

be remarked, in general, that not only does the law of God regulate our language, condemning the evil and applauding the good, but there are other laws of which our fellows are the guardians and executive that rightfully regulate the exercise of this freedom. In this department also true liberty is defended and protected by law. Whether it be well to bring men before legal tribunals for sentiments which though generally injurious to Society have no personal reference, may admit of question and doubt ; some might think that *action* rather than *expression* were the true point from which punitive consequence should spring. But, however this may be settled, a healthy public sentiment rightfully denounces and puts down by its inherent moral force those expressions of thought which violate public decency, and would obscenely intrude themselves into the domain of virtue. There is an obvious moral limit to liberty, passing which it loses its character, and becomes licentiousness. If, therefore, men were to rise up among us, or come on a mission to us, propounding "*communist*" sentiments, for example, whereby the sacred bands of marriage are rudely dis severed, and the domestic hearth is profaned, and the rights of property are trampled upon ; we would not imprison them or coerce them, or invest them with the importance of martyrs to their miserable theories, but we would have a healthy public sentiment rise up in its dignity and calmly frown into banishment doctrines so pestiferous. When freedom of expression passes into licentiousness, and a man abuses his liberty in attacks upon the bulwarks of private and public virtue, it is only reasonable that "men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place."*

On this matter we may not enlarge. The sentiments which I have sought to place before you may be summed up in a few verses of exquisite sweetness and beauty :

" Free is the eagle's wing
Cleaving the sun's warm ray ;
Free is the mountain spring
As it rushes forth to-day.
But freer far the mind,—
Priceless its liberty ;
No hand must dare to bind,
GOD MADE IT TO BE FREE !