

rights and interests? If the decisions of the Court, as embodied in the *charge* of his Honor Judge Grier, are to be received as an authoritative exposition of the *law*, we think they will be found as follows:

First. No Southern master can, under the provisions of the act of 1850, reclaim his fugitive slave who may have escaped into a free State, except at the hazard of his life, for the protection of which that law affords no security.

Secondly. No resistance of that act, even though successfully made by armed and organized bands of conspirators, and though the thirsty soil of the North should be made drunk with the blood of Southern slave-owners, can amount to the "*dignity of treason*," because, in the opinion of the court, it is intended to effect objects of a "*private*" and not of "*public*" character, and hence a resistance to its execution is not a "*public resistance to any law of the United States!*"

Thirdly. Congress cannot enact any *efficient* law to enforce the stipulations of the 2nd section of the 4th article of the Constitution, because, in the event of its infraction by armed and organized bands, it would be almost entirely impossible to produce evidence "*that any person concerned in the transaction, knew that there were such acts of Congress as they were charged with conspiring to resist by force and arms!*" Thus, in effect, deciding that portion of the supreme organic law to be a nullity, at the same time that the legal maxim, "*Ignorantia juris neminem excusat,*" is utterly repudiated!!

Fourthly. That the Federal Courts afford no remedy for violations of the "*Fugitive Slave Act*," or the massacre of those who, under its provisions, seek to reclaim their property; but that all redress for such grievances must be sought from the local tribunals, where such outrages may have been perpetrated.

Now if this exposition of the law, by one of the Federal Courts of the Union, is not calculated to excite the deep and painful sensibilities of the people of Maryland, and of the entire South, then we are unable to conjecture what could arouse them to a sense of the insecurity of the position they occupy as members of the Confederacy. The first proposition to which we have invited your attention is based upon the decision of the Court, that no owner of a "*fugitive from service or labor*" has the right to approach any house during the hours of night for the purpose of reclaiming said fugitive, under the pains and penalties of being considered a "*kidnapper*," and treated accordingly. This monstrous assumption strikes at the very principle of the right of recapture, guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and is utterly subversive of the doctrines advanced by that eminent jurist, Judge Story, in the case of "*Prigg vs. the State of Pennsylvania*," in 16 Peters, 613, and which has been so ably com-