

Mary Stuckenborg is even stranger than that of the celebrated Mary Louise Lateau, which Catholics believe to have been a genuine case of the stigmata.

The medical men of Louiaville having been given a chance to explain away the mystery about the manifestations of Mrs Stuckenborg, and those who were there having confessed it beyond their power to assign a cause, the Catholic Church, represented by Bishop McCloskey, took the case in charge. The woman is now in St Joseph's Infirmary on 4th street, between Chestnut and Broadway, though not even the other inmates know that she is there.

She is closely watched by priests, who act under the direction of the Bishop of this diocese, and it is stated that he is receiving instructions from Rome regarding the case. His orders as to who shall and who shall not see her are strictly obeyed, and how long this investigation by the Catholic Church will continue is not yet known. When the manifestations first appeared, on the first Friday of June, 1891, the priests of the neighbouring parishes to Mrs Stuckenborg's residence, 2,534 St Cecilia street, visited her regularly, and had become to a certain extent convinced that there was no fraud.

When the facts were first made public the Bishop, it seems, had no knowledge that such a thing was going on. That a case parallel, so far as appearances went, to the famous stigmata recorded in the history of the Catholic Church existed in this city, or even in this country, seemed so incredible that when the Bishop was first informed of it he remarked, "Oh, it's all foolishness." Developments, however, brought out the undeniable facts that a very strange case existed in the manifestations of Mrs Stuckenborg.

Dr M. F. Coomee had charge of the scientific examination, which went on continuously for nearly four months, and his report, published at the time, showed the result of his work—that it was beyond his power or the power of his associates to explain the case. The last visit he paid to the woman was the last Friday before Christmas. Then she was placed in the hands of Bishop McCloskey. What he has done since then has been simply to keep a close watch on her to make sure that no deception was practiced. For a number of weeks Mrs Stuckenborg remained in her own home on St Cecilia street, but the Bishop did not want her to be surrounded with any of those conditions that existed when the manifestations first appeared. She was, therefore, removed to the Convent of the Good Shepherd on Bank street.

Every Friday the Bishop selected certain priests of the city to watch during the period of unconsciousness and the bleeding of the five wounds—in the hands, feet, and left side. The utmost secrecy was then and still is observed. No one save the priests selected for the purpose, and occasionally a relative, or near friend, is allowed in the apartment where the manifestations occur. An effort has also been made to keep her whereabouts unknown, but this was done only to avoid crowds calling to see her. Until a few weeks ago the woman was kept in the convent, but she was afterward removed to the residence of Mr Flood, of 713, 25th street, where the same close watch was kept. She was removed to St Joseph's Infirmary last Thursday. Almost every day Father Bachman calls, and on Friday he is always there with others.

The accounts of the manifestations as first given were the same as the manifestations appear now. There has been no change. Every Friday afternoon at exactly three o'clock Mrs Stuckenborg falls into an unconscious state, somewhat resembling a trance. The same rigidity of the muscles appears now as then, and the wounds in the palms of her hands, in her feet, and left side open and bleed. When the physicians last visited the woman the wounds, it will be remembered, had begun to bleed entirely through the hands and feet—that is, blood came from both the palms of the hands and from other wounds on the back of the hands.

This was also true of the feet. Since then the marks are even more clearly developed, and the woman's hands and feet have holes entirely through them during the trance period. It is at times almost possible to see through them, so large are the holes becoming. The crosses in her forehead and on her chest are distinct. The scab-like appearance has worn off, leaving the impression of a crucifix apparently cut in the bone, and the outer skin has grown over very thin, leaving the figures distinct beneath it. The effect is peculiar. The initials "I.H.S.," which appeared on her right shoulder, are also clearly visible. The duration of the period of suffering remains unchanged. It is always three o'clock almost to the minute when she falls, and six o'clock when she becomes conscious of her surroundings.

After the manifestations had been going on for a number of months, Mrs Stuckenborg became very weak. Her health seemed to be failing, and it was the general belief that she could live but a short while. The physicians who saw her said that they did not see how a person could undergo so much apparent suffering and live. Though her health did not seem good for a time, it has now become better. From close confinement she has become weakened slightly. Her husband remains with her whenever she is taken ill. It is seldom that she goes on the street, though occasionally she walked out with some one until very recently. To avoid being recognised and stared at, she wore a heavy veil, and is now usually addressed by another name than her own, if she happens by chance to be among strangers.

Mrs Stuckenborg has attracted scientific as well as religious interest in other places besides this. She is daily in receipt of scores of letters from persons wanting to know something more about the manifestations. They come from every class and description of people, but are left unanswered. Dr Coomes has also been troubled in the same way. Those from intelligent persons who have some interest from one cause or another he sometimes answers. Just after the case passed from Dr Coomes's hands the secretary of one of the largest English societies of scientific research came to this city especially to investigate Mrs Stuckenborg's manifestations, but the Bishop, having then taken charge, would not consent to his visiting her until he had finished the investigation in behalf of the Catholic Church.

Other attempts by scientific men of note have been made to secure access to her, but none has been successful. They will be given an opportunity later on. There have been frauds, and the Bishop is going slow in his investigation. It may be only a short while, it may be a year or two, or it may be two or three years before the Bishop is through with the investigation.

It is said that when he has finished, a history of her life will be written, and she will pass the rest of her days on earth just as Louise Lateau and others did. Those who have proper reasons will be allowed to see her, and the scientific world will be given a chance to investigate the case thoroughly. The priests who are watching Mrs Stuckenborg decline to express an opinion. They do not wish to commit themselves until the Bishop has been satisfied.

Mrs Stuckenborg will on May 9 celebrate her twenty-fourth birthday. Of twelve children she was the only daughter. Her eleven brothers died, and at the age of four years she was left motherless. It is said that when very young she had always been religiously inclined. Her parents were Protestants, and so was she. Her conversion to the Catholic faith occurred several years ago. Fathers Ward and Coughlin, the Jesuit missionaries of St Louis, who recently conducted services at the cathedral, were holding similar meetings at St Patrick's Church at 13th and Market streets.

She went in one evening, and from that time became one of the most regular attendants. It was later, though, while attending Father Nicholas's church, that she became converted. After her marriage she lived at the little cottage, 2534 St Cecilia street, and Father Baffo was her confessor. The parish church is across the street from where she lived, and every morning she was a regular attendant at early Mass. At first the cross on her forehead had not appeared, and when she went to a public place no attention was attracted by her presence. But when the manifestations became publicly known she attended church heavily veiled. On Fridays she was at early Mass, but returned home quickly and remained quiet the rest of the day until she fell into the unconscious state at three o'clock.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

THE following is the summary of the financial statement as made by the Premier on Thursday the 23rd inst:—

I have sketched an outline of the financial policy of last year, and indicated the provision we have made to carry on the public service for the year on which we have entered. In many directions the Committee will have seen evidence of strength and progress. It was no small thing that we were able to pay off £200,000 of floating debt in one year, one-half the amount coming out of revenue to provide for roads and bridges and make good from the same source the deficit of the land fund. Above and beyond this I have had the gratification of announcing a splendid surplus of £165,000 brought over from last year, due partly to the improved position of the great body of consumers who contribute to the revenue through the customs, and partly to economical administration. The people had more to spend, and have had the courage and heart to spend more in this direction than in previous years. Economy on the expenditure side is seen in the "Unauthorised," which is the smallest on record, while the "Liabilities" have also touched a low mark, showing that payments were promptly made and none held over. Many of the difficulties attending industrial employment have been overcome, and what has been accomplished may inspire us with the hope that the time is not far distant when a satisfactory solution of the labour problem will have been discovered. In the introduction of a new system of taxation many obstacles stood in the way and had to be overcome. The result, on the whole, has been as successful as the strongest advocates of the principles on which it is founded could have desired. The great departments of the Government have been administered with vigour and prudence. The lands have been disposed for the benefit of the people and not in the interest of speculators, and checks, as far as the law allowed, have been placed on monopoly. The difficult and delicate task of converting some of our loans has been satisfactorily performed through the agency of the Bank of England.

Coming to the current year, proposals are submitted for the acquisition of Native and private lands for the purpose of settlement; a system of pensions and insurance for the civil service is proposed, which entails neither expense nor liability to the Colony, yet is suffi-