

“ in cases of the Bankruptcy or death of the owner thereof) shall be  
 “ null and void to all intents and purposes whatsoever.”

That upon the faith of His Majesty's Government, solemnly pledged by the above mentioned laws, the inhabitants of this Province in General and the inhabitants of the City and District of *Montreal* in particular, have purchased for a valuable consideration, a considerable number of Panis and Negro Slaves; and divers persons, formerly subjects of the United States of *America*, have, upon the faith of the above in part recited Statute of 30th *George III.* Chapter 27th imported into this Province, according to Law, a number of Negroes Slaves belonging to them; and which Panis and Negro Slaves have always demeaned themselves in a becoming manner until lately, that they have imbibed a refractory & disobedient spirit, under pretext that no slavery exists in the Province.—In February 1798, one *Charlotte*, a Negro woman, belonging to a Miss *Jane Cook*, absconded from the service of her mistress, and having refused to return, was, upon a complaint on oath, apprehended in virtue of a warrant from a Magistrate, and having still persisted in refusing to return to her duty, was, upon legal conviction, committed to the prison of the District (for want of a House of Correction;) but having applied for, and obtained a Writ of *Habeas Corpus*, she was, in vacation, discharged by his Honor the Chief Justice of this District, without being obliged to give security for her appearance in the Court of King's Bench. Upon this enlargement, the Negroes in the city and district of *Montreal* threatened a general revolt; and one *Jude*, a Negro woman belonging to *Elias Smith*, of *Montreal*, Merchant, purchased by him at *Albany*, on the 27th day of January, 1795, in consideration of eighty pounds, *New York* currency, absconded, and refusing to return, was, upon conviction, committed to prison; but upon a petition presented by her to the Court of King's Bench for this district, holding criminal pleas, she was on the eighth day of March, 1798, without deciding upon the question of Slavery, discharged; the Chief Justice declaring at the same time, in open Court, that he would, upon *Habeas Corpus*, discharge every Negro, indented Apprentice, and Servant, who should be committed to Gaol under the Magistrates Warrant in the like cases.

That His Majesty's Justices of the Peace having thus no power to compel absconding Slaves to return to their owner's service, nor the  
 owners