

the court-martial, and the authority of the President to issue the Proclamation under which the militia were called out to repel invasion, were both considered in the case; the question in chief, however, of course being the right of the individual citizen to judge, for himself, whether the legal occasion existed, upon which the President might rightfully summon the citizens to arms. This latter was the real and only point in controversy, and the Court decided, that under the Act of 1795, it was for the President, exclusively, to determine whether the exigency contemplated by the law had arisen, and that no soldier or officer had any choice but to obey.

The principle of military subordination upon which this adjudication is distinctly placed by the Court, is too obvious to be confounded with the recognition of arbitrary and irresponsible power, to which the decision is sought to be perverted, by the supporters of the existing order of things. To determine that the President is the exclusive judge of whether an exigency has arisen, in a case to which his discretion is lawfully applicable, is one thing. To give to him the exclusive and irreversible authority to determine, not only the existence of the exigency, but the existence of the case in which it may lawfully arise, is quite another thing. The first is what the Supreme Court has done, the second is what no respectable Court, it is confidently assumed, can be persuaded or forced to do, except under the pressure of "military necessity." The one gives to the President the exercise of a discretion, in certain named and ascertained cases. The other gives him absolute power in all cases. The one endows him with a necessary executive function. The other makes him supreme over all law, by granting him the exclusive control of its application. If the President cannot only invoke the military power at his discretion, in cases of invasion, insurrection and resistance to the laws, but can create invasion, insurrection and resistance, by merely proclaiming that they exist, whether, in fact, they do so, or not; there is not a moment of his term, at which he cannot constitutionally compass the absolute subjugation of the people, through the mere official assertion of a falsehood. Assume for a moment, for the sake of the argument, that the attitude of the United States, is not, in fact or law, a case authorizing the President to call out the militia, under the act of 1795, is it to be pretended that he makes it such a case simply by calling it such, in a proclamation? Is it to be gravely argued, under a constitutional government, that the nation is bound to acquiesce in it as a fact, against the public knowledge to the contrary, and must accept the war, indorse the bloodshed, pour out the treasure, and submit to the usurpation, with no other remedy than articles of impeachment, or the chances of the next Presidential election?

The commonest intelligence—the most superficial acquaintance with the scheme and spirit of republican institutions—revolts at