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# RISE AND PROGRESS

OF THE

# BLOODY OUTBREAK

AT

# HARPER'S FERRY.

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"So incompatible are the two systems, that every new State makes its first political act a choice of the one, and an exclusion of the other, **EVEN AT THE COST OF CIVIL WAR**, if necessary.

"They who think that it is accidental, unnecessary, the work of interested or fanatical agitators, and therefore ephemerally, mistake the case altogether. It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become entirely a slaveholding nation or entirely a free labor nation."

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD'S Speech at Rochester.

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PUBLISHED BY DIRECTION OF THE  
NEW YORK DEMOCRATIC VIGILANT ASSOCIATION.

JOHN F. TROW, PRINTER, 879 BROADWAY.



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At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the New York Democratic Vigilant Association, held on the 18th inst., a committee was unanimously appointed, on motion of Mr. Royal Phelps, "to collect the details of the history of the affair at Harper's Ferry; and, if it prove that there be any connection between the conspirators and any political body at the North, that ——— sum of money be appropriated to disseminate the facts, and to make known to our Southern brethren our utter condemnation of the instigators of the movement."

In accordance with this resolution, the committee, consisting of Messrs. Watts Sherman, Royal Phelps and S. L. M. Barlow, submitted, at a meeting which was convened on the 25th inst., the following address to the people for consideration. It was unanimously resolved that it should be printed in pamphlet form, and in the newspapers, and extensively circulated, under the authority of the Democratic Vigilant Association, whose Executive Committee consists of the following gentlemen:—

WATTS SHERMAN,  
 JAMES LEE,  
 ALGERNON S. JARVIS,  
 B. M. WHITLOCK,  
 CHARLES A. LAMONT,  
 JOEL WOLFE,  
 SAMUEL L. M. BARLOW,  
 REUBEN WITHERS,  
 GEORGE J. FORREST,  
 N. W. CHATER,  
 ARTHUR LEARY,  
 GEORGE C. COLLINS,  
 JAMES OLWELL,  
 B. N. FOX,  
 JOHN MCKESSION,

ISAAC TOWNSEND,  
 THOMAS F. YOUNGS,  
 STEPHEN JOHNSON,  
 JOEL CONKLIN,  
 SCHUYLER LIVINGSTON,  
 J. T. SOUTTER,  
 BENJAMIN H. FIELD,  
 MOSES TAYLOR,  
 ROYAL PHELPS,  
 E. K. ALBURTIS,  
 WILLIAM T. COLEMAN,  
 JOHN T. AGNEW,  
 GEORGE GREER,  
 JOHN W. CULBERT,  
 HENRY YELVERTON.



## RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE HARPER'S FERRY REBELLION.

FELLOW-CITIZENS:—The community was thrown into consternation, on the 17th instant, by the appalling intelligence that a formidable outbreak, headed by Northern abolitionists, had broken out at Harper's Ferry, in Virginia, with the avowed object of arousing the colored population of the South to take up arms against their masters. It resulted in the sacrifice of valuable lives, and the destruction of private and public property; but it failed of success, and most of those who actively participated in it, were slain, or taken prisoners. Had the expectations of its leaders been fulfilled, a portion of the Southern States would now be under the scourge of a hideous uprising of brutality and ignorance against civilization, involving fearful deeds of blood, rapine and outrage, which it sickens the imagination to dwell upon.

Short-lived, and contracted in locality, as the Harper's Ferry rebellion was, such deep and enduring results, for good or evil, cannot fail to spring from it, that it is essential for every conservative citizen to understand its true import. We therefore request a careful perusal of the following outline of its history, and that every one who cherishes the peace and welfare of his country, will ponder over the truths it teaches, before voting at the coming



election. It will appear that Northern abolitionists have long contemplated a war of races ; that preparations for it have been slowly and deliberately made ; that the recent invasion of the South was not intended to be an isolated one ; that its active agents were supplied with money and arms from the Kansas Free Soil State fund, and by sympathizers in the North ; and that the documents exposing their rules of future action, are founded upon the principles laid down in the speech delivered by the Hon. William H. Seward, at Rochester, on the 25th of October, 1858. You will be called upon, on the 7th of November next, to signify by your vote, your approval or rejection of these pernicious principles ; and we ask you to reflect, before giving them your endorsement, upon the calamities which would flow from their adoption.

It has been discovered that a Central Association was organized, some time ago, which adopted the following, plan for the abolition of slavery. Among its founders were Mr. John Brown—known familiarly as “Ossawatimie” Brown—Mr. H. Kagi, Gerrit Smith, and many others, some of whom, as has been revealed, subsequently established subsidiary associations, in different towns and cities of the country:—

When a human being is set upon by a robber, ravisher, murderer or tyrant, of any kind, it is the duty of the bystanders to go to his or her rescue, *by force, if need be.*

In general, nothing will excuse men in the non-performance of this duty, except the pressure of higher duties, (if such there be,) inability to afford relief, or too great danger to themselves or others.

This duty being naturally inherent in human relations and necessities, governments and laws are of no authority in opposition to it. If they interpose themselves, they must be trampled under foot without ceremony, as we would trample under foot laws that should forbid us to rescue men from wild beasts or from burning buildings.

On this principle, *it is the duty of the non-slaveholders of this country, in their private capacity as individuals—without asking the permission or waiting the movements of the government—to go to the rescue of the slaves from the hands of their oppressors.*



This duty is so self-evident and natural a one, that he who pretends to doubt it should be regarded either as seeking to evade it, or as himself a servile and ignorant slave of corrupt institutions or customs.

*Holding these opinions, we propose to act upon them.* And we invite all other citizens of the United States to join us in the enterprise. To enable them to judge of its feasibility, we lay before them the following programme of measures, which, we think, ought to be adopted, and would be successful:—

1. The formation of associations, throughout the country, of all persons who are willing to pledge themselves publicly to favor the enterprise, and render assistance and support, of any kind, to it.

2. Establishing or sustaining papers to advocate the enterprise.

3. Refusing to vote for any person, for any civil or military office whatever, who is not publicly committed to the enterprise.

4. *Raising money and military equipments.*

5. *Forming and disciplining such military companies as may volunteer for actual service.*

6. *Detaching the non-slaveholders of the South from all alliance with the slaveholders, and inducing them to co-operate with us, by appeals to their safety, interest, honor, justice, and humanity.*

7. *Informing the slaves (by emissaries to be sent among them, or through the non-slaveholders of the South) of the plan of emancipation, that they may be prepared to co-operate at the proper time.*

8. To encourage emigration to the South of persons favoring the movement.

9. When the preceding preliminaries shall have sufficiently prepared the way, then to *land military forces (at numerous points at the same time) in the South, who shall raise the standard of freedom, and call to it the slaves, and such free persons as may be willing to join it.*

10. If emancipation shall be accomplished only by actual hostilities, then, as all the laws of war, of nature and of justice, will require that the emancipated slaves shall be compensated for their previous wrongs, *we avow it our purpose to make such compensation, so far as the property of the slaveholders and their abettors can compensate them.* And we avow our intention to make known this determination to the slaves beforehand, with a view to give them courage and self-respect, to nerve them to look boldly into the eyes of their tyrants, and to give them true ideas of the relations of justice existing between themselves and their oppressors.

11. To remain in the South, after emancipation, until we shall have established, or have seen established, such governments as will secure the future freedom of the persons emancipated.

And we anticipate that the public avowal of these measures, and our open and zealous preparation for them, will have the effect, within some reasonable time—we trust within a few years at farthest—to detach the government and the country at large from the interests of the slaveholders; to *destroy the security and value of slave property*; to annihilate the commercial



credit of the slave-holders, *and finally to accomplish the extinction of slavery.* We hope it may be without blood.

If it be objected that this scheme proposes war, we confess the fact. *It does propose war—private war, indeed—but, nevertheless war, if that should prove necessary.* And our answer to the objection is, that, in revolutions of this nature, it is necessary that private individuals should take the first steps. The tea must be thrown overboard, the Bastille must be torn down, the first gun must be fired, by private persons, before a new government can be organized, or the old one be forced (for nothing but danger to itself will force it) to adopt the measures which the insurgents have in view.

If the American governments, State or national, would abolish slavery, we would leave the work in their hands. But as they do not, and apparently will not, we propose to force them to do it, or to do it ourselves in defiance of them.

If any considerable number of the American people will join us, the work will be an easy and bloodless one; for slavery can live only in quiet, and in the sympathy or subjection of all around it.

We, the subscribers, residents of the town of — in the county of — in the State of — believing in the principles, and approving generally of the measures, set forth in the foregoing "Plan for the Abolition of Slavery," and in the accompanying address "To the Non-Slaveholders of the South," hereby unite ourselves in an association to be called the League of Freedom, in the town of —, for the purpose of aiding to carry said plan into effect. And we hereby severally declare it to be our sincere intention to co-operate with each other, and with all other associations within the United States, having the same purpose in view, and adopting the same platform of principles and measures.

Together with this general plan of association, the manner in which its members intended to carry out its objects, was drawn up for secret circulation among those whom it was hoped would lend it assistance in the South. It reads as follows :

OUR PLAN, THEN, IS—

1. To make war (openly or secretly, as circumstances may dictate) upon the property of the slaveholders and their abettors—not for its destruction, if that can easily be avoided, but to convert it to the use of the slaves. If it cannot be thus converted, then we advise its destruction. Teach the slaves to burn their masters' buildings, to kill their cattle and horses, to conceal or destroy farming utensils, to abandon labor in seed time and harvest, and let crops perish. Make slavery unprofitable, in this way, if it can be done in no other.

2. To make slaveholders objects of derision and contempt, by flogging them, whenever they shall be guilty of flogging their slaves.



3. To risk no general insurrection until we of the North go to your assistance, or you are sure of success without our aid.

4. To cultivate the friendship and confidence of the slaves, to consult with them as to their rights and interests, and the means of promoting them ; to show your interest in their welfare and your readiness to assist them ; let them know that they have your sympathy, and it will give them courage, self-respect and ambition, and make men of them—ininitely better men to live by, as neighbors and friends, than the indolent, arrogant, selfish, heartless, domineering robbers and tyrants who now keep both yourselves and the slaves in subjection, and look with contempt upon all who live by honest labor.

5. To change your political institutions as soon as possible ; and, in the mean time, give never a vote to a slaveholder ; pay no taxes to their government if you can either resist or evade them ; as witnesses and jurors, give no testimony and no verdicts in support of any slaveholding claims, perform no military, patrol or police service ; mob slaveholding courts, goals, and sheriffs ; do nothing, in short, for sustaining slavery, but every thing you safely and rightfully can, publicly and privately, for its overthrow.

### The document in question continues :

We are unwilling to take the responsibility of advising a general insurrection, or any taking of life, until we of the North go down to take part in it, in such numbers as to insure a certain and easy victory. We therefore advise that, for the present, operations be confined to the seizure of property, and the chastisement of individual slaveholders and their accomplices ; and that these things be done only so far as they can be done without too great danger to the actors.

We specially advise the flogging of individual slaveholders. This is the case where the medical principle, that like cures like, will certainly succeed. Give the slaveholders, then, a taste of their own whips. Spare their lives, but not their backs. The arrogance they have acquired by the use of the lash upon others, will be soon taken out of them when the same scourge shall be applied to themselves. A band of ten or twenty determined negroes, well armed, having their rendezvous in the forests, coming out upon the plantations by day or night, seizing individual slaveholders, stripping them, and flogging them soundly, in the presence of their own slaves, would soon abolish slavery over a large district.

These bands could also do a good work by kidnapping individual slaveholders, taking them into the forest, and holding them as hostages for the good behaviour of the whites remaining on the plantations ; compelling them also to execute deeds of emancipation, and conveyances of their property to their slaves. These contracts could probably never afterward be successfully disavowed on the ground of duress, (especially after new governments favorable to liberty should be established,) inasmuch as such contracts would be nothing more than justice ; and men may rightfully be coerced to do justice.



Such contracts would be intrinsically as valid as the treaties by which conquered nations make satisfaction for the injustice which caused the war.

The more bold and resolute slaves should be encouraged to form themselves into bands, build forts in the forests, and there collect arms, stores, horses, everything, that will enable them to sustain themselves, and carry on their warfare upon the slaveholders.

Another important measure, on the part of the slaves, will be to disarm their masters, so far as that is practicable, by seizing and concealing their weapons, whenever opportunity offers. They should also kill all slave hunting dogs, and the owners too, if that should prove necessary.

Whenever the slaves on a plantation are not powerful or courageous enough to resist, they should be encouraged to desert, in a body, temporarily, especially at harvest time, so as to cause the crops to perish for want of hands to gather them.

Many other ways will suggest themselves to you and the slaves, by which the slaveholders can be annoyed and injured, without causing any general outbreak or shedding of blood.

The following extracts from a letter from Mr. Gerritt Smith, make manifest that the conspirators fully comprehended the awful crimes and calamities—even to the extent of “fire, and rape, and slaughters”—that must result from the successful progress of their undertaking. Under date, “Peterboro, August 29, 1859,” Mr. Smith writes to Mr. John Thomas, of Syracuse, Chairman of the Jerry Rescuers, as follows :

\* \* \* Much is said and written against the breaking of human laws. But they are entitled to obedience, only so far as they are one with those Divine laws which cannot be broken. “The law of his God,” was Daniel’s only law. No friend of God knows any other law. Apostles answered and said : “We ought to obey God rather than men ;” so, too, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.” How senseless and wicked is this declamation against trampling under foot these human laws, that are no laws. \* \* \* The invasion of human rights by government can no more than such invasion by an individual, be law. The invaders, be they governments or individuals, are the rebels, and they who resist them are the law-abiding. \* \* \* It is, perhaps, too late to bring slavery to an end by peaceable means—too late to vote it down. For many years I have feared, and published my fears, that *it must go ou’ in blood*. My speech in Congress on the Nebraska bill was strongly marked with such fears. These fears have grown into belief. So debauched are the white people by slavery, that there is not virtue enough left in them to put it down. If I do not misinterpret the words and the looks of the most intelli-



gent and noble of the black men who fall in my way, they have come to despair of the accomplishment of this work by the white people. The feeling among the blacks that they must deliver themselves, gains strength with fearful rapidity. \* \* \* It will, in the end, be found to be as vain as it is inconsistent, to oppose the extension of slavery into the free States while upholding it in the Slave States. Governor Seward was right in saying that the States must ultimately all be secured to freedom or given up to slavery. \* \* \*

No wonder, then, is it that in this state of facts which I have sketched, intelligent black men in the States and Canada, should see no hope for their race in the practice and policy of white men. No wonder they are brought to the conclusion that no resource is left to them but in God and insurrections. For insurrections, then, we may look any year, any month, any day. A terrible remedy for a terrible wrong. But come it must, unless anticipated by repentance and the putting away of the terrible wrong.

It will be said that these insurrections will be failures; that they will be put down. Yes, but will not slavery, nevertheless, be put down by them; for what portions are there of the South that will cling to slavery after two or three considerable insurrections shall have filled the whole South with horror. And is it entirely certain that these insurrections will be put down promptly, and before they can have spread far? Will telegraphs and railroads be too swift for even the swiftest insurrections? Remember that telegraphs and railroads can be rendered useless in an hour. Remember, too, that many, who would be glad to face the insurgents, would be busy in transporting their wives and daughters to places where they would be safe from that worst fate which husbands and fathers can imagine for their wives and daughters. I admit that, but for this embarrassment, Southern men would laugh at the idea of an insurrection, and would quickly dispose of one. But trembling as they would for their beloved ones, I know of no part of the world where, so much as in the South, men would be like, in a formidable insurrection, to lose the most important time, and be distracted and panic stricken.

*When the day of her calamity shall have come to the South, and fire and rape and slaughters shall be filling up the measure of her affliction, then will the North have two reasons for remorse—*

First, That she was not willing (whatever the attitude of the South at this point) to share with her in the expense and loss of an immediate and universal emancipation.

Second, That she was not willing to vote slavery out of existence.

Vague rumors were in circulation, as early as July last, that an invasion of the South by Northern abolitionists was intended, and that insurrections of slaves were impending. They, unfortunately, received no credence, or the loss of life by the recent outbreak might have been prevented. The following is a copy of an anonymous



letter upon the subject, which was received by Governor Floyd in August :

“CINCINNATI, August 20, 1859.

“SIR—I have lately received information of a movement of so great importance that I feel it to be my duty to impart it to you without delay. I have discovered the existence of a secret association, having for its object the liberation of the slaves at the South by a general insurrection. The leader of the movement is old John Brown, late of Kansas. He has been in Canada during the winter, drilling the negroes there, and they are only waiting his word to start for the South to assist the slaves. They have one of their leading men, a white man, in an armory in Maryland; where it is situated I have not been able to learn. As soon as every thing is ready, those of their number who are in the Northern States and Canada are to come in small companies to their rendezvous, which is in the mountains in Virginia. They will pass down through Pennsylvania and Maryland, and enter Virginia at Harper’s Ferry. Brown left the North about three or four weeks ago, and will arm the negroes and strike the blow in a few weeks, so that whatever is done must be done at once. They have a large quantity of arms at their rendezvous, and are probably distributing them already. As I am not fully in their confidence, this is all the information I can give you. I dare not sign my name to this, but trust that you will not disregard the warning on that account.”

The papers and documents which were seized upon the persons of the Harper’s Ferry ringleaders, and the evidence given by prisoners taken by Colonel Lee, show, moreover, that the conspiracy was hatched over a year ago; that it had an extensive organization in various States, and that leading men of the North, East, and West were implicated in it. Letters written by a Mr. Forbes, of this city, prove that republican Senators of the United States, were made cognizant of the invasion intended, but concealed the secret within their own breasts, and refrained from divulging it to the public authorities. The names used by the parties engaged to designate the movement are in most instances fictitious. It is variously characterized in their correspondence, “mining operations,” “missionary work,” “stock operations,” and, by Gerritt Smith and others, “Kansas work.” Thus Mr. Smith writes :



PETERBORO', June 4, 1859.

CAPT. JOHN BROWN :—

MY DEAR FRIEND—I wrote you a week ago, directing my letter to the care of Mr. Kearney. He replied, informing me that he had forwarded it to Washington. But as Mr. Morton received last evening a letter from Mr. Sanborn, saying your address would be your son's home—viz: West Andover—I therefore write you without delay, and direct my letter to your son. I have done what I could thus far for Kansas, and what I could to keep you at your Kansas work. Losses by endorsement and otherwise, have brought me under heavy embarrassment the last two years. But I must nevertheless continue to do, in order to keep you at your Kansas work. I send you herewith my draft for two hundred dollars. Let me hear from you on the receipt of this letter. You live in our hearts, and our prayer to God is that you may have strength to continue in your Kansas work. My wife joins me in affectionate regard to you, dear John, whom we both hold in very high esteem. I suppose you put the Whitman note into Mr. Kearney's hands. It will be a great shame if Mr. Whitman does not pay it. What a noble man is Mr. Kearney; how liberally he has contributed to keep you in your Kansas work.

Your friend,

GERRIT SMITH.

The following letter, from a son of Ossawatimie Brown, makes it appear that the Hon Joshua R. Giddings was among the accessories before the fact of the invasion :

WEST ANDOVER, ASHTABULA COUNTY, OHIO, }  
Saturday, Oct. 1, 1859. }

FRIEND HENRIE :—Since I received Isaac's and yours of Sept. 20, I have been making every effort to raise stock, and am succeeding well. Yesterday I sent a draft of \$15 to J. M. B., of Chatham, with which to get on another hand. Shall soon have enough to send again. Yesterday I returned from a trip to Jefferson and Ashtabula, where I met with some success. Our old friend J. R. G. took stock to the amount of \$300, and as he was just starting for Ravenna, said he would form an association there. Monday next I shall start for Cleveland. Hope to find a letter from you at Mrs. Sturtevant's. You may depend upon it I have been, and am yet "straining every nerve" in furtherance of our cause. (Two phonographic characters which might be made to read Parker Pillsbury) is here, and actually working in behalf of the mining operation.

You will have me with you just as soon as I am satisfied I can do more and be of more use there than where I am.

Nothing new of special interest. All well. In haste. Yours,

JOHN SMITH.

A conversation has been published between Mr. Vallandigham and Brown, since he was taken prisoner, which confirms the testimony in the above letter with regard to



the knowledge of the conspiracy of this Nestor of the black republican party in Congress.

Mr. VALLANDIGHAM—Did you see any thing of Joshua R. Giddings?

Mr. BROWN—I did meet him.

Mr. VALLANDIGHAM—Did you converse with him?

Mr. BROWN—I did. I would not tell you, of course, any thing that would implicate Mr. Giddings: but I certainly met with him, and had conversations with him.

Mr. VALLANDIGHAM—About that rescue case?

Mr. BROWN—Yes, I did; I heard him express his opinions upon it very freely and frankly.

Mr. VALLANDIGHAM—Justifying it?

Mr. BROWN—Yes, sir; I do not compromise him, certainly, in saying that.

Mr. VALLANDIGHAM—Will you answer this: Did you talk with Giddings about your expedition here?

Mr. BROWN—No, I won't answer that, because a denial of it I would not make, and to make any affirmation of it I should be a great dunce.

Mr. VALLANDIGHAM—Have you had any correspondence with parties at the North on the subject of this movement?

Mr. BROWN—I have had correspondence.

Persons in New York, New Hampshire, Ohio, Missouri, Canada, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Michigan are known, by documentary evidence, to have lent aid to the movement, and the prisoners testify that the Kansas aid fund paid for the vast amount of ammunition and firearms with which they were supplied. The conspirators had power to appoint officers of various grades, and were governed by a regular constitution and laws. The following is a copy of one of the commissions issued by Mr. John Brown, previous to the rebellion:

HEADQUARTERS WAR DEPARTMENT, }  
NEAR HARPER'S FERRY. }

Whereas, Jere G. Anderson has been nominated a Captain in the Army, established under the "provisional Constitution,"

Now, therefore, in pursuance of the authority vested in us by said Constitution, we do hereby appoint and commission the said Jere G. Anderson a Captain.

Given at the office of the Secretary of War, this day, Oct. 15, 1859.

JOHN BROWN, Commander in Chief.

H. KAGI, Secretary of War.



Mr. Brown made his first appearance in Harper's Ferry more than a year ago, accompanied by his two sons, all three of them assuming the name of Smith. He made inquiries about land in the vicinity, and, after a short sojourn, disappeared. He returned again, in July last, and hired a residence, in the midst of a thickly settled neighborhood, five miles and a half from the town, commonly known as Kennedy's farm. He resided there with four other men, who were subsequently joined by others. They had no settled business, but were in the constant receipt of large numbers of boxes by railroad, which have since been proved to have contained Minie rifles, percussion caps, stores and ammunition of all kinds, field spy-glasses, picks and shovels for throwing up temporary fortifications, boatswain's whistles and other materials of war. The rifles were furnished by the Massachusetts Aid Society. Fifteen hundred poles, pointed with sharp iron bowie knives, were provided for the use of the negroes. Blankets, boots, shoes, clothes and tents, were also received in large quantities.

There seems to have been an abundance of pecuniary means. The white prisoners have testified that they were "to be well paid for their time and trouble," and a negro from Gettysburgh was offered twenty dollars a month to join the insurgents. He refused; and but one slave, a man named Gains, is said to have taken a voluntary part in the conspiracy. The party finally consisted of twenty-two men, seventeen of whom were whites, and but five colored. They paid in cash for every thing they wanted, and professed to pass the greater part of their time in hunting. In reality, they were preparing the minds of slaves, in the neighborhood, for a revolt, and finally imagined, probably, that they had succeeded in alienating their affections from their masters and securing their co-operation.



On Sunday, the 16th of October, the whole of the twenty-two men marched stealthily into Harper's Ferry, seized upon the government armory, and made two wealthy slave-owners—Colonel Washington and Mr. Alstadt—as well as several other citizens, prisoners, and held them as hostages. The bridge across the Potomac was taken possession of and guarded, and a guard was also placed at all the avenues. The inhabitants of the town found themselves, in the morning, the prisoners of twenty-two men, aided by some slaves whom the conspirators had forced during the night to join them. A colored railroad porter, named Hayward, was killed for refusing to aid the movement.

As day advanced, the news spread, and people came into the Ferry. The first demonstrations of resistance were made against the insurrectionists, and, after slaughtering another unoffending citizen of a neighboring town, named Joseph Barley, and shooting the Mayor of the town, Mr. Fountain Beckham, who was unarmed, they withdrew into the armory. Immediately afterwards, they shot dead Mr. Samuel P. Young, a graduate of West Point, and greatly respected for his high character and noble qualities. At about noon of Monday, however, militia from Charlestown, Shepherdstown, and Martinsburg, arrived, and, in the course of the afternoon, drove the rebels into the engine-house of the Armory buildings, killing several of their number. When night set in, operations ceased, but guards were placed around the armory to prevent escapes.

The Monday night train from Baltimore, brought marines and military, under the command of Colonel Lee, of the United States Army, who had been deputized by the War Department to put an end to the outbreak. His own communication is nearly all that is necessary to



complete that portion of our narrative which has become known in greater detail through the newspaper press.

HARPER'S FERRY, Oct. 13, 1859.

TO THE HON. SECRETARY OF WAR—

I have the honor to report that at seven, A. M., I summoned the rioters that had taken refuge in the Armory building to surrender, promising to hold them in security till the pleasure of the President of the United States was known. The summons was presented by Lieut. Stewart, First cavalry, and declined. A strong party, under command of Lieut. Green, of the marines, had been previously posted near the building, and at a concerted signal, broke down the door and captured the party.

Two of the marines were wounded, one mortally I fear, the other slightly. Two of the rioters were killed and two wounded, Ossawatomie Brown, the leader of the party, mortally. One prisoner, and five negroes, said to be slaves, and freed from their home; Mr. Lewis Washington; Mr. Dangerfield, Paymaster's Clerk; Mr. Ball, Master Machinist; Mr. Mills, Master Armorer; Dr. Murphy, Paymaster; Mr. Kiltymeiller, Superintendent's Clerk; Mr. Donohue, a railroad clerk, captured by the rioters and held as prisoners, were released unhurt. It was the safety of these gentlemen that made me endeavor to get the rioters to surrender. I await your instructions.

Very respectfully,

R. LEE, Colonel Commandant.

Of the original party of twenty-two insurgents, fifteen were killed and two mortally wounded. Two remained unhurt, and three escaped during the night of Monday. The purpose of the invaders was entirely foiled. They had expected to be joined at once by several thousand slaves, while, in truth, they were as little sympathized with by the negroes as by their masters. The wild fanaticism of abolitionism, which has convulsed the Union in different shapes, for so many years, seems to have been the only actuating motive of these misguided, guilty tools, of more subtle and dangerous men. That they neither needed nor sought for plunder, is proved by their having left untouched the large sum which had been deposited, a day before, in the Paymaster's office. To a correspondent of the New York *Times* Brown stated, after he was captured, that "he had only intended to make



the first demonstration at Harper's Ferry, when he expected to receive a rapid increase of allies from abolitionists, sufficient to take possession of both the States of Maryland and Virginia, with all of the negroes they could capture." He said he had "purposed a general South-west course through Virginia, varying as circumstances dictated or required."

The Harper's Ferry rebellion is ended. Most of those who participated in it actively are dead, and the remainder will probably suffer the penalty, which the laws impose, for murder and treason. Perhaps a few, who have been accessories before the fact, of the crimes perpetrated, may also be punished; but those who have sown the seed of evil in the hearts of these fanatics, can only be reached by the voice of the people, raised in condemnation of incendiary doctrines which have produced such deplorable results. The principle upon which John Brown and his allies acted, is the same which has been proclaimed by nearly all the leaders of the Republican party, and which inspired the Hon. William H. Seward to utter the following words:—

Our country is a theatre which exhibits in full operation, two radically different political systems—the one resting on the basis of servile or slave labor; the other on the basis of voluntary labor of freemen. The laborers who are enslaved are all negroes, or persons more or less purely of African derivation. But this is only accidental. The principle of the system is, that labor, in every society, by whomsoever performed, is necessarily unintellectual, grovelling and base, and that the laborer, equally for his own good and for the welfare of the State, ought to be enslaved. The white laboring man, whether native or foreigner, is not enslaved, only because he cannot, as yet, be reduced to bondage. \* \* \* \* \*

The slave system is not only intolerant, unjust, and inhuman towards the laborer, whom, only because he is a laborer, it loads down with chains, and converts into merchandise, but scarcely less so to the freeman, to whom, only because he is a laborer from necessity, it denies facilities for employment, and whom it expels from the community because it cannot enslave and convert into merchandise also. \* \* \* \* \*



The slave system is one of constant danger, distrust, suspicion and watchfulness. It debases those whose toil alone can produce wealth and resources for defence, to the lowest degree of which human nature is capable, to guard against mutiny and insurrection, and thus wastes energies which otherwise might be employed in national development and aggrandizement. \* \*

The two systems are at once perceived to be incongruous. But they are more than incongruous—they are incompatible. They have never existed permanently together in one country, and they never can. \* \*

Indeed, so incompatible are the two systems, that every new State which is organized within our ever extending domain, makes its first political act a choice of the one, and an exclusion of the other, even at the cost of civil war, if necessary. The slave States, without law, at the last national election, forbade, within their own limits, even the casting of votes for a candidate for President of the United States, supposed to be favorable to the establishment of the free labor system in the new States. \* \* \* \*

Thus these antagonistic systems are continually coming into closer contact, and collision results. Shall I tell you what this collision means? They who think that it is accidental, unnecessary, the work of interested or fanatical agitators, and therefore ephemeral, mistake the case altogether. It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become entirely a slaveholding nation, or entirely a free labor nation. Either the cotton and rice fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately be tilled with free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts for legitimate merchandize alone, or else the rye fields and wheat fields of Massachusetts and New York, must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves, and Boston and New York become, once more, markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men.

Carefully examine the signification of these portentous sentences. Compare them thoughtfully with the plan of organization for the abolition of slavery upon our previous pages, and you cannot fail to see clearly that John Brown has only practised what William H. Seward preaches. A recent orator spoke upon this point as follows :

Is it true, do you think, that that insurrection was occasioned by the principles enunciated by Wm. H. Seward? What can be a more natural consequence from an adequate cause than that dreadful and atrocious effect? If I should here declare that, after having left this stand, I would march to the other side of the river this evening, and would enter my friend and neighbor's house, and sack it, and destroy it, and murder its inmates, and apply to it the torch; and if in the morning papers you should learn that such events



have occurred, would you say that those events were not the natural sequence of my announcement here that they would occur? No. You would hold me accountable for the acts, and properly, too: and so would any court of law or any jury of twelve men in all the land. And so, when you heard the proclamation at Rochester of the great captain of this irrepressible conflict (already developed in insurrection) that it must go on—that it must go on until the whole country shall become either wholly slave or wholly free, and when you see upon the heels of that announcement—insurrection, bloodshed—a whole village placed under martial law, and men murdered in the streets, twelve honest jurors taken from the body of the country would pronounce all these events—the insurrection—the bloodshed and martial law—the natural sequence and effect of the principle announced by the very Vetrivius of this unparalleled atrocity. Now, fellow-citizens, although our republican friends disclaim the act, they approve the treason; although they denounce the traitor, they approve the treason. They proclaim that Ossawatomie Brown is no friend of theirs—he belongs not to their communion—but yet one of their principal organs in the city of New York, upon the arrival of the news that Ossawatomie Brown had perpetrated the outrage, virtually proposed its justification, when seeking its excuse in the charge, that the democratic party had perpetrated similar outrages in Kansas, and that this was but their natural requital.

The black republican press of the country, in fact, either openly justifies or lukewarmly condemns the frauds, atrocities, and murders connected with the Harper's Ferry invasion. The New York *Independent* defends, as follows, the principles upon which John Brown acted:

That the slaves of the South, whenever they shall have the intelligence to plan, and the skill and strength and courage to achieve, a revolution for their own emancipation, would be justified in this, no Virginian can deny who respects the memory of Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry, or the broad seal of his own State. Deprived of those "inalienable rights" to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," with which "all men are endowed by the Creator," subjected to every cruelty of oppression, would it be strange if some bold, earnest spirit among them should catch the lingering echo of Patrick Henry's voice, crying, "Give me liberty, or give me death!" and should teach Virginia the meaning of her own motto, *Sic semper tyrannis?* The slaves of the South have the same right to assert their freedom against their masters, whenever their strength and resources shall give them a reasonable hope of success, which the Greeks had to assert their liberties against Turkey, or the Italians now have against Austria. The American who would deny this had better first burn the Declaration of Independence. If ever that day shall come, as come it will whenever the Union is dissolved, woe to the cherished institutions and the boasted power of the South.



The New York *Tribune* thus expresses its sympathy for those who were engaged in the movement :

There will be enough to heap execration on the memory of these mistaken men. We leave this work to the fit hands and tongues of those who regard the fundamental axioms of the Declaration of Independence as "glittering generalities." Believing that the way to universal emancipation lies not through insurrection, civil war and bloodshed, but through peace, discussion, and the quiet diffusion of sentiments of humanity and justice, we deeply regret this outbreak ; but, remembering that, if their fault was grievous, grievously have they answered it, we will not, by one reproachful word, disturb the bloody shrouds wherein John Brown and his compatriots are sleeping. They dared and died for what they felt to be the right, though in a manner which seems to us fatally wrong. *Let their epitaphs remain unwritten until the not distant day, when no slave shall clank his chains in the shades of Monticello or by the groves of Mount Vernon.*

The New York *Evening Post* casts the blame of the Northern raids upon Southern territory on the slaveholders themselves. It says :

In nearly all the Southern States, the negroes greatly preponderate in number ; many of them, it is true, are too ignorant and stupid to take any effective part in an insurrection ; others, too, are profoundly attached to their masters or their families ; but, these excepted, there are yet thousands able and willing to strike for their emancipation. It has been impossible to keep them in entire ignorance of the blessings of freedom, and of the possibility of obtaining it by force of arms. The fugitive slaves of the North have found means of communicating with their old comrades ; the abolitionists have spoken to them by pictures, if not by language ; Democratic orators have told them falsely that the entire North was engaged in a crusade against the South for the sake of the slaves ; and, as servants in the cities, they have heard the talk of the parlor and the barrooms, and, in innumerable other ways, have been made to think and to desire. When the hour comes, therefore, they will not be found either so incapable or so docile as the slaveholders seem to suppose.

But what a condition of society is that in which one-half the population constantly menaces the other half with civil war and murder—in which the leading classes go to sleep every night, carelessly, it may be, over the crater of a volcano, and in which the dangers do not lessen, as in other societies, with time, but grow with its growth, until an explosion becomes as inevitable as the eruptions of Etna or Vesuvius ! What a condition of society, to be extended over the virgin territories of the West—the seat of our future empire—and for which politicians should clamor and sear their conscience, and desperadoes should fight.



The Albany *Evening Journal* considers such outbreaks "inevitable," and adds: "If a man builds his house over a volcano, it is not those who warn him of his danger that are to blame for its eruptions."

Thus are respectable and otherwise estimable journals, blinded by political partizanship to the enormity of crimes, which, under ordinary circumstances, they would be the most zealous to denounce. It is this melancholy spectacle which has made it our duty to lay before you an unvarnished statement of facts, which otherwise might not be correctly presented to you. We have displayed to you an abyss, in which, without your aid, not only the prosperity, but the very existence of this Union may be engulfed. The wild record you have read of an association whose ramifications extend throughout the Northern States, to blot out slavery by means of civil and servile war, is not drawn from imagination—it is a terrible historical reality. It is for you to decide whether you will sanction the overthrow of the federal government, or whether you will aid in saving it by your suffrages.

Fellow-citizens, we implore you to reflect, before casting your votes at the coming State election, whether you will act patriotically, wisely, for the interests of your wives, children, sisters, and of posterity, in aiding to elevate to power candidates for office who are either directly or indirectly pledged to the support of the doctrine that there is an "irrepressible conflict" between the North and the South, and that "slavery must go out in fire, rape, and slaughters." And, remember, that the endorsement of such disunion theories by the State of New York, may possibly elevate some individual to the Presidency, the principles of whose administration would forbid the suppression of outrages similar to those which have taken place at Harper's Ferry, and by whose misrule the future well-being of this now happy country might be destroyed.







