

WHAT IS TO BE DONE NOW!

The law is powerless in Illinois. It cannot be executed, even when its most minute requisites have been complied with. We have reforms, of course, to the total failure of a recent attempt to execute the Fugitive Slave Law in Chicago, and by the nullification of which law seventeen slaves, belonging to citizens of this county, have been let to them. The dispatch which we published yesterday described, briefly, the turn which things took, and the inefficiency of the officer to whom the warrants were directed. We have learned since, that the United States Commissioner performed his duty promptly, and that Mr. Howe, United States District Attorney, was equally prompt; but so much cannot be said of the Deputy Marshal, who was entrusted with the execution of the writs. He was either afraid, or was indifferent to the performance of his own duty, for, when one of the slaves was pointed out to him as one of the Halls, though within reach of him, he refused to take him into custody. He refused, also, to execute the warrants, unless the owners of the slaves should employ one hundred policemen and pay them a dollar an hour—knowing, most probably, that the policemen were Abolitionists, and would not assist him. Where this was the disposition of every officer, it was deemed useless to persevere in the proceedings, and they were abandoned. In Boston, when the slave Burns was arrested, the law was executed, although a mob of white men and negroes attempted to prevent it, and in doing so numbered an officer in the performance of his duty. But in Chicago the law is powerless, and a Southern man, who goes there in pursuit of his property, does so at the peril of his life.

It is time, now, for the people of Missouri to look about them and say what shall be done. Not a week passes, without ten, fifteen or twenty slaves being run off by the Abolitionists, and some method must be devised to counteract their operations. Last week, a poor man of this neighborhood, lost three—all he had—and Mr. Howe, who went to Chicago, to see if he could not recover his slaves, lost five out of six. These negroes have not left good homes without the aid and permission of white men, as well as free negroes, and a better police must be established. We have been told that measures are about being taken which will be effective in driving out of the city and State, every free negro who cannot establish his right to be here, under the Constitution and the law. If the execution of the law operates harshly upon some who have been resident here for a long while, it cannot be helped; there is an imperative necessity in the case, and they may blame the Abolitionists for it.

We presume a proper representation of the present case at Chicago will be made to the President, and it will be seen whether he will regard the oath, which he took when entering into office, as one that the law, are faithfully executed. If Mr. Howe cannot find a deputy at Chicago who will execute all writs directed to him, the President should forthwith find a man who will take Mr. Weston's place as Marshal of Illinois. He can be reached in this way, and there are other means of reaching a people who engaged in open resistance of the law or the law.