

another shock like that of their compatriots of 1812, for again negroes were found defending their new home. All through the forties there was a steady influx of negroes into Canada, the *Western Citizen* of Chicago stating in its issue of Sept. 23, 1842, "there are over \$400,000 worth of southern slaves in a town near Malden, Canada."

"It (slave abduction) threatens to subvert the institution in this state," said a Missouri newspaper of the period,¹⁰ while another authority estimated that between 1810 and 1850 no less than 100,000 slaves valued at \$30,000,000 were abducted from the south.¹¹ After 1850 the situation, from the southern standpoint grew worse and worse. Senator Polk, of Missouri, said in 1861: "Underground railroads are established stretching from the remotest slave-holding states clear up to Canada."¹² The *New Orleans Commercial Bulletin* of Dec. 19, 1860, estimated that 1500 slaves had escaped annually for 50 years past, a loss to the slaveholders of \$10,000,000.¹³ A vigilance committee at Detroit is stated to have assisted 1200 negroes to freedom in one year.¹⁴ A similar committee at Cleveland is stated to have assisted over 100 a month.

Estimates of the number of refugees in Canada on the eve of the Civil War vary greatly. The Canadian census figures have been shown to be quite unreliable and the estimates made by contemporary observers range all the way from 20,000 to 75,000. The bulk of the refugee population in Canada was located in the western part of the province of Upper Canada, where many of their descendants are to be found to-day.

The fugitives who came into Canada during the half century before the Civil War were a continual object lesson to the people of Canada of what slavery meant in the degradation of the black race. Homeless, friendless, destitute, their bodies marked with the lash and the still more brutal punishment of the "paddle," their feet torn, bleeding, frozen often as the result of a flight north in the dead of winter, these products of the slavery system made their own mute appeal to the compassion of a free people. Older people in Canada to-day still speak with emotion of the impression that was made upon their minds sixty years ago by the coming into their community of negro fugitives. The escaped negro was himself one of the powerful influences operating to create in Canada, as in the free states of the North, a sentiment hostile to slavery. The Canadian newspapers of the fifties contain many narratives of fugitives reaching Canada, so that those who did not come into actual contact with the negroes were made acquainted with their condition. The negroes themselves also published newspapers at Chatham and at Sandwich that were agencies in creating anti-slavery sentiment in Canada.

Another influence that was powerful in creating anti-slavery sentiment in Canada, as it did on a tremendous scale in the northern states, was the publication of Mrs. Stowe's famous novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin." First published serially in the *National Era*, an anti-slavery paper printed at Washington, it was issued in book form in March, 1852, the first Canadian edition appearing in the same year and having a large sale. Above all else the book brought home the conviction that slavery was injustice, opposed both to the

¹⁰ *Independent*, Jan. 18, 1855, quoted in Siebert, *Underground Railroad*, p. 194.

¹¹ Claiborne: *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman*, vol. II, p. 28.

¹² *Cong. Globe*, XXXVI Cong., 2nd sess., 356.

¹³ Quoted in American Anti-Slavery Society annual report for 1861, p. 158.

¹⁴ Mitchell: *Underground Railroad*, p. 113.