

quired their "property" under the sanction of the law, and it can be easily understood how enraged they became when told that this "property" should be taken from them without any compensation whatever. A resident in the Southern States to be even suspected of a leaning towards the abolitionist platform, was scouted by nearly everyone, and he was most unceremoniously "sent to Coventry," not alone by his acquaintances, but also by his relatives.

Such was the state of feeling in the Southern States towards all those who sought the extinction of slavery. The supporters of slavery made no distinctions in their hate. They did not stop to enquire how far this or that supporter of emancipation for the negro was prepared to go, or to ask any questions on the subject; it was enough that a man disapproved of slavery as an institution, and was anxious it should be abolished, for them to hate him with an intensity of hatred it is hard now to understand.

"Abolitionist," "The Underground Railway," were hated terms to the Southern planter; and all those in any way connected with one or the other, or both, was "anathema maranatha" to those who were directly or indirectly connected with the slave traffic.

It was in 1838, that the Underground Railway was organized. It is not possible to give a better account of what this institution was than to quote the description of it given by Ascott R. Hope, in his recently published, delightful volume, "Heroes in Homespun," wherein is told the story of the abolition of slavery.

"The first formal organization appears to have been in 1838, with Robert Purvis as the leading name, and Pennsylvania as the chief scene of operations. Perhaps the fact of Levi Coffin having published a large volume of reminiscences, may have given him greater prominence than is his due—not that he assumed special

distinction. Where concealment was of so much importance, the beginnings of the undertaking are naturally lost in some obscurity; and it seems hard to say for certain where or when arose the familiar title of that great secret society which for many years carried on an active business in forwarding black goods from the South to the North. Many, if not most, of its members were Quakers—perhaps the only instance of cautious Friends mixing themselves up with a secret society—but no mediæval brotherhood of cloaked or masked conspirators could have more romantic records."

"This much is clear, that Philadelphia became the chief centre of the work, that "city of brotherly love," where surely the oppressed slave might look to find friends—and he did not look in vain. Here was formed a Vigilance Committee of earnest abolitionists, who, for more than a quarter of a century, found no lack of work in ministering to the needs of fugitives in the same spirit as inspired Levi Coffin. Most of these adventurers came destitute and helpless, with everything to be done for them. They had to be fed, and often to be clothed, as the first step to be cleansed from the disgusting slough of their slavery; many had to be nursed, worn out by excessive fatigue, or bringing with them unhealed wounds which they had received in some desperate struggle on the road. They had to be passed on to Canada; or, if they chose to run the risk of remaining in the Free States, to be directed to some comparatively free asylum, and put in the way of earning a livelihood. Imposters had to be detected, traitors guarded against, spies watched. In many cases help was given to get the lucky runaways' families out of bondage after them. From first to last, it is stated, more than twenty thousand persons were thus aided to freedom in one way or another. And all this charity was done, perforce, secretly, without the resources of sub-