

We purposely select these statements of Slattery for the following chief reasons:—

(a) Because they are plain questions of fact that admit of being tested even in New Zealand. If Slattery is—as he emphatically is—a wholly unreliable witness as to the facts of his own career, his evidence is obviously even more tainted when directed against a body of people the vilification of whom he is coining into chinking drachmas.

(b) Because the official and authoritative disproof of these statements has been notoriously before the world for many years past, both in pamphlet form and in the columns of the newspaper press of America, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Australia.

(c) Because our communications with the countries named regarding the career of the Slatterys has confirmed us in our belief that in each and all of these matters Slattery has—to put the matter in plain Anglo-Saxon—deliberately lied.

(d) Because, in addition to being tests of personal veracity, the published and notorious refutation of these four statements affect so profoundly his character and reputation as a minister of the Gospel as to disentitle him to all claims either to credence or to respect.

(e) Because, though repeatedly and publicly challenged thereto, in the United States, England, Scotland, and Australia—in the Catholic and the Protestant and the secular Press, and by public placard and by registered letter—he has not deemed it prudent to appeal to the protection of any court to establish his innocence of charges arising out of the refutation of his statements which seriously effect his character both as a clergyman and a citizen. What these charges are we shall presently see.

### 'Give him the Pledge!'

We shall first deal with his statements (1) and (2) that he has been all his life a total abstainer, and that he has never been under the influence of intoxicating drinks. These statements and their refutation call to mind the well-known story of Father Healy, of Bray, who was once a fellow priest of Slattery's during the few years that the latter officiated in, or 'hung on by,' the diocese of Dublin. Father Healy was about to enter a railway carriage at Killiney station when he observed that it was nearly filled by Anglican clergymen, with some of whom he was on terms of close friendship. Among them was Lord Plunkett, the Anglican Archbishop of Dublin. He noticed that Father Healy hesitated. 'Oh, come in, Father Healy,' said Lord Plunkett, 'come in! I want to ask you a question. A gentleman of your cloth has come over to us, and I want to know what we should give him.' 'I think,' replied Father Healy, quietly, 'that you should give him the pledge.'

Joseph Slattery—a native of Limerick—was ordained for the archdiocese of Dublin on May 24, 1880. Within three years after his ordination he had become a victim to intemperance, and was at last, after many warnings, removed from the ministry by Archbishop Walsh. His history in the archdiocese of Dublin is briefly told in the following correspondence between him and the late Cardinal MacCabe. The first part of both these letters is holographic—i.e., entirely in Cardinal MacCabe's handwriting. Under the Cardinal's signature in each letter Slattery has, in his own handwriting, written and duly signed his acceptance of the conditions imposed on him, and thus personally given the lie direct to the statements subsequently made in his lectures to the effect that he had been all his life a total abstainer. The correspondence between Cardinal MacCabe and Slattery runs as follows:—

'4 Rutland Square E.,

'Dublin, 8th November, 1883.

'Dear Father Slattery,—I send you by this post an appointment to the curacy of Morne. You receive faculties now on the express understanding that you are a total abstainer. Your faculties will continue as long as you keep the pledge; they will terminate the moment it is violated under any pretext or advice. If you wish to accept your appointment and faculties on these conditions, write your acceptance underneath and return the letter to me.—I remain, yours, etc.,

'E. CARD. MACCABE.'

'I most willingly and thankfully accept my appointment. Wishing you many long and happy years over us.—I remain, your most obedient servant,

'JOSEPH SLATTERY.'

'4 Rutland-square, E.,

'Dublin, 17th January, 1885.

'Dear Fr. Slattery,—I am greatly pained by finding myself compelled to remove you again. Little more than twelve months have passed since you were sent to Morne, on the express understanding that you were bound by the Total Abstinence Pledge, and that by the violation of that pledge you *ipso facto* lose the faculties of the diocese. I have before me my letter sending you to morne, in which you express your assent to the condition I required from you.

'There is, I am sorry to say, too much reason to fear that you have not kept your promise, and consequently that you are administering Sacraments sacrilegiously.

'Your conduct, moreover, is giving a good deal of dissatisfaction; however, I will give you one other chance, but it will be the last.

'With this letter you will receive your appointment to the curacy of Kilbride and Barndarrig. That appointment is made on the following conditions:—

'1st. That you take the pledge from Canon Brady, the V.F. of your district, from whom I expect a certificate of the fact.

'2nd. That the violation of that pledge in any shape or form without a written permission from the Ordinary of the diocese brings with it *ipso facto* suspension.

'3rd. That this suspension is absolutely reserved to myself personally.

'If you are willing to submit to these terms, write your acceptance underneath and return this letter to me immediately.—Faithfully yours,

'E. CARD. MACCABE.'

'I accept the appointment on these conditions with many thanks.

'JOSEPH SLATTERY.'

According to the *Liverpool Catholic Times* of January 6, 1899, the original correspondence between Cardinal MacCabe and Slattery was, in reply to a challenge by the latter, sent by Archbishop Walsh, through the Bishop of Newport, to Mr F. W. Lewis, of the St. Tello's Society, for inspection by the employers of the ex-priest the Welsh National Protestant League. We may state that we have been for some time past in correspondence with the distinguished prelate who now so worthily wears the mitre of the archiepiscopal See of Dublin, and shall at the proper time produce and duly prove the correspondence between his eminent predecessor and the unhappy man who is now stirring up and profiting by sectarian rancour in a country where people of every Christian creed have hitherto lived in harmony.

Cardinal MacCabe's leniency was, however, wasted, and his successor, Archbishop Walsh, was compelled, in the interests of religion, to dispense with Slattery's services. The ex-priest went beneath the surface of things for a time. In 1887 he came to the surface again. He was then a student at the Theological Seminary in Colgate University at Hamilton, N.Y., having been sent thither at the expense of the Baptist Education Society. Here, according to a New York paper of March 2, 1895, in a brief sketch of his career, he posed as an ex-priest who had renounced the Church of Rome from 'conscientious scruples,' and a paper published at the University stated—presumably on Slattery's authority—that he had been educated at Maynooth. Father J. V. McDonnell, a Catholic priest resident at Hamilton, thereupon furnished Archbishop Walsh with these statements and requested him to give the real facts of Slattery's career. The Archbishop sent him the following reply:—

'Archbishop's House, Dublin,

'May 22, 1889.

'MY DEAR FATHER McDONNELL,—You or any other person, ecclesiastic or layman, will be perfectly safe in challenging inquiry as to the antecedents of unfortunate Father Slattery. In Cardinal MacCabe's time he broke down very badly from intemperance. About a fortnight before the Cardinal's death he received an appointment on condition of binding himself in a most stringent way to the total abstinence pledge. There was a distinct written intimation—the original of which I hold—that this was to be the last chance.

'Well, he broke down again. I thought it right, even after all this, to give him one chance more—of course with the intimation that it would be the last, so far as I was concerned. He broke down again, and I was unable to have anything more to do with him. . . . I may add that he was not educated at Maynooth.

'Sincerely yours,

'WILLIAM J. WALSH,

'Archbishop of Dublin.'

This letter was sent to Dr. Dodge, President of Colgate, by Father McDonnell.\* Towards the close of 1897 it was republished in England. Slattery thereupon fell back upon the ready expedient so frequently resorted to by Edith O'Gorman: he threw doubts upon the authenticity of Archbishop Walsh's letter. This ruse often succeeds for a time, for communication with the writers of original documents is sometimes slow, often costly, and the game of bluff *plus* a few days' delay generally enables itinerant slander-mongers to get away to places where the atmosphere is less oppressive. In the present instance, however, the respite was but brief. Dean Lynch (now of St. Winifred's, Hulme, Manchester) was upon the tracks of Slattery and his female companion. A letter from him to Archbishop Walsh elicited the following reply:—

'Archbishop's House, Dublin,

'December 13, 1897.

'Dear Father Lynch,—The letter dated May 22, 1889, and addressed to Father McDonnell, which had been published in so many American and now in so many English newspapers, was undoubtedly written by me.

'That it refers to the lecturer now in England there can be no doubt, for only one priest of the name of Slattery has left this diocese under any circumstances within living memory, and the one who left was the unfortunate victim of drink about whom I wrote to Father McDonnell. In my letter to Father McDonnell I referred to a letter written to this unfortunate man by Cardinal MacCabe. This letter, of course, has been preserved, with other documentary evidence, including some in Father Slattery's handwriting. But what further evidence can be required? The case is a lamentable one, absolutely without parallel in my experience.

'I remain, dear Father Lynch,

'Faithfully yours,

'WILLIAM J. WALSH,

'Archbishop of Dublin.'

### A fair Challenge.

We may close this part of an unpleasant subject—which only Slattery's present crusade could have compelled us to touch upon—by reference to the latest of the many challenges issued to him and his wife during the past few years. We refer to the challenge issued by Mr. Joseph Winter, of the *Advocate*, Melbourne, and published in various papers (including the Presbyterian organ, the *Southern Cross* in June, 1899) during Slattery's stay in Melbourne. That challenge is now before us. Mr. Winter published in his newspaper and in pamphlet form the following two charges: 'To make the