

truth would remain :—That legislators, however bold, do not volunteer vents for opinion not demanded by the public ; and a public, however free, do not vehemently insist upon vents for opinion which custom has not rendered essential to their notions of freedom. This consideration should make us more forbearing to foreign governments—such as the Italian, in which a free press is as unfamiliar an experiment as a free stage is with us.

A free debating chamber is the only safety-valve for the popular excitement which can be occasioned by the action of a free press. Even with us the public would be constantly misled upon public affairs and the characters and actions of leading politicians, if a Minister could not be questioned *vis à vis* in Parliament. Where a state is not ripe for unshackled freedom of debate, it is, therefore, not ripe for unshackled freedom of the press. But freedom of debate once established, the freedom of the press must inevitably follow ; and each acting on the other to the joint security of both, the result, in well ordered states, is an essential check to the licentiousness of either. For it is the very function of the press to be a critic on the debate, and the necessity of debate to be an emendator of the press. And any constitutional government which, by corrupting the one, transfers to the other a disproportionate influence over public opinion, destroys its own surest safeguard. Thus the throne of Louis Philippe was doomed when the French press obtained over public opinion an influence denied to the representative Chamber, from the belief that the press was honest and the Chamber venal. The chief political power of the press is concentrated in its daily journals ; but however honest and however able the journalism of any given state or time may be, its very nature necessitates animated appeals to the passion of the day, without that deliberate consideration of consequences to be felt in the morrow, which is the proper care of legislative assemblies when wisely constituted. Journalism is therefore in itself more fitted to destroy bad governments than to construct foundations for good ones. And thus, where journalism is potent upon popular action, and the representative assembly comparatively disregarded, political changes will be characterised by abundant energy and defective forethought. As the agent of the day, journalism does but the work of the day—the work of the morrow is left for the men of the morrow. But where the law of reaction has not been taken into account, the men of the morrow are seized with alarm at the work which was lauded the day before. What was called the reasoning of freedom when a something is to be pulled down, is called the madness of licence when a something is to be built up. And the press which assisted to a revolution that threatens the men of the morrow with anarchy, is sure to be silenced by the first revolution which promises restoration to order.

The commencement of civilisation is in the desire of individual possession ; and in proportion as civilisation spreads, that desire becomes its prevailing passion. Security of property is thus more valued in highly civilised communities than even security of life. Men will shed their blood for some cause they scarcely comprehend, at the bidding of a sovereign, to whom they would not concede the illegal tax of a shilling.

Foreign wars, however unpopular, never, or rarely, produce intestine re-