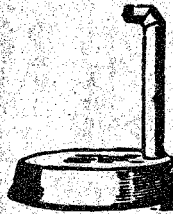




Some means the swindlers keep just outside the  
whiskers of the law.

Two of the most desirable things in a woman's  
life are to lessen compulsory labor and to

dress well. Imagine then what an effect it would have on any woman who read an advertisement in which it was said that for \$1 a washing machine could be bought that could do the family wash without assistance in thirty minutes, and to every woman sending \$1 for a wonderful washer, the machine would be given a thirty-dollar black silk dress. Well, there is such an advertisement, and there are hundreds of women who have believed in it and who have sent their money for the washer. Here is the advertisement as it was published in a number of weekly and monthly journals which have a circulation in country areas:



**FREE - A BLACK SILK DRESS OR A SUIT OF CLOTHES**

We will send as a FREE GIFT, a full suit of clothes for a gentleman, or a dress pattern of black silk for a lady (value \$30—take your choice), to every one who will send for one of our wonderful Automatic Family Washing Machines (see description). As we have many of these machines and help us in future sales. We can afford to pay all such well, hence this offer of a valuable and practical present. We believe we can affect sales and secure agents at a much less cost this way than by commission. We are not advertising, we will try to secure. IT IS A GRAND CHANCE TO OBTAIN A SILK DRESS OR SUIT OF CLOTHES FREE (GENTLE WAIST AND LEG MEASURES WILL DO.) If our grand offer interests you, don't delay if you wish to secure one of these presents. Goods will be sent stage day order in return. **OUR GRAND OFFER:** We make the best \$2.00 self-operating washing machine in the world. It washes and thoroughly cleanses all kinds of clothes. No use for the washer, after rubbing or backache or hard work on wash-day. Last year we gave away a few hundred Washers to introduce them, and we sold over 100,000. There are three million families in this country that will want this machine when they know its merits. To make it known and secure agents, we make above offer this year. One agent in Philadelphia sold 1,400 in two months. One lady in a town of 2,000 population cleared \$90 in five days. Agents are making \$50 a week. You can do the same. Our machine is the original and patented. Give your address as well as post-office address, and enclose \$1.00 cash or postal note in return, express charge, boxing, etc., and we will deliver to you, strictly packed, free of all charges without delay. (Mention this paper.) Address: **NEW YORK LAUNDRY WORKS, 23 Day St., New York.**

I have heard of this swindle for some time, but one day I received the two letters following and having nothing else to do I decided to see what the business was like:

"You are so kind in exposing frauds, to protect poor persons, will you kindly give the accompanying your attention. A girl in my employ answered the inclosed advertisement, expecting to receive the dress, you doubtless stated, saying that she would help sell the machine among her friends. She sent the dollar as called for, and received a trumpery affair of the use even for handkerchiefs and small pieces. If necessary I will send you the money if you will make the investigation."

**ONE OF THE SWINDLED VICTIMS.**

A girl who wanted a silk dress more than she did the washer wrote this pathetic and plaintive letter:

"they advertise if any on wood by their washing machines and tell their friends about it that she would send silk dress with it I sent for it and she only sent a little machine it is of now you see so the only Put it in the Paper for a frode and I am only a living out Girl I told them to send the machine and the silk dress and I would tell all my friends they put it in all the country papers. **JANE DONNELLY.**"

I asked a friend to allow me to use her name and address and then I wrote to the firm in a manner I thought would be usual among their patrons.

"I read your advertisement where you send a dress of black silk free to any one who sends you \$1 for a washing machine. Inclosed find \$1 fee machine and dress."

This letter I registered at Station K, and it was returned to me signed by H. O. Smith, Treasurer New York Laundry Works. The following day I received a package which on opening I found to contain the marvellous washer. It is needless to add that there was no silk dress nor even a scrap of silk, but inclosed was a printed wrapper, an explanation of their fraudulent advertisement.

**OUR SILK DRESS AND SUIT OFFER.**

In our advertisement we offer to give the above away to those who will help us in the sale of our Washers. We have sent you the Sample Washer for your information. Our plan in giving away the presents is this: Any one who buys 575 worth of Washers according to our price list will GET ONE PREMIUM FREE. It is not necessary that you buy all at one time, as each order you send will be recorded, and when you have bought the amount you may claim the Premium. This Premium is extra and in addition to any others we offer. This Washer is automatic, requiring no labor. The washboard is not used, all the hard work and backache common to wash day are done away with. There is no need to turn or leave to work, as the best operates the machine, so that both the time and labor of the washboard are saved by it. The Washers retail at \$2 each (the lowest in the market), and so the work equal to the highest priced ones. The washer was tested and proved to be a generally useful article, and instead of being a

to your advertisement. "I began by the way of an introduction.

"We do not advertise any such thing," he said shortly.

"But you do," I insisted. "I read your advertisement, and my servant sent for a machine and dress, and you only sent the machine, which is absolutely useless."

"Well, I can't help it if you thought you would get a thirty-dollar silk dress for a dollar," he said impudently. "No one with sense would think such a thing."

"But your advertisement says so."

"No, it doesn't. You read it again and you'll see we don't intend to send any silk dress," he said.

"Then your advertisement is a fraud, and you are practicing a fraud on the people by publishing it."

"You can get your lawyer and try to prove it," he said with a sneer. "Our advertisement is rather flowery, but we keep within the limit of the law." Getting a copy of the advertisement reproduced above he handed it to me. "Now, I defy you to show me where we say we will give a silk dress free."

"Well, the first line reads, 'Free, a black silk dress.'"

"Yes, but we don't say we'll give it free," he said slyly.

"Well, here it says 'Don't delay if you wish to secure one of these presents. Goods will be sent same day as order is received.'"

"That means the washing-machine. We can't help it if people think 'goods' refers to the silk dress."

**ADMITTING THE FRAUD.**

"You know that is your motive and you are swindling poor people out of their money just in this way."

"Well, we can't help what you think, and if there is fraud in it try to get your lawyer to prove it. I can show you thousands of testimonials where people say the machine is a success."

"Very well, tell me one woman in New York and I will be glad to call upon her."

He hesitated, his face flushed and his eyes moved about uneasily.

"There is no one just in New York I can give you, but there are thousands in Pennsylvania and Connecticut and Massachusetts. Come over here and I will show you some testimonials."

I followed him in to a desk. An expression came in and left again, and another man, evidently one of the firm, came in and sat down at a desk. All the occupants of the room seemed interested, but no one ventured a word. He took down some dozen badly written, manuscript letters, which told about selling machines to their friends, but not especially about getting the reward of a silk dress or a suit of clothes.

"These letters only go to prove what I said, that you swindle poor and ignorant people."

"No we don't, we have rich people buy from us."

"Boah! What would rich people want with a washing-machine, even if a marvel? And the ones who sell such articles by the means employed are not honest."

"You wouldn't call the new Postmaster-General dishonest, would you? Well, John Wanamaker sells hundreds of these machines over his counter in Philadelphia."

"Will you give me some names of people who have found this washer a success?"

The man wrote these two names on a piece of paper and gave them to me:

**PATRICK O'BRIEN,**  
Kingston, Mass.  
**JOHN SPORN,**  
133 Duane street,  
Sullivan, N. Y.

"You see I did not know that you were coming, and did not manufacture those testimonials for your benefit," he said with a grin.

"No, but you doubtless expect some of your victims to call, so that does not prove anything," I replied. "I think in this business you are making a wrong use of the mails."

"Well, we can't help what you think. But prove it if you can," he said defiantly, as I left the office.

There are hundreds of such firms existing.  
**NATHAN BLY.**