

LAYING DOWN THE LAW.

FROM THE PITTSBURGH DAILY HERALD.

Judge GANES and the FUGITIVE SLAVE BILL. At the opening of the United States Circuit Court, on Tuesday morning last, Judge GANES announced the appointment by the Court of Samuel E. Beach, Esq., of Juniata county, Adolphus D. Wilson, Esq., of Lycoming county, and J. B. Sweitzer, Esq., of Allegheny county, as Commissioners of the Court; and at the same time took occasion to request the members of the bar present and others to recommend to him gentlemen in the neighboring counties who were competent and willing to perform the duties of the office. He said that the late act of Congress concerning fugitives from labor had imposed it as a duty upon the Court to make such appointments in places where their services were likely to be needed. That he was much grieved to find that some who had heretofore been appointed to this office had been compelled by threats and denunciations, through fear of injury to their profession, property, or persons, to refuse the extension of the authority conferred upon them. He did not mean to censure any who, under such circumstances, had felt unwilling to run the risk of injury or offense in the service of their country. But he would like the occasion to observe that the time had come when those who professed obedience to the laws—who were desirous of the prosperity of the Union—who were anxious to avoid domestic and civil war with all its horrors, must take their stand, and no longer shrink from their duty as good citizens.

Heretofore those who had been accustomed to hold their meetings and conventions to howl forth curses and denunciations against the institutions of the country, both civil and ecclesiastical, had been treated as harmless frolics—with pity, if not contempt. But when their railing and vituperation were becoming successful as means of intimidation against the honest and true portion of the community—when mobs of negroes were urged on to violence, and counselled to arm themselves for the purpose of rebellion against the laws, and were harried on to murder its officers—such denunciations of the body politic could no longer be treated with contempt or indifference. And while on this subject, he would say that this city, which contains so many sterling and valuable citizens, whom he had long esteemed and respected, has been the subject of much libel and slander abroad, false and unfounded, as he would freely believe. He referred not to the standing and just of our peculiar taste with regard to the place from which we selected our Chief Magistrate, (Joseph R. Barker,) but to a much more serious accusation affecting some of our most honored and respected citizens. Was it possible that such men, possessing property, character, and the reputation of nobility, could so far have forgotten their duty as Christians and citizens as to be found haranguing large assemblies of negroes and others, urging them to arm themselves to oppose the execution of the laws with violence and to murder its officers? Did such persons not know that those who exhort others to commit murder are themselves accessories to the murder; that those who urge others into a treasonable opposition to their Government are themselves traitors?

If a poor negro, driven to madness by such haranguing, should murder an officer of the law, must he be hanged, and his white adviser go clear? Such would not be found to be the law, and it certainly would not be justice. He would say that if the allegations implied in certain of our citizens were not grossly misstated and exaggerated, (as he believed and hoped they were,) they may be thankful that the negroes, misled through a want of opportunity or the possession of more prejudice and honesty than their white advisers, have not followed their wicked advice; for if they had, he should probably have had more painful duties to perform with regard to them, and which he hoped by those remarks to avert in future; otherwise they might rely on it that those who opposed the execution of the laws with violence and bloodshed should most severely be punished; and those who robbingly advised and tempted them to their ruin, should share in their punishment, let their wealth and standing in the community be what it might. In conclusion, the Judge expressed a hope that the commissioners appointed by the Court would, when called upon to execute the law, do it with impartiality and firmness, regardless of threats and denunciations.