

You find the different States accordingly giving *authority* to make new governments or to alter the existing one.

Any other doctrine consigns to us anarchy. He then went into a detail of the early incidents of the French Revolution of 1793, and read a number of passages from the speeches of the Jacobins to show how the worst men will act in the name of the "*dear people*."

At first all France was the "*people*." It was soon notorious that Paris was France—presently the constituent assembly was Paris—then the Jacobin clubs were the assembly, then Robespierre and the bloody guillotine were the fit representatives of the clubs—to these succeeded a first Consul—a King and an Emperor. He did not mean to say, the succession of events would be as rapid here. Our people had too long been acquainted with the principles of civil liberty. He had regretted to hear the gentleman from Cecil say, our fathers knew nothing of these principles at the revolution. He believed that as pure a representative democracy—republicanism—was to be found in the towns of New England, before the revolution, as now. Those who framed our Constitutions had at least as just conceptions of civil liberty as we have. He read from the Constitution of Virginia, of 1830, of which all the great men of their State were said to be members, the express declaration, that "the declaration of rights made on the 12th of June, 1776, as the basis and foundation of government" "required no amendment," and should be prefixed to the new Constitution. And here, and every where, these principles were understood; so that as "John Randolph" had said, "we had only to throw King George overboard" and every thing was right. But if our ruin would not be as rapid it might be as certain. The population of Baltimore would be larger in respect to the other parts of the State, than Paris was to France. Men in all ages and counties have the same infirmities and unfortunately the same class of artful, designing demagogues to stimulate them.

The final catastrophe was inevitable, if once we were set afloat on this wild and perilous ocean of popular prejudice, passion and excitement.

Edmund Burke had beautifully said, "Justice required protection from power." If now amongst us, might he not add—our weakness requires protection against oppression; our moderation against extravagant ultraism; our minorities, protection against majorities; and the rational civil liberty, we now all love, will e'er long require protection against anarchy? It will then be too late.

Mr. SPENCER said, his friend from the city of Baltimore, (Mr. Presstman,) had offered to amend the first article of the declaration of rights by adding the following:

"And they, (the people,) have at all times the unalienable right, to alter, remodel, or abolish their form of government, in such manner as they think expedient."

The question presented is, one of great interest and magnitude. For thirty years or more

it has agitated this State, and it is high time to be put at rest. It must be settled. A very large portion of the people have contended for the right, whilst another portion have resisted it. At one time so intense was the excitement, growing out of the question, and the bold resistance which was made to all reform, that we were seriously threatened with intestine war.

What objection is there to engrafting such a principle in our declaration of rights? Is there any thing wrong in it? The honorable gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) tells us, he is the friend of the people, but he objects to it, because he is fearful of popular excitement—is apprehensive of the mob. He has pictured to us the character of Robespierre, his professed attachment to the people, and his profligate hypocrisy. Was this done for the purpose of casting a satire on those in this House, who contend for this unalienable and sacred right? If so, the shaft was harmless. There are those to be found in every community who cover their vices by the cloak of hypocrisy—such as profess to be the true friends of the people, and yet embrace every opportunity to stab and to deprive them of their rights. He tells us, too, that in the excitement throughout France, Paris controled everything—that Paris was France and as Robespierre managed Paris, therefore, he was France. And then the gentleman tells us, that as Paris stood to France, so does Baltimore to Maryland. Does he mean to caution us against Baltimore influence and insubordination, and to tell us that in her city, some Robespierre will spring up, who, holding in his hands her destiny, will thereby control the State, and in fact, *be the State*. Such apprehensions had no terror in them for him. He had no such fear. None which would drive him from a just and correct position. Nor did it concern him, that an effort should be made, to drive the friends of popular rights in this House, from their true ground, by pictures of such a character. The true and sincere advocate of the rights of the people, was always known and appreciated. If it true, the purest are sometimes traduced by the friends of power. Even a Henry was branded as a traitor, and would have been hung, had the Revolution proved unsuccessful.

In advocating the doctrine, which is now before us, we stand on no isolated ground. It was the doctrine of our gallant forefathers, and has been incorporated into the Constitution of a large majority of the States of this Union. And in many of them, in the very language submitted by the gentleman from Baltimore. Eighteen of the States have recognized it.

The 1st article of the declaration of rights of Tennessee, concludes as follows: "They, (meaning the people,) have at all times an unalienable and indefeasible right to alter, reform, or abolish their form of government, in such manner as they may think proper."

And for the same purpose he referred to the following authorities:

- 1st. Maine—declaration of rights, 2d sec.
- 2rd. Massachusetts—preamble to Constitution.