

Mr. WM. CRAFT (a fugitive slave) was here introduced to the assembly, and received with loud cheering. Mr. Craft proceeded to say that many persons thought if the slaves had only enough to eat, their condition was not so bad after all, and nothing more need be done.— Now, if they were merely animals, there might be some show of argument in this, but they were men (cheers,) professing the same feelings and aspirations as their fellow-creatures, having the same blood flowing in their veins, and created in the image of the same great God.— (Loud cheers.) The slaves, however, were generally overworked, ill-fed, and frequently flogged. Their allowance was a peck of Indian corn per diem, which they had to prepare after having left the plantation at the close of a day of toil. This would not be sufficient for their subsistence, but they got other food by finishing and by hunting for raccoons during the night or on the Sabbath day. (Sensation.) At such times, also, they obtained vegetable food, and made baskets, and other articles for sale. The masters favor this state of things, because it so occupies the minds of the slaves as to prevent their concocting plans of escape, and because, also, it was more economical. (Hear, hear.)— In 1848 he escaped from slavery, together with his wife, and they settled in Boston. There they remained in security until the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law. The slaveholders found that their slaves escaped so rapidly that they determined to get this law, under which hundreds of commissioners were appointed,

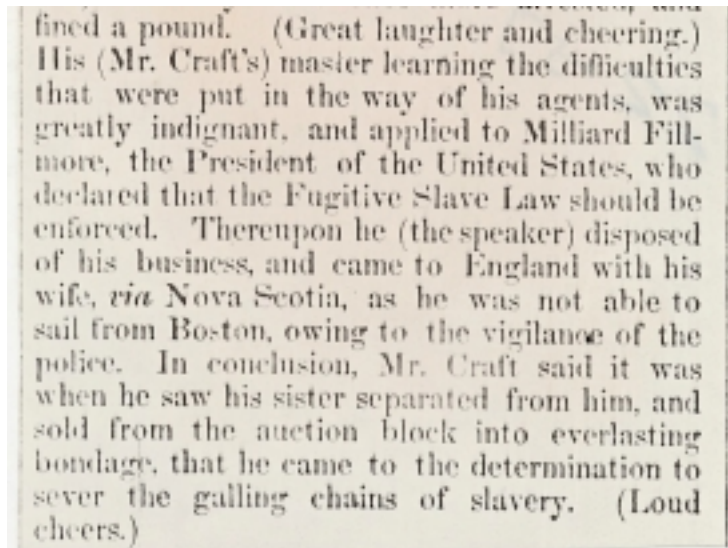
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whose decision alone can restore the fugitive to his owner. If he returns him his fee is £2; if he liberates him it is £1 only (shame.) He has nothing to do but to hand him over to the U.S. Marshal, who if it was unnecessary, could summon to his aid the forces of the Federal Government. If any attempt to effect the reverse, or connive at the escape of a fugitive slave was made, the parties so offending could be subjected to heavy fines and imprisonment. (Sensation.) In 1850 he (Mr. Craft) saw his esteemed friend George Thompson in Boston, who said to him—"Go to England, and if you reach its shores all the slave power in the world cannot reduce you to bondage." (Loud cheers.) One day a friend came to him with the intelligence that the slave hunters were in Boston on the look out for him. His first impulse was to fly, but on reflection he resolved to remain, and die rather than allow his liberty to be sacrificed.—(Cheers.) Great excitement prevailed. His friends formed themselves into a committee of vigilance. Every annoyance was offered to the slave-catchers short of personal injury. When in court they made a disturbance and they were arrested for it. (Laughter.) They drove very fast through the streets, and they were arrested for furious driving. (Laughter.) They drove across a toll-bridge without paying the toll, and again they were arrested. They swore publicly—another arrest followed. They smoked cigars in the streets, and (smoking being illegal in Boston) and they were once more arrested, and

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His (Mr. Craft's) master learning the difficulties that were put in the way of his agents, was greatly indignant, and applied to Millard Fillmore, the President of the United States, who declared that the Fugitive Slave Law should be enforced. Thereupon he (the speaker) disposed of his business, and came to England with his wife; *via* Nova Scotia, as he was not able to sail from Boston, owing to the vigilance of the police. In conclusion, Mr. Craft said it was when he saw his sister separated from him, and sold from the auction block into everlasting bondage, that he came to the determination to sever the galling chains of slavery. (Loud cheers.)



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