

"The Increase of Negroes - The Position of the Wheeling Intelligencer,"  
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**The Increase of Negroes. The Position of the Wheeling Intelligencer.**

[From the New York Post, of yesterday.]

Amid the mad vociferations of the southern papers,—while some, like the *Charleston Courier* and *Savannah Republican*, cry out for the instant extinction of Brown, and others talk absurdly of demanding the surrender of his presumed accomplices from the executives of the northern states—there is one Virginia editor, at least, who is disposed to keep hold of his wits in the flurry, and to inquire whether late incidents may not have more than one import. We refer to the *Wheeling Intelligencer*, whose disquisition is copied into another part of this sheet.]

Wheeling is in the western part of the state of Virginia, where the influence of the slave-breeder is not so omnipotent as it is elsewhere, and where the people are in a position to consider recent events in a calmer and more philo-philic spirit than the majority of their colleagues. They have no such overwhelming interest in the existence and extension of slavery as to blind their eyes to its evils, and no such insane devotion to party as to forget all distinctions of principle, and all considerations of immediate or future well-being, in the single hope of achieving a transient political triumph. Slavery, they say, is here; one of the inevitable incidents of it is such outbreaks as that at Harper's Ferry; and the duty of sane men is, not to inflame the prejudices of localities, but to inquire as to what is to be done.

The *Wheeling* print, after rebuking the extravagances of the abolitionists, deduces the instruction which the South ought to derive from this affair. Southern society, it alleges, is so organized that disorders of the kind are intrinsic to it, and may recur at any moment. A servile population, outnumbering other classes, having few sympathies with them, and whose ranks are constantly recruited by a restless intellectual element through the process of amalgamation, must always be a dangerous population. Let the masters boast as they please of the attachment of their servants, let them demonstrate, as they easily may, the utter folly and impracticableness of insurrections, the history of every slave-society shows that refractory attempts will be made, at the cost of life, property, and social security.

The *Intelligencer*, refers in proof of its position, to the experiences of St. Domingo and the Southampton massacre, but it might have readily extended the range of its illustrations.—Ancient authorities abound in instances of the restlessness of the servile classes in all the states of antiquity, and of their terrible reactions against the superior orders. In Sparta, it is well known, they were periodically murdered by hundreds to get rid of the increase, and in the other societies of Greece the repressive measures resorted to were scarcely less cruel and inhuman. Under the Roman republic, where a larger scheme of politics obviated a resort to such summary remedies, slave revolts were frequent. An incessant vigilance, and the perfect organization of the Roman government and armies, generally nipped them in the bud, although they were none the less causes of unabating disquietude and care. As the compactness of the republic, however, was relaxed by the diffusion of its power over a larger extent of territory, the dangers of these outbreaks became more formidable. The island of Sicily fell completely into the hands of armed bodies of slaves, who glutted their vengeance in the most frightful atrocities; and from Sicily the contagion spread to the continent; where an almost universal insurrection took place. It required all the energy of Rome, mistress as

she was of Carthage, Corinth and Numantia, to suppress this intestine war, more difficult and disastrous than any of her foreign conquests. Later insurrections, especially those which included the gladiators, the readers of Roman history will readily bring to their minds.

In these ancient revolts, it is true, the actors were not Africans, but Europeans—men of the same general stock, if not of the same particular races and tribes, as their masters—they were Germans, Gauls, Samaritans and Spaniards—and it may be argued that less danger may be apprehended from the docile and ignorant black races than from the irritable and impetuous ancestors of the modern civilized nations of Europe; but the Virginia print meets this objection, admitting it to be well taken, with a few pregnant facts. The blood of the white races is rapidly commingling with that of the blacks, who, in its own expressive phrase, are sloughing off the torper and obtuseness which is imputed to their minds, and acquiring the characteristics of the superior breed. Not only do the mixed sort imbibe a greater energy and intelligence, but along with it a keener consciousness of their position, and that morbid and sullen disposition which renders them an easy prey and a powerful implement to the fanatic. All the worst cases of crime, we are told, all the most refractory and stubborn resistance to law, which occur in the south, are the work of those who share the blood of the whites.

These are the views of the Virginia print, and they certainly deserve the attention of the people of the state. Instead of allowing themselves to be diverted from the actual facts of their condition by the interested clamors of the slave-breeders and the reckless schemes of politicians, they should take up the question manfully and resolutely, and meet the evil. Nothing will be gained by idle reproaches of the North. The danger is not in the North, but in the South. It springs out of the slave institution itself, and is fostered by those who would give a new vitality to it by extension and by importation.—As the *Wheeling Intelligencer* observes, there always will be, in every community, extreme and fanatical persons who will endeavor to foment mischief; so there will always be at the North plotters against the South; but the great body of the northern people have no desire nor intention to interfere with slavery within its present limits, except by persuasion and argument. They are unalterably opposed to the spread of it, as the South ought to be, but they are willing to leave the extinction of it in the states to the certain influences of commerce, of good sense, of the sentiment of justice and truth, and the march of civilization.

One aspect of these slave revolts, which has often presented itself to our mind, has been impressed upon us with renewed force by the circumstances of the Harper's Ferry stampede. It is the panic by which they must ever be accompanied. No matter how slight the spark, the apparent combustion is terrific. Old Brown, with his score of followers, has set the entire commonwealth in commotion, and arrested the gaze of the world. The same number of men, with the same means, anywhere else, might have been suppressed by the ordinary police of the village. In a slave community they require the interposition of Governors, Presidents, marines, militia and mobs. The fancied danger transcends the real danger. A spectre always stalks behind the incendiary, of enormous and shldowy proportions; not one spectre only, but a troop of spectres; such a caravan as Freiligrath describes in his poem of the desert, when the sand-wreaths seem to twirl into fearful shapes, and legions of dusky warriors come pressing onward in terrible array. The pilgrim trembles, and the very camels and horses grow frantic, because they fear the bursting of the Simoon.

Slave Stampedes on the Southern Borderlands

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