

Scotland, Ireland, the United States, Australia, &c. But the following random name-list from a long catalogue of 'ex-priests' before us will serve to convey a fair idea of a class that for the last half century have been making a dishonourable livelihood by arousing and trading on sectarian passions and corrupting the minds of youth with pamphlets which, in the words of Newman, 'cannot have been intended for any other purpose than to afford merriment in the haunts of vice and profligacy':—

'Ex-priest' Koehler was sent to gaol for larceny at Buffalo on March 13, 1895. A few weeks previously he had served a term in the Erie County Penitentiary for obtaining money under false pretences. 'Ex-priest' Riordan was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment for swindling at the Erie County Sessions on April 25, 1893. 'Ex-priest' McNamara received 12 months' imprisonment on another charge. 'Ex-priest' Thorp was imprisoned in Wyoming for bigamy. 'Ex-priest' Chiniquy was deposed for intemperance on September 20, 1851, and again (by the Bishop of Chicago) on November 20, 1856. He was also expelled by the Presbyterian Synod, in 1862, 'for fraud and gross swindling.' Another 'ex-priest'—an A.P.A. lecturer with half-a-dozen *aliases*—acquired a very unenviable notoriety at Wisconsin a few months ago, and finally eloped with a farmer's wife. An American contemporary tells us that, previous to this, 'one of his lectures in Canada was so indecent and obscene that he had to fly across the border into the United States to escape arrest.' Achilli, not to put too fine a point upon the matter, was a common blackguard. Another member of the fraternity was 'up' for the theft of clothing in Dublin in October, 1895. 'Ex-priest' Joseph Slattery (now in New Zealand) was, by his own confession, as we shall see, sentenced to imprisonment in America for selling indecent literature. Another, Don Paolo Miraglia, was, in last August, condemned at Piacenza to five months' imprisonment and a fine equal to £15. 'Ex-priest' Hicks served several long terms of imprisonment in Texas, and is described as a 'forger, evangelist, A.P.A. lecturer, and all-round scoundrel.' 'Ex-monk' Widdows was, says *London Truth* of March 30, 1899, sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude for a crime which involved 'a piece of as revolting immorality as it would be possible to conceive.' Other prominent members of the 'ex-priest' fraternity were the American pick-pocket Lawrence, the swindler Rudolph, and many other criminals or adventurers to whom it would be tedious to refer in detail. We do not pretend to know how Riordan, Bluett, Koehler, Hicks, and many other such succeeded, like Slattery, in joining and remaining in the Baptist ministry. But the fact remains that both the downright adventurers and the genuine priests who are compelled to leave the Catholic ministry through bad conduct, generally make their way, now-a-days, either directly or by degrees, to those minor denominations in which sectarian prejudice is strong and the level of clerical education low. As a rule they shun the larger Churches—those which include considerable sections of the educated classes and which are generally ministered to by a scholarly and broadminded clergy. We have no doubt that this unhappy class of itinerant revilers would be as ready to lecture for Rome as readily as they lecture against her—if there was money in it. They have shown themselves to be alike strangers to shame and impervious to exposure. Here in New Zealand such adventurers are, happily, little known. In America, however, their evil record so stinks in the public nostril that so far back as the close of 1895 their principal employers—the A.P.A. (the Orange organisation of the United States)—found it necessary to discard them in the following official circular from the supreme council of the Association:—

'Whereas ex-priests and ex-nuns were going around the country lecturing or purporting to be lecturing under the auspices of the A.P.A., therefore be it resolved that we will not tolerate any such work as this; and, furthermore, be it resolved that whenever an ex-priest or ex-nun is lecturing, or claims to be lecturing, under the auspices of the A.P.A., that we denounce them and show them up. And I would especially warn the presidents of the various councils not to engage or employ any ex-priest or ex-nun to lecture for the A.P.A., as they do the Order more harm than good.'\*

### Slattery and his Orange Friends.

In England an association known as the Protestant Alliance has taken many of these itinerant professional slanderers under its wing. But their chief dependence is upon the Orange Society. There is a stringent rule in this Society against admitting to membership any one 'who is or has at any time been a Papist.' The grand lodges, however—including that of New Zealand—make an exception in favour of professionals of the type we refer to. Their attacks on the Catholic body are, apparently, sufficient 'testimonials of good character.' They admitted to membership Koehler, Riordan, (*alias* Luthven), McNamara, Chiniquy, Widdows, and the whole horde of such swindlers and adventurers as came within their reach, and furnished them with audiences and special funds, † unshamed by the repeated exposures and the frequently successful criminal prosecutions which followed the career of many of those unhappy men in England, Scotland, and the United States. Ex-priest Joseph Slattery (now 'lecturing' in New Zealand with a bogus 'ex-nun') is also a member of the Orange Association. So we learn from one of its 'accredited organs,' the *Victorian Standard* of March 30, 1899. It says (p. 9) that 'the reverend gentleman is a member of the Loyal Orange Institution, and comes hither [to Australia] with official letters of recommendation from Bro Touchstone, Grand Secretary of the Loyal Orange Institution of England.'

\* In the United States (says the *Boston Pilot*), the trade of the A.P.A. lecturers was that of stirring up strife among American labouring men of one religion against labouring men of another religion. 'Bryanism' scotched the A.P.A. conspiracy by solidifying the labour element. When Bryan was nominated for President and the A.P.A. collapsed in Germany, a notorious but genuine ex-priest lecturer and gaol-bird is said to have remarked: 'If this thing keeps on, it is going to play hell with my trade.'

† For an instance of the raising of special funds see the *Victorian Standard* of June 2, 1898. This paper described itself in its issue of April 30, 1897, as 'the accredited organ of the [Orange] Institution in Victoria.'

The same paper of August 31, as well as one of Slattery's pamphlets, show that he has recommendations from one James Ray, who describes himself as 'Supreme Grand Master' of the Orangemen of America. A later issue of the same despicable news-sheet—that of June 30, 1899—contains (p. 13) a communication from Dunedin which gives us to understand that the Orange body had written to Slattery inviting him to come for 'a New Zealand tour.' Yet another issue of the same vile monthly explains the motive of the invitation to Slattery. It is to this effect: that Orangeism is making no headway in this Colony, and that to galvanise it into activity 'a little more opposition,' writes the New Zealand correspondent of the Orange organ, 'is needed.' And that opposition, it is plainly hoped, will be aroused by the coarse, vehement, and brutal attacks of Slattery and his wife on the character of the Catholic priesthood, on the virtue of the Catholic womanhood, and on every religious sentiment that Catholics hold dear. His most prurient charges refer to alleged immorality in the confessional. He dares not commit himself to specific charges against living individuals by name. Such a course would afford the public the opportunity of seeing his veracity tested in a law-court. He prefers broad and general accusations which, translated into ordinary speech, simply come to this, that Catholic men habitually connive, under the cloak of religion, at immorality on the part of their wives, sisters, and daughters. In the same way he charges priests in a wholesale manner with the foulest crimes. Here again his caution does not desert him. If he accused any living specific priest with immorality his career of slander would meet with a very sudden termination in the law-courts. We know that it is hard for Catholics to bear up patiently under an infamous and cowardly crusade of this kind. We exhort them, however, to possess their souls in patience, and to remember that the sympathies of every respectable Protestant in the Colony is with them. Adventurers of the Slattery type, like the Orangemen, like 'a little opposition' of the physical order. But to attack them in this way is to help their work by giving them a plausible excuse for posing as martyrs to 'freedom of speech.' Let no Catholic, then, assist them to become notorious except with that only form of notoriety which they will not court—the free and systematic circulation of this and such-like exposures of the true facts of their career alike to the general public and to the frequenters of their lectures.'

### Sunbeams from Cucumbers.

You may hope to extract sunbeams from cucumbers. But you must not expect truth from those wandering pets of Ananias who make a dishonourable livelihood by maligning the Catholic body. Slattery and his so-called 'Sister Mary Elizabeth' are bold, if not skilful, fibsters. We shall give a thorough exposure of the career of the female impostor in our next issue. As for Slattery: it would be manifestly impossible, in the brief compass of a newspaper article, to even touch upon the seething mass of malignant falsehood contained in his various lectures and pamphlets. Nor is it necessary. For Slattery is not even a plausible liar. 'There is, so to speak, a total lack of aerial perspective in his mad 'pictures.' The colours are too uniformly black and too heavily impastoed. In other words, the sheer monstrosity of his tales is their best refutation. He lies bravely. But he lies so clumsily and inconsistently that, as the reader is already aware, he oversteps the bounds of art in lying, and becomes not so much a relatively clever De Rougemont as a broad and vulgar Munchausen. The staple of his monstrous charges is bald, unsupported statement. They rest upon his own assertion and assumption, and on that alone. Fortunately we have abundant means of testing his reliability as a witness. And this we shall do by reference to a few of the many vital matters in which he has proved himself a willing, if clumsy, perverter of sacred truth. For obvious reasons we select some facts of his personal career of which he would have been a competent, if he had only been a truthful, witness.

(1) In one of his lectures delivered at the Baptist Church, Brunswick, Melbourne, on Thursday, May 25, 1899, he said: 'I thank God I was never under the influence of liquor during the whole of my life. I have been during the whole of my life an absolute and complete teetotaler.'\*

(2) In his semi-illiterate and ungrammatical *Complete Refutation of Popish Lies* he says (p. 7): 'I was never under the influence of intoxicating drink in my life.'

(3) In his lectures and in the fifth chapter of what we may by courtesy call his book, † he tells us that his whole and sole reason for leaving the exercise of his ministry in the archdiocese of Dublin (to which he belonged) was an alleged discovery made by him that the Catholic doctrine of intention was untenable. ‡

(4) Again: he denied in the columns of the *Christian Scotsman*, towards the close of 1897, and in his *Complete Refutation* (p. 4) that he was imprisoned in America for selling indecent publications.

\* Verbatim report in the *Victorian Standard*, the Orange organ of Victoria, May 31, 1899, page 9, 3rd col.

† *Secrets of Romish Priests Exposed*—a tissue of raging falsehood and rampant fallacy. It purports to have been written by Slattery and is dedicated to his wife. The *Complete Refutation* also purports to be, and probably was, written by him, as it contains many Hibernicisms, slips in grammar, and crude remarks such as might naturally be looked for in an Irishman of limited education. It was printed at Sunderland in 1898. The other was printed in America in 1892, and is in style and expression so different from the *Complete Refutation* that it cannot be, as it stands, the work of the same writer.

‡ Slattery misstates this doctrine, and then proceeds to elaborately refute his misstatement. Slattery either does not know Catholic theology on this point or he deliberately misrepresents it. For the general reader the best popular exposition of the subject is *The Doctrine of Intention*, by the Rev. Sydney F. Smith, S.J., published by the Catholic Truth Society (pp. 16, 17, obtainable from all Catholic booksellers). That valuable little pamphlet meets and easily disposes of the shallow fallacies of Slattery. He ekes out his evident lack of real education with a boundless effrontery, and falls in with the class who, in the words of a brilliant American magazine writer, 'do not know a syllogism from a haystack, yet who gloriously dispute the scholarly reasonings of those who, like Newman and Browning, devoted their transcendent talents and their whole lives to theology.'

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