The Daily Picayune.

WHERE IS THE RESPONSIBILITY?

The mails are just beginning to bring us details, as published in the Northern journals, of the outbreak at Harper's Ferry, the sudden rising and the instant suppression of the insurrection.

They are very copious, but they add little to our knowledge of the extent of the conspiracy or the degree of support which it had. They are full of unexplained and mysterious correspondences, especially the nomination of arms and ammunition, which, if they are correctly described, must have cost large sums and been transported from a considerable distance. Reports speak of discussions between abolitionists and proofs of concert with notorious men in the Western and Southern States. This is, however, for the most part speculation, at least it is possible that the design may have been sufficient to satisfy the mind, and in such grave matters, we are not to rest anything involving terrope to monstrous suspicion or rumor.

There is enough in the ascertained facts to make the lives of those who have been against individuals without full proof, and we do not doubt that the investigation will be prosecuted with zeal, and a thorough determination to bring the perpetrators to justice. But the result may be traced to the repetition of the merit, and all the pains in which an out-of-bed country can reach them.

That there has been collusion with or at least an understanding between persons in various parts of the country, is apparent, but the number and station of the confederates, their weight in the power of the public opinion, the difficulty of raising a power over public opinion, and the extent of the evil which the evidence is very slight, and we must deal with presumptions and probabilities.

The attempt was so vast in all its aspects, in its determination to deck itself with a lordly appearance of an overwhelming force as to bring against any possible number of insurgents in the shortest possible time; the means provided were so absurdly inadequate to any possible end that the whole scheme was too trifling, too simple and too unwise to believe that it has been a part of a conspiracy, countenanced by rational men, over anything more than the freak of disinterested individuals of desperate and desperate purposes.

The anti-slavery party of the North, while it breeds such men, and furnishes the aliment which strengthens them, and the stimulants which excite them, is too wise to turn its eyes to any idea of such a project, and in this point of view, as well as in the consideration of the measures which, incidentally or not, beget such pupils and such fruits. We are, therefore, slow to credit the report that any considerable number of responsible persons in the Northern States, can have been found to have been committing, or advising actions to this insurrectionary movement.

Enthusiasm and desperadoes may borrow this part of their numbers and processes, but this will be few, and they will be repudiated by the honest sentiments of the mass of respectable Americans. The slave leaders will prompt them to repentance and an inexorable folly, what they will not join in denouncing as a crime against humanity, and justice and against society and the State. In this view of things, and presented to such a Northern eye, a vivid and forceful picture of the effects upon the ignorant, the deceived, and the wicked, of the preaching of the gospel and the union of the Church.
gain such an ascendency over the minds of the Northern people, and have been made more powerful and more dangerous by being used as the means by which aspiring politicians and selfish demagogues seek to ride into power and office. The fools that became the criminals and have perished in their folly, as all such will do when they fling themselves against the ramparts with which the South can protect itself against this incendiarism, are themselves victims of those false teachers, who are themselves morally guilty of the very offenses they destroy entirely, and responsible for the consequences they may affect to deplore. They are guilty of all the mischief done by the firebrands with which they have armed the heads of the wicked.

There is no apprehension in the Southern States that the designs of their enemies can be accomplished by such means as those of which the Harper's Ferry revolt is an example. Forewarned, they are capable of perfect self-protection against this species of attacks. But they are unwilling to be put to the universal necessity of the rigorous measures of precaution which this state of things, if continued and extended, would require, and they are anxious to live in peace with their Northern brethren, instead of being ever enounced against them as natural enemies. If we are to live together in kindness, the temper and practices which have incited the disorders and those who indulged in them or connived at them, and to whose rash teachings the insane excesses are distinctly traceable as their sources, must be rebuked by public opinion, in that way in which a rebuke will be most keenly felt, in the overthrow of their political fortunes, and their banishment from station, as the exponents of Northern opinions.

If such a consummation is ever to be effected, and we have our hopes that it is within the reach of a full, earnest and honest struggle, by the constitutional men of the North acting together, it must be rapidly advanced by such developments as those in Virginia, of the tendencies of the doctrines which are taught in the journals of the extreme partisans press, and proclaimed by the anti-slavery press; and thus out of the present evil may be plucked the germ of a great good.

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