THE EVENING NEWS.

Friday, - - Sept. 11, 1874.

An Ecclesiastical Curiosity.

Several French newspapers have recently published the following:

"Lord Dupanloup, the Bishop of Orleans, has appointed an ecclesiastical committee to commence immediately, under his direction, the preliminary proceedings necessary for the canonization of Joan of Arc."

It is an historical fact well established that the Catholic clergy had a large share in the martrydom of Joan of Arc by fire; and now this same clergy intend to place her among their saints! But this proceeding is not at all necessary to secure to hermemory the reverence of all Frenchmen, for they never forget that through her agency their country was once delivered from a British invasion.

It is, and always has been, customary with the Catholic priesthood to claim as members of their church all whose names have become famous on account of great deeds, although at the commencement of their career that priesthood were their bitterest enemies. Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America, is a memorable illustration of this fact. The Catholic priesthood left no stone unturned to oppose the projects of this immortal navigator. First in the council of the king of Portugal, and then in the cabinet of Madrid, they branded his intended trip around the world as absurd, impious, and sacrilegious; but their living successors are now trying to claim all the honor of his glorious discoveries.

It may be observed here that the notions of Columbus were founded on the fact of the sphericity of the earth, which it was supposed by the ignorant ecclesiasts of that day, came in contact with many passages of the Bible. But strange as it may appear the successors of those very priests are now making strenuous efforts for the canonization of the great navigator.

To this end, an important work of two volumes, each containing about a thousand pages, was written and published, a few years ago, by Mr. Roselly de Lorgues. This singular work has been highly endorsed and praised by numbers of very influential ecclesiastical ultramontane authorities in Europe. The object of this exceedingly funny publication was to prove to the world that Christopher Columbus was a Capuchin monk, and that to this venerable order of friars belongs exclusively the glory of having discovered the New World! *Risum teneatis, amice.* Do not laugh, kind reader!

Now upon what foundation stands this curious system of historical science, which has so striking a likeness to the famed historical romances of father Loriquet? It stands upon the fact that Columbus, during a wandering tour in Spain, was an unknown traveler, a very poor man, and that he was, as such, hospitably entertained a single night in a convent of Capuchins, at Santa Maria de Robida, in the fair province of Andalusia. As he was entirely destitute of means, he borrowed or received, according to the holy fathers' legend, a Capuchin's garment or robe; and according to their story, that holy robe was the only article of clothing worn by Columbus until his death, and it was as a Capuchin, a *bona fide* Capuchin, that he accomplished all his discoveries, erecting crosses of Catholic missions on every shore, and here and there performing stupendous miracles, all of which are related and greatly amplified in Mr. Roselly de Lorgues' book, upon the reliable authority of the Capuchin fathers. Even Columbus' idea of a western hemisphere was not his own; he gained it by association with the Capuchins, and he was only their messenger, their humble instrument, &c.

By such ludicrous and impudent inventions as these have patronage and immunities been sought and obtained at the papal court of Rome. The object of the book written by Mr. Roselly de Lorgues was to develop, amplify and embellish all this and, as people say, to prepare the way, and from the time of its publication, the question of his canonization has been before the "Sacred Consulta," that is, before the committee of Jesuits which is empowered to distribute seats to the Saints in the Heaven of heavens. The public therefore need not be surprised to learn shortly that Christopher Columbus, the once victim of the Catholic priesthood, who branded him as a heretic and would have gladly burned him at the stake, has been placed by this same priesthood among the saints of the Romish calendar.

Blessed is the man who succeeds! Such is the mortality of the story. Blessed is the man who triumphs, even after his death, although he has been persecuted during his life! It will be so with Joan of Arc. She will soon be canonized by the Vatican, judging by the preparatory proceedings of Lord Dupanloup, after having been condemned to death, and most inhumanly burned by the cure of Lord Cauchon, the bishop of Beauvais, an accomplice of the English, after the latter had been expelled from France by her instrumentality.

The proclamation of the dogma of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, and of papal infallibility, and the canonization of Columbus and of Joan of Arc will constitute the chief religious acts, as in a political sense the loss of his temporal kingdom is already the principal event, of Pius the Ninth's pontificate.

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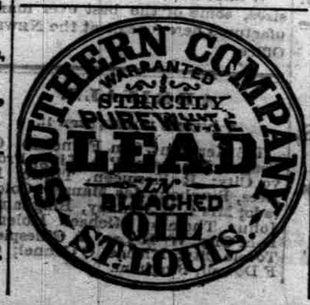

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