

pression, these popular commotions may sometimes be palliated or excused, as the only means possessed by an enslaved people of checking the inordinate excesses, and striking terror into the hearts of their oppressors. But in a country like ours, a country of liberty and laws, where the people are acknowledged to be supreme and in fact are in the constant practical exercise of absolute sovereignty; where the Government, instituted by the people themselves, claims no power but what is immediately derived from the consent of the governed, and is administered solely and exclusively for the good of the whole; where the laws are made by the immediate agents of the people and designed for the protection and security of the rights, privileges and possessions of all equally, and are subject at all times to be altered, repealed or amended as may be agreeable to the will, conducive to the interests or promotive of the happiness of the people, there can be no apology, there is no extenuation or excuse for such commotions, and their occurrence stains the character of the Government and wounds deeply the cause of equal liberty. If existing laws are defective, if artful villany can pervert their meaning or elude their justice, surely their is virtue and intelligence enough to amend such defects and to devise the means of bringing those who will practise wrong and injustice to legitimate punishment: but let not the restraints, the security of the laws be thrown off. How terrible is the condition of that community, where anarchy reigns! How much more of cruelty, wrong and injustice flows from it, than from the most despotic of Governments! How soon are all having claims to virtuous motives driven from control or sacrificed to fury. How completely is the voice of reason silenced, and every thing useful or valuable, sacred or profane, prostituted, abased, or destroyed, as may suit the caprice, or be suggested in the wantonness of brutal force, acting without virtuous motive and guided only by the principal of evil! How natural, nay, almost inevitable the refuge from these horrors to the power most certain to afford effective protection! And what power so effectual, when the people have forgotten their duty to themselves, as a despotism! To this such things tend, and in this they must ultimately terminate, unless a just abhorrence for them can be kept alive among the great body of the citizens of the Republic, and there shall be awakened