

WHAT THE DIFFERENT PLANS PROPOSED WERE.

The following letter, the last of the series, goes still farther into detail and exposes the nature of the nefarious plot which these men had concocted against the Southern States:

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 14, 1859.

Sir: Yours of the 10th came to hand yesterday. You mention one of my letters as being anonymous. I am at a loss to account for this, unless I may have sent that one which I intended to have reserved as a copy; or perhaps the copy of the letter to J. Brown, Jr., inclosed in mine, was not signed.

You assert, as regards my children, that I "stand like a madman between them and aid." My application last August was as temperate as language could express a wish. That first letter having been disregarded, my next and those following were gradually more and more earnest. These being equally fruitless, I eventually lost my patience; and I have only to add, on that score, that I have shown too much patience. My words may be unpalatable to you—it is painful for me to use them; you must remember, however, that till I adopted that style I could make no impression whatever.

Since you warn me that if you do not like the "spirit" of my reply you will throw it behind the fire without perusing it to the end, it is possible that it may not have survived your wrath even thus far; therefore, I shall forward sundry copies to your associates, and to Abolitionists, that it may at least reach them. The caprice of refusing to read anything distasteful is so like a pouting, spoiled child, that I should not be surprised at your being easily hood-winked by any one who were to approach you with flattery and a pleasing story. I shall, however, humor no such nonsensical notions, and I would recommend you to read this attentively all through.

As this must of necessity (for you may throw it behind the fire unread) be sent to many Abolitionists, some of whom may be ignorant of the details of the case, I will here recapitulate a few essential points. When JOHN BROWN applied to me last Spring in the name of the Committees and leading humanitarians, I answered, as you are well aware, that being an Anti-Slavery man, I would not stir merely to get "Kansas for free white people," and on his assuring me that he himself and the leading minds among his associates had views similar to my own, I considered that the application being put upon that basis, I ought to go. BROWN could not then discuss those details. We examined at Tabor the respective merits of our plans.

Mine was as follows: With carefully selected colored and white persons to organize along the Northern slave frontier (Virginia and Maryland especially) a series of stampedes of slaves, each one of which operations would carry off in one night, and from the same place, some twenty to fifty slaves; this to be effected once or twice a month, and eventually once or twice a week along non-contiguous parts of the line: if possible without conflict, only resorting to force if attacked. Slave women, accustomed to field labor, would be nearly as useful as men. Everything being in readiness to pass on the fugitives, they could be sent with such speed to Canada that pursuit would be hopeless. In Canada preparations were to be made for their instruction and employment. Any disaster which might befall a stampede would at the utmost compromise those only who might be engaged in that single one; therefore we were not bound in good faith to the Abolitionists (as we did not jeopardise that interest) to consult more than those engaged in this very project. Against the chance of loss by occasional accidents should be weighed the advantages of a series of successful "runs." *Slave property would thus become untenable near the frontier; that frontier would be pushed more and more southward, and it might reasonably be expected that the excitement and irritation would impel the pro-Slaveryites to commit some stupid blunders.* The Missouri frontier being so far from the habitable part of Canada, and the political parties—anti and pro-Slavery—being in that State (Missouri) so nearly balanced, suggested a peculiar action in that quarter, which would depend in a great measure on affairs in Kansas.

BROWN had a different scheme. He proposed, with some twenty-five to fifty, (colored and white mixed,) well armed, and bringing a quantity of spare arms, to beat up a slave quarter in Virginia. To this I objected that, no preparatory notice having been given to the slaves, (no notice could, with prudence be given them,) the invitation to rise might, unless they were already in a state of agitation, meet with no response, or a feeble one. To this he replied that he was sure of a response. He calculated that he could get on the first night from 200 to 500. Half, or thereabouts, of this first lot he proposed to keep with him, mounting 100 or 80 of them, and make a dash at Harper's Ferry manufactory, destroying what he could not carry off. The other men not of this party were to be subdivided into three, four or five distinct parties, each under two or three of the original band, and would beat up other slave quarters, whence more men would be sent to join him.

He argued that were he pressed by the United States troops, which after a few days might concentrate, he could easily maintain himself in the Alleghanies, and that his New-England partisans would in the meantime call a Northern Convention to restore tranquility and overthrow the pro-Slavery Administration. This, I contended, could at most be a mere local explosion. A slave insurrection, being from the very nature of things deficient in men of education and experience, would, under such a system as BROWN proposed, be either a flash in the pan, or would leap beyond his control or any control—when it would become a scene of mere anarchy, and would assuredly be suppressed.

On the other hand B. considered foreign intervention as not impossible. As to the dread of a Northern Convention, I consider it as a total fallacy. BROWN's New-England friends would not have the courage to show themselves, so long as the issue was doubtful.

After days of discussion, BROWN (whom you reiterate underlined in your letter of the 10th, enjoys your entire confidence) acquiesced or feigned to acquiesce in a mixed project styled "the well-matured plan." I consented to make that concession to secure mutual cooperation, and in consideration of the prospective Committee of Management which was at the proper time to be established. I preferred, however, my original plan of stampedes, unalloyed by anything else. Your assertion that I want to take the management is wholly unfounded; my insisting upon a Committee of Management is conclusive on that head. JOHN BROWN, had he been truthful, might have been useful in some capacity; almost every one might, if zealous, be useful in some place, whereas the same man might be mischievous in another place. This mixed plan in which I am compromised more than you (lying, as you do, out of sight), having been definitely settled upon, I deny the right of B., or you, or any one, from caprice or speculation, to set it aside for the BROWN project, pure and simple, or for any other. *It is a breach of confidence which I will not tolerate, especially when your first act is to assail my own family. You must be worse than insane—you must be depraved—to expect it of me. Now, however, after what has passed, I would not undertake the intended mixed plan, or even my own project of stampedes in connection with any of you, because I can place no more faith in New-England humanitarians.*

My first thought after discovering BROWN's complicity in the New-England breach of faith was—let him try. Though justly irritated at the horrible treatment of my family, I did not, till towards the end of April, utter a syllable, even to Mr. SANBORN, which might tend to check the supplies. I spoke to but one Abolitionist after my arrival here, and he thought much as I did. On reconsidering the matter, with other Abolitionists, they advanced such sound reasons that I conceived my first impression to have been erroneous, and they say that BROWN must be stopped.

The more I reflect the more I become confirmed in the opinion of the last-named abolitionist. First, because a man who deviates from truth, betrays his associate, and ill-treats a friendly family, should not be trusted with any humanitarian enterprise. Second, because BROWN, with his bigoted mind and limited instruction, has not the capacity necessary to direct such an enterprise. Third, because the crude project which he and his confederates have in their heads is not likely to succeed, but is merely suited for a grand speculation in the sudden rise of cotton on the exchanges. Fourth, because some of the hands engaged by him are

highly objectionable; for example, when Brown was in the first Kansas troubles he was, by his own men, robbed of horses, &c. Now, a young man whom he asserted had helped to rob him has been reengaged, for the reason that he did an audacious act, going with three others to Missouri, to the house of another John Brown, whence they took money and horses, after the troubles in Kansas were over, and B. had left; thence they went to another house and did in the like manner, and though pursued, they got away with the booty. Reprisals and foraging for the common stock are justifiable in war, when ordered by the directing power, but such things, if permitted to be done by individuals, for private gain, constitute brigandage; the robbery of comrades is, however, the worst of all pillage. I remonstrated against the engagement of that person, but B. told me he had already done it; his admiration for the desperate feat effaced every other feeling.

For these and many other reasons, I call on you and your associates to stop B. and to take from him your arms, &c. I have a right to exact this, and I do exact it. To your assertion that to stop B. I would denounce and betray, I echo what the Abolitionists here say, that if you do not, by taking from him your arms, &c., stop him, you betray them; for this concerns the Abolitionists, and they have a right to be heard.

It has been written that there is nothing new under the sun. The proverb is wrong—you have laid down a new doctrine, viz.: he who stops a traitor, and so prevents his treason, betrays. Notwithstanding this new rule, I repeat that B. & Co. shall not speculate on the rise in cotton. Some may say, "Why not let them make a little money?—it won't harm the cause." I say it will, because prudence may demand that the initiative be unexpectedly hurried forward; or it may be essential that it be deferred some weeks, or even months; but speculation necessitates that the panic seize the market exactly on the preconcerted day; therefore, to manufacture that fraudulent rise, the ultimate success of the humanitarian move would, without scruple, be sacrificed. Not being a commercial man, the full force of B.'s proposal did not strike me till I inquired, in conversation, how Lawrence & Co. could be so public spirited as to advance \$37,000, and \$8,000 to affect a tariff, in which the whole trade, and not that firm alone, was interested. The reply was, that to a house having heavy speculations, it was well worth \$100,000 to get within a certain time a change of duties, which would enable the speculators to realize five or ten times that amount.

Then the whole cotton scheme reappeared before me, and the recollection that Brown had told me that Mr. Amos Lawrence had promised him \$7,000 whenever actual hostilities should be commenced, brought to my mind other reflections. This iniquitous speculation in human blood for the mere greediness of dollars shall somehow be stopped—though you coolly tell me that if I stop it I betray, because I will not let certain persons betray. To the Abolitionists I say, You must unite together and stop it; and to the colored people I say, If you rise at the call of New-England humanitarians, you will shed your blood for the sole benefit of New-England speculators, and the free colored people may very likely be reenslaved.

You have as strange a notion of what is gentlemanly as you have of what is just. Last autumn, when

I was asked to write strong tracts addressed to the United States troops, pointed against the United States Government and the border ruffians, I complied with the request, and the productions were pronounced to be admirably adapted to the purpose. I was urged to continue them, and because they suited you and yours, nothing was hinted as to their being ungentlemanly, or that "that which cometh out of the mouth defileth the man and him only."

But now that I with the same penell draw your own picture, amidst outrages worse than those of the border ruffians, perpetrated upon me and my family by you and your associates, you suddenly discover that "that which cometh out of the mouth defileth the man and him only." I, however, maintained that the impurities within the heart, such as falsehood, cruelty, pride, hypocrisy, and the sacrificing of innocent children, defile the man, and not the words which are necessary to denounce such horrible cruelties and crimes.

I am not begging charity of you. I demand what is due to me, and that my children, barbarously ill-used and turned into the street, be restored to their comforts, just as they were before you broke your compact. The subterfuge, that you personally made no engagements with me, is disgraceful to you. You and your fellow Committee men agreed to furnish to B. sundry means, and told him to find "somebody" to perfect the preparations to carry out a certain plan. I am that "somebody," and it was very silly in you to imagine that the plan could be perfected and my co-operation secured without my understanding anything about it. I left my occupations, by which I supported my family, and I foolishly but firmly trusted to your fulfilling your engagements. My children in Europe were, while I was in the West, turned starving into the street—ruffians do not frequent exclusively the Missouri border. Respecting the sorrow for the distress of my family, which you now for the first time express, I can only say that the misery has been caused by you and yours; and if the sorrow were real, it would have been shown by having immediately forwarded funds to Paris. Instead of which, you cast about for an excuse for doing nothing, and select the most singular and jesuitical pretext that I stand in the way of your doing what is right. What, my anger in 1858 is a valid justification for you and your committee-men having in the preceding August (1857) neglected to fulfill your engagements? How exact an exemplification of the fable of a wolf picking a quarrel with a weaker animal for troubling the water upstream. I will not be silent. Has anything ever been done for the mild, gentle, submissive and peaceful Treasurer of the Fugitive-Slave Protective Society, defrauded out of \$1,500 by the dissolving committee, or for the hundreds of others cheated by the bogus humanitarians?

In this very city I find that the printer of the (Anti-Slavery) Era was coaxed to print on credit for the Republican Committee, which honorable body "dissolved," leaving him \$2,500 minus. "Nobody responsible." The editor of the Era was induced to start a daily on the delusive promises of leading humanitarians. One of them, who promised to send in one hundred subscriptions, did not procure one, or even subscribe himself. The rest of the promises proved to be much of the same stamp.

I repeat that what has been done to me by the humanitarians is no other than it is the habit to do to all, only the consequences have been more serious in my case than in the others. The victims are to blame for having submitted in silence, and having thus allowed others to be cheated, and the evil to assume gigantic proportions. Had the sufferers resisted, as I do, and shall continue to do, the system of cheating by committees would long ago have been brought to a close. Do the Southerners cheat their partisans? They are not such fools. How lamentable it is that no New-Englander of influence and eloquence can be found who dares jeopardize his popularity by boldly telling the humanitarians that cheating must cease.

The wide circulation among Abolitionists of my project of slave stampedes may be very advantageous, because it may lead to its adoption, for it is so practical that even though a general idea of the plan were, through any imprudence before execution, to reach the ears of the pro-slaveryites, they would not find it an easy matter to prevent it, not knowing the precise spot whence the first (or next) lot would be spirited away. That plan would really be hitting Slavery blows which it could hardly parry, and which must produce a great effect; and, so that it be done, I care not who accomplishes the object. Abolitionists must, however, in the interest of the cause, understand that Brown and his associate New-England speculators cannot be trusted to undertake any project, because they have a pet scheme of private gain to gratify. For this reason it should also be understood widely that the "secret service" fund which you and yours collect professedly for the prosecution of the "well-matured plan" is not for that, but is for the creation of a cotton panic through the alarm at a probable interruption or a sensible diminution of the supply, which panic, beforehand known to you and

yours as a thing about to be, would at one sweep bring from the exchanges sacks of dollars into the coffers of half a dozen managers, at the expense of the abolition cause, the blood of the slaves, and the liberty of the free colored people.

Finding that B. had deceived me, and having heard you highly spoken of by an esteemed friend of mine, I did for some time think that possibly Brown might be deceiving you and might be acting without your concurrence. Your letter of the 10th inst. sets that at rest, for you declare (underlining the same) that he (B.) enjoys your entire confidence. Your assertion that you are not responsible for his acts is a cowardly shirking of responsibility, and is a simple absurdity in regard to such acts as you are knowingly furnishing him with the means to accomplish. Such reasoning is on a par with your presumption, that I have no claim on you because you did not personally engage me to go West, but left that to your confidential agent to do, and you did not know me to be the "somebody" who was engaged to go.

H. FORBES.

To Dr. S. G. Howe, M. D., Boston, Mass.

These letters show conclusively that FORBES was a party to the plot of insurrection from the very beginning:—that he was engaged in it with BROWN, though the two differed as to the precise plan which should be adopted; that they met at Tabor, in Java, and, after consultation with other parties, agreed upon a modified plan, the supervision of which FORBES urged should be intrusted to a Committee:—that FORBES, becoming desperate from the wretched condition of his family, and outraged by the failure of the men on whose behalf and in whose service he supposed himself to be acting, became disgusted with the affair, threatened its exposure, and finally demanded that the whole project should be abandoned, and BROWN forced to give up the arms in his possession. There seems to be no doubt that Dr. HOWE, Mr. SANBORN and some others were familiar with the scheme, and gave it their active encouragement, and that FORBES disclosed it in more or less detail to Gov. SEWARD, Mr. SUMNER, Gov. CHASE, of Ohio, Gov. FLETCHER, of Vermont, and AMOS LAWRENCE of Boston, though these gentlemen do not seem to have taken any active part in the affair, or to have given it any countenance or support. The latest of these letters is dated over a year ago, and it is not likely that Col. FORBES was admitted to a knowledge of any of the subsequent arrangements. Whether BROWN's final movement was in conformity with the programme, or an impatient and premature step of his own, we have not as yet the means of judging.