

against a post, he cusses the post first, all Kreashun next, and sumthing else last, and never thinks of cussing himself.' That is Joseph Slattery. He knocked his bibulous head against that portion of the Church which is in the diocese of Dublin, and has been cursing it back to the forty-seventh generation. He has likewise wasted a good deal of useful energy in 'cussing' the Church at large, and, generally, every decent man and woman of every creed—the enlightened Protestant clergy especially—who do not see their way to aid him and the sham 'ex-nun' in turning their filthy lying into minted coins of the realm. Slattery doesn't 'cuss' himself. That, as Josh Billings points out, is not part of the game. On the contrary, he asks the guileless public to believe that he never—what, never?—looked at wine (or whisky) when it sparkled in the glass, and that in the midst of abounding wickedness and general chuckle-headedness he stood forth alone, a solitary paragon of all the virtues.

His evil trade, is a worse affliction to a country than the bubonic plague or the small-pox. But it has still a commercial value when—as in Slattery's case—the appeal is made at cheap rates to the *gobemouche* of bigots, to the levity of the curious, and the puerility of the lewd. For the *gobemouches* this roving pair—in Butler's words,

Weave fine cobwebs, fit for skull
That's empty when the moon is full,
Such as take lodgings in a head
That's to be let unfurnished.

For all their shilling and sixpenny patrons alike their motto is that immortalised by James Russell Lowell:—

I firmly do believe
In Humbug generally,
For it's a thing that I perceive
To hev a solid vally;
This heth my faithful shepherd been,
In pastures sweet heth led me;
An' this'll keep the people green,
To feed ez they hev fed me.

Meantime, while the Orange party in the Colony seek to strengthen their ranks by the blackguardly vilification of the noble-minded Sisters who are setting what a non-Catholic paper calls 'a splendid example' of courage at Mafeking and elsewhere, we may supplement the brave words of the *Auckland Observer* by the following extract from an article written by the Protestant editor of the *San Francisco Star* in 1895. Commenting on a coarse lecturer of the Slattery type, he qualifies as 'blacker than hell' the heart of the man who could so traduce women who have become earth's angels by their unselfish devotion to humanity. 'On the battle-field,' he continues, 'tenderly ministering to the wounded, in the midst of pestilence, from which even the bravest fly; by the side of the leper, loathsome even to himself and shunned by all others, these gentle souls are to be found and fear not. To be by the bedside of the sick, giving comfort and hope in the damp basement and cold garret relieving misery and want, to give light to the ignorant and joy to the despairing; to seek places where the merely "righteous" may not go, and be not ashamed to take the erring ones by the hand, and kneel with them in prayer; to visit the condemned wretch in the prison cell, and by kind words and deeds inspire him with the love of God, and give him the peace of mind which "passeth all understanding"; all these things and many more are the daily duties of these Sisters of Charity, who worship at the Catholic shrine—but whose creed—to do good—embraces all the world and is as broad as the universe itself.' This broad-minded Protestant editor had no personal interest in giving Catholic nuns their meed of praise. The Slatterys, on the other hand, have a pecuniary interest in vilifying them. 'front seats one shilling, back seats sixpence.'

COSTLY
'CONVERTS.' THE REV. HENLEY HENSON, that pioneer Protestant missionary, Dr. Cust (author of *Missionary Methods*), and many other earnest non-Catholics have condemned in language suited to the occasion the exaggerations of the average foreign missionary reports. But for cheerful and practised fact-slaying commend us to the annual reports of the Irish Church Missions Society. Their cool manipulation or outright creation of facts found long ago an absurd travesty in the story of *Mick McQuaid*. Their latest report is thus commented on in *Truth* of December 28, which by the way, seems to accept their figures without question: 'The conversion of Jews to Christianity, judged by the number of converts, is generally believed to be the most costly form of missionary enterprise; but from an article from the *Daily Nation* it would appear that the efforts of the Irish Church Missions Society to spread Protestantism in the Sister Isle are equally expensive. In a recently-issued booklet the society claims that "during the past ten years no fewer than 246 families, containing 610 souls, have been transferred from the Church of Rome to the Church of Ireland as the fruit of the Dublin Mission"; and on the bases of some figures in the same publication as to the annual expenditure, my contemporary estimates that these families

have cost £460 apiece to proselytise. It seems a stiff price to pay for the "transfer" of a family from Catholicism to Protestantism, and if the subscribers are satisfied they must be thankful for very small mercies.'

THE Rev. R. A. McFarlane, B.D., of Stranorlar (Scotland), is not exactly a George Washington. Some months ago he published a tract of the usual type which contained a pathetic, though highly improbable, story of a death-bed scene. It is soberly recorded as a personal experience of the author. A Catholic priest is represented as administering the last Sacraments to a dying woman. But his ministrations failed to give either hope or comfort to the departing soul. Then came upon the scene a Protestant neighbour. He spoke to the dying woman of 'the saving power of Christ.' Of course, being 'only' a Catholic, it was inevitable that she had never before heard that Christ had died to save sinners. She therefore listened eagerly. Her tears were at once miraculously dispelled. Hope and confidence returned with a rush—like the tide in the Bay of Fundy—and the dying woman passed swiftly and with a smile into a happy eternity. It is an old and mildewed story, and has been trimmed and pared and added to and told with blameable iteration in a thousand silly tracts, with as many local and personal applications as certain of the antiquated tales in *Joe Miller's Jest-Book*. In this instance, as usual, it was narrated at first hand. Pamphlet and story fell into the hands of Mr. M. Diamond, of 12 Rutherglen Road, Glasgow. Like Talleyrand's famous creditor, Mr. Diamond is *bien curieux*—inconveniently inquisitive. He wrote to the author of the pamphlet, asking him to mention 'the place where this happened, or the names of the parties—the priest, minister, or woman—and any other particulars you may have about the matter.' After some delay the answer came. It was not, after all, a personal experience of the writer of the pamphlet. He had 'found the narrative in an old copy of the *Christian Treasury*,' and 'the names of the parties were not given,' nor the date nor scene of the supposed death-bed conversion. The whole tale is thus left hanging in the air. The story is but a typical one of its class. The truth of the rest may be gauged from this. Saving the sickness and the skull and cross-bones, it is Slattery's story of his alleged 'conversion,' which, as editor Brann says, was equally sudden, like that of Saul of Tarsus—or of Judas Iscariot. But does it not, in one feature at least, bear a striking resemblance to the little fiction for the truth of which a prominent Dunedin clergyman vouched some time ago? When pressed upon the matter he could only state that he had it from another man that there was something about the matter in the *London Times* 'some fifteen years ago.'

A LIAR needs a long memory. And ex-priest Slattery's memory is a short and treacherous one. In the *Hawke's Bay Herald* of February 7 and February 8, he admitted that he had been convicted but denied that he had been imprisoned in Pittsburg for the sale of indecent literature. He quite forgets that in an announcement of his book facing page 268 of *Mrs. Slattery's Convent Life* (American edition) he roundly declares 'For producing this work the Romanists imprisoned me at Pittsburg, Pa.' Facing page 199 of another book of his, entitled *Secrets, &c.*, (American edition) he has the following notification regarding the same pamphlet: 'For this work the Romanists imprisoned me at Pittsburg, Pa.' These books were both purchased at Slattery's meetings and are now in our possession. So, likewise, is the very pamphlet for the publication of which he was relegated for a period to the privacy of a prison cell. On the very second page of the copy before us are these words: 'For publishing this I was imprisoned in Pittsburg, Pa.' Verily Slattery's Orange friends in Melbourne had good reason for characterising him as 'an unmitigated liar.'

While upon this unsavoury subject we must here express our emphatic conviction that the writing of letters to the Press—as at Napier—on this roving pair is a blunder which should be carefully avoided. Most editors will, on prudential grounds, decline to give a full statement of the facts of the creatures' careers, and unless this work is thoroughly done it is best left severely alone, as it serves only to furnish them with an opportunity for cheap and effective advertising. The extensive distribution of our Pink Pamphlets is the best specific for the Slattery plague, and the facts set forth therein have remained unanswered by Slattery at Napier simply because they are unanswerable.

Visitors to Dunedin are invited to call at Messrs A. and F. Inglis and inspect the splendid stock of autumn goods in all departments. As Messrs Inglis are noted for keeping the best class of seasonable goods, at moderate prices, it will be to the advantage of our readers to accept the firm's invitation and inspect the goods, when they can judge as to quality and price.—*.*

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