

ciety into a harmonious and well-adjusted mechanism. And it is then that the wisdom which made nature will demonstrate its vast superiority over the wisdom which would mend it—when the desperate experiment of the latter has been tried and found wanting. There are certain restraining forces (and reverence for rank and station is one of them) which never so convincingly announce their own importance to the peace and stability of the commonwealth, as in those seasons of popular frenzy, when, for a time, they are slackened or suspended. For it is then that the vessel of the state, as if slipped from her moorings, drifts headlong among the surges of insurrectionary violence, till, as the effect of this great national effervescence, the land mourns over its ravaged fields and desolated families; when, after the sweeping anarchy has blown over it, and the sore chastisement has been undergone, the now schooled and humbled people seek refuge anew in those very principles which they had before traduced and discarded: And it will be fortunate if, when again settled down in the quietude of their much-needed and much-longed-for repose, there be not too vigorous a reaction of those conservative influences, which, in the moment of their wantonness, they had flung so recklessly away—in virtue of which the whips may become scorpions, and the mild and well-balanced monarchy may become a grinding despotism.