

relegated them to the obscurity which they were so well fitted to adorn. Plausible liars need a good memory, the constructive faculty, a sense of proportion, and a nice perception of probabilities. Slattery and the female impostor who accompanied him were notably deficient in all these qualities. "They lie bravely", said we in one of our 'Pink Pills' (the name by which our widely-circulated pamphlets came to be popularly known); "but they lie so clumsily and inconsistently that they overstep the bounds of their art, and become, not so much relatively clever De Rougemonts, as vulgar, second-hand Munchausens—mere retailers of other impostors' wares".

This precious pair of low Zolaesque romancers appear to have once more emerged from their retreat and to have begun again preaching the sacrosanct gospel of assafoetida at the American equivalent of 'front seats one shilling, back seats sixpence'. 'Brann's Iconoclast' (a sprightly non-Catholic Texas journal) has taken the male fraud in hands, suspended the rules (as is fitting in dealing with such animals), and wiped the earth with him to the following lively tune (we quote from the San Francisco 'Monitor'): "There are three kinds of liars in the land: The harmless Munchausen who romances for amusement, and whose falsehoods do no harm; the Machiavellian liar, whose mendacity bears the stamp of original genius, and the stupid prevaricator, who rechews the fetid vomit of other villains simply because he lacks a fecund brain to breed falsehoods to which he may play the father. And Slattery's a rank specimen of the latter class. When he attempts to branch out for himself he invariably comes to grief. After giving a dreadful account of how Catholics persecute those who renounce the faith, declaring that they were a disgrace to the Church while they were within its pale, he produced a certificate from a Philadelphia minister to the effect that he—the Philadelphian—had visited Slattery's 'old parish in Ireland and the Catholics there declared that he was a good and faithful priest! What Slattery seems to lack to become a first-class fraud is continuity of thought. He lies fluently, even entertainingly, but not consistently.' The Genial Showman once said that 'it would have bin ten dollars in Jeff. Davis's pockets if he'd never been born'. It would have been dollars galore in Slattery's pocket if he had never bumped up against the 'Iconoclast' or the 'New Zealand Tablet'. Strewers of poisoned tinned-lacks cannot always safely waltz about barefooted. And wherever the Clifondale adventurers may stroll in search of filth-stained shekels, they will probably keep clear of our tight little islands.

Mrs. Eddy

'In the sweetest bud
The eating canker dwells'.

Mrs. Eddy is not exactly one of your sweet-bud maidens. She is 'of a certain age', as polite French people say. Beyond this, she is just a shrewd business woman who knows the money value of a 'fancy' new religion. She coined Christian Science (which is neither Christian nor scientific) into a bulky pile of shekels. And now the eating canker of decay has set its fangs upon her vitals; her Christian Science (despite its miraculous claims) has not induced it to relax its hold; and her generous and too trusting dupes are asking what has become of the millions that her 'scientific' financing rolled into her fob. The situation presents aspects of much interest to New Zealanders who remember the story of the Temple of Truth in Canterbury's capital.

A cardinal principle of Christian Science is its utter rejection of the aid of medical science. Yet (so runneth a stoutly contradicted cable story in our daily papers) Mrs. Eddy has been for some time under medical or surgical treatment for cancer. Whether the story be true or false, deponent saith not. But it seems that, in practice at least, Christian Science has its admitted

limitations as a cure of the ills that flesh is heir to. We have, for instance, read of some of its exponents who draw the line at broken bones. And did not the High Priestess herself somewhere make an exception in favor of contagious diseases—on account of the stiffness of neck and the hardness of heart of Public Health authorities? And, according to an American paper, two at least among her disciples chalked up the cure-line at lost molars. It happened thus: A few years ago, a well-matched pair of Mrs. Eddy's disciples paid (so to speak) a business visit to the Rev. Dr. Henson, a popular Baptist minister of Chicago. The callers, although Eddyites, retained their connection with Mr. Henson's congregation. Now it so happened that Mr. Henson (like Polyphemus and Lords Nelson and Wolseley) has only one good eye. His visitors (says the narrator) had felt for some time that their pastor would be much improved if his 'lame' eye could be made whole like unto the other. Why should not their pastor have two good eyes as well as one? So they went to see him about it. "We have been praying for you", they said to him, "that you may have two perfect eyes, and have now come to pray with you. Will you not ask the Lord right here and now to give you a new eye?" Dr. Henson's reply was somewhat disconcerting. "What kind of teeth have you?" he suddenly asked the male Eddyite. "Why—why, that's a strange question," he stammered, "but I don't mind telling you that my teeth are mostly false." "What kind of teeth do you use, sister?" he asked of the other. "Same kind," she frankly admitted. "Well, good friends", rejoined the Doctor of Divinity, "you go and ask God to grow some new teeth in your mouths. According to your theory, He will do it without delay. When you get your teeth, come round, and we'll see what can be done about that new eye". Well, the upshot of it was that those two good people are still grinding their Quaker Oats with artificial molars, and Dr. Henson still looks down on his congregation with (in the double sense, we hope) a single eye.

Salt to Shake

Catholics—especially those who confine their journalistic reading to the daily papers—would do well in these parlous times to carry about a peck of salt in their pockets. They will need it all if they are going to swallow the stories of papal and episcopal chuckle-headedness that ooze through the cables from antipierical sources in Paris, and of 'agrarian outrages' that are invented or 'adapted' in the interests of the anti-Irish Ireland that is 'yellow'. People that are otherwise reputable frequently do not resist the temptation to strengthen the lines and round the corners and embroider the details of their 'good' (or bad) stories, in order to heighten the effect. But in those regions of society where Christian ideals and principles prevail, the thorough-going falsehood—the lie of pure invention—is happily very rare. In the political world, however—more especially during periods of great ferment—outright lying is now probably much more a European Great Power than it was in the day when the economist Ricardo coined his historic dictum. A specially severe economy of truth is to be expected, as a matter of course, from politicians who (like those in France) have cast off the principles of supernatural faith and its moral restraints, and entered upon a fierce and unrelenting war against all religion. It is therefore no surprise to find that the steam-factories of the Political Fib in that lodge-ridden land are working over-time. "Never tell a lie", wrote Mark Twain in an autograph album; and then came the afterthought: "P.S.—Except to keep in practice". There is no danger that political prevaricators, especially in France, will have lack of practice with their favorite weapon. They take their cue from Voltaire, the traducer of the saintly Maid of Orleans. For half a century, until death cut short his evil career, Voltaire waged war against the Church with a bitterness that assumed at last the proportions of a sort of obsession. Falsehood, satire, and ridicule were

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