

she was commonly known as the bishop's friend.

A horrible fact occurred some time ago in Tuscany, which demonstrates how little credit should be given even to the fairest show of morality in the clergy. In the neighbourhood of Figline, a girl of twelve or thirteen years disappeared, and no one knew what had become of her. The narrowest search was made, but in vain. One evening a thief had hidden himself in the confessional of the parish church, with the intention of committing a theft. Towards midnight, just as he was about to step out of his hiding-place, he saw two priests carrying the dead body of a girl, and, having opened a vault, (it is well known that the dead are generally buried in the churches in Italy,) threw it in, and took the utmost care to conceal every appearance that might discover that the vault had been opened. This done, they went away. The thief, seeing the whole proceeding, was struck by its mysteriousness, and especially when the disappearance of the girl occurred to him. He suspected the crime which had been committed, and laying aside the idea of the premeditated theft, anxiously waited for the morning, determined that he would reveal the fact to the magistrate. When morning came, and the church-doors were opened, he hastened to declare himself guilty of the wicked intention to commit sacrilege, and related the whole affair. The magistrate was unwilling to give credit to his statement when he heard the parish priest and curate mentioned as authors of the deed of darkness, for they bore an excellent character, and were almost reputed saints. However, he went to the church, had the vault opened, and found the body of the girl, who was immediately recognised as the one who had been lost. It was then proved that she had been assassinated by the two seducers, that their sin

might not be discovered, as she was in a state of pregnancy.

The danger of being discovered renders cases of seduction rare, both with the secular and regular clergy, and is a cause of the great wretchedness of Italia, and of all Romish countries, through the corruption of nuptial fidelity. See, then, what value should be set on appearances of sanctity in those who are interested so deeply in obtaining the reputation of being saints for the very sake of gratifying their licentious passions.

The priest Abbo, in Rome, was regarded as a holy man, and thought worthy of the friendship of the best families, but he was a sack of wickedness. Oh, if the whitewash which covers those sepulchres could be taken off, and their interior discovered, they would be found full of rottenness!

The English Roman Catholic priests make a great show of chastity which blinds the credulous; but it is easy to seem chaste in England, where railways afford such facility to going with the money earned by masses, and hiding their frailty amidst the confusion of populous cities. But in Ireland, where Popery prevails, as in Italy, the Irish clergy, in many respects, resemble the Italian. What Irish priest has not in his house a cousin or a niece? And who in Ireland knows not the common saying, "Baptize the priest's child first?"—*L'Eco di Savonarola.*

#### The Two Worst Evils.

Italy has two evils, either of which would be enough to break down the most vigorous nation—if a vigorous nation would not have broken both, ages ago. These two are the nobles and the priesthood—both ruinously numberless, both contemptibly idle, and both interested in resisting every useful change, which might shake their supremacy. Every period of Ita-