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they do look upon such declarations as the evidence of cowardly baseness, upon which they may safely presume.

The slaveholders, the parties especially addressed, may well inquire if you, Mr. LINCOLN, and the great party that elected you, honestly entertain this very high respect for the rights of slave property in the States, how happens it that you treat the same rights of property with scorn and contempt when they are set up in the Territories of the United States? -- If slaves are property, and our rights of property in them are to be so sacredly guarded in the States, by what rule of law, justice or reason does that property part with the attributes of property, upon entering into a Territory owned in part by that same State? The fact is, the slaveholders have the argument all their own way, the moment that the right of property in their slaves is conceded under the Constitution. It was, therefore, weak, uncalled for and useless for Mr. LINCOLN to begin his Inaugural Address by thus at the outset prostrating himself before the foul and withering curse of slavery. The time and the occasion called for a very different attitude. Weakness, timidity and conciliation towards the tyrants and traitors had emboldened them to a pitch of insolence which demanded an instant check. Mr. LINCOLN was in a position that enabled him to wither at a single blast their high blown pride. The occasion was one for honest rebuke, not for palliations and apologies. The slaveholders should have been told that their barbarous system of robbery is contrary to the spirit of the age, and to the principles of Liberty in which the Federal Government was founded, and that they should be ashamed to be everlastingly pressing that scandalous crime into notice. Some thought we had in Mr. LINCOLN the nerve and decision of an OLIVER CROMWELL; but the result shows that we merely have a continuation of the PIERCES and BUCHANANS, and that the Republican President bends the knee to slavery as readily as any of his infamous predecessors. Not content with the broadest recognition of the right of property in the souls and bodies of men in the slave States, Mr. LINCOLN next proceeds, with nerves of steel, to tell the slaveholders what an excellent slave hound he is and how he regards the right to recapture fugitive slaves a constitutional duty; and lest the poor bondman should escape being returned to the hell of slavery by the application of certain well known rules of legal interpretation, which any and every white man may claim in his own case, Mr. LINCOLN proceeds to cut off the poor, trembling negro who had escaped from bondage from all advantages from such rules. He will have the pound of flesh, blood or not blood, be it more or less, a just pound or not. The SHYLOCKS of the South, had they been after such game, might have exclaimed, in joy, an ABRAHAM come to judgment! But they were not to be caught with such fodder. The hunting down a few slaves, the sending back of a few LUCY BAGLEYS, young and beautiful though they be, to the lust and brutality of the slaveholders and slave-breeders of the Border States, is to the rapacity of the rebels only as a drop of water upon a house in flames. The value of the thing was wholly in its quality. 'Mr. LINCOLN, you will catch and return our slaves if they run away from us, and will help us hold them where

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they are,' what cause, then, since you have descended to this depth of wickedness, withholds you from coming down to us entirely? Indeed, in what respect are you better than ourselves, or our overseers and drivers



who hunt and flog our negroes into obedience?' -- Again; the slaveholders have a decided advantage over Mr. LINCOLN, and over his party. He stands upon the same moral level with them, and is in no respect better than they. If we held the Constitution, as held by Mr. LINCOLN, no earthly power could induce us to swear to support it. The fact is, (following the lead of the Dred Scott decision, and all the Southern slaveholding politicians, with all the doughfaces of the North who have been engaged in making a Constitution, for years, outside of the Constitution of 1789.) Mr. LINCOLN has taken everything at this point in favor of slavery for granted. He is like the great mass of his countrymen, indebted to the South for both law and gospel.

But the Inaugural does not admit of entire and indiscriminate condemnation. It has at least one or two features which evince the presence of something like a heart as well as a head. Horrible as is Mr. LINCOLN'S admission of the constitutional duty of surrendering persons claimed as slaves, and heartily as he seems determined that that revolting work shall be performed, he has sent along with his revolting declaration a timid suggestion which, tame and spiritless as it is, must prove as unpalatable as gall to the taste of slaveholders. He says: 'In any law on this subject, ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in humane and civilized jurisprudence be introduced, so that a free man be not in any case surrendered as a slave.' For so much, little as it is, let the friends of freedom thank Mr. LINCOLN. This saves his Address from the gulf of infamy into which the Dred Scott decision sunk the Supreme Court of the United States. Two ideas are embraced in this suggestion: First, a black man's rights should be guarded by all the safeguards known to liberty and to humane jurisprudence; secondly, that slavery is an inhuman condition from which a free man out by all lawful means to be saved. When we remember the prevailing contempt for the rights of all persons of African descent, who are mostly exposed to the operation of these slave-catching laws, and the strenuous efforts of the American Church and clergy to make slavery a divine relation, and especially blissful to our much hated variety of the human family, we are disposed to magnify and rejoice over even this slight recognition of rights, and this implied acknowledgment of the hatefulness of slavery. One of the safeguards of liberty is trial in open court. Another is the right of bringing evidence in one's own favor, and of confronting and questioning opposing witnesses. Another is the trial by a jury of our peers. Another is that juries are judges both of the law and the evidence in the case. There are other safeguards of liberty which we might specify, any one of which, faithfully applied, would not only make it difficult to surrender a free man as a slave, but would make it almost impossible to surrender any man as such. Thanking Mr. LINCOLN for even so much, we yet hold him to be the most dangerous advocate of slave-hunting and slave-catching in the land.

He has laid down a general rule of legal interpretation which, like most, if not all general

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rules, may be stretched to cover almost every conceivable villainy. 'The intention of the law-giver is the law,' says Mr. LINCOLN. But we say that this depends upon whether the intention itself is lawful. If law were merely an arbitrary rule, destitute of all idea of right and wrong, the intention of the lawgiver might indeed be taken as the law, provided that intention were certainly known. But the very idea of law carries with it ideas of right, justice and humanity. Law, according to BLACKSTONE, commands that which is right and forbids that which is wrong. A law authorizing murder is no law, because it is an outrage upon all the elements out of which laws originate. Any man called to administer and

execute such a law is bound to treat such an edict as a nullity, having no binding authority over his action or over his conscience. He would have a right to say, upon the authority of the Supreme Court, that 'laws against fundamental morality are void;' that a law for murder is an absurdity, and not only from the purpose of all law and government, but wholly at war with every principle of law.-- It would be no avail in such a case to say that the 'intention of law-makers is the law.' To prove such an intention is only to destroy the validity of the law.

But the case is not murder, but simply the surrendering of a person to slavery who has made his or her escape from slavery into a free State. But what better is an act of this kind than murder? Would not Mr. LINCOLN himself prefer to see a dagger plunged to the hilt into the heart of his own daughter, than to see that daughter given up to the lust and brutality of the slaveholders of Virginia, as was poor, trembling LUCY BAGLEY given up a few weeks ago by the Republicans of Cleveland? What is slavery but a slow process of soul murder? What but murder is its chief reliance? How do slaveholders hold their slave except by asserting their right and power to murder their slaves if they do not submit to slavery? Does not the whole slave system rest upon a basis of murder? Your money or your life, says the pirate; your liberty or your life, says the slaveholder.-- And where is the difference between the pirate and the slaveholder?

But the 'intention of the law is the law.' Well, suppose we grant it in the present case, that the intention of the law-maker is the law, and two very important questions arise-- first, as to who were the makers, and secondly, by what means are we required to learn their intentions. Who made the Constitution? The preamble to the Constitution answers that question. 'We, the people, do ordain and establish this Constitution.' The people, then, made the law. How stood their intention as to the surrender of fugitive slaves? Were they all agreed in this intention to send slaves to bondage who might escape from it? Or were only a part? and if a part, how many? Surely, if a minority only were of that intention, that intention could not be the law, especially as the law itself expresses no such intention. The fact is there is no evidence whatever that any considerable part of the people who made and adopted the American Constitution intended to make that instrument a slave-hunting or a slaveholding instrument, while there is much evidence to prove the very reverse. DANIEL WEBSTER, even in his infamous 7th of March speech, was sufficiently

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