

persuaded him to wait a week, with a view of giving Arismendi time to ascertain the prospect of recovering the property of which he was in pursuit. This engagement, owing to some mistake, was not adhered to, the writ was issued, and for want of bail he was imprisoned; thus taking from him the power of making those collections on which mainly depended the chance of obtaining our payment. It was literally destroying the bird that was destined to lay the golden egg.

This error being manifest, one of the partners of the Providence house came on, in the hope of retrieving it, and in this view we united in an act which rendered the matter worse, that of releasing him from prison, on his promise of making a settlement; for it soon became evident that his object was only to be emancipated, and that he had no intention of fulfilling his engagement. On being satisfied of this, recourse was had to the institution of a new suit, but before the writ could be served on him, he absconded.

This act, no less disgraceful on the part of the assistant, than of the principal, was effected by the aid of a Boston merchant, who enabled him to elude the vigilance of the officer charged with the arrest, concealed him until a vessel for St. Thomas was ready to sail, and then conveyed, or caused him to be conveyed, on board, thus assisting a fraudulent debtor to flee from justice, and preventing honest creditors from recovering their just demands.

In judging of actions we often err, and are guilty of injustice towards the individual whose motives we undertake to scan; but in this instance there can be no mistake. As there existed no personal hostility or animosity to me, it was palpably no other than sordid interest. Arismendi crossed the Atlantic for the purpose, principally, of collecting a debt of upwards of one hundred thousand dollars, alleged to be due him from this Boston merchant.

On the presumption that it was desirable to avoid payment, or even to avert a troublesome course of litigation, nothing could possibly have happened more opportune, than the coincidence of circumstances, by which he became the confident, the adviser, and the liberator of Arismendi, ostensibly to screen him from the rigors of a prison, but really to get rid of the payment of the debt; for, once away, he knew there was a moral certainty he would not return to prosecute in person, and it was apparent it could not be done by an agent,