

arrival the rioters proceeded into every room in the building, rifling every drawer, desk, and trunk which they found, and breaking up and destroying all the furniture, and casting much of it from the windows; sacrificing in their brutal fury costly pianofortes, and harps, and other valuable instruments, the little treasures of the children abandoned in the hasty flight, and even the vessels and symbols of Christian worship. After having thus ransacked every room in the building, they proceeded, with great deliberation, about 1 o'clock, to make preparations for setting fire to it. For this purpose, broken furniture, books, curtains, and other combustible materials were placed in the centre of several of the rooms; and, as if in mockery of God as well as of man, the Bible was cast, with shouts of exultation, upon the pile first kindled; and as upon this were subsequently thrown the vestments used in religious service, and the ornaments of the altar, those shouts and yells were repeated. Nor did they cease until the cross was wrenched from its place, as the final triumph of this fiendish enterprise.'

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The beautiful convent was reduced to a smoking ruin. The Charlestown mob next destroyed the bishop's house with its valuable library, reduced the convent farmstead to ashes, and wound up the orgie with a deed which knits them in a bond of ghoulish brotherhood with the anti-Christian mob who lately dishonored the bones of the dead nuns in Barcelona. 'Not content with all this,' wrote the committee of indignant Protestant gentlemen of Boston, 'they burst open the tomb of the establishment [the convent], rifled it of the sacred vessels there deposited, wrested the plates from the coffins, and exposed to view the mouldering remains of their tenants!' 'Nor,' add they, 'is it the least humiliating feature in this scene of cowardly and audacious violation of all that man ought to hold sacred and dear, that it was perpetrated in the presence of men vested with authority, and of multitudes of our fellow-citizens, while not one arm was lifted in defence of helpless women and children, or in vindication of the violated laws of God and man. The spirit of violence, sacrilege, and plunder reigned triumphant. Crime alone seemed to confer courage, while humanity, manhood, and patriotism quailed, or stood irresolute and confounded in its presence.' Only one man was punished for this outrage on holy and defenceless women. And his punishment was, to all intents and purposes, as harmless as that which Artaxerxes inflicted upon his offending nobles, when he politely prayed them to doff their outer garment and throw it upon the ground—where it was subjected to a severe make-believe 'flogging.'

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When a stone is thrown into a pond the wavelets soon lap the further shore. The sudden splash of fanaticism at Charlestown (Massachusetts) set up a wave of religious fury which rapidly spread till it broke against Charleston in South Carolina. There, however, the massed fanatics found themselves face to face with sterner stuff than helpless women and children such as they had expected, and such as their valiant northern confrères had triumphed over in sight of the monument of Boston's pride and chivalry. 'At the first hint of danger,' says the historian, 'a gallant band of Irishmen rallied in defence of the menaced convent of Charleston, and its Irish bishop coolly examined the flints of their rifles, to satisfy himself that there should be no missing fire—no failure of summary justice. . . . So in South Carolina, and in other States, the resolute attitude of those who would have willingly died in defence of the best and noblest of humanity, saved the country at that time from still deeper disgrace.' New York was likewise rocked on the wave of religious passion that had surged from the vortex of mob fanaticism at Charlestown. An attempt was made to destroy St. Patrick's Cathedral. The building was, however, promptly put in a state of defence. Henry De Courcey and John Gilmory Shea tell, in *The Catholic Church in the United States*, how 'the streets leading to it were torn up, and every window was to be a point whence missiles could be thrown on the advancing horde of sacrilegious wretches; while the wall of the churchyard, rudely constructed, bristled with the muskets of those ready for the last struggle for the altar of their God and the graves of those they loved. So fearful a preparation, unknown to the enemies of religion, came upon them like a thunderclap, when their van had nearly reached the street leading to the Cathedral: they fled in all directions in dismay.'

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Like the epidemic of cholera-morbus, the epidemic of fanaticism soon rose and spread once more in the eastern States. The year was 1844, and the chief storm-centre was Philadelphia—the City of Brotherly Love.' The outbreak was ushered in, as usual, by waterspouts and tornadoes of No-Popery vilification from a triple alliance of the pulpit and the platform and the gutter-press. Intriguing politicians joined their voices to those of reckless fire-

brands, and two dark-lantern associations—the Knownthings (Native American Party) and an organisation formed and headed by Irish Orangemen on Orange lines—swelled the chorus of black calumny and translated wild words into wilder deeds. Here and there sturdy Irish Catholics put up an effective defence. But in Philadelphia generally the defensive preparations were tardy, ill-organised, and ineffective. The rabble of rioters found their game sitting and swept on in triumphant and destructive wrath, to the sound of Orange airs. The eye-witnessing author of *The Olive Branch* (a Protestant Episcopalian clergyman) sums up in a few brief sentences the exploits of those Irish-American forerunners of the anti-Christian menagerie of Barcelona. 'The Native American Party,' says he, 'has existed for a period hardly reaching five months, and in that time of its being, what has been seen? Two Catholic churches burnt, one thrice fired and desecrated, a Catholic seminary and retreat consumed by the torches of an incendiary mob, two rectories and a most valuable library destroyed, forty dwellings in ruins, about forty human lives sacrificed, and sixty of our fellow-citizens wounded; riot, and rebellion, and treason, rampant, on two occasions, in our midst; the laws set boldly at defiance, and peace and order prostrated by ruffian violence.'

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The easy conquests over 'Popery' in the 'City of Brotherly Love' moved the leaders to try their fortunes in New York. A picked band of invaders was formed. Arrangements were made by sympathisers in New York to welcome them with a public procession. A gathering of the Native American Party was called in the City Hall to meet and greet their brethren from Philadelphia. Then Archbishop Hughes took a hand in the game. Through the local *Freeman's Journal* he announced that the riot and destruction carried on in the southern city would not be renewed with impunity in New York. He, too, was reported to have said that 'if a single Catholic church were burned in New York, the city would become a second Moscow.' Hassard's *Life of Archbishop Hughes* tells the sequel: 'The churches were guarded by a sufficient force of men, resolved to die in their defence, but also resolved to make their assailants feel the weight of their vengeance. By an extra issue of the *Freeman*, the bishop warned the Irish to keep away from all public meetings, especially that to be held in the Park. He then called upon the Mayor, and advised him to prevent the proposed demonstration. "Are you afraid?" asked the Mayor, "that some of your churches will be burned?" "No, sir; but I am afraid that some of yours will be burned. We can protect our own. I come to warn you for your own good." "Do you think, bishop, that your people would attack the procession?" "I do not, but the Native Americans want to provoke a Catholic riot, and if they can do it in no other way I believe they would not scruple to attack the procession themselves, for the sake of making it appear that the Catholics had assailed them." "What, then, would you have me do?" "I did not come to tell you what to do. I am a churchman, not the Mayor of New York; but if I were the Mayor, I would examine the laws of the State, and see if there were not attached to the police force a battery of artillery, and a company or so of infantry, and a squadron of horse; and I think I should find that there were; and if so, I should call them out. Moreover, I should send to Mr. Harper, the Mayor-elect, who has been chosen by the votes of this party. I should remind him that these men are his supporters; I should warn him that if they carry out their design there will be a riot; and I should urge him to use his influence in preventing this public reception of the delegates." "There was no demonstration" (says the author of *The Irish in America*), 'and every right-minded man, every lover of peace in the city, must have applauded the course taken by Dr. Hughes, to whose prudent firmness was mainly attributable the fact that New York was saved from riot, bloodshed, murder, and sacrilege, and, above all, from that dreadful feeling of unchristian hate between man and man, citizen and citizen, neighbor and neighbor, which such collisions are certain for years after to leave rankling in the breast of a community.'

Notes

Those Italian 'Scandals'

Many of our readers will recall the sensational reports of horrible 'scandals' at the Salesian institute of Varrazze and elsewhere in Italy, which blistered the columns of the secular press in these countries two years ago. But, with a stringent economy of truth that is, unfortunately, rather common where the Catholic Church and its persons and institutions are concerned, not one of them all, so far as we are aware, ever told the subsequent fortunes of those

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{ Just over Bridge and opposite Drill Shed.

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