

contract; *Provided*, that the said justice, before he renders judgment against the negro, shall be satisfied that the wages are reasonably secure, and that the said negro did not quit the service of the employer on account of improper usage, or treatment, or without sufficient cause; that the constable arresting such person shall have the same right to secure his or her appearance by confinement, as in ordinary cases of misdemeanor, till the hearing can be had before the justice, and which shall take place as speedy as practicable.

SEC. 2. *And be it enacted*, That if any free negro shall hereafter contract or agree, in writing, to hire to any white person for a year, or less time, and for certain wages, and shall afterwards refuse to enter into the service of such person, and shall hire to another person, the first person shall have process of summons in such case without delay against such free negro, and upon trial and proof, shall have judgment against such free negro for two-fifths of the amount of wages contracted to be paid, which judgment shall be a lien on the wages in the hands of the person in whose service he may be engaged, from the time notice of such judgment shall be given to said employer, and shall be paid when due to the person recovering judgment, and may be recovered by an action of debt before any justice of the peace, as in ordinary cases of debt; but in case the said employer shall hire the said negro with a full knowledge of the previous hiring, and shall refuse to deliver him to the first claimant on demand made, the party first hiring may have process of replevin to recover possession of the said negro, to be obtained from a justice of the peace, and which shall be heard and tried, judgment rendered, and execution awarded and executed, as in ordinary cases of replevin; *Provided*, that before any judgment be given against the negro or the employer, under this section, the justice shall be satisfied that the wages agreed to be paid by the party first hiring was reasonably secure, and that the said negro had not sufficient and just cause to refuse to enter into the service of the said party.

SEC. 3. *And be it enacted*, That in case any free negro shall leave the service of his employer after judgment rendered against him, as provided for in the first section of this act, and refuse or fail to return to the service of the employer, the said employer may take possession of the said negro wherever found, and confine him in the public jail for a period not exceeding one week at any one time, and may exercise, in such case,

Proviso.

Process of summons.

Proviso.

Leaving service after a judgment.