

me to draw up a statement of the case or cases which had come to my notice of virtual defeat of the organic law of the State, by having children bound without consent of parents, and contrary to its laws, and in despite also of the late order of Major General Wallace, defiantly holding on to them.

After being waited on by the mother as before observed, in order to obtain the necessary evidence against the party, I advised her to take a respectable white man with her, and go to said Covey, and demand her children. She did so, and he refused in the most peremptory manner to give them up. See letter from aforesaid Curtis Davis, Senator, which I enclose. The parents of these children are abundantly able to take care of them, and are in respectable circumstances for their class of society.

Now, this specific case is before you, and I proceed to state what has come to my own personal knowledge in other cases. The children of colored people who are able to take care of them, of some considerable means in some instances, have been taken from their parents, or rather have never been permitted to be free, or go free; but as soon as the New Constitution went into effect, they have been carried by their masters, and sometimes by the Sheriff of the county upon writs issued by the Orphans' Court, and bound to them, (their masters,) until 21 years old.

A gentleman living in my neighborhood has thus had four or five bound—carried away by the Sheriff of the county on the 2d day of November, a distance of 16 miles to Denton, and bound. Some of these minors are 16, 17 or even 18 years old. The mother was told that such was the law, and threats were used to induce her to give her consent. The father of these children rents land, has his horses and carriage, needs the help of the larger children for purposes of farming, and to help by their labor to support the younger. He came to me several times, so also the mother, and asked me what he was to do. I respectfully ask for him the same question of you. Sir, these children are as much slaves as before, the parents are forbidden to harbor them, and they are forbidden to go to see their parents. They are doomed to grow up without education, and are as perfectly orphaned in the free State of Maryland as if no parents existed.

The Union men of this vicinity think this a sad state of affairs, and are rejoiced to find an officer appointed to look after matters of this kind.

Not one, two, but numberless cases of hardship and grievance, rivalling and going beyond the instances given are around us in this portion of the State.