

at their houses of fugitive slaves, they can easily avoid such disagreeable matters, by first seeing that they are employing a free coloured person, & not actually harboring a runaway slave. If a free negro be kidnaped, by day or night, into slavery, we would all agree that so heinous a crime should be adequately punished, & our own laws of Maryland do most severely punish all such offences.

But no such case of kidnapping was proved on this trial, & if it had been, it was no reason to justify or excuse the killing of Mr Gorsuch, who went into Sadsbury Township armed with legal process, & accompanied by a public officer of the United States.

I respectfully submit that this decision has been the result of that unfortunate sectional feeling which, in spite of the best intentions of the Court, has unconsciously betrayed them into the belief that this Act of Congress was but a private remedy for a private right, instead of being, as it is, a great public law affecting the bond of the Union itself.

Hence it is, that the Court have ruled that armed & organized resistance to the execution of this law is not "levying war" as it would clearly be, if there was a similar resistance to any other public law of the United States, to prevent its execution, & as it was ruled in the cases of the Western & Northampton Insurgents.

I cannot but regard the effect of this decision as most disastrous at this time. It practically strikes dead the Fugitive Slave Act, whenever armed hands of negroes encouraged by white men, may choose to resist the officer of the United States, & he may be unprovided with an army superior to their forces. It encourages & incites these "black regiments with white allies" in their work of murdering Southern masters who dare to pursue their slaves by proclaiming that the United States Courts will not convict them, especially, if it cannot be proved that they have read the Act of Congress. It leaves no other possible redress, by law, for such outrages as that, by which Mr Gorsuch perished, than local prosecutions in the County Courts, where the Insurgents & their white allies reside.

I cannot conceive of a greater farce than such a prosecution would be, before a County Jury, a portion of whom would be misled in sympathies with the Insurgents & their white counsellors & abettors, if indeed they had not themselves been privy to the whole scheme of resistance to the law and the murder of its agents.

We have already had a practical illustration of the

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