

"What the Harper's Ferry Affair Proves," Newark (NJ) Centinel of Freedom,
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What the Harper's Ferry Affair Proves.

We have nothing to do in this State with John Brown, Hugh Forbes, or any other individual connected with the Harper's Ferry affair, or anything leading to it, except to lament that such a mad attempt has been made. The manly Brown and the mean foreigner Forbes, have had no intercourse with our citizens, and were it not for the bragadoctas speeches of the loquacious and over-excited Gov. Wise, who has thereby done no credit to his State, and especially for the mixing it up, in New York fashion, with politics and the pending elections in New York. We could afford to mention and mourn the Virginian occurrence as merely an interesting piece of news and then dismiss it for some other intelligence. But we have the misfortune to be within earshot of the roaring surges of the metropolitan tide, which bears upon its wild waves the wrecks of sober principles, and overwhelms truth argument and common sense itself in a paroxysm of temporary madness. Probably hypocrisy more than fanaticism rules the hour, for property has an inspiration at least as powerful as passion. But we stand aloof from the gale, which is raging in Virginia and New York, and can overlook, without participating in the cry for vengeance or for justice, in one quarter, or the loud maledictions, mingled with the sobs of lamentation in another.

As observing and feeling witnesses, however, we must confess that one striking fact appears pretty distinctly amid the fog and confusion of the passing tempest. Neither complicity nor even sympathy in this affair is brought home to any of the individuals in the free States, who have been considered the leaders of the Republicans, or even of the abolitionists. This is remarkable, and was not expected by the community at large, we will venture to say, after so many imputations made daily for many years, that those leaders, if not their parties, were desirous and actually plotting to abolish slavery in the States, where it constitutionally exists.

Here was an opportunity for such to countenance some such conspiracy. A most heroic and competent grand conspirator, so difficult to obtain, is furnished to their wishes in the person of John Brown, a profoundly sincere zealot, wonderfully resolute and brave, unflinching, determined, perse-

vering, and trusty. He was experienced too in the very roughest warfare. Where or when could a man of superior qualities for the work be found than John Brown, so willing and so able? And yet we have failed to see any prominent individual implicated among those at the north, who have been so long stigmatized as continually desiring and plotting the emancipation of southern slaves, and the destruction of the slave institution. The revelations of the trading friend of liberty—Hugh Forbes, even if credited, fix no charge, that any body mentioned by him was at all concerned in the Harper's Ferry enterprise. It was a stampede undertaking, nothing more, conceived and executed by Capt. Brown on his own account, and strengthened, if not suggested, by the memory of his own wrongs, as well as by a mad and deep enthusiasm for the liberty of the slave. Of course no love for the peculiar institution appears in these disclosures. This was not looked for, and it could not rationally be looked for, because no love for it existed even at the south itself among their first statesmen and distinguished persons, till a very recent period.—The north continues of the same faith still, as that held and cherished by Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Marshall, and the like; and have not been converted to that of the interested southern politicians of the present day. This is its glory, not its fault.

The fact which has been noticed is certainly highly honorable to the northern population. Only some seventeen white men could be found by Brown as associates in an enterprise long cherished, and deliberately prepared by himself and sons. Even his reputation for fitness for the undertaking could elicit no spark of sympathy, much less assistance from any respectable individual in the free States. Should not such a fact put to silence the thousands of accusations that are continually leveled against northern citizens, branding them with a secret desire it not effort to desolate the south, if they do not happen to be able to think, that slavery is a blessing to the black man, and a glory to the country? If the citizens in the free states can not bring themselves to believe, that the historians among their posterity, will not speak of the institution of slavery as a blot upon the people of this otherwise free land, the disclosures elicited by the Harper's Ferry outbreak ought to prevent calumniators from charging upon them the scheme of revolutionizing the slave states, or any design of interfering with the property of citizens there.

Slave Stampedes on the Southern Borderlands

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