

AN
ADDRESS

ON THE
RIGHT OF FREE SUFFRAGE,

DELIVERED BY THE REQUEST OF FREEHOLDERS AND OTHERS OF THE
CITY OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE-ISLAND, IN THE OLD TOWN HOUSE,
APRIL 19, AND REPEATED APRIL 26, AT THE SAME PLACE.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING THE

RHODE-ISLAND BILL OF RIGHTS,

AND THE

REJECTED PETITION,

PRESENTED IN 1829, TO THE LEGISLATURE OF RHODE-ISLAND, BY NEARLY
2000 PETITIONERS, INCLUDING 700 FREEHOLDERS, WHO WERE
ALL DENOMINATED *VAGABONDS* AND *RENEGADES* BY

BENJAMIN HAZARD,

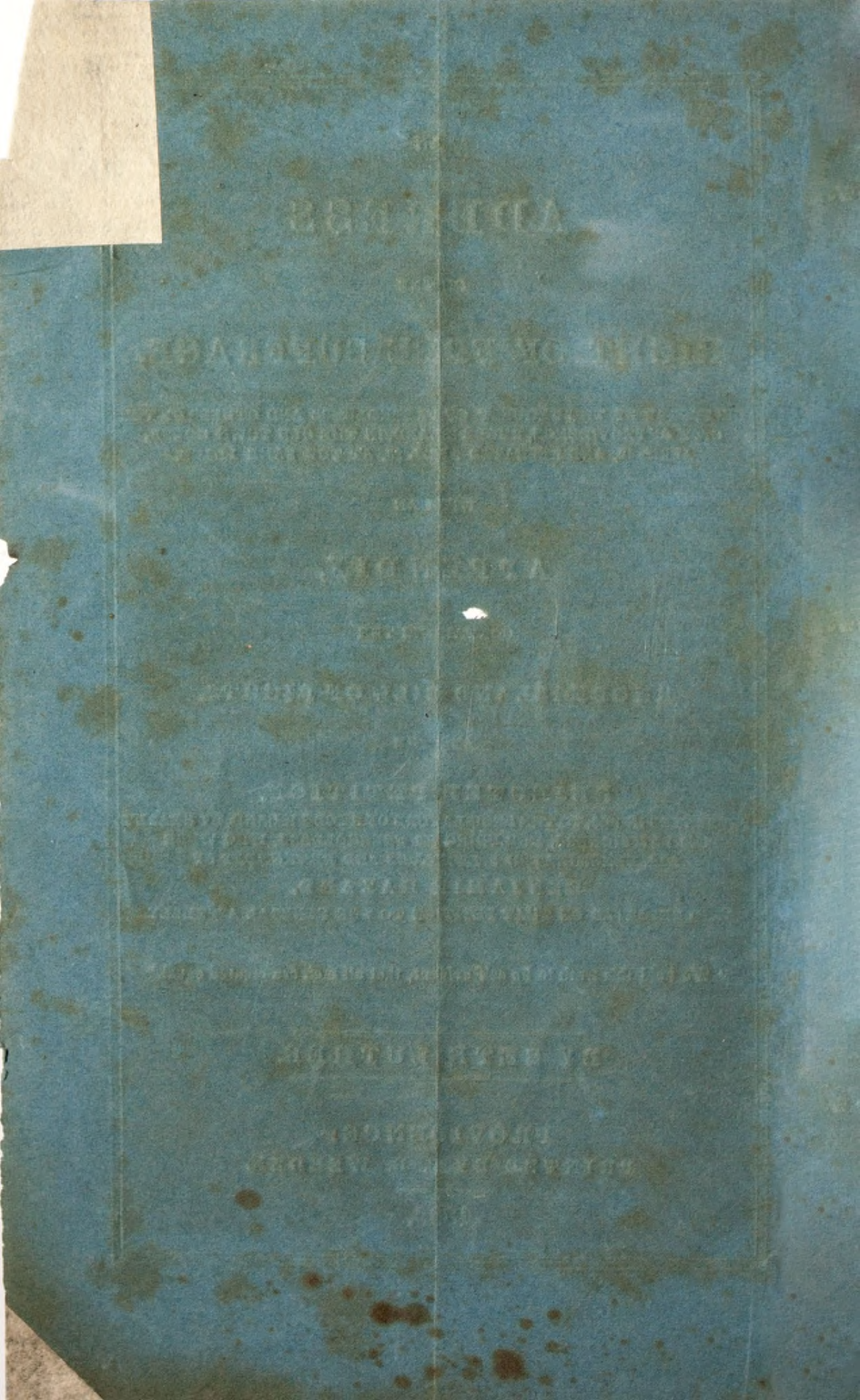
WHO REPORTED ON THAT PETITION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

‘ We hold this truth to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.’

BY SETH LUTHER.

PROVIDENCE:
PRINTED BY S. R. WEEDEN.

1833.



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NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS AND OTHERS.

The author takes this method to state, that the Appendix to this Address contains a much greater quantity of matter than was promised, or is mentioned on the title page, which has enhanced the expense of publication. But as he wishes an extensive circulation, for the good of the cause of EQUAL RIGHTS, the price will not be advanced beyond eighteen and three quarter cents. The author would suggest to the friends of the cause, the expediency of a liberal patronage of the work on that ground. The additions consist of the Report of the Committee, appointed in Providence, April 19, and accepted May 10, 1833, together with the correspondence of the Committee with Hon. Francis Baylies, and Hon. John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts.

THE AUTHOR TAKES THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
REMARK THAT THE PRESENT EDITION
HAS BEEN CORRECTED AND IMPROVED
IN MANY RESPECTS SINCE THE
FIRST EDITION WAS PUBLISHED
AND THAT THE READER WILL FIND
IT MORE COMPLETE AND ACCURATE
THAN THE EARLIER EDITIONS.
THE AUTHOR HAS BEEN ASSISTED
BY SEVERAL FRIENDS IN THE
REVISION OF THIS EDITION
AND IS OBLIGED TO THEM FOR
THEIR KINDNESS AND ASSISTANCE.
LONDON, 1840.

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ON THE

RIGHT OF FREE SUFFRAGE

AS ASSERTED BY THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND OTHERS OF THE
CITY OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE-ISLAND, AND IN THE OLD TOWN HOUSE
AND ADJACENT BUILDINGS AT THE SAME PLACE

WITH AN

APPENDIX

CONTAINING THE

RHODE-ISLAND BILL OF RIGHTS

AND THE

RESOLVED PETITION

ASSENTED IN 1842 TO THE LEGISLATURE OF RHODE-ISLAND BY A MAJORITY
OF 1000 MEMBERS, INCLUDING THE MEMBERS, WHO WERE
ALL DENOMINATED WAGGERS AND RESISTERS

BENJAMIN HAZARD,

WHO REPORTED ON THE PETITION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

We hold the truth to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.

BY SETH LUTHER

PROVIDENCE:

PRINTED BY R. S. WEDDEN.

1838.

ADDRESS.

FELLOW CITIZENS—

HAVING no State Constitution, we have assembled here this evening, under the protection of the Constitution of the United States, to consult as we have a right to do on our rights and interests. We have a right to do so peaceably, and without molestation. The person you have seen fit to appoint to address you is fully sensible of his incapability to do it with that ability, which is requisite to make this address as interesting, as you or the speaker could wish.

I am also sensible of the full force of that saying, 'that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country and among his own kindred.' I am aware that many in this community entertain bitter prejudice against me; I can also see the reasons for this feeling. The first is, I am charged with the unpardonable sin of being a poor man. But this would not have been so heinous, if I had made no exertions against the oppressions, under which, poor men, and women, and children labor. 'The sweet and smiling vallies of our own New-England, have rung with the groans of the orphan, and our soil has been wet with the scalding tears of agony, wrung from helpless childhood, by heartless slave drivers,* and the slaves, are the children and grand-children, of the aged and time worn veterans of '75. I have deemed it my duty, to come forward, and enter a public protest against such outrageous conduct. I have lighted a beacon, on that high watch tower—the Press—and have sent forth to the world, a light to show what is transacted in the dark places of cruelty. For this, I have been abused in almost all possible ways; and the advocates of oppression have used curses instead of argument, and slander instead of refutation, when they find themselves entirely unable, to deny the multiplied and astounding facts contained in my Address to the Working Men of New-England. It is my duty to acknowledge the assistance I have found from others, in furnishing information on the subject matter of that work; but I have to bear all the a-

* Remarks of Rev T. Fiske, Editor of New-Haven Examiner, and Watch Tower of Freedom, on the report of the trial of Paris Richmond, for whipping Paulina Brown, at Slatersville.

buse as the author of it, while others escape. I merely mention these things, to show the disadvantages under which I arise to address this assembly.

The Athenians, refined as they were, had a law by which they put a man to death, who presumed to speak in their assemblies, if he did not belong to the privileged class; or, if he were not, in the language of the Statute Law of Rhode-Island, a '*Freeman*.' I cannot say I am apprehensive of being put to death, but no doubt there are many, who would be gratified, if they could read my last dying speech; and to them the sooner the better. But if such persons are impatient, I will deliver it in advance, as it will be short. Here it is: 'May all Traitors, Tyrants, Tories, and Aristocrats, never find any thing but onions to wipe their weeping eyes.' I have no doubt, many would feel themselves disgraced by listening to the opinions of a *journeyman carpenter*, on any subject. It is a dreadful thing for them, to have a '*poor mechanic*' come between the wind and their '*nobility*.' They are of opinion, that '*good society*' ought not to be disturbed by the unlearned rabble, and the unpolished mob; they would fly from a green baize jacket on the back of a mechanic, as from the infection of the Asiatic Spasmodic Cholera.

I have been told lately, I had better mind my own business, and given to understand that government was none of my business, that our talk about it was all children's play. The man who told me this, would be glad to have even *my* assistance, if his property was on fire, or in danger from a foreign foe. I should probably render that assistance if needed, and in doing so, I should have no fear of being told, 'it is none of your business.' But on any other occasion, we must be *inactive, silent, entirely passive*. We must lay our necks in the mire of the streets, and permit these self-sufficient ignoramuses to tread upon them, and all will be well. 'Only submit to our dictation, and be peacable, and you are clever creatures as ever was.' But if we only attempt to agitate the question of our dearest rights, it is all '*children's play*,' and none of our business. For my own part, I detest such language from any human being who would assert it, or imply by his actions, that peace must be purchased by the last, dearest, and best sacrifice of freedom of opinion, and action. Must we be told we must not speak? Must we have a gag law? Must we shrink from our duty, because the hangers-on to the skirts of the nobility tell us to shut our mouths and be silent. No! if we must suffer tyranny, if we must be slaves, let that tongue be palsied, and may that right arm drop off, which will not make an effort to be free.

I choose rather to be exposed on a gibbet, die on a rack, or rot in a prison, than to bend the hinges of the knees, to the nod of a lord, as such men do for gold. A man who would be a parasite for paltry dust, would sell his *soul for gold*, if it were possible to

sell such a thing, as could dwell in a mustard seed and have tenements to let.

But I am not addressing such persons. I beg the indulgence of a different 'class,' if you please. I care not, if the *mushroom lordlings, sprigs of nobility, and small potato aristocrats* find fault with this address. I did not design it for 'ears polite,' as they esteem theirs. I intend to manage the subject in a plain republican manner, for plain republican ears, and in a way that shall be, if possible, satisfactory to all *honest minds*.

The right of free suffrage, or in other words, the right of self government by free votes, seems to be a matter of dispute in our little seven-by-nine State, one among twenty-four, and the only one where the right is disputed and denied.

The right of self government, has caused much to be said and done in our world, and every page of history is stained with blood shed in obtaining an acknowledgment of that right, or in acquiring the exercise of it, and defending it from encroachment. None but the enemies of equal rights, have either fought or argued against it, either in this country, or any other. Many millions have bitten the dust, while contending in the 'confused noise of war, and amid garments rolled in blood;' fighting for, or in opposition to that self evident truth, that 'ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL. It would seem strange that a self evident truth should require proof, but it is said that an axiom is the most difficult of proof of any truth; and certainly, to use argument to prove that one and one are two, or that two and two are four, would be needless, for the propositions are axioms, or self evident truths. So, in regard to self government, by laws enacted by a majority of the people.

But in this case many arguments have been used in the negative and affirmative. These arguments are of different kinds, some written on paper, or parchments, others written with an iron pen, otherwise called a bayonet. Emperors, Kings, and Governors, have at various times and in different countries, resorted to racks, dungeons, prisons, poisons, starvation, fire, and sword, to convince the world that they had a right to govern, *a divine right* to be tyrants 'by the grace of God.'

Hence we read of the Bastille, the Tower of London, and the Spanish Inquisition. Led by the light of history, we may enter these abodes of tyranny, bigotry, and superstition, and behold the victim lashed to the rack. The cold clammy sweat of agony is on his brow, the blood gushes from his nostrils, and the strained eyeballs start from their sockets, as he is tortured by these minions of hell, at the hour of midnight, who are destroying the body for the good of the soul. What has the poor wretch done? Nothing! He only wished to think as he pleased. He ventured to say, he thought these monsters, these demons about him, had no right to

treat human beings in such a manner, and they are only convincing him of their regard for his welfare, and their extreme solicitude for his happiness in this world, and the next.

In all cases, or nearly all, the rights of man have been wrested from the grasp of power, *vis et armis*, by force and arms. The people have been compelled to take by force that which has been withheld from them by force, to wit: the right to govern themselves, by laws made by themselves.

The people have from various causes, the principal one ignorance, submitted to these royal tigers in human shape, for many centuries; and royal blood, although it has 'crept through scoundrels ever since the flood,' has had supreme, absolute, unlimited, and uncontrolled sway over the destiny of the world, until within a short period of time.

'When we look abroad on this beautiful world, so admirably contrived for the abode of happy beings, and see so much misery and poverty among the inhabitants of its fairest portions, the heart sickens at the prospect, and we involuntarily exclaim, why is it so? Has the great Author of our existence scattered blessings with a partial hand? Has he resolved that one portion of his creatures, made of the same materials, and subject to the same laws of our common nature, should riot in wealth, and luxuriate on his bounties, while the greater number should be poor and miserable, the hewers of wood, and the drawers of water to their more fortunate but less honest oppressors? No—never, never was this the design of the great Governor of the universe, whose ways are just.* But the self-styled higher orders, claim the right as divine to govern and oppress the majority for the benefit of the few, and we can see not the least shadow of a difference, whether the oppression emanate from a crowned head of the old world, or the Statute Law of Rhode-Island, in the new world.

Slavery, disguise it as you will, is still slavery; whether it exist in a free country, so called, or under the sway of a king on his throne. For the *very essence* of slavery consists in taking a man's property, time, and services, without his consent, to apply to public or private uses. This the Laws of Rhode-Island do. There are no two meanings to the words freeman and slave—a man can no more be a *half freeman*, and *half slave*, than he can be 'half horse and half aligator!' But more on this point hereafter.

We find by looking round on the world at the present time, an unusual movement respecting the rights of man, a strong, earnest, and irrepressible desire for reform, in almost every portion of the globe. The people are everywhere waking from the long slumber of by-gone ages. The scales of ignorance and bigotry are

*Dr. Charles Douglas' Address to the Convention of Working Men, Boston, September 6th, 1832.

falling from their mental eyes. They are rousing from the long sleep of despotism. The iron chains they have worn for so many centuries, have at last eaten into their souls. And the flame of liberty, like the pent up fires of a volcano, has broken forth, and threatens to overwhelm 'thrones, and principalities, and powers,' in one general and wide spread desolation and ruin.

The people are inquiring into the *divine right* of their oppressors. The times seem to be passing away when the fiat of kings and emperors should involve the happiness of the countless thousands of our race. Revolution follows revolution in rapid succession, and even the Grand Turk Mahmoud, in the ancient city of Stamboul, trembles on his precarious throne. His subjects are beginning to question his divine right to apply the bowstring to their necks at his sovereign will and pleasure, and the holy standard of the Turkish Empire, composed of the small clothes of Mahomet the prophet, has lost its divine efficacy on the minds of the bigoted, luxurious, and effeminate devotee at the shrine of Islamism.

In England, the haughty dukes, lords, and prelates, have recently had the alternative laid before them, either to have their palaces and castles burnt to the ground, and the ashes scattered to the four winds of heaven, or surrender their ill gotten power into the hands of '*the people*,' its only safe depository.

The people, in order to convince their oppressors that they were in earnest, demolished a few of the splendid abodes of luxury, thereby sternly saying '*if you will not do as you ought, we will do as we please, your divine right to the contrary notwithstanding.*'—The Tories said such people were not fit to govern themselves, and attributed these proceedings, to the superabundant liberty they already possessed. But they must have since been convinced, by the operation of the reform bill, that it was the want of liberty, and not the excess of it, which produced these disastrous results. It is worthy of remark, that while these things were transpiring, the Public Press in this City and State, and the United States, was rejoicing in the glorious prospects of the reformers in destroying the rotten borough system, we had, and still have in this State almost precisely the same system, and full as rotten, as that which existed in England. But the press is almost as silent as the grave, and such an article as a '*free press*,' does not exist within the limits of this State, to my knowledge.

Previous to the passage of the reform bill, the divine right party said, '*to propose to grant reform to the people, because they wanted it was a most dangerous and destructive doctrine.*'* But the people convinced their oppressors, that to *deny* reform when the people *demand*ed it, was still more destructive and dangerous. These

* Blackwood's Magazine.

excesses we have noticed, took place immediately after the rejection of the reform bill, by the House of Lords, and compelled the King to recall Lord Grey, who had been dismissed from the office of Prime Minister. When the Tories saw their splendid palaces enveloped in *crackling flames*, they became convinced it was no longer tenable ground to withhold right from its owners, and they submitted to 'the people' as in duty bound.

The French nation also have risen in their strength, and trampled on the 'divine right' of Charles Tenth to shackle the press, and drove him from the throne he had disgraced by his tyranny, and from the land he had endeavored to ruin and destroy "by the Grace of God," on which he blasphemously based his 'divine right' to be a tyrant and govern the French without their consent. If that nation gained nothing else by the revolution of July, they shook the opinion of all Europe, as it respects the divine right of kings, and placed a man on the throne whom they can remove at their pleasure, without reference to '*divine right*' other than the will of the people. They can compel him to retire to private life much easier than we have found it sometimes in this state to make a regular built and copper-fastened Governor, under the Charter of Charles II.

Poland too, long suffering under the galling chain of the blood-thirsty Russian, has also poured out in purple streams the life of her best and most patriotic sons, as a sacrifice to the cause of self-government. But alas! she has failed once and again, and 'order,' to use the language of despotism, 'order is restored at Warsaw'—order such as tyrants love. The dark and pitchy midnight cloud of slavery has again enveloped the ramparts, where in the time of the detested Suwarrow, the noble Poles fell before the 'leaden rain and iron hail' of the Russian barbarians, When

' Hope for a season bade the world farewell,
And freedom shrieked as Kosciusco fell.'

But all is not yet lost. The wild cry of horror and dismay bursting from the murdered women and children, 'the *blood*, the *tears*, the *anguish* and the *toil*' of Poland shall not be forgotten.—What though the world looked on coldly without rendering assistance in her hour of dreadful peril; although France made the heart of Poland sick with hope deferred, and England with her well known cold calculating policy negotiated with the great Northern Autocrat, until his eagles had sunk their savage talons into the hearts of the Poles, and dipped their beaks in their gore; Yet all is not lost. The red bolts of retributive wrath shall yet smite the tyrant on his throne, and Poland shall yet be emancipated.

' Yes! thy proud lords, unpitied land, shall see,
That man has yet a soul, and dare be free;
A little while, along thy saddening plains,
The starless night of desolation reigns;

Truth, shall restore the light by nature given,
 And like Prometheus, bring the fire from heaven;
 Prone to the dust, Oppression shall be hurled,
 Her name, her nature, withered from the world.*

Amidst all this commotion we have noticed, while we are gazing on Europe with anxious eyes, while we are watching with palpitating hearts the progress of Liberty, will it be believed, that in any one State, under the flag of the United States, there are thousands of American citizens, who have no more voice in the government, general or local, than the serfs, and vassals, and boors, of Europe and Asia? Will it be credited that such a body of men exist, who submit to be taxed without their own consent, who are compelled to perform military duty, to defend the country from foreign invasion and domestic commotion; to protect property frequently not their own; in fact, who are obliged by the will of a minority, to bear all the burthens of a nominally free government, and yet have no voice in the choice of the rulers, and the administration of that government?

Is it possible, that this body of disfranchised American citizens, have submitted to this state of vassalage for nearly two hundred years, peaceably, quietly, and without scarcely a remonstrance?

Painful as it is to avow it, and shameful as is the fact, so it is, and the aristocracy say, '*so mote it be.*' Twelve thousand vassals, of the description we have named, exist in the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, containing a population of one hundred thousand souls; and the twelve thousand are taxed and governed by only eight thousand self-styled freemen, including two thousand eldest sons, who are born freemen by Statute Law, and excluding all younger sons, who are born slaves by the same Statute Law.

The Statute Law for the admission of freemen provides that no person shall be admitted a freeman, or act as such in any town meeting, unless he shall possess at the time of such acting or voting, in his own proper right, a real estate to the full value of one hundred and thirty-four dollars, or which shall rent for seven dollars per annum, or the oldest son of such freeholder.

This law has been altered and amended seventeen times in one hundred and seventy years, always retaining the odious distinction between freemen and slaves—elder sons and younger sons. I propose to prove that this law is contrary to the declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Bill of Rights of the State of Rhode-Island, and the dictates of common sense. That it contradicts and sets at defiance every principle of the American Revolution. It is wicked, ridiculous, unnatural, impolitic, tyrannical and unjust in every point of view. It is a

* Campbell's Pleasures of Hope.

remnant of an old feudal law, established in England by a tyrant nearly eight hundred years ago.

I shall adopt the same course of reasoning used in the revolution. I shall maintain and support the same sentiments, and take the same ground as was taken by our fathers in those days which tried men's souls. Furthermore, I assert that the twelve thousand disfranchised citizens of this State have in some points more reason to complain, than had the men who travelled in mid-winter without shoes, and dyed the frozen ground with blood from their lacerated feet, rather than pay a tax of three pence on a pound of tea, imposed on them without their consent. In order to the right understanding of our subject, I shall introduce a short portion of English History, relative to the adoption of Magna Carta, or the Great Charter, on which our forefathers rested their claims to self government.

'Under the feudal law introduced into England by William the Conqueror, who subdued that nation in 1066, now seven hundred and sixty-seven years ago, the lands were divided into baronies, with but few exceptions, besides the royal demesnes. The king conferred the lands on his principal adventurers. These great barons shared out their lands to other foreigners, who were denominated knights or vassals, and who paid the same duties, service, and submission to the barons, in peace and war, as the baron himself did to the sovereign lord, the king.

'The whole kingdom was divided into about seven hundred chief tenants, and sixty thousand knights fees, or portions of land; as none of the English were permitted to enter the first rank, the few that retained their landed estates were willing to be received into the second rank, and under the protection of some powerful Norman, to load themselves and their posterity with the grievous burthens of the feudal system. According to feudal law, the king was the supreme lord of the landed property; the land was considered as a kind of benefice, which was the original conception of feudal property, and the vassals owed stated services to the barons for their lands, as the baron did to the king for his lands; the vassal was obliged to defend the baron in war, and the baron at the head of his vassals, was obliged to defend the king and kingdom. These barons were the lords of the soil, and they alone were voters; the vassals had no voice in the government of the king, but were consulted by the barons in times of difficulty and danger.' The same as our lords of landed property consult us in like cases. 'The feudal system was not favorable to the happiness of the people, the greater part of whom were in an absolute state of slavery, or villainage, as it was then termed. The languishing state of commerce kept the people poor and contemptible, and the political institutions were such as to render their poverty and degradation perpetual.'

In those times justice and right were openly bought and sold, and the king's court of judicature was open to none, who did not bring presents to the king. The bribes for the prevention, perversion, and suspension of justice, were entered on the registers of the royal revenue, and now remain, as a monument of the perpetual iniquity and tyranny of the times. The king sold his favor in cases most singular. In one instance the wife of Hugh de Nevill gave the king two hundred hens to be permitted to lie with her own husband one night. He was probably in prison, which prevented her from having access to him. The Bishop of Winchester gave the king a tun of good wine, because he did not put the king in mind to give a girdle to the Countess of Albemarle. The sovereign having assumed the power to tax and misuse his subjects, and abuse them in various ways, the barons were aroused, and began to take measures to check his power. It appears that King John, who was then on the throne, and who came to it in 1199, was a great tyrant in every point of view, and in every sense of the word. His character was a complication of every vice, both ruinous to himself, and destructive to the people. He was cowardly, cruel, full of levity, licentiousness and tyranny.—He stabbed his nephew Arthur with his own hand, and after fastening a stone to his body, threw him into the Seine. He dishonored the families of his subjects by his licentious amours. He published edicts against them of a cruel and detestable nature, and constantly loaded them with impositions and exactions of all kinds. This description of John's character will answer with a very little variation for that of Charles II., by whom the '*republican*' state of Rhode-Island is now governed and controlled.

King John, conscious of the general hatred he had incurred, required the barons to furnish hostages for the security of their allegiance, and they were obliged to put into his hands their sons, their nephews, or near relations. When his messengers came with similar commands to the castle of William de Braouse, a baron of great note, his wife said 'she never would trust her son in the hands of a man who had murdered his own nephew.' The family fled into Ireland and endeavored to conceal themselves, but they were sought out by the blood hound John, and the mother and child were starved to death in prison, while the baron barely escaped with his life, by flying into France.'

It is not surprising that under such cruel oppression the barons should form a league against this royal murderer, who committed such enormities on his subjects. 'Accordingly in 1215 the barons appeared in London and demanded redress. The king was alarmed, and promised an answer, soon. He gave them hostages, and the barons retired to their castles. After waiting until they were satisfied the king meant to deceive them, and learning that he had in the interval applied to the Pope, to assist him against

his rebellious subjects, they assembled two thousand knights and their retainers, and inferior persons without number. They advanced to Brackly, fifteen miles from Oxford, where the King's court resided. John sent messengers to them, and demanded to know what those rights were they so boldly demanded of their sovereign. The barons sent a schedule of their principal demands, which no sooner was shown to the king, when he burst into a furious rage, and swore that he never would grant them such liberties as would make himself a slave. He asked the barons why they did not demand his whole kingdom. On hearing the King's answer, the barons levied war upon him without further ceremony. They entered London triumphantly, from whence they sallied and laid waste the king's parks and palaces, and finally compelled him to sign the Charter which had been required of him.

This famous deed has since been called Magna Carta, or the Great Charter. It either granted, or secured important privileges, to all ranks and orders of men in the kingdom. It contains all the outlines of a legal government, and provides for the equal distribution of justice, and enjoyment of property, the great end for which society is formed among men. Mr Hume, from whom we have abridged this account, says, 'that no time, nor *circumstance*, nor *statute*, nor *positive* institution, should prevent us from recalling the privileges therein secured, that the rights are unalienable; and we ought alway to keep them uppermost in our thoughts and intentions.'

Thus I have prepared the way, for remarks on the principles of the Revolution of 1775; and introduced to your notice, the foundation of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the Bills of Rights of the several States in this Union. You will see more fully what those principles are which apply to our subject, when we come to refer to the revolutionary war, in which the point we are now contesting, was decided, as was the adoption of Magna Carta, sword in hand; when 'war to the knife, knife to the hilt, and blood to the knees,' decided the right of these United States, and every citizen thereof, to govern themselves.

Having laid the foundation, we shall proceed to erect the superstructure, and leave the world to judge whether we build our claims to Free Suffrage on the sand, or on the eternal rock of Truth and Justice.

In 1765, the British King and Parliament, began their aggressions on the American Colonies, and passed the famous Stamp Act. This Act contained fifty-five sections. It imposed a tax on all pieces of paper, parchment, or vellum used; and all books, pamphlets, and newspapers of every description. Even an almanac was taxed four pence, which is more than the whole price of that article at the present day; and every thing of the paper or parch-

ment kind was taxed in the same proportion. When the news arrived of the passage of this act, the whole country was thrown into intense excitement, and general commotion, 'and all parties were unanimous in maintaining, that it was utterly impossible to submit to a law made so contrary to ancient usage, to their rights as colonists and as British subjects. The friends of the colonists said in the House of Commons while the Stamp Act Bill was before that body, that it was the right of the colonists not to be taxed but by their own consent; that it resulted from Magna Carta, and from all the writs of those times for collection of revenue and imposition of taxes, for the benefit of the crown as well as from the declaration of rights, and the whole history of the British Constitution; that no English subject could be taxed, except *par communem consensum parliamenti*, that is, by his own consent or his representative; that such was the original right of British subjects, and if it be contended that they are liable to such taxes, they must be first represented.'

In accordance with these sentiments Dr. Franklin wrote to Gov. Shirley, of the then Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 'that to exclude the people from all choice in the grand council, would give great dissatisfaction, as well as taxing them by act of parliament where they were not represented. That it is the supposed right of every Englishman not to be taxed, except by their own consent given through their representatives, and that the Colonies had no representatives in parliament, which of course could not levy taxes for that reason on the colonies. That to propose to tax them without their consent, implied a suspicion of their love to their country, and a doubt of their common sense, and that they had not deserved such treatment.'

The public press was loaded with remonstrances. They exclaimed one and all, 'this is but the commencement of a most odious and detestable system of tyranny and oppression. The people destroyed the stamped paper which was sent over from England in bales. They burnt the king's officers in effigy, destroyed their houses, furniture, and valuable paintings, books and papers, tarred and feathered some of the king's minions for variety's sake, and finally compelled the British Parliament to repeal the odious Stamp Act in 1766, a little short of one year after its passage.*

I should like to ask the question if it was the right of British subjects not to be taxed without their consent before the Revolution, and the General Assembly now tax the twelve thousand citizens of this State directly or indirectly without their consent, what has that body of men gained by the revolution but a change of masters in that respect? Is there the least shadow of a differ-

*Botta's American Revolution.

ence between the acts of the British Parliament, and those of our General Assembly, so far as it regards taxation without representation? If there is, I have, for one, not sense enough to perceive it. If there is any difference, it must be that which exists between a pig and a full grown hog, or between a young rat and an old one, the same in nature, but differing in size; and those who persist in maintaining this state of things, well deserve the name given by a gentlemen in this city, by altering the pronunciation of the term 'aristocrat,' to 'aris-stock-rat.'

But to proceed—the next imposition on our fathers, was the tea tax. This was only *three pence* on a pound, but they would not pay it. Why? Because they were not represented in the body which assessed that tax. Their motto was, 'Millions for defence, but not one cent for tribute.' They had destroyed the stamped paper by fire, and now they destroy the tea by water. The fire and water finally raised the steam on the high pressure principle, and burst the boiler of the British Ministry, with a report, like the thundering in the heavens during the warring of the elements.

The case must now come to the '*dernier resort*.' Blood must again flow, as a sacrifice to the cause of self government. The Colonists drove the hirelings of the British King from our shores, '*because he was unjust, and had taxed them without their consent.*' Hence, 'he was unworthy to rule over a free people.' If we have a government in this State who treat us in the same manner, by taxing us without our consent, what is the difference between our government and the British King's. Whatever may be the difference, such are the facts.

The Statute law of Rhode Island is certainly contrary to the revolution of '75. It is in direct opposition to that immortal document the Declaration of Independence. That paper, from the pen of the illustrious Jefferson, like a sword of flaming fire, has carried terror and dismay, into the hearts of tyrants, and caused their knees to smite together, as did the knees of the king of Babylon when he saw the hand writing on the wall, 'Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting. Thy kingdom is departed from thee.'

What is the language of this instrument? 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable 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.*' Then certainly all powers *not* derived from the consent of the governed are *unjust*. Have the twelve thousand disfranchised citizens of this State ever given their consent to the Legislature to govern them? They never have and never can, under existing laws. The law of Rhode-Island says, all men *are not* created equal; but that oldest

sons are above younger ones, and unless a man owns one hundred and thirty-four dollars' worth of a '*sand bank*' he is not a freeman, and consequently must be a slave. I think the General Assembly ought to order a *new translation* of the Declaration of Independence, calculated like an almanac, for the meridian of Rhode-Island. So on the fourth of July, those who are appointed to read that instrument, would read thus: 'We hold this truth to be self-evident that all men are created equal, except in Rhode-Island.' And he might say, in explanation, that Jefferson and all the signers to that paper, were old fools; and that the Statute law of Rhode-Island was the best and only expositor of the internal meaning of that Declaration.

The Statute law of Rhode-Island is contrary to the Constitution of the United States, for it is there made the imperative duty of the General Government, to guarantee to each State a republican form of government, whether that State is willing or not. The government of this State is not republican even in its form; it was formed under a king, and it is an aristocratical form of government.— It never has attempted as a State to assume any other form than that given to it under Great Britain. The government of this State is not republican, for eight thousand govern twelve thousand without their consent. A minority govern the majority, consequently it cannot be a republican government; for in such a government, the majority govern; and we have no claim to rank among republican governments in any one particular.

The Statute law under consideration, is directly opposed to the Bill of Rights of this State. The Preamble to that paper says, that the rights therein contained and declared, are the unalienable and unquestionable rights of the *people* of this State; it does not say freeholders, nor the oldest sons of freeholders. It declares that all persons within the limits of this State, shall obtain right and justice, promptly, freely, and without being obliged to purchase it.* The Statute says to non-freeholders and youngest sons, you shall *purchase* the *right* to vote and govern yourselves, and pay at least one hundred and thirty-four dollars for that *right*.

Again, the declaration of our State rights says, that no person within the limits of this State, shall be deprived of his life, liberty, or property, but by the judgment of his peers. Now peers are equals; not equals in property or learning, but equals in civil and religious rights and privileges. So it is impossible for one single person out of the twelve thousand disfranchised, to be tried by his peers or equals; for none but those above them, according to law, can sit on a jury. The peers or equals among the twelve thousand non-freeholders cannot enter a jury box; so that if the life, liberty, or property of one of the disfranchised is taken from him,

* See Bill of Rights in the Appendix.

it is not done by his *peers*, and is consequently unjust, and contrary to the Bill of Rights of this State. In fact, not one of the twelve thousand can even *enter* a court of justice, without the consent of a freeholder—he cannot prosecute a claim for damages or debt unless his superiors give him permission so to do, by endorsing the writ or warrant to secure cost. If a plaintiff or defendant offer the best of security that five hundred men could give, although the five hundred were worth fifty thousand dollars each, in personal property, no such plaintiff or defendant could enter court on any accusation, in his own behalf or even in behalf of his children, if they had been beaten black and blue, from the head to the heels, in a '*whipping room of a large cotton manufactory.*' Even a deaf and dumb boy who was thus mauled by an overseer at Central Falls, must go and make his signs to a freeholder, and show as well as he could the extent of his injury, before he could have permission to appeal to his country and his God for redress.

Is this right? Is this justice? The man or the law that would say it was either just, or right, deserves the contempt of all men, throughout all ages.

Let us inquire why this law of freeholds was made. Judge Blackstone says in his Commentaries on the Laws of England, 'The reason of requiring any property qualification is, to exclude all such as are in *so mean a condition as not to have any mind of their own,*' or will of their own. He says 'if it were probable that all would give their vote without influence of any kind, then according to the true and genuine principles of liberty, it would be proper to permit every man, however poor, to vote for those delegates to whom are committed his life, liberty and property. But this is hardly to be expected in persons of indigent circumstances.'

This is certainly highly complimentary to the twelve thousand disfranchised citizens of this State; they have no minds of their own unless they have one hundred and thirty-four dollars' worth of soil, or are the oldest sons of such owners. You will perceive that we have given the true reasons for the statute, as the same arguments are now used in our streets every day. Some people in this State seem to think that one hundred and thirty-four dollars will make a wise man of an *ideot*; or a man of common *sense*, may be considered an *ideot* if he does not possess that amount of real estate. An instance has come to my knowledge which took place just before the last election, which will strengthen this position. A man in North Providence, near the line of this City, had purchased a lot for two hundred dollars, which would make him and his oldest son voters. The lot had rented for eight dollars, which is more by one dollar than the law requires in rental. The Assessors in their wisdom decided at the period named, that the land was worth just one hundred and *thirty* dollars, or in other words the owner and his oldest son lacked just four dollars of having common *sense*.

But taking into consideration the one dollar extra rental, I should decide that it wanted only three dollars, to enable them to be ranked among those who '*have a mind of their own.*' And I shall begin to think if the people of this State, submit to such an abominable law as this now under *medical* treatment, that common sense will have to be put into the price current of this State, under the head of '*none in the market.*' You will permit me to present to your view, the case of that venerable and lamented patriot, Barton. *He* might have been a '*freeman*' if he would; but he no doubt disdained the idea, that he must expend one hundred and thirty-four dollars on a sand bank, to make *him* a freeman. But the law said he had no mind of his own. Prescott did not think so when Barton took him out of bed at midnight, from the head quarters of the British camp. When he bearded the British lion in his den, and took away under the mouth of British cannon, the Commander in Chief of the British forces, an admiring world thought he had a mind of his own, and all the friends of liberty cried '*long live Barton, the noble and the brave.*' The shout almost rent the blue concave of heaven's high arch, above which he now rests from his labors with his compatriots in glory, and his memory is embalmed in our hearts. The Statute law of Rhode-Island declares in effect, that Barton was a *slave*, a *vassal*.— Shame on such laws, and if justice were done, the red lightnings of Heaven would consume the accursed pages, that contain *such* a libel on *such* a man. And the thunder-bolts of vengeance ought to visit us, if we suffer that law to exist without resistance. Petition and remonstrance are both vain.

Dr. Franklin ridiculed the idea of a property qualification; he said it might consist in a *jackass* as well as soil, both were ridiculous. If a man votes to day on a jackass and tomorrow the jackass dies, he loses his vote. It certainly is not the *man* who votes, but the *jackass*. We think *some* jackasses vote under the present law. I am acquainted with one freeholder, who is a very '*clever*' man indeed, but when presented with a speech delivered by Hon. Daniel Webster, at Worcester, he said he would take it and read it, as he always thought Mr Webster was a nice sort of a man, he always got along without making much noise in the world, and on the whole, he thought he was a well meaning, quiet man. On being asked if he was acquainted with Daniel Webster, he said, O yes, Dr. Webster, who lives out towards Pawtucket, the Indian doctor. Do you not think this '*freeman*' had a mind of his own?

Let us enquire into the origin of the law respecting oldest sons. We have seen that the barons, or landholders, were voters in feudal times, and we find that the right of primogeniture, which gave the oldest son the right to exclusive privileges, is of the same origin and connects our history with that of England. Judge Blackstone says, '*the law of primogeniture seems only to have obtained*

among the Jews in ancient times, in whose constitution the eldest son had a double portion of the inheritance, in the same manner as in England. By the law of King Henry the First, the oldest son had the capital fee of his father's estate without any other privilege. The Greeks, Saxons, Romans, and Britons, and even the Feudists, originally divided their property equally. This is certainly the most obvious and natural way, especially in the opinion of younger sons, and has the appearance of being impartial and just. But when the Emperors began to create honorary feuds or titles of nobility, it became necessary to support their dignity to make them impartable, or as they styled them *feuda individua*, and in consequence decendible to the eldest son alone, so finally the oldest son began to succeed to all the lands in military tenures, and in this condition the feudal Constitution was established by William the Conqueror, sometimes called William the Bastard.' Here is the foundation of the Rhode-Island title of nobility granted to oldest sons of freeholders; and our Statute law is the remnant of this old feudal law made more than a thousand years ago, and established in England more than seven hundred years since. Surely Rhode-Island can say, 'behold in our State the march of intellect, the march of improvement!' Oldest sons do you not feel proud of your noble selves? I may be permitted to remark that I do not intend to ridicule oldest sons, but the law which grants this title to them to be the lords over their younger brothers; for I know many of that class who despise the law as much as I can or do, and they will no doubt render us their voices in removing the cause of complaint and ridicule.

The law of primogeniture gave the landed estate to the oldest son, but whether he voted in the life time of his father in the feudal ages, I have not been able to ascertain; perhaps this may be ranked among the *improvements* of the age in which we live, and the privilege may be ascribed to the superior judgment of Rhode-Island legislators. Be this as it may, this law was introduced into this country, and was the law of Massachusetts from 1641, to 1789, when it was repealed, having existed a century and a half. I am not certain that property was ever divided in this State according to that law;* but we all know that the oldest son votes in this State if he has neither property or common sense, while the younger son is a vassal to the first-born.

The law is certainly unjust, for it implies and secures '*heredit-*

* Since preparing this Address for the press, a friend has kindly handed us the following note:

'The law of Primogeniture as established in England, was in force in Rhode-Island till repealed by Act 455 of George 1st, in 1718, when the oldest son had a double portion of the estate, and the remainder was divided equally among the others. In 1728, the Common Law was re-established, and so remained till 1770.'—*Judge Story—Comments on the Constitutions, 2d volume.*

ary rights,' to political privileges, or a hereditary right to govern others without their own consent. Is not this the doctrine held by kings as they say by the Grace of God? Is this a republican doctrine? I will not impeach the judgment of this assembly by repeating the question.

The law of primogeniture as it regards the vote of the oldest son is wicked. Not because he has no right to vote, but not on that ground, because he now injures others by his vote; he takes from them that which no man has a right to take without the consent of the owners, the right to govern himself by his own consent. But this law is wicked if there is any justice in the command, what God hath joined let no man put asunder. Yet the Statute Law of this State puts twelve thousand men asunder from the exercise of their unalienable rights; and if God ever joined any thing he joined men to their rights, and they cannot, if they would, alienate themselves from the right of self-government; it is impartable, unalienable, and we cannot part with it. Liberty is enstamped on the soul '*in characters of living flame,*' and we ought to sacrifice every thing, even life to the last drop of the crimson tide, which flows in the deepest recesses of the heart, for its attainment and defence.

The Statute Law of this State is ridiculous in the extreme.— Now suppose a man's wife should have three sons at a birth, which is the oldest son? Call them Tom, Dick, and Harry. How could we decide? It certainly would be shameful and disgusting to see a mother come into this house and give oath that either Tom, Dick, or Harry was the oldest son, especially if the law was in force passed at the instance of Mr Curtis, which drove all the non-freeholders off this floor;* for the poor woman would have to go into the galleries, taking the three twins with her until the case was decided, when the *oldest son* could come down and stand on the floor with the author of the law which would still keep the *younger ones* in the gallery. This case presents a serious difficulty; we are certainly in a serious dilemma respecting these three boys, all of them over twenty-one years of age, of course. I can see no other way than to adopt the same course pursued in an ancient case of midwifery, where the midwife put a scarlet thread on the wrist of the first who made his appearance on the threshold of mortal life; but the scarlet threaded gentleman was not born *first* after all, and could not be a voter according to the Statute law of R. I. Well, here we are on a lee shore, and must get off or go to pieces; if all hands will stand by and brace up sharp, we will

*In 1829, a law was passed in Providence, authorizing the Moderator of Town Meeting to employ five constables to keep all non-freeholders off the floor of the Town House. Public indignation caused its repeal soon after its passage.

try our best to get into deep water. I propose that the General Assembly (so called, but a particular Assembly in fact) pass an act to provide a lot of scarlet ribbons under the 'GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE,' and to have an inscription on them in letters of gold, similar to the titles assumed by European monarchs, differing a little in phraseology. As thus: instead of saying 'We Nicholas, by the Grace of God Emperor of all the Russias,' say 'We, the oldest sons, born voters by the Statute Law of Rhode-Island, and by the Grace of God.' These badges ought to be worn during life, so that the younger sons, the *vassals*, would know how to pay all due deference to their republican Highnesses. A State's midwife ought to be appointed with a sufficient number of deputies, whose duty it should be to be extremely careful that there should be 'no mistake.' A regular department, like the Department of War or Treasury, at Washington, should be erected, and denominated the Department for Delivery, for the Sovereign State of Rhode-Island. The Assembly might denominate this act, the Delivery Stamp Act, for the more careful preservation of the royal blood of the hereditary nobility of the State. This would increase legislation, and the Assembly might find as much as they could do in altering and amending this act, instead of counting votes to no purpose, as they have done for the year past. If this course were pursued, we should in a few years have a splendid little monarchy, about twenty-five miles wide and ninety long, including Block Island. We might then return by an easy road to the feudal system of vassalage, and from that to savage barbarism; and at last become complete savages, if we kept on in our retrograde movements.

The Statute law of this State is impolitic, because it is well known, that where a people have the making of their own government in their own hands they are the most attached to it; and the twelve thousand disfranchised in this State would be more attached to the government if it were a republican one, instead of being aristocratical as it now is under the present law. Now they are discontented, they are reminded every day of their vassalage.— They are in a worse situation than the vassals of feudal times, for they paid taxes and fought in consideration of holding the lands they defended, and which they held by the military tenure of which we have spoken. But in this State the younger sons and non-freeholders are obliged to defend property not their own, land they cannot occupy or cultivate, lands used by the barons, the lords of Rhode-Island, to enslave its defenders. In fact the vassals in this State have to stand guard over their own chains, the very chains with which they are shackled. They are actually compelled to watch over the lives and property of men, who do not think them worthy or fit for any other use, but to obey the commands of their superiors.

The American flag never ought to wave over the soil of Rhode-Island while this law exists, except at half mast and Union down. The celebration of the fourth of July, never ought to take place in this State except as a day of mourning, and those who walk in procession, ought to be in chains, and clothed in sackcloth and ashes. It is all mockery to say we are free when we are not, and every time we assert it we are guilty of falsehood. The non-freeholders have gained nothing by the Revolution if this state of things must continue. *But it must not be so.* We must have a remedy. 'Peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must.' I hope there is no person in this house so extremely nervous as to go into spasms at the sound of the last sentence; keep calm if possible, until you see what kind of force we recommend. We assert that every citizen of these United States has a right to vote for his rulers. We deny the justice of all laws made without the consent of ourselves, the majority of the people. We deny the right of Congress, to lay any tax, duty, or impost of any kind on the disfranchised citizens of this State; for no part of any man's property can be taken from him justly, without his consent, neither his time for military duty, in peace or in war, nor one cent for taxes.

We assert that the Legislature of Rhode-Island is not an assembly of the people. That the Senators and Representatives in Congress from this State, are not chosen by the people, in the sense of all the Bills of Rights, of this and other States; for a minority choose the whole of them, and this is evidently unconstitutional. No law made by either Legislative body assessing a tax on non-voters, can with justice be collected; for they have never given their assent to the tax, directly or indirectly, by themselves or their representatives. It is a special cause of complaint in the Declaration of Independence against the King of England, 'that he had given his assent to laws, taxing our fathers without their consent!' We give as our opinion on this ground, that no non-freeholder is bound to do military duty, or pay taxes, because he is not represented. It is the duty of all men to resist tyranny, if need be, sword in hand, let it proceed from what source it may, although we heartily say, God forbid it should be necessary, and we do not believe it will in this case. We solemnly believe it is the duty of every man, rather to die in the last ditch and never surrender his birthright, if he wallows in his own blood and that of the enemies of Freedom. We can say in the language of the American Congress, in an address to the King of England 'had our Creator been pleased to give us existence in a land of slavery, the sense of our condition might be mitigated by habit and ignorance; but thanks to his adorable goodness we were born *heirs* of Freedom.'

I believe I shall speak the sentiments of many here, when I say we consider ourselves under an implied contract to the other mem-

bers of society. We are willing to do our duty, and we demand that others should do the same by us. We say unto all who have power, do us justice and we will go all lengths with you to defend your property. Tax us if you please, and if we have nothing else to tax put it on our heads, and abolish your abominable gambling Lottery system. Our claim is simple, and easy to be understood. We agree to bear all our proportion of the public burthens of society, and we claim, *by the blood of our fathers*, all the rights and immunities secured to us by them. If the disfranchised citizens of this State are true to *their* principles, they never will do another day's military duty, nor pay a tax assessed by a body which *does not* 'DERIVE ITS JUST POWERS FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED.' They will no longer permit their ears to be tickled by the aristocracy of our State. They have only to say the word, and they will be freemen in fact and in name.

What shall be done in the case before us? Shall twelve thousand citizens of this State be governed by eight thousand, in accordance to a law made by a tyrant nearly two hundred years ago? Shall King Charles, of Great Britain, still rule and reign over us, while he has been rotting in his grave nearly two centuries? Will you permit a minority to govern in a more tyrannical manner, or at least as much so, as a king? Does not the Legislature do the same thing that King George did in ancient times? Did not one of the members of that august body say that the Legislature was omnipotent? *King George* never claimed the attributes of Almighty God. He only claimed to tax us without our consent, 'by the Grace of GOD.' It may be said, it has been said, I use too strong terms; but how have we been treated? Did we not petition the 'omnipotent' Legislature of the State? What did we get by it? Nothing but scorn, and contumely, and reproach. Yes, you were called vagabonds and renegades from other States, who had impudently interfered with the laws of Rhode-Island. You were told 'you might leave that house, and decamp from the state.' Your petition, drawn up in respectful terms,* was not even read in the House, and Benjamin Hazard, who branded you as vagrants and renegades, probably never read the petition himself, nor did he offer a single argument against you. Thus were nearly two thousand petitioners kicked out doors by the *Honorable* General Assembly, and seven hundred of them were freeholders in this State. I must say I have no respect for laws not made by the people, and though I am now compelled to obey them, I deny the right of any body of men to be tyrants, as much as I deny the right of one man to be so. I assert that all laws taxing men without their consent, are tyrannical, and those who make such laws are tyrants. I care not wheth-

* See Petition, in Appendix.

er the law-makers assemble in London, St. Petersburg, Paris, or Constantinople, Providence, Newport, Bristol or South Kingstown, the principle remains the same. The General Assembly has no more right to tax non-freeholders under the present law than has the Great Mogul, of India.

I am constrained to repeat, as my opinion, and this from a sense of duty I owe to the twelve thousand disfranchised, that they are under no obligation to do military duty, or pay taxes, under the present Statute law of this State. What will be the consequence of refusal? Let us suppose the result. If the same unrighteous law which compels you to render service without your consent, is put in force, you must go to jail. Where will jails be found to imprison you. It would be a much more *feasible* plan for the twelve thousand to put the Assembly in jail! Suppose you resist or refuse to obey? Then the military arm must be put in requisition to assist the civil arm. But *you* are that military arm. Will you put yourselves in prison? But suppose you do actually turn out and put yourselves in prison, or under guard, the barons the lords of Rhode-Island, will have to support you while standing guard over your own bodies: if they did not, you would be apt to forage on your own account. But would not the United States send troops to quell such resistance? Never!—The general government cannot lift its arm against its own Constitution. It would be impossible for them, to fight against the Declaration of Independence, and by so doing prevent us from obtaining the acknowledgment of rights, pronounced by our fathers unalienable, calling on Almighty God, to witness the sincerity of their intentions.

If it be again asked, what would be the result, I would point you to that respectable body of people called Quakers; they refused to do military duty, and they suffered fine and imprisonment even unto death; but they triumphed in a cause they esteemed dearer than life; it was a triumph of *principle*; even so we should triumph. It would be a triumph of a principle as glorious and sacred, as that which carried the Quakers through. They contended for religious liberty; we for civil liberty. We ought first, to adopt passive resistance; and what power on earth shall say, that the majority of the people of this State, shall not govern themselves, on those principles, advocated by Washington, LaFayette, Warren, and Greene.

Is the question ever asked, when the town is on fire, whether we are freeholders, before we extinguish the flames? Were we asked in the last war whether we were oldest sons, before we were called to build fortifications around the town and State, to defend the property of freeholders from a foreign foe? Were we asked if we were freemen or oldest sons when desolation rode on the whirlwind and directed the storm in the September gale, before we were called to guard property of freeholders scattered by wind

and wave over land and water? We could then shoulder our muskets and tramp these streets night after night, without a morsel of refreshment furnished by property owners, and while they were sweetly sleeping on their beds of down, safe from the chilling dews of night.

On a more recent occasion we could arm to protect property owned by freeholders, and by them devoted to purposes of the worst kind, under a man to whom we had not delegated our power to govern. After our streets were soaked in human blood,* and the whole State in commotion, we could arm with muskets, powder and ball, and patrol these streets voluntarily, to protect property used to deprive us of our rights. Did we refuse on that dreadful occasion to do our duty to our State and country? Did the authorities, so called, doubt our fidelity? Did they say you are not freeholders; you have no right to vote, you are not the oldest sons? Did they say we were Vagabonds and Renegades from other States?

‘Oh no, they never mentioned it.’

And because *we* never mentioned it,

‘They think that we forget.’

We ought to have a Constitution for this State, founded on Republican principles, and the whole people have a right to make it. They have a right to assemble in primary meetings, and appoint Delegates to a Convention. That Convention have a right to form a Constitution, and submit it to the people. If they adopt it, it is the law of the land. The General Assembly have no right to have any thing to do with it, no more than the Siamese twins, because they are not the Representatives of the people. If I have succeeded in throwing any light on this subject, I shall be gratified, and I hope we shall never rest until it become a truth in Rhode-Island; that all men are born equal in fact and theory.

If we make an attempt to free ourselves, we shall meet with insult of all kinds. We shall be called disorganizers, and an unholy combination. We shall be told we are raising an excitement, and disturbing the ‘ancient order of things.’ The words combinations and excitements, are the bugbears and humbugs always used by the enemies to liberty. I will close by giving an explanation of my own of what I consider the meaning of the words combinations and excitements, extracted from my Address to the Working Men of New England, which has passed through two editions in Boston and New York. ‘Combinations are good or evil, according to their objects. The combination to murder Capt. White, of Salem, was an evil and a wicked combination; but the combination, to detect and punish the murderers, was useful, necessary, and just. Men of property find no fault with combinations.’

*Battle of Smith's Bridge, September 24th, 1831.

to extinguish fires and protect their *precious persons* from danger. But if poor men ask JUSTICE, it is a *most horrible* combination. The Declaration of Independence was the work of a combination, and was as hateful to the traitors and tories of those days, as combinations to obtain right and justice, are now to the avaricious monopolist, and purse proud aristocrat.

Was there no combination, when the British tender Gaspee was burnt, in Providence river? Was there no combination, when the leather aprons and green baize jackets of the farmers and mechanics, were seen mingling with the shining uniform of the British regulars; and that class which is now so much despised, gained the independence of this nation? Was there no combination when Bostonians, in the disguise of Mohawk Indians, made a dish of tea, at the expense of King George the Third, using Boston Harbor for a tea-pot? When the immortal and illustrious Washington took Yorktown by storm, *there* was a combination of red hot cannon balls and bomb-shells from a combination of American and French forces, for three days and three nights in succession, pouring in upon a haughty foe, to the tune of Yankee Doodle. No doubt Lord Cornwallis was a great enemy to combinations; they hurt his feelings. So much for combinations—now for excitements.

Tyrants in all countries are always alarmed at excitements.—The excitement which existed in Poland, troubled 'We Nicholas, Emperor of all the Russias' extremely, and when the flame of liberty was for a time smothered by an overwhelming force, the minions of the Autocrat proclaimed that, 'Order is restored at Warsaw.' Any excitement among those who are not wealthy, troubles 'We the Aristocracy' in the same way; and if they succeed by the overwhelming force of wealth, in bearing down and smothering the efforts of those who are contending for Equal Rights, they proclaim that order is restored in Rhode-Island, among the Renegades and Vagabonds who dared to petition the '*omnipotent*' General Assembly, for Free Suffrage.

Martin Luther was cautioned by the Pope of Rome, not to make an excitement. The Rev. Catholic gentleman, who officiates sometimes in this desk, informed his hearers, lately, that the 'Classical meaning of the word Luther, was, a wild beast let loose.' I am not very deeply read in the Classics, but I think the Pope of Rome found the definition to be a correct one, so far as *his* power was concerned. Be that as it may, Luther had found that, in his opinion, at least, the Pope was not the vicegerent of God on earth, and he did not feel disposed to kiss the great toe of his Holiness, in token of reverence, although it was done every day, by Emperors and Kings, Cardinals and Bishops, and perchance, by Monks, Friars, and Pilgrims, if they could get money to *pay* for the *glorious* privilege. I hope we shall soon find that the General Assembly is not '*omnipotent*.' Let our motto be, 'VOX POPULI, VOX DEI.'—*The voice of the People, is the voice of God.*

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APPENDIX.

AN ACT

DECLARATORY OF CERTAIN RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS STATE.

WHEREAS the General Assembly of this State have from time to time passed sundry acts, declaratory of the rights of the people thereof; and whereas a declaration of certain rights is deemed by this Assembly to be highly proper and necessary, both for the administration of justice and the security of said rights:

Be it therefore enacted by this General Assembly, and by the authority thereof it is enacted, That the people of this State are entitled, among other important and essential rights, to the rights hereafter enumerated, and that the same are and hereby are declared to be the inherent and unquestionable rights of the people inhabiting within the limits and jurisdiction of this State: that the political axioms, or truths, hereinafter mentioned and declared, are, and ought to be, of paramount obligation in all legislative, judicial and executive proceedings, which shall be had or done therein, under the authority thereof.

SECTION 1. Every person within this State ought to find a certain remedy, by having recourse to the laws, for all injuries or wrongs which he may receive in his person, property, or character. He ought to obtain right and justice freely, and without being obliged to purchase it; completely, and without any denial; promptly, and without delay; conformably to the laws.

SEC. 2. The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and possessions, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated; and no warrant shall issue, but on complaint in writing, upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and describing, as nearly as may be, the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

SEC. 3. No person shall be holden to answer a capital or other infamous crime, unless on presentment or indictment by a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia when in actual service, in time of war or public danger. No person shall, for the same offence, be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb.

SEC. 4. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel punishments inflicted, and all punishments ought to be proportioned to the offence.

SEC. 5. All prisoners shall be bailable by sufficient sureties, unless for capital offences, when the proof is evident, or presumption great; and the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when, in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it.

SEC. 6. In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury; to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses against him, to have compulsory process for obtaining them in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence; nor can he be deprived of his life, liberty or property, unless by the judgment of his peers, or the law of the land.

SEC. 7. The person of a debtor, when there is not strong presumption of fraud, ought not to be continued in prison, after delivering up his estate for the benefit of his creditors, in such manner as shall be prescribed by law.

SEC. 8. Retrospective laws punishing offences committed before the existence of such laws, are oppressive and unjust, and ought not to be made.

SEC. 9. No man in the courts of common law ought to be compelled to give evidence against himself.

SEC. 10. Every man being presumed to be innocent, until he has been pronounced guilty by the law, all acts of severity that are not necessary to secure an accused person ought to be repressed.

MEMORIAL.

The following is a copy of the Memorial, or Petition for an extension of Suffrage, signed by nearly two thousand Memorialists, who were *kicked out* of the House of Representatives of the *HONORABLE* General Assembly of the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, June Session, 1829, with every possible mark of contempt and reproach.

To the General Assembly of the State of Rhode-Island, &c. to be presented at their May Session, A. D. 1829.

Your Memorialists, permanent residents of the State of Rhode-Island, and those of them who are non-freeholders, laboring under legal disabilities which they believe to be at variance with the genius of our institutions, unjust in themselves and unnecessary for the preservation or security of a republican form of government, respectfully address this Assembly as the only acknowledged source of the laws of this State, and the only tribunal through which they can obtain the means of redress.* Though you are in no way the representatives of such of us as are non-freeholders, nor responsible to us for your acts, yet constituting as we do a large majority of the adult population of this State, and contributing our proportion to the support of government, we claim the right to be heard; nor can we believe that you will refuse to us a candid and deliberate consideration of the unequal operation of the laws of which we complain.

In every State of the Union, save Rhode-Island and Virginia,† the free white adult citizens are admitted (with slight property qualifications in some States, and none in others) to the elective franchise. In Virginia, the most aristocratic State in the Union, (where, except slaves, land is almost the only property, and where the greatest efforts have been made to retain the whole property in the smallest number of hands,) a freehold of twenty-five acres is a necessary qualification. In Rhode-Island a freehold worth one hundred and thirty-four dollars is requisite, except to that favored class, the eldest sons of freeholders. But even in Virginia, from the low price of land and the extent of her area, the relative number of freeholders to the other adult population is much greater than in this State—a State professing to be the most democratic in its form, of any State in the Union. The relative proportion in Rhode-Island, from the most careful estimate, we state to be 12,365 adult non-freeholders to about 8,400 freeholders; allowing for increase of population since the last census.

Though abuses have arisen from indiscriminate suffrage ‡ in other States;

* Doubted by the author of this Address on Free Suffrage.

† Virginia not excepted, now.

‡ I do not know exactly what indiscriminate suffrage here means; but I know that no indiscriminate voting exists in any State in the Union. -S. L.

and it is not our wish to carry it to the extent that it is recognised in many of the States; yet we cannot perceive that the rulers are more judiciously selected, or the laws more justly or ably administered, by the freehold voters in Rhode-Island, than by the citizens at large in other States. We cannot therefore believe, that in this State alone we have discovered the true principles of a republican government; or that there is any thing peculiar in the nature or extent of her soil, or the character of her population, which renders it less expedient or safe to place the government in the hands of the people, than it has been found in the other twenty-two [twenty-three] States.

If monopolies in trade are odious and destructive to public good, how much more so are they when they are extended to the exercise of the common rights of citizenship. Is it not, too, an anomaly in the institutions of this State, that she should have been the first to establish the great principle of religious freedom, and yet should be the last to recognize the civil emancipation of her own citizens? that she long ago should have given freedom to her slaves, and yet persist in denying to so large a portion of her white adult population all participation in any department of government, except its pecuniary and military burdens? Your honorable body, in common with the citizens of this State, have viewed with wonder and indignation, any attempt, in our neighboring States, to recognize an ecclesiastical domination, or to compel their citizens to support some form of religious worship; and yet we ask, would it not be as consistent with the policy and institutions of Connecticut and Massachusetts, that they should make the ownership of a *pew* in some meeting-house the test of voting, as it is conformable to the professed attachment of Rhode-Island to civil and religious freedom, that she require her *freemen* to own one hundred and thirty-four dollars' worth of soil? Would the burden be in any respect more unjust or oppressive? The Rhode-Island freeholder is not obliged to cultivate his soil; nor need the Connecticut freeman occupy his *pew*. With what propriety, then, can we boast of our religious freedom, while this exclusion and intoleration in political rights is made the basis of our civil institutions.

We are told in this State, we may qualify ourselves to become freemen by purchasing land; admitting we had the ability to do so, might not the same argument be urged with equal propriety, by the landed aristocracy of England; by the holders of rotten Boroughs which enable them to send members to Parliament representing acres instead of population?

Might it not too, be urged, if instead of eight thousand there were but one thousand, or five hundred persons owning soil in Rhode Island? Surely the utmost extent to which restriction of Suffrage ought on any principle to be carried in a republican form of government, should still leave the government in the hands at least of a *majority* of the adult population. The result of the laws of Rhode-Island, is to place the government in the hands of a *minority*, which minority is relatively decreasing every year.

The British Parliament only required our forefathers to submit to taxation without representation. If they complained, they were at liberty to remove to the mother country, purchase freeholds, and enjoy the rights of representation. Do you not hold out to us conditions based on the same principles, when you tell us if we complain of being taxed without being represented, that we need only purchase land in order to be represented? but you do not tell us we must own land in order to be taxed or do military service. What then becomes of the theory that taxation and representation should go together? that a participation in the burdens and direction of the government, should be inseparable?

The existing laws on elective franchise are believed to be more the result of accident, than from any determination to withhold from a majority of the citizens their just rights.* This State in its original charter origin, was a landed company, and ownership in soil became a necessary requisite of admission into

*I disagree with the petitioners here, and refer to Blackstone, for the reasons of the franchise laws.—S. L.

the company of which it constituted the stock. Subsequent events totally changed the grounds of this policy, and as the non-freeholders equally shared with the freeholders, the hardships and sacrifices of the revolutionary struggle which established this State an independent sovereignty, they had a right to anticipate an admission to the privileges of citizenship. The power, however, still continuing in the hands of the freeholders, the exclusion complained of was introduced into our laws, and has ever since formed a part of the system of our government. The sovereignty of the PEOPLE, has, in fact, never been acknowledged by any legislative or popular act, in the State of Rhode-Island. The civil laws recognize no class of citizens but those owning lands, and extends to all others no privileges that are not enjoyed by the stranger or foreigner, the moment he treads our soil, with the bare exception of a right to petition for divorce, and the benefit of the insolvent act, after a lapse of three years. This last is in fact the only mode by which an inhabitant, who is not a freeholder, can without the consent of freeholder approach our courts of justice, and claim redress for injury to his person, property, or character. In this respect there is a contradictory absurdity in the laws made by the General Assembly, which its character for intelligence and consistency, in our humble opinion, demands should be reconciled. The Bill of Rights lays it down as a principle of Government, that '*every person in this State* (not merely every freeholder in this State) ought to find a certain remedy, by having recourse to the laws, for all injuries or wrongs he may receive in his person, property, or character; and yet a subsequent act passed by the same body, which sanctioned the above principle, declares that *no person whatsoever*, who is not a freeholder, and an inhabitant of the State, shall have a writ or summons, unless some *sufficient* freeholder in this State shall endorse on the back of the writ, or summons, his christian and surname,' thus leaving the non-freeholder entirely dependant on the favor of the landholder, for permission to prosecute the plainest evidence, or in any way to avail himself of the civil law. Thus in the event of a combination among free holders not to endorse the writs of non-freeholders, there would be to that numerous class a total denial of justice.

But admitting such exigency may never arise, is there any sound reason for placing one class of citizens, and that the most numerous, at the mercy of a privileged order for the bare permission of collecting their honest debts, and enforcing their civil rights? If security of costs is the sole object of this provision, why not abolish an odious distinction of this sort, only suited to arbitrary governments, and exact a sufficient security from all suitors in Court, without that limited security to the endorsement of the name of a freeholder? Nay, so invidious is this distinction, that any freeholder, though he but hold the fee of a piece of land mortgaged for twice its value, may have his writs, without security or limitation, while the non-freeholder, be his personal property what it may, is compelled not only to procure the endorsement of a freeholder, but of a freeholder who is pronounced to be '*sufficient*' for the responsibility. At the same time, the non-freeholders are freely admitted on their own responsibility to the United States Courts sitting in this State, a foreign jurisdiction, while they are excluded from our own Courts. Your memorialists therefore would respectfully suggest, that the first section of the Bill of Rights be erased from the Statute Book, or the law regulating the issuing of writs, ought to be rendered conformable to the principles of that section.

Your memorialists entertain the highest respect for the landed interests, as the main pillar in the support of every government; but they believe that the present law operates as unequally on that class as any other in the community, it being obvious that of the thirteen thousand engaged in agriculture in this State, according to the last census, much less than one half are in fact landholders neither do they recognize distinct interests among any class in the community; nor will they believe that one portion of citizens, who might accidentally possess the power, will persist in retaining it, to the exclusion of their fellow-citi-

zens, who are equally entitled to a participation in the affairs of government.* Such a principle goes the full extent of justifying the Holy Alliance, or any other combination, in withholding from a majority of the people, the exercise of all civil rights.

The notion that the ownership of land is the only evidence of an intention of permanent residence, and the only tie that binds men to their country, is not believed to be well founded. Their homes, their families, their means of subsistence, their local prepossessions, their love for the free institutions of their native or adopted State, form much stronger relations, in the support and defence of which they cannot engage, without at the same time defending the soil, where these attachments and privileges are centered. For the defence of the soil, if threatened with invasion, the landholders must look to the non-freeholders, and the history of our country abundantly proves, that men who have not owned soil enough for the last repose of their mortal relics, have poured out their blood as freely, in defence of their country, as the most patriotic and wealthy landholder.† Miserable indeed must be that attachment to our free institutions which depends solely on the ownership of one hundred and thirty-four dollars' worth of land, which can be the subject of bargain, sale, and conveyance, by deed signed, sealed, and delivered.

If property qualifications in addition to military service is deemed indispensable, we see no good reason why it should be limited to soil, any more than to property in stock and farming utensils, or the tools of a mechanic; nor have we discovered in common sense, or any treatise on government, a satisfactory reason why the owner of a spot of land should be a good citizen and a *freeman*, while another individual who owns a house standing on that land, of ten times the value, is regarded as unfit to be entrusted with the rights of citizenship.

We will not insult the good sense of this body, by offering an argument against the feudal notion of primogeniture, giving the oldest son the right of voting, without even subjecting him to the preliminary step of being propounded. If good reason can be found for retaining such an absurdity in our laws, we see not why the whole doctrine of primogeniture, and the hereditary enjoyment of public offices, may not be equally as well defended.

In conclusion we would represent to this General Assembly, that we come here with no disposition to stir up an excitement, or with any determination (whatever may be the result of our application) inconsistent with our duties of good citizens, though residing in a State to whose revenue and prosperity we directly contribute, and in whose defence we are ready to peril our lives, but in which we are not so far recognized as citizens, as even to be permitted to vote for the military commander of the State or United States. We firmly but respectfully ask for a candid consideration of the subjects here presented, and for the right to be permitted a participation in the choice of our rulers. We wish not for indiscriminate suffrage,‡ and should be the first to approve of all judicious provisions to preserve the purity of elections.

The prayer of our Petition is, that the present laws relating to suffrage be altered and extended, at least so far as to embrace a *majority* of the free white male citizens of this State, over twenty-one years of age, with such qualifications of previous and permanent residence, payment of taxes, performance of military service, or such other restrictions consistent with the fundamental principle, that the sovereignty of a republican government resides in the people at large. And further, should the General Assembly decline acting decisively, in the premises, we then respectfully request that body to frame an act, upon the above basis, extending the right of suffrage, and send it out to the freeholders themselves, to decide in Town Meeting whether they will or will not admit

*The memorialists found that men in power *do persist*, however outrageous, in withholding from non-freeholders their rights.—S. L.

†The *most wealthy landholders* generally *'stand back'* in such cases; they *'can see full as well.'*—S. L.

‡No such *'suffrage'* exists in the United States.—S. L.

their fellow citizens to the exercise of the inherent right of *freemen*, by a participation in the choice of their rulers.

‘The Report of B. Hazard on this petition was a hasty scrawl, written in the bitterest spirit of invective and abuse, that Mr Hazard ever indulged in; the memorialists were sneered at as VAGRANTS and RENEGADES from other States, who had impudently interfered with the laws of Rhode Island, and who were at liberty to leave the State whenever they saw proper.’—*Rhode-Island American and Providence Gazette*, June 30, 1829.

Any persons knowing these facts, and afterwards petitioning to such a body of men, who would throw out a petition without even reading it, ought to be *literally kicked* out of the House, out of the State, and out of the world.

At an adjoined meeting of the citizens of Rhode Island, favorable to the adoption of the Massachusetts mode of suffrage, holden at the old Town House, in the City of Providence, May 10, 1833, the Committee, appointed at the primary meeting holden April 19, made the following

REPORT.

Your Committee were instructed to correspond with our friends in different parts of the State, for the purpose of fixing a time and place, for holding a State Convention on this subject; but as we think the public mind has not yet been sufficiently awakened to call a Convention, we have suffered that part of our duty to sleep for the present, till some preliminary steps, which we have in view, shall be taken.

Your committee were also instructed, to request a copy of Mr Seth Luther's Address on Free Suffrage. That part of our duty we have performd. A subscription has been opened by Mr Luther at our request, and one thousand copies of the Address are now in the Press and will be ready for delivery in the course of the following week. In the opinion of the Committee, every friend of our cause ought to buy one, or more copies for his own perusal, or distribution among his neighbors. This address will be delivered at our request at Warren, on Tuesday evening next.

Your Committee after their appointment, were told by those interested in preventing the adoption of the Massachusetts mode of suffrage ‘that it would ruin the State, and that the best part of the citizens of Massachusetts, regret the extension of Suffrage in that State, and would willingly adopt the Rhode Island plan, were it practicable to do so.’ Believing this to be a slander on the citizens of both States, we addressed a letter to the Hon. Francis Baylies, of Taunton, to ascertain from high authority, the truth or falsehood of these assertions.

This correspondence is now submitted, to be read to the meeting, and we trust that the letter of Mr Baylies will be received by you with the same heartfelt gratitude, and proud satisfaction, which is experienced by your Committee.—Our's was inexpressible, and we challenge you to express all your's, however unbounded may be your applause.

One reason, among others, why we selected Mr Baylies from among the distinguished men of Massachusetts to answer our inquiries was, the heroic and perfectly disinterested part he took in our behalf, when the question was before Congress whether the little, but patriotic State of Rhode Island, should be de-

prived of one half of her representation in Congress. It was then that Mr Baylies showed himself 'a friend in need, and a friend indeed.' He then said, 'if such gross injustice should be inflicted on Rhode-Island, she would be found leaning on her anchor, and trusting in her God.' It was generally understood at that time, and we believe ever since, that Rhode-Island owed to the chivalry and eloquence of Francis Baylies, of Massachusetts, more than to any other cause, the preservation of one half of her representation in Congress.

Shall the citizens of this State ever forget such a friend? We are sure you will answer, no. To him therefore did your Committee apply, to put down the slanders which the enemies of Free Suffrage heaped on Massachusetts and Rhode-Island, by falsely asserting 'that Massachusetts suffrage would ruin Rhode-Island, and that the best part of the citizens of Massachusetts would be glad to adopt the one hundred and thirty-four dollar system, if they could do so! It may be proper to remark, that although the twelve thousand disfranchised citizens of Rhode-Island were not at the time mentioned, neither are they now represented in Congress, yet our gratitude to Mr Baylies for his exertions in behalf of this State is none the less, for we look upon him as the advocate of our rights, as well as of the rights of the freeholders, although we are deprived of the exercise of them *now*, by freeholders; and we look forward with the utmost confidence when these rights will be acknowledged both as 'their's and our's,' and that at no distant period of time.

The friends of equal rights in Rhode-Island, and we trust every where else, will henceforth look upon FRANCIS BAYLIES, as one of the very few, who practice what they profess. He believes the words of the Declaration of Independence, 'All men are created equal,' and he practices on his belief, to the very letter, while thousands of pretended and noisy patriots, in the South and North, are driving round their *black slaves* and *white slaves*, to the tune of 'Columbia, the land of the free.'

One of your Committee has seen a couple of slaves in Georgia, carrying from an auction to their master's residence, an elegant copy of the Declaration of Independence, in a splendid gilt frame, with these words in bold relief.—'WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL; THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE 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.' If the meeting will believe us, the whole of the Committee have seen a sight still *more* strange. We have seen a non-freeholder in Rhode-Island burnishing his gun, whitening his belts, and filling his cartridge box, all at his own expense, to defend the houses and lands of his native State, (where he has paid taxes and performed military service for years) against a foreign foe, or domestic aggression—and at the same moment the owners of that land, telling him 'he has no right to vote for his officers, civil or military, because a man who has no land, has no patriotism.' The only remark we have to make on these two cases of the practice under our glorious Declaration of Independence is, to ask of this meeting and the whole world this question—who is the most to be pitied, and who most despised, the reluctant slave of the South, who has no means of redress, because he is bound down by the Constitution of the United States, and by all the physical force of the several States, or the willing slave of Rhode-Island, who submits cheerfully to his fate, although he would be supported by the Constitution of the United States, and by all the sympathy and all the physical strength of the several States, in any attempts whatever, which he might make to gain his liberty; for the Constitution guarantees to each State a republican form of government, and our's is not so, so long as eight thousand govern twelve thousand.

Your Committee further report, that they consider nothing effectual can be

done in this glorious and holy cause, without a public press under the entire control of a Committee to be appointed for that purpose, so that we can lay before our deeply and long injured disfranchised fellow-citizens, whatever the Committee shall deem useful in our cause. In accordance with these views we have issued proposals, and sent them to different parts of the State, for publishing a Free Suffrage paper, to be called the Political Balance; and some little progress has been made in getting subscribers. On this subject we would only remark, that if there is not spirit enough in the twelve thousand non-freeholders in Rhode-Island to support one paper, while the five thousand aristocrats support about twenty, we may as well abandon our attempts at free suffrage at once, and instead of being at any further expense, in holding meetings and printing books, lay out our loose change in buying chains for our necks, hands and feet, as badges of servitude; no matter how much the chains *gall* and *chafe* us, so long as they are golden chains. We have mentioned five thousand aristocrats. There are twelve thousand non-freeholders and eight thousand freeholders; but about three thousand of these last are in favor of the Massachusetts mode of suffrage.

Some curious people may enquire how the Committee can use the phrases '*our rights,*' and '*our chains,*' when three out of the six of the Committee are '*freemen.*' The three who are '*freemen,*' do not consider their freedom complete, or secure, until it rests on a different foundation than the mere holding a piece of land. It is true, a young man in health, and before he has a family, can generally lay up enough to make himself a freeman; or, in other words, as they say at the South, '*buy his freedom.*' But when the slaves of the South buy their freedom once, they are free for *life*. Not so with the *white* slave of Rhode-Island; for as the tyrant Dionysius suspended a sword over the head of Damocles, his flatterer, by a single hair, as an emblem of what tyrants have constantly to fear; and as Damocles chose rather to retire into obscurity than be a king at such a price; so the three on the Committee who are entitled to the honorable appellation of '*freemen,*' feel that the sword of tyranny hangs over their heads. The least misfortune in their families, and their houses or lots, or both, must go to pay the doctor's bill; and the '*only Republican State in the Union,*' as this State has recently been called, has decreed that it is not sufficient that a man should be afflicted with sickness and death in his family; not enough to have his land taken from under his feet, and his house from over his head; but he must also lose his *liberty* at the same time, for he is no longer a freeman. What freeman, under this view of the case, will refuse to aid us in the attainment of equal and unalienable rights, for himself and children? In Rhode-Island a man, to be free, must purchase it with a price, as the Chief Captain did, who was about to scourge Paul? But in Massachusetts they are all Pauls, for they are all born free. In Rhode-Island, if a man is unfortunate in his business, the only way to secure his house and lot, is to go to jail, or shut himself up in his house and make a prison of that; then he is a '*freeman,*' by the statute law of the State. Although he may owe ten times the value of his freehold, he may go, on town-meeting day, and vote, '*free from arrest,*' and then retire to his *prison* again, and there remain, a *freeman* of the '*only Republican State in the world.*'

Some other curious people will ask, 'what business have those who are freemen, by statute law, to meddle with the business of non-freeholders?' We answer that question, in true yankee style, by asking another:—'What business had the inhabitants of Salem to interest themselves about the murder of Mr White? Nobody had hurt *them.*' But we answer this question *directly*, by saying, that the 134-dollars-law is a disgrace to the State. It makes eight thousand of her citizens, freemen, and twelve thousand, slaves; and even if the twelve thousand were satisfied to be slaves, it is bad policy in the Government to make them so. Are any persons in this meeting, fathers? If so,

you must know how easy it is to make a fool and a dolt of a son, by not suffering him to speak his own sentiments on any occasion. By continuing to impress on his mind that he knows nothing, and can do nothing, your own words will prove true. 'Tis much better to have two rogues in a family, than one fool; for rogues, like young horses, can be *broken down* to the proper standard; but the man who could work a fool *up* to the true standard, must be as ingenious as the person who said of his coat, if it was too short he could splice it, but if it was too long he could not tell what he should do with it.

We therefore warn the General Assembly, who are the *reputed* fathers and guardians of the State, not to continue to break down the spirits of its citizens; for the time may yet come, as in '76, that the State will 'expect every man to do his duty;' and this cannot be *justly* expected, unless the State does its duty towards every citizen alike.

We have said this State has been recently called the only Republican State in the Union. This wonderful discovery was disclosed, we understand, during the last session of the General Assembly, at Newport, by the most distinguished member from this city.* How miserable all the other States in the Union must be! It reminds us of an old woman in North Carolina, who sat knitting by the light of a pitch pine knot, and when asked by a man from New-England why she used such lights, instead of lamps or candles, the good dame very compassionately asked if we had no '*light-wood pitch-knots*' in New-England? being answered in the negative, she exclaimed—'O, dear! what a miserable place New-England must be!!!'

There are some *political* old women in our State, whose views extend as far as did those of this simple dame of North Carolina; and they fearfully suppose, or rather *say* they do, '*that the world's last hope for a republican government hangs on the Rhode-Island mode of suffrage.*' And yet such men claim to be talented, learned, men. A Massachusetts man lately said in this city, that they were entirely satisfied with their mode of suffrage; and that his fellow-citizens considered the government of Rhode-Island a limited monarchy.—Whatever the *noble-blooded* Representative from Providence may think of monarchy, we know some of the aristocrats of this State who have said,—'The government of England is the best government in the world!' and when asked if they would not except the American Government, they have said, 'We make no exceptions!!'

At the last session of the General Assembly, a Memorial was presented, signed by nearly two hundred citizens of Warren, praying for an extension of suffrage. The presentation of this Memorial is mentioned in the papers, and the fact that the Assembly refused to have it read, under pretence that it was too late in the session to take up any new business. We do not know why the petition was presented at so late an hour; but it seems the member who presented it was afraid to mention the words '*FREE SUFFRAGE.*' It appears to us that the Speaker of the House, who held the Memorial in his hand, feared to inform the House what the object of the petition was. Your Committee also have been given to understand, that the Speaker was told, while on his way to Newport in the steam-boat, that 'he must do all he could to prevent having any thing said on Free Suffrage in the House this session;' and his *tutor* told him if he did so, 'the present excitement on the subject would soon *die away.*' This may account for the neglect the good citizens of Warren have experienced. But they are not alone; and if there is any consolation in that proverb, that '*Misery loves company,*' they will not be entirely without comfort. This is the way memorialists on Free Suffrage have always been treated, by the *Honorable* General Assembly, for twenty or thirty years past; and this is the way the '*powers that be*' will always treat us, as long as we follow the Quaker doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance. National Republicans may tell of their hatred of proscription, as practiced by Jacksonians and Antimasons: Jackson-men may boast of their being the only democratic party, and of Jackson being the favorite of the

* Hon. John Whipple, in House of Representatives.

common people; Antimasons may bellow for years about secret societies and exclusive privileges: but let either of those parties have the power in Rhode-Island, and they will fear and hate the discussion on Free Suffrage as much as the Royal Family in England did the torch of Guy Fawkes; and for the same reason, because it would blow all their pretensions to exclusive privileges 'sky high.' and the parties we have named would then be *obliged* to be, in *reality*, what they now only *pretend* to be—'Republicans.'

As for petitioning the General Assembly again, we might as well petition Engine Company No. 2. Both would throw a vast quantity of cold water, and in a very short time; the Engine Company to extinguish fire, and the General Assembly to extinguish the flame of Liberty.

Let the Warren people petition, if they like the sport, but as long as the State withholds our rights, we dont think they will get much military or other service out of us. There is an implied contract between the State, and the citizen.—If the goverment withholds right from the citizen, the citizen has a right to withhold services. If an American citizen does military or engine duty, or pays a tax, he has a right to vote, and he is a fool to do the one without the other is allowed him.

In Massachusetts the State acts on that principle; for if a man does not pay his tax he cannot vote. And why has not a citizen of Rhode Island a right to refuse the execution of his part of the contract, till the State performs her part towards the citizen. It is an old saying but a true one, 'a man is a fool to do something for nothing.'

If the twelve thousand slaves in Rhode-Island ever obtain their freedom, it must be accomplished by *themselves*, and not by others. *Now* they have but few friends; let them once gain their liberty, and friends, yea, *sunshine* friends, will *surfeit* them with kindness. The very demagogues who *now* call them '*vagrants* and *renegades*,' will court them for their *sweet voices*, as did Coriolanus of olden time, and then their base and fawning flattery, would be as disgusting and contemptible, as their abuse now is.

In conclusion, we would remark that no people can have a better cause than our's, or a plainer one. We could spread out arguments in its favor that would cover the State from Woonsocket to Block Island, and from West Greenwich to Fall River; but of what avail would it be when the five thousand aristocrats say they have us in their power, and intend to keep us so? This is the only argument they offer, and we think it no more than fair that we should answer *this, first*. Let them try the experiment. whether five thousand men can put twelve thousand in jail for not being their willing slaves. If the five thousand succeed, the case should certainly be reported for the Journal of Arts and Sciences, together with the fact that Rhode-Island is the only republican government on the face of the globe, and our noble Representative from this town would no doubt volunteer to make out the report.

Your Committee recommend that a Committee be chosen to draw up a Bill of Rights, and to state explicitly to the inhabitants of Rhode-Island, and to the whole world, that we are determined to have the Massachusetts mode of suffrage (or some mode equally liberal) adopted in this State, at ALL HAZARDS; and we will no longer submit to the unjust Statute which deprives us of our rights, and compels us to forego all the advantages secured to us by the revolutionary and last war; that we are under no obligations to obey any government which does not '*derive its just powers from the consent of the governed*.' One word more and we have done. We say to the twelve thousand disfranchised citizens of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, in the language of the Roman Orator, '*MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALABIT*.'—*Great is Truth, and must prevail*. All of which is respectfully submitted, by

WILLIAM J. TILLINGHAST,
For the Committee.

NOTE.—The report was unanimously accepted and a committee of Six appointed to frame a Declaration of Rights, according to the recommendation of the Committee.

WILLIAM J. TILLINGHAST, *Secretary.*

PROVIDENCE, May 10, 1833.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The following is a copy of the letter, referred to, in the Report of the Committee, as having been addressed to Hon. Francis Baylies, of Massachusetts:—

PROVIDENCE, April 22, 1833.

RESPECTED SIR—At a meeting, in this city, on the 19th instant, of persons favorable to the adoption in this State of the Massachusetts mode of Suffrage, the subscribers were appointed a Committee to report on the subject at a future meeting.

We have since been told, by persons interested in preventing such a measure, that it would be the ruin of the State, and that the best part of the citizens of Massachusetts regret the extension of Suffrage in that State, and would willingly adopt the Rhode-Island plan, were it practicable for them to do so.

Now as the subscribers yield to none in patriotic emotions, we would like to know, from high authority, if these things are so; for if they are, we shall recommend to the adjourned meeting to abandon their enterprise, and sacrifice their own rights on the altar of public good; but if these assertions prove, as we suspect they will, to be a slander on our fellow-citizens of Rhode-Island and Massachusetts, we should also like to know it, that we may persevere in what we at present consider a holy cause.

We regret the necessity that has compelled us to trespass on your valuable time; but we fondly anticipate that it cannot deprive you of much of it, in answering what appears to us so plain a question; and as our adjourned meeting will be held in a few days, we shall deem it a lasting favor to receive, *at least*, a brief answer, as soon as your other calls of duty will admit.

The undersigned, though humble mechanics, have seen enough of the world to know, that gentlemen who have attained your lofty eminence, are above being “respecters of persons,” and we therefore sign our proper names and occupations.

RESPECTFULLY,

YOUR FELLOW-CITIZENS,

WM. J. TILLINGHAST, Barber,

LAWRENCE RICHARDS, Blacksmith,

WILLIAM MITCHELL, Shoemaker,

SETH LUTHER, Housewright,

WILLIAM MILLER, Currier,

DAVID BROWN, Watch and Clock Maker.

Hon. FRANCIS BAYLIES, Taunton, Mass.

P. S.—We thought it unnecessary, for your information, to state that no citizen of Rhode-Island, whatever his standing, or whatever duties he may perform to his country, can vote for his rulers, unless he own a freehold estate worth one hundred and thirty-four dollars, or the eldest son of such freeholder. But we are confident, from what we hear, that there is a fire kindling in public opinion, in different parts of the State, that will consume all the hay and stubble of aristocracy and primogeniture, and leave to the land of Roger Williams and Nathaniel Greene, the pure gold of democracy and republicanism. Eight thousand citizens of Rhode-Island now vote: on the Massachusetts mode, twenty thousand would vote.

REPLY.

TAUNTON, April 29, 1833.

GENTLEMEN—YOUR communication of the 22d has been received. Occupation and indisposition, are my excuses for not replying sooner.

Whenever my fellow-citizens have done me the honor to address me on any subject relating to the public interest, I have, according to my information on the subject, answered the enquiries: It would be a poor return for your civility, should I permit your's to remain without notice and without reply.

You wish to ascertain, 'Whether the best part of the citizens of Massachusetts regret the extension of the right of Suffrage; and whether they would willingly adopt the Rhode-Island plan, were it practicable so to do.'

I can only say, that I have heard but few complain of the extension of the right of Suffrage; and none express a preference of the 'Rhode-Island plan.'

It is true, when the amendment of our Constitution, which changed the qualification of voters from property to the payment of a tax, was referred to the people, in 1821, many voted against it: since then, it has seldom been made the subject of conversation, and from the general silence I infer a general acquiescence.

Although you have assigned to me a much 'loftier eminence' than I ever took to myself, even in my vainest dream of self-importance,—yet, in one respect, you judged rightly—I am no 'respector of persons.' I acknowledge no other aristocracy than that which all good citizens should be willing to acknowledge—the aristocracy which nature herself seems to have established amongst men. The influence which is exercised over society by men of genius, moral worth and personal accomplishments; by men who possess a capacity for usefulness, and have rendered services to their country; and by men of wealth, who use it for the public benefit—for promoting the happiness and advancing the knowledge of their fellow men; is a just and salutary influence. There is certainly no occasion for self-abasement amongst such as pursue mechanical employments, if rank be graduated according to the standard which I have assumed; and 'barbers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, housewrights, curriers, and clock-makers,'—the professions which you designate—are not 'humble men,' if their virtues bring them within this circle of excellence.

If the inventions of an English barber have multiplied beyond measure the wealth of his own country—ameliorated the condition and increased the comforts of men, even in your own State—employed its citizens and doubled its capital—none need take shame to themselves for pursuing that profession. The spinning-jenny of Arkwright is a truer emblem of British power than the sword of Wellington; for had it not been for the wealth which that machine and its improvements have poured into England, the nations of Europe would never have triumphed at Waterloo.

The eldest son of a barber, who became 'the great law lord' of England, may with propriety assume a rank equal, at least, to that of the eldest son of a Rhode-Island freeholder, who votes on the strength of one hundred and thirty-four dollars in land, held by his father.

If profound genius for military affairs—if native greatness and grandeur of character—if high-reaching chivalry, the loftiest honor, the most enduring fortitude, and the most devoted patriotism, can enoble man—then the hero 'blacksmith' of Rhode-Island might well have claimed a rank equal if not superior to that of his noble competitor.

If the deepest sagacity—the application of the soundest and clearest intellect to the science of law and government—can constitute a political philosopher: if the person who had the rare good fortune to have signed both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, has thereby acquired any title to distinction—then the descendant of the Earl of Rivers, who from the 'shoemaker's' bench ascended to the highest elevations of society, rose above the level of his ancestry, noble as they were.

When our ancestors were engaged in that dire conflict with the savage race, on the issue of which their existence depended—as well as the question whether the fair regions which now constitute New-England, should become the seats of learning, law, religion and civilization, or be yielded back to desolation and barbarism—the sword which rescued them was wielded by a ‘housewright.’

I could swell this catalogue with the names of many other illustrious men, who have instructed and delighted the world; but these instances are enough to shew that

‘Honor and shame from no condition rise.’

Within the last half century, the application of mechanical science to the arts, by practical mechanics, has done more to accelerate the progress of man in knowledge, and to increase his independence, wealth, and comforts, than all the labors of all the theoretic philosophers of the same period: the labors of the first have consolidated and strengthened the social institutions—the theories of the last would have made them a vast ruin.

Unless public sentiment should indicate, in the clearest and most unequivocal manner, that changes in the provisions of existing constitutions of government are necessary, (and the people must determine whether they are) I should oppose them, on the ground that

‘It is sometimes better to endure the ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.’

I have often wondered, when arguments founded on the notion of the natural and abstract rights of man, have been applied to the social regulations which communities have adopted. It is an undeniable truth, that the social man is deprived in some measure of his native independence, and cannot be a ‘law to himself,’ but must be restrained by the rules which govern the community of which he is a member; if it were not so, he would be a savage. The formation of social communities, governed by laws, negatives the principle of absolute, entire independence. Men, when they come into society, surrender a portion of natural liberty, to secure more than an indemnity. Amongst the advantages secured by this surrender, is the protection of individual property. The privilege of ‘sitting under their *own* vines and fig-trees, with none to molest or make them afraid.’ But those ‘vines and fig-trees’ only become ‘*their own*’ in consequence of social regulations.

Feelings and sympathies arising from particular associations, ancient usages, and historical recollections—peculiar local circumstances—the modes of life—the pursuits of the people, whether agricultural, commercial, manufacturing, literary, or mechanical, and the extent and predominance of each—religion—the degree of knowledge and moral refinement—must all be consulted in the formation of political constitutions; and therefore it is that no instrument of government can be so fashioned, that it can be applied with equal advantage to all conditions of men, and to all nations: even some of the States of this Union would become restive under constitutions congenial to others.

In some countries, a despotism may be the only alternative against anarchy. It would be as impossible to sustain a free government in Russia, as it would be in the United States to sustain a government of King, Lords and Commons.

The freehold qualification in Rhode-Island, might have been expedient once. The population being entirely agricultural, when the charter was granted, it was not unwise, perhaps, to provide that the qualification should consist of that species of property which constituted the entire property of the colony; but circumstances have changed—society has assumed a new aspect—other interests have sprung into life and activity, which would seem to render it expedient that other classes besides agriculturalists should have some voice in the election of their rulers, and some influence in legislation. Much property exists in personal effects, which often constitute the entire capital of many merchants, traders, manufacturers, mechanics, seafaring and professional men.

Once, one hundred and thirty-four dollars would have purchased a farm and

a permanent residence : now, that sum, invested in real estate, is not enough to bind the freeholder to the State, or to create any strong interest in its prosperity. To secure the attachment and support of the people, other and higher feelings must be relied on, than those which arise from a trifling property in the soil.

The provision in your charter, making a freehold qualification indispensable to the exercise of the right of suffrage, operates with much inequality in the city of Providence, and in the compact and populous towns. In such places, the smallest house and shop-lots are worth more than one hundred and thirty-four dollars ; therefore men of small means must either associate in the purchase of real estate, of greater value ; or throw away the sum necessary to constitute the qualification in strips of land, far from their domicils ; or abandon the most invaluable privilege of an American citizen.

‘The right of electing and of being elected,’ is, in my opinion, the most important of our civil rights ; and every one is justified for attempting, by constitutional and proper means, to obtain that right. Without it, he has not, in his own country, any privilege superior to the privileges of the stranger and sojourner. He is protected in person and property, and so is the foreigner ; nay, a short residence, and one hundred and thirty-four dollars in land, will impart to the foreigner this high privilege, denied to native born Americans. The possession of one hundred and thirty-four dollars in land imparts no superior intelligence or moral worth ; and I know no good reason why the want of that particular qualification should deprive a native born Rhode-Islander of that which may now be called a birth-right in Massachusetts.

With respect to *universal* suffrage, I can only say, that the current of public opinion, both in the United States and England, is running in that direction ; the temper of the times is favorable to the notion. In Europe, the experiment may be dangerous—in America, it cannot be, until the character of the people is totally changed. We have but few of that class, which in Europe constitute ‘the rabble ;’ and there is a high degree of independent and manly feeling amongst our poorest citizens, which will long preserve them from the influence of bribery, corruption, and intimidation.

I AM, GENTLEMEN,

WITH MUCH RESPECT,

YOUR OBEDIENT SERVANT,

FRANCIS BAYLIES.

Messrs. WILLIAM J. TILLINGHAST,
LAWRENCE RICHARDS,
WILLIAM MITCHELL,
SETH LUTHER,
WILLIAM MILLER,
DAVID BROWN,

Providence, R. I.

The Committee who addressed the letter to Mr. Baylies deeming it necessary to obtain answers to the question in that letter from more than one point of our sister State, sent at the same time a copy of that letter to Hon. John Quincy Adams, merely substituting his name for that of Mr. Baylies. It will be seen by our letter that all we requested of these gentlemen was to send us “at least a brief answer as soon as their other calls of duty will admit ;” thus leaving it to their discretion to go beyond that point or not. It is no wonder that Mr. Baylies felt at liberty to take any range of the subject which his “good and honest heart” dictated—knowing that the people of Rhode-Island could not be so ungrateful, as even to *think* him capable of any improper motives ; and the event has proved that he judged rightly. As soon would the people of America suspect the good La Fayette of sinister motives in any friendly letter which he

may write to a Committee in this country, as the people of Rhode-Island harbor such thoughts of Mr. Baylies.

Mr. Adams, it seems, did not feel free to go beyond the mere answering of our question. With *that* decision, we ought, in justice to him, to be equally as well satisfied as with the decision of the question which we propounded to him, viz:—"Whether the best part of the citizens of Massachusetts regret the extension of suffrage in that State, and would willingly adopt the Rhode-Island plan, were it practicable to do so?" *This* question, (the only one submitted to him) we acknowledge with gratitude—he has answered more fully and satisfactorily—were such a thing possible, than Mr. Baylies; we therefore hazard nothing in returning him, with our thanks—those of every friend of Massachusetts suffrage, in the State of Rhode-Island.

The Committee now having *proved* from the very highest authority, that the only assertion (worthy of notice) which our enemies have made against our cause, is a sheer, slanderous fabrication—we hope they will withhold their abuse till they can make some better founded charges. Whenever the subject of "*Free Suffrage*" is mentioned, our opponents immediately begin to rave about vessel loads of foreigners landing in New-York and Philadelphia, and going immediately to the polls. Should we admit that such is the law and practice in those places, (both of which we deny) yet what has that to do with Massachusetts law and practice—the *very* thing, and the *only* thing we wish to establish in this State? At the time of making their report, the Committee not having received any answer from Mr. Adams, did not feel at liberty to introduce his name to the public, but having since received the following letter, take pleasure in laying it before the people of Rhode-Island.

QUINCY, May 10th, 1833.

GENTLEMEN,—I have received your letter of the 22d of last month, enquiring my opinion with regard to the adoption in the State of Rhode-Island of the mode of practice, in Massachusetts, of the political right of Suffrage.

The administration of the Government, and the modification of the Constitution in each State of this Union, are exclusively at the disposal of the people of the State itself. As the point upon which your enquiries turn, is one upon which, I conclude, from your letter, that there is a great diversity of opinions among the people of your State, it might be considered obtrusive, in giving his opinion, for a stranger to pronounce on one side or the other. The right of suffrage is, in every State of the Union, subject to some limitation, but scarcely any two States have the same.

With the system of suffrage established in Massachusetts, so far as concerns the right of voting, I do not know that there is any dissatisfaction among the people. If there were, it is probable measures would be taken for amending, in that respect, the Constitution. I see no occasion for dissatisfaction with it, myself, and feel none. Whether it would be expedient for the people of Rhode Island to adopt it, I am not competent to give an opinion, deserving to be considered of any authority. Were it otherwise, I would cheerfully give it, in compliance with your desire, being,

WITH GREAT RESPECT AND CONSIDERATION,

YOUR FELLOW-CITIZEN,

J. Q. ADAMS.

Messrs. WM. J. TILLINGHAST,
LAWRENCE RICHARDS,
WILLIAM MITCHELL,
SETH LUTHER,
WILLIAM MILLER,
DAVID BROWN,

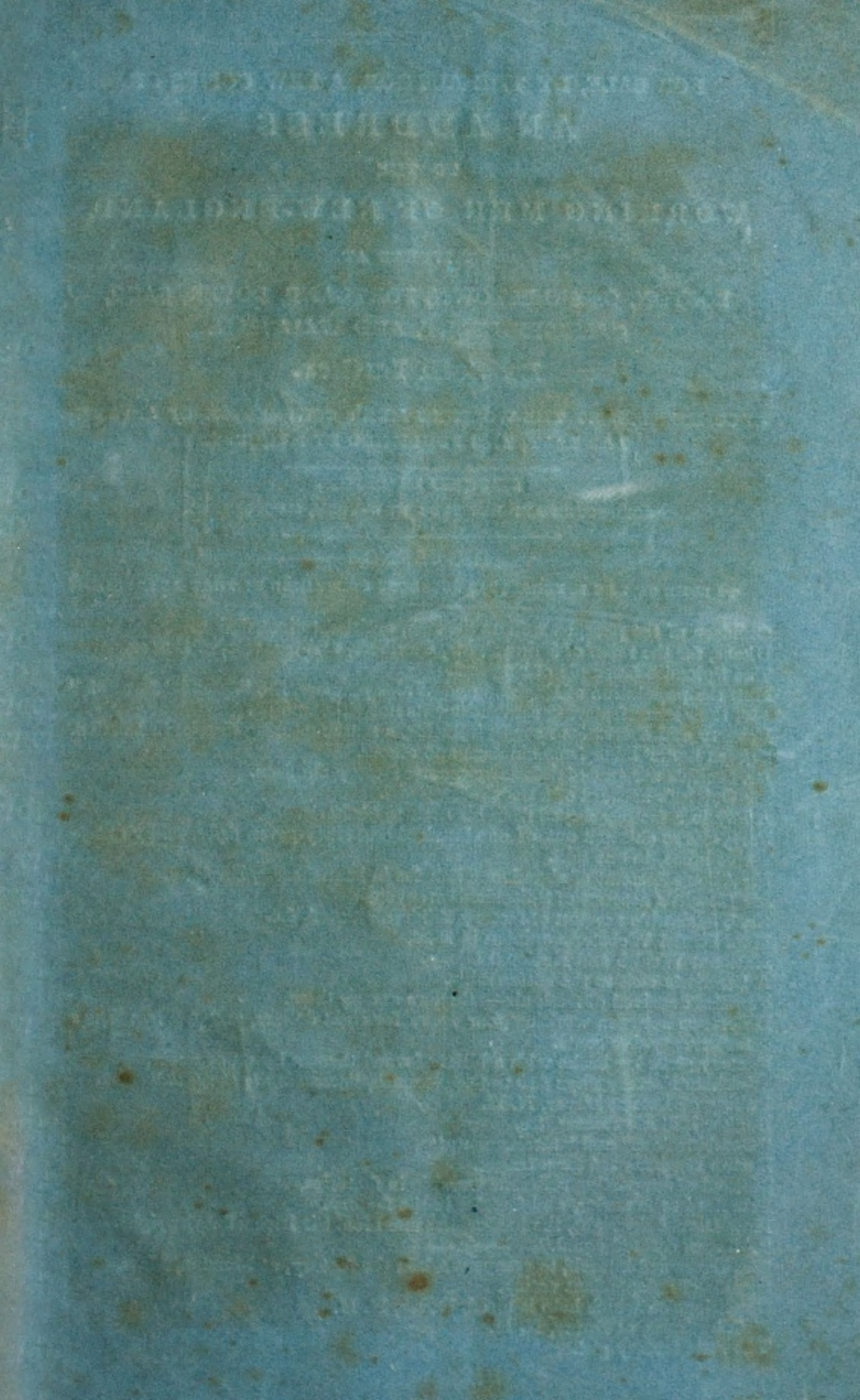
Providence, R. I.

The following is the second section of the Act entitled an Act regulating the manner of admitting freemen, and directing the method of electing officers in the State of Rhode-Island :—

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That no person shall be permitted to vote or act as a freeman in any town-meeting in this State, but such only who is an inhabitant therein, and who at the time of such his voting and acting is really and truly possessed, in his own proper right, of a real estate within this State, to the full value of one hundred and thirty-four dollars, or which shall rent for seven dollars per annum, being an estate in fee simple, fee tail, or an estate in reversion which qualifies no other person to be a freeman, or at least an estate for a person's own life, or the eldest son of such a freeholder: *Provided however,* that the yearly value of such life estate, shall exceed the amount of the rent reserved (if any) by the sum of seven dollars per annum.

REMARKS.

As the subject of Free Suffrage is misrepresented by its enemies, and misunderstood by the wilfully ignorant, the author of this work deems it necessary to state what the Free Suffrage party in Providence understand, and intend to have understood, by the term. The Report of the Committee refers to the Massachusetts mode of suffrage, and they wish that mode adopted in this State. Thus, every citizen of the United States who resides in Massachusetts for the space of one year previous to any election, and who shall have resided in the town where he shall wish to vote, six calendar months previous to any election, and shall have paid a State or county tax within two years, shall have a right to vote in all cases. If he pays no tax, he cannot vote; and if he has or has not other property, a *poll tax* is assessed upon him, not exceeding one dollar and fifty cents, generally about one dollar; and he is a voter to all intents and purposes. This is what we understand by Free Suffrage, to wit, to bear all our proportion of the public burthens, and enjoy all the privileges of free citizens of these United States, and of the several States. This we are determined to have, and to enjoy, "AT ALL HAZARDS."



FOR SALE, BY THE AUTHOR, A FEW COPIES OF
A N A D D R E S S
TO THE
WORKING MEN OF NEW-ENGLAND.

DELIVERED AT
BOSTON, CHARLESTOWN, PORTLAND, DOVER, SACO,
CAMBRIDGEPORT, AND WALTHAM.

By Seth Luther.

RECOMMENDED BY THE WORKING MEN'S CONVENTION OF SEPTEMBER LAST, AND PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

SECOND EDITION,
CORRECTED AND REVISED: NEW-YORK, MDCCCXXXIII.

REFERENCE

TO SOME OF THE INTERESTING SUBJECTS CONTAINED IN THAT ADDRESS.

Children of the poor, as well as the rich, entitled to instruction.
Ukase, for the relief of Shipwrights, Caulkers, and Gravers, of Boston.
The Splendid Example of England.
Half the population of England and Wales paupers, the "*Splendid Example*"
of their manufacturing establishments notwithstanding.
Poverty and *Starvation* near Spitalfields, a manufacturing district in London.
Fifteen hours' labor from children and others.
Dr. Smith's account of deformity among factory children.
Mr Oastler's account of a poor factory girl.
A boy in a factory flayed from his neck to his heels.
Forty-seven children out of one hundred and sixty-seven *deformed* by excessive labor, in one mill.
Mr Allen's account of abandoned females in Manchester, England.
Mr Hewitt's account of Spitalfields weavers.
Dr. Thackrah's account of factory children stunted, &c.
Hon. Daniel Webster's opinion in 1824.
National Wealth and National Glory.
A Senator's visit to the cotton mills.
Females deprived of fresh air—rebellion among them.
Difference between working *four hours* for eight dollars, and *fourteen hours* for seventy-five cents.
Factory girl's leg broke with a billet of wood thrown by an overseer.
Waltham Factory pays \$10 to \$43 a month, "*according to strength.*"
Pulling off hats at Dover, N. H.
Bunker Hill Monument, &c.
"Combinations" and "Excitements."
Boston Harbor used for a teapot.
Method of supporting religious worship in factories.
Females in the parlor, and females in the factory.
How Dick Arkwright, the barber, became Hon. Sir Richard Arkwright.
"All men created equal."
Child drowned himself, to escape work in the factory, at Mendon, Mass.
Sample of independent voting.
Conditions on which help is hired, Dover, N. H.
Milk business, at Dover, N. H.
The little factory girl.