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Reciprocity of Saves Here's for the

Continued from page 1

The Western District of Upper Canada, which stretched from Long Point westward, and so was next to Michigan, suffered most from this flight of Negro slaves; and there is in the Archives at Ottawa, a document which indicates the annoyance and loss felt by prominent slave-nolders in that district. It reads as fol-

New York, May 26, 1807.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th ult. enclosing a memorial presented to you by the proprietors of slaves in the Western District of the Province of Upper Canada.

I regret equally with yourself the inconveniences which His Majesty's subjects in Upper Canada experience from the desertion of their slaves into the territory of the United States and of persons bound to them for a term of years, as also of His Majesty's soldiers and sailors but I fear no representations to the Government of the United States will at present avail in checking the evils complained of, as I have frequently, of late, had occasion to apply to them for the surrender of various deserters under different circumstances and always without success.

The answer that has been usually given has been "That the treaty between Great Britain and the United States which alone gave them the power to surrender deserters having expired, it was impossible for them to exercise such an authority without the sanction of the laws."

I will, however, forward to His Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs, the memorial above mentioned in the hope that some arrangements map be entered into to obviate in future the great losses which are therein described.

With great respect, I have the honor to be Sir. Your most obedient, humble servant,

D. M. Erskine. Endorsed May 26th, 1807 From Honorable D. W. Erskine Relative to Runaway Slaves and Deserters. Copy sent to Wm. Elliott Esq., 11th Nov., 1807. Copy sest to Matthew Elliott, Esq., 22nd Dec., 1807.

Addressed to Honorable F. Gore, etc. Erskine was the British representative in the United States: Francis Gore was Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada from 1806 to 1817, but having leave of absence during the War of 1812-14; Matthew and Wm. Elliott were prominent personages in the Western District, both being justices of the peace.

This letter illustrates a situation between the two sides of the International Line, not unlike that bitterly complained of by the Slave-holding States as to the disposition of the Free States to decline to assist in sending back to their masters, the Negro slaves fleeing from the South; this complaint, it will be remembered, led to the passing of an Act compelling their return—an Act, which,

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perhaps had something to do with the ultimate destruction of the horror.

-William Renwick Iiddell. Osgoode Hall, Toronto, February 12th, 1932.

VOL. VI. 1

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