

"Apprehension of Runaway Negroes—Conduct of Abolitionists in Illinois,"

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Apprehension of Runaway Negroes—Conduct of Abolitionists in Illinois.

If the people of Illinois have ground of complaint against the citizens of Missouri on any score whatever, certainly we have good reason to complain of their conduct in interfering with, and destroying the value of property guaranteed to us by the Constitution, and which, if not tampered with and corrupted by Abolitionists, would feel no desire to leave their homes.—Almost every day our slaves are induced, by the persuasions of Abolitionists, to abandon comfortable homes, and to entrust themselves to the tender mercies of pretended friends, who are sure to fleece them of all their money before they quit them. We published yesterday a telegraph dispatch from Quincy, Ill., announcing the stampede of fifty slaves, in one company, from the county of Lewis, and no one will doubt that they were aided in their escape by citizens of Illinois. Of the desperation of these men—the unblushing effrontery with which they act, even to the commission of perjury—we proceed to present a case which has just occurred.

Four slaves, the property of Messrs. E. Block, McCune, Glasby, and Pittman, ran away from their homes in this city on Saturday night, a week ago. They went up the river to the head of Gabourie Island; crossed over to the Island, and from thence were assisted in getting to the Illinois shore by white men, whose names have not been furnished to us. One of the runaways, belonging to Mr. Pittman, was left there, being lame, to make what progress he could, and is yet at large. The others started for Alton, passed that city, and were arrested eight miles beyond Alton, in Jersey county, by Wm. R. Bowmar and brother.—The slaves were put in the jail of Jerseyville on Monday, and Mr. Bowmar left for St. Louis, to inform the owners of their apprehension. They immediately proceeded to Jerseyville and arrived there on Tuesday night, when they found that an Abolitionist, named E. J. Palmer, had made oath that the slaves in question were free men, and falsely imprisoned, and not, as alleged, slaves. Upon his oath, a writ of *habeas corpus* was issued, directed, not to the Judge of the Circuit Court in Madison county, to which they could easily return, but to the Judge of the Circuit Court at Beardstown, a distance of seventy-five miles on the route which the negroes and their allies were to take, in making their escape. This they expected, and attempted to do on the way.

On the arrival of the owners at Jerseyville, they found that the company had left a few hours before for Carrollton, in custody of the Deputy Sheriff, Mr. CANNON. This officer was forced to leave in a hurry, and was also compelled to make use of a wagon or carriage belonging to ISAAC SNEDEKER, a noted abolitionist, who drove the team. It was represented to the abolitionists, that the owners of the slaves would be there in a few hours, to prove and reclaim their property, but this was urged as a good reason for getting off as speedily as possible. When leaving Jerseyville, the abolitionists indulged in loud huzzas and glorified the *habeas corpus* law. They reached Carrollton at 10 o'clock at night, and when just entering the town the abolitionist driver gave the whip to his team, intending to drive through the town without stopping, and thus get clear with the slaves. But it so happened, that the former Sheriff of the county, Mr. SILLEWAY, was along, and he seized the reins and stopped the vehicle. The abolitionist, SNEDEKER, then ordered the negroes to seize Mr. SILLEWAY, and hold him, until they could get through the town, but they failed to do it.

The negroes were committed to the jail in Carrollton that night. Meanwhile, the officer determined to get rid of his Abolition driver and team, and to take the negroes to Columbiana, on the Illinois river, and thence to Beardstown by boat; but the owners arrived early next morning, and they concluded to go by land. The slaves, with the fellow PALMER, who had caused the writ to issue, were brought before Judge WOODSON, of the Circuit Court, then in session, and an immediate hearing was granted. DAVID A. SMITH and MURRY McCONNELL, members of the bar, were retained by PALMER as counsel for the negroes, and the defendants in the case employed Judge BROWN and Mr. H. E. DUMMER as their counsel. On the part of the slaves, it was contended, that the proceedings in the case were illegal; and the defendants admitted the illegality. But before the decision of the Judge was pronounced, Mr. SMITH proceeded to make an inflammatory abolition speech, not intended for the benefit of the Court, but addressed to the multitude who crowd-

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ed the house. He quoted the Declaration of Independence, about all men being born free and equal, &c. Among other things, he said that citizens of Missouri had been in the habit of coming to Illinois, and taking free people of color—men born free—carrying them to Missouri and selling them, and making fortunes by it. He complained of the defendants in this case, that they were forcing a trial in a summary manner, without giving his clients an opportunity of proving their freedom. When so great a question was at issue, time ought to be allowed, &c. It will be observed, that it was the abolitionists who had sued out the habeas corpus—that they were forcing a trial, at a distant point, and refusing to give time for the arrival of the owners of the property.

Judge Brown replied to Smith in very appropriate and indignant terms. He referred to that part of his harangue in which Smith admitted that his address was not intended for the Court, and said that he supposed he was addressing a town meeting, for the purpose of exciting the sympathies of the people; that such speeches were calculated to create strife and bad feeling between citizens of sister States, and ought not to be indulged. Smith, in explanation, said that his remarks in relation to the stealing of free negroes &c., were not intended for the parties in this case whom he understood to be honorable men,

Judge Woodsox then remarked that, as the defendants admitted that the proceeding was illegal, he must discharge the persons from custody; but, if they had not done so, he should have directed their commitment to jail, there to remain and be proceeded with according to law. The costs of the proceeding were adjudged to be paid by the abolitionists; and then it was found out that they had taken from the negroes every dollar of money, under pretence of employing lawyers, fees, &c. A pretty set of scoundrel-philanthropists, of a certainty!

The owners of the slaves, on their discharge under the habeas corpus, took them before a Justice of the Peace in Beardstown, established their right to them, put them on board a boat, and brought them home.

Among others assisting in the escape of these men, was a *free negro* by the name of Bill Williams, an old offender in this kind of work. He conveyed them off, travelled with them, went to jail with them, and was discharged at Beardstown with them. He has been brought back, and is now confined in the calaboose.—He has made a full confession of all the facts of the case, and will likely go to the penitentiary for his trouble. Capt. Dewitt, of the steamer Daniel Hillman, arrived at Beardstown about the conclusion of the proceedings, and he at once recognized Bill Williams as the fellow who, about a month since, on his boat ran off three slaves belonging to Col. Norcom. Capt. Dewitt, returned] the slave and Bill to the calaboose in St. Louis, in charge of one of his men, and he was surprised on finding him so soon at his work again.

It is due to the mass of the citizens of Carrollton, Whitehall, Jacksonville and Beardstown, to say that they expressed decided dissatisfaction with the proceedings of these Abolitionists, and such is, most probably, the general feeling; but the class of fanatics is so numerous as to make it exceedingly difficult for our citizens to reclaim their slaves when once they are in their clutches in Illinois.