

event, he died a raving maniac! and his wife who was a talented sceptic, renounced infidelity, and united with the Church pp. 109-110.

C. C. Cohen was one of the ablest writers in the *Free Enquirer*, published not long ago in this city. He came to his end under the following circumstances:—'In an article which he signed with his name, Mr. Cohen made the emphatic remark: 'For my own part, I should say, I can attach no meaning to the word of God, and cannot consequently believe in him!'

This was printed on Saturday, Feb. 16, 1834, and on the very day that such an avowal was made, under the deliberate sanction of his name, he was blown to pieces in his laboratory, while making fulminating powder. His head, by an understanding among the *Free Enquirers*, was given to the society for phrenological studies: and his arm which was blown off, was never found. Thus, his body has gone one way, his head another, and his limb another—scattered, we may say, to the winds.—Now, philosophers may smile, free-thinkers may ridicule the idea of divine interposition, or Divine vengeance—all have a right to make their comments, but say what they may, it was a singular coincidence of *profession and catastrophe*.'

That the author does not gratuitously assert the hellish proceedings of Madame Restoll to be one of the practical results of infidelity in our city, is clear from the fact of her having been a constant visiter of Tammany Hall when the 'Moral Physiology' of Frances Wright and Robt Dale Owen was the text book of the benighted individuals who gathered within its walls.

Alas! for the unwary youth of our country, who are launched into a corrupt society without the previous panoply of a good religious education!—What arm will shield their innocence against the malice of the seducer, and deafen their ears to the voice of the syren? Talk of the force of moral principles unaided by the force of true religion, of the necessity of not infringing upon the liberty of children, but of allowing them to judge for themselves when they arrive at the age of discretion!—This little book teaches us the practical effects of such a system. Let those who make themselves the noisy advocates of such principles read the fate of those who have preceded them in the ungodly task, and tremble for themselves.

And let all good Protestants ask themselves if the act of those who first taught the believer to throw off the yoke of authority and venture upon the ocean of life in the frail bark of individual opinion without rudder or compass, are not to blame for these results legitimately deduced from their broad and unrestrained premises. The opposers of the Reformation, in Germany especially, repeatedly predicted that infidelity must of necessity result from rebellion against the authority of the Church of God.

Was their prediction a true one? Let History—the history of our own age and dwelling-place supply the answer, and then let the tree be judged by its fruits.

#### SECRECY OF THE CONFESSIONAL.

On Thursday, the 23d September, the office of Mr. Hutton, situated in North-street, was robbed of notes and certificates amounting to between thirteen and fourteen thousand dollars, and the house on the evening of the same day was fired. The Sunday following all the papers that had been taken from Mr Hutton's desk, were restored to him through the Rev Mr Hickey, assistant pastor of the Cathedral. Some days after, the Rev. gentleman was summoned to appear before the grand jury, which at the close of its inquiries, issued a warrant for the arrest of Mr Gracey, clerk of Mr. Hutton. These facts, which we have just stated, having been presented to the public through a portion of the Baltimore press in a very bungling manner, were calculated to produce a very erroneous impression that Mr Hickey had made some disclosure that led to the arrest of Mr. Gracey. We deem it proper to say, that such intimation of the press of Baltimore, and the more positive assertions of the press elsewhere in relation to the same subjects, were entirely unfounded in truth. Mr. Hickey was questioned on the occasion, in reference to the practice of the Catholic clergy in the reception of converts, and other matters connected with the Catholic Church, and on these points, of a general nature, he could with perfect propriety, impart any information that was desired. But he could not, and did not, say any thing that might be a clue to the recovery of the individual who committed the robbery. The name of a John Nepomucen has risen to a glorious distinction throughout the Christian world, for his having suffered death rather than divulge the knowledge obtained in the tribunal of penance; the calendar and martyrology of the church exhibit him as an object of universal respect and admiration, and as a model for the imitation of her clergy in administering the sacrament of reconciliation.\* But we have yet to learn the name of a priest who has ever betrayed the confidence reposed in him as a confessor. It is plain, that if this could in any case be admitted, the criminal would be deterred from seeking the remedy for his spiritual maladies, and thus the institution of Jesus Christ for the benefit of sinners and their reconciliation with God, would be completely thwarted in its design and operation.—Hence the same law that commands a recourse to the sacrament of penance, for mortal sins committed after baptism, requires the observance of an inviolable secrecy on the part of the clergyman, and so far does this law of secrecy extend, according to an an-

\* See his biography in Alban Butler, May 16.