

how violent, was justifiable in so holy a cause as the liberation of those held in bondage.

"The principles that animated, impelled, and controlled my actions as an abolitionist, may briefly be summed up as follows:—

"1. That every innocent human being has an inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

"2. That no government, nation, or individual, has any right to deprive an innocent human being of his or her inalienable rights.

"3. That a man held, against his will, as a slave, has a natural right to kill every one who seeks to prevent his enjoyment of liberty.

"4. That it is the natural right of a slave to develop this right in a practical manner, and actually kill all those who seek to prevent his enjoyment of liberty."

These may seem strong words; but what had Dr. Ross witnessed? He had seen a negro woman branded with hot irons because she had refused to become the mistress of her owner; he had seen a woman flogged to death; he had seen in the papers from day to day strange advertisements for slaves who had made an effort to obtain their freedom.

Dr. Ross forcibly remarks: "The newspapers of the Slave States, in 1855-6-7, teemed with advertisements descriptive of runaway slaves. One has been 'lacerated with a whip'; another, 'severely bruised'; another, 'a great many scars from the lash'; another, 'several large scars on his back from severe whipping'; another had an iron collar on his neck, with the prong turned down; another had a 'drawing chain fastened around his ankle'; another 'was much marked with a branding iron'; another, a negro, 'had an iron band around her neck,' etc., etc. All these brutalities were permitted, if not authorized, by law, were frequent, and not prohibited. 'Mary has a sore on her back and right arm, caused by a rifle ball': an-

other, 'branded on the left jaw': another 'has a sore across his breast and each arm, made by a knife; loves to talk of the goodness of God': 'Sam has a sword cut, lately received, on his left arm': 'Fanny has a scar on her left eye'; 'the letter A branded with red hot iron on her left cheek and forehead'; another 'scarred with the bites of dogs'; 'Runaway—A negro woman and two small children. A few days before she went off, I burned her with a red-hot iron on the left side of her face. I tried to make the letter M'; 'Rachel had three toe nails pulled out.'"

Is it any wonder that Dr. Ross used strong terms? The wonder is, not that he was so vehement, but that the majority of people were so supine.

Dr. Ross was a warm friend of John Brown, the apostle of liberty to the slaves. Unlike most of those who, while admiring Brown's character, deem his attack on Virginia, at Harper's Ferry, unwise, if not absolutely Quixotic, Dr. Ross approves of all Brown did, and naturally looks upon him as a martyr to the cause he advocated. Undoubtedly he was, to a certain extent; but no unbiassed mind can declare Brown's conduct of his plans, which culminated at Harper's Ferry, as being anything else than in law an armed insurrection against the State.

The following is a copy of John Brown's farewell letter to Dr. Ross. Whatever our estimate of Brown may be, he certainly met his death like a man.

JAIL, CHARLESTON, Va.,
December 'st, 1859.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Captain Avis, my jailor, has just handed me your most kind and affectionate letter. I am sorry your efforts to reach this place have been unavailing. I thank you for your faithfulness, and the assurance you give me that my poor and deeply afflicted family will be provided for. It takes from my mind the greatest cause of sadness I have experienced since my imprisonment. In a few hours, through infinite grace 'in Christ Jesus, my Lord,' I shall be in another and better state of existence. I feel quite cheerful and ready to die. My dear friend, do not give up