

In countries where silence reigns with absolute power, it is said, "It is impossible to govern with a free press." Certainly; for each battery from the press offers a public appeal to the examination of that power; and it cannot but be jealous of submitting to that scrutiny. To exculpate itself upon its own principles, arbitrary despotism is forced to accuse the press, and to impute to it those evils which flow only from tyrannic arrogance; not perceiving that all those allegations are included in the fact,—“Absolute power and the liberty of the press cannot co-exist.”

Thus Jesuitism complains:—“With the freedom of the press, how can I serve despotism? And cited every day before the public tribunal, how can I fascinate the eyes of the purblind multitudes, and scatter the seeds of passive obedience through countries enlightened and refreshed by a sun which never sets upon them! Accursed be the liberty of the press!” Thus Jesuitism raves. Concerning their other opinions, which, with an enslaved press, demand official bucklers for religion, the tranquillity of the state, the peace of families, and respect for dignities, look at America! Is piety wanting there; or honor for their Government and Senators; or social quietude; or domestic concord; or municipal order; or female purity and character?

The right and the penal code of liberty are distinct topics. Experience has proved that the public derive no advantage from condemnations of this species, and that in general, instead of purifying, they corrupt society. During the civil wars of Britain and France, those nations were covered with scaffolds. In Spain and Italy, the more they murdered, the more remained to be killed. Leopold abolished the punishment of death in Tuscany; and the prisons remained nearly empty, while the gallows was vacated. Holland and Switzerland were the most free countries in Europe as to the press. What could not elsewhere be published was there printed,—yet Holland was as rich in peace and good morals as in money; and in Switzerland, part of the habitations were without bolts and locks to the doors.

One of the chiefs of a sound and correct philosophy publicly declared in France, that affairs had attained such a crisis, that ‘JESUITISM AND PUBLIC LIBERTY ARE IRRECONCILABLE, AND THAT THE REPUBLICS OF SOUTH AMERICA, IN ADOPTING POPERY AS THEIR ESTABLISHED RELIGION, WERE GUILTY OF NATIONAL SUICIDE.’ But expansive ideas germinate not where Jesuitism sways; for its blasting breath dries up and withers every thing it infects.

Since the French revolution in 1789, society, reclaiming their legitimate rights, separated the civil marriage from the religious ceremony. Before that period, the Priest combined a civil office with his ecclesiastical character. His register regulated the state