

A Cur—

Ed. Standard:— I find in the Sentinel of the 26th inst. the following statement in relation to my charge to the Grand Jury of the County of Rockingham at the Special ~~Session~~ Court now being held there.— "The judge charged the Grand Jury that the terror had been called to put down violence. If the Grand Jury ~~who~~ could not find evidence to present the guilty, who, masked and disguised, do violence to the person of the citizen, then such acts of violence must be reciprocated by acts of violence. If the Grand Jury can't get hold of them for presentment, the citizen must fall back on his own rights."

I am glad to find, at length, something of truth in the columns of the Sentinel. It is a tolerably fair version of one portion of my charge. I said it and I meant it. And now after having beheld the developments of the past week, I repeat it with an emphasis which springs from a realizing sense that any warning must be heeded or bloodshed and havoc will follow in the county.

I repeat that if the outrages committed upon peaceable, quiet, and almost always unresisting citizens, by bands of armed ruffians in disguise, are placed beyond the reach of the law, either by the perpetration of the dis-

guise, or the forgery of their fellows, then the citizen has no other resource but to defend himself. Retaliation must remedy what the law cannot. Then must be taught that such acts do not pay and if the law cannot teach them this lesson, the citizens, in self preservation, must do it.

And not only is it an act of necessity under such circumstances but absolutely praiseworthy. The man who permits his home and person to be violated by these disguised ruffians with impunity but encourages others to the perpetration of other similar outrages, while he who resists to the death the aggression, who meets these Thugs with cold lead and cold steel and leaves, under the white mask, the countenance of death, is a public benefactor.

Safety and security — in its strict sense, the feeling of safety — for life limb and property, are the great elements which distinguish civilized society from barbarism. The object of the law is that every person may feel secure in his personal rights. When, by frequent violations, the citizen has lost all confidence in the ability of the law to protect him in his rights then it is his duty to protect himself and in so doing he protects and preserves his fel-

low citizens. He is a doer of the law and a keeper of the peace. He who, at his own home, in the graphic language of the law, "in the peace of God, then and there being," is set upon by a gang of cowardly ~~cut-throats~~ cut-throats, in the dead of night, hidden by masks, armed and violent has a right to infer that their object is the commission of the most fearful crimes and his duty to himself, his family, his and his country call upon him in unmistakable tones to kill them, as he would an enemy in battle, or an assassin with his knife at the throat of his child — And men are animated by the same instincts. In San Francisco a few years ago, a people driven to desperation by repeated and long continued acts of violence, formed one vast vigilance committee and administered a stern and bloody retribution without judge or jury. This committee was composed of the best most refined and capable citizens of that metropolis of the Pacific coast, ~~and~~ and their proceedings were marked by the utmost decorum and order. A less intelligent people, a class of less experience in affairs, irritated beyond endurance and without legal remedy, will show the same spirit, but will wreak its bit =

terer revenge. With a feeling as intense
an organization as perfect, and a pru-
dence and discretion undeveloped and
unnatural, their action as compared with
that of the San Francisco committee, will
be as the sudden plunge and fathomless
abyss of Niagara ~~in comparison~~ ^{as compared}
with the steady sweep of the Arroyo.
When it comes, — if it is forced upon the
people — it will be as instantaneous as
the lightning's flash, and its scath will be
as deadly. Every hill will bear its beacon
of blazing home and harvest, and every
valley will be tinged with blood. Innoc-
ent and guilty will suffer together, the one
feeling the penalty for wrongs committed
and the other for the apathy with which he stood
by and saw the rights of his fellow citizens
violated.

