

ter-lie from the merchant prince down to the coffee-stall keeper? Not a bit of it. They may and do permit themselves to diverge a little from the straight and narrow way. There are business lies just as there are social lies. But colossal lying is not the fashion in the same sphere any more than in the other. No business and no society could exist in such an atmosphere. The realm of colossal lying belongs to the company promoter. In a larger proportion of cases than one cares to think a lie is the most valuable of all instruments in his hands, and the power of systematic falsehood the surest key to wealth. In his case you have the apotheosis of the lie. He has found in it a sure resource in every time of need. Great is the lie proper in the hands of the man who is expert in its use. You clumsy liar, of course, comes to grief sooner or later — though generally much later than one looks for; but the adept at the business may go down to the grave wept, honoured, and sung.

THE FINANCIAL DEBATE.

ANYONE who has any knowledge to speak of about the inside of Parliament knows that the Financial Debate is least of all a debate of finance. Why this is the case can be easily demonstrated. In the first place, although the Financial Statement is taken by the outside world to be a truthful exposition of the Government's financial policy, a large section in the House refuses to accept it as such, and the Government, knowing the utter hopelessness of trying to convince that section of unbelievers, do not greatly try, but content themselves with the faith of those who undoubtedly accept their word for it. Then again, you must consider how small comparatively is the number in the House of those who have really any head for figures and how difficult it is for those who have some faculty in that direction to master in their entirety all the tables and statements in the Budget. I question whether there is ten per cent. of our representatives capable of passing a very simple examination on the Budget. After all, they are men very much like ourselves; and like us, so far as the Budget is concerned, they live mainly by faith or by scepticism. I am sure that not one man in the whole assembly, the Treasurer himself included, ever gets the hang of every one of the figures, and the rank and file stick to such leading features as the surplus, the debt, and the borrowing proposals without going too deeply into details. This being the position, you can understand how, when debate comes on, financial criticism plays but a small part in it. How can you talk about a thing of this kind if you know next to nothing concerning it. Other matters lend themselves readily to the discursive loquacity of ignorance, but you can't do much with figures in that way. Long ago this was recognised, and thus arose that almost unlimited latitude which is allowed speakers in the Financial Debate. As the rules of the House now stand a member is at liberty to talk of anything he likes under cover of the Financial Statement, and if you could follow their remarks you would find that most of them take full advantage of the license. The debate offers the opportunity of the session to a very large number of members of all kinds. Those men whose ideas are limited and who in spite of their adopted vocation have but a very loose grasp of political questions, have now a chance of telling the House what they do know. As I said before, you are free to talk about anything while the Financial Debate is on. You may range far and wide in search of subject, air your pet theories on social or commercial, literary or sporting topics. If you have any special knowledge on any matter under the sun now's your time to bring it to the light and make the most of it. For this reason stupid members often appear quite brilliant during the time this debate is in progress. I have known representatives who in their so-called Budget criticism rose like a rocket out of the dark of low level mediocrity. Certainly they descended again almost as quickly, but they crusaded for a moment in the firmament of Parliament, which they would never have done had it not been for the license allowed in the debate.

THE LATEST WANTED.

I READ the other day in an Auckland paper the following advertisement:—Wanted, an elderly gentleman for housework; small wages, good home. My first thought was that the traditional newspaper scapegoat, the poor compositor, had been at it again, and had unwittingly substituted gentleman for gentlewoman; but, prompted by curiosity to inquire into the matter, I found that there had been no mistake, and that what the advertiser really desired was a man, not a woman. And, after all, why not? Throw aside your prejudices in the matter, if you can, and you will find there is nothing extraordinary in such an arrangement, even if it has a novel appearance on the outside. Nay, the very novelty should be an attraction rather than the reverse. To be waited on by an elderly gentleman, if he were up to the business, would be something so entirely new to most of us that at the outset I think we would enjoy the change till we became accustomed to it, and then in all likelihood we would find that it was preferable to the old plan. The great difficulty to the scheme in general does not lie in any objection that might be entertained against elderly gentlemen as elderly gentlemen, but in the scarcity of elderly gentlemen able and willing to take the position. Gentlemen have not as a rule a pronounced faculty for housework, and they do not naturally acquire it with increasing years; and, even if possessed of it, it is questionable whether you would find many of them prepared to exercise it in the service of another on the conditions we are supposing. But perhaps we are putting too narrow a construction on the use of the term gentleman, as used by the advertiser. Does not the kindred term lady enjoy in this democratic land a range of application that practically knows no limits? Is it not becoming more and more difficult to find a woman among the adult females of

Portrait of the "lady" who does the wash for the woman as lives down the road.



becoming more and more difficult to find a woman among the adult female population. Are they not all ladies now?

our population? Are they not all ladies nowadays? By the same process probably the men are becoming all gentlemen, and the advertiser may have worded his request for the elderly gentleman out of deference to the change that is creeping over us. If that is so, we may expect similar requests for gentlemen to mend our roads, ladies to milk our cows, and so on. This politeness may seem distinctly commendable to some people. To me it seems only detestably snobbish. Of course, any working man or woman may be much more of a gentleman or lady than hundreds who without question are accorded that title. The words are shamefully misused as it is, but I don't see how you will mend matters by an enlargement of the area of distribution.

A BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION.

Apply Sulpholite Lotion. It drives away pimples, blotches, roughness, redness, and all disfigurements. Sulpholite develops a lovely skin. Is bottled. Made in London.—Adv.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Notice to Contributors.—Any letters or MSS. received by the Editor of the "New Zealand Graphic" will be immediately acknowledged in this column.

'Heartbroken Maisie.'—Give him a chance to explain. Appearances are against him, but such heartlessness would scarcely be natural in the man you describe.

'X.Y.'—Try this lotion for the scar of which you complain: Alcohol, 12 grams; tincture benzoin, 2 grams; liquid storax, 2 grams. Add five drops of this mixture to half a glass of water. Use at night, letting it dry on.

'An Unsuccessful Competitor.'—Try again. Take great care with your writing and put your heart into it, and you may succeed next time.

'Apollo's Lyre.'—Judging from the specimens of your verse which you send me, you certainly have got nothing to do with the nom de plume you have chosen.

'Offended Dignity.'—No, you could not accept an invitation given under such circumstances without a loss of self-respect.

'June.'—Pour vinegar over fish to make the scales come off easily.

'Newly Wed.'—All grease spots can be easily removed from upholstered furniture by using ether or chloroform for silk, and the best spirits of turpentine for woollen stuffs.

'James R.'—I should term your request amazingly insolent did not the whole tenor of your letter show me clearly that you are a very ignorant young man to whom the first principles of good breeding are unknown. Please do not write me again until you have taken the trouble to acquire those first principles.

'Amateur Gardener.'—Yes, they would be best kept in pots all the year round.

'Geraldine.'—I have already complied with your request.

'Stage Struck.'—Your question seems to me quite ridiculous. How can I tell whether you are likely to make your mark on the stage or not?

'Wandering Sunbeam.'—This is not the best time of the year for making the trip. You should wait now till the spring.

'In a Dilemma.'—Write at once and confess the whole truth to her.

'Newly Married.'—Choose your furniture with careful deliberation since you are richer in leisure than money.

'Edith R.'—Let your scarf simply encircle the waist, form a large bow at the back somewhat to the left, and then fall down to the edge of the skirt.

'Julia.'—Grammar and algebra are not essential for a wife. Cooking and domestic duties are.

'Young Lady.'—Your bedroom must be badly ventilated.

'J.A.R.'—There is no objection to a club for women, always provided it does not interfere with home duties.

'Reta.'—There are only spelling faults in every line of your letter, even including the date 'July.'

'G.M.'—You cannot hope for happiness in the course you are pursuing.

'Pansy.'—Guests should leave a party at the hour specified in the invitation, unless specially pressed to remain.

'D.R.'—Dump your paper first.

'Hostess.'—Arrange some old-fashioned parlour games for the children. Supper may be cocoa, sandwiches, cakes, buns, bananas and oranges.

'Effie,' 'R.R.,' 'Ella.'—Returned, with thanks.

It would be ridiculous to assert that a red, rough hand was evidence of a fiery and uncouth disposition; but it might be significant of a want of due attention to personal appearance. Naturally this affects the gentler, rather than the sterner, sex, since it is demanded of the former that the hands should be shapely, soft, white and cool. Now Wilton's Hand Emollient will secure all these attributes to those who use it. Price 1s. per jar. Sold by all Chemists. One jar will be sent by post on receipt of 1s. in stamps.—G. W. Wilton, Adelaide Road and Willis St., Wellington.

ANECDOTES

SENSIBLE ARRANGEMENT.

What Sir Daniel Lysons believes to have been the first case of a settlement of an 'affair of honour' on the Duke of Wellington's plan is described by him in his 'Early Reminiscences.' It occurred in Halifax about the middle of the present century.

One day Captain Evans came to me boiling over with wrath and indignation. He said he had been grossly insulted by Captain Harvey, the Governor's son, and begged me to act as his friend. I agreed, provided he promised to do exactly as I told him. He consented.

I called on Captain Harvey's friend, Captain Bourke, and we agreed to abide by the Duke of Wellington's order about duelling, which had just then been promulgated at Halifax.

We carried out our intentions as follows: We made each of our principals write out his own version of what had occurred. We then chose an umpire. We selected Colonel Horn of the Twentieth Regiment, a clear-headed and much respected officer. With his approval we sent him the two statements, and he directed us to come to his house the following morning with our principals.

At the appointed time we arrived, and were shown into the dining-room. We bowed formally to each other across the table, and awaited the appearance of our referee. Colonel Horn soon entered, and addressing our principals, said:

'Gentlemen, in the first place, I must thank you for having made my duty so light. Nothing could be more open, generous or gentlemanlike than your statements. The best advice I can give you is that you shake hands and forget that the occurrence has ever happened.'

They at once walked up to each other and shook hands cordially. They were the best of friends ever after.

EJECTING A PATIENT.

The following story, told by the poet Tennyson, is a graphic illustration of Abernethy's manners toward a certain class of patients who vexed his professional spirit:

A farmer went to the great doctor, complaining of discomfort in the head, weight and pain. The doctor asked, 'What quantity of ale do you take?'

'Oh, I taaks mu yale pretty well.'
Abernethy, with great patience and gentleness: 'Now, then, begin the day, breakfast. What time?'
'Oh, at haafe past seven.'
'Ale then? How much?'
'I taaks my quart.'
'Luncheon?'
'At eleven o'clock I gets another snack.'
'Ale then?'
'Oh yees, my pint and a haafe.'
'Dinner?'
'Haafe past one.'
'Any ale then?'
'Yees, yees, another quart then.'
'Tea?'
'My tea's at haafe past five.'
'Ale then?'
'Non, noa.'
'Supper?'
'Nine o'clock.'
'Ale then?'
'Yees, yees. I taaks my fill then. I goes asleep afterward.'

Like a lion aroused, Abernethy was up, opened the street door, shoved the farmer out, and shouted, 'Go home, sir, and let me never see your face again! Go home, drink your ale, and die!' The farmer rushed out aghast, Abernethy pursuing him down the street with shouts of, 'Go home, sir, and die!'

The 'Pall Mall Gazette' says:—Mr Gladstone was no laudator temporis acti. Mr Dewey tells a characteristic story of him which brings this out. It was a dinner party at Lord Rosebery's. Mr Gladstone raised the question at which period of the world's history one would choose to live. He went over all the great epochs—Egypt, with her wonderful civilisation; Greece at her prime, with her wealth and learning; her simplicity, and her beauty; Rome at the hour of her greatest strength, when she was mistress of the world; Italy at the time of the Renaissance; and so on down to to-day. 'If I had my choice of them all,' he said, 'I would select the period covered by the last fifty years, because it has been the half-century of emmelpation.'