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The Passage of the Body to North Elba—The Funeral —Speeches of J.M. McKim and Wendell Phillips.

TROY, Dec. 10, 1859.

The little cortege, upon whom devolved the duty of following the remains of John Brown to their final resting-place have fulfilled that duty, and I sit down to complete for *The Tribune* the history of the master. You have already published a record of events up to the time of the arrival of the body in this city, and at this point I commence my narrative.

The party reached Troy on Monday afternoon. at 2 o'clock, and stopped at the American House. They came without notice, but news of their arrival soon spread, and some of the most respectable people of the place called to express their condolence with Mrs. Brown and to testify to the gentlemen who accompanied her their respect for their mission.

The American House is a temperance hotel, and had been Capt. Brown's usual stopping-place when in this city. The landlord showed, with much pride, the autograph of John Brown in several places on his register, and said that he had been offered tempting prices if he would consent to part with them. The party only tarried long enough to make their connections with the next train North; But, during this brief space, a large number of persons, including act a few of the colored class, sought and found an opportunity of shielding Mrs. Brown's head, in taken of their sympathy. They would have formed a percussion to accompany her from the hotel to the depot, but a gentleman, fearing it might be painful to Mrs. Brown's feelings, and unwilling to add, oven in the slightest degree, to her trials, discouraged them.

It was at the American House that Oliver Brown took leave of his young bride in September last, shortly before the affair at Harper's Ferry, in which he lost his life. Mr. Brown had indicated it in his last interview with his wife, as a proper place for her to stop at on her way home.

Starting at 4 o'clock P.M., the party reached Rutland, Vt., about 10; there they remained until 5 the next morning, at which hour they resumed their journey, and at 10 A.M. reached Vergennes, Vt. There they stopped at the fine large hotel kept by the gentlemanly Messrs. Stevens, where they were most hospitably entertained, and

all their wants provided for. The news that the window of John Brown had arrived with the body of her husband spread like wild-fire. Soon the Hotel was crowded by leading citizens of the place who came to express their respect and sympathy. Carriages were provided in which to convey the body and the party accompanying it to the Lake shore. A procession was formed in front, noiselessly and in a very short space of time, and, when the hour came to start, all moved forward amid the tolling of solemn bells. Arrived at the bridge over Otter Creak, a distance of about a third of a mile, the gentlemen composing the procession halted, and, forming themselves into a double line and uncovering their heads, allowed the body, with the stricken widow and her friends, to pass through; the thus they took their leave. It was a spontaneous tribute, and an affecting sight.

At the Lake shore a boat was in readiness, which, deflecting from its usual course, landed the party close by the town of Westport; thus, by saving time and trouble, accelerating them on their journey. Mrs. Brown was now among the friends and familiar acquaintances of her husband, and every kindness that the occasion called for was freely bestowed; and her companions, too, shared in the good will which was manifested for her. Without delay conveyances were provided, and the little cortege was soon on its way to Elizabethtown, where they were to tarry for the night. A heavy rain was falling, and the snow was disappearing so fast that it had been deemed best to substitute wheel-carriages for sleighs. On reaching Elizabethtown, which is the seat of justice of Essex, the party stopped at the hotel kept by E.A. Adams, Esq., who is also Sheriff of the County. Mr. Adams at once offered the Court-House as a place in which to deposit the body for the night, with an assurance that a little company should be formed to guard it. This offer was accepted, and in a few minutes, raining as it was, and without any previous notice, a respectable procession was formed, and the body borne to its temporary resting-place. The house was soon filled by the leading residents of the town, eager to learn from Messrs. Phillips and McKim all the particulars of the execution. They found it hard to realize that their old friend and fellow-citizen, the man whom they had known so well, and only known to respect, had actually been put to death. They had not thought that, in the last extremity, Virginia would do the bloody deed. They did not see how Gov. Wise could have deliberately consented to the death of such a man.

The party were now within twenty-five miles of their destination. But the road lay over a mountain, and was well-nigh impassable; so that, short as was the distance, it would take the whole of the next day (Wednesday) to accomplish the journey. Mr. Henry Adams, a son of the sheriff, volunteered to start off in the night, with a swift horse, to notify the family of the party's approach. Six young men, including several lawyers of the place, took it upon themselves to sit up all night in the court-house as a guard of the body. Among them were O. Abel, Jr., J.Q. Dickinson, R. Hand, and Mr. Haskell; the names of the other two I did not learn. Among the gentlemen who called to express their sympathy with Mrs. Brown, and to pay their respects to the escort, were Judge Hall, the Hon. A. Kellogg, late Member of Congress, G.L. Nicholson, Esq., and many others, all without respect of party.

At daylight the next morning, the journey was resumed. The roads were found to be even worse than was anticipated. At 10 o'clock, the party arrived at the house of Phineas Norton, an old friend of Mr. Brown, living in the town of Keene. It had taken all that time to accomplish these eight miles. Mr. Norton welcomed them most hospitably. He had known Mr. Brown well, and loved him dearly. He had not been able to realize that the sentence of death would really be executed. The proof furnished by the coffin containing the dead body quite overcame him.

After stopping a short time for refreshment, the party again started on their way. Slowly they climbed the mountain pass, and as slowly descended on the other side. The sun had set before they reached North Elba, and it was after night when they approached the house to which they were destined. As they drew nigh, they saw moving lights, which, on their nearer approach, proved to be lanterns in the hands of men who had come out to meet them. By these, they were conducted in silence to the house. Not a word was spoken. These friends had been waiting all the afternoon in anxious expectation, and, unable to bear the suspense any longer, had come out to ascertain, if possible, the cause of the delay. The carriage which bore Mrs. Brown stopped at the door. She alighted with difficulty, being much agitated. Instantly there was a sharp, low cry of 'Mother!' and, in answer, another in the same tone of mingled agony and tenderness, 'O! Anna!' and the mother and daughter were locked in a long, convulsed embrace. Then followed the same scene with the next daughter, Sarah; and then Ellen, the little girl of five, was brought, and another burst of anguish and love ensued. Then came the daughter-in-law, Oliver's widow, and there went up a low wail, before which flint itself would have softened. It was a scene entirely beyond description.

But soon all was composed. The strangers had been introduced. Emotion had been put under restraint—an accustomed task with these people—and all was quiet. The evening meal had been ready for some time, and the family and guests, who by this time had received some accessions to their number, took their seats. Supper was soon dispatched; no one, cold and wearisome as had been the day's travel, was much disposed to eat.

In a few moments, Mrs. Brown announced to Mr. McKim and Mr. Phillips, that the family were all gathered in another room, waiting anxiously to hear a recital of what had happened; and the rest were invited to join them. There was Salmon Brown, the only son at home, an intelligent-looking and handsome man of 23, tall, stout, with rich auburn hair, and a full and becoming beard; then there was Ruth Thompson, the eldest daughter, a child of John Brown by his first wife; then the daughters and daughters-in-law already alluded to, besides some others whose names I do not recollect.

Mr. McKim, at Mrs. Brown's request, began, and related, as well as he could in so short a space as was allowed, all that had happened of particular interest to them

from the time of their mother's arrival in Philadelphia, on the 12th of Nov. up to that moment.

When Mr. McKim had finished, Mr. Phillips took up the theme, and, in the tender and most beautiful manner, pursued it, till all tears were wiped away. A holy, pensive joy seemed gradually to dispel all grief, and a becoming filial and conjugal pride to reconcile these stricken ones to their destiny.

It was a late hour, and the duties and trials of the morrow admonished the party that some of them had need of rest.

Mr. Brown had expressed a desire that his body should be laid in the shadow of a rock, not far from his house. This rock, after the more striking features of the surrounding scenery, was the first object to arrest my attention. It stands about fifty feet from the house, is about eight feet in height, and from fifteen to twenty feet square. It is a very picturesque aspect, and the recollection of it would naturally suggest to the mind of Mr. Brown a place for the interment of his body.

The Brown Farm at North Elba is on the highest arable spot of land in the State, if, indeed, soil so hard and sterile can be called arable. The question was asked in my hearing, why Mr. Brown should have chosen a spot so difficult of cultivation, and yielding so poor a requital to labor? and the answer was, that he had come there in pursuance of the great purpose of his life. The land formerly belonged to Gerrit Smith, and lies near to those large tracts which that gentleman had presented as a free gift to contain colored people, and through, them to benefit their race, that he had originally come to a place so unpromising to the agriculturist.

The funeral was to take place at 1 o'clock from the house; by that time the neighbors were gathered, and all were ready. The country is sparsely settled, and there was room, with some crowding, for all who came. The services were commenced with a hymn, which had been a great favorite with Mr. Brown, and with which it was said he had successively sung all his children to sleep:—

'Blow e the trumpet, blow
The gladly solemn sound;
Let all the nations know.
To earth's remotest bound,
The year of jubilee has come,'

It was sung to the good old tune of Lenox. It will be at once recognized by all who know anything about the old-fashioned sacred music, and it will readily be seen why it was a favorite with Mr. Brown. The air has a stirring, half-military ring, and the words a smack of liberty. Its themes are 'jubilee,' 'ransom,' and it seems to blow the trumpet of freedom.

After the hymn, followed an impressive prayer by the Rev. Joshua Young, of Burlington, Vt. It was a spontaneous offering, as will be readily inferred when I say that Mr. Young, with his friend Mr. Bigelow, had travelled all night through the storm and over the dismal mountain to be present at the burial.

Mr. J. Miler McKim, of Philadelphia, then made some very feeling, pertinent and impressive remarks.

Mr. McKim concluded with exhortations to the family and friends as he comforted assuring them that by their sacrifices they had made large contributions to the cause of Freedom and Humanity; that in this respect their position was an honorable, and by many would be regarded as an enviable one, and that the hearts of tens of thousands beat in the deepest sympathy with them.

SPEECH OF WENDELL PHILIP.

WENDELL PHILLIPS followed Mr. McKim, and said

How feeble words seem here! How can I hope to utter what your hearts are full of? I fear to disturb the harmony which his life breathes round this home. One and another of you, his neighbors, say, 'I have known him five years, 'I have known him ten years.' It seems to me as if we had none of us known him. How our admiring, loving wonder has grown, day by day, as he has unfolded trait after trait of earnest, brave, tender, Christian life! We see him walking with radiant, serene face to the scaffold, and think what an iron heart, what devoted faith! We take up his letters, beginning, 'My dear wife and children, every one of them'—see him stoop on his way to the scaffold and kiss that negro child—and this iron heart seems all tenderness. Marvellous old man! We have hardly said it when the loved forms of his sons, in the bloom of young devotion, encircle him, and we remember he is not alone, only the majestic center of a group. Your neighbor farmer went, surrounded by his household, to tell then slaves these were still hearts and right arms ready and nerved for their services. From this roof four, from a neighboring one two, to make up that score of heroes. How resolute each looked into the face of Virginia, how loyally each stood at his forlorn post, meeting death cheerfully till that master voice said, 'It is enough.' And these weeping children and widows seem so lifted up and consecrated by long, single-hearted devotion to his great purpose, that we dare to remind them even now, in this first bitter hour, how blessed they are in the privilege of thinking that in the last throbs of those brave young hearts, which lie buried on the banks of the Shenandoah, thoughts of them mingled with love to God and hope for the slave. He has abolished Slavery in Virginia. You may say this is too much. Our neighbors are the last men we know. The hours that pass us are the ones that we appreciate the least.— Men walked Boston streets, when night fell in Bunker's Hill, and *pitied* Warren, saying, 'Foolish man! Thrown away his life! Why didn't he measure his means better? We see him standing colocoal that day on the blood-stained sod, and severing the tie that bound Boston to Great Britain. That night

George III. cased to rule in New England. History will date Virginia Emancipation from Harper's Ferry. True, the slave is still there. So, when the tempest uproots a pine on your hills, it looks green for months—a year or two. Still, it is timber, not a tree. John Brown has loosened the roots of the slave system; it only breathes—it does not live—hereafter. Men say, 'How coolly brave!' But in him matchless courage seems the least of his merits. How gentleman graced it! When the frightened town wished to bear off the body of the Mayor, a man said, 'I will go, Miss Fouke, under their rifles, if you will stand between them and me.' He knew he could trust their gentle respect for women, those brave Northern boys. He was right. He went in the thick of the fight, and bore off the body in safety. That same girl flung herself between Virginia rifles and your brave young Thompson. They had no pity. The merciless bullet reached him, spite of woman's prayers, though the fight had long been over. How God has blessed him! How truly he may say, 'I have fought a good fight, I have *finished* my course.' Truly he has *finished*—done his work. God granted him the privilege to look upon his work accomplished. He said, 'I will show the South that twenty men can take possession of a town, hold it twenty-four hours, and carry away all the slaves who wish to escape. Did he not do it?— On Monday night he stood master of Harper's Ferry—could have left unchecked with a score or hundred slaves. Let us thank God for the fifteen or twenty that did escape, and are safe under the British flag. The wide sympathy and secret approval are shown by the eager, quivering lips of lovers of slavery asking 'Oh, why did he not take his victory and go away?' Who checked him at last? Not started Virginia. Her he had conquered. The Union crushed—seemed to crush him. In reality God said, 'Your work is done; you have proved that a slave State is only Fear in the mask of Deepotism; come up higher, and baptize by your martyrdom a million hearts into holier life.' Surely such a life is no failure. How vast the change in men's hearts! Insurrection was a harsh, horrid word to millions a month ago. John Brown went a whole generation beyond it, claiming the right for white men to help the slave to freedom by arms. And now men run up and down, not disputing his principle, but trying to frame excuses for Virginia's hanging of so pure, honest, high-hearted, and heroic a man. Virginia stands at the bar of the civilized world on trial. Round her victim crowd the apostles and martyrs all the brave, high souls who have said 'God is God,' and trodden wicked laws under their feet. As I stood looking on his grandfather's gravestones, brought here from Connecticut, telling, as it does, of his death in the Revolution, I thought I could hear our hero saint saying, 'My fathers gave their swords to the oppressor—the slave still sinks before the pledged force of this nation. I give my sword to the slave my fathers forgot. If any swords ever reflected the smile of Heaven, surely it was those drawn at Harper's Ferry. If our God is ever the Lord of Hosts, making one man chase a thousand, surely that little band might claim him for their captain. Others have fought for themselves and died for their own rights. This man died for a race in whose blood he had no share. Harper's Ferry was no single hour, standing alone—taken out from a common life—it was the flowering of fifty years of single hearted devotion. He must have lived wholly for one great idea, when these who owe their being to him, and these whom love has joined, group so harmoniously around him, each accepting serenely his and her

part. I feel honored to stand under such a roof. Hereafter you will tell children standing at your knees, 'I saw John Brown buried—I sat under his roof.' Thank God for such a matter. Could we have asked a nobler representative of the Christian North putting her foot on the accursed system of Slavery? As time passes and these hours float back into history, men will see against the clear December sky that gallows, and round it thousands of armed men guarding Virginia from her slaves. On the other side, the serene face of that calm old man, as he stoops to kiss the child of a forlorn race. Thank God for our emblem. May he soon bring Virginia to blot out hours in repentant shame, and cover that hateful gallows and soldiery with thousands of broken fetters! What lesson shall these lips teach us? Before that still, calm brow, let us take a now baptism. How can we stand here without a fresh and utter conservation? These tears! how shall we dare even to offer consolation? Only lips fresh from such a vow have the right to mingle their wards with your tears. We envy you your never place to these noble children of God. I do not believe Slavery will go down in blood. Ours is the age of thought. Hearts are stronger than swords. That last forenoon! How sublime its lesson! the Christian one of conscience—of truth. Virginia is weak because each man's heart said amen to John Brown. His words—they are stronger even than his rifles.— These crushed a State. Those have changed the thoughts of millions and will yet crush Slavery. Men said, 'Would he had died in arms'—God ordered better, and granted to him and the slave those noble prison hours—that single hour of death, granted him a higher than the soldier's place, that of teacher the echoes of his rifles have died away in the hills—a million hearts guard his words. God bless this roof—make it bless us. We dare not say bless you, children of this home; you stand nearer to one whose lips God touched, and we rather bend for your blessings. God make us all worthier of him whose dust we lay among these hills he loved. Here he girded himself, and went forth to battle. Fuller success than his heart ever dreamed God granted him. He sleeps in the blessings of the crushed and the peer, and men believe more firmly in virtue, now that such a man has lived. Standing here, let us thank God for a farmer faith and faller hope.

Another hymn was then sung, during which the coffin was placed on a table before the door, with the face exposed, so that all could see. It was almost as natural as life—far more so than an ordinary corpse. There was a flush on the face, resulting from the peculiar mode of death, and nothing of the pallor that is usual when life is extinct.

Mr. Phineas Norton, who acted as the friend of the household on the occasion, invited all who desired to do so to come and take a last look, and then make way for the family. The neighbors went forward as invited, and took their final leave of all that remained of their cherished friend; and then followed the family. It was a touching sight to see those widows, the eldest still in the prime of life, and the younger ones in its opening bud, deprived of their natural companions, leaning, as they stood round the coffin, on the arms of strangers. Such a sight I should not expect to see again if I should live a thousand years.

This scene over, the next that followed was the short procession from the house to the grave. First came Mrs. Brown, supported by Wendell Phillips; then the widow of Oliver Brown, leaning on the arm of Mr. McKim, who, in his other hand, held that of the little girl Ellen; next came the widow of Watson Brown, supported by the Rev. Mr. Young, and after that, though whether next in order I cannot tell, the widow of William Thompson, leaning on the arm of one of the family. Salmon Brown and his sisters followed, with Henry Thompson, and Ruth, his wife, John Brown's eldest daughter; and then Roswell Thompson and his wife, the aged parents of the two young men of that name who were killed at Harper's Ferry. Then followed the friends and neighbors. As the body was lowered into the grave, a gush of grief, apparently beyond control, burst from the family, and Mr. Young stood forth to comfort them. Raising his deep and mellow voice, and quoting the words written to Timothy by Paul when he was brought before Nero the second time, and just before his death, he said: 'I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me; and not to me only, but unto all that love his appearing'; which words he followed with the benediction:

'May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the blessing of God our Father, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, be and abide with us all, now and forever. Amen.'

The words seemed to fall like balm on all who heard them. The souls were hushed, and soon the family, with the rest, retired from the grave, leaving the remains of the loved one to their last repose.

It was not nearly 3 o'clock. Messrs. Phillips and McKim, and all of us, indeed, were anxious to be on our way home. A long and difficult journey was before us, and as the worst part was to be encountered at the outset, it was important that we should start as long as possible before the setting in the night. The carriages were got ready; a hasty but tearful leave taking ensued between the family and their friends from a distance, and soon we were all on our way over the mountains. Most of our party stopped at Keene that night, but one or two pushed on to Elizabethtown. On the following evening—which was last evening—Mr. Phillips, by previous engagement, delivered a lecture in the Town Hall at Vergennes. The room could not hold all that desired to hear. I was not present till the discourse was in good part over, but I doubt not some account of it will find its way into print. You may form some idea of its quality when I tell you that a venerable Deacon who came to the hotel where I stopped made the following remark; 'I have listened, said he, 'to seven thousand sermons in my life, and I heard more of God's eternal truth to-night than was contained in them all.'