

W. M. Thackeray (1811-63)

13 *A Woeful New Ballad*

of the
Protestant Conspiracy to Take The Pope's Life
by a Gentleman who has been on the Spot

Come all ye Christian people, unto my tale give ear;
'Tis about a base consperracy, as quickly shall appear;
'Twill make your hair to bristle up, and your eyes to start and glow,
When of this dread consperracy you honest folks shall know.

The news of this consperracy and villianous attempt, 5
I read it in a newspaper, from Italy it was sent:
It was sent from lovely Italy, where the olives they do grow,
And our Holy Father lives, yes, yes, while his name it is NO NO.

And 'tis there our English noblemen goes that is Puseyites no longer,
Because they finds the ancient faith both better is and stronger. 10
And 'tis there I knelt beside my Lord when he kiss'd the POPE his toe,
And hung his neck with chains at Saint Peter's Vinculo.

And 'tis there the splendid churches is, and the fountains playing grand,
And the palace of PRINCE TORLONIA, likewise the Vatican;
And there's the stairs where the bagpipe-men and the piffararys blow. 15
And it's there I drove my Lady and Lord in the Park of Pincio.

And 'tis there our splendid churches is in all their pride and glory,
Saint Peter's famous Basilisk and Saint Mary's Maggiory;
And them benighted Prodestants, on Sunday they must go
Outside the town to the preaching-shop by the gate of Popolo. 20

Now in this town of famous Room, as I dessay you have heard,
There is scarcely any gentleman as hasn't got a beard.
And ever since the world began it was ordained so,
That there should always barbers be wheresumever beards do grow.

And as it always has been so since the world it did begin, 25
The POPE, our Holy Potentate, has a beard upon his chin;

And every morning regular when cocks begin to crow,
There comes a certing party to wait on POPE PIO.

There comes a certing gentleman with razier, soap, and lather,
A shaving most respectfully the POPE, our Holy Father.
And now the dread consperracy I'll quickly to you show,
Which them sanguinary Prodestants did form against NONO.

30

Them sanguinary Prodestants, which I abore and hate,
Assembled in the preaching-shop by the Flaminian gate;
And they took counsel with their selves to deal a deadly blow
Against our gentle Father, the Holy POPE PIO.

35

Exhibiting a wickedness which I never heerd or read of;
What do you think them Prodestants wished? to cut the good POPE's head off!
And to the kind POPE's Air-dresser the Protestant Clark did go,
And proposed him to decapitate the innocent PIO.

40

"What never can be easier," said this Clerk — this Man of Sin,
"When you are called to hoperate on His Holiness's chin,
Than just to give the razier a little slip — just so? —
And there's an end, dear barber, of innocent PIO!"

This wicked conversation it chanced was overerd
By an Italian lady; she heard it every word:
Which by birth she was a Marchioness, in service forced to go
With the parson of the preaching-shop at the gate of Popolo.

45

When the lady heard the news, as duty did oblige,
As fast as her legs could carry her she ran to the Poleege.
"O Polegia," says she (for they pronounts it so),
"They're going for to massyker our Holy POPE PIO.

50

"The ebomminable Englishmen, the Parsing and his Clark,
His Holiness's Air-dresser devised it in the dark!
And I would recommend you in prison for to throw
These villians would esassinate the Holy POPE PIO!

55

"And for saving of His Holiness and his trebble crownd
I humbly hope your Worships will give me a few pound;
Because I was a Marchioness many years ago,

Before I came to service at the gate of Popolo."

60

That sackreligious Air-dresser, the Parson and his man,
Wouldn't, though ask'd continyally, own their wicked plan —
And so the kind Authoraties let those villians go
That was plotting of the murder of the good PIO NONO.

Now isn't this safishnt proof, ye gentlemen at home,
How wicked is them Prodestants, and how good our Pope at Rome;
So let us drink confusion to LORD JOHN and LORD MINTO,
And a health unto His Eminence, and good PIO NONO.

1851

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