

And then the Alliance worked itself into a state of 'regret and alarm' and sent to Lord Salisbury a furious onslaught on the Jesuits, filled with the usual misinformation of which the society carries such heavy stocks.

Impostors in the Toils.

Evil days have fallen upon some of the employés of the Protestant Alliance, and others are at the present time in a bad way. The Slattery impostors were for a time in close touch with the society, but later on it found it convenient to disown them. Other members of the noisome fraternity are in trouble just now. That unmitigated blackguard, the sham 'ex-monk' Nobbs (*alias* Widdows), is once more in the hands of the police. The ex-convict is again charged, as before, with an unmentionable crime, and at the time our last exchanges were issued, the case was pending against him at the Bow Street Police Court, London. The bogus 'ex-nun' Margaret Shepherd—a former inmate of a Magdalen asylum in Bristol—had lately to make a secret and hurried departure from New York in order to escape arrest on a criminal charge. And this is how a Denver Catholic contemporary deals with the diabolical abominations which led to the infliction of long terms of penal servitude on the sham 'ex-nun' and all-round cheat, swindler, and impostor, Diss De Bar and her male partner in nameless iniquity: 'How the blush of shame must burn the face of every decent Protestant as he reads the scanty, but horrifying, details of the trial of that female beast, Diss De Bar, and reflects that this disgrace to womanhood but a few years ago posed as an escaped nun, attracted large audiences, and was aided and assisted in her infamous work by Protestant Church organisations. . . . It is refreshing to hear that intelligent Protestants are at last showing some signs of repudiating those immoral scoundrels and shameless adventuresses who have been able for so many years to exchange the product of their filthy imaginations for good Protestant money; and it is to be hoped that when a few more have followed the vile Diss De Bar to the prison cell the rest will be driven from the Protestant pulpit to the slums from which they came.'

Aubrey de Vere.

Correspondence from Ireland record the passing of one of the noted poets of the nineteenth century, Aubrey de Vere, on January 21, in his eighty-sixth year.

'The solemn angel of eternal peace
Has waved a wand of mystery o'er his head,
Touched his strong heart, and bade his pulses cease.'

The sweet-singing son of a poetic father (Sir Aubrey de Vere) came of a Cromwellian stock and was brought up a Protestant. In 1851 he became a Catholic, and his piety, his strong personality, and the winning sweetness of his life—which was celibate to the last—'allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.' All the members of his family soon followed his example, and their conversion exercised a marked influence upon the non-Catholic aristocracy of their native Limerick county, with most of whom they were united by ties of blood or marriage. Among those who followed the de Veres and 'went over to Rome' were Lord Emly (Postmaster-General in Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1868-1874), the late Earl of Dunraven, some members of the family of the late Lord Monteaigle, the Ladies Fitzgibbon (of the family of the Earl of Clare), and a goodly sprinkling of the gentry that lived around 'sweet Adare, O lovely vale,' and in other parts of the County of Limerick. It is strange that in practically every biographical notice of Aubrey de Vere that we have met, he is set down as the author of the drama *Mary Tudor*, which was written by his father, Sir Aubrey, and which has attracted a good deal of notice since and on account of the appearance of Tennyson's drama of *Queen Mary*.

'Missionary Tales.'

We pointed out a few weeks ago that the 'missionary tales' told by Dr. Grattan Guinness against the Catholic Church in South America, during his money-raising tour in New Zealand, were of the usual style of such 'yarns.' It is by no means pleasant to have to switch the electric light on the crooked ways of those who manufacture the typical 'missionary tale,' which deserves about as much credit as snake or fish 'yarns' or big-gooseberry stories. But, on the Deuteronomic principle, the responsibility must rest with those who first lit the fire. The Rev. Dr. Starbuck, a learned American Protestant writer and divine, makes the following scathing remarks in a recent issue of the *S.H. Review* regarding a missionary society which he describes as 'one which carries off the palm for impudence in religious controversy as against the Catholics.'

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'The chief organ of theirs in Spanish-America (says Dr. Starbuck) has now come regularly to me for several years, and leads me to suppose that whatever fragments of intelligence and decency

and conscience these emissaries may have had on leaving home (and they seem to have gone out very slenderly provided with all three qualities), they lost them overboard on the way out. Certainly at home they would not have dared to publish an article sneering at marriage regarded as a spiritual union, coarsely declaring it, like Luther, a mere outward thing, and mocking at those who are shocked at the notion of dissolving it. Yet this they do by way of evangelising the Spanish-Americans.' And he adds some words which are peculiarly applicable to the 'missionary tales' (*alias* 'snake-yarns') which Dr. Grattan Guinness has been retailing throughout New Zealand to open the mouths—and the pockets—of the *gobemouches*. 'There is practically no limit,' says Dr. Starbuck, 'to the degree of effrontery which a large proportion of the ministers of this denomination are capable where the Catholic Church is concerned.' It is refreshing to see an honest Protestant protesting so vigorously against discreditable tactics which decent and God-fearing members of the Reformed creeds must abhor as cordially as Catholics do.

In Lighter Vein

(By 'QUIP.')

*. Correspondence, newspaper cuttings, etc., intended for this department should be addressed 'QUIP,' N.Z. TABLET Office, Dunedin, and should reach this office on or before Monday morning.

'THERE's nothing like a little judicious levity.'

R. L. STEVENSON.

That Coronation Robe.

I shouldn't be surprised if, after all, Mr. Seddon turns out not to be the chief figure at the King's Coronation. Unless he wishes to be outshone by a new Flora McFlimsey, he will have to borrow all Sir J. G.'s gold lace, and ornament his three acres of chest with all the war medals he can persuade the Veterans to lend him. The lady referred to is a member of the United States 'hup-pah suckles,' and she is simply going to knock spots off everything at the Coronation by appearing in a dress that is to cost £250,000. Her husband is going with her in a two-guinea sac suit, warranted to wash. She must be what the boys call a 'bonzer.' But even if she were as obese as a member of the Chang Giant Family in good condition, or if she were twice the size of Ghuni Sah, the circus elephant, and bolstered herself up after the fashion of Tweedledum and Tweedledee in Alice's adventures, I still fail to see where and how she could crowd on £250,000 worth of rag—or sail.

'For all manner of things that a woman can put
On the crown of her head or the sole of her foot,
Or wrap round her shoulders, or fit round her waist,
Or that can be sewed on, or pinned on, or laced,
Or tied with a string, or stitched on with a bow,
In front or behind, above or below,'

could hardly cost a quarter of a million.

How it Works Out.

I have just read over the detailed description of this amazing sartorial dream, and have, on second thoughts, come to the conclusion that, after all, it is worth the money. As well as I can remember, it is a stylish tailor-made costume of electric blue chiffon and dark-red appliqué, tucked up every few yards with scarlet toile boleros. Two *moiré* antiques, slightly pouched with ruffles, and stylishly dadoed with golden daffydownillies, hang down from the off-shoulder and are caught by a transparent yoke of draped fichu around the bottom of the skirt. The skirt itself is laced tulle, in skim-milk blue, enlivened here and there with chines and toques in yellow. Around the waist is a row of foulards and pom-poms (the latter specially imported from the Transvaal), and on the starboard side is an accordion-pleated tuck of grenadine guipure, edged with four-and-twenty revers all in a row.

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I may be wrong in one or two points. My lady readers will, however, overlook these, as this is merely a rough description, from memory, of the bit of quarter-million upholstery. I give it here for two reasons: firstly, that my fair readers may know what they will have to compete with if they go to the Coronation; and secondly, that the men may know what to get when they wish to give their wives a little present.

Our Last Seance.

Corney Ryan is an old digger who made his little pile long ago on the 'Dunskin.' He is at present living on White Island and his money. Last week the Island received a visit from one of those long-haired, wild-eyed, ungrammatical fellows, ycleped mediums,