johnson,
Lawrence Embree,
William Dunlap,
William Walton Woolsey.

Pennsylvania Society.

William Rawle,
Robert Patterson,
Benjamin Rush,
Samuel Coates,
Caspar Wistar,
James Todd,
Benjamin Say.

Delaware Society.

Richard Bassett,
John Ralston,
Allen McLane,
Caleb Boyer.

Wilmington Society (state of Delaware.)

Cyrus Newlin,
James A. Byard,
Joseph Warner,
William Poole.

Maryland Society.

Samuel Sterett,
Adam Fonerdon,
Joseph Townsend,
Joseph Thornburgh,
George Buchanan,
John Bankson,
Philip Moore.

Edward Scott,
James Houston.

Of whom the following appeared and took their seats, *viz.*

Jonathan Edwards,
Uriah Tracy,
Zephaniah Swift,
William Johnson,
Lawrence Embree,
William Dunlap,
William Walton Woolsey,
William Rawle,
Robert Patterson,
Benjamin Rush,
Samuel Coates,
Caspar Wistar,
James Todd,
Benjamin Say,
Richard Bassett,
Caleb Boyer,
Cyrus Newlin,
Joseph Warner,
Samuel Sterett,
Joseph Townsend,
Joseph Thornburgh,
John Bankson,
Philip Moore,
Edward Scott,
James Houston.

[Pg 6]

The Convention proceeded to the election of a President, and, on counting the ballots, it appeared, that Benjamin Rush was duly elected.

Walter Franklin, one of the Secretaries of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, was appointed Secretary, and Joseph Fry, Doorkeeper.

Agreed, That all questions, which shall come before this Convention, be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present, and that every motion, when seconded, shall, if required by the President, or any member, be reduced to writing.

The address, from the last Convention, to the different Abolition Societies in the United States, was then read; after which, several written and verbal communications were made.

Jonathan Edwards, William Dunlap, Caspar Wistar, Cyrus Newlin, Caleb Boyer, Philip Moore, and James Houston, were appointed a committee to consider of, and report, the objects proper for the attention of this Convention, and the most suitable means of attaining the same.

[Pg 7]

Ordered, That the several communications, made this evening, be referred to the above committee, and that the members of the Convention be requested to impart to them such information as they may possess, relative to the object of their appointment.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at five o'clock.

January 8th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Present—Jonathan Edwards, Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnson, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolsey, William Rawle, Robert Patterson, Samuel Coates, Caspar Wistar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Richard Bassett, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Warner, Joseph Townsend, Joseph Thornburgh, John Bankson, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houston.

The President being absent, Uriah Tracy was appointed to preside for the evening.

An extract, from the minutes of the proceedings of a general meeting of the New Jersey Abolition Society, was read, by which it appeared, that Joseph Bloomfield, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, John Wistar, and Franklin Davenport, were elected to represent that Society in this Convention, of whom, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, and Franklin Davenport, appeared and took their seats.

[Pg 8]

The committee, appointed at the last meeting, not being prepared to make a final report, were continued.

Several communications, from the New Jersey Society, were presented by their Delegates, and referred to the said committee.

Adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at five o'clock.

January 9th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Present—Jonathan Edwards, Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnson, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolsey, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, Franklin Davenport, William Rawle, Robert Patterson, Benjamin Rush, Samuel Coates, Caspar Wistar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Richard Bassett, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Warner, Samuel Sterett, Joseph Townsend, Joseph Thornburgh, John Bankson, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houston.

A letter, from the President of the Providence Abolition Society, was read; by which it appeared, that Theodore Foster and George Benson were appointed to represent that Society in this Convention.

A letter, from the Washington Abolition Society in Pennsylvania, was, also, read, notifying the appointment of Thomas Scott, Absalom Baird, and Samuel Clark, as Representatives of the said Society, in this Convention.

[Pg 9]

The Secretary was directed to inform such of those gentlemen as are now in this city, of the receipt and purport of the above letters.

The Convention being informed, that the absence of Joseph Bloomfield, of New Jersey, was occasioned by sickness, mention thereof was ordered to be made on the Minutes.

The committee, appointed to consider of, and report, the objects proper for the consideration of the Convention, and the most suitable means of attaining the same, made report, which, after amendment, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

First, That an address be made, by this Convention, to the several Abolition Societies in the United States, recommending to them, to send Deputies to a Convention, similar to the present, to be holden in Philadelphia the first day of January, in the year 1796; also, that it be recommended to those Societies, who have not sent, to this Convention, complete copies of the laws of their several states, relative to slavery, to send, to the next Convention, copies of all such laws, both those which are now in force, and those which have been repealed; and to send, to the next, and every succeeding, Convention, an accurate list of their officers for the time being, together with an account of the place of their abode, and of the offices, civil, military, or ecclesiastic, which they may sustain, with the number of members of which they consist: that it be further recommended, to the several Societies, to send, annually, to the Convention, an accurate list of all those persons who have been relieved and liberated by their agency; and, also, an account of such trials and decisions of courts, the general knowledge of which they shall judge subservient to the cause of abolition: that it be recommended to the several Societies, to institute public periodical discourses, or orations, on the subject of slavery, and the means of its abolition; also, to continue, without remission, and in such ways as they shall, respectively, judge most likely to be successful, their exertions to procure an amelioration of the laws of their respective states, relative to the Blacks; and, at the same time, to give particular attention to the education of the black children: and, as an historical review of the legislative provisions, relative to slavery, in the several states of the Union, from their respective settlements to the present time, would be conducive to the general benefit,—that it be further recommended, to the several Abolition Societies, to take measures for procuring the materials, and promoting the publication, of such a work; and that a communication of the steps taken, in pursuance of this recommendation, be made to the ensuing Convention.

[Pg 10]

[Pg 11]

Second, That the Convention take into consideration the case of those persons, who, having been made free by the republic of France, are still holden in slavery by those who have emigrated into the United States from the territories of the said republic; and that the Convention devise some lawful measures for their relief:—we barely suggest, whether an application to the French ambassador be, or be not, proper in the case.

Third, That the Convention take into consideration the means of improving the condition of the Blacks, who are, or may be, made free in the different states, and of preventing the inconveniences that may arise from the degraded state of the Negroes in the United States.

Fourth, That it be recommended, to the Society of New Jersey, to enter on proper measures to procure an amendment of the law of that state, prohibiting the manumission of slaves of a greater age than thirty-five years.

William Johnson, Franklin Davenport, and Samuel Coates, were appointed to prepare an address, as proposed in the first and fourth sections of the above report.

[Pg 12]

The second section was referred to William Walton Woolsey, William Rawle, James Todd, and Edward Scott, to report thereon.

The third section was referred to Lawrence Embree, Caspar Wistar, Benjamin Say, Joseph Warner, and Samuel Sterett, to report thereon.

Samuel Coates, James Sloan, and Joseph Townsend, were appointed a committee to enquire, and report, concerning the measures taken, in pursuance of the several resolutions of the former

Convention, for transmitting memorials and addresses to the Congress of the United States, and the Legislatures of individual states.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at six o'clock.

January 10th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Present—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnson, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolsey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterson, Benjamin Rush, Samuel Coates, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Warner, Joseph Townsend, Joseph Thornburgh, John Bankson, Philip Moore, James Houston.

[Pg 13]

Theodore Foster, delegated to represent the Providence Society, appeared and took his seat.

The committee, to whom was referred the second section of the report of the committee of arrangement, reported, that they had taken the subject into consideration; that it appeared to them, to be within the province of the several Societies to act therein; and that the Convention should recommend, to the said Societies, to exert themselves for the liberation of the persons described in the said report, so far as may be consistent with the laws of their respective states.

Ordered, That the said report be accepted.

Adjourned till Monday evening next at six o'clock.

Monday evening, January 12th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Present—Jonathan Edwards, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foster, William Dunlap, William Johnson, Lawrence Embree, William Walton Woolsey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterson, Samuel Coates, Caspar Wistar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Warner, Joseph Townsend, Joseph Thornburgh, John Bankson, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houston.

[Pg 14]

The President being absent, Zephaniah Swift was appointed to preside for the evening.

The committee, appointed to enquire concerning the measures taken, in pursuance of the resolutions of the former Convention, for transmitting memorials and addresses to the Congress of the United States, and the Legislatures of individual states,—presented the following report, which was read and accepted, *viz.*

The committee, appointed to enquire if the memorials to Congress, and the different state Legislatures, were presented agreeably to the order of the Convention last year,—report,

That the memorial was presented to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled, who took the same into consideration, and granted the prayer thereof by enacting a law, of which the following is a copy:

An Act to prohibit the carrying on the Slave-trade from the United States to any foreign place or country.

Section I. *BE it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled,* That no citizen or citizens of the United States, or foreigner, or any other person coming into, or residing within the same, shall, for himself or any other person whatsoever, either as master, factor or owner, build, fit, equip, load or otherwise prepare any ship or vessel, within any port or place of the said United States, nor shall cause any ship or vessel to sail from any port or place within the same, for the purpose of carrying on any trade or traffic in slaves, to any foreign country; or for the purpose of procuring, from any foreign kingdom, place or country, the inhabitants of such kingdom, place or country, to be transported to any foreign country, port or place whatever, to be sold or disposed of, as slaves: And if any ship or vessel shall be so fitted out, as aforesaid, for the said purposes, or shall be caused to sail, so as aforesaid, every such ship or vessel, her tackle, furniture, apparel and other appurtenances, shall be forfeited to the United States; and shall be liable to be seized, prosecuted and condemned, in any of the circuit courts or district court for the district, where the said ship or vessel may be found and seized.

[Pg 15]

Section II. *And be it further enacted,* That all and every person, so building, fitting out, equipping, loading, or otherwise preparing, or sending away, any ship or vessel, knowing, or intending, that the same shall be employed in such trade or business, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act, or ways aiding or abetting therein, shall severally forfeit and pay the sum of two thousand dollars, one moiety thereof, to the use of the United States, and the other moiety thereof, to the use of him or her, who shall sue for and prosecute the same.

[Pg 16]

Section III. *And be it further enacted,* That the owner, master or factor of each and every foreign ship or vessel, clearing out for any of the coasts or kingdoms of

Africa, or suspected to be intended for the slave-trade, and the suspicion being declared to the officer of the customs, by any citizen, on oath or affirmation, and such information being to the satisfaction of the said officer, shall first give bond with sufficient sureties, to the Treasurer of the United States, that none of the natives of Africa, or any other foreign country or place, shall be taken on board the said ship or vessel, to be transported, or sold as slaves, in any other foreign port or place whatever, within nine months thereafter.

Section IV. *And be it further enacted*, That if any citizen or citizens of the United States shall, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act, take on board, receive or transport any such persons, as above described, in this act, for the purpose of selling them as slaves, as aforesaid, he or they shall forfeit and pay, for each and every person, so received on board, transported, or sold as aforesaid, the sum of two hundred dollars, to be recovered in any court of the United States proper to try the same; the one moiety thereof, to the use of the United States, and the other moiety to the use of such person or persons, who shall sue for and prosecute the same.

[Pg 17]

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG.
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

JOHN ADAMS, *VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,*
AND PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

APPROVED—March the twenty-second, 1794.

G^o: WASHINGTON, *President of the United States.*

That the memorial, to the General Assembly of Connecticut, was presented, accompanied with a memorial from the Abolition Society of that state; whereupon, a bill was originated, and passed, in the House of Representatives, to abolish slavery in Connecticut; which bill was negatived by a small majority in the legislative Council.

That the memorials, to the Assemblies of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, were presented, but not acted upon.

That the memorial, to the Delaware Assembly, was presented late in the session, but no order taken thereon.

That the memorials, to the Legislatures of New York, Maryland, and Virginia, by reason of accidents, were not presented.

[Pg 18]

That no certain information is yet obtained, that the memorials were presented to the Legislatures of North Carolina, South Carolina, or Georgia, although your committee have reason to believe they were presented, as they were forwarded by a careful person.

The committee, appointed to prepare an address, as proposed in the first and fourth sections of the report of the committee of arrangement, presented one, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The committee, to whom was referred the third section of the report of the committee of arrangement, made report, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The following resolutions were then adopted, *viz.*

Resolved, That addresses be prepared and presented to the Legislatures of those states, which have not passed laws for preventing the importation of slaves.

Samuel Coates presented an essay of an address on this subject, to the state of Georgia, which, with the above resolution, was referred to William Dunlap, William Rawle and Joseph Townsend.

Resolved, That a memorial be transmitted to the Legislature of South Carolina, requesting a continuance of the act for preventing the importation of slaves.

Jonathan Edwards presented a draught of an address on this subject, which, with the resolution, was referred to the above committee, who were authorized to embrace such other objects, in the memorials, as they might judge proper.

[Pg 19]

Resolved, That Theodore Foster, William Rawle, and William Johnson, be a committee to consider, and report, whether any, and what, amendments, appear necessary in the act, passed by the Congress of the United States, prohibiting the carrying on the slave-trade to any foreign place or country.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the several Societies, to transmit, to the next Convention, an account of the number of free Negroes in their respective states, with a general statement of their property, employments, and moral conduct.

The address, to the several Abolition Societies, was re-committed to William Walton Woolsey, William Johnson, Samuel Coates, and Robert Patterson, for the purpose of incorporating therein such other matters as this Convention have resolved to recommend to the said Societies.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at six o'clock.

The Convention met.

Present—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foster, William Johnson, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolsey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterson, Samuel Coates, Caspar Wistar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Warner, Joseph Townsend, Joseph Thornburgh, John Bankson, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, and James Houston.

[Pg 20]

The President being absent, Theodore Foster was appointed to preside for the evening.

The committee, appointed to prepare memorials to the Legislatures of the states of Georgia and South Carolina, presented two essays, which were read; the one to the Legislature of Georgia, was ordered to lie on the table; that to the Legislature of South Carolina, after amendment, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the — of the State of South Carolina.

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the several Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of slavery, in Convention assembled, in Philadelphia, on the seventh day of January, 1795.

Respectfully shew,

THAT, having been deputed, and having convened, for the purpose of considering, and carrying into effect, the most proper measures for the abolition of slavery; and being forcibly impressed with a sense of the dangers to which the citizens of the United States are exposed, while a numerous class of men exist among them, deprived of their natural rights, and forcibly held in bondage;—we think it our duty to address you, as men, fellow citizens, and brethren, and earnestly to request your attention to the means of avoiding the evils naturally resulting from the above mentioned unhappy circumstances.

[Pg 21]

The first step which we take the liberty of suggesting to you, is an entire prohibition of all traffic in slaves, between your state and every other nation or state, either by importation or exportation: This is the first and principal object of our memorial—an object which we the more earnestly recommend to your attention, as we are informed that the law of your state, prohibiting the importation of slaves, will expire sometime in March next.

In considering this subject, many methods of conciliating the affections of this unfortunate people, and preparing them for that state in society upon which depends our political happiness, suggest themselves:—such as, an amelioration of their condition and a diffusion of knowledge among them. But, as nothing can be effectual while the number of slaves may be daily increased by importation, and while the minds of our citizens are debased, and their hearts hardened, by contemplating these people only through the medium of avarice or prejudice (a necessary consequence of the traffic in man) we confine the prayer of this petition to the total prohibition of all traffic in slaves, between your state and every other nation or state, either by importation or exportation; which we respectfully solicit you to grant, having full confidence, that, independent of other considerations, you will see the evident policy of the measure.

[Pg 22]

The committee, appointed to consider whether any, and what, amendments appear necessary in the act, passed by Congress, prohibiting the carrying on the slave-trade to any foreign place or country, made report as follows, *viz.*

The committee, to whom was referred the consideration of the act of the Congress of the United States, for prohibiting the traffic in slaves, report,—

That, in their opinion, no amendment is necessary to the law in question. It appears, to them, to prohibit the exportation of slaves from America, for the purposes of traffic, or from any part of any foreign country, whether a port, river, bay, or coast, to any other foreign country. The generical term "place" certainly includes as well the sea as the land; and it is, in substance, declared to be unlawful so to traffic in any place or manner, except only what the constitution, at present, denies the power of restraining, *viz.* the importation of slaves into the United States.

[Pg 23]

Whether further experience may point out defects at present not seen, the committee cannot predict. It may not, perhaps, be prudent to aid avarice and inhumanity by the attempt.

Ordered, That the said report be accepted.

On motion,

Resolved, That this Convention address the free black people, in the United States, exhorting them, by suitable arguments and motives, to such conduct and behaviour as may be judged most proper to promote their own happiness, and render them useful members of society.

Ordered, That Samuel Coates, Robert Patterson, and William Dunlap, be a committee to prepare, and report, an address conformable to the said resolution.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at six o'clock.

January 14th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Present—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foster, William Johnson, Lawrence Embree, William Walton Woolsey, James Sloan, Robert Patterson, Benjamin Rush, Samuel Coates, Caspar Wistar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Warner, Joseph Townsend, and James Houston.

[Pg 24]

The address, to the Legislature of the state of Georgia, was read a second time, and, being amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the — of the State of Georgia.

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the several Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of slavery, in Convention assembled, in Philadelphia, on the seventh day of January, 1795.

Respectfully shew,

THAT the Convention, assembled in the month of January, 1794, addressed your body on the subject of the African slave-trade; and the present Convention, not having been informed of the success of that memorial, have thought it a duty incumbent on them, to re-call your attention to some points nearly connected with the honor of humanity, and the interest of your state, and of the United States.

We have learned, with the highest satisfaction, that you have prohibited the importation of slaves into your state, from all other parts of the world, except Africa. We congratulate you, and the friends of humanity in general, on such a step; but the time, we hope, is not far distant, when every motive of wisdom and true policy will lead you to prohibit entirely this species of commerce. And we, at this time, request your serious attention to a consideration of the evil likely to ensue from the continuance of the traffic, and to the numerous advantages which must arise from its abolition. Among the least of these, we would mention the consistency it would afford to the American character, now held up, as an example to the European world; and the good treatment which might hence be naturally expected, as likely to be afforded to those blacks who are already in your country. To these suggestions, permit us to add a wish, that you would consider of the propriety of passing a law, to empower the owners of slaves to grant their gradual emancipation, by will or otherwise, as we are well convinced, that the happiest effects are to be expected from a progressive abolition of slavery.

[Pg 25]

The committee, to whom was re-committed the address to the several Abolition Societies, for the purpose of incorporating therein such other matters as had received the approbation of the Convention since the appointment of the first committee,—presented one with the additions, which, being read and amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

[Pg 26]

To the — Society for promoting the abolition of slavery, &c.

THE Delegates, from the several Abolition societies in the United States, convened in this city, express to you, with great satisfaction, the pleasure they have experienced from the punctual attendance of the persons delegated to this Convention, and that harmony with which they have deliberated on the several matters that have been presented to them, at this time, for their consideration. The benefits which may flow from a continuance of this general meeting, by aiding the principal design of its institution—the universal emancipation of the wretched Africans who are yet in bondage, appear to us so many and important, that we are induced to recommend to you, to send Delegates to a similar Convention, which we propose to be holden, in this city, on the first day of January, in the year one thousand, seven hundred and ninety-six.

We have thought it proper to request your further attention to that part of the address, of the former Convention, which relates to the procurement of certified copies of the laws of your state respecting slavery; and that you would send, to the next Convention, exact copies of all such laws as are now in force; and of such as have been repealed. Convinced that an historical review of the various acts and provisions of the Legislatures of the several states, relating to slavery, from the periods of their respective settlements to the present time, by tracing the progress of the system of African slavery in this country, and its successive changes in the different governments of the Union, would throw much light on the objects of our enquiry and attention, and enable us to determine, how far the cause of justice and humanity has advanced among us, and how soon we may reasonably expect to see it triumphant;—we recommend to you, to take such measures as you may think most conducive to that purpose, for procuring materials for the work now proposed, and assisting its publication; and to communicate, to the ensuing Convention, what progress you shall have made toward perfecting the plan here offered for your consideration and care.

[Pg 27]

Believing that an acquaintance with the names of the officers of the several Abolition Societies, would facilitate that friendly correspondence which ought always to be preserved between our

various associations, we request that you would send, to the next, and to every future, Convention, an accurate list of all the officers of your Society, for the time being, with the number of members of which it consists. And it would assist that Convention in ascertaining the existing state of slavery in the United States, if you were to forward to them an exact account of the persons who have been liberated by the agency of your Society, and of those who may be considered as signal instances of the relief that you have afforded; and, also, a statement of the number of free blacks in your state, their property, employments, and moral conduct.

[Pg 28]

As a knowledge of what has been done, and of that success which has attended the efforts of humanity, will cherish the hope of benevolence, and stimulate to further exertion, we trust that you will be of opinion with us, that it would be highly useful to procure correct reports of all such trials, and decisions of courts of judicature, respecting slavery, a knowledge of which may be subservient to the cause of abolition, and to transmit them to the next, or to any future, Convention.

It cannot have escaped your observation, how many persons there are who continue the hateful practice of enslaving their fellow men, and who acquiesce in the sophistry of the advocates of that practice, merely from want of reflection, and from an habitual attention to their own immediate interest. If to such were often applied the force of reason, and the persuasion of eloquence, they might be awakened to a sense of their injustice, and be startled with horror at the enormity of their conduct. To produce so desirable a change in sentiment, as well as practice, we recommend to you the instituting of annual, or other periodical, discourses, or orations, to be delivered in public, on the subject of slavery, and the means of its abolition.

[Pg 29]

We cannot forbear expressing to you our earnest desire, that you will continue, without ceasing, to endeavour, by every method in your power which can promise any success, to procure, either an absolute repeal of all the laws in your state, which countenance slavery, or such an amelioration of them as will gradually produce an entire abolition. Yet, even should that great end be happily attained, it cannot put a period to the necessity of further labor. The education of the emancipated, the noblest and most arduous task which we have to perform, will require all our wisdom and virtue, and the constant exercise of the greatest skill and discretion. When we have broken his chains, and restored the African to the enjoyment of his rights, the great work of justice and benevolence is not accomplished—The new born citizen must receive that instruction, and those powerful impressions of moral and religious truth, which will render him capable and desirous of fulfilling the various duties he owes to himself and to his country. By educating some in the higher branches of science, and all in the useful parts of learning, and in the precepts of religion and morality, we shall not only do away the reproach and calumny so unjustly lavished upon us, but confound the enemies of truth, by evincing that the unhappy sons of Africa, in spite of the degrading influence of slavery, are in no wise inferior to the more fortunate inhabitants of Europe and America.

[Pg 30]

As a mean of effectuating, in some degree, a design so virtuous and laudable, we recommend to you to appoint a committee, annually, or for any other more convenient period, to execute such plans, for the improvement of the condition and moral character of the free blacks in your state, as you may think best adapted to your particular situation.

By a decree of the National Convention of France, all the blacks and people of color, within the territories of the French republic, are declared free, and entitled to an equal participation of the rights of citizens of France. We have been informed that many persons, of the above description, notwithstanding the decree in their favor, have been brought from the West-India islands, by emigrants, into the United States, and are now held as slaves.—We suggest to you the propriety, as well as the necessity, of making enquiry into the subject, and of effecting their liberation, so far as may be found consistent with the laws of your state.

[Pg 31]

Copies of our proceedings will be transmitted to you, and we hope, that you will receive such satisfaction as will induce your early attention to the objects we have here recommended.

The committee, appointed to prepare an address to the free black people, reported one, which was read, and ordered to be postponed for the consideration of the next Convention.

Resolved, That Theodore Foster, Robert Patterson, Samuel Coates, and Benjamin Say, be a committee to superintend the publication and distribution of the proceedings of this Convention; and that so many copies thereof as may be thought proper by the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, be printed, and distributed among the several Abolition Societies in the United States.

That the address, to the several Abolition Societies, be signed by the President, attested by the Secretary, and transmitted, by the above mentioned committee, to the said Societies.

That the Memorials, to the Legislatures of the states of South Carolina and Georgia, be signed and attested as above mentioned, and transmitted to the respective Presidents or Speakers of one branch of the Legislature, or laid before the respective Houses, in such manner as the President may think expedient.

[Pg 32]

That a copy of the proceedings of this Convention be transmitted to the President of the Abolition Society of London.

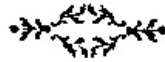
Resolved, That the Abolition Society of Pennsylvania be requested to thank the Mayor of the city of Philadelphia for accommodating the Convention with a room.

The Convention then adjourned *sine die*.

Published by order of the Convention,

WALTER FRANKLIN, *SECRETARY.*

Philadelphia, January 14th. 1795.



Transcriber's Notes

Changed long-s to regular s throughout text.

Pages 20, 24, 26: The long dash — represents the blank area in the "To the" address title.

Page 22: Retained original spelling of independant.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND CONVENTION OF DELEGATES FROM THE ABOLITION SOCIETIES ESTABLISHED IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES ***

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