

Novel 17, c.14

*c. 14. No One Shall Presume to Harbor Serfs Belonging to Other Census Tenants.*

*You will entertain great aversion for persons who harbor the serfs of others, and you must compel them to return immediately what they have illegally received; and if they should remain for a considerable time disobedient, you will impose all the expenses of the province upon those having serfs in their possession. Where the serfs are said to be in other provinces, you will address public letters to the Governors of the same, stating therein that they are fugitives, and requesting that they be surrendered along with any property in their possession, and returned to the province of which you are Governor; and you will punish those who have harbored them by forcing them to pay the amount of depreciation suffered, through the absence of the serfs, by the land to which they are attached. Hence, they will make good the diminished value of the said land, and will understand what it means to injure others.*

*You will see that these provisions are executed, whether owners of land have harbored the fugitive serfs, or whether this was done by persons holding the property under lease or by virtue of any other lawful contract; for both of them must avoid obtaining what does not belong to them, thus wickedly profiting by the injury of others.*

[The translation in italics above is that of S.P. Scott. This chapter was missing from Blume's manuscript.]