LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 521
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

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FOREWORD.

John Brown's life is a grand, simple epic that should inspire one to heroism. No one asks for dates and minute details on hearing the life of Jesus or Socrates. There are men who have proved their superiority to the pettiness of life, and who seem almost divine. John Brown is one of them. I think he was almost our greatest American. I know that he was the greatest man the common people of America have yet produced.

He did not become a President, a financier, a great scientist or artist; he was a plain and rather obscure farmer until his death. That is his greatness. He had no great offices, no recognition or applause of multitudes to spur him on, to feed his vanity and self-righteousness. He did his duty in silence; he was an outlaw. Only after he had been hung like a common murderer, and only after the Civil War had come to fulfill his prophecies, was he recognized as a great figure.

But in his life he was a common man to the end, a hard-working, honest, Puritan farmer with a large family, a man worried with the details of poverty, and obscure as ourselves. Now we are taught as school-children that only those who become Presidents and captains of finance are the successful ones in our democracy. John Brown proved that there is another form of success, within the reach of everyone, and that is to devote one's life to a great and pure cause.

John Brown was hung as an outlaw; but he was a success, as Jesus and Socrates were suc-

cesses. Some day school-children will be taught that his had been the only sort of success worth striving for in his time. The rest was dross; the personal success of the beetle that rolls itself a huger ball of dung than its fellow-beetles, and exults over it.

John Brown is a legend; but I still see him in the simple, obscure heroes who fight for freedom today in America. That is why I am telling his story. It is the story of thousands of men living in America now, did we but know it. John Brown is still in prison in America; yes, and he has been hung and shot down a hundred times since his first death. For his soul is marching on; it is the soul of liberty and justice, which cannot die, or be suppressed.

LIFE OF JOHN BROWN

WHEN SLAVERY WAS RESPECTABLE

To understand any of the outstanding men of history one must also understand something of their background. The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius persecuted and burned the primitive Christians; yet he is accounted one of the most religious and humane of historical figures, and his Meditations are commonly considered a book of the gentlest and wisest counsel toward the good life.

You cannot understand this paradox unless you know the history of the Roman state. And you cannot understand John Brown unless you understand the history of his times.

John Brown, until the age of fifty, had lived the peaceful, laborious life of a Yankee farmer with a large family. He hated war, and was almost a Quaker; had never handled fire-arms, and was a man of deep and silent affections. He was deeply religious, read the Bible daily; Christianity imbued all the acts of his daily existence.

This man, nearing his sixtieth year, assembled a group of young men with rifles and took the field to wage guerrilla war on slavery. He became a warrior, an outlaw. What drove him to this desperate stand?

I think the answer is: Respectability. There is nothing more maddening to a man of deep moral feeling than to find that slavery has become respectable, while freedom is considered the mad dream of a fanatic.

The slavery of black men had become the most respectable institution in America in John Brown's time. It had had a dark and bloody history of a hundred years in which to become firmly rooted into American life.

There had been slavery in Europe for centuries before the discovery of America—but it was white slavery. Each feudal baron owned hordes of serfs—white farmers—who were as much a part of his land-holdings as his castles, horses and ploughs.

With the invention of printing, gunpowder and machine production the system of feudalism declined. The French Revolution helped deal it a death blow. The last country where this ancient slavery of white men was not dead was in Russia; but African slavery, the slavery of Negroes, who were heathens, and therefore could morally be bought and sold by Christians, had been reintroduced on the northern coast of the Mediterranean by Moorish traders. In the year 990 these Moors from the Barbary Coast first reached the cities of Nigrita, and established an uninterrupted exchange of Saracen and European luxuries for black slaves.

Columbus tried to introduce Indian slavery into Europe but the church forbade it, for Indians were accounted Christians when converted. The unhappy Negroes were not considered convertible; their slavery was sanctified by the church. And for the next few centuries the African slave-trade was the most lucrative traffic pursued by mankind. Black slaves were to be found in the whole vast area of Spanish and Portuguese America, also in Dutch and French Guinea and the West Indies. It was black men who cleared the jungles, tilled the fields, built the cities and roads and laid down, in their sweat and blood, the foundations of civilization in the New World. Great

jealous and prosperous monopolies were formed in this traffic of slaves; and its profits were greedily shared by philosophers, statesmen and kings.

In 1776, the American colonies were inhabited by two and a half million white persons, who owned half a million slaves. Many of the most rational and humane leaders of the Revolution saw the inconsistency of slave-holders making a revolution in the name of freedom. There was some early agitation against slavery, but the humanitarians were in a minority. Even then slavery had become respectable and profitable. It would have been easy and cheap to have freed the slaves then. It would have been the most practicable thing the young nation could have done. Not a life would have been lost; and the development of the country might have been even more rapid. But it was not done; such acts need more far-sightedness than the average man possesses.

Slavery grew by leaps and bounds, as the country was growing.

The slave trader, shrewd, intelligent and rich, kidnapped young men and women in Africa and did a huge business. His markets became the feature of every Southern town. The planters lolled at their ease, and devised ways and means of forcing their slaves to breed more rapidly. The slaves were treated as impersonally as animals. Mothers were sold away from their children, and husbands from their wives. Generations of black men died in bondage, and left their children only the sad inheritance of slavery.

The South developed an aristocrat class of indolent white men and women who looked down on all work as ignominious, and who used their minds, not in the arts or sciences, but to find new moral justifications for slavery.

Slavery was respectable. "It is an act of philanthropy to keep the Negro here, as we keep our children in subjection for their own good," said a Southern statesman. Slavery was moral. Even most of the respectability of the North enlisted in its defense. In 1826, Edward Everett, the great Massachusetts statesman, said in Congress that slavery was sanctioned by religion and by the United States Constitution.

The churches of almost every denomination were solidly behind slavery. The Supreme Court ruled that it was constitutional. A pro-slavery President occupied the White House, and Senator Sumner, a lonely abolitionist, was beaten down with a loaded cane on the senate floor because he dared say a brave word against the nation's crime.

In 1838 William Lloyd Garrison founded the Liberator, first of the abolitionist journals. He said that "the constitution is a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell," and he fought slavery with all his power. "Our country is the world, our countrymen all mankind," was the slogan of his journal. Garrison was beaten by a mob in a northern city for his courage; and other abolitionists were tarred and feathered, lynched, and attacked by mobs of respectable northern merchants and churchgoers, much as pacifists were beaten by mobs during the late war.

Slavery was respectable. Negro field hands sold for $1,000 each, and innocent black babies were worth $100 each to the white master as they suckled at a Negro mother's breast.

To attack slavery was to attack the constitution, the church, the government, and the institution of private property. To attack respectability has always been the crime of the saviours, and respectability is the cross on which they are forever hung.

HOW JOHN BROWN BECAME AN ABOLITIONIST

In the pagan ages and in the more distant days of savagery, men were individuals. They had no social imagination. They could stand by and see another man writhe in tortures, and laugh at him. Civilization has been developing social imagination; it has been breeding more and more the type of human being who feels the suffering and injustice of another as his own.

John Brown was perhaps born with this strain in him. In 1857, when he had already plunged into his life-work, and was in the thick of bloody fights in Kansas, he sat down to write a most charming and tender letter to a little boy who was the son of one of his friends in the east. Those who think of fighters like John Brown as possessed by only a lust for battle, ought to read this letter. It reveals how soft was his heart under the grim mask of the Kansas warrior.

The letter is autobiographical. It tells how John Brown first became acquainted with the horrors of slavery, and what effect it had on his imagination.

This letter is so touching, and so remarkable for the picture it gives of John Brown's early years, also for the picture of the man's mature character as revealed by his own words, that I am tempted to give it in full. I shall give only parts of it, however.

THE LETTER TO MASTER HENRY L. STEARNS

"My dear Young Friend:—I had not forgotten my promise to write you; but my constant care and anxiety have obliged me to put it off a

long time. I do not flatter myself I can write anything that will very much interest you; but have concluded to send you a short story of a certain boy of my acquaintance; and for convenience and shortness of name, I will call him John.

"This story will be mainly a narration of follies and errors, which I hope you may avoid; but there is one thing connected with it, which will be calculated to encourage any young person to persevering effort, and that is the degree of success in accomplishing his objects which to a great extent marked the course of this boy throughout my entire acquaintance with him; notwithstanding his moderate capacity, and still more moderate acquirements.

"John was born May 9, 1800, at Torrington, Connecticut; of poor and hard-working parents; a descendant on the side of his father of one of the company of the Mayflower who landed at Plymouth, 1620. His mother was descended from a man who came at an early period to New England from Amsterdam, in Holland. Both his father's and his mother's fathers served in the war of the revolution; his father's father died in a barn at New York while in the service, in 1776.

"I cannot tell you of anything in the first four years of John's life worth mentioning save that at an early age he was tempted by three large brass pins belonging to a girl who lived in the family; and stole them. In this he was detected by his mother; and after having a full day to think of the wrong, received from her a thorough whipping.

"When he was five years old his father moved to Ohio, then a wilderness filled with wild beasts and Indians. During the long journey which was performed in part or mostly with an ox-team, he was called on by turns to assist

a boy five years older, and learned to think he could accomplish smart things in driving the cows and riding the horses. Sometimes he met with rattlesnakes which were very large, and which some of the company generally managed to kill.

"After getting to Ohio he was for some time rather afraid of the Indians, and of their rifles; but this soon wore off, and he used to hang about them quite as much as was consistent with good manners, and learned a trifle of their talk. His father at this time learned to dress deer skin, and John, who was perhaps rather observing, ever after remembered the entire process of deer skin dressing, so that he could at any time dress his own leather such as squirrel, raccoon, cat, wolf or dog skins; and also he learned to make whip lashes, which brought him in some change at various times, and was useful in many ways.

"At six years old John began to be quite a rambler in the new wild country, finding birds and squirrels, and sometimes a wild turkey's nest. Once a poor Indian boy gave him a yellow marble, the first he had ever seen. This he thought a good deal of, and kept it a good while; but at last he lost it one day. It took years to heal the wound, and I think he cried at times about it. About five months after this he caught a young squirrel, tearing off its tail in doing it; and getting severely bitten at the same time himself. He however held on to the little bob-tailed squirrel and finally got him perfectly tamed, so that he almost idolized his pet. This, too, he lost, by its wandering away; and for a year or two John was in mourning; and looking at all the squirrels he could see to try and discover Bobtail, if possible. He had also at one time become the owner of a little ewe lamb which did finely until it was about two-thirds grown, when it

sickened and died. This brought another protracted mourning season; not that he felt the pecuniary loss so heavily, for that was never his disposition; but so strong and earnest were his attachments. It was a school of adversity for John; you may laugh at all this, but they were sore trials to him.

"John was never quarrelsome; but was excessively fond of the roughest and hardest kind of play; and could never get enough of it. He would always choose to stay at home and work hard, rather than go to school. To be sent off alone through the wilderness to very considerable distances was particularly his delight; and in this he was often indulged; so that by the time he was twelve years old he was sent off more than a hundred miles with companies of cattle; and he would have thought his character much injured had he been obliged to be helped in such a job. This was a boyish feeling, but characteristic, nevertheless.

"When the war broke out with England in 1812 his father soon commenced furnishing the troops with beef cattle, the collection and driving of which afforded John some opportunity for the chase, on foot, of wild steers and other cattle through the woods. During this war he had some chance to form his own boyish judgment of men and measures; and the effect of what he saw was to so far disgust him with military affairs that he would neither train nor drill, but got off by paying fines; and got along like a Quaker until his age had finally cleared him of military duty.

"During the war with England a circumstance occured that in the end made him a most determined Abolitionist and led him to swear eternal war with slavery. John was stopping for a short time with a very gentlemanly landlord, since made a United States Marshal. This

man owned a slave boy near John's age, a boy very active, intelligent and full of good feeling to whom John was under considerable obligation for numerous little acts of kindness.

"The Master made a great pet of John; brought him to table with his finest company and friends and called their attention to every little smart thing he said or did, and to the fact of his being more than a hundred miles from home with a company of cattle alone; while the Negro boy (who was fully if not more than his equal) was badly clothed, poorly fed and lodged in cold weather, and beaten before John's eyes with iron shovels or any other thing that came first to hand.

"This brought John to reflect on the wretched, hopeless condition of fatherless and motherless slave children; for such children have neither fathers or mothers to protect and provide for them.

"He sometimes would raise the question in his mind: Is God, then, their father?"

HOW JOHN BROWN EDUCATED HIMSELF

There are other matters treated in this long and charming letter, written by an outlaw 57 years old, to a boy of twelve. One detail that is important is the analysis of his own character. John Brown says his father early made him a sort of foreman in his tanning establishment, and that though he got on in the most friendly way with everyone, "the habit so early formed of being obeyed rendered him in after life too much disposed to speak in an imperious or dictating way." John Brown was ever humble, and severely chastised his own faults, but

this habit of being a leader served him in good stead, and made him the born captain of forlorn hopes he later became.

Another detail that interests us is his account of his early reading. Working-class Americans, and they are the majority of the nation, do not go to the high schools and universities. Neither did John Brown. But they can read history, as he did at ten years, and they can study and make themselves proficient in some field, as he made a surveyor of himself by home study. He also read passionately, he says, the lives of great, good and wise men; their sayings and writings; the school of biography that seems to have nurtured so many great men. John Brown never went to school after his childhood; but he became an expert surveyor, he learned the fine points of cattle breeding and tanning, he was a student of astronomy, he knew the Bible almost by heart, he studied military tactics later in life, he was familiar with the lives and times of most of the great leaders of mankind, and best of all, he knew how to stir men to great deeds, and lead them in the battle.

Great men do not need to own a college diploma; they teach themselves, they are taught by Life.

How meaningless college degrees would sound if attached after the names of Brutus, Pericles, Socrates, Caius Gracchus, Buddha, Jesus, Wat Tyler, Jefferson, Danton, William Lloyd Garrison!

As for instance: Jesus Christ, D.D.; Robert Burns, M.A.; Victor Hugo, B.S.; John Brown, Ph.D.! How superfluous the titles of man's universities, when Life has crowned the student with real and greener laurels! Yes, there are many things not taught in the colleges!

THE MOULDING OF JOHN BROWN

And so by his own pen, we have had illuminated for us the life of John Brown up to his twentieth year. We see him, a big, strong boy, fond of hard work, capable in all he put his hand to, a young man bred in the hard college of life in an early pioneer settlement. He was fond of reading good books, and improving his mind; he was rather shy, and yet filled with an extraordinary self-confidence, which made him a born leader, one who could show the way to men older than himself, and command them, and himself, in the straight line of duty.

The subsequent life of John Brown cannot be understood unless one knows all the environmental forces and the heredity that went to mould him. John Brown, a Puritan in the austerity of his manner of living, the narrow yet burning reality of his vision, and the hardships he later underwent, came of a family of American pioneers. To John Brown life from the outset meant incessant strife, first against unconquered nature, then in the struggle for a living, and finally in that effort to be a Samson to the pro-slavery Philistines in which his existence culminated.

At twenty John Brown married Dianthe Lusk, a plain but quiet and amiable girl, as deeply religious as her young husband, and as ready as he to assume all the serious burdens of life.

He was working in his father's tanning establishment at this time, at Hudson, Ohio. But in May, 1825, John Brown moved his family to Richmond, near Meadville, Pennsylvania, the first of his many moves for he was imbued with a deep restlessness, the hunger of the pioneer for virgin lands and new enterprises.

Here, with his characteristic energy, he cleared twenty-five acres of timber land, built

a fine tannery, sunk vats, and in a few months had leather tanning in all of them. Like his father, Owen Brown, John was of a marked ethical and social nature. He proved of great value to the new settlement at Richmond by his devotion to the cause of religion and civil order. He surveyed new roads, was instrumental in building school houses, procuring preachers, "and encouraging anything that would have a moral tendency." It became almost a proverb in Richmond, so an early neighbor records, to say of a progressive man that he was "as enterprising and honest as John Brown, and as useful to the county."

In Richmond the family dwelt for ten years. John Brown raised corn, did his tanning, brought the first blooded stock into the county, and became the first postmaster. Here, also, at Richmond, the first great grief came into John Brown's life, to school him in that stoicism that later made him the hero of a great cause. A four year old son died in 1831, and the next year his wife, Dianthe, died after having lived and worked beside him like a good, faithful woman for twelve years, giving birth to seven children in that time, five of whom grew to vigorous manhood and womanhood.

Nearly a year later John Brown was married for the second time, to Mary Anne Day, daughter of a blacksmith. She was then a large, silent girl of sixteen, who had come to John Brown's home with an older sister to care for his children after his wife's death. He quickly grew fond of the young pioneer girl; one day he gave her a letter offering marriage. She was so overcome that she dared not read it. Next morning she found courage to do so, and when she went down to the spring for water for the house, he followed her and she gave him her answer there.

Mary Brown was the best wife a John Brown

could have found. She had great physical ruggedness, and she bore for her husband thirteen children, seven of whom died in childhood, and two of whom were killed in early manhood at Harper's Ferry. She did more than her full share of the arduous labor of a large pioneer household, and she endured hardships like a Spartan mother. She was strong; and she had a noble and unflinching character. It was only a heroic woman such as this who could have been the wife of a hero; who could have given husband and sons cheerfully to the cause of abolition, and been so silent and brave even after their death.

John Brown worked hard; he had no vices, he was honest and painstaking, but somehow success in business always eluded him. This was another of the griefs of his life. He blamed himself for his failures, but it was really not his fault. It requires a real worship of money to make one a business success, and John Brown never took money as seriously as it demands of its lovers. After ten years in Pennsylvania, of much hard work with little results, he moved to Franklin Mills, in Ohio, where he entered the tanning business with Zenas Kent, a well-to-do business man of that town. Here he also became involved in a land development scheme that was ruined by a large corporation's maneuvers. He was so deeply involved in this and other ventures that in the bad times of 1837 he failed. In 1842 he was again compelled to go through bankruptcy proceedings.

In after years John Brown explained these failures to his oldest son as the result of the false doctrine of doing business on credit.

"Instead of being thoroughly imbued with the doctrine of pay as you go," he wrote, "I started out in life with the idea that nothing could be done without capital, and that a poor man must use his credit and borrow; and this pernicious

doctrine has been the rock on which I, as well as many others, have split. The practical effect of this false doctrine has been to keep me like a toad under a harrow most of my business life. Running into debt includes so much evil that I hope all my children will shun it as they would a pestilence."

John Brown never gave up in despair anything he had attempted; his business failures bruised him sorely, but he arose each time like a rugged wrestler and began a new endeavor. In 1839, at one of his darkest periods, he began a sheep growing and wool marketing venture in which he engaged for many years, going into partnership with Simon Perkins, a wealthy merchant of Akron, Ohio. This partnership was the longest and final one of Brown's business career.

So that is how one must think of Brown, too; not only as the consecrated, almost inhuman battler and martyr, but also as the sane, plodding, patient farmer, tanner, surveyor, real estate speculator, and practical shepherd. He was a tall, spare, silent man, terribly pious, terribly honest, a good neighbor and community leader, and the father of a large family of sons and daughters—a patriarch out of the Bible, tending his flocks and gathering about him a tribe of young and stalwart sons.

He was a typical pioneer American of those rough days in the settling of the middle west. He had no time for frivolity, though there was a grim humor in the man; he brought his children up strictly, yet with a justice that made them all love, revere and respect him until the end; and he had his share of those private sorrows that crush so many men; his first beloved wife had died, with an infant son; he had failed in business; and he had lost by death no less than nine children, three of whom perished in one month in those hard

surroundings, and one of whom, a little daughter, was accidently scalded to death by an elder sister. These deaths hurt John Brown cruelly, for though stern and stoic, he was a fiercely tender father; all his affections were fierce, though inexpressible and deep, as a lion's.

"I seem to be struck almost dumb by the dreadful news," he wrote his family, when he heard of this accident. "One more dear little feeble child I am to meet no more till the dead, small and great, shall stand before God. I trust that none of you will feel disposed to cast an unreasonable blame on my dear Ruth on account of the dreadful trial we are called to suffer. This is a bitter cup indeed; but blessed be God; a brighter day shall dawn; and let us not sorrow as they who have no hope."

The Browns had made at least ten moves in the years from 1830 to 1845, and John Brown had engaged in no less than seven different occupations. But always, under the business man and farmer, there had been the solemn philosopher brooding on God and the mystery and terror of life; and always, under the sober father and citizen, there had been planning and brooding and suffering keenly the tender humanitarian, the Christ-like martyr, the relentless fighter who would finally pay with his life to strike a blow at Slavery, "that sum of all villainies."

In this patriarchal farmer of the middle west, Freedom was forging and sharpening a terrible weapon that was some day to be turned against Tyranny. Quietly, in peaceful surroundings the work was being done; no one knew the fire in this man, least of all himself.

THE GROWTH OF AN ABOLITIONIST

For though John Brown had always been an abolitionist, though he had learned from his father, and from his own experiences to hate slavery and its manifold brutalities, it was not until his thirty-fith year that John Brown showed any more active hatred of it than did hundreds of Ohio farmers around him. Like them, he aided when he could, in the work of the Underground Railroad. Thousands of free Negroes and white abolitionists were engaged in this work of passing fugitive slaves from the South up over the Canadian line, where they were being restored to manhood under the flag of monarchism.

But John Brown, in 1834, began thinking that education of the Negroes might be an important way toward the solution of their problems. He formed plans of starting a school for them. He and his family at this time, though his wool-business was going comfortably, lived in extreme frugality, for they had agreed to save all they could toward the establishment of some such school. For years John Brown dreamed of such ventures as these; and he read all the journals of the small abolitionist groups, and met many of the leaders. He always spoke against slavery in churches or political meetings where he happened to be; and he made friends with many Negroes, and showed a deep interest in all their problems. But not yet had he formed any of those belligerent plans that later were his whole life. He still believed that abolition might be effected by education and peaceful agitation.

Events were piling up too rapidly against such a view, however. The South grew more aggressive every day. The slave system seemed to carry everything before it. It had broken

the agreement of 1820 by extending slavery above the Mason and Dixon line into Missouri. It had forced the war against Mexico, and had carved out huge new tracts for slavery. It dominated the government of the United States. All of the Presidents were pro-slavery, or they could not hope for office. Congress was pro-slavery, and the Senate, too.

And it was not only in the South that the life of an abolitionist was worth little more than a pinch of snuff. The slavery venom had crept into the North, for powerful economic reasons. The Northern merchants and manufacturers made their profits by selling machinery, and the goods made by machinery, to the agricultural, cotton-raising South. And the South threatened to secede from the union, or at the least, to force a low tariff on imports, and buy its goods in Europe, if the abolitionists were not curbed.

There were not many of these abolitionists; but they were outspoken, intense, and made themselves heard at all costs. They paid a heavy price for this courage. They were persecuted, tarred and feathered, and in many cases lynched by the Northern mobs.

Then the Southern slave system seemed to have reached a triumphant climax in two events: the first, the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law, in 1851, and the other, the battle over the admission of Kansas as free soil or slave territory.

The fugitive slave law incensed John Brown to fury, as it did every other abolitionist. It was a federal law forced by the South which forced the state officials of every Northern state, however much they might hate slavery, to join in the hunt for runaway slaves and their helpers.

A United States sloop was sent to bring back

a slave who had fled to Boston. The abolitionists tried to rescue him, but were foiled, with two men killed. Scenes such as these marked, everywhere in the North, the enforcement of the law. Abolitionists were arrested in communities where everyone of their neighbors was also anti-slavery. Slaves, who had been freemen for years and years in the North, were captured and dragged back to bondage by government officials.

The abolitionists became more fiery in their desperation. Many of them, like Garrison, began preaching that the North set up a government of its own: "No Union With Slaveholders!" was the slogan.

And the Kansas affair heaped coal on this fire. Under the Missouri Compromise, both North and South had agreed to restrict slavery within the states already burdened with it; they had agreed also, that the citizens of a new territory could decide whether or not they wanted slavery or freedom, and could vote their choice when the territory was admitted to the union. In other words, both sides would keep their hands off new territory; and the federal government would not interfere.

Kansas was such a territory; it was being rapidly settled, and in a few years was to come up for admission as a state.

And what was happening was that the South was flooding this territory with spurious settlers; idle, whiskey-drinking ruffians armed with shotguns and revolvers, who were intimidating the Northern settlers who had come, and were stealing the elections from them, by force of arms.

The South was openly breaking its agreement with the north; it was openly declaring its intent to make Kansas another addition to the slave states.

To the abolitionists in the North this seemed like the last straw. The South was at its flood-tide of domination; it controlled everything in the American union; and now it was moving forward to make its domination permanent by any means; even by the means of murder and intimidation.

Reports of assassinations, whippings, and the burning down of Northern settlers' cabins came every week from Kansas. The abolitionists began raising emigrant companies of Northerners who would go to Kansas to vote for freedom, even though the South sent its cannon against them.

The Brown family had by now moved to North Elba, New York, a little Adirondack colony of fugitive Negroes who had settled on the lands owned by Gerrit Smith, a wealthy and sincere abolitionist. John Brown had been of much practical service to the Negroes there; but he and his sons, like every other foe of slavery, were deeply shaken by the events in Kansas.

It seemed horrible to everyone, that after twenty years of bitter agitation, slavery was not waning, but was stronger than ever—indeed, was threatening to swallow up even the North.

Strong men were needed in Kansas; and so John Brown's sons went there. They were men of peace; they went there as bona fide settlers, to take up claims, and to cast their vote, when the time came, for freedom. But in two months they were writing letters to North Elba asking their father to send them all the rifles he could collect.

"We have seen some of the curses of slavery, and they are many," wrote one of the sons in the very first letter home. "The boys have all their feelings worked up, and are ready to

fight. Send us arms; we need them more than we do bread."

John Brown collected the arms; and what was more, he delivered them with his own hands. He wound up his business affairs, left his strong, patient wife in charge of the North Elba farm, and went to join his sons in Kansas. The curtain was now rising in the first act of the universal drama called John Brown. The man of God, the tender friend of little slave children, and old, tortured slave mammies, the man of the plough and the counter, the patriarch and citizen was at last ready to become Captain John Brown of Osawotamie; John Brown, the outlaw, the warrior, the soldier of freedom.

At the mere mention of his name Border Ruffians and swashbuckling adherents of slavery were soon to tremble and even fly, as though a devil were behind. And he was bowed with cares and rapidly turning gray; and he had never handled fire-arms; and he was at the age when other men begin to talk of retiring from business and life, when they long for peace and reflection, in some quiet country scene, away from the world and its problems.

He was fifty-five years old.

THE SITUATION IN KANSAS

As John Brown left for Kansas, he turned to his wife and the remaining members of his family and said: "If it is so painful for us to part with the hope of meeting again, how must it be with the poor slaves, who have no hope?"

John Brown was always sanguine in his ventures; but the events before him would have

tried the hope of a superman; they were to be bloody, exacting, terrible. It was what he needed, however, for John Brown went to Kansas with a greater project in his mind, the attack on Virginia and the South, and Kansas was to be for him the rough, harsh school in which he could train himself for that supreme effort.

With his youngest son, Oliver, then about eighteen years old, and a son-in-law, Henry Thompson, John Brown left Chicago in August. The party had a heavily loaded wagon drawn by a "nice, stout young horse," that was stricken with distemper when they reached Missouri, and could barely drag himself along. Their progress was therefore slow; a scant seven or eight miles a day. But it gave them an opportunity to see and hear things in Missouri, then fiercely pro-slavery, and the reservoir from which were drawn most of the Border Ruffins who were raiding Kansas, and trying to force it into the phalanx of slavery states.

Companies of armed men were constantly passing and re-passing on the route to Kansas, and they were continually boasting "of what deeds of patriotism and chivalry they had performed there, and of the still more mighty deeds they were yet to do." As Brown wrote home in a letter. "No man of them would blush when telling of their cruel treading down and terrifying of defenceless Free State men; seemed to take peculiar satisfaction in telling of the fine horses and mules they had killed in their numerous expeditions against the damned Abolitionists."

John Brown was roused by all this; already he was changing from the peaceful patriarch to the fearless warrior in the field. One incident illustrates this. When the little party reached the Missouri River at Brunswick, Missouri,

they sat themselves down to wait for the ferry. There came to them an old man, frankly Missourian, frankly inquisitive after the manner of the frontier. "Where are you going?" he asked. "To Kansas," replied John Brown. "Where from?" asked the old man. "From New York," answered John Brown.

"You won't live to get there," the old Missourian said, grimly.

"We are prepared," John Brown answered, "not to die alone." Before that spirit and that eagle eye the old Missourian quailed; he turned and left.

It was in October, after an arduous trip, that John Brown and his party reached the family settlement at Osawotamie. They arrived weary and all but destitute, with about sixty cents between them. And they found the settlement in great distress; all of the Browns, except the wife of John, Jr., were completely prostrated with fever and ague, gotten from the rough conditions. They were living in a tent exposed to the chill winds, and were shivering over little fires on the bare ground. All the food left was a small supply of milk from their cows, some corn and a few potatoes. It was an unusually cold winter that year; on October 26 John Brown saw the hardest freezing he had ever witnessed south of his bleak farm-house in the Adirondacks; and all the Kansas pioneers suffered in it as did the Browns.

Nobody in Kansas that first winter knew what comforts were. While the Browns paid the penalty for living on low ground in a ravine and in tents, their bitter experience with sickness and hunger was not as bad as that of many other Northern families. Starvation and death looked in at many a door where parents lay helpless, while famished children crawled about the dirt floors crying for food, and shriek-

ing with fear if any footstep approached, lest the comer be a Border Ruffian, (as the Southerners were called) instead of a friend. For pure misery and heart-breaking suffering these pioneer tales of Kansas are not surpassed by any in the whole history of the winning of the West.

But old Jonn Brown was indomitable; he put new life and energy into his six sons; by November two shanties were well advanced, and the food problem had been lightened. They were getting into good shape for the winter, and preparing to take up their share in the settling of Kansas, when the hot breath of war scorched all these plans, as it did many another Northern settler's.

There would be little time for growing corn for the Browns thereafter, or for the other settlers; the slavery question demanded an answer first.

One dread that had worried the Browns before leaving home proved unnecessary. It was their fear of the Indians. The Browns were terrified when the first big band of Sacs and Foxes in war-paint surrounded their tent, whooping and yelling, but they had the good sense to ground their arms, and the Indians did likewise. Thereafter both sides were great friends. John, Jr., went often to visit their old chief; once, when in the following summer, the Indians came to call again, they were "fought" with gifts of melons and green corn. "That," said Jason Brown, "was the nicest party I ever saw."

John Brown, Jr., used to ask the old chief questions, as. "Why do you Sacs and Foxes not build houses and barns like the Ottawas and the Chippewas? Why do you not have schools and churches like the Delawares and Shawnees? Why do you have no preachers and teachers?" And the chief replied in a staccato which sum-

med up wonderfully the bitter, century-long experience of his people: "We want no houses and barns. We want no schools and churches. We want no preachers and teachers. We bad enough now."

No, the Indians were friends. The men really to be feared were not long in putting in their appearance. One night six or seven heavily-armed Missourians rode up to the door, and asked whether any stray cattle had been seen. The Browns replied in the negative; and then, as newcomers, they were asked, in the border slang, how they were "on the goose."

"We are Free State," was the answer, "and what is more, we are Abolitionists."

The men rode away, but from that moment the Browns were marked for destruction. They did not shrink from danger, however. They nailed their flag to the mast; armed themselves, and plunged into the thick of all the political battles then raging. In a short time their settlement was to become known as a center of fearless, and if necessary, violent resistance to all who wished to see human slavery introduced into the Territory. John Brown's life work had begun.

THE BORDER RUFFIANS HOLD AN ELECTION

No fair-minded reader of history can doubt, in glancing over the records of that time, that the South took the first bloody and brutal offensive in their attempt to force slavery on Kansas. Later, the Free State men from the north, under leaders like John Brown, General Lane and Captain James Montgomery, took up arms, too, and defended themselves bravely; but at first, they were victims of the South's determination to carry its point.

The Southerners began the attack by stealing the elections for the Territorial legislature. Thousands of Missourians, on horseback and in wagons, with guns, bowie-knives, revolvers and plenty of whisky, poured over the line in November, 1854, and encamped near the polling places. The ballot boxes were extravagantly, even humorously, stuffed; the elections were carried for the South. There was nothing concealed about the affair; in fact, the Missouri newspapers had gaily whipped up recruits for the raid.

Many of these men, Border Ruffians, as the North called them, were hired for the work. Others came for the fun; others because they hated Yankees; others because they were devout believers in Slavery.

"They wore the most savage looks and gave utterance to the most horrible imprecations and blasphemies," said Thomas Gladstone, a relative of the great statesman of that name, who was in Kansas at the time. "In groups of drunken, bellowing, blood-thirsty demons, armed to the teeth, they crowded about the bars and shouted for drink, or made the night hideous with noise on the streets."

Their fraudulent Pawnee legislature convened and passed a code of punishments for Free State men. Under the code, no one opposed to slavery in any manner could serve on a jury, or hold any office in Kansas.

Death itself was the penalty for advising slaves to rebel, or even supplying them with literature that would have that effect.

The mere voicing of a belief that slavery was illegal in Kansas was made a grave crime. Any person who said in public that slavery was wrong, or any person who even "introduced into the Territory, any book, paper, magazine, pamphlet or circular,"—saying this, was to be punished by imprisonment at hard labor for

a term of not less than five years.

This notorious Clause 12 was obviously aimed at the New York Tribune and other anti-slavery journals, and was meant to shut off every whisper of free speech. And it did not work.

For the Free State settlers would not recognize the legality of the Legislature, and held an election of their own. And so there were two legislatures in Kansas Territory, two governors and governments. All the fighting that followed centered about this dualism, and about the mad, desperate butcheries and burnings begun by the Southerners, when they saw they could not cow the Northerners into submission.

President Pierce, who was pro-slavery, sent a message to Congress in which he sided with the fraudulent legislature and its code, declaring it legal, and threatening the Free State men, whom he called traitors, insurrectionists, and seditionists against the United States government.

In all the Kansas conflict, he threw federal troops and federal politicians against the Free State men. The South rejoiced at his stand, but the Free State men went on with their work. And John Brown and his sons took a leading position in the fight.

THE SACK OF LAWRENCE

"Yet we will continue to tar and feather, drown, lynch and hang every white-livered abolitionist who dares to pollute our soil," said a flamboyant editorial in the Squatter Sovereign, a pro-slavery paper published at Atchison, Kansas, a Border Ruffian stronghold.

The Slaveryites lived up to this promise. The Free State men at this time had not begun to arm, but doggedly and quietly went about organizing their own government at Topeka.

Their actions infuriated the Southerners. Now began the long list of crimes that made the soil of Kansas reek with blood.

It would be impossible to give a full record here of all those crimes. The least that happened was the destruction of newspapers that protested against Southern injustice, such as the Parkville, Missouri, Luminary, which was burned down, the machinery thrown in the river, and the editors threatened with a similar fate if they indulged in further free speech.

There were hundreds of abolitionists murdered in Kansas; hundreds of their wives and children were gibed at and threatened and terrified; hundreds of their cabins were burnt down, and thousands of head of cattle stolen.

One of the murders was the killing of Samuel Collins, owner of a saw-mill near Atchison, by Patrick Laughlin, a pro-slavery man. No effort was made to punish him by the authorities. But something was done by them in another case. Charles Dow, a young Free State man from Ohio, was cruelly shot down from behind by Franklin Coleman, a pro-slavery settler from Virginia.

What the authorities did in this case was to arrest Jacob Branson, with whom the dead man had lived. A pro-slavery sheriff charged Branson with having made threats to revenge his friend. Branson was rescued by a group of his friends with rifles, and taken to Lawrence for protection, Lawrence being entirely settled by the Free State men.

The Sheriff called on the Governor, and the Governor called on the militia, and with the aid of Missouri citizens, about twelve hundred armed men marched on Lawrence, to "put down the rebellion."

The men of Lawrence sent out a call to all Northerners; and John Brown and his men were among those who responded. There were

five hundred settlers in Lawrence, and they feverishly fortified the town with embankments; but the whole affair ended by a compromise; there was no fighting; only two men were killed in a light skirmish.

The Southerners left, weak with all the whisky they had drunk on the expedition, according to reliable observers, and angered that they had not been given the chance to burn Lawrence down.

For Lawrence was a sore spot to the pro-slavery men. It was the largest Free State town in Kansas, and the center of all the political activities of that group. It publishe a newspaper, and its Free State Hotel was the headquarters of the Northerner's government.

There were other murders, despite the treaty signed at this time. And then in February, as Free State men were holding another of their elections, they were assaulted at Leavenworth, and many of them forced to flee to Lawrence.

One of the leaders of the Free State men, as he was returning from Leavenworth after the election, was captured by a company of Border Ruffian militia. Wounded and defenceless though he was, they literally hacked the unfortunate foe of slavery into pieces with their hatchets and knives. Not an effort was made to punish these murderers, though their names were known by everyone. Some of the slavery journals even praised the deed, and called for more. Said the Kansas Pioneer of Kickapoo:

"Sound the bugle of war over the length and breadth of the land, and leave not an Abolitionist in the Territory to relate their treacherous and contaminating deeds. Strike your piercing rifle balls and your glittering steel to their black and poisonous hearts."

And in May of that year, after further alarms and disturbances, Sheriff Jones returned with an army of 750 "swearing, whisky-drinking ruffians," armed with rifles, and even two pieces of artillery. This time the Free State men were unprepared. John Brown was not there, nor any other real leader. The Free State men still believed in peace, and legality. And they saw their Free State Hotel go up in flames, their newspaper plant destroyed, and an orgy of drunken destruction let loose among their homes.

"Let Yankees tremble, Abolitionists fall,
Our Motto is, Give Southern Rights to All."

This was the inscription on one of the banners of the invading army. Lawrence was the first city to receive these rights. Thereafter Free State men knew what to expect; they began forming companies of riflemen and guerrilla fighters to protect their communities against Southern rights.

THE LIBERTY GUARDS

One of these companies was the Liberty Guards, as commander of which John Brown first received his historic title of Captain. Besides four of Brown's stalwart sons, there were fourteen other Free State settlers in the company, and they were present at the first attempted raid on Lawrence, which had resulted in a compromise and an abortive "treaty."

Captain John Brown had gathered his men, and was on the way to Lawrence for the second time when they were informed by a messenger that Lawrence had already been destroyed. The Border Ruffians had captured the town without meeting any resistance, and had razed it

to the ground, the breathless courier reported. This startling news was received in a bitter silence by the little company. They pushed on, nevertheless, and encamped near Prairie City, hearing from passing stragglers further reports of burnings, killings and drunken threats of the Southern invaders.

It was a period of great excitement. The Kansans felt as if war had commenced in earnest on them, and that they were to be wiped out. Some of the men who lived on the Pottawotamie Creek, near Dutch's Crossing, heard reports that their women had been threatened by a group of the toughest pro-slavery ruffians who lived there.

"We expect to be butchered, every Free State settler in our region," one of these men told John Brown.

Here was a story John Brown heard a few days before from the lips of a pretty young girl named Mary Grant, a settler's daughter in the region:

"Dutch Bill arrived at our house, horribly drunk, with a whisky bottle with a corncob stopper, and an immense butcher knife in his belt. Mr. Grant, my father, was sick in bed, but when they told him that Bill Sherman was coming, he had a shot gun put by his side. 'Old woman,' said the ruffian to my mother, 'you and I are pretty good friends, but damn your daughter, I'll drink her heart's blood.' My little brother Charley succeeded in cajoling the drunken man away."

An old settler named Morse was hung and let down again by this same group of ruffians. Then they threatened to kill him with an axe, but his little boys set up a terrible wailing, and begged for his life. The ruffians spared him, but gave him until sundown to leave the community. He wandered in the brush for two

or three days with his children, frightened to death, and finally died of the excitement.

There were other such tales, including one horrible story of a similar attack on a woman in childbirth. The ruffians had also put up a notice, advising every Free State settler to leave the community in thirty days or have his throat cut.

John Brown and his men discussed this matter, and grimly decided to "do something to show these barbarians we have some rights." They moved down that night on the Pottawatomie, and calling out the five men who had done most of the killing, threatening, and burning down of houses in the region, executed them as a measure of self-defense.

It was a bloody, stern act, but it proceeded out of the same inflamed spirit with which the miners at Herrin recently shot down the armed strikebreakers who had been brought into their section. Many, including some sympathetic historians like Oswald Garrison Villard, have condemned this brutal deed, and have called it a stain on John Brown's life. Murder is murder, and it cannot be defended on ethical or logical grounds. But when a thug assails one with a gun, or threatens one's wife and children, is one to practice non-resistance on him? Is his life more valuable than one's own? In such moments men do not think, they act as nature tells them to; even a Villard would refuse to yield up his life to a thug; he would forget logic and ethics, and defend himself. And that was what John Brown did; his act was a stern and immediate answer to the long-continued murders and threats against the Free State men of Kansas. It shook the Territory to its foundations, and it made of John Brown a hunted outlaw. Thereafter he grew

no more corn and built no more cabins for his family; he was a guerrilla captain in the field.

AFTER POTTAWATOMIE

John Brown, Jr., and Jason Brown, two of the fighter's sons, were captured by Missourians and suffered incredible tortures after the Pottawatomie affair. Both men were burning with fever, but they were dragged at the ends of ropes for two or three days, beaten, hung up and then let down, and then chained to ox-carts in the wind and rain. John Jr., always of a nervous temperament, went temporarily insane under this treatment, but his captors had no mercy. Though he shrieked wildly, and though his brother Jason begged that the Southerns have pity, their hearts were hard as flint.

The following scene is described by Jason:

"Captain Wood said to me: 'Keep that man still.' 'I can't keep an insane man still,' said I. 'He is no more insane than you are. If you don't keep him still, we'll do it for you.' I tried my best, but John had not a glimmer of reason and could not understand anything. He went on yelling. Three troopers came in. One struck him a terrible blow on the jaw with his fist, throwing him on his side. A second knelt on him and pounded him with his fist. The third stood off and kicked him with all his force in the back of the neck. 'Don't kill a crazy man!' cried I. 'No more crazy than you are, but we'll fetch it out of him.' After that John lay unconscious for three or four hours. We camped about one and a half miles southeast of the Adairs. There we stayed about two weeks. Then we were

ordered to move again. They drove us on foot, all the prisoners, chained two and two. At Ottawa ford young Kilbourne dropped of a sun-stroke.'"

The men were later released, for they had done nothing that could be prosecuted in the court where the pro-slavery government "troops" had driven them. This was the sort of thing John Brown was fighting; it was life and death, and no mercy could be expected from the Southerners. Mr. Villard and other timorous friends of John Brown do not seem to understand the nature of the battle; and they do not understand what giant faith and courage it must have taken for an old farmer of fifty-five to continue fighting in such an atmosphere.

John Brown did not flinch. Another son, Frederick, was shot down in cold blood on the steps of the family home at Osawatomie, but the old fighter, shedding a silent tear for the loss, for he deeply loved his children, went on his stern path.

The spuriously-elected slavery governor offered a reward of $3,000 for John Brown, and the President of the United States a reward of $250. Federal troops scoured the territory for him. For months he and his men slept out in the fields, flitting from place to place, and fighting in many battles.

With only nine men he fought off a troop of twenty-three Southerners at the "battle of Black Jack," and forced them to surrender. In August, 250 men moved on Osawatomie, to destroy it as they had destroyed Lawrence. John Brown gathered about forty men to resist the Southerners, and a hot battle was fought, in which, of course, Brown had to retreat. The town was thoroughly wiped out, and also granted "Southern rights."

There were many other skirmishes; the name of Captain John Brown, old Brown of Osawatomie, became a legend in Kansas. He became a sort of Pancho Villa figure to the South; a hundred times he was reported dead or captured; a hundred times he was blamed for wild deeds he had never done.

Here are two contemporary pictures of John Brown in the field. The first is written by August Bondi, a brave and able young Austrian Jew, who put himself under Brown's leadership after the Pottawatomie affair:

"We stayed here up to the morning of Sunday, June 1st, and during those few days I fully succeeded in understanding the exalted character of my old friend, John Brown. He exhibited at all times the most affectionate care for each of us. He also attended to the cooking. We had two meals daily, consisting of bread, baked in skillets; this was washed down with creek water, mixed with a little ginger and a spoon of molasses to each pint. Nevertheless, we kept in excellent spirits; we considered ourselves as one family, allied to one another by the consciousness that it was our duty to undergo all these privations for the good cause. We were determined to share any danger with one another, that victory or death might find us together; and we were united, as a band of brothers, by the love and affection toward the man who with tender words and wise counsel, in the depth of the wilderness of Ottawa creek, prepared a handful of young men for the work of laying the foundation of a free commonwealth.

"His words have ever remained firmly engraved in my mind. Many and various were the instructions he gave during the days of our compulsory leisure in this camp. He expressed himself to us that we should never al-

low ourselves to be tempted by any consideration to acknowledge laws and institutions to exist if our conscience and reason condemned them.

"He admonished us not to care whether a majority, no matter how large, opposed our principles and opinions. The largest majorities were sometimes only organized mobs, whose howlings never changed black to white or night into day. A minority convinced of its rights, based on moral principles, would, under a republican government, sooner or later become the majority."

The other description is that of William A. Phillips, then a correspondent of the New York Tribune, and later a Colonel in the Civil War. Brown, still an outlaw, was on his way to Topeka, to be on hand at whatever crisis might arise at the opening of the legislature elected by the Free State settlers. Phillips met him on the way.

His account is important, for it shows that John Brown saw much farther than his own times. He knew that there were many other things wrong with the social system in America besides slavery. There are plain indications here, as in other accounts, that John Brown was one of those early American Socialists, such as Horace Greeley, Albert Brisbane, father of Arthur Brisbane, Bronson Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and others, who felt that the abolition of slavery was only the first step toward a free America. Wendell Phillips, for instance, one of this abolitionist band, became after the Civil War one of the leading champions of the rights of workingmen in their battle against the capitalists.

But here is Colonel Phillips giving his charming picture, in the Atlantic Monthly for December, 1879, of that night ride and the con-

versation he had with Brown as they lay bivouacking in the open beneath the stars:

"He seemed as little disposed to sleep as I was, and we talked; or rather, he did, for I said little. I found that he was a thorough astronomer; he pointed out the different constellations and their movements. 'Now,' he said, 'it is midnight,' as he pointed to the finger marks of his great clock in the sky. The whispering of the wind in the prairies was full of voices to him, and the stars as they shone in the firmament of God seemed to inspire him. 'How admirable is the symmetry of the heavens; how grand and beautiful! Everything moves in sublime harmony in the government of God. Not so with us poor creatures. If one star is more brilliant than others, it is continually shooting in some erratic way into space.'

"He criticized both parties in Kansas. Of the pro-slavery men he said that slavery besotted everything, and made men more brutal and coarse; nor did the Free State men escape his sharp censure. He said we had many true and noble men, but too many broken down politicians from the older states, who would rather pass resolutions than act, and who criticized all who did real work.

"A professional politician, he went on, you could never trust; for even if he had convictions, he was always ready to sacrifice his principles for his advantage.

"One of the most interesting things in Captain Brown's conversation that night, and one that marked him as a thinker, was his treatment of our forms of social and political life. He thought society ought to be reorganized on a less selfish basis; for while material interests gained by competition for bread, men and women lost much by it. He condemned

the sale of land as a chattel, and thought there was an infinite number of wrongs to right before society would be what it should be, but that in our country slavery was the sum of all villainies, and its abolition the first essential work."

THE GREAT PLAN EVOLVES

Much more can be written of this Kansas period in John Brown's life; a large bibliography of Robin Hood literature has gathered about it. John Brown, and other men like him, hastened the solution of the slavery question by their firm stand in Kansas. If the South had been allowed to add Kansas to the roster of slave states, it would have crept further north, until perhaps there would have been slavery up to Canada. It is easy for any institution to become permanent; man is a creature of conventions. Slavery, like cannibalism among savages, would have in time become a matter-of-fact doctrine with all America, had not the Kansas abolitionists challenged it.

John Brown left Kansas in 1857, and made a trip through New England, gathering friends, money, arms and recruits for a new great plan that was working in his mind.

He saw that the abolitionists would be successful in making Kansas a free state. The job was already half done; but when it was completed, what next? There would still be the vast groaning empire of slavery in the South; there would still be five million black folk bought and sold like cattle; beaten, raped, murdered as if they were lower than cattle. The South would still be in the saddle at the

White House; the fugitive slave law would still be enforced; and churches, business men, newspapers, mobs, and United States troops, all would join in upholding the devil's doctrine that slavery was respectable, the law of the land.

The Abolitionists, with their few journals, were ever agitating against this infamy that was being protected by the United States flag. But John Brown knew that only a bold deed could shake the union; could make men see clearly what slavery was.

Slavery had become so firmly settled into the national life that the few thousand abolitionists only seemed like gadflies biting at the hide of a rhinoceros. John Brown saw that a pick-axe was needed to draw the blood. The pocket-books of the slave-holders must be attacked. Slavery must be sabotaged, and made unprofitable. It was such a safe and sane business now; it must be made dangerous. John Brown planned to go boldly into Virginia, with a band of men, and start there a large movement of runaway slaves. When slaves were no longer meek and submissive, when every slave became a potential runaway and rebel, slavery would cease to be a paying business. Thus reasoned John Brown.

In December, 1858, with things at last peaceful in Kansas Territory, and a Free State almost assured, John Brown made a last stirring raid into Missouri. A Negro slave named Jim Daniels had come to one of Brown's men with a pathetic tale. He and his wife and babies were to be sold at auction in a few weeks, and perhaps separated forever. He was a fine-looking, intelligent mulatto, and he wept as he told the story. John Brown and ten of his men rescued Daniels' little family and carried off to freedom eleven other slave

of the vicinity. At dawn the next day the caravan of freedom set forth on its long journey to the Northern Star—to Canada, where slaves were free. It was a perilous and arduous undertaking. The party had to sleep by stealth in barns and icy fields, with armed sentinels posted all night. The Governor of Missouri wired to Washington; money rewards were offered for Brown, armed posses were sent searching for him, the Federal troops combed the state. There were prairie snowstorms, and there were little provisions. But the old lion brought his charges through to Canada.

One incident of the trip is worth repeating. It shows what a terror the mere name of John Brown had become in Kansas.

At one place, the ford of a river, Brown's party learned there was a posse of 80 armed slavery ruffians waiting to capture him. The old man did not turn back, though he had only 22 men, black and white. He marched down on the ruffians. "They had as good a position as 80 men could wish," wrote one of Brown's men, "they could have defeated a thousand opponents, but the closer we got to the ford, the farther they got from it. We found some of their horses, for they were in such haste to fly that some of them mounted two on a saddle, and we gave chase and took three or four prisoners, whom we later released. The marshal who led them went so fast one would think he feared the fate of Lot's wife."

"Old Captain Brown is not to be taken by boys," said the Leavenworth Times, now Free State, "and he invites cordially all pro-slavery men to try their hands at arresting him."

On March 12th the slaves were safe in Canada, rejoicing in their happy fortune, after

having been brought in the dead of winter, through hostile country, some 1,100 miles in 82 days. One of the slave women had had six masters, and four of the party had served sixteen owners in all. Now they were free. And their little children were free, and would never be whipped by a Southern gentleman, or stood on the auction block like a horse or cow. The outlaw John Brown had done what was forbidden by the Supreme Court and the President of the United States; and now he was planning greater deeds.

THE EVE OF THE TRAGEDY

John Brown was now fifty-nine years old, and in the last year of his life. He had been disciplined in a terrible school in Kansas, but what he was about to attempt seemed so mad, so reckless, and so suicidally brave that many men of the South claimed, after the attempt, that he was but an insane man, and many of his conservative friends chose to take this view of the case, also.

Yet John Brown was not insane. Cooly, rationally, like a clear-headed strategist, he had figured out the situation. He was an Abolitionist, and was determined to do anything to end the brutal slave-system. Peaceful agitation had been going on for decades, but the North was still apathetic, and the South was only more inflamed and settled in its ideas.

What John Brown felt was needed now, was to make the men of the North and the South realize that there would be no peace in the land while slavery endured. What they must see was that men like himself would

rise to break that loathsome peace. He would go to the South, capture the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, in Virginia, and run off all the slaves he could find. He would take the hills about the Ferry, and with a guerrilla band move through the countryside, making slavery a shaky institution.

If he failed, he could but lose his life. He would at least stir the nation on the issue of slavery, and force men to take sides. There was too much neutrality and silence in the land on this issue, this institution that to him was a bloody crime against God and humanity. He could not fail, he felt; success or failure would achieve the same results. Events proved that he was right.

John Brown spent that winter and spring in New England, giving occasional lectures, and meeting all the leading men of the Abolition movement, who collected money for him, though he did not fully reveal his plans to anyone.

George L. Stearns, Gerrit Smith, the philanthropist, Frank B. Sanborn, the Concord schoolmaster and author; Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a brave, noble commander in the Civil War, and a charming man of letters afterward; Theodore Parker, one of the greatest and most sincere Christian clergymen produced in America; Samuel G. Howe, and others were among John Brown's supporters. Thoreau and Emerson he also met at various times, and both were passionate admirers of the stern, pure soldier of liberty.

While their Captain was gathering arms and money for the raid, some of Brown's men were quartered in a farm-house near Harper's Ferry, while others were studying the region, and mapping out routes for the attack and the retreat to the hills.

It was a cool fall night, the 16th of October, 1859, when Captain John Brown gave the command his men had been impatiently awaiting for months: "Men, get on your arms; we will proceed to the Ferry." Says Mr. Villard, at times an eloquent chronicler:

"It took but a minute to bring the horse and wagon to the door, to place in it some pikes, fagots, a sledge hammer, and a crow-bar. The men had been in readiness for hours; they had but to buckle on their arms and throw over their shoulders, like army blankets, the long gray shawls which served some for a few brief hours in lieu of overcoats, and then became their winding sheets. In a moment more, the commander-in-chief donned his old battle-worn Kansas cap, mounted the wagon, and began the solemn march through the chill night to the bridge into Harper's Ferry, nearly six miles away.

"Tremendous as the relief of action was, there was no thought of cheering or demonstration. As the eighteen men with John Brown swung down the little lane to the road from the farmhouse that had been their prison for so many weary weeks, they bade farewell to Captain Owen Brown, and Privates Barclay Coppoc and F. J. Meriam, who remained as rear-guard in charge of the arms and supplies. The brothers Coppoc read the future correctly, for they embraced and parted as men do who know they are to meet no more on earth. The damp, lonely night, too, added to the solemnity of it all, as they passed through its gloom. As if to intensify the sombreness, they met not a living soul on the road to question their purpose, or to start with fright at the sight of eighteen soldierly men coming two by two through the darkness as though risen from the grave.

"There was not a sound but the tramping of the men and the creaking of the wagon,

before which, in accordance with a general order, drawn up and carefully read to all, walked Captains Cook and Tidd, their Sharp's rifles hung from their shoulders, their commission, duly signed by John Brown, and officially sealed, in their pockets. They were detailed to destroy the telegraph wire on the Maryland side, and then on the Virginian, while Captains John H. Kagi and Aaron D. Stevens, bravest of the brave, were to take the bridge watchman and so strike the first blow for liberty. But as they and their comrades marched rapidly over the rough road, Death himself moved by their side."

THE ARSENAL IS CAPTURED

Events flashed sharp and terrible and swift as lightning after this sombre opening of the storm. The telegraph wires were cut, the watchman at the bridge captured, guards were placed at the two bridges leading out of the town, and many citizens were taken from the streets and held as prisoners in the Arsenal.

Perhaps the most distinguished prisoner was Colonel Lewis W. Washington, a great-grandnephew of the first President, and like him, a gentleman farmer and slave-owner. He lived five miles from the Ferry, and with the instinct of a dramatist, John Brown seized him and freed his slaves as a means of impressing on the American imagination that a new revolution for human rights was being ushered in.

The little town was peaceful and unprepared for this sudden attack, as unprepared as it would be today for a similar raid. By morning, however, the alarm had been spread; the church bells rang, military companies from Charles-

town and other neighboring towns began pouring in, the saloons were crowded with nervous and hard-drinking men, and there was the clamor and furor of thousands of awe-struck Southerners. No one knew how many men were in the Arsenal. No one knew whether the whole South was not being attacked by abolitionists, or whether or not all the slaves had armed and risen against their masters, as they had attempted to years before in Nat Turner's and other rebellions.

By noon the Southerners had begun the attack. They killed or drove out all the guards John Brown had stationed at various strategic points in the town; they murdered two of Brown's men they had taken prisoners, and tortured another. They managed to cut off all of Brown's paths of retreat, and by nightfall, he and the few survivors of his men were in a trap.

His young son Oliver, only twenty years old, and recently married, died in the night. He had been painfully wounded, and begged, in his agony, that his father shoot him and relieve him from pain. But the old Spartan held his boy's hand, and told him to be calm, and to die like a man. Another young son, Watson, had been killed earlier in the fighting. John Brown had now given three sons to freedom, and was soon himself to be a sacrifice.

There were left alive and unwounded but five of Brown's men. The Virginia militia, numbering, with the civilians in the town, up to the thousands, seemed afraid to attack this little group of desperate men. In the dawn of the next morning, however, United States marines, under the famous commander, Robert E. Lee, then a Colonel in the Federal forces, attacked the arsenal and captured it easily. John Brown refused to surrender to the last; and he stood waiting proudly for the marines when

they broke down the door and came raging like tigers at him.

A fierce young Southern officer ran at him with a sword, that bent double as it pierced to the old man's breast-bone. The young Southerner then took the bent weapon in his hands and beat Brown's head unmercifully with the hilt, bringing the blood, and knocking senseless the old unselfish and tender champion of poor Negro men and women. Those near him thought John Brown was dead; but he was still alive; he had still his greatest work to do.

JOHN BROWN'S MEN

I have written almost entirely of John Brown, and because of necessities of space I have given little attention to the brave youths who fought under him at Harper's Ferry. Yet here I must stop and with only the facts, paint some portrait of the men who followed John Brown. It will be seen that they were no ordinary ruffians, no bandits, adventurers or madmen, as the South called them at the time. They were young crusaders, thoughtful, sensitive and brave. They had a philosophy of life; and they were filled with passion for social justice. One may disagree with such men, but one must not fail to respect them.

There were twenty-one men with John Brown at Harper's Ferry, sixteen of whom were white and five colored. Only one was of foreign birth; nearly all were of old American pioneer stock.

John Henry Kagi was the best educated of the raiders, largely self-taught, a fine debater and speaker, and an able correspondent for the New York Tribune and the New York Evening Post. He had been a school-teacher in Virginia,

and had come to know and hate slavery there, protesting so vigorously that he was finally run out of the State. He practised law in Nebraska, but left this to join John Brown in the Kansas fighting. He was killed at Harper's Ferry.

Aaron Dwight Stevens was in many ways the most attractive and interesting of the personalities about John Brown. He ran away from his home in Massachusetts at the age of sixteen, and joined the United States army, serving in Mexico during the Mexican War. Later he was sentenced to death for leading a soldiers' mutiny against an offensive pro-slavery Major at Taos, New Mexico. President Pierce commuted the sentence to three years at hard labor in Fort Leavenworth. Stevens escaped from this prison, and joined the Free State forces in Kansas, for he had always been a firm abolitionist. Stevens came of old Puritan stock, his great-grandfather having been a captain in the Revolutionary War. He was a man of superb bravery and of wonderful physique; well over six feet, handsome, with black penetrating eyes and a fine brow. He had a charming sense of humor, and a beautiful baritone voice, with which he sang in camp and in prison. He was hung soon after John Brown for the Harper's Ferry raid.

John E. Cook was a young law student of Brooklyn, New York, a reckless, impulsive and rather indiscreet youth, to whom much was forgiven because of his genial smile and generous nature.

Charles Plummer Tidd escaped after the raid, and died a First Sergeant in one of the battles of the Civil War. He had not much education, but good common sense, and was always reading and studying in an attempt to repair his lack of training. Quick-tempered, but kind-

hearted, a fine singer and with strong family affections.

Jeremiah Goldsmith Anderson, killed at Harper's Ferry in his 27th year, was also of Revolutionary American stock. A sworn abolitionist, he wrote in a letter three months before his death: "Millions of fellow-beings require it of us; their cries for help go out to the universe daily and hourly. Whose duty is it to help them? Is it yours? Is it mine? It is every man's, but how few there are to help. But there are a few to answer this call, and dare to answer it in a manner that shall make this land of liberty and equality shake to the center."

Albert Hazlett, executed after Brown, was a Pennsylvania farm worker, "a good-sized, fine-looking fellow, overflowing with good nature and social feelings."

Edwin Coppoc, also one of those captured and hung, was well-liked even by the Southerners who saw him in jail, and some of them hoped to get him pardoned. He came of Quaker farmer stock.

Barclay Coppoc, his brother, was not yet twenty-one when he fought at the Arsenal. He escaped after the raid, but was killed in the Civil War. After the raid he had returned to Kansas, and had nearly lost his life in an attempt to free some slaves in Missouri.

William Thompson, a neighbor of the Browns at North Elba, in New York, was killed at Harper's Ferry, in his 26th year. He was full of fun and good nature, and bore himself unflinchingly when face to face with death.

Dauphin Osgood Thompson, his brother, was only twenty years old, when he met the same fate for the cause of freedom. Dauphin was a handsome, inexperienced country boy, "more like a shy young girl than a warrior, quiet and good," said one of the Brown women later.

Oliver Brown, John Brown's youngest son, was also twenty years old when he died at Harper's Ferry. His girl-wife and her baby died early the next year. "Oliver developed rather slowly," says Miss Sarah Brown. "In his earlier teens he was always pre-occupied, absent-minded—always reading, and then it was impossible to catch his attention. But in his last few years he came out very fast. His awkwardness left him. He read every solid book that he could find, and was especially fond of Theodore Parker's writings, as was his father. Had Oliver lived, and not killed himself with over-study, he would have made his mark. By his exertions the sale of liquor was stopped at North Elba."

John Anthony Copeland, a free colored man, 25 years old, was educated at Oberlin College. He was dignified and manly, and in jail there were prominent Southerners who were forced to admit his fine qualities. He was hung for the raid.

Stewart Taylor, the only one of the raiders not of American birth, was a young Canadian wagon-maker, 23 years old. He was fond of history and debating, and heart and soul in the abolition cause. Killed in the Arsenal.

William H. Leeman, the youngest of the raiders, killed in his 19th year. He had gone to work in a shoe factory at Haverhill, Mass., when only 14 years old, and though with little education, "had a good intellect and great ingenuity." He was the "wildest" of Brown's men, for he smoked and drank occasionally, but the Old Puritan captain liked him, nevertheless, for he was boyish, handsome, and brave.

Osborn Perry Anderson was also a Negro. He escaped after the raid, and fought through the Civil War.

Francis Jackson Meriam, was a wealthy,

young abolitionist who put all his fortune into the cause, and came from New England to join John Brown in the raid. He escaped also, and died in 1865, after having been the captain of a Negro company in the Civil War.

Lewis Sheridan Leary, colored, left a wife and a six-months-old baby at Oberlin, Ohio, to go to Harper's Ferry. He was a harness maker by trade, and descended on one side from an Irishman, Jeremiah O'Leary, who fought in the Revolution. Leary was 25 years old when he died of his terrible wounds in the Arsenal fighting.

Owen Brown, another of John Brown's sons, was stalwart and reliable, and is reported original in expression and thought, like all the Browns. He is also said to have been quite humorous. He survived the raid, and died in Pasadena, Calif., in 1891.

Watson Brown, another son, 24 years old when killed at the Ferry, was tall and rather fair, very strong and a man of marked ability and sterling character.

Dangerfield Newby was born a slave in Virginia, but his father, a Scotchman, freed him with other mulatto children. Newby had a wife and seven children still in slavery, and he was trying to raise money to buy them, for they were to be sold further south. He failed at this; and joined John Brown in desperation. He was killed at the Ferry, and so failed to free his poor family, as he had dreamed.

Shields Green, colored, was also born a slave, but escaped, leaving a little son in slavery. He met Brown through Frederick Douglass, the great Negro orator, and joined in the raid, though many warned him it would mean his death. He was uneducated, but deeply emotional, and deeply attached to the "ole man,"

as he called John Brown. He was hung after the raid; his age 23.

They were all young men; the average age of the band was 25 years and five months. They were all strong, intelligent, in love with life and eager for the future; but they chose to attempt this mad, dangerous deed rather than consent any longer to the lie and to the power of black slavery.

John Brown they followed and loved as one would a strong and kindly father. There was always something patriarchal about John Brown and his soldiers, many observers said. It made his deed seem like some story out of the Bible, the swift and terrible justice of the Lord of Hosts.

THE "NIGGER-THIEF"

When the South heard of John Brown's raid, there was a wave of immediate fury. Men poured by the thousands into the little Virginia town, and the bars were filled with savage, half-drunk men, who talked of lynching the "old nigger-thief." Governor Wise had come down from the capital, and he and others prevented any such disgraceful procedure. He himself was mystified by the raid. It seemed an incredible performance, for these Southerners could not understand the moral passion that animated the Abolitionists. To the south Negroes were property—private property. And an attempt to free slaves was to them insane, illegal and criminal. When men came with arms for this purpose and Southerners were killed in defending slavery, the crime became doubly damnable.

John Brown, after his capture, was taken with

Aaron Stevens to a room nearby. Lying on a cot, his head bandaged, his hair clotted and tangled, hands and clothing powder-stained and blood-smeared, the old lion was questioned by Governor Wise and a party of officials, who included Robert E. Lee, Colonel J. E. B. Stuart, Senator Mason, Congressman Vallandigham of Ohio, and other pro-slaveryites.

Their questions were a summary of the attitude of the South to such as he. And John Brown, though he was wounded and a prisoner, though everywhere enemies surrounded him, and the gallows stared him full in the face, answered their questions calmly and courteously, without the slightest show of fear.

"Who sent you here?" one official asked. They were trying to worm out the names of Northerners who had given Brown money for the raid, so as to prosecute them for conspiracy in murder.

"No man sent me here," John Brown answered calmly. "It was my own prompting, and that of my Maker, or that of the devil, which ever you please. I acknowledge no man in human form."

"What was your object in coming?"

"I came to free the slaves."

"And you think you were acting righteously?"

"Yes. I think, my friends, you are guilty of a great wrong against God and humanity. I think it right to interfere with you to free those you hold in bondage. I hold that the Golden Rule applies to the slaves, too."

"And do you mean to say you believe in the Bible?" some one said, incredulously. They could not understand this man; they only saw a wild, mad "nigger-thief" in him.

"Certainly I do," John Brown said with dignity.

"Don't you know you are a seditionist, a traitor, and that you have taken up arms against the United States government?"

"I was trying to free the slaves. I have tried moral suasion for this purpose, but I don't think the people in the slave states will ever be convinced they are wrong."

"You are mad and fanatical."

"And I think you people of the South are mad and fanatical. Is it sane to keep five million men in slavery? Is it sane to think such a system can last? Is it sane to suppress all who would speak against this system, and to murder all who would interfere with it? Is it sane to talk of war rather than give it up?"

Thus John Brown uttered his challenge to the South; but they failed to understand.

THE TRIAL AT CHARLESTOWN

And they failed to understand that it was not he who was on trial at the Charlestown court-house a month later, but the whole slavery system.

Every moment of that trial was reported in the newspapers of the nation. Every reader in America knew of the wonderful strength and majesty of John Brown in the court-room. The North began thinking about slavery as it had never thought before. John Brown was so manifestly pure in his intentions; manifestly a crusader, and people were forced to try to understand why an old, gray-haired farmer should have taken up arms at the age of sixty, after a life spent in useful occupations.

His dignity, his piety, his reputation as a terrible fighter, and the Biblical sublimity of the picture of this white-bearded patriarch sur-

rounded by his seven sons, all of them armed with rifles, all of them ready to die for the cause of abolition—these had their powerful effect on the imagination of the North. Hosts of new friends rose up in Brown's defense; legislatures passed resolutions asking for his pardon, Congressmen began speaking out, newspapers suddenly found themelves in danger of losing their subscribers if they spoke against John Brown; everywhere in the North men found themselves waking from a dream, and coming into the clear, white vision of John Brown. They saw slavery as if for the first time in all its horrors; they could not help taking sides. And the South became more and more inflamed with rage as the trial progressed, and those reverberations reached it from the North.

John Brown was tried on three charges, murder, treason, and inciting the slaves to rebellion. The trial was quickly over; it was but a formality. The jury, of course, returned the verdict of guilty, and John Brown, lying on his cot in the court-room, said not a word, but turned quietly over on his side, when he heard it.

A few days later, Judge Parker pronounced the sentence of death, and this time John Brown rose from his cot, and drawing himself up to his full stature, with flashing eagle eyes, and calm, clear and distinct tones, he addressed the citizens of America. He said many things that they were soon to understand clearly on the battlefields of the Civil War.

"Had I taken up arms in behalf of the rich, the powerful, the intelligent, the so-called great, or in behalf of any of their friends, or any of their class, every man in this court would have deemed it an act worthy of reward rather than of punishment. But this Court acknowledges

the validity of the law of God. I see a book kissed here which is the Bible, and which teaches me that all things that I would have men do unto me, so must I do unto them. I endeavored to act up to that instruction. I fought for the poor; and I say it was right, for they are as good as any of you; God is no respecter of persons.

"I believe that to have interfered as I have done, as I have always freely admitted I have done, in behalf of His despised poor, I did no wrong, but right. Now, if it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children, and with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel and unjust enactments, I say, let it be done."

Judge Parker fixed the date for hanging on December 2nd, 1859, a month away. It was a fatal mistake for the South, and John Brown's finest gift at the hands of the God he believed in.

THE AGITATOR IN JAIL

For in that month, John Brown accomplished more for abolition than even the stern deeds of Kansas had effected. He had put by the sword forever, and now for a month took up the pen and made it as powerful a weapon. He wrote innumerable letters to Northern friends and they were published and read everywhere. Their tone was Christ-like; no longer was Brown the militant Captain in the field, but the sweet, patient martyr waiting for his end in tranquil joy. In many letters he repeats the statement that he is glad to die; that his death is

of more value to the cause than ever his life could have been. This was no vainglorious hysterical gesture with John Brown; he was calmly certain of it; he slept peacefully as a child at night, and wrote his letters by day, secure in his tranquil wisdom. Friends were planning an attempt to rescue him, but he forbade them to try, for he really felt that his death was necessary. "I am worth now infinitely more to die, than to live," he said.

And in his letters he gave Americans his last warning on the slavery question. He told them it must be settled; it could not go on. His letters were so strong, manly, and yet so touching, that even the jailor wept as he censored them in the course of his duties. As Wendell Phillips said, the million hearts of his countrymen had been melted by that old Puritan soul.

With absolute equanimity, John Brown wrote his will, wrote his last few letters to his family, determined the coffin in which he was to be buried, and the inscription on the family monument, said farewell to his fellow-prisoners and jail-keepers. On the morning of December 2nd he stood calmly on the steps of the scaffold and gazed about him. Before leaving his cell he had handed to another prisoner the following last and uncompleted message:

"I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood. I had, as I now think, vainly flattered myself that without much bloodshed it might be done."

Now, as he looked about, he could see massed beyond the fifteen hundred soldiers Virginia had felt necessary for this execution, the hazy outlines of the Blue Ridge mountains. The sun was shining; the sky was blue, and his heart was at peace. "This *is* a beautiful country," he said, "I never had the pleasure of really

seeing it before." He walked with perfect composure up the steps, watched by the eyes of the soldiery and officialdom of slave-holding Virginia. They saw not a tremor in his face or body; not even when the cap was drawn over his head, his arms pinioned at the elbows, the noose slipped around his neck. He had refused to have the solace of any ministers, for they believed in slavery, and he told them he did not regard them as Christians. He needed no man's solace; he was braver than any one there. "Shall I give you the signal when the trap is to be sprung?" said a friendly sheriff. "No, no," the serene old man answered, "just get it over quickly."

And quickly enough, it was all over for John Brown. The trap was sprung; his body hung between heaven and earth. In the painful silence that followed, the voice of Colonel Preston declaimed solemnly, the official epitaph, "So perish all such enemies of Virginia! All such enemies of the Union! All such foes of the human race!"

That was the verdict of the South, still infatuated and blinded by its slave system. But on the other side of the Mason-Dixon line men were pronouncing a different verdict on John Brown, and on the other side of the Atlantic, the greatest man of letters in Europe, Victor Hugo, was saying:

"In killing Brown, the Southern States have committed a crime which will take its place among the calamities of history. The rupture of the Union will fatally follow the assassination of Brown. As for John Brown, he was an apostle and a hero. The gibbet has only increased his glory, and made him a martyr."

HIS SOUL GOES MARCHING ON

John Brown was hung on December 2, 1859. Exactly eleven months later Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States. Exactly eight months after that, Northern troops were marching southward, to put down the rebellion of the slave states that had hung Brown.

No one at the time believed events would march so swiftly after Brown's death. There were many who knew that some sort of conflict between the North and South was inevitable; it had been brewing for decades. But there were as many more who were confident that slavery would win its legal fight, and would spread over the whole continent. And the great mass of Americans just faintly understood the issues involved; to most of them, John Brown seemed some kind of mad fanatic.

President Lincoln's election undoubtedly provoked the Civil War. And his election was undoubtedly due to the discussion on slavery that raged after John Brown's deed. Lincoln was the first Northerner to be elected in forty years; the South had always carried things before it, and would have done so again had not John Brown roused the entire North to a consciousness of what slavery meant.

He did more than all the abolitionists had been able to do in their fifty years of agitation.

And yet even most of his friends thought him mad at the time of the deed. Abraham Lincoln, in a campaign speech at Cooper Union, in New York, said: "Old John Brown has been executed for treason against a state. We cannot object, even though he agreed with

us in thinking slavery wrong. That cannot excuse violence, bloodshed and treason."

Only men of the stamp of Wendell Phillips fully understood what John Brown had done. His funeral oration at the last resting place of John Brown's body had all the vision of the prophets:

"Marvelous old man!....He has abolished slavery in Virginia. You may say that this is too much. Our neighbors are the very last men we know. The hours that pass us are the ones we appreciate the least. Men walked Boston streets, when night fell on Bunker Hill, and pitied Warren, saying, 'Foolish man! Thrown away his life! Why didn't he measure his means better?' Now we see him standing colossal on that blood-stained sod, and severing that day the tie which bound Boston to Great Britain. That night George III ceased to rule in New England. History will date Southern emancipation from Harper's Ferry. True, the slave is still there. So, when the tempest uproots a pine in your hills, it looks green for months, for a year. Still, it is timber, not a tree. John Brown has loosened the roots of the slave system; it only breathes—it does not live—hereafter."

Wendell Phillips was a prophet; and even men of wide vision like Lincoln could not attain his lofty view. At first there was a rush of Northern politicians to disavow and condemn John Brown's deed. Later, there was approval; still later understanding; still later, worship.

Yes, the old man seemed mad, as all pioneers are mad. Gorky has called it the madness of the brave. But such madness seems necessary

to the world; the world would sink into a bog of respectable tyranny and stagnation were there not these fresh, strong, ruthless tempests to keep the waters of life in motion.

Who knows but that some time in America the John Browns of today will be worshipped in like manner? The outlaws of today, the unknown soldiers of freedom.

"And his soul goes marching on."

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