

The Harper's Ferry Insurrection

We have heretofore had occasion to refer to the manner in which the Abolition Republican press of this State has made comments on the recent attempt at insurrection and servile war in Virginia, and to call attention to the deep sympathy apparent in all that has been said by us for old Brown and his coadjutors in crime, and the unmistakable evidences of regret that the attempt was not successful, and that the horrors of a country laid waste and its white inhabitants murdered and destroyed by the black population, instigated and led on by such fiends as old Brown and his colleagues there with him, under the promptings and patronage of the chief spirits of the Republican party in this and other States, were not among the things to which the public attention could be called, as the first act in the "irrepressible conflict" drama, which it has been prognosticated by the highest lights in the Republican party, was an inevitable thing, and sooner or later must come upon the country. It is true, now that the plan has failed and almost all of the wicked men who were engaged in it have lost their lives, we are told that Brown was a crazy man, that the wrongs he suffered in Kansas, at the hands of the pro-slavery men of that territory, have made him a maniac, and induced him to commit the present rash act. This excuse will not do. Brown and his confederates have been engaged in the abolition business for ten years, and his conduct in Kansas was simply to perform his part in the play which has been going on, its origin dating back far beyond the Kansas times. The Cincinnati Gazette sent a reporter to Harper's Ferry, who has detailed a conversation between Brown and several gentlemen, among whom was Mr. Vallandigham of Ohio, which is published in the Gazette of Friday. We extract two questions put by Mr. Vallandigham, and Brown's answers, in relation to the organization to which Brown belongs, and of which he was at this time the leader. They are as follows.

Mr. V.—What time did you commence your organization over in Canada?

B.—It occurred about ten years ago. If I remember right, it was, I think, in 1849.

Mr. V.—Who was the secretary?

B.—That I would not tell if I recollect, but I do not remember. I think the officers were elected in May, 1858. I may answer incorrectly, but not intentionally. My head is a little confused by wounds, and my memory of dates and such like is somewhat confused.

It thus appears that the organization dates back to 1849, and hence his conduct as a leader is not to be attributed to the cause assigned by the Republican press. That the matter was known in the free States, and especially in Ohio, there can be no doubt, and that it had "aid and comfort" from prominent Republican politicians is quite certain. We give you some further questions and the answers of Brown. After Mr. Vallandigham had questioned him as to his being in Ohio, and his affirmative answers, the following occurred:

Mr. V.—Did you see anything of Joshua R. Giddings there?

B.—I did meet him.

Mr. V.—Did you consult with him?

B.—If I did, I would not tell you, of course, anything that would implicate Mr. Giddings, but I certainly saw him and had a conversation with him.

Mr. V.—About the rescue case?

B.—Yes, I did hear him express his opinion on it very freely and frankly.

Mr. V.—Justifying it?

B.—Yes sir; I do not compromise him in saying that.

A Bystander.—Did you go out to Kansas under the auspices of the Emigrant Aid Society?

B.—No sir; I went under the auspices of old John Brown, and nobody else.

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

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

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

B.—I have had correspondence.

After reading the above answers from Brown who can have any doubt of the fact that Joshua R. Giddings was known to the intentions of Brown. Mr. Giddings is at the head of the State Central Committee of the Republican party of Ohio, and if he was cognizant of the contemplated movement, how many of his colleagues on that committee were also informed about it? The Christian Anti Slavery Convention which met in this city last summer preached precisely the same doctrines that Brown attempted to put in practice in Virginia. The political preachers and other fanatics who attended that notable assemblage, were not, we presume ignorant of what was in contemplation, as Brown is one of their number, and felt that it was his highest christian duty to do what he attempted. On that point his answers to questions are conclusive. Here they are:

Bystander.—Do you consider it a religious movement?

B.—It is in my opinion the greatest service a man can render to God.

Bystander.—Do you consider yourself an instrument in the hands of Providence?

B.—I do.

Bystander.—Upon what principle do you justify your acts?

B.—By the golden rule. I pity the poor in bondage. That is why I am here. It is not to gratify any personal animosity, or feeling of revenge or of a vindictive spirit. It is my sympathy with the oppressed and wronged that are as good as you, and as precious in the sight of God.

That the Republican party should be held responsible for what occurred at Harper's Ferry, will be the judgment of all impartial men, and it is not therefore surprising that the leading papers of that party are so restless under the crushing disclosures that are made. The negroes in New York City admit that the conspiracy was understood there, and state that the 21st of October, was the day on which the arsenal at Harper's Ferry was to be taken possession of, that that was to be the signal for a general uprising in Maryland and Virginia, and that some one connected with the execution of the plan must have erred as to the day. Brown says he was to have had aid from Maryland, Kentucky, North and South Carolina and Canada. It is fortunate that the blunder occurred and that thus a servile war was averted. We will no doubt have further and important developments in the immense correspondence of Brown which has fallen into the hands of the authorities. Every one however is already enabled to judge as to where the responsibility rests.