

**Document 3: From *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1783), Query XVIII, "Manners"**

. . .And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their own firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but what of his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: this his justice cannot sleep for ever: that considering numbers, nature and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events: that it may become probable by super-natural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest. – But it is impossible to be temperate and to pursue this subject through the various considerations of policy, of morals, of history natural and civil. We must be contented to hope they will force their way into every one's mind. I think a change already perceptible, since the origin of the present revolution. The spirit of the master is abating, that of the slave rising from the dust, his condition mollifying, the way I hope preparing, under the auspices of heaven, for a total emancipation, and that this disposed, in the order of events, to be with the consent of the masters, rather than by their extirpation.