
Statement of the case.

ARMSTRONG v. UNITED STATES.

1. The President's proclamation of the 25th December, 1868, granting "unconditionally and without reservation to all and every person who directly or indirectly participated in the late insurrection or rebellion, a full pardon and amnesty for the offence of treason against the United States, &c., with restoration of all rights, privileges, and immunities under the Constitution, and the laws which have been made in pursuance thereof," granted pardon unconditionally and without reserve; and enables persons otherwise entitled to recover from the United States, the proceeds of captured and abandoned property, under the Abandoned and Captured Property Act, to recover it though no proof be made, as was required by that act, that the claimant never gave any aid or comfort to the rebellion.
2. The proclamation referred to, is a public act, of which all courts of the United States are bound to take notice, and to which all courts are bound to give effect.

APPEAL from the Court of Claims.

Mrs. Armstrong filed a claim in the court below for the proceeds of certain cotton under the "Abandoned and Captured Property Act," the provisions of which are quoted in the preceding case, page 151. The Court of Claims found that the cotton was raised by the claimant; that in the latter part of 1863, or early in 1864, there were on her plantation one hundred and twenty bales of cotton, which were taken possession of by the United States military forces and removed to Little Rock, Arkansas; that, prior to July, 1864, one hundred and two bales of this cotton were in the hands of the treasury agents, and were taken and used by the military forces in the works of defence around the city of Little Rock; that sixty bales, when taken out of the defences, were identified as belonging to the claimant; and with other cotton identified as belonging to other parties, and one hundred and seventeen sacks of loose cotton which came out of the fortifications and not identified, were shipped to the treasury agent at Cincinnati, sold, and the proceeds paid into the treasury. The claimant was proved to have given no active aid to the rebellion, except that on the approach of the Union army she fled south with thirty or forty of her slaves to avoid emancipation. This was in Septem-

Opinion of the court.

ber, 1863. Judgment was rendered against her on the 4th of April, 1870, and an appeal taken to this court.

Mr. R. M. Corwine, for the appellant; Mr. B. H. Bristow, contra; the argument being directed chiefly to the point of Mrs. Armstrong's loyalty, and as to how far her going south with her slaves to avoid the emancipation of them, was proof of want of it.

The CHIEF JUSTICE delivered the opinion of the court.

The "Abandoned and Captured Property Act" provides for the restoration of the proceeds of property on proof that the claimant has never given any aid or comfort to the present rebellion. The Court of Claims seem to have thought that going south with her slaves was evidence that she did give aid or comfort to the rebellion. On this point it is not now necessary that we express an opinion; for the President of the United States, on the 25th of December, 1868, issued a proclamation, reciting that "a universal amnesty and pardon for participation in said rebellion, extended to all who have borne any part therein, will tend to secure permanent peace, order, and prosperity throughout the land, and to renew and fully restore confidence and fraternal feeling among the whole people, and their respect for, and attachment to, the National government, designed by its patriotic founders for the general good;" and granting, "unconditionally, and without reservation, to all and every person who directly or indirectly participated in the late insurrection or rebellion, a full pardon and amnesty for the offence of treason against the United States, or of adhering to their enemies during the late civil war, with restoration of all rights, privileges, and immunities under the Constitution, and the laws which have been made in pursuance thereof."*

We have recently held, in the case of the *United States v. Klein*,† that pardon granted upon conditions, blots out the offence, if proof is made of compliance with the conditions;

* 15 Stat. at Large, 711.† *Supra*, p. 142.

Statement of the case.

and that the person so pardoned is entitled to the restoration of the proceeds of captured and abandoned property, if suit be brought within "two years after the suppression of the rebellion." The proclamation of the 25th of December granted pardon unconditionally and without reservation. This was a public act of which all courts of the United States are bound to take notice, and to which all courts are bound to give effect. The claim of the petitioner was preferred within two years. The Court of Claims, therefore, erred in not giving the petitioner the benefit of the proclamation.

Its judgment must be REVERSED, with directions to proceed

IN CONFORMITY WITH THIS OPINION.

[See the next case.]

PARGOUD v. UNITED STATES.

The President's proclamation of December 25th, 1868, granting pardon and amnesty unconditionally and without reservation to all who participated, directly or indirectly, in the late rebellion, relieves claimants of captured and abandoned property from proof of adhesion to the United States during the late civil war. It is unnecessary, therefore, in a claim in the Court of Claims, under that act, to prove such adhesion or personal pardon for taking part in the rebellion against the United States.

APPEAL from the Court of Claims.

Pargoud filed a claim in the court below to recover under the Abandoned and Captured Property Act, the proceeds of certain cotton. This act, as by reference to its provisions, on page 151, *supra*, will be seen, makes "proof that the claimant had never given aid or comfort to the late rebellion" a prerequisite to recovery. Pargoud's petition, however, averred no loyalty at all. On the contrary, it set forth in the first sentence of it "that he was guilty of participating in the rebellion against the United States," adding, however, "that he had been duly and legally pardoned for such participa-