

*The
Constitution
of the
Republic of Liberia
July 1847*

Constitution of Liberia

In Convention

The representatives of the people of the Commonwealth of Liberia, in Convention Assembled, invested with authority for forming a new Government, relying upon the aid and protection of the Great Arbiter of human events, do hereby, in the name and on behalf of the people of this Commonwealth, publish and declare the said Commonwealth, a Free, Sovereign, and Independent State, by the name and style of the Republic of Liberia.

While announcing to the nations of the world the new position which the people of this Republic have felt themselves called upon to assume, courtesy to their opinion seems to demand a brief accompanying statement of the causes which induced them, first to expatriate themselves from the land of their nativity and to form settlements on this barbarous coast, and now to organize their government by the assumption of a sovereign and independent character. Therefore we respectfully ask their attention to the following facts.

We recognize in all men, certain natural and inalienable rights: among these are life, liberty, and the right to acquire, possess, enjoy and defend property. By the practice and consent of men in all ages, some system or form of government is proven to be necessary to exercise, enjoy and secure these rights; and every people has a right to institute a government and to choose and adopt that system or form of it, which in their opinion will most effectually accomplish these objects, and secure their happiness, which does not interfere with the just rights of others. The right therefore to institute

government, and [redacted] necessary to conduct it, is, an inalienable right, and cannot be reserved without the grossest injustice.

We the people of the Republic of Liberia were originally the inhabitants of the United States of North America.

In some parts of that country, we were debarred by law from all the rights and privileges of men - in other parts, public sentiment, more powerful than law, frowned us down.

We were every where shut out from all civil office.

We were excluded from all participation in the government.

We were taxed without our consent.

We were compelled to contribute to the resources of a country, which gave us no protection.

We were made a separate and distinct class, and against us every avenue to improvement was effectually closed. Strangers from all lands of a color different from ours, were preferred before us.

We uttered our complaints, but they were unattended to, or only met by alleging the peculiar institutions of the country.

All hope of a favorable change in our country was thus wholly extinguished in our bosom, and we looked with anxiety abroad for some asylum from this deep degradation.

The Western coast of Africa was the place selected by American benevolence and philanthropy, for our future home. Removed beyond those influences, which depressed us in our native land, it was hoped we would be enabled to enjoy those rights and privileges, and exercise and improve those faculties, which the God of nature has given us in common with the rest of mankind.

Under the auspices of the American Colonization Society, we established ourselves here, on land acquired by purchase from the Lords of the soil.

In an original compact with this Society, we for important reasons delegated to it certain political powers; while this institution stipulated that whenever the people should become capable of con-

conducting the government, ~~over~~ ~~the~~ ~~people~~ ~~should~~ ~~desire~~ ~~it~~, this institution would resign the delegated power, peaceably withdraw its supervision, and leave the people to the government of themselves.

Under the auspices and guidance of this institution, which has nobly and in perfect faith redeemed its pledges to the people, we have grown and prospered.

From time to time, our number has been increased by migration from America, and by accessions from native tribes; and from time to time, as circumstances required it, we have extended our borders, by acquisition of land by honorable purchase from the natives of the country.

As our territory has extended, and our population increased, our commerce has also increased. The flags of most of the civilized nations of the earth float in our harbors, and their merchants are opening an honorable and profitable trade.

Until recently, these visits have been of a uniformly harmonious character, but as they have become more frequent, and to more numerous points of our extending coast, questions have arisen, which it is supposed can be adjusted only by agreement between sovereign powers.

For years past, the American Colonization Society has virtually withdrawn from all direct and active part in the administration of the government, except in the appointment of the Governor, who is also a colonist, for the apparent purpose of testing the ability of the people to conduct the affairs of government, and no complaint of crude legislation, nor of mismanagement, nor of mal-administration, has yet been heard.

In view of these facts, this institution, the American Colonization Society, with that good faith which has uniformly marked all its dealings with us, did by a set of resolutions in January, in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and forty six, dissolve all political connections with the people of this Republic; return the power with

which it was delegated and left the people to the government of themselves.

The people of the Republic of Liberia then are of right, and in fact, a free, sovereign and independent State, possessed of all the rights, and powers, and functions of government.

In assuming the momentous responsibilities of the position they have taken, the people of the Republic, feel justified by the necessities of the case, and with this conviction they throw themselves with confidence upon the candid consideration of the civilized world.

Liberia is not the offspring of grasping ambition, nor the tool of avaricious speculation.

No desire for territorial aggrandizement brought us to these shores; nor do we believe so sordid a motive entered into the high consideration of those who aided us in providing this asylum.

Liberia is an asylum from the most grinding oppression.

In coming to the shores of Africa, we indulged the pleasing hope, that we would be permitted to exercise and improve those faculties, which impart to man his dignity—to nourish in our hearts the flame of honorable ambition, to cherish and indulge those aspirations which a Bountiful Creator hath implanted in every human heart, and to evince to all who despise, ridicule and oppress our race, that we possess with them a common nature, and with them susceptible of equal refinement, and capable of equal advancement in all that adorns and dignifies man.

We were animated with the hope, that here we should be at liberty to train up our children in the way they should go—to inspire them with the love of an honorable fame, to kindle within them, the flame of a lofty philanthropy, and to form strong within them, the principles of humanity, virtue and religion.

Among the strongest motives to leave our native land—to abandon forever the scenes of our childhood, and to sever the most endearing connections, was the desire for a retreat where,

free from the agitation of ~~the~~ fear and molestation, we could, in comfort and security approach in worship the God of our Fathers.

Thus far our highest hopes have been realized.

Liberia is already the happy home of thousands, who were once the doomed victims of oppression, and if left unmolested to go on with her natural and spontaneous growth: if her movements be left free from the paralyzing intrigues of jealous ambition and unscrupulous avarice, she will throw open a wider and a wider door for thousands, who are now looking with an anxious eye for some land of rest.

Our courts of justice are open equally to the stranger and the citizen, for the redress of grievances, for the remedy of injury, and for the punishment of crime.

Our numerous and well attended schools attest our efforts, and our desire for the improvement of our children.

Our churches for the worship of our Creator, every where to be seen, bear testimony to our piety, and to our acknowledgment of His Providence.

The native African bowing with us before the altar of the living God, declare that from us, feeble as we are, the light of Christianity has gone forth, while upon that curse of curses, the slave trade, a deadly blight has fallen as far as our influence extends.

Therefore in the name of humanity, and virtue and religion — in the name of the Great God, our common Creator, and our common Judge, we appeal to the nations of Christendom, and earnestly and respectfully ask of them that they will regard us with the sympathy and friendly consideration, to which the peculiarities of our condition entitle us, and to extend to us that comity which marks the friendly intercourse of civilized and independent communities.

The end of the institution, maintenance, and administration of government, is to secure the existence of the body politic, to protect it, and to furnish the individuals who compose it, with the power of enjoying, in safety

and tranquility, their ~~natural~~ rights, and the blessings of life; and whenever these great objects are not obtained, the people have a right to alter the government and to take measures, necessary for their safety, prosperity, and happiness.

Therefore we the people of the Commonwealth of Liberia in Africa, acknowledging with devout gratitude the goodness of God, in granting to us the blessings of the Christian religion, and political, religious and civil liberty, do, in order to secure these blessings for ourselves and our posterity, and to establish justice, insure domestic peace, and promote the general welfare, hereby solemnly associate, and constitute ourselves a free, sovereign and independent state, by the name of the Republic of Liberia, and do ordain and establish this Constitution, for the government of the same.

Article II.

Declaration of Rights.

Section 1st. All men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural inherent and unalienable rights; among which, are the rights of enjoying and defending life and liberty, and of ~~acquiring~~ possessing and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

Sec. 2nd All power is inherent in the people; all free governments are instituted by their authority, and for their benefit, and they have a right to alter and reform the same when their safety and happiness require it.

Sec. 3rd All men have a natural and unalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, without obstruction or molestation from others, all persons demeaning themselves peaceably, and not obstructing others in their religious worship, are entitled to the protection of law in the free exer-

-cise of their own religion, and no sect of Christians shall have exclusive privileges or preferred over any other sect; but all shall be alike tolerated; and no religious test whatever shall be required as a qualification for civil office, or the exercise of any civil right.

Sec: 4th There shall be no slavery within this Republic, nor shall any citizen of this Republic, or any person resident therein, deal in slaves, either within or without this Republic, directly or indirectly.

Sec: 5th The people have a right at all times, in an orderly manner, to assemble and consult upon the common good, to instruct their representatives, and to petition the government, or any public functionaries for the redress of grievances.

Sec: 6th Every person injured shall have remedy therefor by due course of law; justice shall be done without sole denial or delay; and in all cases not arising under martial law or upon impeachment, the parties shall have a right to a trial by jury, and to be heard in person or by Council, or both.

Sec: 7th No person shall be held to answer for a capital or infamous crime except in cases of impeachment. Cases arising in the Army and Navy, and petty offences, unless upon presentment by a grand jury; and every person criminally charged shall have a right to be seasonably furnished with a copy of the charge, to be confronted with the witnesses against him, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor; and to have a speedy public, and impartial trial by a jury of the vicinity. He shall not be compelled to furnish or give evidence against himself, and no person shall for the same offence be twice put in jeopardy of life and limb.

Sec: 8th No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, property, or privilege, but by judgment of his peers, or the law of the land.

Sec: 9th No place shall be searched nor person seized, on a crim-

in a charge or suspicion ^{upon} unless a warrant lawfully issued, upon probable cause, supported by oath, or solemn affirmation, specially designating the place or persons, and the object of the search.

Sec: 10th Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed nor excessive punishment inflicted; nor shall the legislature make any law impairing the obligation of contracts; nor any law rendering any act punishable, in any manner, in which it was not punishable when it was committed.

Sec: 11th All elections shall be by ballot, and every male citizen of twenty one years of age, possessing real estate, shall have the right of suffrage.

Sec: 12th The people have a right to keep and to bear arms for the common defence. And as in time of peace, armies are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be maintained, without the consent of the legislature, and the military power shall always be held in exact subordination to the civil authority and be governed by it.

Sec: 13th Private property, shall not be taken for public use without just compensation.

Sec: 14th The powers of this government shall be divided into three distinct departments, the Legislature, Executive and Judicial, and no person belonging to one of these departments, shall exercise any of the powers belonging to either of the others. This section is not to be construed to include Justices of the Peace.

Sec: 15th The liberty of the press is essential to the security of freedom in a State; it ought not, therefore, to be restrained in this Republic. The printing press shall be free to every person, who undertake to examine the proceedings of the legislature or any branch of government; and no law shall ever be made to restrain the rights thereof. The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the invaluable rights of man, and every citizen may freely speak, write, and print on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.

In prosecutions for the publication of papers, investigating the official conduct of officers, or men in a public capacity, or where the matter published is proper for public information, the truth thereof may be given in evidence. And in all indictments for libel, the jury shall have a right to determine the law and the facts, under the direction of the Court, as in other cases.

Sec: 16th No subsidy charge, impost, or duties ought to be established, fixed, laid or levied, under any pretext whatsoever, without the consent of the people, or their representatives in the legislature.

Sec: 17th Suits may be brought against the Republic in such manner, and in such cases as the legislature may, by law direct.

Sec: 18th No person can, in any case, be subjected to the law martial or to any penalties or pains, by virtue of that law, (except those employed in the army or navy, and except the militia in actual service) but by authority of the legislature.

Sec: 19th In order to prevent those, who are invested with authority from becoming oppressors, the people have a right at such periods, and in such manner, as they shall establish by their frame of government, to cause their public officers to return to private life, and to fill up vacant places, by certain and regular elections and appointments.

Sec: 20th That all prisoners shall be bailable by sufficient sureties, unless for capital offences, when the proof is evident, or presumption great: and the privilege and benefit of the writ of habeas Corpus shall be enjoyed in this Republic, in the most free, easy, cheap, expeditious, and ample manner, and shall not be suspended by the legislature, except upon the most urgent and pressing occasions, and for a limited time, not exceeding twelve months.

Article II.

Legislative Powers.

Section 1st The legislative power shall be vested in a legislature of Liberia, and shall consist of two separate branches. A House of Representatives and a Senate, both styled the Legislature of Liberia; each of which shall have a negative on the other, and the enacting style of their

acts, and laws, shall be. It is enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Liberia in Legislature assembled.

Sec. 2^d The Representatives shall be elected by and for the inhabitants of the several counties of Liberia, and shall be apportioned among the several counties of Liberia as follows: — the County of Montserrat shall have four representatives, the county of Grand Bassa shall have three, and the county of Sinoe, shall have one, and all counties hereafter that shall be admitted in the Republic shall have one representative, and for every ten thousand inhabitants one representative shall be added. No person shall be representative who has not resided in the County two whole years immediately previous to his election, and who shall not when elected, be an inhabitant of the County, and does not own real estate of not less value than one hundred and fifty dollars in the County in which he resides, and who shall not have attained the age of twenty three years, the representatives shall be elected biennially and shall serve two years from the time of their election.

Sec. 3^d When a vacancy occurs in the representation of any County by death, resignation, or otherwise, it shall be filled by a new election.

Sec. 4th The House of Representatives shall elect their own speaker and other officers, they shall also have the sole power of impeachment.

Sec. 5th ~~The~~ Senate shall consist of two members from Montserrat County, two from Bassa County, two from Sinoe County, and two from each County which may be hereafter incorporated into this Republic. No person shall be a Senator who shall not have resided three whole years immediately previous to his election in the Republic of Liberia, and who shall not when elected be an inhabitant of the County which he represents, and who does not own real estate of not less value than two hundred dollars in the County which he represents, and who shall not

have attained the age of twenty five years. The Senators for each County who shall have the ^{three} highest number of votes, shall retain his seat four years, and the one who shall have the next highest number of votes, two years, and all who are afterwards elected to fill their seats, shall remain in office four years.

Sec: 6th The Senate shall try all impeachments; the Senators being first sworn, or solemnly affirmed to try the same impartially, and according to law, and no person shall be convicted but by the concurrence of two thirds of the Senators present. Judgment in such cases shall not extend beyond removal from office, and disqualification to hold an office in the Republic, but the party may still be tried at law for the same offence.

When either the President or Vice President is absent, the Chief Justice shall preside.

Sec: 7th It shall be the duty of the Legislature, as soon as conveniently may be, after the adoption of this Constitution, and once at least in every ten years afterwards, to cause a true census to be taken of each town, and County of the Republic of Liberia, and a representative shall be allowed every town having a population of ten thousand inhabitants, and for every additional ten thousand in the Counties, after the first census, one representative shall be added to that County, until the number of representatives shall amount to thirty, afterwards one representative shall be added for every thirty thousand.

Sec: 8th Each branch of the legislature shall be judge of the election returns, and qualifications of its own members. A majority of each shall be necessary to transact business, but a less number may adjourn from day to day, and compel the attendance of absent members. Each house may adopt its own rules of proceedings, enforce order, and with the concurrence of two thirds, may expel a member.

Sec: 9th Neither house shall adjourn for more than two days.

without the consent of the other; and both houses shall always sit in the same town.

Sec: 10. Every bill or resolution, which shall have passed both branches of the legislature, shall before it become a law be laid before the President for his approval, if he approve, he shall sign it; if not, he shall return it to the legislature with his objections - if the legislature shall afterwards pass the bill or resolution by a vote of two thirds in each branch, it shall become a law. If the President shall neglect to return such bill or resolution to the legislature with his objections for five days after the same shall have been so laid before him - the legislature remaining in session during that time, such neglect shall be equivalent to his signature.

Sec: 11. The Senators and Representatives shall receive from the Republic a compensation for their services to be ascertained by law; and shall be privileged from arrest except for treason, felony or breach of the peace, while attending at, going to or returning from the session of the legislature.

Article III.

Executive Power.

Section 1. The Supreme Executive Power, shall be vested in a President, who shall be elected by the people; and shall hold his office for the term of two years. He shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy. He shall, in the recess of the legislature, have power to call out the militia or any portion thereof, into actual service in defence of the Republic. He shall have power to make treaties, provided the Senate concur therein, by a vote of two thirds of the Senators present. He shall nominate, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint and commission all Ambassadors and other public Ministers and Consuls, Secretaries of State, of War, of the Navy, and of the Treasury, Attorney General, all Judges of County, Sheriffs, Coroners, Marshalls, Justices of

the Peace, Clerks of Courts, Registers, Notaries Public and all other officers of State, civil and military, whose appointment may not be otherwise provided for by the Constitution, or by standing laws. And in the recess of the Senate, he may fill any vacancies in those offices, until the next session of the Senate. He shall receive all ambassadors and other public ministers. He shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed; he shall inform the legislature from time to time of the condition of the Republic, and recommend any public measures for their adoption which he may think expedient. He may after conviction, remit any public forfeitures and penalties, and grant reprieves and pardons for public offences, except in cases of impeachment. He may inquire information and advice from any public officer, touching matters pertaining to his office. He may, on extraordinary occasions, convene the Legislature, and may adjourn the two houses, whenever they cannot agree as to the time of adjournment.

Sec. 2d There shall be a Vice President who shall be elected in the same manner, and for the same term as that of the President; and whose qualifications shall be the same. He shall be president of the Senate, and give the casting vote, when the house is equally divided on any subject. And in case of the removal of the President from office, or his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office; the same ^{shall} devolve on the Vice President; and the Legislature may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation or inability, both of the President and Vice President declaring what officer shall then act as President, and such officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

Sec. 3d The Secretary of State shall keep the records of the State, and all the records and papers of the legisla-

...their body, and all other public records and documents, not belonging to any other department, and shall lay the same when required, before the President or Legislature. He shall attend upon them when required, and perform such other duties as may be enjoined by law.

Sec. 4th The Secretary of the Treasury, or other persons, who may by law, be charged with the custody of the public monies, shall before he receive such monies, give bonds, to the state, with sufficient securities, to the acceptance of the legislature, for the faithful discharge of his trust. He shall exhibit a true account of such monies when required by the President or Legislature; and no monies shall be drawn from the Treasury, but by warrant from the President, in consequence of an appropriation made by law.

Sec. 5th All Ambassadors and other public Ministers, and Consuls, the Secretary of State, of War, of the Treasury and of the Navy, the Attorney General and Post Master General, shall hold their offices during the pleasure of the President. All Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs, Coroners, Marshalls, Clerks of Courts, Registers, and Notaries Public, shall hold their office for the term of two years, from the date of their respective commissions; but may be removed from office within that time by the President, at his pleasure: and all other officers whose term of office may not be otherwise limited by law, shall hold their offices during the pleasure of the President.

Sec. 6th Every civil officer may be removed from office by impeachment, for official misconduct. Every such officer may also be removed by the President, upon the address of both branches of the legislature, stating the particular reasons for his removal.

Sec. 7th No person shall be eligible to the Office of President, who has not been a citizen of this Republic for at least five years, and shall have attained the age of thirty five years; and who shall not be possessed of unincumbered real estate, of not less value than six hundred dollars.

Section 8. The President shall at stated times receive for his services, a compensation which shall neither be increased nor diminished, during the period for which he shall have been elected:— And before he enters on the execution of his Office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation.

I do solemnly swear, (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the Republic of Liberia, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and enforce the laws of the Republic of Liberia.

Article IV.

Judicial Department

Section 1. The Judicial power of this Republic shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and such subordinate Courts as the Legislature may from time to time establish. The Judges of the Supreme Court, and all other Judges of Courts, shall hold their office during good behavior; but may be removed by the President, on the address of two thirds of both houses for that purpose, or by impeachment and conviction thereon. The Judges shall have salaries established by law, which may be increased, but not diminished during their continuance in office. They shall not receive any other perquisites or emoluments whatever, from parties or others, on account of any duty required of them.

Sec: 2. The Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction in all cases affecting ambassadors or other public Ministers and Consuls, and those to which the Republic shall be a party. In all other cases the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions, and under such regulations as the Legislature shall from time to time make.

Article V.

Miscellaneous Provisions.

Section 1. All laws now in force in the Commonwealth of Liberia, and not repugnant to this Constitution, shall be in force as the laws of the Republic of Liberia.

until they shall be repealed by the Legislature.

Sec: 2^d. All judges, magistrates, and other officers now concerned in the administration of justice in the Commonwealth of Liberia, and all other existing civil and military officers therein, shall continue to hold and discharge their respective offices, in the name and by the authority of the Republic, until others shall be appointed and commissioned in their stead pursuant to this Constitution.

Sec: 3^d. All towns and municipal corporations within this Republic, constituted under the laws of the Commonwealth of Liberia, shall retain their existing organizations and privileges, and the respective officers thereof shall remain in office and act under the authority of this Republic, in the same manner and with the like powers as they now possess under the laws of said Commonwealth.

Sec: 4th. The first election of President, Vice President, Senators, and Representatives shall be held on the first Tuesday in October in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and forty seven in the same manner as elections of members of the Council are chosen in the Commonwealth of Liberia, and the votes shall be certified and returned to the Colonial Secretary, and the result of the election shall be ascertained, posted and notified by him as is now by law provided in case of such members of Council.

Sec: 5th. All other elections of President, Vice President, Senators, and Representatives, shall be held in the respective towns on the first Tuesday in May in every two years, to be held and regulated in such manner as the Legislature may by law prescribe. The returns of votes shall be made to the Secretary of State who, shall open the same, and forthwith issue notices of the election to the persons apparently so elected Senators and Representatives: and all such returns shall be by him laid before the Legislature at its next ensuing session, together with a list of

the names of the persons who appear by such returns to have been duly elected Senators and Representatives; and the persons appearing by said returns to be duly elected shall proceed to organize themselves accordingly as the Senate and House of Representatives. The votes for President shall be sorted, counted, and declared by the House of Representatives. And if no person shall appear to have a majority of such votes, the Senators, and Representatives present, shall in convention by joint ballot, elect from among the persons having the highest number of votes, a person to act as President for the ensuing term.

Sec. 6th The Legislature shall assemble once at least in every year, and such meeting shall be on the first Monday in January, unless a different day shall be appointed by law.

Sec. 7th Every legislator and other officer appointed under this Constitution, shall before he enters upon the duties of his office, take and subscribe a solemn oath or affirmation to support the Constitution of this Republic, and faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of such office. The presiding officer of the Senate shall administer such oath or affirmation to the President, in convention of both houses; and the President shall administer the same to the Vice President, to the Senators, and to the Representatives, in like manner. If the President is unable to attend, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, may administer the oath or affirmation to him, at any place, and also to the Vice President, Senators and Representatives, in convention. Other officers may take such oath or affirmation before the President, Chief Justice, or any other person, who may be designated by law.

Sec. 8th All elections of public officers shall be made by a majority of the votes, except in cases otherwise regulated by the Constitution or by law.

Sec. 9th Offices created by this Constitution, which the

present circumstances of the Republic do not require that they shall be filled, shall not be filled until the Legislature shall deem it necessary.

Sec: 10th The property of which a woman may be possessed at the time of her marriage, and also that of which she may afterwards become possessed, otherwise than by her husband, shall not be held responsible for his debts; whether contracted before or after marriage. Nor shall the property thus intended to be secured to the woman be alienated otherwise than by her free and voluntary consent, and such alienation may be made either by sale devise or otherwise.

Sec: 11th In all cases in which estates are insolvent the widow shall be entitled to one third of the real estate during her natural life, and to one third of all the personal estate, which she shall hold in her own right, subject to alienation by her by devise or otherwise.

Sec: 12th No person shall be entitled to hold real estate in this Republic unless he be a citizen of the same. Never the less this article shall not be construed to apply to colonization, missionary, Educational or other benevolent institutions, so long as the property or estate is applied to its legitimate purposes.

Sec: 13th The great object of forming these Colonies, being to provide a home for the dispersed and oppressed children of Africa, and to regenerate an enlightened this benighted continent; none but persons of color shall be admitted to citizenship in this Republic.

Sec: 14th The purchase of any land, by any citizen or Citizens from the aborigines of this country, for his, or their own use, or for the benefit of others, as estate or estates in fee simple, shall be considered null and void to all intents and purposes.

Sec: 15th The improvement of the native tribes, and their advancement in the arts of agriculture and husbandry, being a cherished object of this govern-

ment, it shall be the duty of the President to appoint in each County some discreet person whose duty it shall be, to make regular and periodical tours, through the country for the purpose of calling the attention of the natives to these wholesome branches of industry, and of instructing them in the same, and the legislature shall, as soon as can conveniently be done, make provisions for these purposes, by the appropriation of money.

Sec. 16. [&] The existing regulations of the American Colonization Society in the Commonwealth, relative to emigrants, shall remain the same in the Republic, until regulated by compact between the Society and the Republic: nevertheless, the Legislature shall make no law prohibiting emigration. And it shall be among the first duties of the Legislature to take measures to arrange the future relations between the American Colonization Society and this Republic.

Sec. 17. [&] This Constitution may be altered whenever two thirds of both branches of the Legislature shall deem it necessary. In which case the alterations or amendments, shall first be considered and approved by the Legislature, by the concurrence of two thirds of the members of each branch, and afterwards by them submitted to the people, and adopted by two thirds of all the electors at the next biennial meeting for the Election of Senators and Representatives.

Done in Convention at Monrovia in the County of Montserraty by the unanimous consent of the people of the Commonwealth

of Liberia, this twenty sixth day of July, in the year
of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and forty
seven, and of the Republic the First. In witness
whereof we have hereto set our names.

L. M. Shout
Secy Com.

Benedict
Presdt

J. M. Servis

H. Leage

Bevly. R. Wilson

Elijah Johnson

J. B. Gripon

Johns Day

A. R. Gardner

Amos Fleming

Ephraim Little

R. C. Murray

Marionade County

County of Grand Bassa