

something to God, the creator, primary legislator, and common father. Who is free to erase by a dash of the pen a single one of these obligations?

The press is free and is not free. It is not free with regard to those truths which accepted for years and years, have become part and parcel of the social system. All that is understood by the names law, government, civilization, and chiefly the church that God has set up among nations, claims undiminished respect. On the other hand the press is free when it seeks to realise doctrines doubtless true and beneficial though not yet incorporated into social life. Beyond this intolerance is just and necessary. In politics a liberty called reform exists though it must remain outside the fundamental principles of the national constitution. In the church it is clear that where there is a body of infallible truths religious and moral, left in perpetual deposit, liberty of discussion commences where the ascertained truth comes to an end. Liberty is enjoyed on doubtful subjects. The two branches of our conclusion are briefly but clearly summed up in the words of St. Augustine

"In dubiis libertas, in necessariis unitas."

Bad books offend in one or all of these points. Either they place temptation, as moral danger is called, in the way, or strike at once that body of traditions, maxims and beliefs which make up the sum of whatever little liberty and happiness is enjoyed in this life as well as in the hope of something better. The interests of individuals, the welfare of society and religion are bound up in a common cause and demand the suppression of these dangerous elements. Yet are they even checked? Do the disturbing agents not grow stronger and more numerous? Every day the growth of unwholesome literature appears ranker and thicker with no sign of decay. Evidently on this great battlefield the struggle between good and evil has not slackened. Amidst the thickening perils the Congregation of the Index can still raise a warning finger. Whilst this institution remains true to the aims which gave it birth it will not only not clash with but rather aid the freedom of the press and the production and diffusion of pure and good literature.

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Ah, thou art welcome, heaven's delicious breath!
When woods begin to wear the crimson leaf,
And suns grow meek, and the meek sun grows brief,
And the year smiles as it draws near its death.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

