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THE

FABRICATION,

ENTITLED

"AWFUL DISCLOSURES IN A NUNNERY,
BY MARIA MONK,"

DETECTED AND EXPOSED,

IN AUTHENTICATED DOCUMENTS OF THE MOST RESPECTABLE
PROTESTANTS, AND OTHER SWORN TESTIMONY;

ACCOMPANIED WITH

A SHORT ADDRESS

TO THE

UNPREJUDICED AND REASONING PROTESTANTS
OF THE UNITED EMPIRE,

ON THE

EVIL TENDENCY OF SUCH FALSE AND SCANDALOUS CALUMNIES.

"They that render evil for good have defrauded me, because I followed
goodness."—Ps. xxxvii. 21.

DUBLIN:

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1836.

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TO THE
UNPREJUDICED AND REFLECTING PROTESTANTS
OF THE UNITED EMPIRE.

MY FRIENDS,—It is a melancholy fact, that thousands of Protestants, who take credit for being the most enlightened and impartial, are yet the most shamefully imposed upon, and more seduced than those of other denominations. There appears to be no falsehood too gross, nor calumny too unfounded for them, where "popery" is concerned. There is no tract too vile against "Romanism and Monks" they will not circulate, provided "the good cause" is served by it. How can those, who say the attainment of truth is their only object, and who are for ever talking of the holy volume, yet remorselessly aid the circulation of tracts and books filled with "false evidence against their neighbour?" Is this Christianity? Is it justice? Is it honesty? Is it doing as they would be done by? When we published the first Irish edition of the "*Answer to R. Reed's 'Six Months in a Convent,'*" we did not imagine we would have so soon to notice a production of a similar nature, still more barefaced and atrocious. It would be an offence to the ears of chastity, an insult on the judgment of the wise, and an abuse of the patience of the virtuous, to notice in *detail* the infamous slanders and incomparable falsehoods of a work which was published in January, 1836, in New York, under the title of "Awful Disclosures, by Maria Monk." This production was got up to calumniate the Catholic religious establishments at Montreal; but its lies were so gross as to recoil upon its abandoned author and its infamous supporters.

The evidence which we subjoin to these reflections must satisfy even the most sceptical, that a greater tissue of lies never was circulated than this work contains.

From the recent attacks made by the fanatics in America upon the Catholic *religious* females, their intolerant supporters in Great Britain, wishing to imitate their example, have republished the most unprincipled productions of the transatlantic haters of "popery," conceiving that they would be less liable to detection than home-manufactured slanders.

We call upon Protestants of all denominations, if they value truth and hate lies, to discountenance the scandalous attacks now made upon the religious female Catholic institutions. Where is the honest Protestant despising falsehood and misrepresentations, who believes the atrocious fabrications of such self-condemned characters as Reed and Monk; the first denounced by the Protestant Committee, who inquired into the state of the Ursuline Convent at Charleston; and the other branded in a public court of justice, as unworthy of all credit? And what is the object of the present unholy warfare against religious institutions? Is it to promote female virtue, or to increase the obedience or improvement of youth? Suppose that the enemies of Monasteries and Convents obtained the destruction of all religious communities, would they thereby check immorality, or advance the character of our country? Where would we then find thousands ready and willing, at all hours, to instruct the children of the poor gratuitously; or like the good Samaritan, to pour the oil of comfort into the bosom of distress? Have not the instructions and example of the religious in Ireland preserved the female character of our country, when the rulers of other nations, (whose "liberalizing policy" opposed those thus consecrated to God,) have destroyed that of the fairest portion of creation?

If some infuriated fanatics were to follow up the anti-christian work, performed by those of a similar character in America, what would be the consequence? Perhaps the destruction of their own offspring, as happened there, would be the first fruits; the ramparts which religion has built up would be removed—licentiousness would be aided in its satanic work—the number of profligates and prostitutes would rapidly increase; and vice, in all its terrific forms, would assail even the bosom of our peaceful dwellings!

Could these "philosophic" and "rationalising" gentlemen ever give the poor a substitute for those lessons of piety and

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religion they now receive from the *religious*, who have devoted themselves, in the most solemn manner, to praise God, to sanctify themselves, and to improve Society? Could they ever teach the starving peasant, or his miserable offspring, such submission to Providence, and such obedience to the laws, as they are now taught? Could they ever, with all their "reason and philosophy" alone, induce them to submit, as they are now taught to submit, to the trials and hardships of their degraded state, to avoid every species of malice and revenge, even against their worst persecutors, and to love even their worst enemies, as Christ loved his executioners?

But why ask these questions? Has not every respectable Protestant landlord, from the Duke of Leinster to Sir J. Keane, seen by experience, that whilst those of their own community, who have been paid for and sworn to teach poor schools, have neglected that duty, religious Catholic monks and nuns have sacrificed their property, and nearly their lives, to instruct, comfort, and support the poor? Nay, is it not a fact, that whilst Protestant charter schools have been denounced and suppressed by Parliament, as incompetent to their professed original purpose of promoting religion or morality, the Education Commissioners have found none more deserving of support, than the schools kept by the male and female religious of Ireland?

If Mr. Percival (like many other Protestants who do not inquire, but are deceived by the infamous lies alluded to) has called upon one of the Ministry to institute a spiritual *Inquisition* against the female religious, perhaps with the same intentions of Sir Henry Mildmay, who introduced a bill into the British Parliament, in 1800, for the suppression of Nunneries; let it be remembered, that the enlightened O'Leary, in his admirable "*Address to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal*," so triumphantly exposed this effort, and so much shamed its authors, that the bill was immediately cushioned! Well did this illustrious man say:

"The legislature of 91 made this distinction in the toleration granted to the Catholics: it removed the penalties attached to those who would enter into any ecclesiastical community of the church of Rome, but not to extend to monastic institutions; that is to say, not to endow monasteries, or incorporate their rules, such as they are in

Catholic countries, with the laws of the state, where they are never to marry, nor return to the world. What are then the few English nuns now in England, or the few Irish nuns in Ireland, for no ladies of any other country devote themselves there to a religious life? What are they in the eyes of the law? What are they in the eyes of any man who pays the slightest attention to the subject. A few Catholic females, who, from devotion, form a resolution to die old maids.

"If these ladies were ladies of pleasure, seducing youth, the gentlemen of Winchester would not give themselves the slightest concern about them. They are of the greatest use to the Catholic nobility and gentry, who send their daughters to be educated by them, on account of the strictness of their morals, their seclusion from the dissipations of the world, which affords them the more time to superintend the instruction of their scholars, and the facility of observing the exercises peculiar to the Catholic religion, such as fasts, abstinence, confessions, communions, &c., which could not be observed at other boarding schools; and which, though they may appear ridiculous to others, are held sacred by us. In Galway, in Ireland, there are ladies of this description, since the conversion of the kingdom to Christianity in the fourth century. The parliament, however rigorous in angry times, never molested them, on account of their utility, by their instructions, besides the policy of spending their money in the country; for if there were not ladies of this description in the country, the Catholics would send their daughters to be educated abroad."

"In an age of profligacy, when so many wise and virtuous members of the Legislature intended to introduce a law for the security of the marriage bed; when divorces, instead of *constant affection*, are the frequent fruits of matrimony; amidst so many seminaries of lewdness, and cities become, on account of vice and corruption, so many criminal Ninivites, which would require a Jonas to induce them to repent in sackcloth and ashes; streets infested with lewd females, from the age of eleven to the period at which the effects of a crime that carries with it its own punishment, and the enormous number of which wretches, a magistrate, who has written a book on the police of London, computes at fifty thousand annually! Amidst such scenes of vice, is the chastity of a few Catholic women an object of so alarming a nature, as to deserve the attention of the first senate on earth, especially as it is in their power to renounce their state of celibacy when they choose? Perhaps not two hundred of them would bind themselves to a single life in the space of fifty years. If their number were multiplied to ten times, or to a thousand times more, what are they when compared to the great number of immoral and unchaste all over England? About twenty or thirty atoms floating on the surface of an immense ocean. *Rari nantes in gurgite vasto*.

"Were it the custom amongst Quakers, Anabaptists, Moravians, or any other sect or description of people, to have women of a solitary cast or disposition of mind amongst them, who from fanaticism or inclination, would choose to lead a retired life, and superintend the education of the females of their sects, Sir Henry Mildmay would rather admire than molest them. Why then harass, perplex, and expose to the insults of domiciliary visits, persons of the Catholic religion? Why,

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amongst such a variety of sects, single the Catholics out as objects of persecution? There are now no Catholic Pretenders to the throne when there were, not one of the Catholics of Ireland joined them although they raised the standard twice in Scotland, to assert their claim to the British empire."

Let not honest and candid Protestants say, that the efforts of fanatics, when encouraged, may not produce bad effects, or that those who circulate these lying and calumnious productions, are not responsible for the consequences. It may be seen from the following extract, that an Orange fanatic in Dublin, from what he audaciously calls his "chair of truth," has called upon his wicked confederates (as he did upon a late occasion, to insult the citizens, and endanger their lives,) to destroy the asylums of peace, education, and religion:

"The following are a few extracts from a sermon preached on Sunday evening, 6th March, by JOHNNY M'CREA, who is called a Protestant Minister. We are scarcely justified in calling them the ravings of a fanatic, as we do not believe the man sincere in his madness. They have been sent to us by a correspondent, who can substantiate the truth of the report by affidavit. If M'CREA had not been recognised as the chaplain of a Dublin Orange lodge, he should be as unheeded by us as 'the dog that bays the moon.'

"I know and foresee, my friends, ere many months, that the true Protestants of this island will level every convent and Popish altar in it. Mind, I do not make it a request of you to do so; but it is my own opinion that it will be done."

"Again, in speaking of the Catholic church, he designated it all through by that infamous title for female ears to listen to (of whom there were many present) 'that bloody w——! that Antichrist!'

"In one of the prayers, which he delivered extempore, he prayed 'that the Almighty might turn the head of the executive in this country from his Popish ways!'

"I forgot to mention, that in advising his auditory (composed of the lowest of the Orange faction) to destroy the convents and altars, he instanced the 'good people of America;' and desired them to follow the example set by the 'Lynch-law' ruffians."—*Weekly Freeman*, 12th March, 1836.

The hypocritical idea, that such satanic zeal may "promote pure protestantism" even in the estimation of its most stern defenders, will render it the more abominable, and such efforts would only make the instigators the more culpable. Thus, when an application was made in England to show lenity to the rioters of London, in 1780, called Lord George Gordon's mob, "because those who first

engaged in it did so from the conscientious motive of promoting protestantism," the great Edmund Burke declared, (as Lord John Russell observed, some months since, in his reply to the memorial on behalf of the Dorchester labourers) "those who were the originators were more culpable than those who were seduced to follow their example for the sake of plunder." We therefore hope that you, my Protestant friends, will despise the efforts of such fanatics, and whilst you hold, from conscientious motives, your own creed, will allow us to enjoy in peace, the blessings of our religion and the advantages of our *religious* communities. As for those who have aided in propagating the slanders of Rebecca Reed and Maria Monk, we call their attention to the following observations of an eminent divine, on the baneful consequences of such publications :—

"The authors and promulgators of immoral or slanderous works, may, it is true, repent of their crime, but can never recal the mischief, as it branches out into endless ramifications, and goes down to the latest posterity. The only reparation they can make, is for the future to do all the good they can, in order to atone, in some measure, for the evil effects of their writings."

But whilst there are prejudiced and unprincipled persons fabricating lying stories, for the purpose of reviling our religion, and blackening the character of our religious institutions, it is very gratifying to our feelings to find so many of our unprejudiced and enlightened Protestant brethren coming forward promptly and generously to vindicate us, and rescue the character of the innocent of our community, when attacked by those uncharitable calumniators, who think it no crime to rob their fellow-creature of his good fame; like the murderers of their Lord and Saviour, who took away his life because they considered him as an obstacle to their designs, and an exposor of their hypocrisies.

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FABRICATION OF MARIA MONK

DETECTED AND EXPOSED.

In commencing the exposure of Maria Monk's falsehoods, we cite the following from a Dublin journal :—

“ From the columns of a Montreal paper we learn, that the system, of which Rebecca Reed was the first agent, has found another and a fitting tool in the person of a young woman of light mind and depraved habits, named Maria Monk, a native of Montreal. From the depositions of Doctor Robinson, a justice of the peace for Montreal, it would appear that in November, 1834, a young woman was found in the neighbourhood in a destitute condition, who stated that she was the daughter of a Dr. Robinson. Upon being confronted, however, with her alleged father, she admitted that she had uttered an untruth; and that in reality her father was one William Monk, of that city. She stated, that in consequence of temporary insanity, to which she was subject, her parents had kept her chained in a cellar for four years. When it was remarked to her that her person bore no marks of manacles or any other mode of restraint, she replied that her mother took care to cover the irons with soft cloths to prevent them injuring the skin. From this time until August last Dr. Robinson lost sight of this strange story-teller. It would seem, however, that in the interval she made her appearance in New York, in a very destitute condition, where she excited the interest of the lovers of the marvellous and the haters of Popery, by alleging all manner of crimes against the monks and nuns of the General Hospital of Montreal, out of which place she asserted she had escaped. It is said the authorities at New York deputed a Mr. Hoyte (who represented himself

as a clergyman) and two other gentlemen to accompany the wretched woman to Montreal, to make inquiry in reference to the truth of her statement. And in August last Mr. Robinson was waited upon by several inhabitants of Montreal, who requested that he would, as a magistrate, institute an inquiry into 'some very serious charges which had been made against certain Roman Catholic priests of the place and the nuns of the General Hospital, by a female who had been a nun in that establishment for four years, and who had divulged the horrible secrets of that establishment, such as the illicit and criminal intercourse between the nuns and the priests, stating particulars of much depravity of conduct on the part of these people, in this respect, and their murdering the offspring of these criminal connections, as soon as they were born, to the number of from thirty to forty every year.' Dr. Robinson at once declared that he did not believe there was the slightest truth in the allegations. He consented, however, to see the wretched woman alluded to, and he then found that she was the same who had, some months previously, told such a strange story of her own parents. She repeated, in Dr. Robinson's presence, the allegations we have mentioned above, stating that she had been four years in a convent, and had taken the black veil. 'I was asked to take her deposition (says Dr. Robinson) on her oath as to the truth of what she stated. I declined doing so, giving as a reason, that, from my knowledge of her character, I considered her assertions upon oath were not entitled to more credit than her bare declaration, and that I did not believe either; intimating, at the same time, my willingness to take the necessary steps for a full investigation, if they could get any other person to corroborate any part of her solemn testimony, or if a direct charge were made against any particular individual of a criminal nature.'

"The widowed mother of the unfortunate creature, a Protestant, too, came forward and swore that her daughter was never in a nunnery, unless when, at the age of eight years, she went to school in such an establishment. She further swore that Hoyte was very pressing in his solicitations that she (Mrs. Monk) would make out that her daughter had been in a nunnery. He stated, says the writer, 'that should I say so, it would be better than one hundred pounds

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to me; that I should be protected for life, that I should leave Montreal, and that I would be better provided for elsewhere; I answered that thousands of pounds would not induce me to perjure myself. I told him notwithstanding I was a Protestant, and did not like the Roman Catholic religion, but like all other respectable Protestants I held the priests of the seminary and the nuns of Montreal in veneration, as the most pious and charitable persons I ever knew.

"When it was found that the mother was not to be wrought upon by the golden promises of the wretches who had got her child into their toils, it seems their victim was spirited away, or at least kept out of her parent's view, (it is supposed) maternal counsel might spoil the sport of the American O'Mulligans. But we have further evidence of the character of this pretended man. Upon her return to Montreal she was the mother of an infant child. It does not positively appear that Hoyte was the father of the bantling, but from his conduct in regard to it and its unfortunate mother, the fact is rendered more than suspicious." *Morning Register.*

"We perceive that the pious publishers of Protestant "Pious Frauds," are zealously placarding the revelations of Miss Maria Monk—revelations in one sense certainly; for the facts put forth by her had no previous earthly existence, unless in the shape of a work published some 100 years before. Still the vilification goes on; and the Irish saints pander to the prurient imagination of all who can digest a lie for the enjoyment of the filthy luxury which is its accessory. We copy the following paragraph from the *Liverpool Journal* in reference to this base and malignant tissue of lies:—

"It is likely that the pious slanderers of Catholicity (who are Legion in this city) may send to the illiberal portion of the British press copies of a vile pamphlet, called "Awful Disclosures, by Maria Monk," which they have lately published here. If notice be taken of this work in your city, the following facts may be of use to you. In the year 1731, a book was published called 'The Gates of Hell opened, or a Development of the Secrets of Nunneries.' Miss Maria Monk's pamphlet is a verbatim copy of that work! the only difference being the change of names. Dr. Bartlett, the editor of the *Boston Post*, pledged himself, a week since, that this was the fact, and this morning the editors of the *Boston Pilot* state that they are ready to make affidavit that the original work, printed in 1731, was in their

possession until a few months ago, when it was lent to the publisher of the 'Awful Disclosures.' They copy pages from both works, which are the same, word for word."—*Ibid.*

We shall now lay before an impartial public, evidence sufficient to prove that no Protestant, who values truth and justice, can aid, even in the most remote way, the circulation of the tissue of lies, signed Maria Monk.

The first shall be the universal testimonies of the Protestant Journalists at Montreal, where the religious institutes, so grossly reviled, are established.

The second shall be the sworn testimony of those who were best acquainted with the character of the said Maria Monk.

"The first publication of this calumny against the priesthood and nuns of Montreal, appeared in a New York 'religious' (?) paper, called the *Protestant Vindicator*. The number in which the infamous libel appeared, was dated 14th October, 1835, three months previous to the appearance of the book; it reached Montreal four or five days after, and was met by immediate and unanimous contradiction from the whole of the Protestant press of the province. These contradictions are of the most unqualified character; and as the parties from whom they emanated are, for the most part, politically opposed to the section of the population to which the priests belong, they are at once honourable to the good feelings of the witnesses, and of course the more valuable as evidence.

"We shall commence with the evidence of the *Montreal Herald*, in favour of the unimpeachable character of the calumniated persons. After a paragraph which it is not necessary to quote, the *Herald* proceeds as follows:—

• • • 'The first editorial article is entitled 'Nunneries,' and is intended to be an exposure of debauchery and murder, said to have taken place in the Hôtel Dieu in this city. We will not disgrace our columns, nor disgust our readers, by copying the false, the abominably false article. Though of a different religious persuasion from the priests and the nuns, we have had too many opportunities of witnessing their unwearied assiduity and watchfulness, and Christian charity, during two seasons of pestilence, and can bear witness to the hitherto unimpeached and unimpeachable rectitude of their conduct, to be in the slightest degree swayed in our opinion by a newspaper slander; but we would respectfully inform the conductors of the *Protestant Vindicator*, that there never existed a class of men who are more

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highly respected, and more universally esteemed, by individuals of all persuasions, than the Roman Catholic priests of Montreal. The 'Sisters of Charity' are equally respected, and are the means of effecting important services to the community. They *practise* Christianity, by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, protecting the orphan, and ministering to the sick, the afflicted, and the dying—'pursuing the noiseless tenor of their way,' courting no popular applause, and seeking their sole reward in 'conscience void of offence towards God and man.' We do not pretend to be defenders of the Roman Catholic religion, or of any of its particular institutions. We are Protestants, and glory in being so; but we will not so far forget the precepts of our divine Master, as to connive at traducing the character of individuals, who are exemplary members of society, although they are of a different religious persuasion from ourselves!

"*The Montreal Gazette*, another journal of similar politics, and conducted by Protestants, is equally unqualified in its testimony in favour of the calumniated, and equally indignant in its condemnation of the calumniators. We select the following passages:—

* * * 'From our infancy we have resided in this city, and we therefore may be supposed to know the characters of the Roman Catholic clergy and the nuns, somewhat better than any itinerant preacher from the United States. Their constant and unremitted attention to the discharge of their parochial duties—their kind and affectionate attendance upon the sick, at all seasons, but more particularly during the severe visitations of pestilence, have excited general admiration and approval from the believers in other creeds—their numerous acts of charity and benevolence are experienced by thousands, whose wants and sufferings have been relieved from the funds at their disposal—their character for unblemished purity and morality has stood unimpeached, until a worthless and anonymous scribbler has dared to impugn their hitherto unsullied reputations. * * *'

'It is superlatively ridiculous to suppose, that while these institutions are open daily to the visits of our citizens, and their inmates are seen at all hours attending to their religious avocations, such events should occur as have been described, and yet be unknown to the public until ushered into notice by a New York paper. The palpable errors with which the article teems, as to the title and qualifications of some of the clergy, betray its origin, and point it out as the production of one, who has raised up the creature of his imagination, with a view to injure the Roman Catholic religion, and to support his own illiberal views.'

"The other English papers of Montreal added their voluntary testimony to the same effect, as did also those of Quebec; from one of which we shall content ourselves with a single quotation. It is from the *Quebec Mercury*:—

'The falsehood of this, pretended, Protestant Vindicator, is so revolting and gross, and couched in terms so coarse, that we can

make no quotation from it, nor even more particularly allude to it, than to say, in contradiction of the infamous slander to which it has given birth, that having passed the greater part of our life in this province, in which we have an extensive acquaintance, we have never known any ladies who had been educated in either of the nunneries of this city, and of Montreal, who did not in after-life retain the warmest affection for the religious ladies who were their preceptors, and speak of them in the highest terms; and if they become mothers, afford the strongest evidence of the confidence they reposed in the purity of the lives and conduct of the members of these institutions, by committing their young daughters to their care and instruction. The conduct also of the Roman Catholic clergy in Canada deserves an equally strong testimony from us. We have witnessed their courageous and unremitting attention to their duties, when an appalling pestilence twice swept over the land; we have seen them as the preceptors of youth in the seminaries—we have known them in the discharge of their more limited, yet not less useful, duties as parish priests, and in all these characters we are bound to say, that their conduct has been such as to command the love of their own flocks, and the sincerest respect of the Protestant inhabitants towards the Roman Catholic clergy.'

"These general testimonies in favour of the Roman Catholic clergy and religious ladies of Montreal, and in contradiction to the sweeping accusations against them contained in the paper already named, produced no retraction or apology on the part of the editor of the *Protestant Vindicator*. On the contrary, in a subsequent number of that paper, dated 4th of November, 1835, the calumnies were reiterated and insisted upon, in the violent and bitter language of ignorant fanaticism, on the single authority of the unfortunate creature whose name is attached to the book quoted at the head of this article.

"In the mean time some of the Protestant inhabitants of Montreal had voluntarily instituted an inquiry into the origin of the accusations, and the result was the perfect establishment of the falsehood of the statements, which have since been woven into the book under notice. The first piece of evidence we shall offer, is the affidavit of Dr. Robertson, a physician of long standing, and a justice of the peace. It is not the first in chronological order, but it is the first in importance, as it gives a connected history of Maria Monk for a considerable time previously. This document we give entire.

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William Robertson, of Montreal, Doctor in Medicine, being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelists, deposeth and saith as follows:—On the 9th of November, 1834, three men came up to my house, having a young female in company with them, who, they said, was observed, that forenoon, on the bank of the canal, near the extremity of the St. Joseph suburbs, acting in a manner which induced some people, who saw her, to think that she intended to drown herself. They took her into a house in the neighbourhood, where, after being there some hours, and interrogated as to who she was, &c., she said she was the daughter of Dr. Robertson. On receiving this information they brought her to my house. Being from home when they came to the door, and learning from Mrs. Robertson that she had denied them, they conveyed her to the watch-house. Upon hearing this story, in company with G. Auldjo, Esq., of this city, I went to the watch-house, to inquire into the affair. We found the young female, whom I have since ascertained to be Maria Monk, daughter of W. Monk, of this city, in custody. She said that although she was not my daughter, she was the child of respectable parents, in or very near Montreal, who, from some light conduct of hers (arising from temporary insanity, to which she was, at times, subject from her infancy), had kept her confined and chained in a cellar for the last four years. Upon examination, no mark or appearance indicated the wearing of manacles, or any other mode of restraint. She said, on my observing this, that her mother always took care to cover the irons with soft cloths, to prevent them injuring the skin. From the appearance of her hands, she evidently had not been used to work. To remove her from the watch-house, where she was confined with some of the most profligate women of the town, taken up for inebriety and disorderly conduct in the streets, as she could not give a satisfactory account of herself, I, as a justice of the peace, sent her to jail as a vagrant. The following morning, I went to the jail, for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, who she was. After considerable persuasion, she promised to divulge her story to the Rev. H. Esson, one of the clergymen of the Church of Scotland, to whose congregation she said her parents belonged. That gentleman did call at the jail, and ascertain who she was. In the course of a few days she was released, and I did not see her again until the month of August last, when Mr. Johnson, of Griffin-town, joiner, and Mr. Cooley, of the St. Ann suburbs, merchant, called upon me about ten o'clock at night, and after some precatory remarks, mentioned that the object of their visit was to ask me, as a magistrate, to institute an inquiry into some very serious charges which had been made against some of the Roman Catholic priests of the place, and the nuns of the General Hospital, by a female who had been a nun in that institution for four years, and who had divulged the horrible secrets of that establishment, such as the illicit and criminal intercourse between the nuns and the priests stating particulars of such depravity of conduct, on the part of these people, in this respect, and their murdering the offspring of these criminal connexions as soon as they were born, to the number of from thirty to forty every year. I instantly stated, that I did not believe a word of what they told me, and they must have been imposed

upon by some evil-disposed and designing person. Upon inquiry who this nun, their informant, was, I discovered that she answered exactly the description of Maria Monk, whom I had so much trouble about last year, and mentioned to those individuals my suspicion, and what I knew of that unfortunate girl. Mr. Cooley said to Mr. Johnson, 'Let us go home, we are hoaxed.' They told me she was then at Mr. Johnson's house, and requested me to call there and hear her own story. The next day, or the day following, I did call, and saw Maria Monk at Mr. Johnson's house. She repeated in my presence the substance of what was mentioned to me before, relating to her having been in the nunnery for four years; having taken the black veil; the crimes committed there; and a variety of other circumstances concerning the conduct of the priests and nuns. A Mr. Hoyte was introduced to me, and was present during the whole of the time that I was in the house. He was represented as one of the persons who had come in from New York with this young woman, for the purpose of investigating into this mysterious affair. I was asked to take her deposition, on her oath, as to the truth of what she had stated. I declined doing so, giving as a reason, that from my knowledge of her character, I considered her assertions upon oath were not entitled to more credit than her bare assertion, and that I did not believe either; intimating at the same time, my willingness to take the necessary steps for a full investigation, if they could get any other person to corroborate any part of her solemn testimony, or if a direct charge were made against any particular individual of a criminal nature. During the first interview with Messrs. Johnson and Cooley, they mentioned that Maria Monk had been found in New York in a very destitute situation by some charitable individuals, who administered to her necessities, being very sick. She expressed a wish to see a clergyman, as she had a dreadful secret which she wished to divulge before she died: a clergyman visiting her, she related to him the alleged crimes of the priests and nuns of the General Hospital at Montreal. After her recovery, she was visited and examined by the mayor and some lawyers at New York, afterwards at Troy, in the State of New York, on the subject; and I understood them to say, that Mr. Hoyte and two other gentlemen, one of them a lawyer, were sent to Montreal with her, for the purpose of examining into the truth of the accusations thus made. Although incredulous as to the truth of Maria Monk's story, I thought it incumbent upon me to make some inquiry concerning it, and have ascertained where she has been residing a great part of the time she states having been an inmate of the nunnery. During the summer of 1832, she was at service at William Henry; the winters of 1832-3, she passed in this neighbourhood, at St. Ours, and St. Denis. The accounts given of her conduct that season, corroborate the opinions I had before entertained of her character.

W. ROBERTSON.

Sworn before me, at Montreal, this 14th day of November, 1835.

BENJ. HOLMES, J. P.,

" But, although each of these stories contradicts the other, and all completely destroy the general credibility of the witness, we have, further, the direct testimony of Dr. Robertson, that during the four years in question, she was neither chained in a cellar, nor outraged in a nunnery. In 1832, she was at William Henry—a town about forty-five miles below Montreal; and in the winter of 1832-3, she was living in the same neighbourhood, namely, at St. Ours or St. Denis, two villages lying south and inland of the town just named.

" We now come to the affidavit of the mother of Maria Monk. It is of great length, and contains some minor details which do not materially strengthen the evidence, though they would do so were that evidence of a less decided character. Many of these details we shall therefore omit, giving only the most important passages.

" The affidavit was sworn to on the 24th of October, 1835, before Dr. Robertson, whose own evidence the reader has just perused.

" Mrs. Monk declares in this affidavit,

' That wishing to guard the public against the deception which has lately been practised in Montreal by designing men, who have taken advantage of the occasional mental derangement of her daughter, to make scandalous accusations against the priests and the nuns in Montreal, and afterwards to make her pass herself for a nun who had left the convent,'

" She proceeds to state, that in August, 1835, a man named Hoyte, who stated himself to be a minister of New York, called upon her and informed her,—

' That he had lately come to Montreal, with a young woman and child of five weeks old; that the woman had absconded from him at Goodenough's tavern, where they were lodging, and left him with the child; he gave me a description of the woman; I unfortunately discovered that the description answered my daughter, and the reflection that this stranger had called upon Mr. Esson, our pastor, and inquiring for my brother, I suspected that this was planned; I asked for the child, and said that I would place it in a nunnery; to that Mr. Hoyte started every objection, in abusive language against the nuns.'

" Subsequently the child was delivered to her. Mrs. Monk then sent an acquaintance, a Mrs. Tarbert, to seek

for her daughter, who was found, but she refused to go to her mother's house. The only fact of importance, in this portion of the affidavit, is, that Maria Monk had borrowed a bonnet and shawl 'to assist her escape from that Mr. Hoyte, at the Hotel,' and she requested Mrs. Tarbert to return them to the owner.

"We now proceed to quote a further portion of Mrs. Monk's affidavit.

'Early in the afternoon of the same day, Mr. Hoyte came to my house with the same old man, wishing me to make all my efforts to find the girl, in the mean time speaking very bitterly against the Catholics, the priests, and the nuns; mentioned that my daughter had been in the nunnery, where she had been ill-treated. I denied that my daughter had ever been in a nunnery; that when she was about eight years of age she went to a day-school; at that time came in two other persons, whom Mr. Hoyte introduced; one was the Rev. Mr. Brewster. I do not recollect the other reverence's name. They all requested me, in the most pressing terms, to try to make it out my daughter had been in the nunnery; and that she had some connexion with the priests of the seminary, of which nunnery and priests she spoke in the most outrageous terms; said that should I make that out, myself, my daughter, and child, would be protected for life. I expected to get rid of their importunities, in relating the melancholy circumstances by which my daughter was frequently deranged in her head, and told them that when at the age of about seven years, she broke a slate pencil in her head; that since that time her mental faculties were deranged, and by times much more than at other times, but that she was far from being an idiot; that she could make the most ridiculous but most plausible stories; and that as to the history that she had been in a nunnery, it was a fabrication, for she never was in a nunnery; that at one time I wished to obtain a place in a nunnery for her; that I had employed the influence of Mrs. De Montenach, of Dr. Nelson, and of our pastor the Rev. Mr. Esson, but without success.'

* * * 'After many more solicitations to the same effect, three of them retired, but Mr. Hoyte remained, adding to the other solicitations: he was stopped, a person having rapped at the door; it was then candle-light. I opened the door, and I found Doctor McDonald, who told me that my daughter Maria was at his house in the most distressing situation; that she wished him to come and make her peace with me; I went with the Doctor, to his house in McGill-street; she came with me to near my house, but would not come in, notwithstanding I assured her that she would be kindly treated; and that I would give her her child; she crossed the parade ground, and I went into the house, and returned for her.—Mr. Hoyte followed me. She was leaning on the west railing of the parade; we went to her: Mr. Hoyte told her, my dear Mary, I am sorry you have treated yourself and me in this manner; I hope you have not exposed what has passed between us nevertheless; I

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will treat you the same as ever, and spoke to her in the most affectionate terms; took her in his arms; she at first spoke to him very cross, and refused to go with him, but at last consented and went away with him, absolutely refusing to come to my house. Soon after, Mr. Hoyte came and demanded the child: I gave it to him. Next morning Mr. Hoyte returned, and was more pressing than in his former solicitations, and requested me to say that my daughter had been in the nunnery; that should I say so it would be better than one hundred pounds to me; that I would be protected for life, and that I should leave Montreal, and that I would be better provided for elsewhere; I answered that thousands of pounds would not induce me to perjure myself; then he got saucy and abusive to the utmost; he said he came to Montreal to detect the infamy of the priests and the nuns.'

"What follows is not important, except that Mrs. Monk heard a few days after that her daughter was at one Mr. Johnson's, a joiner, at Griffin-town, with Mr. Hoyte; 'that he passed her for a nun who had escaped from the Hôtel Dieu Nunnery;' and on further inquiry, she found that her daughter had subsequently gone off with the said Hoyte.

"To the above ample testimony we shall only add the most material portion of the evidence of Mrs. Tarbert, the female who was requested by Mrs. Monk to seek out her daughter:—

'I know the said Maria Monk; last spring she told me that the father of the child she was then carrying, was burned in Mr. Owen's house. She often went away in the country, and at the request of her mother I accompanied her across the river. Last summer she came back to my lodgings, and told me that she had made out the father of the child; and that very night left me and went away. The next morning I found that she was in a house of bad fame where I went for her, and told the woman keeping that house, that she ought not to allow that girl to remain there, for she was a girl of good and honest family. Maria Monk then told me that she would not go to him, (alluding, as I understood, to the father of the child, for that he wanted her to swear an oath that would lose her soul for ever, but jestingly said, should make her a lady for ever. I then told her (Maria) do not lose your soul for money.'

"Here, then, not only have we abundant proof of the utter falsehood of Maria Monk's 'awful disclosures,' but the whole character of this abominable conspiracy is unfolded."—*Dublin Review*.

The same writer concludes his remarks by the following observations:—

" But little now remains to be added. Touching the character of the Catholic clergy and nuns of Canada, we might add the testimony of several persons now in London, whose opportunities of observation have been ample, having resided many years in Canada, during the whole of which period not even a whisper was ever uttered against these servants of the Gospel. On the contrary, the spotless purity of their lives was universally acknowledged. Living in the midst of a populous city, their residences open to any visitor, constantly mixing with the inhabitants, they may be said to be perpetually under the public eye; hence it would be quite impossible that any irregularity of conduct could be practised without attracting attention and leading to exposure.—Most of the individuals named in Maria Monk's book, are specially known for the practice of every active virtue. With reference to education particularly, both priests and nuns have secured the enduring gratitude of the community of Lower Canada. The seminaries* of Montreal and Quebec are the only public schools of any note in Lower Canada, and there is scarcely an individual of any education in the province who is not indebted for his mental acquirements to one or other of those excellent establishments.

" The same may be said of the nunneries as places of education for girls. So deservedly popular are they, that the Protestant English are in the habit of sending their daughters to those institutions for elementary education; and, as the *Quebec Mercury* very properly observes, when these daughters in their turn become mothers, it is seldom that they do not evince their confidence in the purity of the lives and conduct of the members of these establishments, by committing their own daughters to their care.

" It really ought to excite astonishment that any persons should be found so destitute of moral feeling, as to renew in England the publication of a work which had exposed its authors in America to so disgraceful a celebrity. That the

* Seminary is the specific name of the male religious houses of Quebec and Montreal. They were originally schools of theology, but on the suppression of the order of the Jesuits, the priests of the seminaries extended their plan to general education.

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Standard, edited as it is by some of the most reckless of the calumniators of the religion of the people of Ireland, or that the *Times* should make use of any calumny, which could escape contradiction and exposure even for a few weeks, is easily accounted for by the habitual depravity of the editors of those papers. But that any persons of a different station in life should be found so destitute of all sense of religion, as to republish known calumny—calumny, the falsehood of which was demonstrated, might indeed create the extreme of surprise, if anti-Catholic bigotry had not furnished multitudinous instances of the total abandonment of all shame—of such an utter disregard of veracity, that Charles James Fox's expression, of 'a good Protestant lie,' is not so familiar as to suppress every angry emotion, and to cause a smile of contempt to take the place of a more legitimate resentment.

"We cannot but appeal to all that exists of good sense and good feeling, against the continuance of this system of unprovoked and unjustifiable slander. Surely falsehood,—calumny—for we must use the only appropriate word—is not the proper weapon of religious controversy. It cannot possibly make any converts to Protestantism. On the contrary, it irritates and disgusts the Catholics, and tends to convince them that the cause must necessarily be a bad one, which sanctions and requires such vile instruments. It is true that they may deter Protestants from giving that patient and candid attention to the merits of the controversy between them and the Catholics, which so important, so truly awful a subject demands. But this protection to Protestantism, which arises from the dark mist created by calumnious imputations, is one which no sincere Christian can hesitate to condemn: and there is also a reaction in the system itself. Protestants of just minds and right feelings, when they discover how totally false are the assertions of the advocates of their religion, are thereby rendered more attentive to the arguments of the Catholics—more disposed to look upon Catholicity with a favourable eye, as not affording any grounds for true accusations, when calumnies are used to supply their place; and thus, what was intended to prevent conversion, is often and often the cause of a great increase to the ranks of our religion."

The following is taken from the *Edinburgh Patriot*, (a high Protestant journal), of the 22nd May, 1836:—

“We are opponents of the Roman Catholic creed. We should like to have a fair field for discussion with those who maintain it. But that we should seek for in vain, while those who call themselves the friends of the Protestant cause, give them the advantage of *being persecuted*. We cannot have their superiority in this respect brought more forcibly before us, than in the review of Maria Monk’s ‘Black Nunnery.’ That such a work should have been published, and forced into circulation by Protestants, is sufficiently degrading. The clear confutation of its falsehoods, which we here find,—(alluding to the article in the *Dublin Review*, from which we have given extracts)—is written with a temperance which the author of it owes, we fear, to the circumstance, that those who have entered into the *base and degrading conspiracy* he exposes, are not of his own creed.”

What will honest Protestants say after this? What will they think of a Protestant minister giving extracts from such atrocious work weekly, for the edification of Protestants? What restitution can such a man make to the violated laws of truth and justice?

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We trust, that all lovers of truth and advocates of justice, who must naturally desire to avoid a breach of the precept, that commands them NOT to bear false witness against their neighbour, will ponder on the following solemn declarations of the Holy Ghost, and avoid the crimes of calumny and detraction therein condemned :—

“ But if you have bitter zeal, and there be contentions in your hearts; glory not, and be not liars against the truth.

“ For this is not wisdom, descending from above: but earthly, sensual, devilish.

“ For where envying and contention is, there is inconstancy, and every evil work.

“ But the wisdom, that is from above, first indeed is chaste, then peaceable, modest, easy to be persuaded, consenting to the good, full of mercy and good fruits, without judging, without dissimulation.

“ And the fruit of justice is sown in peace, to them that make peace.”—ST. JAMES, ch. iii., ver. 14 to 18.

“ Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity: thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie.

“ The bloody and the deceitful man the Lord will abhor.

“ For there is no truth in their mouth: their heart is vain.

“ Their throat is an open sepulchre: they dealt deceitfully with their tongues: judge them, O God.

“ Let them fall from their devices: according to the multitude of their wickednesses cast them out: for they have provoked thee, O Lord.”—PSALM v., ver. 7, 10, 11.

“ Behold he hath been in labour with injustice: he hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth iniquity.

“ He hath opened a pit and dug it: and he is fallen into the hole he made.

“ His sorrow shall be turned on his own head: and his iniquity shall come down upon his crown.”—PSALM vii., ver. 15 to 17.