

We had long thought that the silly fabrication of the female Pope Joan was buried centuries ago, with its bungling authors, in the tomb of the Capulets. Protestant as well as Catholic writers of sense and learning have long agreed in branding the story as a silly fabrication from beginning to end. It bears stamped on its very face all the marks of a clumsy imposture. To think that a woman could have succeeded in passing herself off as a man with persons of discrimination and sense, and in having herself promoted through all the grades of the ministry to the highest dignity of Papacy itself, and that she contrived to sustain her imposture for more than two whole years before her sex was discovered, all this is too absurd to be seriously believed, even by the most rabid enemies of the Papacy.

The learned Protestant Blondel had long since refuted the absurd story; and the erudite Bayle, in his Historical Dictionary, a work in which his systematic opposition to Catholicity is clearly set forth in almost every page,—had, we thought, set the matter forever at rest with all men of sense. We never even dreamed that the fabrication would be revived in our enlightened age, or that it would be again presented to the public as a fact of history.

But how much we were mistaken! Truly this is an age of progress and discovery! The Presbyterian Herald of this city has recently discovered that Blondel, Bayle, the Protestant authors of Rees' Encyclopedia, and of the Encyclopedia Americana, and a host of other Protestant writers and historians, were all wrong, and that, after all, Joan is to be set down as a veritable successor of St Peter! With a few strokes of the pen the sapient editors of this print demolish all the arguments heretofore accumulated by learned and eminent Protestants on this subject, and establish their own position, apparently much to their own satisfaction.

They are evidently in favor of the doctrine of progress—backwards. Whatever they advance in proof of their own opinion has been already advanced,—and with much greater force—a thousand times; and has been triumphantly refuted as often. Still they boldly go over the same ground again, with as much complacency as though it had never been traversed before, and they confidently place their own idle conjectures in opposition to all the probabilities of the case and to the plainest facts of history. They must count largely on the credulity of their Protestant readers, if they flatter themselves that their first attempt to bolster up a stale fabrication will go down with them. None are so blind as those who will not see; and, we regret to say it, many of those who are enlightened in opposition to Catholicity appear to belong to this class. Religious bigotry is always deplorable; it becomes utterly contemptible when it wholly blinds reason and obscures and obliterates common sense itself.

To enable our readers to judge of the facts upon which the Herald's reasoning is based, we present the following specimen:

"How came the statue of a female Pope to hold its present place in the long train of statues of deceased Popes in the front gallery of the Vatican itself. There it stood and continued to bear its silent but impressive testimony in 1847, when an American professor saw it and heard its history from one of the officials of Pius IX."

Now all that is wanting to this alleged fact is—that which is not unfrequently wanting in Presbyterian prints when they attack Catholicity—truth. There is no "long train of statues of deceased Popes in the front gallery of the Vatican;" and there is, of course, no one of the female Pope; the anonymous "American Professor's" testimony to the contrary notwithstanding; he has been evidently hoaxed by some cunning Cicerone; or he has endeavoured to hoax others. Is he akin to a certain "bright correspondent" of the Herald whom we lately noticed?

Perhaps, after the editors of the Herald have succeeded in demolishing Blondel and Bayle, they will try their hands on another Protestant author of great learning, of undoubted zeal against every person and thing in Catholicity, and of considerable weight of authority among Protestants. We mean the recent German Protestant historian Gieseler, the author of the well known Text Book of Ecclesiastical History, translated from the German, and republished in this country by Carey, Lea & Blanchard in 1839. He says. (vol II, p. 20.)

"The story of Pope Joan (Johannes Anglicus or John VIII) who is supposed to have filled the papal chair between Leo IV. and Benedict III., is a fabrication of later times."

In a note he fully sustains the assertion in the text, by an array of authorities, which we willingly submit to the acute dissection of the editors of the Presbyterian Herald.

We have already said more upon this subject than was necessary. An impartial and sensible man would already be convinced that the whole story "is a fabrication of later times." If the editors and readers of the Presbyterian Herald believe the contrary, their case is hopeless—that is all. You might as well undertake to reason with a blind man in respect to colors, as to convince them of their error. The many exposures of themselves made by prejudiced Protestant writers in their attempts to expose Catholicity, should have taught those men a lesson of discretion; but some persons are unteachable.

THE DECLARATION TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT.

The Rev. John Kenny, Parish Priest of Kilkenny West, county of Westmeath, in a letter to the Evening Post, ridicules the declarations in support of law and order, when that journal has advocated. In the concluding passage of this letter he says.—"Will any one doubt that Guizot would have got five times as many names to a declaration, three days before Louis Philippe and himself (*Rex meus et ego*) were compelled to fly for their lives, in borrowed clothes? So much for the declaration. Look at the names, and think how few of that class that can either make or prevent a revolution in any country. Believe me, Sir, that you would do much more real service to our gracious Queen, and to both countries by advocating the peaceful settlement of the question of Repeal, than parading the strength of the British army, and abusing, however ably and well-deserved the excesses of the Jacobin press. While the Evening Post is little known and never read except by the higher classes, the Freeman, Nation, and United Irishmen, are greedily devoured by the masses—every exhortation to prepare themselves is received with delight. In point of fact they are preparing for the coming struggle throughout the length and breadth of the land. The exhortations of the Catholic Clergy against the folly and imprudence, and danger to themselves of such a notion, are invariably answered, I speak by the book 'That their condition cannot be worse, and that they will rather die than bear it longer.' The universal cry amongst even the most ignorant people is 'No stir until the crops are all sown. We got enough of famine. When the long days and leisure come we are ready.' If these days come without a settlement of the Repeal, the cry for which, it is useless to blink it, must be satisfied, or smothered in the blood of the Irish people. I feel convinced that the influence of all the Bishops and Priests in Ireland, even if strenuously exerted, will not be able to prevent hundreds of thousands marching simultaneously on the capital, if invited to do so by the Confederation. Whether the Bishops and Priests would interfere at all depends, I imagine, on the uncertainty, or rather obvious improbability, of success in a cause which they have as much at heart as their people. Yours, &c., &c."

THE PEOPLE'S POWER.

The popular power, arrayed in arms, is becoming organized throughout all Europe. It resumes its natural place as an element of the state. A National Guard, to protect the rights, interests, and honour of the nation was the earliest demand of every people who have won their freedom in our day. National honour is no longer in the keeping of kings and ministers, it is guarded by the strong hands of the people. And wisely and jealously they have guarded it, till tyranny or anarchy alike threaten it in vain.

Ireland, too, demands this guarantee for liberty and order. To secure it we must make certain that there are men ready, and competent for so serious a duty. And this trial has begun. The following declaration is in course of signature. The first name to it is that of WILLIAM SMITH O'BRIEN.—

"Resolved—That inasmuch as the circumstances of the present time require that every man should hold himself in readiness to take up arms in defence of his country, and that the names of those who are willing to perform this duty should be known to the British government and to their fellow countrymen, it is recommended that the following declaration be signed by all

Irishmen between the ages of eighteen and sixty who are willing to serve as members of a National guard

"We, the undersigned, hereby declare that we are willing to enroll ourselves as members of a National Guard, for the purpose of preserving social order, and of protecting this island against all foes, domestic and foreign—that we are prepared to furnish ourselves with suitable weapons and accoutrements, and are resolved to hazard our lives in defence of our country, in case any emergency shall arise which may require our services in its behalf."

This declaration will be signed by all men who are prepared to abide by it, and we trust by no others. It is not a light undertaking, and must not be lightly assumed, for it involves life and honor. It will, of course, be signed openly, and the names published, or otherwise placed before the country. Men fit for this duty are not ashamed of their country or their devotion to her sacred cause. God speed the army of the people!—Nation

"One who knows" calls our attention to a late article in the London Despatch (the coffee house organ of English ignorance and prejudice) which plainly anticipates the sort of war which would be most dangerous to England.—"Our internal distraction may not only deprive us of these advantages, but encourage violent and turbulent spirits of the continent of Europe to overbear the peaceful tendencies of the Provisional Governments by pleading our weakness as their opportunity for striking a fatal blow at our power, and plunging us, with Ireland on our hands, into a war that must be paid for out of the sweat of our toiling masses, and which may so embarrass our finances as to end in our ruin." So then England's difficulty is the result of Ireland's disaffection. 'The hand of the slave is destined to strike the very heart of the master.' Such are the mysterious ways of Providence.—Nation.

MR. SHORE'S CASE.—A public meeting was held at Exeter-hall, on Friday, to hear from the Rev. J. Shore, of Berry, Pomeroy, a narrative of the proceedings taken against him by the Bishop of Exeter. The Hon. A. Kinnaird was in the chair. The Rev. Baptist Noel and Rev. Thomas Mortimer were advertised to attend, but the Bishop of London interfered, and the former gentleman abstained, but the latter paid no attention to the admonition of his diocesan, and was present amidst a number of Dissenting ministers aiding and abetting the schismatic priest.

THE REV. MR. GORHAM has allowed the publication of a long letter from himself, detailing the "persecution" which his Bishop, Dr Phillpotts, has inflicted upon him. It seems that, though about sixty years of age, he was submitted by his Bishop to a rigorous examination, Mr Gorham's theology being different from that of his Lordship. One hundred and forty-nine questions were proposed on one subject, namely, the efficacy of Baptism, and the disputants separated without coming to any conclusion. Mr. Gorham now proposes to take legal proceedings against the Bishop for not instituting him into his living, and the Bishop will proceed against Mr. Gorham for heresy.

The Devotions of, and for, the Month of May, in honour of the ever blessed Virgin Mary, have everywhere commenced with great effect. Not only in Dublin, but in Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Wexford, they are attended by thousands. In Dublin the churches of St Audeon and of St Francis of Assisium, are especially devoted to pious exercises every day. In the former the Rev Dr Gentili and the Rev Mr. Furlong have commenced a mission, which at morning, noon, and night, is attended by immense numbers. In the latter the Rev Dr O'Connell preaches daily at 12 o'clock.—Tablet.

THE PROTESTANT REPEAL ASSOCIATION.—The committee of this body have addressed a circular to the Protestants of Ireland, in which they invite their brethren to demand Repeal with "a firm and decisive voice." After expounding the principles of the body, they set forth the objections urged by Protestants to the severance of the Union, and answer them in their own fashion.—Correspondent of Daily News.

CONFIRMATION.—Last Sunday, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Smith of Scotland, acting at the request of the Bishop of Philadelphia, gave Confirmation in St. Mary's Church to seventy persons.—Catholic Herald.

REPEAL AMONG THE PROTESTANTS OF THE NORTH.—The Weekly Vindicator of Belfast describes as a complete failure the Anti-Repeal meeting attempted to be got up in Lurgan by a few Government Presbyterian clergymen, the cause that have endeavoured, by an insidious embrace of tenant right to choke its vitality.—

"Not an Orangeman would attend, and when the hour arrived to take the chair not a man was to be found near the place of meeting. A few little boys amused themselves beating an old drum up and down the street for some time, and ended the affair. In the evening, however, the tenant-right committee met in full force, and to a man declared for Repeal, and entered into arrangements to prosecute the agitation of that glorious measure in the most effective manner. We had then adhesion—honorable to themselves and promising to the country."

We understand that the corner-stone of a new Catholic Church, to be erected on Academy Hill, the foundation of which is now being dug, will be laid, on Sunday, 21st of May, by the Archbishop of Baltimore, with all the solemn and imposing ceremonies of the Church.—Mountaineer, Cumberland, Md.

DIOCESE OF BUFFALO.—A correspondent of the New York Recorder, writing from Buffalo, says—"The Catholics have just commenced the foundation of another immense church, on Batavia street, in this city. It is to be 88 feet in width and 168 long, and to be finished in a costly style of architecture. They are also negotiating for a lot whereon to erect a Cathedral."

CONFIRMATION AT PHILADELPHIA.—The Rt. Rev. Bishop Smith of Glasgow, acting at the request of the Bishop of the Diocese, administered Confirmation in St. Joseph's Church last Sunday to 120 persons.

FROM ALL SECTS.—It appears that the conversions in England are by no means solely from the Anglican sect. In the list of converts published in the Catholic Directory for 1848, are the names of the Rev. S. S. Wilson, pastor of an Independent congregation; Rev. J. Bell, a Presbyterian minister; and J. M. Gibson, Esq., a member of the Society of Friends!

OXFORD CONVERTS.—The Church and State Gazette says that the Rev. D. Thomas, A. M., who was recently received into the Catholic Church at St. Edmund's College, Herby, obtained his degree at Oxford University, in 1835. He is the sixteenth convert from Oxford alone, since the secessions commenced.

ROCHESTER.—Property has been purchased in Rochester for Educational purposes. A preparatory school is to be opened now. In a few years a college in Ohio is to be removed to Rochester.—Atlas, May 2d.

Died.

May 20—Michael, infant son of Thomas and Bridget Donovan, aged 10 months. 21—Jane, infant son of James and Margaret Hurley, aged 10 months. 23—William Devine, native of the County Waterford, Ireland, aged 66 years. 24—Anastasia, daughter of the late Wm. Doyle, native of Wexford, Ireland, aged 28 years. 24—Patrick Kennedy, native of County Waterford, Ireland, aged 33 years. 24—James McGlinn, native of the 23d. Fusiliers, native of Ireland, aged 38 years. 24—James Gillashy, native of Galway, Ireland, aged 37 years. 25—Catherine, daughter of John and Mary Marks, aged 1 year and 8 months.

Dissolution of Copartnership.

THE Copartnership heretofore existing between the Subscribers, General Printers and Publishers in this day dissolved by mutual consent—the Senior Partner retiring.

A. J. RITCHIE.
RICH'D. NUGENT.

May 10, 1848

NOTICE

It is hereby given, that all Accounts due the late firm at this date as well as those due to the Subscriber individually, as Publisher of the Register and Cross for the years 1845 and 1846, must be arranged with Mr R. Nugent, who assumes the whole business, and is fully authorized to collect and receive the same.

A. J. RITCHIE.

TAKE NOTICE.

It is required that all accounts due to the late firm of Ritchie & Nugent, to the 31st Dec'r. 1847, be settled immediately, in order that any demands which exist against the said firm may be discharged at an early day.

RICH'D. NUGENT.