

CONFIRMATION  
OF  
MARIA MONK'S DISCLOSURES

CONCERNING THE  
HOTEL [DIEU NUNNERY OF  
MONTREAL';

PRECEDED BY  
A REPLY TO THE PRIESTS' BOOK.

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By THE REV. J. J. SLOCUM,  
OF NEW YORK.

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TO WHICH IS ADDED  
FURTHER DISCLOSURES BY MARIA MONK.  
AND  
AN ACCOUNT OF HER VISIT TO NUNS' ISLAND.

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THIRD EDITION.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE following reply to the "Awful Exposure," consists of two parts. Part I. is occupied with an examination and refutation of that book. And Part II. contains the principal arguments, which may be adduced in confirmation of Maria Monk's "Awful Disclosures." The work is somewhat more extensive than it was first designed to be; and yet, in some respects, it is less full than could be wished, or than was originally intended. On some points, the author has failed in his attempts to obtain from Canada, such information as he has sought for. It appears that, for some cause or other, several of his letters sent by mail to gentlemen in Montreal, have never been received by the persons to whom they were directed.

The author has also found an extreme backwardness on the part of individuals, especially in Canada, to furnish such testimony as they possess, in support of Miss Monk's claims to public confidence; in some instances, he has met with an absolute refusal; in others, he has received a strict prohibition to publish any thing in connexion with their names. This is particularly true, as it respects Miss Monk's nearest relatives, some of whom are using every means in their power to induce her to deny the truth of

her narrative, going so far as even to threaten her life, if she does not do it. The public will deduce their own inferences from such conduct.

The author would further remark, that his production has the usual defects of haste in composition. From a variety of circumstances, he has felt himself compelled to hasten his publication, as rapidly as possible. He has done the best he could under existing circumstances. His sole object has been to elicit and exhibit the truth, in regard to the "Awful Disclosures." He has, therefore, one request to make of the public, and it is certainly a very just one. It is, that he may receive an impartial trial, before he shall be condemned, either as to his motives or his conduct. The subject is extremely exciting, and is attended with difficulties peculiar to itself. It would be a wonder, therefore, if he had not erred in some minor particulars; but he will acknowledge his errors, whatever they may be, as soon as they shall be satisfactorily pointed out to him. The subject is one of deep and solemn interest to the parties concerned, and all he wishes in regard to the matter is, that the truth, whatever it may be, may be brought to light.

J. J. SLOCUM.

New York, Nov. 7th, 1836.

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## PART I.

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### REPLY TO THE PRIESTS' BOOK,

DENOMINATED "AWFUL EXPOSURE OF AN ATROCIOUS PLOT FORMED BY CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS AGAINST THE CLERGY AND NUNS OF LOWER CANADA, THROUGH THE INTERVENTION OF MARIA MONK.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### GENERAL REMARKS.

Culpable conduct of the priests—Authors of the "Awful Exposure"—Entitled the Priests' Book—its contents—its style and spirit vulgar—Clamorous about matters of trifling importance—Extraneous matter.

If Maria Monk be an impostor, the conduct of the Montreal Roman priesthood is unpardonable. At the commencement of the controversy, they ought to have shown it, so clearly as to have silenced every reasonable doubt on the subject. This could have been done with very little trouble, and have saved the world from the painful excitement which her disclosures have produced. Had the doors of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery been opened for the inspection of a few impartial examiners, when she first appealed to the test of examination, in the August of 1835; or had a single page of credible testimony been produced, clearly proving an alibi in her case—the work would have been accomplished, and the "Awful Disclosures" would never have seen the light.

But very different has been the course pursued by her opponents. They steadfastly refused, for the space

of about one year, to subject that convent to the proposed test; and even then refused to have it explored, except by individuals of their own selecting, such as were known to be hostile to Miss Monk's claims. The consequence has been to deepen the conviction on the public mind, that her pretensions, as an ex-nun, are founded in truth.

It is true, they collected and published to the world in November, 1835, several affidavits, the object of which was to prove that she was unworthy of confidence, and that she had never been a nun. These affidavits, however, were of such a character as to produce an effect, opposite to their intention, on the minds of those who had the means and the ability intelligently to examine them.

The book recently published in New York, entitled, "Awful Exposure of the atrocious plot formed by certain individuals against the clergy and nuns of Lower Canada, through the intervention of Maria Monk," is of such a character, that it will by no means terminate the dispute between Maria Monk and the priests.

"Who is the author?" is an inquiry which naturally springs up in the mind, when we first take up a book to read, that we have never seen before. In regard to the book above named, it is believed, that the inquiry will be made in vain. As to authorship, it is nameless. According to the title page, its publishers are 'Jones & Co., of Montreal.' Mr. Jones has made different and contradictory statements as to who wrote it. He has repeatedly alleged himself to be the author, and as such, responsible for its contents. He has also said that a gentleman by the name of Mr. McGan, was its author. But a Philadelphia priest, in a letter from Montreal to the Catholic Herald, says,



"I am happy to be able to inform you that there is forthcoming a most satisfactory review of the vile work, (Awful Disclosures,) from the pen of a talented Scotch gentleman of this place." Now, Mr. Jones is a French Canadian, and Mr. McGan an Irishman. We have then, according to these statements, a trio of authors; a Canadian Frenchman, an Irishman, and Scotchman; the representatives of three different nations. The probability is, that neither of them wrote it.

The book is written in defence of the Canadian priests and nuns; and was announced before publication, and recommended after it, by priests in this and other cities. And if credible report be true, money from the priests' treasury sustained the expense of getting it up. It undoubtedly has their sanction. I can, therefore, see no impropriety in calling it, *The Priests' Book*. If they did not write it themselves, it was written for them in their defence, and may at least, be called theirs in this sense, if in no other. Having thus found a name for it, let us proceed in our examination of its contents and general character.\*

The book before us is a small 18mo., containing about 130 pages. After the introduction, which contains a fulsome eulogy on the exalted character of the

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\* I have understood that Mr. Jones is endeavoring to produce the impression that the priests of Lower Canada wholly disregard this book—not having purchased a single copy of it. I trust that none will be gulled by this priestly manoeuvre. It is undoubtedly the object of the wily priests to conceal themselves behind Mr. Jones and others, whom they use as the mere tools of their defence. The priests are celebrated for this mode of warfare. I expect a flourish in respect to this matter. Perhaps Mr. Jones will falsify himself, once at least, in reference to it.

priests, nuns, and convents of Lower Canada, we have 71 pages occupied with unsupported denials of the truth of Maria Monk's statements, interspersed with jeers and scoffs at her and her friends. Then comes a chapter of some eight or nine pages as a "biographical article on the life of Maria Monk,"—the character of which I forbear naming at present. The remainder of the book contains affidavits and letters, the object of which is to prove, 1st, that Maria Monk has never been a nun—2d, that she lived in sundry specified places during the time, which, she says, she spent in the convent—3d, that she obtained her nunnery knowledge from the Montreal Magdalen Asylum—4th, that she has described the asylum instead of the nunnery—5th, that her character from her earliest youth has been lewd, lying, thievish, and adventurous—6th, that the father of her child is not priest Phelan, but one Louis Malo of Montreal. Such is an outline of the priests' book.

Whoever will take the trouble to examine this book of the priests, will find it to be of a character extremely vulgar, both in its style and in its spirit. Its spirit is any thing rather than what it should be. This is the more to be regretted by the friends of truth, because of the immense importance of the subject discussed. Such are anxious to know the truth; and if Miss Monk is an impostor, they wish to know it, that they may treat her and her disclosures accordingly. On the other hand, if her narrative is essentially true, they wish to be convinced of it, in order that they may make such use of it, as the cause of suffering humanity and religion demand. But how will they be repulsed with the grossness, the bitterness, and the denunciatory spirit, of this book! One thing is very certain,

and that is, if the priests have the truth on their side, their cause is most wretchedly managed in the present instance.

A specimen of the coarse vulgarity spoken of may be seen, in the manner in which Miss Monk is generally spoken of by the priests. They call her "*Monk the thief*," "*the tool Monk*," "*the prostitute Monk*," &c. &c. In a single chapter she is called "*Monk*" upwards of seventy times. Now, whatever the character of Maria Monk may be, it can afford no justification for so gross a breach on the appropriate use of language. It both offends and insults the readers themselves.

The authors of the "*Awful Exposure*," are very clamorous respecting matters in Maria Monk's book which are of trifling importance to mankind,—such as Miss Monk's ignorance of dates—of the proper use and translation of French phrases—of the correct spelling of names—of the true names of the different convents, and of their founders, &c. &c. Now suppose she has erred in these matters, what does it amount to? If in spelling Bourgeois, she spells it Bourgeoise, adding the letter *e*, when, according to the priests, it should not be added, what is the mischief done? This mistake is more than once gravely pointed out, by the writers of the "*Awful Exposure*." Respecting dates they remark:—"We repeat here that the utter absence of dates from the pretended '*Disclosures*,' ought in itself to have been sufficient to cause their rejection by a man of common sense and common honesty." This is very remarkable indeed.

Reject the solemn testimony of an eloped nun, respecting the secret practices of her former secluded abode, on the simple ground of her incapacity to recol-

lect the dates, when such and such things narrated by her occurred! One is instinctively led to ask whether the writer of this passage can possibly be in earnest? Nuns have little or no occasion to discipline their memories to retain dates. They are professedly dead to the world, and all its variations of time. To them, life is made up of one monotonous round of senseless ceremonies. Besides, what is it to the world whether Maria Monk is a correct scholar or no, so as accurately to mark dates—to translate French phrases—to spell names, &c.? The great question is, has she correctly delineated the character of Canadian priests and Convents? But were it not trifling with the reader's patience, it were easy to show that most of the charges brought against her book, in respect to these matters, are without foundation. It were easy to point out two literary blunders in their own book, for every one that can be marked in hers. But I forbear, as it would be of no use to the cause of truth. The assertion, however, that her book is without dates is untrue, the priests themselves contradicting it, as will be shown hereafter. And as for bad spelling in Miss Monk's book, seeing the priests have so much to say about it, I will furnish my readers with a single specimen of their own. They give us an affidavit from a woman, whose name is spelt at its commencement, *Jane McCoy*, but at its close, it is spelt, *Jean McKay*. If the priests will point out as great a blunder as this, in Miss Monk's book, I will yield to them the victory in point of spelling.

There are many statements in the book before us, which have little or nothing to do with the great question in dispute, namely; whether Maria Monk was

ever an inmate of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal, and, having been such, reveals the vicious practices of priests and nuns ; or whether she is an impostor, and, of course, her disclosures a mere fiction—"the vicious workings of a distempered brain." Every thing disconnected with this, will be passed over unnoticed, as extraneous matter. Among the statements referred to, are those which speak of her vicious habits out of the Convent, and at the very time she professes to have been a cloistered nun. Of course, if it be proved that her profession is founded in truth, then all these assertions, affidavits, &c. must be so many false aspersions upon her character.

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## CHAPTER II.

## MISREPRESENTATIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS.

The priests and Miss Monk contradict each other—The priests worthy of no confidence—Contradict Dr. Robertson; Louis Malo; themselves; Miss Monk—Misrepresent her—False statements about the sale of Fancy Articles—Another respecting Congregational Nuns being in the States—Another about the use of a coffin, when the veil is taken—Alleged attempt of Mrs. Monk to introduce her daughter into the Nunnery—Three reasons assigned for her failure—Stupid mendacity—Gross absurdity and perjury—Miss Monk charged with disrespect for her mother—Untrue—Celebrated pencil story—Miss Monk falsely charged with insanity—Her statements respecting priests denouncing the Protestant Bible contradicted—Confirmed by extracts from Popes and the Council of Trent—Shifts o. the Roman priesthood to conceal the Bible from the people—Several misstatements—Testimony of a lady who was three years in the Congregational Nunnery.

THE "Awful Exposure" devotes one of its chapters to pointing out misrepresentations, said to be contained in Maria Monk's book. This chapter, however, like several others, is occupied simply with contradictions, and ridicule of her statements. Maria Monk declares that certain things and practices existed in the Congregational Nunnery and in the Hotel Dieu, during the time of her residence in those Convents; and her opponents stoutly deny the truth of what she asserts. Now which of the parties are to be credited? For the truth of many of her statements, Maria Monk appealed, when she first made them, to an examination of the Hotel Dieu Convent; thus affording a touchstone, by which they could have been infallibly tested. But the priests refused to have the matter thus brought to a fair trial. And now, at this late period, they give



us a book in which, upon their own unsupported authority, they flatly contradict what she says. Again, ask, whom shall we believe? Whose conduct best comports with the appearance of honesty and truth? Maria Monk travelled from New York to Montreal, and there, upon oath, made her solemn charges against the inmates and visitors of the Convent; and appealed to a simple test, easily applied, by which, if untrue, they could have been disproved in a single hour. Certainly, on her part, this looks like honesty, in the highest degree. On the other hand, the conduct of the priests has every appearance of conscious guilt. Matters being thus, therefore, the unsupported contradictions of the priests, when placed in the scale opposite to Miss Monk's statements, are lighter than a "puff of empty air."

It is not my design to notice all the particulars, concerning which, the priests declare that Maria Monk has made false statements. In themselves considered, many of these things are of no consequence. I shall therefore notice only a few of them; enough, however, to show that the writers of the "Awful Exposure" are as destitute of veracity, as they would fain have us to believe that Miss M. is. I confess that my main object at present is to show, that no confidence whatever can be reposed in any thing these men say. For this purpose I will present my readers with a few (if I may be allowed to express myself in plain English) of their *most palpable lies*; taken irrespective of order from different parts their book.

It is admitted on all hands, that Maria Monk was in jail for a few days in the month of November, 1834. She had stated it, and it had been written down before her opponents ever mentioned it. She states in

her narrative, that after leaving the Convent she took passage in a steamboat for Quebec—that the Captain, mistrusting who she was, detained her as a prisoner, and brought her back to Montreal—that she escaped from his boat, quite early in the morning, and wandered about the city of Montreal—that amidst her sufferings and fears, she determined to drown herself, and accordingly flung herself into the Lachine Canal—that she was rescued ere life was extinct, and brought before Doctor Robertson, whose questions to her, as to who she was, she declined, from prudential reasons, to answer; and that he, “thinking her to be obstinate and unreasonable, sent her to jail.” Such is the substance of Maria Monk’s statement of the matter. See *Awful Disclosures*, p. 262.\*

On page 7, of their book, the priests declare that she was imprisoned for *theft*. On page 94, Doctor Robertson says in his affidavit:—“As she could not give a satisfactory account of herself, I, as a Justice of the Peace, sent her to jail as a *vagrant*.” Here then the priests declare that her imprisonment was for theft; while the magistrate who imprisoned her affirms, that he did it on the ground of her being a vagrant. Who tells the truth, the priests or Doctor Robertson? One thing is certain, either the priests have told an untruth for the purpose of sinking the character of Maria Monk, or their Doctor has *perjured* himself. I leave it for them to decide which is true. I will only add, that the unfeeling paragraph, on page 66, respecting “Monk’s being immured in the Montreal house of correction,” refers to the same imprisonment: and that what is said on page 74,

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\* I use the last editions of Miss Monk’s *Disclosures*.



pecting "Capt. Armstrong's carrying her on board his boat to Quebec; and looking upon her as insane and locking her up in his state-room,"—evidently refers to the voyage which she says she made on board of his boat, just before her attempt to drown herself in the Lachine canal. This was in November, 1834, though it is said in the priests' account of it, to have been in the year 1829. Now it is my deliberate opinion, that the priests have inserted 1829, in the place of 1834. How could Miss Monk's account of the voyage agree so exactly with that of Capt. Armstrong's, except the year, unless they both refer to the same voyage? "Awful Disclosures," page 262.

The priests say that Maria Monk was an inmate of the Montreal Magdalen Asylum, from the close of November, 1834, until about the beginning of March, 1835. Respecting her conduct while there, on page 78 they say:—"It was even discovered that the seclusion of the Asylum, did not prevent her from renewing her intercourse with the constable. She received his visits, and held converse with him through the yard enclosure." Now compare this with what the constable Malo says in his affidavit, page 93. He affirms that he parted with Maria Monk sometime in October, 1834, and that he "never heard of her afterwards, until about the early part of the month of September last, (1835.)" Here then is a direct contradiction between the parties. The priests declare that the constable paid his visits to Maria Monk during the winter of 1834-35; while the constable affirms that he never heard of her from October, 1834, until September, 1835. Here again the priests have fabricated a malignant falsehood, in order to asperse and blacken Maria Monk's character, or Louis Malo

has *perjured* himself. It is to be hoped that the old adage will prove true in this instance, that "when rogues fall out, honest men will get their due." Now if the priests and their witnesses thus contradict each other, what confidence can be put in the testimony of either?

Again, on page 96, we are told—"That there are four periods mentioned in the 'Awful Disclosures,' at which it is pretended that Miss Monk was an inmate of the Hotel Dieu." What is said here, is repeatedly denied in other parts of their book. On page 8, there is the following unqualified declaration, expressed in italics: "*In the Awful Disclosures, there is not a single date from the commencement to the end!*" Thus this work of the priests broadly asserts a thing in one place, and then as flatly contradicts it in another. A house divided against itself cannot stand.

On page 67 of their work, it reads thus:—"We cite the following additional instance of the contradictions in the 'Disclosures,' and we ask the candid reader if there can be found language too strong to express the just abhorrence which the conduct of the advisers of Monk must inspire. It is stated at page 222, that it was well known to some of the nuns that she had twice left the convent from choice. Now we defy the most subtle inquirer to discover from the previous narrative that she had twice left the convent, either from choice or otherwise." If the reader will take the trouble to look on page 22 of "Awful Disclosures," he may read as follows:—"After I had been in the Congregational Nunnery about two years, I left it," &c. Here, then, she tells us that she left the convent for the first time. On page 34, she tells us that, while she was a novice in the Hotel Dieu, she became dis-

satisfied on account of certain treatment which she received, and that she forthwith left the establishment. Here then is the second time of her leaving the convent.

Again, on page 21, we read as follows:—"Another story is told her (Maria Monk,) by a girl of the school, of a murder committed by a priest on the person of a young squaw. Why the priest murdered, and why he then ran away, are most ingeniously accounted for; it is intimated as a reason for the latter, that timely notice was conveyed to him in a *note* by an *Indian*." Maria Monk's narrative of this affair may be seen on page 20, of her book. She states there, that, "a note was found on his (the priest's) table, addressed to him, telling him to fly if he was guilty." She does not intimate that "timely notice was conveyed to him in a *note* by an *Indian*." This is another priestly misrepresentation, made for the purpose of exciting contempt for her statements.

In speaking of the three convents of Montreal, Maria Monk says on page 15 of her work, that, "In all, large quantities of various ornaments are made by the nuns, which are exposed for sale in the *ornament* rooms, and afford large pecuniary receipts every year, which contribute much to their incomes." On this passage, the "Awful Exposure" remarks:—"It is true, that at one time articles of fancy were made at the convent, but those articles were produced for sale in the sick-wards, and the products expended in procuring additional comforts for the sick and infirm. The sale was confined to strangers, and, as may readily be imagined, was trifling. The custom is now dropped, and the nuns have sacrificed their 'large pecuniary receipts' to the more important objects of

peace and freedom from impertinence." Now be it known to all the world, that there are fancy articles now in this city, (New York,) in the possession of a highly respectable and Christian lady, which she purchased in the Gray and Hotel convents of Montreal, about the middle of last August, 1836, and for which she paid some three or four times their real value. These articles, I have both seen and handled, so that there can be no mistake in the matter. What then can we think of a set of men, who are so utterly lost to all truth, as to be capable of fabricating a falsehood, so palpable, for the sake of making good their declaration, "that Maria Monk has not made a correct statement in her book concerning the convents." This declaration Jones and Leclerc made times almost without number in this city, while their book was publishing. Since the foregoing was penned, Col. Stone, their recent champion, thus contradicts them: "In each of the apartments visited, articles of fancy needlework were produced, sales of which are made for the benefit of the institution. We appeal on this subject to every person who has ever visited the Hotel Dieu.

It is stated by Maria Monk in her disclosures, that nuns of the Congregational Nunnery, or sisters of charity, as they are sometimes called, are sent to different parts of the United States, as instructresses of schools. This her opponents deny, as usual. There is, however, something rather uncommon about this denial, viz. a reason assigned for it in these words:—"The rules of the foundation expressly limit the labours of the sisterhood to Canada." God has a rule also, which is, that men should always speak the truth and never lie. But what do priests and nuns care for

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rules, whether they be ordained of God, or of themselves, if they cross their wishes? Now, there is, or was a short time since, a female, call her a sister of charity or a Congregational nun, or whatever else you please, in New York, who is in someway connected with the Montreal convents. Her name is Miss Keoph, and she is a teacher of young ladies, and when she gets a company of them suitably bewitched to go to the Montreal convents "to finish their education," she packs off with them. When making her second trip from this city to Canada, some three or four years since, accompanied by six of her pupils, she travelled in company with my informant, a gentleman of respectability, during the latter part of her journey. She stated to him that she was connected with the Congregational Nunnery—that she received her education there—that she had intended to take the veil; but was refused on the ground of "her levity!" and was appointed to the work of teaching in the States. I doubt not, that many more might be found of the same description in the States on a little inquiry, notwithstanding "their rules limit their labors to Canada." So much for their "rules."

In describing the ceremonies connected with her taking the veil, Maria Monk speaks of a coffin into which she placed herself, as if dead; thus signifying her renunciation of, or rather dying unto the world: (and I have no doubt but the priests have wished a thousand times that her dying had been real instead of farcical.) The use of a coffin on such occasions is denied by the authors of the book before us. "Is it necessary," they ask, "to say that there is no such coffin?" I answer, yes, if Maria Monk is to be contradicted in all her statements. But if it be asked,



whether truth demands it, I answer, no. It is amazing that these men should have the impudence to insinuate that no such coffin is used on such occasions, when they must know that every person who has any knowledge on the subject, knows that their insinuation is untrue. A multitude of witnesses might be obtained, if it were necessary, to confirm Miss Monk's statement. I will mention a Catholic gentleman, by the name of Guerin dit La Fontain, who resides in La Prairie, near Montreal. This gentleman was recently in New York, and, although not a believer in the "Awful Disclosures," yet he stated that he was present, sometime since, at the reception of a nun into the Hotel Dieu, and that on that occas on a coffin was used.

On page 74, we have an account of a voyage made by Maria Monk to Quebec, on board the Hercules steamer. This, we are told, was in the year 1829. "On her return to Montreal, her mother was induced to endeavor to get her received into a Convent." But Mrs. Monk failed in her endeavor. Three reasons are mentioned as the ground of her failure. First, Mrs. Monk's poverty. On page 42, we are informed that the admission fee into the Nunnery, is "three thousand francs, or about five hundred and sixty dollars." But Mrs. Monk was too poor to pay so great a sum; therefore her daughter could not be admitted into the Romish "holy of holies." None but the rich, it seems, are allowed to enter the popish heaven through this exalted channel. Very charitable, indeed, for a house of charity. Another reason assigned for Mrs. Monk's failure is, that "Maria was not a Roman Catholic," though she expressed a "readiness to become one." The remaining reason is expressed in the fol-

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lowing words :—" As the Convents of Montreal are not asylums for corrected vice, or reformed profligacy, Maria's previous habits rendered her admittance, even as a *postulante*, utterly impossible." In reading this passage, one is naturally lead to ask—Suppose that Maria Monk had been as vicious and profligate as is here insinuated, and that she wished to reform and live a life of purity, placing herself beyond the reach of temptation, ought she to have been denied the privilege? "Do not publicans and harlots," on condition of their reforming, "enter into the kingdom of God," while "whited sepulchres" are excluded? Is the Hotel Dieu more holy than the kingdom of God?

But my design in noticing this passage, is to show that, what is said here respecting Maria Monk's habits of vice and profligacy, is as untrue as it is base and calumnious. The first sentence in the chapter from which the above extract is taken, is in the following words :—"Maria Monk was born at St. John's, in Lower Canada, about the year 1817, and is now in her nineteenth year." It was in the year 1829, we are told, that the application of her mother to have her received into the nunnery, was refused for the above reasons. It was seven years ago; of course, according to their own showing, she must have been in her *twelfth year!* and yet, *habituated in vice and profligacy!* I leave the reader to select his own language, in which to express his abhorrence of such mendacity.

The gross absurdities and falsehoods into which the Compilers of the "Awful Exposure," in their unrighteous attempts to annihilate the slightest appearance of virtue in the character of Maria Monk, are

almost as endless as they are sickening to a virtuous mind. On page 85, speaking of her residence in St Denis, they say :—"She pursued her adopted profession (school teaching) during the spring, summer and autumn of 1833, and on the 2d of December in the same year, entered the employment of Miss Louise Bousquet, government School Mistress, as her English Assistant." Miss Bousquet testifies that she remained as English teacher in her school about seven months. The point to which I wish to direct the attention of the reader, in this connexion, is this :—That a girl of Maria Monk's alleged character should have been thus employed as a school teacher. It seems that this singular compound of "*confirmed vagrancy*," "*strange flightiness and unaccountable irregularities*," "*insanity*," "*thievery*," "*lies*," and "*profligacy*," was employed from the spring of 1833, until the month of July, 1834, as an English school teacher, in St. Denis! In the following November, they tell us, she entered the Magdalen Asylum, of Montreal, under the management of "the exemplary and charitable Mrs. McDonell," who, "after making oath on the Holy Evangelists, declared: That she understood that the said Maria had, for *many* years, led the life of a stroller and a prostitute." Several of Mrs. McDonell's pupils in the Asylum swear to the same thing. Thus we are told on one page that Maria Monk was teaching school in St. Denis, for some 14 or 15 months: and then on another, a whole tribe of Magdalens, Matron and all come forward and swear that she was leading, at the same time, the life of a wandering prostitute. Oh, shame, where is thy blush!

Again, lest there should be one spot in the charac-



ter of Maria Monk unblackened, these men charge upon her the want of respect towards her mother. On page 82, they say:—"The conduct of Monk towards her mother has always been ungrateful; and her habit of indulging in calumnious remarks on her parent, could be testified to by hundreds of witnesses." Yes: so could any thing else by such witnesses. It were no great matter to prove, by such characters, that the sun was a jack-o'-lantern, the moon a haystack, and the stars, a flock of sheep.

The charge here brought against Miss Monk, by her imbittered enemies, I am confident, has no foundation in truth. One thing is certain, if ever a child had cause for unkind feeling towards a parent, it is Maria Monk. Mrs. Monk has treated her daughter in a most unfeeling and unparental manner. Her conduct relating to her pretended affidavit, is unpardonable. Alas, that a mother could ever become so callous in her feelings towards an own child, bone of her bone, and flesh of her flesh! Mrs. Monk knows, as well as she knows any thing, that many of the statements, which she is represented as making in her affidavit, are untrue. She ought, therefore, to repent for having sold herself to such a body of unprincipled men, as are the Montreal Romish priests. It is true, as I believe, she has represented to Maria, that she never swore to the affidavit which bears her name; that the priests carried it to her, and secured a promise from her that she never would contradict its statements. Hence the fact, that it is without her signature. This she ought to publish to the world, and to do all she can to vindicate her daughter, from the numberless calumnies which are heaped upon her. On the other hand, the feelings of Maria towards her

mother, since she has been in New York, have been of a very filial character, as all who have any knowledge on the subject would readily testify. On all occasions, she goes as far as truth will admit, in vindicating her mother's conduct. The severe, though perhaps just, remarks on the character of Mrs. Monk, which are contained in the dissertation published in the Appendix to the "Awful Disclosures," from the hand of a gentleman of this city, have always been a source of grief to Maria. I well recollect how she felt when she first saw them; but it was too late then to make alterations.

On page 73, we have the celebrated pencil story. It is as follows:—"It appears that Maria, while at school, had her ear perforated by a slate pencil, and that a piece of the pencil has remained in her ear to this day. Her sufferings arising from this cause have been acute, and have led to the supposition that her intellect has been from the time of the accident, seriously and badly affected. It is known to medical jurisconsults, that no question is of more difficult determination than that of alleged insanity. Thus it has happened that the cause of her malady still subsists, and that she still endures its effects." To say the least, this is a curious piece of historic knowledge. There are, however, two statements in it, which are as distant from truth, as the southern from the northern pole. First, the declaration that a piece of a slate pencil remains in her ear to this day, is too ridiculously false to deserve hardly a passing notice. The origin of the story is this; when Maria Monk was quite a child, she and another little girl were at play, and they put each into the other's ear a piece of slate pencil. Maria says the piece in her ear remained for

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some time; but she declares, that she cannot positively tell, now, whether it was in her right, or in her left ear. The assertion, therefore, that it remains to this day in her ear, and that she still suffers from it, is destitute of the least semblance of truth. But we are told that the pencil remains, seriously affecting her intellect, and producing, if not absolute insanity, "strange flightiness and unaccountable irregularities." But to talk of an effect without a cause, is an absurdity; and in the present case we see that the alleged cause does not exist. Therefore the alleged effect cannot exist. If Maria Monk is insane, it is unaccountable that none of her friends in New York have ever been able to discover the least indications of it. When her friends call to mind what she has passed through since she left the convent, they wonder that she has not been driven to insanity. Not one female in ten thousand would have endured the ordeal, through which she has been enabled to pass without injury. With an infant in her arms, she commenced the contest. She told her sad tale; but scarce anybody was prepared to believe it. It was too horrible for belief. Hence all about her was suspicion. Her circumstances were suspicious. She was examined, re-examined, and cross-examined by every sort of people. She has been persecuted by Catholics and by Protestants. Malice has directed against her its bitterest arrows of slander. Her feelings have been excited to the highest pitch for days and weeks, for she is naturally very excitable, being constitutionally sensitive. And yet, amidst all her excitements, she has never given any symptoms of insanity while she has been in New York. What confidence, therefore, can be reposed

in the multiplied charges of insanity which are made against her in the "Awful Exposure?" Sad indeed must be the predicament of truth, if it needs for its support such weapons.

But this charge itself is one of the proofs of her having been a nun. It appears to be the standing order to charge upon every female who makes disclosures, disadvantageous to convents, madness and insanity. Rome set the example. Says Scipio de Ricci, "they say at Rome, to defend the Monks, that the two nuns are mad; but up to the present hour, no one has ever taken them for such." Thus Miss Reed was mad or insane, and also Miss Harrison, and now Maria Monk.

"Among the instructions given us by the priests," says Maria Monk, "some of the most pointed were those directed against the Protestant Bible. They often enlarged upon the evil tendency of that book, and told us that but for it many a soul now condemned to hell, and suffering eternal punishment, might have been in happiness. They could not say any thing in its favor; for that would be speaking against religion and against God. They warned us against it as a thing very dangerous to our souls." In commenting on this passage, the "Awful Exposure" becomes quite warm and wrathful. It is denounced as the "language of a New York Conventicle." "It is utterly incredible, nay, impossible in the ordinary course of things, that the language ascribed to the priests should have been used by them." "The word of God is the Christian's text, Protestants and Catholics equally revere it." "It is well known that Roman Catholic clergymen are more given to scriptural quotation than the ministers of any other denomination;

good taste is frequently offended by their excess in this particular !!"

Whom now are we to believe, in this case, Maria Monk or her opponents, the priests? Every intelligent reader will reply at once, Maria Monk. Because her statements agree perfectly with the instructions, on this subject, given by popes and Councils: and on the other hand the language of her antagonists. is condemned by these high and infallible Romish authorities. A few specimens shall here be given, illustrating and confirming the truth of this declaration. In 1713, Pope Clement XI. issued the celebrated bull *Unigenitus*. In this he condemns certain "Moral reflections on the New Testament," by Father Quesnel, stigmatizing them as "false, captious, shocking, offensive to pious ears, scandalous, pernicious, rash, seditious, impious, blasphemous." Among the reflections thus unmercifully condemned by "his holiness," the following are to be found: that "it is useful and necessary, at all times, in all places, and for all sorts of persons, to study and know the spirit, piety, and mysteries of the Holy Scripture;" that "the reading of the Holy Scripture is for everybody;" that "the Lord's day ought to be sanctified by Christians in reading pious books, and above all, the Holy Scriptures." In 1816, Pope Pius VII. writing to the Archbishop of Gnezn, calls the Bible Society a "most crafty device," which the very foundations of religion are undermined," a "pestilence," and "defilement of the faith, most imminently dangerous to souls." Pope Leo XII. in 1824, speaking of the same institution, says that it "strolls with effrontery throughout the world, contemning the traditions of the Holy Fathers, and contrary to the well known decree of the Coun-



oil of Trent labors with all its might, and by every means, to translate or rather to pervert, the Holy Bible into the vulgar languages of every nation." Thus bitter are the popes against a society which labors to furnish mankind with the word of God, in languages which they can read. But as the subject is of such vital importance, and as some Catholics admit that popes may err in their decisions, but all agree that a general council sanctioned by a pope cannot, I will here subjoin the fourth rule of the Congregation of the Index, of the Council of Trent, which is the last general council ever held by the Romish Church. It is as follows:—"Inasmuch as it is manifest from experience, that if the Holy Bible, translated into the vulgar tongue, be indiscriminately allowed to every one, the temerity of men will cause more evil than good to arise from it, it is, on this point, referred to the judgment of the bishops, or inquisitors, who may, by the advice of the priests or confessors, permit the reading of the Bible translated into the vulgar tongue by Catholic authors, to those persons whose faith and piety, they apprehend, will be augmented, and not injured by it; and this permission they must have in writing. But if any one shall have the presumption to read or possess it without such written permission, he shall not receive absolution until he have first delivered up such Bible to the ordinary. Booksellers, however, who shall sell, or otherwise dispose of Bibles in the vulgar tongue, to any person not having such permission, shall forfeit the value of the books, to be applied by the bishop to some pious use; and be subjected by the bishop to such other penalties as the bishop shall think proper, according to the quality of the offence. But regulars

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shall neither read nor purchase such Bibles without a special license from their superiors."

Truly, the Bible must be a very bad book, or infallibility must have erred in this instance. The truth is, there is no book in the world so destructive to Catholicism as is the Bible. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that general councils, popes, bishops, and priests, are so anxious to lock it up in a language which the people do not understand. Nor is it to be wondered at, that, when the people become so rebellious as to demand it in their mother tongue, their priests put them off with something as remote from the true Bible, as they can possibly satisfy them with. Hence, in different countries the people have different Bibles, graduated according to the light with which they are surrounded. In countries where there are but few heretics, a mere primer, called the Bible, will answer every purpose. A curious specimen of this was observed by the learned and pious Daniel Wilson, bishop of the Episcopal church in the East Indies, during his travels in the summer of 1833, on the continent of Europe. Says he, "as I walked down the hill, I asked our guide if he had a Bible. He told me he had, and that he read it constantly. I asked him a few questions about the Old and New Testament history; when I discovered that his Bible was a pamphlet of eighteen or nineteen pages, drawn up by the priests. He had no idea that there was any book such as we mean by the Bible—so sad is the ignorance of these poor people." Here is popery in its meridian splendors, if darkness have splendors. How numerous are the tricks of Roman priests to counteract the effects of the Bible! I was conversing, a short time since, with a Catholic girl in New York, who

insisted upon it, that her Bible was the production of man, and that her *prayer-book was the word of God!!*

The misstatements and contradictions of the priests are more numerous than the paragraphs in their book. It is painful to the writer of these pages, and doubtless also to the reader of them, to be long detained in an atmosphere so impure. I shall, therefore, briefly allude only to a few more of them in this connexion.

The priests contradict the statement of Miss Monk, that nuns, on their reception, have assigned to them the names of saints, as St. Mary, St. Eustace, St. Frances, &c. They also deny that priests, with the exception of the chaplain of each, ever visit either the Hotel Dieu or the Congregational nunneries. These denials are so notoriously untrue, that it is matter of astonishment, how the priests were ever so foolish as to make them. Ask almost any female, Catholic or Protestant, who ever attended the Congregational nunnery school, and she will tell you at once that the priests are in error. They deny Maria Monk's statement that there are about one hundred and fifty priests connected with the seminary of Montreal, which is a place of general rendezvous for all the priests in the district of Montreal. Now they do not deny that there are this number of priests in the district, nor that they all occasionally resort to the seminary; but they deny that all are connected with the seminary as an incorporated body. This is marvellous. They also deny Miss Monk's statements respecting the number of novices and nuns in the Hotel Dieu nunnery; and they support their denial by quotations from an old Quebec almanac printed for the year 1831! What can the Quebec almanac know about the interior of the Hotel Dieu convent, except what the priests may



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inform it; and it is doubtless their policy to produce the belief that the number of novices and nuns is much smaller than it really is. The fact, that the committee who examined the Hotel Dieu in July last, and since then Col. Stone, found the number of nuns to agree with the statement of this old almanac, has led some to doubt Maria Monk's statement as to their number. Such should remember that it is a very easy matter for the priests to remove as great a number as they choose. They can remove them to the Quebec Hotel Dieu, and to the nun's island, and to other filthy establishments, which the priests have scattered about Lower Canada. I will here add, that what they say about certain legislative enactments, requiring girls to be of a certain age before "they can take the religious habit," and also that they should sign some kind of a deed, attested by others, &c., may be true, or untrue; none the more either way, however, for their saying so. But if such enactments exist, they are observed or not, doubtless, just as it suits the pleasure of the priests. What civil magistrate ever entered the cloistered apartments of the Hotel Dieu, in order to ascertain whether or not such laws were obeyed? To the proof of this we challenge them; they might as well show us the law of God to prove their holiness. The priests conclude what they have to say about Miss Monk's misstatements in relation to the Congregational Nunnery, as follows:—"We have examined all the representations concerning the Congregational nunnery, and we have shown them to be false in every instance." Now I have taken pains to converse somewhat extensively with several ladies who have been educated, to a greater or less extent, in that convent, and they all state that

Miss Monk's representations of that nunnery are generally very correct. The subjoined statement is from one who was there about three years. Her name is suppressed for several reasons, all of which are justifiable in her case. The fullest credit, however, may be reposed in her testimony, for she is a lady of character and standing, and a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

"I was at the school in the Congregational Nunnery of Montreal nearly three years. When I entered the school I was a Protestant; but I had not been there more than three months before my faith was shaken: and I began to think that the Catholic religion was the only true religion. I was young, and nearly all my companions were Catholics, and I had none but Catholic books to read. I at length became unwavering in my Catholic belief.

"My impressions respecting the cloistered life of the nuns, were of the most exalted kind. My feelings at length became so excited that I determined to take the veil. I felt that there was no other way for me to secure the salvation of my soul. I felt that I had, what they call in the nunnery, a calling to become a cloistered nun. I never have been able to this day, to understand how my mind arrived to such a degree of excitement, for I was all but distracted, such was my desire to take the veil. I visited my friends, who lived at some distance, with the fixed determination to enter the Hotel Dieu on my return; but they, understanding my case, refused positively to let me return to Montreal, and I now most heartily thank my Maker for so ordering it in His kind Providence.

"Respecting Maria Monk's description of the Congregational Nunnery, I think they are generally very

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correct. I can't doubt for a moment but what she has been a scholar in the nunnery, as she states in her book.

"The fact that her descriptions of the Congregation-  
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 lieve what she says of the Hotel Dieu ; though the  
 description is so awful that I am sometimes led to  
 doubt its truth. But then when I recollect what I  
 have read, seen, and heard, of the character of Roman  
 priests, my doubts vanish. I have thought a thou-  
 sand times of a remark that priest Larkin, who was  
 professor of Moral Philosophy in the College at  
 Montreal, made to us one day in the public school-  
 room. It was this: he said if he was able *he would*  
*hang every Protestant there was on the face of the*  
*earth.* Though I was a Catholic then, my feelings  
 were shocked at such a remark."

Here it seems was Father Larkin, although not the  
 chaplain of the nunnery, instructing the young ladies,  
 and endeavoring to imbue their minds with the true  
 spirit of Romanism.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE PRIESTS' ATTEMPT TO PROVE AN ALIBI.

Easily done, if true.—Character of the evidence demanded—Miss Monk's alleged residence in Sorel—Testimony of Charles Gouin—Of Angelica Monk—Of Martel Paul—Evidence against the priests' position—1st, Character of their witnesses—2d, Maria Monk's ignorance both of the witnesses and the place—3d, An argument from the evidence of her having been a nun—4th, Statement of Mr. Buttery—5th, Of Mr. Edler—6th, Of a lady—A pseudo Maria Monk—Maria Monk's alleged residence in St. Denis—Witnesses—Mrs. St. Germain—Michael Guertin—Ambroise Vigeant—Louisa Bousquet—Character of their testimony—Difficulty of obtaining testimony from St. Denis—Interception of letters—Remarks respecting a young Canadian—His testimony—Miss Monk's account of the matter confirmed—Her alleged residence in the family of Mr. Lovis of Montreal—His testimony—Evidently false—Capt. Ryan's story—Louis Malo—His character and testimony—Dr. Nelson's statement—Statements of Dr. Robertson and Mrs. Monk—The Magdalens—Character of the evidence offered by the priests—Their failure to prove an alibi.

FOR the priests to prove an alibi in the case of Maria Monk, provided it be true that she never was a nun, must be a task easily accomplished. They possess every imaginable facility for doing it. They are dispersed over the entire face of Canada, and nearly all the inhabitants in the province are disposed to render them every assistance in their power to accomplish it. By their management, they have created a strong popular prejudice in favor of their cause, and against Miss Monk. Indeed, such is the state of feeling in Canada, that it is almost impossible to induce a single individual to utter any thing in his own name, or even to divulge in any way, any thing favorable to her claims, however much he may

know. Public opinion rides over every law, both human and divine.

Matters being thus, no evidence which the priests or their advocates may offer in proof of an alibi, ought to be received, unless it be of an unexceptionable character. The reason is extremely obvious. The momentous importance of the subject demands it; and if it be true that Maria Monk has never been a cloistered nun, it is an easy matter to produce such evidence in proof of it. If Maria Monk was, as is maintained, at service for some ten or eleven months in Sorel, and some six months in St. Denis, and for some fourteen or fifteen months a school mistress in the same place, at the very time she professes to have been in the nunnery—it must be a matter of public notoriety. Hence there can be no difficulty in furnishing unexceptionable testimony of the fact, if it be so.

Ought the testimony of Roman Catholics, unsupported by respectable Protestants, to be received as such evidence? I answer, no. The reason is obvious. It is an established principle, acted on for ages in the Catholic church, "*that the end sanctifies the means.*" And according to this principle, he is a good Catholic that falsifies his word, if by so doing he may thereby promote a good end; and what end, in the eye of a faithful Catholic, is so precious as the honor of his church? Among Catholics the priesthood constitutes the church. Hence every Roman Catholic on earth is bound, by his religion, to defend the priesthood, right or wrong. No intelligent reader of Catholic authors will dispute the truth of this position. Let me not be misunderstood; I speak now with reference to a single point—that of defending the honor of the Romish church; and I speak of



thorough going Catholics, not nominal ones living amidst intelligent Protestants.

The first testimony presented to us in the "Awful Exposure," is that of Charles Gouin, of Sorel. He states that Maria Monk was a servant girl in his family, from the month of November, 1831, until September of the following year. This testimony is either true or false: if true, it overthrows Maria Monk's claims as an eloped nun. That it is false, there can be no doubt. Mr. Gouin is stated, by very respectable authority, to be a Roman Catholic, so far as he has any religion. A man notoriously destitute of moral principle; a bankrupt, owing much and paying little. He is described by his own friends, as "an active conspirator, unworthy of confidence."

Before presenting counter testimony, I wish to put my readers in possession of all the evidence which the priests have furnished in confirmation of Mr. Gouin's statement. A woman by the name of Mary Angelica Monk, of Sorel, makes oath that Maria Monk was in her service as a domestic, one week in the autumn of 1832. She states that she understood that Maria had been a servant girl in the family of Mr. Gouin. Who then is this Mary Angelica Monk? We are told by the priests, that she is not a relative of Maria Monk; and it is very certain, from respectable testimony received here, that her relationship would be no honor, either to Maria Monk, or to any other person. She is an impure woman; having been separated from her husband, on the ground of her criminal connexion with a man by the name of Hall. Report also says, that she is very intimate with the notoriously profligate priest Kelly, of Sorel. Of what value, then, is the testimony of such a person?



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The statements of Mr. Gouin and Mrs. Monk, are confirmed by the testimony of one Martel Paul Hus Cournoier. The affidavit of this man has every appearance of having been fabricated, for the sole purpose of bolstering up, not only the testimony of Mr. Gouin and Mrs. Monk, but also that of other individuals, to be examined hereafter. He is described by those who know him, "as an illiterate fellow, who can neither read nor write; an active speculator, of no property, little credit, reputation for virtue or integrity; having not long since debauched one of his own creed named Couthnay." He was convicted of perjury in the case of the King against Isaac Jones and others, for the murder of Louis Marcoux. If any man in Canada doubts the truth of this, he is referred to the legal registers of that Province, for the proof of it. Such, then, is the unprincipled character of Martel Paul: and I ask, what confidence can be reposed in the affidavit of such a perjured ignoramus?

Here, then, is the testimony adduced by the priests, to prove that Maria Monk resided in Sorel, as a servant girl, for some ten or eleven months of the time which she alleges herself to have passed in the Hotel Dieu nunnery, of Montreal. And that it is false, is evident from the following reasons:—

1. The individuals thus testifying, have little or no character for veracity. This the priests well knew, and they never would have rested their cause on such testimony, if they could have procured better. Can any man believe, that if Maria Monk had resided for ten or eleven months in Sorel, the priests could not have obtained such evidence of the fact, as would have challenged even suspicion itself! Sorel or Wil-

liam Henry, is a small place on the southeastern bank of the St. Lawrence river, containing about fifteen hundred inhabitants, so that each individual of the town is generally known to every other. Hence, if Maria Monk had been there, as is maintained by the priests, she would have been generally known by the inhabitants of that village; and the testimony of any number could have been obtained.

2. Maria Monk declares that she never was in Sorel; and it is very evident that she is altogether ignorant of the place, except what she knows from mere report. Before she had seen Dr. Robertson's affidavit in Nov. 1835, she was examined with reference to her knowledge of Sorel, and it was evident that she knew nothing about it. I took special pains to ascertain, before she knew any thing of the priests' attempt to prove that she had resided in Sorel, whether she knew their witnesses. She evidently had never heard of Mr. Gouin, and Mr. Paul; but of Angelica Monk she had some knowledge, as she had formerly resided near her mother's, in Montreal.

3. All the multiplied and varied evidence of her having been a nun, hereafter to be offered to the reader, proves that the testimony of these witnesses is false.

4. Mr. Buttery, a reputable merchant of Sorel, was in New York in June or July last, and called upon Maria Monk. This was before the priests' book made its appearance, but Doctor Robertson, of Montreal, had given it as his opinion, formed on mere hearsay testimony, that she had resided, during the summer of 1832, in Sorel. Special pains, therefore, were taken to ascertain whether Mr. Buttery and Maria Monk had ever seen each other before, and it

was evident to those present that they never had. Mr. Buttery declared, that it was impossible for her to have resided in Sorel, as above stated, without his having had some knowledge of it. He was, therefore, decidedly of the opinion that she had never lived in that place. Mr. Buttery lives near Mr. Gouin's, and would of course have seen her, had she lived there for ten months.

5. The following testimony of Mr. John Edler, of New York, is decisive on the point. Mr. Edler first became acquainted with Maria Monk some time in the summer of 1836, in the city of New York. His statement is as follows:—

"I have friends, a grand-parent and a brother, residing in Sorel or William Henry, whom I have frequently visited in that place. My mother resided there before her decease. I am personally acquainted with Mr. Charles Gouin and his family, who keep a tavern in Sorel. Their residence is in the immediate vicinity of my relatives. On one occasion I resided with my connexions in Sorel, for about the space of nine months, immediately preceding the commencement of the Cholera in July, 1832. During this period I was often at Mr. Gouin's, and personally knew the members of his household; and I am very certain that Maria Monk, authoress of the "Awful Disclosures," was not, during this period of time, a member of Mr. Gouin's family, in any sense whatever. Nor did I ever hear of her living in Sorel, until I recently heard of it in New York. I first became acquainted with Maria Monk in New York, some three or four months since."

Mr. Edler's testimony covers eight out of the ten months; during which time, Mr. Gouin says, that

**Maria Monk** was a menial in his family. Mr. Edler, so far as I have been able to ascertain, is a young gentleman of veracity and industry. His statement, therefore, can be relied on as true.

Since writing the above, a lady from Sorel has visited Maria Monk in New York. And she gives it as her decided opinion, that the authoress of the "Awful Disclosures" has never been a resident of Sorel, as testified by the priests' witnesses. Thus the evidence, that Charles Gouin, Martel Paul Hus Cournoier, and Angelica Monk, have given false testimony, is constantly augmenting.

It is evident, therefore, that Maria Monk, authoress of the "Awful Disclosures," has not resided in Sorel, as maintained by the priests and their perjured supporters. It seems, however, that a person assuming the name of Maria Monk, did reside at Mr. Gouin's in Sorel, at the time specified. A gentleman of character and standing, who appears to have faithfully examined the matter, writes as follows:—"From all then that I can ascertain—and it is in the mind of others—I suspect that a *Maria Monk* was made by the priests and nuns of Montreal, in anticipation of what should follow from the disclosures of the true Maria Monk after leaving the convent." This is a right priestly trick—what the venerable Baxter would denominate "*Jesuit juggling*." Who can fathom the depths of their deceptive workings—prophetically called by the Apostle Paul, "the deceitfulness of all unrighteousness?" The arts of deception have been cultivated by them, now, for more than one thousand years.

After Maria Monk left Sorel, we are told by the priests, that she went to reside in St. Denis. Here

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she resided, it is said, from the month of October, 1832, until the month of July, 1834, about one year and nine months. They tell us that she was employed as a domestic servant for the first six months, in the family of Mrs. St. Germain; and the remainder of the time in school-teaching. All the witnesses adduced by the priests, to prove her residence in St. Denis, are Roman Catholics; two out of the five presented are incapable of writing their names.

Mrs. St. Germain, styled in her affidavit Angelica Hodjins, testifies "that she knew well the so-called Maria Monk," and that she was in her service from about the first day of October, 1832, until the following March, about six months. There is something worthy of special notice in this woman's affidavit. She says that she knew well the *so-called* Maria Monk. What is the meaning, in this connexion of the compound word *so-called*? Does it not look as if the priests or their agents had so called some servant girl, who has been in the service of Mrs. St. Germain? If they could make a Maria Monk for Sorel, could they not do the same for St. Denis?

The next evidence is that of Michael Guertin, who testifies in the same language as Mrs. St. Germain, "*that he knew well the so-called Maria Monk*;" and that she taught school in his house from the fifteenth of May to the end of June, 1833. This man is an ignorant papist, incapable of writing his name.

We have an affidavit from a young man, by the name of Ambroise Vigeaut. He tells us that he lives in the St. Lawrence suburbs of Montreal. He testifies that he "attended a school kept by the so-called Maria Monk at St. Denis, for the space of about two months in the year 1833." He states that he attended



her school in two different places, at Michael Guertin's and at Jean Baptiste Laflamme dit Timineur. He also says that he saw the said Maria on the 29th day of June, 1834, in St. Denis. He further declares that in the summer of 1835, Maria Monk, accompanied "by a man dressed in black," called on him, at the bar of Philip Lavoie, tavern keeper in the St. Lawrence suburbs, where he resided, and requested him to write a letter to Miss Louise Bousquet of St. Denis, and invite her to come to Montreal and receive two hundred pounds currency, which Maria had for her. We shall see more of this currency matter, when we come to examine the testimony of Louise Bousquet.

The testimony of this young man is evidently a compound of truth and falsehood. While Miss Monk was an assistant teacher to Miss Bousquet, in St. Denis, this young man, then but a boy, attended her school. The man "dressed in black" was Mr. Hoyt; he and Miss Monk called on him, as he states. Their object was to learn, if possible, the precise time that Miss Monk was employed as assistant teacher to Louise Bousquet. He thought that it was in the year 1829 or 1830. His statement, therefore, in his affidavit, that he attended her school in the summer of 1833, is manifestly untrue. There is something on the very face of it, which strongly indicates it to be so. He was quite a youth, being a bar-keeper when Mr. Hoyt and Miss Monk called on him, in the August of 1835, which was about two years from the time he says, in his affidavit, that he attended her school. In 1833, he must have been some fourteen or fifteen years of age. The idea, therefore, that a youth of his age should attend on the instructions of such a teacher as Miss Monk must have been at that time, is very improba-



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ble; especially in a country town, in the heart of the summer, when the business of the farmer is most urgent. Moreover, his statement that he was requested by Maria Monk, to write to Louise Bousquet and inform her, that if she would come to Montreal she should receive two hundred pounds currency, is so absurdly false as to show that little or no confidence can be put in whatever he may say.

Another witness is Martel Paul Hus Cournoier. He states that he knew of Maria Monk residing in St. Denis; but he does not tell us when it was. The worthless character of this man has been already noticed.

The only remaining testimony to be examined is that of Louise Bousquet.

Maria Monk states in her Disclosures, that while a novice in the Hotel Dieu, she became displeased, and left the convent and went to St. Denis, and engaged as an assistant teacher in the Government school to Louise Bousquet. She states that she remained with Miss Bousquet about three months, and then returned to the convent. Miss Bousquet testifies to the fact, that Maria Monk was at one time in her employment, as an assistant teacher. There is, therefore, an agreement between them, as to the fact, that they were once associated together as instructresses of children in St. Denis; but in every thing else they disagree. Miss Bousquet contradicts every statement that Maria Monk has made in her book, which is in any way connected with her, except it be the one just noticed. The only point of importance, however, respects the time when Miss Monk was associated with her, as teacher in St. Denis. Miss Bousquet affirms that it was from December, 1833, till July, 1834,—the

very time when Miss Monk declares that she was a nun in the Hotel Dieu. There are two things in Miss Bousquet's affidavit, which especially give to her testimony the appearance of fabrication: 1. The fact that she denies all Miss Monk's statements respecting her, some of which are of no importance, with the single exception of the one that they were associated together in teaching school. This looks like art, not like the utterings of simple nature or truth. She does not contradict Miss Monk's statements in the gross, but in the detail, one after another. 2. Her statement that she received two letters in the month of August, 1835, one in English, signed "Hoyte," which she "remained ignorant of because she could not read English:" the other in French, signed "Ambroise Vigeaut," which invited her to go to Montreal and receive two hundred pounds currency, "which a lady in Montreal was commissioned to give her." She tells us that she proceeded to Montreal, and called on Ambroise Vigeaut, who informed her that the lady was Maria Monk. She then called on Maria's mother, "who in an angry manner burned the letters on the spot," saying "that her daughter was a victim and an unfortunate." Now the meaning of all this is, that Mr. Hoyt and Miss Monk wished to bribe her, with two hundred pounds currency, to testify that Maria Monk had been a nun in the Hotel Dieu—thus insinuating that a vile conspiracy had been formed against the nunnery. This is known, however, to be absolutely false, for Miss Monk communicated her principal statements respecting the Hotel Dieu, before she ever saw or heard of Mr. Hoyt; as will be seen hereafter. Besides, Mr. Hoyt and Miss Monk were poor, not being worth the tythe of two

hundred pounds currency. How then could they offer it? But suppose that they had wished to bribe her. Would they have offered her two hundred pounds, currency, when the fiftieth part would have answered every purpose? Would they have sent her a letter in English, which Maria Monk must have known she could not read? Would they thus foolishly have exposed themselves to detection? Would they have employed Ambroise Vigeaut to make her the offer in French, when Maria Monk could have done it herself, and thus have kept him out of the secret? The whole affair is absurd and false. Of what value then is the testimony of Louise Bousquet, and of Ambroise Vigeaut?

Thus we have reviewed all the evidence which the priests have produced, to prove that Maria Monk resided at St. Denis, from October, 1832, until July, 1834. Setting aside the fact, that all the witnesses are Catholics, the mere tools of the priests, their testimony bears internal marks of fabrication. Had Maria Monk resided twenty-one months in St. Denis, how easy a matter for the priests to adduce such proof of the fact, as would remove every reasonable doubt on the subject!

The inhabitants of St. Denis are nearly all of them Catholics. Hence the difficulty of obtaining any testimony from that place, which would be favorable to Miss Monk's claims, and which would, as a matter of course, militate against the cause of the priests. Even the few Protestants there, are so intimately connected with the Catholics, that they cannot do any thing on the subject, without securing to themselves consequences highly disagreeable. I wrote to a gentleman of that town, requesting his assistance in the

matter; and the following is an extract from his reply:—"I am sorry to say I am unable to meet with your views, as I cannot give you any information respecting her (Maria Monk) from personal knowledge; and I must at the same time *positively* decline making the inquiries you desired me to make, as it might, and *would* lead to consequences highly disagreeable to myself hereafter." I would here observe that such is the situation of this gentleman, that if Maria Monk had resided in St. Denis, as maintained by the priests and sworn to by their vassals, he must have had some "personal knowledge" of her.

Another serious difficulty with which I have met in attempting to secure such an investigation of the matter, as I have wished, has been the interception of letters, as I suppose in the Post-office at Montreal. Since receiving the one, from which an extract is given above, I have written several letters to gentlemen in Montreal on the subject, which appear never to have been received, by those to whom they were addressed. I do not say who has done this. I simply state a fact, and leave my readers to make their own inferences.

The following statement, as will be seen, is directly to the point. It is presented without being sworn to, and without the young man's signature. It is proper that I should state the reason of this. It is simply the fact, that all his friends are Catholics, and of course unwilling that he should do any thing to establish the truth of Maria Monk's claims. A short time since I had an interview with him, when he very readily communicated to me the facts contained in this statement. At that time he was uncertain, whether it was in the early part of the summer of 1830, or of

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1831, that Maria Monk was assistant teacher to Louise Bousquet in St. Denis; but he thought, however, he could ascertain by examining his papers. This he agreed to do, and to call on me the Saturday following.—it being on Monday we had the interview. During the intervening time, I arranged the facts which he communicated to me, leaving a blank for dates to be filled when he should call according to his agreement; when i expected that he would confirm the whole on oath. Saturday arrived, but he did not call, as he engaged to do. During the following week, I engaged a gentleman to visit him in Brooklyn, and have him fill the blank dates, correct any error which might exist in the statement, and confirm it before a magistrate. The gentleman called on him and read to him the statement, but he declined to confirm it on oath, or to have his name published in connexion with it, as that would offend his friends in Canada, and he felt himself to be among strangers here. He stated that he had received a letter from his brother, stating that it was in the summer of 1833, that Maria Monk was in St. Denis. I have been thus particular in detailing these facts, in order that the public may be enabled to judge in the matter. The statement that Maria Monk was connected with Louise Bousquet's school in the summer of 1833, contradicts all the testimony which the priests have produced on the subject. Louise Bousquet, as we have seen, testifies that it was in the summer of 1834. This Canadian tampering does not help the matter. The statement, therefore, is given, with the date as first given by the young man, before he had been tampered with from Canada. Of its truth, i have no doubt; especially since this foreign popish influence



was exerted upon this young man, to destroy his testimony.

"A. V., now a resident of Brooklyn city, State of New York, having been duly sworn, doth depose and say :

"I was born and brought up in St. Denis, Lower Canada, where most of my relatives still live. I am acquainted with Maria Monk, authoress of 'Awful Disclosures.' I first became acquainted with her in the year of 1830, or 1831, in St. Denis. She was then an assistant teacher, as I understood, in the Government school, taught by one Louise Bousquet. She was frequently at my mother's house, as my three brothers younger than myself attended her school, two of whom she prepared for their first communion. After she had been residing for several weeks in St. Denis, I left home, and went to reside for two months in Montreal. When I returned home in the latter part of the summer, I inquired for the little English girl, as we used to call her, and was informed by my mother and others that she had left St. Denis. After this I never knew nor heard any thing as to where she was, until after she published her 'Disclosures' in New York. And further deponent saith : I know Michael Guertin, Jean Baptiste Laflamme dit Timineur, and Angelica Hodjins, widow of the late Anthony Gazaille dit St. Germain, all of St. Denis. They reside in the neighborhood of my mother's residence. Had Maria Monk ever resided in either of their families, either as a servant girl or as a school mistress, during any part of the years 1832 and 1833, I feel quite certain that I should have known it, or at least have heard of it, at the time : but I never heard



of it until published in a book called 'Awful Exposure,' &c., in New York."

Three things are rendered very clear by this man's testimony:—1st, That Maria Monk was in St. Denis but a short time, as stated in her "Disclosures." 2d, That during this time she was connected with Louise Bousquet's school. 3d, That she was not connected with the families before mentioned. And thus her account of her residence in St. Denis, is confirmed.

We are told that Maria Monk proceeded directly from St. Denis to Montreal, and entered into the service of Charles D. S. LOVIS, where she remained from the 12th of July, 1834, until the 7th or 8th of the following month. Mr. LOVIS testifies that, while she was in his family, "she was often deranged in her mind;" and that she expressed a wish "to become a Roman Catholic, and be baptized." Mr. LOVIS is a Roman Catholic, and his testimony is to be received as such. The following statement of Mr. JONES, one of the publishers of the "Awful Exposure," made at the interview which he and his coadjutor, Mr. Le Clerc, had with Miss Monk, in New York, on the 17th of August, 1836, does much towards overthrowing the affidavit of Mr. LOVIS:—"Mr. LOVIS, of Montreal, told me that Maria Monk left his service in July, 1834; and about that time Fanny Johnson came to live with us. She stayed with us about a week, and was dismissed on account of her negligent habits. She answered the description given by Mr. LOVIS so well, and having declared that she came from Mr. LOVIS', I was strongly impressed with the belief that they were the same person. But now I see my mistake. You (Miss Monk)

are not Fanny Johnson." There is no doubt but that if Mr. Lovis, (provided he is an honest man,) should see Miss Monk, he would also see his mistake, and see that *his* Maria Monk was Fanny Johnson, or some other person.

That the affidavit of Mr. Lovis is false, I have not the least doubt. 1. We have seen that Maria Monk did not come to his house directly from St. Denis, in July, 1834; for it is evident that she was not in St. Denis during that year. 2. The above statement of Mr. Jones is enough to show that Maria Monk was not in his service; but that it was one Fanny Johnson. 3. Mr. Lovis' declaration that "she was often deranged in her mind," during the three or four weeks, that, he says, she was in his service, is evidently untrue of Maria Monk, and is enough in itself to show that his testimony is unworthy of the least confidence. They tell us that she was a teacher in the Government school for a long time, immediately preceding this; and would a deranged person have been thus employed? Besides, she has evinced no symptoms of derangement during her residence in New York, for the last year and a half. Doctor Robertson, of Montreal, who examined her hands some three months afterwards, states in his affidavit, that "From the appearance of her hands, she evidently had not been used to work." It is very manifest from the whole appearance and conduct of Miss Monk, that she has never been a servant girl in any family. This is the decided opinion of the families, in which she has resided since she came to New York. Hence the affidavits of Mr. Gouin, and Mrs. Angelica Monk, of Sorel, and of Mrs. St. Germain, of St. Denis, and Mr. Lovis, of Montreal, all of them

testifying, that she has been at service in their families,—are undoubtedly false.

We have next a statement from one Lawrence Kidd. This consists of a conversation which he had sometime in the summer of 1834, with Capt. Ryan, "master of a steamer." Mr. Kidd states that "Capt. Ryan told him that Monk had journeyed on board his boat from Sorel to Montreal;" and that he had lost his watch, and that he suspected that "Monk" had stolen it.—The priests think that this must have been after she left the service of Mr. Lovis. But what does it all amount to? Mr. Kidd says, that Mr. Ryan told him thus and thus. And who is Capt. Ryan? He is a miserable atheist; ejected, on account of his vile atheism, from his office, by the government authorities. Of what value then is his idle tale?

We are furnished in the next place with a long affidavit from one Louis Malo, a constable of Montreal. He tells us that in October, 1834, he arrested Maria Monk for stealing—"that on account of her youth, and the respectability of her family," the man from whom she stole declined prosecuting her—and that he, taking pity on her, took her to a tavern, where he kept her two or three days—and that a few days afterwards, being sent for by her, he saw her again at another tavern—and that the next time he saw her was in September, 1835, when she, being in a house of ill-fame, sent for him, and told him that she had come to Montreal from New York, with Mr. Hoyt, with whom she had left his (Malo's) child, at Goodenough's tavern. It is in this way that this contemptible creature, aided by the priests, wishes to

tell the world that he is the father of Maria Monk's child. Thus he glories in his own shame.

A full delineation of this man's character would pollute even pollution itself. I must, therefore, be excused from the loathsome task of even attempting it. I will only say, that he is considered by all who know him, as the greatest of blackguards, a perfect paragon of immorality, a man destitute of veracity, whose oath, unsupported by others, even Mr. Jones himself admitted in New York, was worthy of no confidence. He owns some two or three houses in one of the Montreal suburbs, all devoted to the goddess of infamy, himself being the presiding genius over each of them. What confidence, then, can possibly be placed in this man's affidavit—an affidavit covering some two or three pages of detail, all of which bear the marks of sheer fabrication? Thus I will take my leave of Louis Malo, with the simple remark, that his affidavit appears to have been fabricated by the priests or their agents, for the single purpose of finding a father for Maria Monk's child, other than priest Phelan, of Montreal, on whom she had sworn it.

Maria Monk professes to have eloped from the Hotel Dieu nunnery in the early part of November, 1834. The priests say, that she left the service of Mr. Lovis on the 7th or 8th of August, of the same year. There is, therefore, some three months intervening between the two points of time—from the time she is said to have left Mr. Lovis' until the time she professes to have escaped from the convent. Where was she during these three months? The priests tell us that "she took up her habitation in various brothels, at Griffin Town, a suburb of Montreal, and elsewhere." They do not pretend to offer any other evi-

dence of this than their own declaration ; and what is that good for ? Are they not the criminated party ? And is their testimony to be received against the person criminating them ? This is not our mode of acting in the "States."

We have thus traced their account of the different places, in which they say Maria Monk resided from the autumn of 1831, to November, 1834. And what is the result ? Is it not manifest, that all the statements and affidavits, which we have examined, present us with one train of popish lies and perjury ? Can any man believe, after examining the subject, that the priests have given us a true account of Maria Monk's residence during the time specified ? Where then was she during this time ? Before answering this question, we must examine the statement of Doctor Nelson. He says :—"That when I was the medical attendant of the Hotel Dieu hospital, and occasionally of the convent, which is the cloistered part of the establishment, I never once saw Miss Monk there ; but more than once, at her mother's request, I saw her at the Government housekeeper's apartments, which are those occupied by her mother." On page 184, Awful Disclosures, Maria Monk states that she frequently attended Dr. Nelson in his visits to the public hospital, and wrote down his prescriptions, &c. One or other of them, therefore, must be mistaken, or a wilful deceiver. The doctor's statement consists of two parts :—1. He denies having seen her in the nunnery. This may be true, and yet she may have been there, and he not have known her in her nun's apparel as being Miss Monk, though he must in that case have known her as Saint Eustace, the name by which she was called in the convent.



2. He says that by her mother's request, he saw her more than once at her mother's house. The question is, when did he thus repeatedly see her at her mother's house? Was it during the time she professes to have been in the nunnery? The doctor's declaration is equivocal, and I fear designedly so. If he repeatedly saw her at her mother's request, at her residence, she must have been *sick there*. Now, if the doctor's declaration, that he more than once saw her at her mother's house, means any thing to the point, it means that he saw her there during the time she professes to have been a nun in the Hotel Dieu. But the priests have professedly proved, that she lived during this time, in Sorel, St. Denis, Mr. Lovis', and in the Griffin Town brothels. How could she have lived in these places, and at the same time be sick at her mother's house, under the care of Dr. Nelson? Let Dr. Nelson and the priests explain this, if they can, for it is more than I can comprehend. One thing, however, is certain, viz. that Dr. Nelson's testimony either proves no alibi from the nunnery, or else an alibi from Sorel and St. Denis.

However skilful Dr. Nelson may be as a physician, his veracity appears to be, especially on this subject, at a very low ebb. He is or has been physician to the nuns. The priests call him a Protestant; but he is not a Protestant, but a professed ridiculer of all religion. He keeps a mistress; and, according to the statement of Maria Monk, his conduct when in the nunnery is very little better than that of the priests. His declaration, therefore, that he never saw Miss Monk in the convent, ought not to have the weight of a feather in deciding the point whether she has been a nun or not.



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The testimony of Dr. Robertson and Mrs. Monk, Maria's mother, re-presented in the "Awful Exposure," has been for a long time before the public. It amounts to little or nothing on the question, whether or no Miss Monk has been an inmate in the nunnery. Dr. Robertson expresses his opinion from hear say testimony, that Maria Monk was in Sorel and St. Denis, during a greater part of the time she professes to have been in the nunnery. I suppose the priests or their agents told him so. Mrs. Monk states that, in conversation with certain gentlemen, she told them that her daughter had never been in the nunnery. The long affidavit of Mrs. Monk is a mere farce, never confirmed by her. Hence it has not her signature. It was fabricated under the direction of the priests, who obtained a promise from her that she would not contradict its statements. But if this were not so, still we have the affidavit of Mr. William Miller, who testifies that Mrs. Monk told him in the summer of 1833, that her daughter Maria was then in the nunnery: Awful Disclosures, page 237. The reader may judge at which time she told the truth. At the time she stated the fact to Mr. Miller, she was under no temptation to tell an untruth. But not so in August, 1835, when she says that she told certain individuals, that her daughter had never been in the nunnery. Besides, Mr. Jones expressly declared in New York, in August, 1836, that the affidavit of Mrs. Monk was now considered as injurious to their cause, and that its first publication was regretted.

The affirmations of the Montreal tribe of Magdalens are beneath contempt. They affirm that, in the winter of 1834-5, Maria Monk told them of her residing in Sorel, St. Denis, &c., but never intimated to

them any thing respecting her having been a nun in the Hotel Dieu. Admitting all they say on this subject were true, however, it would amount simply to this, that Miss Monk, for the sake of her own safety, practised deception upon them as to the fact of her having eloped from the convent. But who has any confidence in this fictitious tribe of Magdalens? Well did Mr. Jones, publisher of the "Awful Exposure," say to me in New York, that many of his witnesses could not be found, and that I should need his assistance to find them. Some of these Magdalens have been searched for, but lo, they were not to be found! Respecting this manœuvre of the priests, I shall have occasion to remark more at length hereafter. Suffice it to say, that the priests could never have expected to gull anybody with this Magdalen trick, except it were such as "love darkness rather than light." These Magdalens and Louis Malo are at direct antipodes in their affidavits. They affirm that he had intercourse with Maria Monk, during the winter of 1834-5, in the yard of the Asylum. He affirms that he never heard of her from October, 1834, until Sept. 1835.

This completes our review of the documentary testimony presented by the priests, to prove an alibi in the case of Maria Monk—that she resided elsewhere than in the nunnery, during the time she professes to have been a nun in that establishment. What then is the result? Have the priests succeeded in their attempt to prove an alibi? So far as the *number* of statements and affidavits are concerned, their is no deficiency. But oh, their character! What a compound of ignorance, contradictions, falsehoods, and perjury! Among those who have testified from per-

sonal knowledge, there is not a single Protestant witness, unless it be the notoriously profligate Mary Angelica Monk—the intimate friend of Kelly, the most licentious priest there is in Canada. Not a single unexceptionable witness is to be found among them.

I wish my readers to remember, how easy a matter it is to prove an alibi in Maria Monk's case, provided she has never been a nun in the Hotel Dieu. If she lived about one year in Sorel, and about one year and a half in St. Denis, as maintained by the priests, how easy a matter it would have been to prove it, by unexceptionable witnesses? If true, why present to us as witnesses, such unprincipled characters as Martel Paul, Charles Gouin, Angelica Monk, &c.? The very fact, that the priests have been unable to furnish any better testimony, after the labor of so many months, is in itself evidence of the desperateness of their undertaking. I beg of my readers to ponder well this particular point, for it is of great importance in the controversy. When I take into consideration all the circumstances of the case—the length of time which the priests have had to collect evidence—the fact that Maria Monk is said to have lived for two years and a half in the two places specified—the fact that the mass of the people in these two towns are favorable to the priests, and of course, decidedly hostile to Miss Monk's claims—and above all, when I consider its immense importance to the priests; that upon it is suspended the strength of their defence; and then look at the testimony adduced—I feel constrained to say that, in my judgment, *the priests and their agents have utterly failed in their attempt to prove an alibi.*

It is perfectly proper to remark further, that such an attempt, in such a case, thus resulting in ill-success and failure, leaves their cause in a condition far more hopeless than before. Every unsuccessful effort greatly strengthens the contrary position.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### REPORT OF MESSRS. CURRY, PERKINS, ESSON, HOLMES, AND JONES, WHO EXAMINED THE HOTEL DIEU NUNNERY.

Preliminary Considerations—Time elapsed from her elopement—  
Since she first appealed to this test—Since the announcement of  
alterations in the Nunnery—Appointment and qualifications of the  
Examining Committee—Hostile to Miss Monk—Their examination  
—Their unfavorable report—Made up of negatives—Nuns' apart-  
ments changed—Book of registers—Miss Monk's passage through  
the nunnery yard—Report of an architect—Mr. Ostell's three  
reasons for his unfavorable report—One has nothing to do with  
the subject—The other two stated—Origin and circumstances of  
Miss Monk's drawing—The two reasons known to exist before the  
drawing was published—Furnish evidence of her honesty—Mr.  
Ostell's report furnishes strong evidence in support of Miss  
Monk—Alterations in the nunnery—Strictures on the conduct of  
the Committee—The fiction that Miss Monk has described Mrs.  
McDonell's Asylum—Mrs. McDonell unworthy of confidence—Mr.  
Stone's Report the result of a mere hoax—Resolutions of August,  
1836, passed in New York.

FROM the time of her visit to Montreal, in August,  
1835, Maria Monk, in confirmation of the fact that  
she had been an inmate of the Hotel Dieu, appealed  
to an impartial examination of that convent—staking  
the truth of her claims to public confidence on the  
result of such an examination. She thus challenged  
her opponents to test the matter by a fair tribunal.  
This challenge the friends of the priests pretend to  
say, has been accepted, because on the fifteenth day  
of July, 1836, they subjected the nunnery to the ex-  
amination of a few individuals, as a committee, ap-  
pointed by themselves for that purpose. But before  
receiving the report of this committee, as deciding



the point in controversy, several things should be distinctly noticed.

1. The time which elapsed from the period she left the convent, until the day the examination was made. She professes to have eloped from the nunnery in the early part of November, 1834, and the examination took place in July, 1836. Thus about one year and eight months intervened between the points of time. A period of time more than sufficient to have rebuilt the nunnery, if they had been so disposed.

2. She first made her appeal to this test in the August of 1835; so that eleven months intervened, before the pretended examination of it was made.

3. It was announced in the public prints in October, 1835, that men were employed in making alterations in the Hotel Dieu; so that this announcement, uncontradicted, was before the public about nine months, prior to the examination. On page 63, of her book, which was published in the following January, Miss Monk makes the same charge in these words:—"And I have been credibly informed, that masons have been employed in the nunnery since I left it." Such assurances she had while in Montreal, as well as since her return to New York.

So much in reference to time for making alterations. The next thing worthy of notice, is the appointment and character of the committee, who made the examination. In the appointment of this committee, neither Maria Monk, nor her friends, had any voice whatever. It was chosen exclusively by her avowed enemies. Mr. Jones, the agent of the priests, and publisher of the "Awful Exposure," declared, in New York, again and again, that he selected and in-

vited the individuals composing it. It was, therefore, altogether an *ex parte* committee.

As to the qualifications of these judges in the case, were it consistent with the demands of truth and justice, I would gladly pass them over in mute silence. But fidelity to the task I have undertaken, peremptorily forbids it, however unpleasant it may be. The public stand which these gentlemen have taken, and the tremendous responsibility which they have voluntarily assumed, in taking upon themselves the office of judges in the case, and publishing their verdict to the world, authorizes every man to examine their qualifications, as well as their right, thus to act.

I remark, then, that one and all of them have, from the commencement of the controversy, been the decided opponents of Maria Monk. Mr. Jones, the ostensible leader in all the movements which have been made to vindicate the criminated priests—avows himself to be a Roman Catholic, though he is understood to be, by those who know him, an infidel—a man in whose word, little or no confidence can be placed. He declared in New York, in the presence of several gentlemen, that he published the first article that was ever published against Maria Monk in Canada, before he ever saw either her or her book: and then on another occasion, when he was shown that that very article was in direct opposition to the whole tenor of his book, he denied that he ever had published it. Mr. Holmes is a decided opponent of Miss Monk. The Rev. Mr. Esson is a Scotch clergyman; a man whose character has labored exceedingly for several years past. His name is quite conspicuous in the various documents which have been issued, from time to time in Montreal, against Maria Monk. Of the

general characters of the Rev. Messrs. Perkins and Curry, I have nothing to say, but what is praiseworthy of them. As ministers of Christ, they have the general confidence of the Christian community. But, unfortunately, both for themselves and the cause of truth, they have been led to pursue a course, in reference to the controversy between Miss Monk and the priests, which appears to me, every enlightened and unprejudiced man must unhesitatingly condemn. It is known, that, from the first, they have, in their letters, and in their conversation, been active in opposing the claims of Maria Monk. Being early prejudiced against her, they took a decided stand in their opposition; and thus becoming partisans, they have been goaded on from step to step in vindication of their own conduct. I speak advisedly on this subject, and with no other feelings, than those of kindness towards these gentlemen.

The origin and growth of their prejudice can be easily traced. Miss Monk went in company with Mr. Hoyt, from New York to Montreal, to procure a legal investigation of her charges against the priests. An unhappy difference existed between Mr. Perkins and Mr. Hoyt, who had been residing for some time previous in and about Montreal, as an agent for some benevolent societies. This fact, connected with the circumstance that Mr. Hoyt was a member of the Free Presbyterian church of that city, and was especially befriended in the object of his visit, by its leading members, who had gone off from Mr. Perkins' church, very much against his wishes, gave to the subject a strong party character, and thus awakened the prejudice of that gentleman, against the cause which his opponents had espoused. Had Miss Monk

fallen into other hands, it is probable Mr. Perkins would never have occupied the unnatural position in which he now presents himself, to the astonishment of the Protestant public. His position is not the result of any friendship which he feels towards priests, nuns, and their religion. Popery in all its forms he abominates.

It was evident from an early date, to those who were investigating Miss Monk's case, in New York, that he was under strong excitement: for he replied only in terms of passion to a respectful letter addressed to him, for information on the subject.

Mr. Curry, having then but recently arrived in Canada, and being intimately associated with Mr. Perkins, was, amidst the general unpopularity of Miss Monk's cause, easily led to array himself against her claims; and the sarcastic tone of his letter stating the results of his examination of the Convent exhibits the violence of his prejudice. He has since been serving the cause of the priests, however much he may dislike their religion. The first intimations received in New York, respecting Maria Monk's having described the Montreal Magdalen Asylum, instead of the Hotel Dieu nunnery—a fiction of recent date—were connected with his movements. He was represented as searching the building, and applying the test; and Mr. Jones, in the presence of the Editors of the New York Sun, declared to the writer of this, on his (Mr. C.'s) authority, that he (Mr. C.) found Maria Monk's plan to be an exact fac-simile of the interior of that Asylum!!

Such, then, were the qualifications of the examining committee. And that I have not misjudged in the matter, I feel quite confident; especially in reference

to the Rev. Mr. Perkins,—whose opinion is perhaps considered to be the most important of any in the committee—for I have several letters from him, which abundantly evince the embittered state of his feelings on this subject.\*

One word respecting the time occupied in examining the nunnery. The building is a huge affair. According to Bouchette's Topographical Description of Lower Canada, it is 324 feet in front, on St. Paul street, by 468 feet in depth, on St. Joseph street. Now Mr. Jones declared in New York that the committee were occupied only between two and three hours in making their examination, "from garret to cellar." This being the case, it is impossible that the examination could have been any thing like a thorough one.

Such being the circumstances of the case, it may be asked, what but an unfavorable report could be expected, by the friends of Miss Monk, from such a committee? But let us examine the report itself, and see what it amounts to. It is professedly written by the Rev. Mr. Curry, and sanctioned by the remainder of the committee.

There is something quite imposing in the first sentence; says Mr. Curry, "I did a few weeks since, in

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\* The following is an extract from a letter published in August, 1836, by the Rev. Mr. Clary, of Montreal. Speaking of the report of the committee, he says:—

But the community who know the facts of the case will not be satisfied with such an examination; for *all the five gentlemen who examined the convent* were strongly prejudiced against the book, and none of them were more so than Messrs. Perkins and Curry: and *that prejudice in them is the result of a personal dislike to Hoyt, and perhaps to others here who were active in the first movement that was made in regard to those disclosures.*



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company with N. B. Doucet and J. P. Lacroix, Esqs., and without sending any previous notice, visit said nunnery," &c. He goes on to state that he examined every thing "from the cellar to the roof," out-houses and all, except the cloistered department; and that the lady Superior and the nuns, to whom he was introduced, offered him every facility; and that he was assured by one of them "that if they had had timely notice of his visit, a permit from the bishop would have been obtained to give him immediate access to the whole of the cloistered department." Now the impression that all this is adapted to make is, that Mr. Curry's visit was unexpected to the nuns, and that they and their lady Superior earnestly courted an examination of their convent. But be it known that N. B. Doucet and J. P. Lacroix, Esquires, Mr. Curry's associates in his adventure, are Roman Catholics, and great friends of the priests; and Maria Monk declares that they are habitual visiters of the Hotel Dieu, for the same purpose that the priests visit that house of ill-fame. Hence the probability is, that the priests, nuns, and their two comrades, had the matter all "cut and dried," in order that they might make the experiment, and see how far they could mislead Mr. Curry; and thus judge whether they might prudently admit a committee, in part under his generalship, to explore the nunnery. It appears that the experiment succeeded just as they would have it. In this exploration, Mr. Curry found nothing that bore any resemblance, as he tells us, to Maria Monk's descriptions. This may be called the first part of the examination—a sort of preparation for the work of the future committee.

Some time after this the committee was organized;

and the examination made. The result was the same as before with Mr. Curry; the committee "were unable to discover the remotest resemblance between any part of said building, and the plan or description of Maria Monk." Maria's name was not to be found, either in "the register of deaths," or in "the register in which are entered the names, ages, and dates of the taking the veil of each nun." No trace of her was to be found; not even the names of those mentioned in her disclosures.

This report of the committee is all negatives. The committee tell us that they repeatedly traversed every section of the nunnery," and could find nothing resembling Maria Monk's descriptions. But they do not tell us what they did find; whether a greater or less number of rooms, than she mentions in her descriptions. We are thus left to grope our way in all the darkness of negatives.

In a letter from the Rev. Mr. Perkins, written immediately after the examination took place, he informs the writer of these pages, that Maria "has placed the cloistered part of the establishment where the kitchen is: and that the whole concern is turned upside down." It appears from this statement, and from a conversation which I had with Mr. Jones, confirmed by the testimony of Mr. Ostell, that the cloistered part of the Hotel Dieu nunnery, is not, at present, the rear central wing of that building, as described by Maria Monk. The truth is, that amidst the changes and alterations which have taken place in that convent, since she left it, the nuns' department has been changed from the rear middle wing, to another part of the building. That they formerly occupied the part of the nunnery described by Miss

Monk, is a fact that the *priests dare not deny*. It is a fact that can be proved by several witnesses, now residing in New York. Hence "the whole concern," as Mr. Perkins says, "is turned upside down" from what she described it. And well it should be, for she does not, in her published writings, attempt to describe the present habitation of the nuns.

From Mr. Jones, I learned that that part of the building described by Miss Monk, is now occupied as a kitchen, sleeping-rooms for servants, storage-rooms, a place for old rubbish, &c. &c. How easy, then, to mislead and bewilder such a committee, hastening through the nunnery as they must have done, seeing they despatched their search in so short a time!—Since the report of the committee, some of Miss Monk's friends have attempted to examine this part of the building, and have been peremptorily excluded. Why is this? My readers can easily conjecture.

Before leaving this *exparte* report of the committee, two things mentioned in it, deserve a passing notice. First, speaking of the register of names, Mr. Curry says: "To ascertain whether this was the real register, I called for the name of a nun with whom I had become acquainted about one year since, and was immediately referred to it. In this record, which was an old book, there were no erasures, no mutilations. We searched for the name of Maria Monk, and others mentioned in her book; no such names were there." Now this looks like a piece of accomplished Jesuitism on the part of the priests and nuns. Who knows but this book may have been prepared with said names, for the express purpose of deception? Mr. Curry has said, in conversation, that he was expressly requested by the mother of said nun to make inquiries re-

specting her daughter. It was therefore known beforehand that Mr. Curry would inquire for her. Or, perhaps, it is an old register of admissions, but false or imperfect. But to settle the question beyond dispute, let the bishop and the Superior present it to the public; and let its names be transcribed; and let inquiry be made, and see if it contains the name of every individual who has been known to enter that convent. No one can raise an objection to this course.

The other thing to be noticed is the statement, that Maria Monk in passing from the nunnery through the yard into the street, according to the course which she says she took—"must have passed directly over, under, or through, at least, three high stone walls." This may be true, as things now exist in that yard. But it is known that alterations have been made in that yard. By referring to the ground plan of the drawing in her book, which was taken in the autumn of 1835, by a competent gentleman in Montreal, it will be seen that no walls then existed in the course she describes herself to have taken, until she arrived to the one on Jean Baptiste street, in which she says there was a small gate, opening on the inside, through which she passed into the street. I have been credibly informed that such a gate formerly existed in that wall.\* But be that as it may, it is matter of little consequence. She may be mistaken in this particular; and may have passed into Jean Baptiste street, through the gate leading out of the yard of the Con-

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\* A gentleman in New York, who recently visited Montreal, declares that he saw such a gate there. A highly respectable lady now on a visit to this city from Montreal, declares that she has often seen it. Another, who lived in Montreal for twelve years, declares the same.

gregational Nunnery, or in some other way. It was dark, and she had just left the nunnery, and was, doubtless, much terrified and bewildered, hardly knowing what course she did take. She knew that she had just violated the awful oaths by which she had been bound to the convent, and that she was fearfully exposing herself to be taken and cruelly punished, if not absolutely murdered, as her saintly sister St. Francis had been. This being the case, the committee ought to be ashamed of their unfeeling and contemptuous statement, that "she must have passed directly over, under, or through at least three high stone walls that would have discouraged a less adventurous lady."

Appended to the report of the examining committee, we have a statement from Mr. John Ostell, architect and surveyor, giving us the result of a professional application of Maria Monk's plan or drawing, to that part of the Hotel Dieu professedly described by her—the centre wing. He "declares it to be his opinion, that, architecturally speaking, and with reference to the practice prevailing in Canada, in the construction of buildings, it is impossible that the said plan should have any real existence," in connexion with that part of the nunnery. Mr. Ostell assigns three reasons for his opinion. The present cloistered apartments, he informs us, "he was not permitted to enter."

One of the three reasons mentioned by Mr. Ostell, has nothing to do with the subject. It is a discrepancy between Maria Monk's drawing of the interior, and the ground or block plan, of the building, drawn by another person. Miss Monk distinctly states in her book, "that the general plan of the

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grounds and buildings, were in some respects defective and erroneous," and that she was not responsible for its errors. It was drawn by a gentleman in Montreal, who was fully competent to do it correctly, and who would have done it so, had he not been driven unceremoniously out of the yard. See *Awful Disclosures*, p. 374. Why Mr. Ostell should mention, as a reason for his opinion, a discrepancy, which exists between her drawing of the interior, and a drawing of the exterior, of the nunnery, by another person, I am unable to understand.

Another reason assigned, is in the following words:—"That the partition walls on the first and second stories, have no correspondence with each other, commencing and ending on each separate story; whereas it is necessary that such walls should not only correspond with each other, but that they should commence in the cellar." According to what is said here, by Mr. Ostell, Canadian houses must be very singular in their construction—each story, from the cellar upwards, must have an equal number of rooms, of equal size. For example, if there be five rooms on the first floor, there must be five, of precisely the same dimensions, on the second floor, and also in the cellar. If there be a bed-room in the third story, of a three story house, there must be a bed-room in each story beneath, even down into the cellar. If this be so, all I have to say is, that the mode of constructing houses in Canada, is a very absurd mode. There is no doubt, however, but what many of the walls are one and the same, beginning in the cellar, and passing through each story in the house; but to say that this is the case with each partition wall, is evidently incorrect.

The remaining reason is, that—"The second story plan shows a portion of building at one extremity, without any similar substructure in the lower stories." This is true, and was spoken of by myself and the gentleman who assisted Miss Monk in arranging her drawing for the engraver. It was distinctly pointed out to her, but she was unable to remove the difficulty. All she knew was, that on the second story, there were such and such rooms, thus and thus located, containing such and such furniture, and devoted to such and such uses. She showed none of that ready wit and expedient, which her enemies so liberally attribute to her; nor did she even attempt to reconcile the discrepancy pointed out to her. She exhibited the artlessness of a child in the matter.

It is proper here to say a word or two, respecting the origin of Miss Monk's drawing of the interior of the Hotel Dieu, or that part of it formerly occupied by the cloistered nuns. At the time it was done, she had been out of the nunnery some fifteen or sixteen months—months of excitement and varied trials and sufferings, such as few females of her age are ever called upon, in the providence of God, to endure. It was made solely from memory, and in considerable haste; for the idea of drawing an entire plan of the department was not suggested, until the edition, in which it was to be inserted, was nearly ready for the press, although several sketches of different parts had been previously drawn. The building described, is a huge establishment; containing many rooms, and of course, a description of them, solely from recollection, was attended with much perplexing difficulty. This will be readily seen by every reflecting mind; and

if any man doubts it, let him remove his doubts, by attempting to give a drawing from memory, even of the house in which he was born and raised. Under these circumstances, nothing but an imperfect and general description, could possibly have been expected. The demand, that she should have given to each room its exact proportionate size, so as to have the separating walls on each story exactly correspond with each other, is beyond measure unreasonable. No man on earth could do it, except he were on the spot, with his measuring rule in his hand. How preposterous, then, to require it of a girl in her situation !

The two discrepancies between her drawing and the building, pointed out by Mr. Ostell, were known to exist before her plan was published. It was known that the walls between the rooms on each story, did not correspond with each other ; nor was such a correspondence even sought for, much less professed. It was also known that a portion of the second story extended beyond the first story, so as to be without any corresponding substructure. Miss Monk knew it ; and had she been an impostor, and of course her drawing a mere fancy work, her fancy would have created a room or two more for the first story, and thus have removed the want of the substructure spoken of. This is a strong evidence of her honesty. Or had we who assisted her in arranging it, been so disposed, we could have done it ; but that would have been contrary to our determination from the first, which was, that every thing ascribed to Miss Monk, in her book, should be her own production, and not ours. As we sought nothing but truth, it was our determination, that she should stand or fall by her own descriptions.

And now, understanding the subject, as I do, I solemnly aver, that the architectural report of Mr. Ostell presents to my mind, irresistible evidence of the fact, that Maria Monk has described, though imperfectly, the centre wing or main building of the Hotel Dieu, *from a personal knowledge of it, obtained by a long residence in that establishment.* Her description of it appears, from this report, to be quite as accurate as I ever supposed it to be. In speaking of a portion of the first story, on page 396 of her book, Miss Monk says:—"Of the size and precise number of the two or three succeeding rooms, I am not very certain. I think I have drawn them pretty nearly right." Now, suppose—what is probably the truth in the case—that, in the indistinctness of her recollection alluded to in this passage, she has omitted in her drawing, a single room; would not the omission account for the discrepancies spoken of by Mr. Ostell? Would it not represent the first story of that long building, as being shorter than the second, and thus produce the absence of the substructure spoken of? And would it not produce the want of a general correspondence in the separating walls, on the two stories of the building?

I beg of the reader to pause and consider this professional report of Mr. Ostell, for a single moment. Maria Monk, in the first place, gave us a general description of the first story of the nunnery—her former abode; and then of the second story. We compared the two together, to see if they corresponded with each other; and we saw that they did not. We saw that she had made the second story somewhat longer than the first, and of course that there was a want of a general correspondence in the walls, separating

the rooms in each story. We stated the fact to her, and she made another effort, but came to the same result, saying, "I have done as well as I could, and if there are mistakes, I can't help it." We saw that she was confused in her recollections, respecting a portion of the first story—where the rooms are numbered, the 4th, 5th and 6th. This imperfection of memory is alluded to in the above extract from her book. But notwithstanding this known imperfection in her drawing, we published it; and what is the result? An architect is employed, some time afterwards, by her opponents, to compare the drawing with the building; and he reports unfavorably, assigning as his reasons, the very imperfections which we knew existed before the drawing was published. I ask, then, what stronger evidence could be presented to our minds, than is here offered by Mr. Ostell, of the fact, that her drawing is not the work of fancy, but of sober reality? If Mr. Ostell had found any other discrepancies than these two, between her drawing and the building, he unquestionably would have named them, in place of mentioning the one first noticed above, which has nothing to do with the subject—the discrepancy between her drawing of the interior, and the plan of the exterior, of the building, furnished by another person. He does not intimate any incorrectness as to the general form and size of the building, as described in her drawing.

If any man will take into consideration the entire circumstances of the case—her youth and inexperience in such matters—the undisciplined state of her mind—the size of the building, and consequent difficulty attending its description—the agitations, trials, and sufferings she had experienced—the long time



which had elapsed since her elopement from the nunnery; he must see, in the light of Mr. Ostell's report, that the drawing of Miss Monk is as accurate as could have been reasonably expected. He must and will see the intrinsic absurdity of the idea, that she drew her plan of the interior of the nunnery from the mere workings of a wild, undisciplined imagination. The man that can understandingly believe, that her drawing is mere fancy work, can believe any thing, however absurd. His belief is beyond the point of being influenced by evidence; and of course it were an absurdity to attempt to reason with him on the subject.

What then is the conclusion? Have not the priests failed in this attempt to mislead the public? Is not their attempt here as fruitless, as that in the preceding chapter to prove an alibi? Nay, this attempt is more than a failure. It furnishes evidence of a high degree in support of Miss Monk's claims.

In connexion with Mr. Ostell's report, how reckless does the following declaration of Mr. Curry, sanctioned by the other members of the committee, appear!—"In conclusion, I declare, to all whom it may concern, that if Maria Monk has told the truth in her description of the interior of the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal, I shall not be slow to believe that the nuns of Canada yet retain the power of working miracles with stone and mortar."\* No miracle need to have been wrought, nor a particle of stone or mortar used, and yet it is extremely manifest from Mr. Ostell's professional report, that her description of the interior of the nunnery has its foundation in truth.

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\* Query—Did they ever possess this power? If so, when did they lose it?

But then there can be no doubt but what extensive alterations have been made in that convent, since Maria Monk left it; and the priests, in any responsible manner, *dare not deny it*.\* Mr. Curry knows that alterations have been made; for he has declared, as I have been credibly informed, that he saw a hole, or well, newly dug, in the cellar of that establishment; and when asked why he did not mention it in his report, he replied, that he did not feel himself called upon to state *what* he saw in the nunnery!" True, if he wished faithfully to serve the priesthood of Montreal, he was not called upon to report any thing unfavorable to their interests. Alas, for such a committee! What motive could have influenced them to take upon themselves the performance of a task, for which they must have known themselves to be so incompetent? They knew, as well as they knew they existed, that they were among the bitterest of Miss Monk's opponents; and they also must have known

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\* The Rev. Mr. Clary of Montreal, published in August, 1836, to the world, over his own signature, the following statement, which, so far as I know, remains uncontradicted by any responsible person in Montreal. "*Material alterations have been made in and around the Convent!!!* Those persons living where they can look over the wall into the enclosure of the convent, say, that cartmen and masons have been at work there much of the winter and spring, *overhauling and fixing for an examination.*" Again in October 17th, 1836, speaking of Mr. Stone's report, he says:—"He said nothing about the recent building and repairing of stone walls within the enclosure of the convent, and which everybody who wishes can see, nor the new wall within the building, as mentioned privately by one of the former examiners—nor does he tell us that the well in the cellar was dug this summer, nor whether or not it is in exactly the same place that the cemetery, or hole for smothered nuns and infants, is said to have been."

the fact, that they were thus considered by all who were interested in ferreting out the truth of her awful charges against that nunnery. Could they then for a single moment have supposed, that an unfavorable report from them would terminate the controversy? And they must have known, that the priests would never have selected them for the task, unless they had *felt quite sure of obtaining such a report from them.* What object, then, could they hope to gain by serving on such a committee? It is to be hoped, that Messrs. Perkins and Curry—as to the rest of the committee, it is of little consequence what ranks they occupy—will hereafter leave the priests and nuns to defend their own unnatural and impure institutions. They are in bad company, and in bad business.

Before leaving this subject, I wish briefly to notice the senseless fiction, that Maria Monk has described the interior of the Magdalen Asylum of Montreal, instead of the interior of the Hotel Dieu nunnery. I call this a senseless fiction, recently fabricated for the purpose of deception. Mrs. McDonell, matron of the Asylum, states on oath, "that the description given in the said 'Disclosures,' of the interior of the Hotel Dieu, is an incorrect description of the apartments of the said Asylum." Here is a fair specimen of jesuitism, found in the phrase "incorrect description." What does Mrs. McDonell mean by it? Does she mean to say that Maria Monk *attempted* to describe the Asylum, and has done it *incorrectly*? or does she mean, that Maria Monk's attempted description of the Hotel Dieu, *incorrectly* resembles the Asylum? I am unable to conceive of any other meaning which may be attached to it. To say that Maria Monk attempted to give a description of her Asylum, is a declaration

so absurd as not to be within the limits of reason or common sense. It cannot therefore be reasoned about. And to affirm that Miss Monk's descriptions bear an incorrect resemblance to her Asylum, is about as relevant as it would be to affirm, that they bore an incorrect resemblance to the moon; for both the moon and Mrs. McDonell's Asylum have the dimensions of length, breadth, height, and depth, and so has Maria Monk's drawing; and in this respect there is an incorrect resemblance between all of them.

The truth is, this "exemplary and charitable" woman is unworthy of the least confidence. She has perjured herself in several instances in her affidavit. She affirms that Maria Monk had led the life of a stroller and a prostitute, for *many years*, in direct opposition to all the priests' witnesses, who affirm that she had been living during this time in Sorel and St. Denis—in the latter as a school mistress, for some fifteen months, while Dr. Nelson says she was a part of the time with her mother. She also affirms that Louis Malo was in the habit of visiting Maria Monk during the winter of 1834-5, whilst he affirms that he never heard of her during this period. She is a mere tool of the priests, ready to swear to any thing which they command her. Respecting this trick of the priests, I have more to say hereafter.

I will conclude this chapter with the subjoined expressive resolutions, simply observing that the committee therein named to explore the convent, in company with Maria Monk, have as yet received no permission from the proper authorities, to discharge the duty assigned them. Why is this? If Maria Monk is an impostor, why should the bishop of Montreal reject this unexceptionable mode of convincing

the world of the fact?\*

It is earnestly desired that the public will hereafter duly appreciate the reports of exparte and superficial examiners of the nunnery, such as the one already examined; and also that recently published in New York by Mr. William L. Stone, who, according to his own narrative, appears not to have seen a single room in that part of the convent professedly described by Maria Monk. He appears to have been completely duped by the priests and nuns; and of course, his report is a sheer imposition on the public, and should be treated as such.

## RESOLUTIONS.

## RESPECTING MARIA MONK.

"At a meeting convened in the American Tract Society's Rooms, at the call of several gentlemen, for the purpose of considering the controversy existing between Maria Monk and the Romish Priests of the Montreal Diocese, *Francis D. Allen, Esq.* was called to the chair, and the *Rev. Octavius Winslow* ap-

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\* The Rev. Mr. Clary says, in his published letter of August, 1836:—*I have tried to get permission for a Committee of gentlemen from New York, with others from this place, to go in, and take Maria Monk with them, but I have not succeeded.* In his letter of October the 17th, he says:—*On the same day of the examination of the convent, made in July last, under the guidance of Mr. Jones, the Catholic editor of this city, I made application to him for permission for a few gentlemen from New York, with others from this city, under the guidance of Maria Monk, to examine the convent, whose report I deemed the only one which would bring out the truth or satisfy the community. He seemed in favor of this proposal on the condition that if they failed to prove the truth of the Disclosures, its authoress should be given up to the authorities to be at their disposal; and he promised to get permission, but the bishop could not grant it.*



pointed as Secretary. The following Preamble and Resolutions were unanimously adopted :

"Whereas, Maria Monk has hitherto appealed in vain to the Canadian authorities, both civil and ecclesiastical, to bring her charges against the Romish priests of the Montreal Diocess, to some equitable tribunal for investigation ; and, whereas, she now appeals to the people of the United States, invoking them to interpose in her behalf, and demand that justice be rendered to her, a lonely girl, in her peculiarly trying and unequal controversy with the priests of the Romish church ; and, whereas, the people of the United States—besides being always disposed to listen to the voice of the friendless and the persecuted—have a deep and solemn interest in the matter in dispute, in consequence of the rapid increase of Popery and of popish institutions in their country ; and also, in consequence of the contiguity of the Canadian nunneries, and their intimate connexion with, and influence upon, the rising institutions of America :—Therefore.

"*Resolved*, 1st, That it is the sense of this meeting that the appeal of Maria Monk to the American people, ought to be promptly and efficiently responded to, so far as the nature of the case will admit of.

"*Resolved*, 2d, That the conduct of the Romish Montreal priests and their advocates—(1) in attempting, by every means, to asperse and vilify the character of Maria Monk ; and (2) in attempting, through the most artful deceptions, to decoy her into their hands ; and (3) in refusing, for the space of one full year, to allow the matter in controversy to be brought to a fair trial ; bespeaks any thing rather than manly honesty and virtuous innocence.

"*Resolved*, 3d, That the recent examination, said to have been made, of the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal, is altogether unsatisfactory ; because (1) the gentlemen engaged in it have been, from the beginning, *strongly and actively prejudiced* against Maria Monk. Mr. Jones, editor of a Romish paper, under the auspices of the priests, and principal mover in getting up the book against Maria Monk, which is about to appear, containing, among other things, the results of this party examination, was their leader. And because (2) *material alterations are said to have been made in and around the convent during the past year*—alterations, such as doubtless would easily deceive *such* a committee of examiners. For these reasons, any report unfavorable to Maria Monk, made by these disqualified examiners, ought to have no influence in deciding this controversy.

"*Resolved*, 4th, That the recent effort of the priests and their defenders, to make it appear that Maria Monk, instead of describing the Hotel Dieu nunnery and its inmates, has described a place which they call a "Magdalen Asylum;" and also, their attempts to prove, by the affidavits of some unprincipled profligates and infidels, calling themselves protestants, and of ignorant papists, that she never was a nun ; but that she has been of a bad character, living in brothels, &c., is highly characteristic of Jesuitism ; adapted to blind and bewilder the public mind, and turn it away from the single point to which it ought to be directed, *viz : an impartial examination of the Convent.*

"*Resolved*, 5th, That the demand made and reiterated by Maria Monk, during the space of a full year, *viz : that herself in person, accompanied by her*

friends, as well as enemies, should be permitted to explore the nunnery, is perfectly reasonable and right; and that a further refusal, in the present state of the case, forthwith to comply with it, on the part of the Hotel Dieu Ecclesiastics, *ought to be considered as equivalent to an acknowledgment of the crimes alleged against them by Maria Monk.*

*"Resolved, 6th, That a committee of four gentlemen be now appointed, with power to fill vacancies and increase their number, either in the United States or in Canada, to accompany Maria Monk to Montreal, so soon as the authorities of Canada shall afford suitable protection to such a committee, and shall grant them the necessary permission and facilities for thoroughly exploring the Hotel Dieu nunnery, and such other establishments as are said to be connected with it, viz., the Priest's Seminary, and the Congregational Nunnery, connected by subterranean passages; and also the Black Nuns' Island, which seems to be a component part of the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal; and that the following gentlemen be appointed on that committee,—George Hall, Esq., late Mayor of Brooklyn, Professor S. F. B. Morse, David Wessen. Esq., and Rev. J. J. Slocum.*

*"FRANCIS D. ALLEN, Chairman.*

*"OCTAVIUS WINSLOW, Secretary.*

*"New York, August 8th, 1836."*

The reader will please notice the length of time since these resolutions were first published to the world.

## CHAPTER V.

### ORIGIN OF MISS MONK'S "DISCLOSURES."

Troublesome matter to the priests—Statement of the Boston Pilot—Ascribed to a combination of individuals—To a nameless man—Said to have obtained her facts in the Magdalen Asylum—Her residence in the Asylum—Its gross absurdity—First discovered in New York by Mr. Hilliker—His affidavit—Their incipient origin attributed to Mr. Hoyt—Her supposed dying confession to the Rev. Mr. Tappin—The true origin of the "Disclosures"—Statement of the writer of her book as to the circumstances connected with its compilation—Integrity of the compiler vouched for by several gentlemen.

Nothing appears to have given the Roman priests and their advocates more vexation, than the contrivance of some scheme, by which the world may be induced to believe that Maria Monk is not the sole authoress of the disclosures attributed to her. She is yet in her youth, and according to the position assumed and proved by them, as they say, she has hitherto led the life of an infamous stroller, being subject to fits of insanity from her childhood, and has never been a Roman Catholic. Taking this ground, they readily perceive that it will not do to admit that she, and she alone, has furnished the matter of her disclosures; for they know that all the world will see that the thing is impossible in the nature of the case. Yea, they know that it will not do, on any consideration whatever, to admit that she is the sole authoress of her works. The admission would ruin them; for it is utterly impossible that she should have produced the matter of her narrative, unless she had been an inmate of the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal. This

they know full well. Hence the various and contradictory sources, which they have alleged to be the true origin of her disclosures.—Let us notice some two or three of these.

Immediately after the "Awful Disclosures" were published, the Boston Pilot (a Catholic paper) issued the following statement, as disclosing their true origin :—

"We are ready and willing to declare upon oath, that the extracts which we have seen in the New York Transcript, Boston Morning Post, Salem Gazette, and other respectable periodicals, purporting to be extracts from the disclosures of Maria Monk, &c., are to be found, word for word, and letter for letter, (proper names only being altered,) in a book translated from the Spanish or Portuguese language, in 1781, called 'The Gates of Hell Opened, or a Development of the Secrets of Nunneries,' and that we, at present, are the owner of a copy of said book, which was loaned by us, a year or two since, to some person in Marblehead or Salem, who has not returned it."

This statement was extensively circulated both through the Catholic and Protestant papers, and multitudes were led to believe that it was true. But time has shown it to be otherwise. Miss Monk's publishers forthwith offered one hundred dollars, to any individual who would present them with a work thus resembling the "Awful Disclosures." But the priest, who fabricated and published the statement, and who "*was ready and willing to swear*" to his own lie, has never been able to produce such a book.

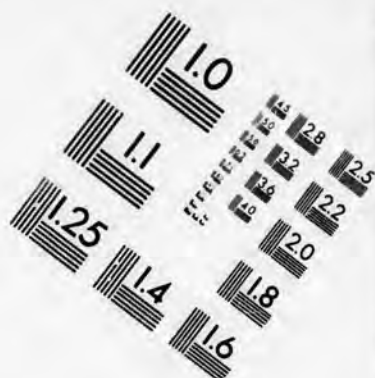
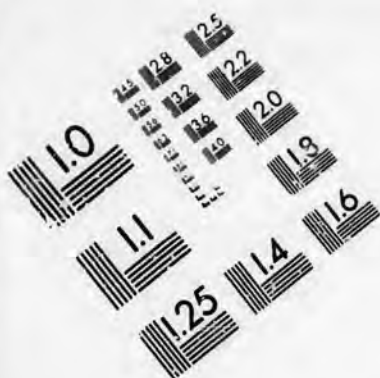
The ground usually taken by the opponents of Miss Monk is, "that she is a mere tool in the hands of others," who have fabricated her disclosures, and



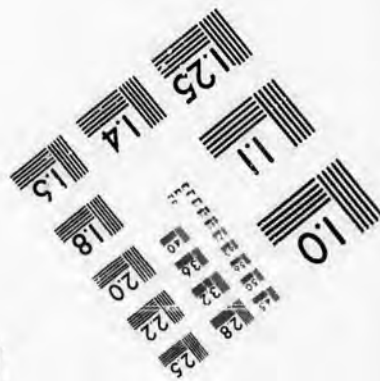
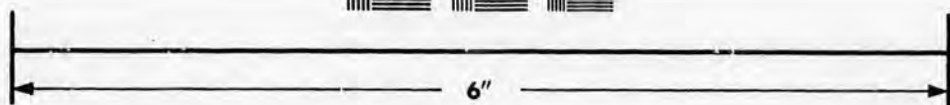
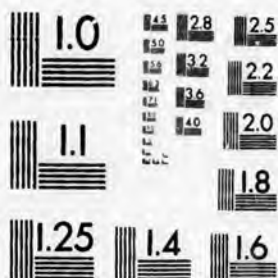
published them in her name. The writers of the "Awful Exposure" assume this position, as a truth which needs no proof. Hence the title-page of their book:—"Awful Exposure of the atrocious plot formed by certain individuals against the Clergy and Nuns of Lower Canada, through the intervention of Maria Monk." Who these individuals are, we are not informed. But they are unmercifully denounced as, "a band of fanatics," "an association of impostors," "abettors of Monk," "advisers of Monk," "her crew," "infamous," "canting hypocrites," "calumniators" "using Monk to convey their own slanders," "rendered insane by the instigations of their own malice," possessing "unparalleled impudence and imbecility," "atrocious intentions," "minds prolific of calumny," "strange audacity," being unable "to construct a lie of ordinary verisimilitude"—which by the way, is equivalent to saying that they are *not practised in the art of lying*.

On page 81 of their book, the priests speak as if the "Awful Disclosures" were the production of some one man; whom they handle after their accustomed manner. Say they:—"When this refutation and these proofs shall meet the scurrilous and unhesitating defamer, will he not seek to escape the light of day and the regards of his fellow men? The turbulent current of his deliberate and blasphemous fanaticism will be heated by hot shame and unavailing regret. The stupid and lying wretch, the base knave, the imbecile criminal, will writhe in his anguish, scorned and loathed by an insulted and indignant community." Who the individual is, thus mauled, I know not. But I think he must have been a nameless man of straw, whom the priests, by this thunder





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storm of wrath, have blown into the land of nonentity.

But the priests are not satisfied—or rather they justly think that the reflecting part of the community are not satisfied with either of these modes of accounting for the origin of Miss Monk's disclosures. They have, therefore, recently lit upon another, as novel as it is singular. They say that the materials, out of which her disclosures were fabricated, were obtained by her from the Montreal Magdalen Asylum. This is truly a marvellous discovery; and, in order that the reader may be enabled to judge of its truth, it will be necessary, here, briefly to state Miss Monk's connexion with this establishment. This she has stated in her first volume, pages 272-73; and the statement was made by her, long before her enemies even alluded to the fact; and indeed, they appear to have first learned it from her narrative. She has stated all she knew about it, though it appears that she was unacquainted with the nature of the establishment. She states that she was never in the larger of the two houses belonging to the Asylum, and of course knows nothing about it. But when, how long, and how came she in the Asylum? are questions which need to be answered. It was in the winter of 1834-5, that she was there, after she professes to have left the nunnery. There is no disagreement on this point, between her and her opponents. There is, however, as it respects the length of time that she was there. The Magdalens affirm that she was in the Asylum about three months, while she thinks that she was there but about six or seven weeks. It appears quite evident that they are mistaken as to the length of time. They admit that she left the establishment about the



first of March, 1835. Now it is stated in the "Awful Exposure," that she was released from jail on the 19th of November, and taken by her mother to the Government House, of which she is the keeper. And it appears that she was at her mother's residence, for several weeks before going to the Asylum. She could not, therefore, have been there for three months.

But how came she in the Asylum? Her unfeeling mother sent her there. But why should Mrs. Monk place her in that establishment? It will be recollected that Maria Monk had attempted to drown herself, and as a consequence, being considered an insane vagrant, she had been imprisoned. "Awful Disclosures," 266-7. This attempt at self-destruction connected with her confinement, for a few days, in jail, were considered by Mrs. Monk as disgracing her family; hence she wished to cover up the matter as much as possible, by keeping her daughter concealed from the eye of her friends. While Maria remained with her mother, she was not allowed to see any company—this, however, was in accordance with her own wishes, as she was in constant fear of being apprehended by the priests—so that even her own brother did not know that she was in the house, until about two weeks after she entered it. But Mrs. Monk becoming weary of keeping Maria after this manner, procured a place for her in the Asylum, probably as a boarder. This conduct of Mrs. Monk, is in perfect keeping with her general treatment of her children—or at least of some of them—which is any thing rather than maternal. In consequence of her barbarous conduct towards her oldest son, now a resident of New York, he left her house when only

ten years of age. The same brutality which thus drove her eldest son from under her roof, also drove her eldest daughter, Maria, to seek a refuge in the nunnery. Much might be said on this subject, but I forbear.

Maria Monk states that, during her residence in the Asylum, she kept her chamber from the day she entered, until about the time she left it. She was in feeble health, though not as much so as she feigned herself to be, in order that she might be allowed to keep her room. Her motive was, the fear of being detected by the priests, one of whom—Father Bonin, one of the murderers of St. Francis—was the confessor of the establishment. She states that she had as little intercourse as possible with any in the house—not even seeing Mrs. McDonell above three or four times, until the day she left the house. Hence the fact that Mrs. McDonell and a Miss Howard, both of whom have given their affidavits respecting her, are ignorant of her person. A gentleman from New York, being on a visit, not long since, in Montreal, hearing that Jane Ray, concerning whom Miss M. has so much to say in her writings, was in the asylum, called to see her. He was told that she was not in, but would be in shortly. He remained in waiting for an hour and a half, but no Jane Ray made her appearance. During his stay he had some conversation with Mrs. McDonell, and Miss Howard, about Maria Monk, and they told him, and his companion, that she had *light* hair! Now, be it known to these women, that Maria Monk's hair is directly the opposite of light. It is *black*. I would add that the gentlemen were informed, that if they would call on the first of the week—it being on Saturday they visited

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the Asylum—they should see Jane Ray. The call was made accordingly, and lo! the door was closed! They could not receive visitors! Why was this?

Having said thus much, we are now prepared to inquire, whether Miss Monk did, in reality, obtain the matter of her disclosures from this Asylum, during the few weeks of her stay in one of its chambers. But what could she have learned in this establishment, which bears any resemblance to the principal facts disclosed in her book?

I frankly confess, that I do not know what to say on this subject, because of its gross absurdity. There are some subjects that beggar all proof or disproof, all explanation or illustration. They do not fall within the sphere of argumentation. If a man were to tell me that the proper place to learn temperance principles was in a grog-shop, or that the sanctuary, where Jehovah is worshipped in spirit and in truth, and where his law and his gospel are faithfully expounded, was a fit place to learn all that is infamous in crime—what could I say to him? Could I reason with him? How then can I reason with the priests on the subject before us? A Magdalen Asylum is a house of virtue; a place where unfortunate females, who have wandered from duty, are taught all that is virtuous in purity, industry, and religion. But what resemblance is there between the instructions and practices of such a place, and those delineated in the "Disclosures?" Such as the most consummate hypocrisy, lying, producing and strangling infants, smothering women, and almost every other crime that can be named, all practised under the highest sanctity of a religious profession. Surely, one might as well think of "gathering grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles," as to think

of gathering the facts, narrated by Miss Monk, from a Magdalen Asylum.

But the position of the priests is so grossly absurd, that I fear lest some may possibly think that I misrepresent them; such may think that the priests would be simply understood as saying, that Miss Monk obtained her knowledge of conventual ceremonies in the asylum. This, however, is not so. On page 55, of their book, they say:—"In fact, there is not, perhaps, a single lie told in the 'Disclosures,' for which a similar (a practice in the asylum) origin might not be found." Now, what are the practices spoken of by Miss Monk, which the priests would have us to believe are lies? Are they not those which would disgrace a heathen and a publican?

This strange resort of the priests, must convince every unbiased mind, of the fact, that their cause is desperate. The mere statement of it, is enough to expose its intrinsic absurdity.

Whether the astounding facts respecting the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal, which are narrated in the "Awful Disclosures," be true or false, I hope to show to the satisfaction of every honest mind, that Maria Monk is the sole authoress of them.

The manner in which Miss Monk passed her time, from the hour she left the convent, until she arrived in New York, will be found narrated in the first four chapters of her sequel, *Awful Disclosures*, beginning at page 257.

The affecting circumstances in which Mr. Hilliker and his associates, first discovered Miss Monk, after her arrival in New York, are briefly stated in the following affidavit. It is to this kind and humane gentleman, that the world is indebted, under a benign

Providence, for the preservation of Miss Monk's testimony, by rescuing her from a premature grave, into which she was then rapidly sinking, after having spent several days in the forlorn situation in which she was thus discovered. I envy not the sensibilities of that man who can read it unmoved.

"*City and County of* } ss.  
*New York,*

"John Hilliker, being duly sworn, doth depose and say—that one day early in the month of May, 1835, while shooting near the Third Avenue, opposite the three mile stone, in company with three friends, I saw a woman sitting in a field at a short distance, who attracted our attention. On reaching her, we found her sitting with her head down, and could not make her return any answer to our questions. On raising her hat we saw that she was weeping. She was dressed in an old calico frock, (I think of a greenish color,) with a checked apron, and an old black bonnet. After much delay and weeping, she began to answer my questions, but not until I had got my companions to leave us, and assured her that I was a married man, and disposed to befriend her.

"She then told me that her name was Maria, that she had been a nun in a nunnery in Montreal, from which she had made her escape, on account of the treatment she had received from priests in that institution, whose licentious conduct she strongly intimated to me. She mentioned some particulars concerning the convent and her escape. She spoke particularly of a small room where she used to attend, until the physician entered to see the sick, when she accompanied him to write down his prescriptions; and said that she escaped through a door which he sometimes



entered. She added, that she exchanged her dress after leaving the nunnery, and that she came to New York in company with a man, who left her as soon as the steamboat arrived. She further stated, that she expected soon to give birth to a child, having become pregnant in the convent; that she had no friend, and knew not where to find one; that she thought of destroying her life; and wished me to leave her—saying, that if I should hear of a woman being found drowned in the East River, she earnestly desired me never to speak of her.

"I asked if she had had any food that day, to which she answered, no; and I gave her money to get some at the grocery of Mr. Cox, in the neighborhood. She left me, but I afterwards saw her in the fields, going towards the river; and after much urgency, prevailed upon her to go to a house where I thought she might be accommodated, offering to pay her expenses. Failing in this attempt, I persuaded her, with much difficulty, to go to the Almshouse; and there we got her received, after I had promised to call to see her, as she said she had something of great consequence which she wished to communicate to me, and wished me to write a letter to Montreal.

"She had every appearance of telling the truth; so much so, that I have never for a moment doubted the truth of her story, but told it to many persons of my acquaintance, with entire confidence in its truth. She seemed overwhelmed with grief, and in a very desperate state of mind. I saw her weep for two hours or more without ceasing; and appeared very feeble when attempting to walk, so that two of us supported her by the arms. We observed also, that she always folded her hands under her apron when

she walked, as she has described the nuns as doing in her 'Awful Disclosures.'

"I called at the Almshouse gate several times and inquired for her; but having forgotten half of her name, I could not make it understood whom I wished to see, and did not see her until the last week. When I saw some of the first extracts from her book in a newspaper, I was confident that they were parts of her story, and when I read the conclusion of the work, I had not a doubt of it. Indeed, many things in the course of the book I was prepared for from what she had told me.

"When I found her, I recognised her immediately, although she did not know me at first, being in a very different dress. As soon as she was informed where she had seen me, she recognised me. I have not found in the book any thing inconsistent with what she had stated to me when I first saw her.

"When I first saw her in May, 1835, she had evidently sought concealment. She had a letter in her hand, which she refused to let me see; and when she found I was determined to remove her, she tore it in small pieces, and threw them down. Several days after I visited the spot again and picked them up, to learn something of the contents, but could find nothing intelligible, except the first part of the signature, 'Maria.'

"Of the truth of her story, I have not the slightest doubt, and I think I never can until the nunnery is opened and examined.

JOHN HILLIKER.

"Sworn before me, this 14th of March, 1836.

"PETER JENKINS,

"Commissioner of Deeds."

Respecting the incipient origin of the "Awful Dis-

closures," the priests say on page 122 of their book, that:—"The earliest instigator of Monk's fabrications appears to have been an individual named Hoyt." Concerning this man they have much to say that is untrue, to the disadvantage of Miss Monk. They would have the world to believe, that there was an improper intimacy between them, on their first arrival at Mr. Goodenough's tavern in Montreal; and that this was observed by Judge Turner, of St. Albans, Vermont, who accompanied them to that city, for the purpose of procuring a legal investigation of Miss Monk's criminal charges against the priests. But this is denied by the Judge.

However indiscreet Mr. Hoyt's management of Miss Monk's affairs may have been, he appears to have acted from upright motives, until a short time before her book was completed for the press; when, in attempting to secure its profits for himself, except such as she needed for the immediate support of herself and child, he took a misstep, which involved him in a multitude of others. Since then his conduct has been very reprehensible. He has involved her in law-suits, and occasioned her, besides much trouble and vexation, the loss of considerable money. He is not a "cast-off clergyman," as the priests call him; for he never was a clergyman of any sect.\*

The important testimony of the Rev. Mr. Tappin settles the question, both as to the origin of Miss Monk's disclosures, and also her earliest acquaintance with Mr. Hoyt.

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\* The bitter feelings which have existed, for some ten months past, between Mr. Hoyt and Miss Monk, is decisive evidence of the fact, that there has been no collision between them, in originating her book for purposes of speculation.

The following statement respecting the origin of Maria Monk's disclosures, and her first acquaintance with Mr. Hoyt, has the sanction of the Rev. Mr. Tappin, Chaplain, for several years past, of the Humane and Criminal Institutions of the city of New York—a gentleman of unblemished character.

"In the summer of 1835, Maria Monk, authoress of the 'Awful Disclosures,' was seriously ill, and, as she supposed, on the borders of the grave. In this situation, she sent for me, and with all the solemnity of a dying hour, she communicated to me the principal statements respecting the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal, which she has since published to the world, in her disclosures. She did this by way of penitential confession. Her object appeared to be, not to criminate others, but to confess her own guilt, and thus relieve her troubled conscience; for she felt that she had, in some sense, been a participator in the horrid crimes which she divulged. At the time, it was very evident to my mind, that she had no idea that her disclosures to me, would ever be made known to the public. The impression, which I then received of her honest sincerity, remains to this day unaffected. This was some time before her acquaintance with Mr. Hoyt; who, having recently arrived in New York from Canada, and having heard of her case, called on me to make inquiries respecting it, and was, by me, introduced to her acquaintance."

Here then we learn, when it was that Mr. Hoyt first became acquainted with Miss Monk. Mr. Tappin states that a short time after Miss Monk's confession to him, he mentioned her case to a friend in New York, under the expectation that it would have been kept secret, at least for the time being. Mr.

Hoyt, then recently from Montreal, called upon this friend of Mr. Tappin's, who communicated to him the circumstances of the case. Hence the manner in which Mr. Hoyt first heard of Miss Monk. And having resided, as an agent for Sabbath schools, for some time in Montreal, it was very natural that he should feel an interest in the disclosures which Miss Monk had made. He accordingly sought an interview with her, and after consultation with her, and with a few gentlemen in New York and Brooklyn, it was deemed advisable that Miss Monk should go, as soon as her health would admit of it, to Montreal and present her criminal charges against the priests and nuns to the civil authorities of that city for investigation. She accordingly went, in company with Mr. Hoyt, to Montreal.

Mr. Tappin's statement is of a very impressive character. Sufficiently so, it appears to me, to more than outweigh all the opposing testimony, which the opponents of Miss Monk have ever been able to produce against the truth of her claims! There is something in the dying penitential confessions of an individual, that precludes the possibility of intentional misrepresentation. Such were the confessions of Miss Monk, as she supposed. She was then a Roman Catholic, and as such, she supposed that the salvation of her soul depended, in a great measure, upon her confessing to some minister of Christ before she died. But then she supposed that her confessions would remain, locked up in the breast of her confessor, as she had always been taught by the Roman priests.

In regard to the origin and compilation of Miss Monk's disclosures, I trust, that the following unimpeachable statement, sanctioned as it is by gentlemen



of the highest character, will for ever silence the boisterous ravings of the priests and their advocates, against certain nameless individuals, who, they say, "have formed an atrocious plot against the clergy and nuns of Lower Canada, through the intervention of Maria Monk."

Copy of a letter from the editor of Miss Monk's book, addressed to the Rev. J. J. Slocum, under date of New York, Oct. 29th, 1836.

"You have requested from me a statement of the origin of the book called 'Awful Disclosures,' &c., of the circumstances connected with its preparation, and the motives of its publication.

"The first time I ever heard of Miss Maria Monk, was in the month of October, 1835, when Mr. Hoyt called on me, in company with a friend of mine, (and, as I afterwards understood, at the suggestion of another friend, a merchant of New York,) and proposed to me to write her narrative for publication. This I at first declined, saying that my time was too much engrossed; but being informed of some of the leading particulars of her history and disclosures, (which are now publicly known,) and assured that her story was worthy of investigation, I consented to devote a portion of time to the subject for one week—that being considered sufficient to perform at least an important part of the task.

"It was stated to me at the time, that Miss Monk had been unwilling, when first invited, to publish a book, and that she might perhaps be prevented from giving her testimony, unless advantage were taken of the present time; and of the truth of these representations I afterwards became fully persuaded.

"On my first interview with Miss Monk, I began to

note down briefly her statements ; and this I continued to practise, with care, and all the accuracy I could, during the many interviews which I afterwards had. I endeavored from the first to subject her testimony to the most rigid tests ; and especially to try the consistency of her statements ; being satisfied that if the tale were not true, I should be able, first or last, to detect inconsistency. I often entertained suspicions of its truth ; and in order that I might detect and expose the imposture, I sought for evidence from different quarters.

"The narrator did not receive my confidence, indeed she did not claim it, independently of other testimony. She represented herself as accustomed to systematic deception ; though then disposed to communicate the truth, and only the truth, on subjects of moment connected with her experience and observation. I was but little acquainted with those pictures of convents drawn by Roman Catholic writers ; and, although I had seen many of them in other countries, and often heard them condemned by foreigners of intelligence and virtue, many of them Roman Catholics, I was not prepared to believe them the scenes of crimes like those described by Miss Monk.

"I soon became satisfied that she had not fabricated her story ; for the originality and variety of characters and scenes which she introduced, appeared to me to be beyond the invention of a young woman, only nineteen or twenty years of age, scarcely able to write intelligibly, and to all appearance ignorant of books, except a few such as may be used in nunneries and Canadian schools. I found foreign books, however, which contained counterparts of her statements, and the resemblances between them and her

disclosures, were evidently such as could not have been produced either by accidental conjecture, nor by studied invention. On the contrary, they were of such a nature, and brought out in such connexions, as to show, beyond any reasonable doubt, that Miss Monk drew, from recollection, real scenes and characters, with which she had been acquainted, in a society fundamentally different from any known among ourselves, or ever fully developed in any publications I had seen or could discover.

"But there were other kinds of evidence to which I had access. Although I never had entered the Veiled Department of the Hotel Dieu, I had formerly visited Montreal, and had more local acquaintance with that city, than Miss Monk was at first aware of. I had also means of testing some of her statements, by resorting to the testimony of individuals, disposed to render some assistance.

"Beside this, several scenes, of much importance in her narrative, had transpired in this neighborhood; and some of the most important points connected with them, were confirmed by persons worthy of all credit. We thus became satisfied, from an early date, that she had been found in a friendless, exposed, and suffering condition, and introduced into the Bellevue hospital; that she was there sought for by Roman priests as a nun; that she first made disclosures when she supposed herself near death; that she afterwards visited Montreal, but failed in her attempt to bring the priests to trial; and that, while on the whole rather unwilling to divulge her story, she yet appeared to regard the truth with scrupulous care, in all the statements which she consented to make.

"The character of her mind, also, as it was display-

ed in conversation, and in her habits of thought, feeling, and action, ever afforded powerful confirmation of the truth of her story. She appeared to know such things as a nun (according to her description of a nun) would be likely to know; and to be ignorant of what such a person would be ignorant of. Her reflections, motives, fears, hopes, expectations, associations of ideas, superstitions and errors, were as appropriate to the character to which she laid claim, as her Canadian dialect, to the city in which she professed to have spent her life. The same may be said of her hasty, and sometimes tumultuous feelings, when excited by apprehension or opposition; the changeableness of her views, and the successive elevation and depression of her spirits. Her motives and reasons for speaking and acting, were also often such as would be appropriate only to a recluse, shut out from the knowledge and sympathies of the world, accustomed to be controlled by superstition, and liable to be subdued by force, when that failed to keep her within desired bounds.

"She suffered a considerable part of the time, from superstitions, and other fears, which were sometimes almost too strong to be suppressed; while a sense of her friendless condition would at other times almost overcome her. She felt no personal interest in publishing her disclosures; and the task was unpleasant and laborious to her, while she thought it would expose her to many inconveniences. Her expectations of deriving pecuniary benefit from her book, may be inferred from a single question she asked, when it was in press. 'Do you think they will print as many as a hundred?'

"Among the remarkable traits of her character, has

ever been her indifference to property. She has been accused, by writers who spoke on conjecture, of having fabricated her book for the sake of gain. A person acquainted with her, would have been likely to assign any other reason before this. In the first place, she never proposed to publish it herself, and was often half inclined to give over the undertaking; and, in the second place, she has shown such a disregard for money, that her friends have often found it difficult to prevent her from giving away what she possessed, to any person who wanted it.

"It was found difficult to obtain all the testimony from Canada, which was to be desired. There were gentlemen of high respectability, in New York, who from the first scouted the idea of Miss Monk's having been a nun; and this was particularly true of some of the Presbyterian clergymen; while it happened that, for some time, only one of their number ever was known to express a word in her favor. I have no doubt, that had it not been for the exertions of one or two laymen, Miss Monk's story would have been rejected and suppressed, within the first few weeks after her return from Montreal, and never have been brought before the world.

"The opposition among the Presbyterian clergymen alluded to, was found to be chiefly owing to letters written by the Rev. Mr. Perkins, pastor of the American Presbyterian church, of Montreal, to warn them against the impostures of Miss Monk, who, he said, had never been a nun, and whose residence, he stated, had been proved to have been among scenes of vice, during a great part of the time when she pretended to have been an inhabitant of the Hotel Dieu. Such charges were coupled with accusations



against Mr. Hoyt, who first met with her in the Bellevue hospital, and accompanied her to and from Montreal. He had been the agent of a charitable society in Mr. Perkins' congregation, (but was not a clergyman, as had been erroneously asserted.) Several of the charges adduced by Mr. Perkins against Mr. Hoyt, after an investigation here, were deemed to be founded in mistake, and to have grown out of the excitements of a personal difference between Mr. Perkins and himself; and in this opinion some respectable Americans, of Montreal, concurred.

"It then became a natural and important inquiry, how far Mr. Perkins might have been led into erroneous conclusions concerning Miss Monk's history and character, either by the circumstances above mentioned, or by the fact that she was countenanced whilst in Montreal, by some persons connected with the Free Church, then lately formed by a secession from his own. When therefore it was stated, by a clergyman in a letter to New York, that there was satisfactory evidence in the possession of respectable persons in Montreal, to prove that Miss Monk had never been a nun, a letter was addressed to Mr. Perkins requesting information, 1st, of the names of the witnesses, and 2d, of the amount of their testimony.

"His reply conveyed none of the information asked, but spoke of the application as a deliberate insult. Under these circumstances, the opinions of respectable persons, on the other side of the question, seemed to merit some consideration, especially as there were those who had had an intimate local knowledge of that city, and an acquaintance with the people for many years. They had also taken great pains to observe the conduct and proceedings of Miss Monk du-

ring that trying period of her life, when she was in Montreal, endeavoring to bring her enemies to justice.

"But there was another kind of evidence constantly before our eyes, which ever afforded a strong corroboration of the story of Miss Monk, that is, its consistency. All cross-questioning failed to confound or confuse her; and the familiarity with which she explained apparent inconsistencies at one moment, and at another presented new scenes and characters, or proceeded to develop them with new circumstances, were as striking as the childish simplicity and ignorance which she often displayed in relation to things of every-day occurrence among ourselves.

"It appeared to me utterly impossible, that a person so young, and ill-educated and inexperienced in the world, should be able to forge a tale so abounding in scenes and characters, true to nature in the circumstances with which they were connected, yet endlessly differing among themselves; and especially that she should do all this in rapid conversation, and in replying to questions often designed to perplex her, apparently without exertion or the slightest fear of exposure. Such sketches of persons and occurrences as she has communicated, could not have been invented by any ingenuity inferior to that of Scott or Shakspeare, even if they might have been by one superior to theirs. And could they have performed such a task as she did without study, and without writing any part, in such a manner as to undergo numerous cross-questionings on all points without self-contradiction?

"But, allowing that possibly Miss Monk might have invented her story; how could she have remembered

it? Let us imagine such a writer as Walter Scott to be questioned over and over again for weeks and months in succession, on a thousand points of some work of fiction which he had planned, but never written. Will any one believe it possible for him, or any one else, successfully to avoid all collision between his statements? If required to specify time, place, and circumstance, at the will of unwearied querists, would he not inevitably betray himself first or last? What then could be expected of a young and ignorant girl, totally unaccustomed to book-making in all its branches. Besides, if it is so easy for her to forge such a tale, why cannot her opponents present as good a one, especially if they have truth on their side.

"But again, allowing it to be possible, (although it is evidently impossible,) that the story was the invention of some unknown person, who contrived to teach it to Miss Monk, and extended it at secret interviews, while she was engaged in communicating it for publication; the author, whoever he might be, must still be allowed to possess peculiar talents, and must be supposed to have had adequate motives for his conduct. He would never have undertaken so difficult, laborious, and dangerous a task, without an important object. To carry on such a trick, he would know must be no light task: certainly it would be a grave kind of pastime. His motive must then be worth knowing, and his name, character, and designs, would become highly interesting objects of inquiry to the people of this country. If Miss Monk's story can be supposed to be the invention of some person unknown, its nature, and the fact that it was designed to impose upon North Americans, should awaken the anxiety and the apprehensions of us all. Who is the author?

What are his designs? would become natural and reasonable questions. It therefore always appeared to me, that in every point of view the story of Miss Monk was worthy of investigation.

"Several of the charges which have been made against Miss Monk, have with reason been regarded as affording evidence in favor of its truth.

"In the first place the book has not been copied or formed, even in the smallest part, on any other. The editor of the Boston (Roman Catholic) Pilot, solemnly asserted, that a large part of it at least was copied from an old Portuguese book he had possessed; but while this was known to be utterly void of truth, the charge gave us a strong confirmation of its accuracy. What better evidence could be expected from the opposition party, to prove that both the books were faithful pictures of nunneries on both sides of the Atlantic?

"In reply to several other charges it may be stated, that it is known and can be proved, that the book was not written for the purpose of making money. The primary object was the publication of important truth; and its secondary, to procure the means of supporting an unfortunate and friendless young female, and her innocent babe. None of those who have assisted her in preparing her book, or in defending it, have received a fair equivalent for their time and labor; and, I think I may safely assert, that all have repeatedly declared they neither expected nor desired it. Their great object is the discovery of truth; and they will hold themselves ready, if ever the fact shall be proved, to confess that they have been deceived, and to make all possible amends. The day when such evidence

shall be produced, however, never seemed more distant than it does at the present time."

The following certificate, signed as it is by gentlemen of the highest reputation, is a sufficient voucher for the unimpeachable character of the gentleman who has furnished the above statement of facts.

"This certifies, that the undersigned are personally acquainted with the gentleman who drew up the narrative of Maria Monk, and know him to have always sustained a reputation unimpeached. We have full confidence in him as an intelligent and upright man, and believe that he is wholly incapable of wilfully deceiving the public.

WM. PATTON, D. D.

W. C. BROWNLEE, D. D.

JONATHAN GOING, D. D.

PROF. S. F. B. MORSE.

GEORGE HALL, ESQ.

*"New York, Nov. 2d, 1836."*

Thus it is evident, beyond all reasonable doubt, that Miss Monk is the sole authoress of the facts, contained in the disclosures attributed to her. And it is proper to pause here a moment, and remind the reader of the condition into which the advocates of the nunnery have brought themselves, by endeavoring to maintain their several positions, as to the origin of her book, after it is thus rendered evident that they cannot retain either one of them. The ground is false, and their plea preposterous. They have therefore now new ground to choose; but their case is rendered very suspicious by being thus driven back again to their old position, and left exposed, without a shadow of defence.

The following passage is cited from the priest's



book, page 7. "Is the book which bears her name, really written by Maria Monk? Impossible, for she is in fact, and by her own confession, an ignorant and uneducated girl. It cannot be received as her own evidence, although produced in her name. It may be alleged that all the materials were obtained from her own lips, and that the editor, or editors, have merely arranged for the public eye the matter she supplied. In that case, they have been guilty of tampering with the evidence, a misdemeanor for which there is no excuse nor palliation." Here are two very absurd notions. 1st. The idea that Maria Monk's book cannot be received as her evidence, except penned by her, is very extraordinary, to say the least. The mere statement of it is enough to expose its absurdity. According to this rule, what would become of the four affidavits in the priests' book, from as many individuals who are incapable of even writing their own names? 2d. I wish to know how it can be considered a "tampering with the evidence" of an individual to write and arrange his statements? and in what consists the "misdemeanor for which there is no excuse nor palliation" for so doing? Have not the priests done the same thing in case of the affidavits referred to above? The priests must have been very short of good materials out of which to compose their book, or they never would have written such stupid nonsense. If Miss Monk has stated the truth respecting the Hotel Dieu, it is of little consequence to the world, who penned or printed her statements, or who bound or sold her book. And that she has told the truth, is evident from what follows in the second part of this work.

## PART II.

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### CONFIRMATION OF MARIA MONK'S DISCLOSURES.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### GENERAL REMARKS.

Truth of Miss M.'s having been a nun and of her disclosures blended together—Priests have great advantage—Have Miss M.'s external testimony in their power—Canadian press—Miss M. as a witness—Arguments establishing her truth—From her incapacity to have acted the part of an impostor—From her nunnery knowledge and practice—From her comparative ignorance of every thing else—From marks on her person—From the situation in which she was first discovered in New York—From her confession to the Rev. Mr. Tappin—From the consistency of her conduct in the matter—From the simplicity and consistency of her narrative—From the moral character of her mind—Character of the evidence adduced in this chapter.

MARIA MONK affirms that she has been a nun in the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal, and that her statements respecting that establishment are such as she knows, from her own experience and observation, to be true. On the other hand, the priests and their advocates deny that she has ever been an inmate of that convent; and, of course, maintain that her disclosures are so many fictions. The hinge, therefore, on which the whole controversy turns, is the fact,

whether or not she has ever been a cloistered nun. And, although this question is distinct from the question of the truth of her statements, in point of fact, yet, in the discussion, they naturally run into each other. The priests, on the one hand, attempt to draw an argument from the character of her disclosures, in support of their position, that she has never been a nun; while on the other hand, the friends of Miss Monk reason from the same source, to prove that she must have been an inmate of the nunnery. The former maintain that the crimes, which she alleges are habitually practised by themselves and the nuns, are incompatible with human nature; while the latter argue that they are just what might be expected from the circumstances of the case—that they are in perfect accordance with the history of convents, and that a girl in her situation could never have become as familiar with them as she is, unless she had been associated with a society addicted to their practice. Hence the question, both as to the fact of her having been a nun, and as to the truth of her disclosures, are intimately blended in this discussion.

In this controversy, aside from truth, the priests have greatly the advantage. They are a numerous and powerful body of men, skilled in the arts of controversy. Miss Monk is an inexperienced girl, yet in her youth, having no friends, except such as she has gained by her apparent honesty and consistency, since the controversy commenced. Moreover, from a variety of circumstances, the mass of the people in Canada are prejudiced in favor of the priests and against her, so that they are disposed to afford them any assistance in their power. This is the case to a great extent, even with the Protestants, especially in

Montreal. Not only the ordinary relations which bind society together exist between Catholics and Protestants in Canada, but there are relations of a special character existing in the present case. The government, it is true, is nominally Protestant, but then such is the state of parties there, that it requires, in order to its very existence, the patronage, to some extent, of the priests. This the wily priests give to it; in order that they, in their turn, may receive the special smiles of civil officers. Maria Monk states another circumstance, respecting some few of the more wealthy and nominal Protestants in and about Montreal, which is, that they are licentious visiters of the nunnery. If this be true, it exhibits a reason for the violence of their opposition to her.

Another thing worthy of special notice is the fact, that the field of nearly all Miss Monk's external testimony is in the power of the priests. They have her former associates and companions; nay, they have her own blood-connexions, so completely under their control and influence, as to restrain them from uttering any thing favorable to her claims. They also have the nunnery in their possession, and will not allow it to be impartially examined. Hence the demand for more external evidence, made by many, is unreasonable. Every subject has evidence appropriate to itself; and that—and that alone ought to be all that should be required.

The public press in Canada is either Catholic or political. Hence it has from the first been violent in its opposition to Miss Monk. It took its stand against her before she had published a single word. Not a single article has ever been published there, so far as I can learn, the design of which has been to

exhibit the evidence in support of her truth. The consequence is, that the people of Canada are, in general, profoundly ignorant in respect to the existence of any such evidence; and not only so, but they have been led astray by the numberless misstatements, which have been circulated by the priests, their friends, and the Canadian press. Hence the strong popular prejudices, which are believed to exist to a considerable extent in that province, against Miss Monk.

I might also remark respecting the horrid nature of the crimes, which Miss Monk charges upon the priests and nuns, in connexion with her own character as a professed witness. By her own confession, while in the convent, she lived in impurity, and was taught the arts of deception and hypocrisy. Hence an argument, very properly used to a limited extent, against her as a witness. But, it may be asked, is she not as good a witness as the nature of the case can possibly furnish? If her story be true, are not all the inmates of that convent alike in these respects? The criminal practices which she divulges are of the deepest dye, insomuch that the more virtuous portions of society instinctively recoil at the very thought of believing them. Hence they are predisposed to discard them, without examining the evidence of their truth.

But, notwithstanding all these difficulties, the evidence in support of Miss Monk's claims, when collected and intelligently considered, is irresistible. The argument is cumulative. And I will now proceed, as succinctly as possible, to lay it before my readers.

The character and conduct of Miss Monk furnish



the strongest evidence in support of the general truth of her claims, as a professed ex-nun.

1. *Her incapacity to have acted the part of an impostor, is, in the highest degree, evident to all who are personally acquainted with her.*—The cogency of this argument is acknowledged by her opponents. Hence they deny that she is the authoress of the disclosures attributed to her. They maintain that she is a *mere tool*, in the hands of others, who have fabricated and published them in her name. But this, I trust, has been shown to the satisfaction of the reader, to be untrue. It has been shown, that she, and she alone, is the authoress of the dark tale, which she has published to the astonishment of the people of this country.

Miss Mork is young, and possesses a mind altogether undisciplined by study. Her education is inferior to that of ordinary country girls. Habits of study she has none. Her knowledge of books is, or was when she first arrived in New York, next to nothing. And, if the "Awful Exposure" gives us a true history of her life, she has never been either a nun, or a Roman Catholic; but "has led the life of a stroller and a prostitute." If this be true, it is asked, how a girl of her age, character, and attainments, could possibly fabricate such books as her "Disclosures?" The supposition beggars all belief, but that of blindness. If she has fabricated them, Rome, with its numberless saints, may be fearlessly challenged to produce a miracle any thing like as great.

Besides, on the supposition, that she had fabricated her "Disclosures," it is impossible that she should have been able to act the part of an impostor, up to the present time, without being detected. Many

minds have been at work, for more than a year past, endeavoring to develop her true character. Both friends and foes have been thus employed. Had she been an impostor, it would have been discovered, long before this day. She constitutionally possesses transparency of character, to an uncommon degree. Hence the predominant workings of her mind are very apparent, to a penetrating observer. She has very little of that systematic concealment and forethought, so necessary to a successful impostor. Her openness of character, constitutionally considered, is almost the first thing observed, by an intelligent stranger who may chance to see and converse with her. Hence, if such a person has been skeptically disposed in regard to the general truth of her claims, his skepticism, in perhaps nineteen cases out of twenty, has been removed by a free conversation with her. Such an individual readily perceives, that her mental constitution is such, as totally to disqualify her to act the part of protracted imposture.

The argument, therefore, under this head, is two-fold—being founded, 1st, On her incapacity to create her "Disclosures"—2d, On the supposition that she possessed such ability, her incapacity to have successfully concealed her imposture, up to the present time.

2. *Her minute and extensive nunnery knowledge, connected with the ease and dexterity with which she can perform the many ceremonies of a convent,* can be accounted for, on no other supposition, than that of her having been a nun, as she states. Her practical knowledge of Popery and Jesuitism, of priests and nuns, of the furniture and diversified apartments of the Hotel Dieu, of the ceremonies and practices

of that establishment, is such as could have been acquired by her, only by a residence of years in that convent. She is as familiar with the mummerly of Popish observances, as a school-boy is with his alphabet—such as penances, hymns, Latin prayers, &c. &c., though she is as ignorant of the meaning of Latin words, as she is of the Chinese language. The same is true with reference to the ease with which she performs the various bodily ceremonies, some of which she speaks of in her book, such as falling upon the knees, and standing erect upon them, &c. &c. With the Romish catechisms, she is perfectly familiar. In a word, she is, in regard to these matters, all that we might suppose her to be, on the supposition that she has, for years, been a resident in the convent. Speaking in the language of common life, “she has learned her trade.” And no man, in his senses, can understandingly deny it. How, then, can this evidence be resisted?

3. *Her ignorance of life, disconnected from convents*, can be accounted for, only on the supposition of her having lived a conventual life. I speak now with special reference to what she was, when she first arrived in New York, in the spring of 1835. At that time, her acquaintance with matters and things, as they appear in the domestic circle, and in ordinary life, was very limited. She was evidently a comparative stranger to them; whilst all her movements and manners were such, as bespoke her former life to have been that of a cloistered nun. Says Mr. Hilliker, in his affidavit:—“We observed also, that she always folded her hands under her apron when she walked, as she has described the nuns as doing in her “Awful Disclosures.”

4. *The marks on her person*, which were produced by suffering penances, and other violent treatment, afford an argument in support of her claims. She has several of these, as she states in her first volume. She speaks of having worn a broad belt around her waist, "stuck full of sharp iron points, for the mortification of her spirit." The writer of this has been informed by a respectable lady, who examined Miss Monk's waist, that the scars produced by this belt, are very manifest. To use her own language, "it looks distressing."

The marks of gagging are seen on her lips; and there are scars also on her thumbs, which were "cut severely by the tight drawing of the band used to confine her arms." These are the signs of Romish penance and violence. But the "Awful Exposure" tells us that she has never been a Roman Catholic!

5. *The circumstances*, in connexion with which she was first discovered by Mr. Hilliker, and his associates, after her arrival in the city of New York, afford an argument in proof of Miss Monk's honesty. See Mr. Hilliker's affidavit on page 97. She was discovered by Mr. Hilliker and his companions in a retired place, above the city of New York, where she had secreted herself for several days, and where she had evidently made up her mind to die. She was not far from death when thus found; and it was with much difficulty that she was prevailed upon to leave the place of her concealment. Nay, she declined leaving it, until she saw that the gentlemen were determined to remove her by force, unless she would go voluntarily. She had already become so feeble as to need to be supported, by two of the gentlemen, in walking the distance of half a mile, to the alms-

house. She was in a strange country, under circumstances peculiarly distressing. After Mr. Hilliker had conversed with her some time alone, and assured her that he was a married man, and that he wished to befriend her in every way he could, she stated to him, that she was an eloped nun, and that she became *enciente* in the convent. He states that he found her in tears, and that she wept for two hours afterwards. He has mentioned several circumstances in his affidavit, all of which bear the marks of honest sincerity, on the part of Miss Monk. It is impossible to account for them on any other supposition than that she told the truth, as to her elopement from the nunnery. It is impossible, that such circumstances should mislead, for they cannot testify falsely, as guilty man can, and often does, do.

6. *The circumstances* in connexion with which Miss Monk first divulged the principal facts recorded<sup>1</sup> in her book, are such as to afford the strongest evidence in support of her claims to public confidence. These are detailed in the statement of the Rev. Mr. Tappin, on page 101. She made known these facts to him by way of penitential confession, while sick in the almshouse, and as she supposed, ready to die. Mr. Tappin states that it was perfectly manifest to his mind, that she had no idea of criminating others, or that her statements would ever be made public. She and others thought, that she was on the borders of the grave, and she wished to quiet her troubled conscience, by confessing what she considered to be her grossest sins. She was still a Roman Catholic; it was therefore in perfect accordance with the religion she had been taught, thus to confess. There are two things worthy of special notice in connexion



with Miss Monk's confession to the Rev. Mr. Tap-  
pin:—1st. *The manifest absence of every sinister  
motive*, by which she could have been influenced in  
making these communications to him. What earthly  
motive could have influenced her? Revenge to the  
priests? Certainly not; for she had no idea that her  
confessions would go beyond the mind of him whom  
she then considered as her confessor. The same re-  
ply may be given to the insinuation, that she did it in  
order to mitigate her unfortunate situation, in being  
the mother of an illegitimate child; or that she did it  
for the purpose of securing any earthly good whatever.

2d. The only motives which appeared to be pre-  
sent, at the time, to her mind, were such as arise from  
*the apprehension of speedy dissolution, connected  
with the solemn retributions of eternity*. Was it,  
then, within the limits of possibility, under such  
circumstances, for her to have acted the part of a dia-  
bolical impostor? Is not the supposition utterly in-  
credible? How then can it be otherwise, than that  
she is honest in putting forth her claims as an ex-nun? I  
would only add that the hand of God is extremely  
manifest in bringing to light Miss Monk's statements  
respecting the Hotel Dieu nunnery, in a manner so  
convincing to every reflecting mind. Let, then, her  
sad tale be believed; and let it produce the benign  
effects, in counteracting vice and error, which, under  
the government of the Supreme disposer of all events,  
it is adapted to do.

7. *The consistency of Miss Monk's conduct with  
the demands of truth*, furnishes an argument favora-  
ble to her claims. She has acted just as one might  
~~suppose she would have done~~, on the supposition that  
she was honest in giving her disclosures to the world.

Her circumstances have been peculiarly trying, arising in part from her comparative ignorance of the world, connected with the discredit which has been thrown upon her statements, and the consequent violent denunciations which have been heaped upon her by Protestants, especially editors of newspapers, who have taken very little pains to investigate the subject. Often has she felt, as if she had scarcely a real friend on earth—as if all the world was against her, making her the helpless victim of its combined contempt and indignation. Yet amidst all her trials, she has exhibited, to those around her, that she felt an unwavering consciousness of standing upon the truth; and that the God of truth would one day vindicate her honesty. Being possessed naturally of an unusual degree of sensibility, and feeling her forlorn situation, it is true, she has often wept in secret places, for having published her dark story, not because of its untruth, but because of the cruel treatment she has received in consequence of it.

She has invariably manifested a very strong desire that the truth of her charges against the Roman priests and nuns of Lower Canada, might be tested by some equitable tribunal. Hence her visit to Montreal for this purpose, in the August of 1835, and before she ever thought of publishing a book. She then and there solemnly appealed to the civil authorities, to investigate their truth. She was accompanied by two American gentlemen, of the legal profession, who assisted her in presenting her charges in due form, attested on oath, to the Attorney General for prosecution. And after spending some three or four weeks, in fruitless attempts to secure the object of her visit, she returned to New York.

While at Montreal, it was denied by the priests that she had ever been an inmate of the Hotel Dieu. She at once offered a fair test of the fact, which, by a very little trouble, would have settled the point beyond the power of contradiction. She proposed a description of the interior of the convent—its furniture, its inmates and different apartments, and their uses—and staked her all upon its correctness. But the application of it was not allowed by her opponents; on what ground, no mortal can conjecture, unless it were that they were afraid to abide the results.

On the fourteenth day of last July, I received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Perkins of Montreal, informing me, that on the following day a committee of gentlemen were to apply the test, which she had proposed nearly one year before. The thought immediately occurred to me, if she be an impostor I can now discover it, by communicating to her this unexpected intelligence. I applied the test, in the best manner to accomplish the end in view, that I was capable of; and the result was such, as decidedly deepened my convictions of her honesty. Other particulars might be mentioned, were it necessary, all going to show the consistency of her conduct, with the supposition, that she feels herself standing upon the rock of truth.

On the other hand, if she be an impostor, her conduct has been, in the highest degree, preposterous and unaccountable. Suppose that she had described the interior of the Magdalen Asylum of Montreal, instead of the Hotel Dieu nunnery. She certainly must have been sensible of the fact. And if so, is it supposable that she would have gone to Montreal, for the purpose of substantiating crimes, of the darkest hue, against the Hotel Dieu ecclesiastics; and there make oath

that she had resided for years in the convent, where she had witnessed their commission; and in proof, that she had thus resided in the convent, offer a description of the persons, furniture, and the interior arrangements of the Montreal Magdalen Asylum? The supposition is absurd, beyond the power of language to express. If she be an impostor, the extremes of unparalleled genius, and the most stupid folly and ignorance, meet in her. Considering her youth and limited opportunities, she has exhibited a talent for invention, in her works, compared with which the powers of Sir Walter Scott are but as a drop to the ocean; while on the other hand, she has evinced stupidity, if possible more remarkable, in staking her all upon the general truth of her description of the interior of a huge building, of which she is as ignorant as she is of the palace of the king of China. And then, to crown her folly, she has urged, with an importunity that would accept of no denial, the application of this test, which she must have known would have procured her inevitable and hopeless ruin. To believe, therefore, that she is an impostor, when the belief implies such an absurdity, I must say for one, I cannot, without a degree of insanity which it would require, at least, as many as two "*pencils*" in each ear to produce.

8. *The artless manner in which Miss Monk narrates the principal facts in her disclosures*, furnishes a cogent argument in support of her claims. This may be called the internal evidence of the truth of her book. The first ten or fifteen thousand copies of her work were given to the public, accompanied with no other evidence than this. Immense multitudes who read the book, believed it, because they perceived that

it bore the internal marks of truth, notwithstanding some of its statements divulged the perpetration of crimes, by priests and nuns, under the cloak of religion, of so horrid a character as to make an honest man shudder at the thought of them. I will mention some two or three things which have been urged as internal marks against the truth of the "disclosures;" but which, it appears to me, afford evidence in its favor. The circumstances connected with the murder of St. Frances, is one of these. It is said "that its comparative publicity, and the number of individuals employed in it, are marks of its falsehood." Thus argues the Rev. Mr. Perkins of Montreal. Now, in the first place, there was no publicity about it, except such as belonged to the convent. It was done within the walls of the nunnery, shut out from all communication with the world. In the second place, the fact, when understandingly considered, that so many were employed in it, is a circumstance corroborative of the truth of the narrative. Two reasons may be assigned for this:—1. It is the policy of such establishments thus to do, for the double purpose of inspiring terror at the thought of disobedience, and at the same time, implicating all present in the crime committed. It had this effect on Maria Monk. Hence her penitential confession, at the time she thought that she was going to die, to the Rev. Mr. Tappin. The second reason is this, that it was a regular court, or inquisitorial tribunal, the bishop presiding as inquisitor general. The Rev. W. C. Brownlee, D. D. of New York, a gentleman as well versed in the history of popish jurisprudence as any other Protestant in America, mentioned this fact to me, as affording, to his mind, one of the strongest internal marks in the book, of its



truth. Now Maria Monk knows nothing of these reasons; all she knows is the simple fact, that such and such persons were present, and that they did as she states in her narrative. Had she forged the story, undoubtedly she would have made it a more private affair, and would have created reasons for every thing connected with it. But as it is, it bears the stamp of simple truth.

Maria Monk, on page 195 of her work, says that she once saw a book in the superior's room, containing, among other things, a record of births which occur in the convent. Now it is asked, "if infants are immediately baptized and strangled after their birth, what can be the object of such a record? Why expose themselves, by making a record of their own crime?" Now, as in the case above, Miss Monk is incapable of assigning any reason why such a record should be kept. All she knows, or pretends to know, is the simple fact that such a record then existed. Undoubtedly, if she were an impostor, she never would have created the statement, without creating a reason for it at the same time. The same may be said respecting there being no balustrade around the "hole of interment," described by her as existing in the cellar of the Hotel Dieu. Had the description been the work of fancy, fancy would have given us a suitable balustrade.

Were it possible to put my readers in possession of the manuscript notes of the gentleman who arranged and gave form to Miss Monk's disclosures, I am quite confident that they would perceive in them all the artless simplicity of childlike truth. They would exhibit the simple statements of Miss Monk, just as they fell from her lips; and also the fidelity of her

amanuensis, in so examining her as to render it impossible for her to have acted the part of an impostor. Miss Monk's mind is undisciplined, and is wholly unaccustomed to connected thought and orderly arrangement. Hence her statements have all the simplicity and want of connexion of those of a child. This circumstance would have enabled her writer to have caused her to contradict herself in her narrations, had she not been based on the truth.

Miss Monk's narrative is consistent with itself and with reason. It is minute and specific in its details, respecting places, persons, and facts. In a word, it has every internal appearance of truth. How can all this be accounted for, if she be an impostor?

9. *The moral character of Miss Monk's mind*, for many months after her arrival in New York, was such as to furnish a high degree of evidence in support of her pretensions. She told us how and where she had lived for several years past. The moral condition of her mind bore its unequivocal testimony to the truth of her narrative. She informed us of the systematic deceptions which were inculcated and practised in the society with which she had been connected. The painful truth of this statement, was easily discovered in the state of her mind. It was seen that for her to speak truth, when a slight temptation to deviate from it, presented itself, required an effort on her part. Truth being the basis of confidence, the latter, as matter of course, cannot exist in the absence of the former. It was, therefore, evident that the inmates of the Hotel Dieu, could place little or no confidence in each other; and that jealousy and suspicion would naturally exist, to a fearful extent, in such a community. Thus it was

with Maria Monk ; although constitutionally she possesses the opposite qualities. She was suspicious of everybody, and could confide in nobody. To repose full confidence in those around her, was a lesson, which it took her some time to learn. In a word, according to her statements, the character of the community with which she had been living, was peculiar, such as cannot be found in civilized life ; but only in a cloistered convent. It was in a high degree selfish, subject to the violent exercise of the darker passions of depraved human nature ; such as constant fear, jealousy, want of confidence, suspicions, subjection to absolute authority, not out of respect, but from fear, irritability, growing out of a forced submission to a code of contemptible ceremonies ; in fine, the absence of whatsoever is pure, lovely, and of good report, in the female character. She bore the impress of this wretched community on her soul, thus evincing the character of the education she had received ; although, as I had occasion to remark before, the moral texture of her mind, constitutionally considered, is directly the opposite. She is naturally liberal, even to excess, open, frank, affectionate, and confiding ; and these traits of character have been, for some time past, rapidly developing themselves.

There can be no stamp without a corresponding seal. But Miss Monk's character furnishes us with a stamp or impress, altogether peculiar ; and the question is, where is the seal or counterpart ? If it does not now exist, it certainly must have existed at the time the impression was made. I repeat the question, where is it ? Miss Monk declares that it was in the Hotel Dieu nunnery. The priests deny

it. Let the priests, then, tell the world where it can be found; otherwise the world must believe Maria Monk.

Such is a summary view of the arguments, in confirmation of Miss Monk's claim to public confidence, as deduced from her character, person, conduct, and narrative. They are susceptible of much expansion, as my object has been, rather to suggest thought, than to expand it. The evidence thus derived, is of a character peculiarly strong and convincing. It is of an internal character, such as an enlightened mind loves to confide in. It is the *spontaneous testimony of nature*. And can nature bear false witness? Impossible! It is true, nature may, to some extent, be counterfeited; or we may mistake her voice, and attribute testimony to her, which she does not give, and thus deceive ourselves and others. But it is impossible that she should utter any thing, but what is strictly true. Now, it is possible that myself and others, have misinterpreted the language of nature in the present instance; though I declare, that I cannot realize it. Hence, if there were no other evidence in confirmation of Miss Monk's testimony to be found, I should feel that I stood on firm ground, in endeavoring to support the truth of her claims as an ex-nun. For I feel, that the statements and affidavits of interested men, in opposition to the evidence adduced in this chapter, are of no value. In the scales of moral evidence, they are lighter than a breath. They are like chaff to the wheat; fit only to be given to the four winds of heaven. Unbelieving Protestants may hence learn what has been the principal ground, on which the friends of Miss Monk, in New York, have stood, amidst the clamorous denun-

ciation, abuse, and contempt, which have been poured upon them from various quarters. They have felt that they were standing on a solid foundation, against which the waves of prejudice and wrath might beat in vain.

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## CHAPTER II.

TESTIMONY OF OTHERS IN CONFIRMATION OF  
MISS MONK'S CLAIMS.

Peculiarity of Miss Monk's case—Statement of a Montreal lady—State of feeling in and about Montreal—Testimony of Mr. Miller—Of Mrs. Hahn—Opinion of three classes of persons—Of those who have informed themselves upon the subject—Of those around Miss Monk—Of those who know in part—Subterranean passage—Statement of Mr. Sprague—Of a gentleman—Of Mr. Wetmore—Of Mr. Bourne—Of Mr. Hogan.

It is often asked, why the friends of Miss Monk, provided she has resided for years in the Hotel Dieu, do not produce the testimony of a sufficient number of living witnesses, to establish the fact, beyond the power of contradiction. If a person has lived for years in a given place, it is asked, is it not an easy matter to prove it, by a multitude of witnesses? I answer that it is, in ordinary cases. But the case of Miss Monk is peculiar; perhaps without a parallel on the pages of history. Her residence has been in a cloistered nunnery, shut out from the world. Since she escaped from the convent, she has made known the vile practices of her former associates, the priests and nuns; and they, in self-defence, deny that she was ever one of their number. Moreover, by their management they have sealed the lips of her friends, out of the nunnery, in Canada, who might otherwise testify as to the place of her former abode. Had the matter been otherwise managed at first, doubtless witnesses in abundance could have been found, who would have testified to the fact of her former residence in the Hotel Dieu. But it was not attended to, until

the priests had every opportunity they could desire, to arrange matters according to their wishes. Go to Montreal now, and inquire of its older inhabitants, if they ever knew Maria Monk, and many of them will tell you that they used to see her, some six or seven years ago, at her mother's residence and at other places, but that they saw nothing of her during the time in which she alleges herself to have been in the nunnery. They all say, that during this period of time, they have missed her; but as to the fact, whether or no she was in the convent, during this time, they know nothing about it.

The following is a specimen of the kind of evidence alluded to. A few days since, I saw a lady from Montreal, who observed, that, a short time ago, she was conversing with a Mrs. \*\*\*\* of Montreal, a respectable and Christian lady, who stated, that she had known Maria Monk from her childhood; and that the last time she ever saw her, was about the time she says that she returned from St. Denis and entered the nunnery—that she (M. M.) then called on her (Mrs. \*\*\*\*) to obtain money from her, for her mother; and that she let her have some, though less than what she asked for. Now it will be recollected that Maria Monk states, on page 38 of her book, that she did obtain money from several individuals, on her mother's account, in order to pay her entrance into the novices' department of the Hotel Dieu.

The following extract of a letter, from a worthy gentleman in Montreal, who has taken some pains to investigate this matter, will enable the reader to understand something of the state of feeling, respecting this subject, in and about that city. After detailing the efforts of himself and another gentleman, in making

inquiries of those who ought to know something of Miss Monk's past history, he writes as follows:—"Now the fact is just here, everybody is afraid to *know* any thing about this matter: and all her relatives seem backward to say what they might on the subject. Romanism is so far predominant here, that there are only a very few who have correct principle and moral courage enough to *think, speak, or act*, aright in the concern. Political, pecuniary, and relative interests and connexions, have occasioned such a commingling of Romanism and Protestantism, that it is difficult to reach the *black heart* of the Roman beast, nominal Protetsants are so much in the way. A bookseller said to me yesterday, that *he* and all the other booksellers in the town were afraid to keep Maria Monk's book in their stores, lest a mob should attack them."

The subjoined testimony of Mr. Miller and Mrs. Hahn has been some time before the public. That of Mrs. Hahn is the more important. It is that of an old companion, and of course there can be no mistake as to her acquaintance with Miss Monk. Mrs. Hahn described the person of Miss Monk, and stated the substance of her testimony before she saw her; and before Miss Monk knew any thing of Mrs. Hahn's residing in New York. Collusion, therefore, between the parties is out of the question. Mr. Jones, while in New York, inquired of me what I should say respecting Mrs. Hahn's testimony, if she herself were to acknowledge that it was false. I replied that it would not in the least shake my confidence in its substantial truth, for such were the circumstances connected with the giving of it, that my reliance was

chiefly upon them. Mrs. Hahn, however, remains unchanged as to the truth of her statements.

Mr. William Miller, a resident of New York for several years past, and formerly an old schoolmate of Maria's in Montreal, testifies that, on a visit to the latter city, in the summer of 1833, he called on Mrs. Monk, the mother of Maria, and inquired for Maria; and was informed by her that her daughter Maria was *then in the nunnery*. See his affidavit, *Awful Disclosures*, page 237.—The priests, in their work, dispose of this affidavit by exhorting Mr. Miller to *repent!*

Mrs. Hahn, now a resident of New York and formerly a schoolmate of Miss Monk, testifies that she was with Maria in the school of the Congregational nunnery for about two years: that she was present at the time that Maria was received as a novice in the Hotel Dieu; and that she saw her some time after this, while she was yet a novice: and that she saw her a veiled nun, towards the close of the winter of 1833-4, in the hospital of the Hotel Dieu, which she at that time frequently visited, in order to see a sick friend: and that "a short time afterwards," she saw her again in the same place among the veiled nuns. See her testimony, *Awful Disclosures*, page 238.—The circumstances connected with the giving of this testimony were such, as to preclude almost the possibility of an error. The reader will see some of these by referring to the whole of her testimony. The authors of the "*Awful Exposure*" glide over this by a contemptuous sneer! A summary way of disposing of important testimony.

There is also the testimony of three classes of individuals, besides the above; or rather, their opinion

formed on evidence more or less conclusive, which ought to have its weight in determining this controversy. There is the opinion of a large number of individuals, who have taken some considerable pains to inform themselves on the subject, not only by reading what has appeared in print on both sides of the question, but also by such an examination of Miss Monk, as has been satisfactory to themselves. Among this class are to be found men of the first standing in the different learned professions. I know that this is mere opinion, and as such I give it for what it is worth.—There is another class of persons, whose opinion ought to have still more weight, because their opportunities for forming it have been much greater. Among these are the different families in which Miss Monk has resided, since she came to reside in New York. The celebrated Whitefield, I think it was, was once asked his opinion respecting a certain individual, with whom he had some acquaintance. His reply was, that he did not know him, having never been with him in his family, *the only place in which a man's true character could be discovered.* Thus it is in regard to Maria Monk; her true character is easily discovered by those with whom she daily associates. And these, I think I may say without a single exception, are thoroughly convinced that she is not an impostor. The affidavits of all Canada could hardly shake their belief.

To these I would add the unwavering opinion of the gentleman who penned her works for her. He is a gentleman of high standing in the community, for literature, integrity, and piety. No man could have felt a deeper solicitude on the subject, than he has felt. He has felt, that not only his own reputation



was at stake, but that truth—to him priceless—was to achieve new victories, or receive detriment, according as Miss Monk's testimony should prove true or false. Hence he has spared no pains to get at the simple truth of the case, whatever that might be.

I trust that the reader will not consider it out of place, for the writer of these pages to add his own opinion to the above. It is now some eight or nine months, since Miss Monk came to reside among the people of my pastoral charge. During this time I have seen her in a variety of circumstances; have heard her converse with friends and enemies, Protestants and Catholics, and men of all professions; have improved every opportunity, which God in his providence has given me, to ferret out the truth in relation to her claims—and as the result of the whole, I deliberately say, that I have never seen any thing which led me, for any length of time, to doubt the general truth of her story; but on the contrary, the evidence of its truth has been constantly augmenting, so that I could now almost as easily believe any supposable impossibility, as to believe that she has been acting the part of an impostor, in what she has done.

The other class of individuals whose opinion is of some importance on the subject, are those who *know* a part of Miss Monk's statements to be true, and who infer from that, the truth of the remainder. Among these are to be found, those females scattered through the country, who received their education in the Congregational Nunnery of Montreal. A short time since, I heard one of this class speaking on the subject, after the following manner:—"Miss Monk's description of things, persons, and practices, which came under my observation, while a scholar in the

Congregational Nunnery of Montreal, are generally so correct, that I cannot but think, that her descriptions of things and practices in the Hotel Dieu, the cloistered part of which I was never permitted to visit, are also generally correct." I have heard gentlemen who have long resided in Montreal, and who were familiar with matters and things without the concealed part of the convent, reason in a similar manner.

It is known to many, that there is a subterranean passage, leading from the priest's Seminary to the Hotel Dieu. In addition to what is said on pages 241 and 332 of *Awful Disclosures*, respecting this passage, the following, taken from the *St. Albans Franklin Journal*, is subjoined. Even Mr. Jones, the publisher of the "*Awful Exposure*," admitted, to several gentlemen in New York, that there was such a passage; but that it was not more than thirty feet long! The existence of this passage is known to many in Montreal. What is the object of such a passage? Can any thing virtuous require that a house of priests should be thus united, by a concealed, under-ground passage, to an establishment of secluded women? And I would further ask, how a man, who believes in the existence of such a secret communication, can disbelieve the "*Awful Disclosures*" of Maria Monk? If the priests are such licentious hypocrites, as to need a dark, under-ground passage to the women of the Hotel Dieu, from the commission of what crime would they abstain, which they considered necessary to conceal their infamy from the public eye? Would they refrain from the murder of infants and nuns? That man has but a slight acquaintance with human

depravity, that can believe they would. The following is the communication alluded to.

"As there is some excitement in the community upon the subject of Popish licentiousness and vice from the disclosures of Maria Monk, and as some affect to disbelieve and ridicule her work as totally false, being in possession of some strong evidence that will confirm her statements, I give the public the facts.

"In conversation with a gentleman, who was some months since a Roman Catholic in Montreal, but has renounced their blasphemous dogmas, and is now a professed Christian, he told me, that he had been employed to labor in the cellars of the Priests' Seminary at Montreal, and while there engaged, he discovered a door in the wall of the cellar, which on opening, he found it connected with a passage under ground. He entered the passage and passed through it until he came to some stairs, at the head of which was a trap door. From the direction and distance of the passage, he was perfectly certain that it must be a subterraneous communication between the Seminary and the convent. He further informed me, that from the testimony of many females, his relatives not excepted, that at confession, the priests were in the habit of asking the most licentious and revolting questions that could be propounded, not only to married ladies, but also to girls of thirteen years.

"Likewise from the habiliments of the nuns, and their appearance at times, he was wholly confirmed in the belief that their course in the nunnery was any thing but virtuous. At the time of his making these disclosures, I think Maria had not written her book. I think testimony of this kind is powerfully corroborated

tive, and that these things exist, I fully believe. It is truly painful to come before the public with so offensive a subject, but believing the contagion of death to be spreading through the community by Catholicism, leaving putrescence and wo behind, I feel constrained thus to appear.

"E. SPRAGUE.

"*St. Albans, July, 1836.*"

The ensuing statement is from a gentleman who was for many years a resident in Montreal. For reasons satisfactory to himself, his name is withheld. His testimony is undoubtedly true.

"I often heard of a subterranean passage, from the Seminary to the Hotel Dieu nunnery, years ago; and while the cathedral was building, I often saw that part of it which was opened in digging for the foundation. It was near the east corner of the cathedral, where the waterworks were laid along St. Joseph's street. Several years before, I saw the same passage opened in another place by the workmen, who had removed several stones and exposed it to view. I have often heard it spoken of, as a thing very generally known; and never heard any doubt of its existence, until the appearance of Mr. Jones' book, and Mr. Stone's pamphlet."

The following documents on the subject of the subterranean passage, are extracted from the American Protestant Vindicator, of November 2, 1836. They have appeared since the above was written:—

"The first witness is the Rev. *Oliver Wetmore*, of Utica. In a late conversation with that beloved minister of the gospel, he thus remarked—

"Mr. Stone says: 'No subterranean passage between the Seminary and the Hotel Dieu nunnery, at

Montreal, was ever seen or heard of! *That is not true!* When I travelled as a missionary in the northern parts of the State of New York, *thirty-three years ago*, I was frequently at the house of Judge Moers, who resided about a mile from the Canada line. That gentleman repeatedly talked with me respecting the Roman priests and Popery, in Montreal, which he had often visited. He spoke of the *subterranean passage between the Seminary and the Nunneries*, as a matter of most public notoriety; and detailed the dissolute lives of the priests, their habitual gambling, intemperance, and profligacy, as well as the licentiousness of the female convents of Montreal; which Judge Moers said, were as open matters of talk at that period, in that city, just as much as the most common affairs of life. Judge Moers also represented to me the priests and nuns of Montreal, from his own personal acquaintance with them, in exactly the same light and character, *thirty-three years ago*, as they have lately been exhibited before the American public. *Mr. Stone, therefore, to my own certain knowledge, has published that which is not true!"*

It appears, from this statement, that the existence of an underground passage, between the Priests' Seminary and the nunnery, has been a matter of conversation for many years.

The next statement is from the Rev. George Bourne, of New York:—

"I most solemnly affirm, that the late Rev. Mr. Christmas, conducted me in the year 1825, I believe, for I have but one criterion by which I can determine the first time that I saw it, to visit the subterranean passage, between the Seminary and the Hotel Dieu



convent; and that we frequently afterwards stood over that passage together. At other times, in company with different Christian brethren, I have also examined that underground avenue from the Seminary to the Nunnery: at least, that part of it which was open for common inspection for a considerable period, during the completion of the cathedral in that city.

"GEORGE BOURNE."

The following is the affidavit of Mr. Hogan, now a respectable member of the Methodist church, of New York, but formerly a Roman Catholic student of the Seminary of Montreal:—

"New York, October 26, 1836"

"Thomas Hogan, of the city of New York, being duly affirmed, doth say: That in the year 1824, he was a resident of the city of Montreal, Lower Canada—that at that period, the existence of a subterranean passage between the Seminary in Notre-Dame street, and the Hotel Dieu convent, was a matter of the most public notoriety; and that he himself has been in that passage, having entered it from the door in the Seminary—and the said Hogan doth further depose, that to his own personal knowledge, the Roman priests were constantly in the practice of visiting the nuns, for the purpose of licentious intercourse, by that secret passage.

THOMAS HOGAN.

"Affirmed this 26th day of October, 1836.

"Before me, William H. Bogardus, Commissioner of Deeds."

Who, after this, can doubt the existence of such a communication between the two establishments? And the question may be reiterated, what is the object of such a passage? Can it be any thing lawful?

If so, what is it? The world would be glad to know what it may be.

It is hardly necessary to remind the reader of the fact, that the above testimony furnishes a high degree of evidence, in confirmation of the general truth of the "Awful Disclosures."

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## CHAPTER III.

THE CONDUCT OF MISS MONK'S OPPONENTS, FURNISHES  
AN ARGUMENT IN HER SUPPORT.

They have expended much labor in vain to disprove her claims—Refusal to have the nunnery examined at first, is evidence against them—Their attempt to prove an Alibi in November, 1835, a failure—Priest Phelan's visit to New York—Attempted abduction of Miss Monk—Failed to destroy her testimony in their attempt to destroy her character—Also in their second attempt to prove an Alibi—Also in their exparte examination of the nunnery—Also in their Magdalen trick—Remarks on this manœuvre—Other failures—Conclusion—Priests found guilty.

"ACTIONS speak louder than words," is a maxim as venerable for age, as it is just and true. According to this maxim, it is evident, that the conduct of Miss Monk's opponents furnishes an argument of great force against themselves, and, of course, in support of her claims. The position, which they have taken, that she is an impostor, and never has been a nun, if true, could have been proved beyond all doubt, with one-thousandth part of the labor, which they have fruitlessly bestowed in their several attempts to prove it. They admit that, until recently, she has always lived in and about Montreal. Could they not then, with very little trouble, have shown us where and with whom she lived, during the time she professes to have been a nun in the Hotel Dieu convent?

But let us look at their conduct a little in the detail. When Miss Monk visited Montreal in the month of August, 1835, and there presented her

criminal charges against the priests and nuns, it was denied that she had ever been a nun in the Hotel Dieu nunnery. In proof that she had been an inmate of that convent, Miss Monk offered to furnish a description of its interior—its apartments, its persons, and their occupations, &c.—and urged the examination of the nunnery, with a view to the application of the proposed test. Certainly this was fair on her part. Why, then, did not the priests comply with the proposal? If she had been an impostor, what easier and more ready mode of proving it, to the satisfaction of all concerned, could they have desired? The reply often made, that she and her friends were unworthy of their notice, and that the convent was a sacred place, not to be inspected by men from the world, is not less insulting than it is untrue; for they did notice her, by collecting and publishing affidavits against her; and men from the world, such as they have been pleased to select, have been admitted into the nunnery to inspect it. Does not their conduct in this particular betray guilt?

A short time after Miss Monk returned to New York from Montreal, her opponents made an attempt to prove an alibi—to show that she was elsewhere than in the convent, during the time in which she declares herself to have been in that establishment. They collected and published six or eight affidavits, the import and character of which is known to the public. Five of them refer exclusively to matters subsequent to her arrival in Montreal. The other two are those of Dr. Robertson and her mother, Mrs. Monk. Dr. Robertson states, that on inquiry, he had ascertained that she was at service in Sorel and St. Denis, a portion of the time which she professed to have been in

the nunnery ; and Mrs. Monk says, that she once told certain persons, that her daughter had not been in the nunnery. This is the amount of their testimony ; and, if Maria Monk had been an impostor, can any man believe that the priests and their advocates, would have rested their cause on a foundation, so unsubstantial as this ? Does not the weakness of their defence, show the unsoundness of their cause ?

The next step worthy of notice in the conduct of the priests, is the visit of father Phelan of Montreal to New York, in order to decoy Miss Monk away from her friends in that city. This was in the winter of 1835-6. A detailed account of it may be seen in the first chapter of the present work by Miss Monk. As this priest came to New York in disguise, leaving an impression in Montreal that he had gone to spend a few weeks on Nuns' Island, it is presumed, that his visit to this city will be denied. It can, however, be proved that he was in New York at the time specified, and that the impression was made in Montreal that he had gone to the Island. It has been published again and again, without being as yet contradicted, from any responsible source. Why then should that priest visit New York under such circumstances, unless it were in some way to destroy Miss Monk's testimony ? He knew her feelings towards himself as the father of her child ; and he knew that a special intimacy had been formed and cherished between himself and her, during her residence in the nunnery ; in a word, he knew that if any man could draw her away from her friends in New York, or induce her to withhold her testimony, he was the man. Out of regard to him, Miss Monk was perfectly silent respecting his visit to New York, until after the abduc-



tion plot, during the following summer, had been developed. It was, however, noticed by her friends, that her feelings towards him, during this lapse of time, were different from what they were, prior to this visit. Now if Miss Monk were an impostor, is it supposable that this priest would have thus visited her? And does not this visit stamp with the seal of truth her claims as an ex-nun? What stronger evidence can be demanded?

In the present work by Miss Monk, will be found an account of the attempt in May, 1836, to abduct her away from New York. The principal facts in the case are mentioned by her, in her narrative of the attempt. From personal knowledge, I know many of her statements respecting this matter, to be true; and others of them I believe on good authority, to be equally founded in truth. To mention particulars, such as I know too be true, would occupy too much space. They may be seen in her narrative. My object at present, is with the fact, that such an attempt was made; and of this there can be no reasonable doubt in the minds of such as are acquainted with the facts in the case.

It is certain that several individuals were thus engaged; and it is certain that some of them were Canadians. They were prowling about the neighborhood for a number of days. They were seen again and again, and her uncle, on the Sabbath specified by Miss Monk, was overheard in conversation with her respecting the matter.

The design of the plot was to induce Miss Monk, voluntarily, to leave New York. The plot was well formed, and well conducted; and would have succeeded, had it not been thwarted by the untiring vigi-

lance of Miss Monk's friends. Miss monk was completely deceived by her uncle, until the time specified by her in her narrative of the affair, when a gentleman called on her, and made known to her the true nature and design of the plot. I was present at the time when the gentleman called, and I regret that it is not permitted me to mention, at present, particulars as to the betrayal of one of the enemy, by which the ultimate object of the scheme was communicated to her. Now they knew whether or not Miss Monk was an impostor: on this point, they could not possibly be mistaken. Would they then, be at so much trouble and expense, to decoy away a known impostor? The supposition is preposterous in the extreme. It is therefore evident, that she is not an impostor.

The next attempt on the part of the priests to vindicate themselves, worthy of special consideration, is to be found in their book, entitled, "Awful Exposure." The contents of this book have been examined in the first part of this work; and it is believed, that the candid reader is prepared to unite in pronouncing the attempt to be an entire failure. Their object has been to destroy Miss Monk's testimony. To do this, they have undertaken:—

1. In the first place, utterly to destroy her character. They have attempted to prove that, besides being insane, she is a compound of all that is infamous in the vilest of women. But in this, they have come short. Their attempt only evinces the weakness of their cause, and the infamy of their witnesses. Their witnesses, as we have seen, are false witnesses, testifying in several instances, in direct opposition to each other.

2. They have repeated their attempt to prove an

alibi—that at the time she professes to have been in the nunnery, she was living in Sorel, St. Denis, &c. Here they have failed; and on what ground can their failure be accounted for, unless it be, the falseness of their position? Is it possible rationally to conceive of any other? If so, let it be made known.

3. Being themselves conscious of the incredibility of their testimony to prove an alibi, they have endeavored to support it, by an *exparte* examination of the nunnery. But this examination has only helped to expose the unsoundness of their cause. We have seen, that the report of their professed architect furnishes a high degree of evidence of the fact, that Miss Monk has, as correctly as could have been expected, described the apartments of that portion of the nunnery which she attempted to describe. The priests have, therefore, utterly failed in this effort to mislead and deceive the public. What, then, is the consequence of their failure? Does it not prove them to be false?

4. But, as if sensible of the rottenness of their foundation, they have, as a last desperate resort, taken refuge in Mrs. McDonell's Magdalen Asylum. Why should they go there, if they were satisfied with the evidence which they had collected, to prove Miss Monk to be an impostor? They do not even pretend that she was ever there, prior to the time she professes to have escaped from the convent. If they had satisfactorily proved to the world, that Miss Monk did not obtain the facts, published in her book, from a residence in the Hotel Dieu nunnery, why give themselves any more trouble on the subject? Ah, they knew better; they knew that she had been a nun, and they knew that they could not disprove it.

Respecting this movement of the priests, it is proper to make a few remarks, in order that its character may the better be understood. The idea that Miss Monk and her friends manufactured the "Awful Disclosures," from what she learned in the Asylum, is of recent date. It was never heard of in New York, so far as I can learn, until last summer, nearly a year after she preferred her charges in Montreal, against the priests. After this long period, they wish us to believe that the conventual ceremonies, interior apartments, and persons—themselves excepted, I suppose, though they do not say so—described by Maria Monk, are such as she saw in Mrs. McDonell's Asylum. Miss Monk, in her book, speaking of her novitiate state in the Hotel Dieu, mentions the names of four novices, as also that of Jane Ray. The priests, in order to carry forward their novel device, have furnished us with five affidavits, from as many persons, bearing the names mentioned by Miss Monk as inmates of the Hotel Dieu. These women are made to testify that they were inmates of the Asylum at the time Miss Monk was, and that she became acquainted with them there. But who has ever seen these individuals in the Asylum? A gentleman from New York called there twice, but he could find but one out of the five named, and she evidently had never seen Maria Monk, for she described her as having light hair, when in fact her hair is black.

Now, that this whole affair is a mere jesuitical device, designed to mislead the public, is not only manifest from its intrinsic absurdity, but also from the fact, that immediately after it was publicly announced, the Asylum was said to be broken up and its inmates dispersed, because no more means could be obtained for

their support. How happens it that the streams of benevolence in Montreal should become dry just at that time? And how happens it, that if Maria Monk has described the interior of Mrs. McDonell's establishment, it was not made known at an earlier date? Why especially was it closed from inspection, as soon as the discovery was made? It does appear that, if any thing can demonstrate the desperateness of the priests' cause, it is this silly Magdalen trick of theirs. I call it silly, for it does seem to evince a degree of stupidity on the part of the priests, which cannot be accounted for, unless it be on the principle, that those whom the Almighty abandons to destruction for their vices, he often, in his providence, drives to otherwise unaccountable folly and madness.

Thus we have noticed the more prominent attempts, which the priests have made to defend themselves from the charges preferred against them by Maria Monk. Several minor attempts have been passed over; such as their celebrated handbill, which was so extensively circulated in New York and other places, declaring that Miss Monk was a Protestant girl, and had been living for four years with Mr. Hoyt; and also their declaration, that her "book was a translation from an old Portuguese work;" and since then, that it was not her production, but that of "certain individuals who had formed an atrocious plot against the Clergy and Nuns of Lower Canada."

What a mass of untruth and palpable contradictions! Is the supposition possible, that the priests are innocent in this matter, when all their attempts at self-defence have only served to sink them deeper and deeper, in the bottomless abyss of falsehood and infamy? One thing is certain, and that is if they are innocent, their conduct is beyond measure unaccount-



able. It belies them in a manner that it is truly astounding. With a voice that cannot be misunderstood, it proclaims them guilty.

In conclusion, I would seriously press the inquiry, whether it is supposable, that, if the priests were innocent they would have borne such a load of reproach and infamy for so long a time, without having demonstrated their innocence to the world. Especially when it could have been done with so much ease, by proving Miss Monk to be an impostor, if she is an impostor as they maintain that she is. The belief of it beggars credulity itself. The reply, "they stand upon their character," and that the "disclosures of Miss Monk are unworthy of their notice," is as preposterous as it is untrue. Stand upon their character! Common sense rebukes so gross an absurdity. The horrid charges, preferred against them by Maria Monk, and believed by thousands and tens of thousands to be sober truth, "unworthy of their notice!" Who can believe this? If it be so, it may be asked what is there on earth, that can arrest their dignified attention?

Finally, it is manifest that the priests have utterly failed, in every attempt they have made in their own defence. What, then, is the legitimate inference, from this fact? Is it not, that they are guilty? That they themselves are impostors, instead of Maria Monk's being an impostor? In reason's name, it is asked, how can it be otherwise? How can it be that they are innocent, and that she is an impostor, when every thing that speaks on the subject, proclaims the opposite to be true. This is the voice—not only of her person, character, conduct, narrative, of religion and nature, and of the testimony of others—but it is also the voice of every attempt which they have made in self-vindication.

## CHAPTER IV.

REVELATION, REASON, AND NATURE, CONFIRM MISS  
MONK'S TESTIMONY.

Extract from the New York Observer—Inquiry as to the object of nunneries—Condemned by Christianity—By reason and nature—Their ultimate object not religion—Nor charity to the sick—There are false garbs—Their object priestly indulgence—"Awful Disclosures" confirmed—"Sisters of charity."

THE following is taken from an able article in the New York Observer.

"Popery forbids its priests and ecclesiastics to marry, and encourages the devotion of each sex to a single life. Hence convents are provided both for monks and nuns, to which they may respectively retire from the world, and lead a life of holy seclusion, as it is termed, from the temptations of the flesh. Nature cries out against this unnatural and forced separation of the sexes. Reason condemns it as monstrous and absurd, and religion pronounces upon the unnatural and absurd prohibition its severest denunciations, "*forbidding to marry*," being expressly classed with the "*doctrine of devils*." We cannot escape from the conclusion that a course which nature, reason, and religion unite to condemn, must be productive of evils of a kind and extent commensurate with the folly, absurdity, and impiety of the parent evil. We here see one of the strongest passions of human nature, a passion implanted in man for the wisest purposes by the God of nature, unnaturally restrained by pains and penalties. What power have unhallowed vows to bind, where God

has not required the sacrifice, where he has, in fact, prohibited it? Need I pursue the details of the degenerating process, to show the easy steps by which passion thus restrained, descends to crime? How the nun, at the confessional, must pour into the ear of a man, the secret conflicts of her own breast, with regard to this very passion; how the priest questions; and how he may advise his fair penitent in secret? Need I depict the voluntarily incurred temptations to which both are exposed by this most unnatural intercourse? It can scarcely be otherwise, than that crime should be the result. Both priests and nuns are kept from its commission by no *human* restraint, and certainly by no promise of *divine* assistance, but are left weak and unaided to contend with, and to be vanquished by, this strongest of human passions. Love thus perverted is lust, and every one knows that the secret servant of lust, is Murder."

In reason's name, I would ask, what is the object of female cloistered convents? Why congregate an assembly of youthful females, and then bind them, not only with bolts and bars, but with the most solemn and superstitious vows and oaths, never more to have any communication with the world? Why deprive such of that liberty which the God of nature has given to all mankind? To imprison an individual for life, and thus deprive him of his liberty, is considered to be next to the highest punishment that can be inflicted for crime. But of what crime have the helpless victims of female convents been guilty, prior to their becoming nuns? Can it be said that the religion of the Son of God demands such imprisonment? If so, where is the chapter and verse?

I have never been able to find it. But I do find that Christ was "*to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.*" The voice of Christianity, therefore, is that the doors of these female prison houses be opened, and that the captives be set at liberty. Christianity is from heaven. It came into the world, not to derange and break up the institutions of man's social nature, but to hallow and purify them. Did the God of nature make woman for society, or to shut her up in a nunnery? Let the advocates of nunneries read the second chapter of the first book in their Bibles, if they have any; and they will learn that woman was made for man, not to be shut up in prison. Revelation, therefore, is against nunneries.

Reason still presses the inquiry, why should inoffensive and unsuspecting young ladies be decoyed from the path of life, which Christianity prescribes, and be intombed for life within the walls of a convent? *Young ladies*, I say, for the priests will have no others, unless it should be some who were very rich, and received for the sake of their wealth. This fact proves to a demonstration, that the object cannot be of a religious character; for if it were, then the aged and the infirm, who are now excluded, would, of all others, be received. I am aware of the fact, that a religious profession is the bait, by which young females are enticed, by the priests and their panders, into nunneries. They are made to believe that the moment they enter a convent, they are thenceforth removed from all worldly temptation and are, during the remainder of their lives, to be devoted exclusively to the holy duties of religion. But that this is untrue, is evident, not only from the

testimony of eloped nuns, and others, but from the above-named fact, viz., that the aged and infirm, to whom such retirement and religious employment might possibly be desirable, are the very persons who are excluded.

Nor can the object be for purposes of charity, such as educating poor children, and nursing the sick. I am aware that the latter is connected with the Hotel Dieu—that there is a fine hospital there, and that many of the sick have reaped essential benefit from it. But, I ask, what necessary connexion there is between this charity, and the imprisonment, for life, of scores of young and tender females? Cannot the sick be taken care of, without doing such violence to the laws, both of God and nature? The sick are nursed, and the poor are educated, to say the least, among Protestants, who have no occasion for nunneries, as well as they are among Catholics. The truth is, this charity business is a mere outward garb—fair to appearance, like a “whited sepulchre”—designed, in connexion with a “religious profession,” to conceal from the public eye the real object which the priests have in view, in sustaining cloistered convents. Roman priests are required by their religion, habitually to violate a primary law of the human constitution, in being required to live a life of celibacy. But nature protests against the requisition, and determines on seeking relief from some other source. But concealment is requisite, in order to give external consistency to their professions of chastity. How then can gratification and concealment be secured? A cloistered nunnery, under the colors of peculiar sanctity and charity, presents itself as affording both the requisites. Concealment,



however, requires something more than the most arrant deceit and hypocrisy. Children and refractory nuns must be disposed of; and to secure this, habitual murder is necessary, as well as a system of the most severe and tyrannical discipline. Sin, in its progress, being downward, where will it stop? What bounds can you set to it, when unbridled as in a convent, concealed from the public eye? The Hotel Dieu is of long standing, and has grown ripe in iniquity. Hence but a small portion of its diabolical abominations can be disclosed by Maria Monk to the world. There are others which ought not to be "once named as becometh saints."

It seems, then, that the real object of cloistered nunneries is, so far as they respect the priests, their own licentious gratification. Now I do not say that this was their original intention. I think it was not. But they soon degenerated into it. Hence the ultimate design of the scores of incipient nunneries in these United States. Oh, that they were rightly understood by mothers and by daughters! Then we should hear of no more taking the veil.

The conclusion, therefore, of the whole matter under this head is this,—That the disclosures of Maria Monk are just what might rationally be expected, from the nature of the case; from priestly celibacy in connexion with cloistered females. How futile, then, is the following question of the priests: "Now we ask the ten thousand readers of the book, (*Awf. Disc.*) if the deeds therein alleged are not incompatible with human nature,—if any thing that is known of man's capacity for crime can render them credible?" What is the history of Popery, but to a great extent a history of just such incompatibilities?

Before closing this chapter, perhaps something should be said, respecting the order of "sisters of charity," as they are called. These females have, no doubt, done much to mitigate the sufferings of the sick and destitute; as also to impart papal instruction to poor children. This is natural to the kind and sympathizing nature of the female sex. But does this argue any thing in favor of this order of women, who are required to live in a state of celibacy? Are these amiable female qualities confined to this mode of life? Must woman live a single life in order to be kind and generous to the needy and the helpless?

But the question is, what is the object of the priests in having these unmarried women clustered about them, as they always have, especially in the absence of cloistered nunneries? Let Miss Monk's narrative in the subsequent pages, respecting the Black Nuns' Island, answer the question. It would seem that the object of the priests, with reference to this order of females, was substantially the same with that of convents. Let, then, the lovers of good order and chastity frown upon this order of women, until it shall be broken up, together with convents. And let young women avoid this vow of celibacy, as they would avoid impurity and wretchedness. It is death to all that is lovely in the female character.

## CHAPTER V.

## HISTORIC CONFIRMATION OF MISS MONK'S TESTIMONY.

Absence of historic information a cause of disbelief in the "Disclosures"—Spirit of popish history agrees with that of the "Disclosures"—Of murder—The Inquisition—Uncondemned by papists—Slaughter of French Protestants on the eve of St. Bartholomew's day—Murderous spirit with which the news of it was received at Rome—More than 6000 heads of infants found in the pope's fish-pond—Licentious character of the Roman priests—Golden mean to be observed in speaking of it—Extract from Da Costa—Illustrates the character of priests and of the Confessional—One object of the Confessional—Catholic girl in New York—Practice of confessing to a priest should be discountenanced—Extracts from Scipio de Ricci confirmatory of the "Awful Disclosures"—Object of exposing vice—Jesuit moralists sanction vice—Miss M.'s character of the priests true, independent of the fact of her having been a nun.

THERE are two things, in the disclosures of Maria Monk, which render them comparatively incredible to the American community. First, the enormity of the crimes which she declares are perpetrated in the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal; and, in the second place, the cool-hearted manner in which they are said to be habitually practised in that establishment. This objection, so frequently urged against the truth of Miss Monk's narrative, arises from two sources;—1st, the comparative purity of the American people:—and 2d, the want of historic information respecting the character of the Roman priesthood, in all former ages. The latter of these is the more prominent obstacle in the way of gaining full confidence in the truth of her statements. Hence the fact, so frequently noticed by the friends of Miss Monk, that those persons, who are versed

in popish history, as also those who have sojourned somewhat extensively in popish countries, find no difficulty in believing the "Awful Disclosures" to be substantially true. Hence, too, the fact, that gentlemen of extensive observation, who have been reared in Catholic countries, amidst the vices of Roman priests, not unfrequently ridicule the incredulity of the American people, in reference to this matter.

Roman Catholics glory in the infallibility of their church; and, of course, its immutability. It is, say they, the one church of Christ, the same in every age and in every country. The author of these pages is aware of the fact, that when the consequences of this principle are pressed upon the advocates of popery, they attempt to evade them by some Jesuitical prank or other. Still, it is true, if the tree is one and the same in all ages and in all climes, its fruit must be substantially the same, under all circumstances. Thus, in regard to the spirit of popery, it is one and the same the world over, and in every age; and bears substantially the same fruit, wherever it is allowed to arrive to full maturity. Now, what is this spirit, as exhibited on the impartial page of history? Does it contradict the reigning spirit of the Montreal cloistered convent, as illustrated by the disclosures of Maria Monk? Are the crimes which are divulged by her, such as murder, hypocrisy, and the most unblushing licentiousness, novel things in the history of popery? or are they such as naturally fall in with that history? If the pages of Roman Catholic history could be made honestly to oppose the statements of Maria Monk, the controversy would assume altogether a different

aspect from what it now wears. But they cannot. Truth is immutable, however much it may be falsified and glossed over. A few statements and extracts from well authenticated history will be sufficient to show, not only that Maria Monk's narrative is no libel on the Roman priests, but also to confirm its truth, so far as the history of the past can do it. And here I wish to be as brief as fidelity to the cause of truth and humanity will admit of, for the subject is painful to every virtuous mind.

1. In respect to the crime of murder.

Perhaps no subject more perfectly illustrates the murderous spirit of Roman priests, in past ages, than the "Holy Inquisition," as papists call it. This "infernal tribunal" originated with the priests—it was introduced into every country into which they had the power of introducing it—and by them it was sustained, as long as they had the power of sustaining it. For cruelty, it stands without a rival on earth, and, I hope, also in the dark domains of Satan below. Thank God, that humanity and the Protestant religion have nearly banished it from the earth, although its dreadful spirit still remains with those who originated and sustained it. The object of the inquisition is the destruction of "damnable heresy," by torturing, in the most cruel manner, even unto death, all such as dare to think and believe contrary to the wishes of the church; that is, the priesthood, from the pope downward, for such is the meaning of the word *church* among Roman Catholics. In Spain alone, its victims, according to the estimate of Llorente, from 1481 to 1808, amounted to 341,021. Of these 31,912 were burned, 17,659 were burned in effigy, and 291,456 were subjected



to severe penance. Here, then, were nearly 32,000 men and women burned to death, after suffering imprisonment, and a variety of tortures, simply for resisting the will of the priesthood. What is this but the most cold-blooded murder? It is vain for the friends of popery to attempt to blunt the edge of these facts, by saying that they occurred in the dark ages. Are not all ages dark where popery reigns? And are not papists loud in their denunciation of the reformation, by which the darkness that covered Christendom was, in some measure, dissipated? Besides, what pope, cardinal, bishop, or priest, has ever been known to utter a sentence of condemnation against their "most holy inquisition?" What, condemn an institution which for ages had the sanction of an infallible church! No, never. They will sooner defend it, as bishops England and Hughes have had the hardihood to do, the one in Baltimore and the other in Philadelphia.

The manner in which the Pope and his court received the intelligence of the barbarous massacre of the Protestants in France, commencing on the eve of St. Bartholomew's day, in A. D. 1572, is another instance which shows the murderous spirit of the priesthood. Perhaps the page of history does not contain a darker spot than this. The principal Protestants of the kingdom were invited to Paris, under a solemn oath of protection from Charles IX., a papist, to attend the marriage of the king's sister. They attended the wedding, and thus fell into the snare that had been spread for their destruction. The design of the papists was to destroy every Protestant in France, and they came wellnigh accomplishing their nefarious project. Some ten

thousand were inhumanly butchered in the single city of Paris, while the work of death was carried on in almost every part of the empire, until from 30,000 to 100,000 Protestants were slain.

And now, reader, how do you suppose the intelligence of this dreadful slaughter was received at Rome? Did the pope condemn the king for the double crime of breaking his oath and murdering his subjects? Did he grieve because so many human beings had been so fiendishly butchered? No, reader. It was to him and his court "glad tidings of great joy." The following is extracted from "Buck's Theological Dictionary."—"When the letters of the pope's legate were read in the assembly of the cardinals, by which he assured the pope that all was transacted by the express will and command of the king, it was immediately decreed that the pope should march with his cardinals to the church of St. Mark, and in the most solemn manner give thanks to God for so great a blessing conferred on the See of Rome, and the Christian world; and that, on the Monday after, solemn mass should be celebrated in the church of Minerva, at which the pope, Gregory XIII., and cardinals were present; and that a jubilee should be published throughout the whole Christian world, and the cause of it declared to be, to return thanks to God for the extirpation of the enemies of the truth and church in France. In the evening, the cannon of St. Angelo were fired to testify the public joy; the whole city illuminated with bonfires; and no one sign of rejoicing omitted that was usually made for the greatest victories obtained in favor of the Roman church!!!" Alas! what spirit is here? Is it that of the compassionate Saviour?

or that of Satan, "who was a murderer from the beginning?"

Once more, and I have done on the crime of murder.

"Pope Gregory, drawing his fishpond, found more than six thousand heads of infants in it; upon which he deeply repented, and, confessing that the decree of unnatural celibacy was the cause of so horrid a slaughter, he condemned it, adding: 'It is better to marry than to give occasion of death.'"—*Hulderic Epist. adv. constit. de Cleric. Celib.*

Were it not a tax upon the reader's patience, I would here add a few extracts from standard Roman Catholic writers on morals, teaching the lawfulness of murder for a variety of frivolous reasons, such as might easily be offered by priests and nuns, in justification of the murders committed by them. But I forbear. See *Awf. Dis.* p. 355.

Respecting the licentious character of the Romish priesthood, but little need be said. If ever the golden mean should be observed on any subject, it should be on this. The subject is disgusting, and requires a skilful pen so to manage it as not to promote rather than destroy its practice. There is, however, a fastidiousness about it which is contrary both to scripture and sound reason. This vice, like every other, in order to destroy it, must be exposed to some extent. Nothing can be more pleasing to the priests than the senseless clamors which are raised against the supposed licentious tendency of Maria Monk's disclosures. None are louder on this point than themselves. They are like the thief, who is first to cry, stop thief! stop thief! Herein Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, and be-

comes the staunchest advocate of chastity. See that Canadian priest, so chaste that he cannot even shake hands with his own mother, lest he should receive pollution from the touch of woman! What hypocrisy!

It would seem, really, as if some of our newspaper editors had been under the tuition of the priests on this subject. Such moralists, while they avoid Charybdis, shipwreck against Scylla. The character of Roman priests and convents must be known before they can receive that treatment which of right belongs to them. Ah! how many thousands of unsuspecting and virtuous young ladies have been ruined for ever, for the want of just that knowledge which is to be found in Maria Monk's disclosures! And yet, how strange that good men should be so inconsiderate as to unite with profligate priests and others in the only cry which can prevent its diffusion among the people.

I will here give an extract from Da Costa, a Portuguese Roman Catholic writer, who had suffered in the Inquisition, in consequence of being accused of Freemasonry. It illustrates the adulterous character of Roman priests, as also the abominable character of the Confessional. Pope Paul IV., from some cause or other, was induced to issue a bull, ordering an investigation into the crime of *solicitant*, as it is called—that is, when the confessional is used by the priests for licentious purposes. This had reference to the kingdom of Spain. The following is an extract from the bull:—"Whereas certain ecclesiastics in the kingdom of Spain, and in the cities and dioceses thereof, having the cure of souls, or exercising such cure for others, or otherwise deputed to hear

the confessions of such penitents, have broken out into such heinous acts of iniquity, as to abuse the sacrament of penance in the very act of hearing the confessions, not fearing to injure the same sacrament, and him who instituted it, our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, by enticing and provoking, or trying to entice and provoke females to lewd actions at the very time when they were making their confessions."

"When this bull," says Da Costa, "was first introduced into Spain, the inquisitors published a solemn edict in all the churches belonging to the archbishopric of Seville, that any person knowing, or having heard of any friar or clergyman's having committed the crime of abusing the Sacrament of Confession, or in any manner having improperly conducted himself during the confession of a female penitent, should make a discovery of what he knew, within thirty days, to the holy tribunal; and very heavy censures were attached to those who should neglect or despise this injunction. When this edict was first published, such a considerable number of females went to the palace of the Inquisition, only in the city of Seville, to reveal the conduct of their infamous confessors, that twenty notaries, and as many inquisitors, were appointed to minute down their several informations against them; but these being found insufficient to receive the depositions of so many witnesses; and the inquisitors being thus overwhelmed, as it were, with the pressure of such affairs, thirty days more were allowed for taking the accusations, and this lapse of time also proving inadequate to the intended purpose, a similar period was granted, not only for a third but a fourth



time. The ladies of rank, character, and noble families, had a difficult part to act on this occasion, as their discoveries could not be made of any particular time and place. On one side, a religious fear of incurring the threatened censures, goaded their consciences so much as to compel them to make the required accusations; on the other side, a regard to their husbands, to whom they justly feared to give offence, by affording them any motives for suspecting their private conduct, induced them to keep at home. To obviate these difficulties, they had recourse to the measure of covering their faces with a veil, according to the fashion of Spain, and thus went to the inquisitors in the most secret manner they could adopt. Very few, however, escaped the vigilance of their husbands, who, on being informed of the discoveries and accusations made by their wives, were filled with suspicions; and yet, notwithstanding this accumulation of proofs against the confessors, produced to the inquisitors, this holy tribunal, contrary to the expectations of every one, put an end to the business, by ordering, that all crimes of this nature, proved by lawful evidence, should from thenceforth be consigned to perpetual silence and oblivion."

*Nar. &c., by Hippolyto Joseph Da Costa Pereira Furtado de Mendonea, vol. i. pp. 117-119.*

Here then, are the "holy confessors and the holy confessional" depicted to the life so far as decency will allow the picture to be drawn. It were an easy task, would decency permit, to prove, and that too, from Roman Catholic historians, that the priesthood of Rome is composed of the most licentious body of men that ever infested human society. And yet, the writers of the "Awful Expo-

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sure" have the brazen impudence to make the following declaration, on page 56 of their book. "Now the priests of Montreal and of Canada, do enjoy, at least, public esteem for morality, and if necessary, the testimony of every adult in the province would be gladly yielded to their excellent character." The father of lies could not fabricate a purer untruth than this.\*

I have taken some pains to inquire of gentlemen from Canada, respecting the moral character of the priests, out of the nunneries, and the result of my inquiries is, that it would be doing them no injustice to apply to them the above picture given of their brethren, the priests of Spain. I could mention names and particulars, if it were deemed advisable. I will mention the name of one "adult," in whose good opinion the friends of the nunnery appear to place much confidence. The gentleman alluded to, is the Rev. G. W. Perkins of Montreal. In a letter, dated March 18, 1836, speaking of the convent, he says:—"Now that fornication is committed, there is no reasonable question;" that is, in the nunnery.†

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\* A Canadian, speaking of the intemperance of the priests says—"that he had known a party of priests, with Bishop Lartigue at their head, hold a convivial meeting in his village on Saturday, and carry their revels so far that no one was fit to say mass on the following Sabbath."

† The following is the testimony of one of Rome's best popes, extracted from Baxter's *Jesuit Juggling*, page 219. "Pius II was one of the best that the Papal seat a long time had; and yet in his epistle to his father, Epist. 15, who was angry with him for fornication, he saith: 'You say you are sorry for my crime. I know not what opinion you have of me. You know what you were yourself. Nor am I an hypocrite, that I should desire rather to seem good, than to be good. It is an ancient and

According to the above picture, what is the confessional? Beyond all question, one of its grand objects is to secure female victims for the impure indulgence of the priests. Its history affords painful evidence of the truth of this declaration; and were it properly understood, no virtuous family would ever allow its female members to visit it, any sooner than they would allow them to visit a brothel.

For the truth of the following statement of facts, I hold myself responsible. A Catholic young woman, ardently devoted to her religion, by the name of Miss N——, lived in the family of Mr. M——, in New York. In her appearance she was quite prepossessing, and probably of virtuous character, up to the time to which this narrative refers. A short time before good-Friday, which was the first day of last April, she was observed to be uncommonly devoted to the ceremonies of her church. About this time, she said to a young lady of the family, "My father Confessor is a going to bestow upon me a wonderful gift, about next good-Friday, if I am faithful to go frequently to confession, and confess all my sins, and answer all the questions which he asks me." "What is it, a new gown?" replied the lady. "Oh, no, not a carnal gift, but a spiritual one; I am to be exalted, and to be made a spiritual sister."

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usual sin. I know not who is without it. This plague is spread far and near; though I see it not, seeing nature, which doth nothing amiss, hath bred this appetite in all living creatures, that mankind should be continued.' He who was the glory of the Papacy, knew none of the Hierarchy without this beastly sin."—No man, acquainted with the Romish priesthood, will question the infallibility of this pope's testimony in this instance.

Miss N. increased her visits to the confessional, going more frequently as the time of her *exaltation* drew near. At length the time arrived. Miss N. was to go to confess at that time in the evening. She went, but did not return until early the next morning. Sad disappointment and shame were depicted on her countenance. To the question, asking her where she had passed the night, she declined giving a direct answer. On one occasion she said, that she staid in the church all night; but then it should be known that the house of her father Confessor was in the immediate neighborhood of the church. Miss N. remained in the family of Mr. M. but a few days after this.

I leave my readers to make their own inferences. But I would ask, if it be not the duty of the friends of virtue and good order, to discountenance a practice so corrupting and so ruinous to all that is virtuous in the female character, as is that of confession to a corrupt priest. Destroy the confessional, and you at once destroy that fatal power, which the priests now have over their deluded followers; and until this is done, all your efforts to enlighten and elevate Catholics, will be thwarted by these enemies of the human race. Let, then, every lawful means be used to accomplish this end, remembering that it is at the confessional those chains are forged, applied, and riveted, which hold in bondage so large a portion of the human family; a bondage more dreadful than that of the African slave, because it is the bondage of the soul, which God made in his own glorious image.

I will now furnish my readers with a few extracts from a standard Catholic author, for the purpose of

illustrating the character of convents, and of showing that the statements made by Miss Monk, are in keeping with the past history of these establishments. As the authors of the "Awful Exposure" again and again refer us to the life of Scipio de Ricci, a Roman Catholic bishop, as a model writer on female convents, the extracts shall be taken from his memoirs. And it should be borne in mind, that these disclosures were made by this Roman prelate, not in the dark ages, but some forty or fifty years ago. And it should also be borne in mind, that Scipio de Ricci was not a Protestant or an enemy to convents, but a friend to the latter, and a staunch Catholic. And it should be remembered also, that this prelate, not having been connected with convents, knew nothing of them, save what he learned by report, and in his attempts to reform them; when, instead of the inmates being inclined to divulge their own infamy, they were doubtless disposed, out of regard to themselves, to conceal their deeds of darkness. But the case with Maria Monk is very different. She was an inmate of the convent for years, where she had every opportunity of witnessing its abominations. But my readers will see enough, in all conscience, to confirm Maria Monk's statements, in the subjoined extracts:—

"The Dominican Monks, who were members of one of the most numerous ecclesiastical orders, had been the scandal of all Italy, during one hundred and fifty years, for their total corruption: and their direction of the female convents had degenerated into a scene of the basest profligacy. Long habit had so accustomed them to the greatest licentiousness, that



scarcely any respect for public decency remained.”  
—Memoirs of Scipio de Ricci, pages 96, 97, vol. i.

The nuns of Pistoia testified that the monks taught them “every kind of vice,” and that they should look upon it as a great happiness. “That they were able to *satisfy their libidinous desires, without the inconvenience of children.*”

It was necessary to raze from the foundations a monastery and a female convent of Carmelites, which were in fact joined by means of subterranean passages.—Vol. i. pages 98, 121.

A Hindoo brahmin, having become a Catholic priest, says: “The Roman priests in India are like the bonzes of Japan. The nuns are the disciples of Diana, and their nunneries are seraglios for the monks. They were more often pregnant than married women in general. The Jesuits had become brahmins, in order to enjoy the privileges of that caste; among which were exemption from death for crime; and the right of enjoying the favors of every woman who pleased them, it being commonly received, that a brahmin priest sanctifies the woman whom he honors with his attentions.”—Vol. ii. pages 216, 217.

“The monks, confessors of the convents, openly taught the Tuscany nuns atheism; encouraged the most disgraceful libertinism; and filled them with impurity, sacrilege, and debauchery of the foulest kinds. Immorality was thus added to profanation; and corruption brought forth impiety. By tolerating these crimes, the pope plainly announced his indulgence of them; and by encouraging the commission of those iniquities, he became an accomplice.”—Vol. ii. pages 263 264

"The false or forged virtues of the monks and nuns, are but a tissue of hypocrisy, and a stimulant to the most odious vices. The institutions called *Virginales*, were schools of corruption and licentiousness: and the *soi-disant* tribunal of *penitence* is the constant source of infamous wickedness, by those impudent jugglers, whose authority depends on the blindness of man. The monks, the nuns, their superiors, and even the pope himself, not only tolerated these disorders, but took no measures to arrest the infidelity and impiety of those who were daily adding new victims to their atheism and inordinate voluptuousness."—Vol. ii. pages 276, 277.

But enough of such filth; for it is filth of the darkest die; and such as ought not to be named, did not the cause of humanity, virtue, and religion, demand it, for the same reason that the Son of God divested the ancient scribes and Pharisees, the embryo prototypes of Romish priests, of their hypocritical robes, and thus enabled the people to see that they were "FULL OF DEAD MEN'S BONES, AND OF ALL UNCLEANNES."—Matt. xxiii. 27. The Saviour knew that there was no other way to destroy the superstitious veneration with which the Jews regarded their priests, just as the Catholics, only in a much higher degree, regard theirs. The naming of such vices, should be regarded as an evil, the object of which is the removal of a much greater one; just in the sense in which many a medical prescription is an evil, absolutely necessary, however, to be administered, in order to remove disease, and secure health. The unqualified condemnation, therefore, of this moral medicine, on the ground that some writers deal in it too freely, is as absurd as it would be to

condemn the "healing art," because unskilful men abuse it.

Before leaving this subject, I wish to add a single remark further. And that is this: That all the vices spoken of by Maria Monk as practised in the Hotel Dieu, (yea, and more too,) are abundantly inculcated by the standard writers on morals of the order of Jesuits. If any man wishes proof of this assertion, I would refer him, among others, to Paschal's Provincial letters, a work of undying celebrity. Paschal was himself a Roman Catholic, but opposed to the Jesuits.

According to these moralists, a priest may commit lewdness on the ground of self-gratification; and then on the ground of self-defence, or defending his reputation, he may lawfully murder, deceive, lie, and swear falsely, or employ others to do the same for him. I know that these principles are horrid beyond conception. But they are true; and I hold myself pledged to prove them, giving chapter and verse, if the priests, in any responsible manner, have the audacity to deny them.

Who, then, after reading the preceding part of this chapter, can seriously question the general truth of Maria Monk's statements respecting the character of the Canadian priests and nuns? Especially when it is recollected, that a large portion of these priests are foreign Jesuits, expelled from foreign countries, as an order of men too infamous to be tolerated by civil governments. They have been expelled, as an order of men, from almost every country in Europe, by Catholic as well as Protestant governments. Hence they come in swarms to the North American continent, bringing along with

them their ill-gotten gain, by which they build colleges, churches, nunneries, &c. The "disclosures" of Miss Monk, therefore, are unquestionably true, and they would be substantially true, even if it should be proved that she had never been a nun in the Hotel Dieu. This is the opinion of the mass of the Protestant people in Canada. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the testimony of Maria Monk will no more be disbelieved on the ground that she discloses practices so abominable, as to cause virtue to hide its blushing face at the very mention of them.

In conclusion, I will mention two facts, which ought not to be forgotten. 1st. A large number of the Canadian priests are Jesuits, from France: and 2d. The fact that when Bonaparte broke up the convents in France, bones of murdered infants were found in great abundance. Can it then be supposed, that the French Jesuits are any better in Canada, than they were in France?

## CONCLUSION.

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WHAT then is the result of the whole matter? We have, in the first place, examined the "Awful Exposure," published in defence of the Canadian priests and nuns; and have found it to be an entire failure; nay, we have found it to furnish strong evidence, in confirmation of Miss Monk's claims to public confidence. Thus also in reference to every attempt made by them, for the same object. We have, in the second place, briefly noticed the principal arguments in support of Miss Monk's claims to our confidence, as an ex-nun, derived from a consideration of her incapacity to have acted the part of an impostor—of her minute and extensive nunnery knowledge—of her comparative ignorance of other matters—of the marks on her person, produced by the infliction of penance and nunnery violence—of the forlorn condition in which she was first discovered in New York—of her supposed dying penitential confession to the Rev. Mr. Tappin—of her consistent conduct with the demands of her supposed truth—of the internal evidence of her book—of the moral impress, stamped on her mind—of the testimony of others, direct and indirect—of the failure of her opponents in their varied attempts of self-defence—of revelation, reason, and nature—of the past history of the Roman priesthood and convents. And now, I reiterate the question, what is the conclusion? Is there a particle of ground for suspense? If so, what is it? Is there a single position, taken by her opponents unswept away? If so, let it be named.

But, perhaps, some will say, after all, there is a possibility of her being false, of her being an impostor, and of course, of the priests and nuns being innocent



of the crimes charged upon them. Yes; there is a possibility in the case; and so there is a *possibility* of her being changed into a "*pillar of salt*." But is there any *probability* of it? The ground of rational conclusions, is *not possibilities*, but *probabilities*. When gentlemen, in their reasonings, substitute the former in place of the latter, they place themselves beyond the limits of reason.

With reasonable men the case is different. It is believed that the foregoing arguments are sufficient to establish them in the belief, that Maria Monk is not an impostor, but is truly what she professes to be, and that she has told substantially the truth, respecting the nunnery. Such will readily perceive the importance of the "Awful Disclosures," as a means for opposing the conventual system, as also the spread of popery.

Let Protestants, then, act reasonably in appropriately using them for these objects. Let them remember the deplorable state of more than one half of Christendom, in consequence of popery. Let them look at wretched starving Ireland. Let them behold bleeding and distracted Spain, as well as South America. Let them consider the ignorance, poverty, and oppression, of papal countries in general. Let them call to mind the condition of Canada; a vast majority of whose inhabitants are so ignorant, as to be incapable of either reading or writing their names. They are sunk not only in ignorance, but in vice. Intemperance abounds to a fearful extent, the priests, their spiritual guides, setting them the example. Let the American people especially, open their eyes upon their own beloved country, and see with what rapid strides, popery has been spreading itself, for a few years past, over the length and breadth of the land. Let them count the number of its churches, mass-houses, convents, colleges, academies, and newspapers, all devoted to the dissemination of a religion which is fundamentally hostile to every thing that is truly American. Let them count the number of its devotees, all of them marshalled and kept in the most

abject subjection to these foreign Jesuits; ready to go anywhere, or to do any thing which their unprincipled leaders may direct. And then, let them remember, that the God of their fathers has put into their hands, this powerful instrumentality, with which they may oppose and break the unholy power of the Roman priests in their country.

Before closing, I wish to offer a single remark respecting the following work of Miss Monk. It has been written by the same worthy gentleman that penned her first volume; and great care has been exercised in writing it, to give to the community nothing but the simple statements of the authoress. The subject matter is hers. With reference to this point, I speak with the more confidence, from the fact, that it has been written, since she came to reside with the people of my pastoral charge.

And now, in conclusion, I would guard the public against being misled by the deceptive arts of Roman priests. They undoubtedly will do something forthwith for the purpose of weakening the impression, which the following "Disclosures" are adapted to make. They will be ready perhaps, to swear that they are a translation from some old Portuguese work; or that there never was such a priest as the murdered L'Esperance; or that there is no such place as the Island described; or, perhaps, it being in the dead of the winter, when a visit to Canada and such an examination of the nunneries, subterranean passages, Seminary, and the Black Nuns' Island, as has been proposed to make, would be attended with extreme difficulty, they may possibly offer a compliance with the conditions, specified by the meeting, held in New York, in August, 1836. A bewildering flourish of some sort or other will unquestionably be made; but it is hoped that the community will remember the deceptive tricks heretofore practised on them by the priests, and that all further ones will be disregarded.

## PREFACE

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THE following pages contain disclosures relating to various persons and scenes, many of which were not alluded to in my former volume. Some of these facts I did not consider important; and of others I felt a strong reluctance to speak. I have at length come to the conclusion to add thus much to the facts I have laid before the American public, under a belief that it is likely to prove useful.

Since the greater part of the following pages were prepared for the press, my character and the truth of my book have been strongly attacked by several persons. I do not entertain any unkind feelings towards such as may be honest in opposing me, nor do I fear the result; for I know I am speaking the truth, and they will soon become convinced, and acknowledge their error.

I have only to offer to my opponents the following chapters, in which they will find more facts to meet, new scenes and personages to explain or justify. If they should accuse me of deriving these also from the Montreal Magdalen Asylum, I hope they will not keep the place closed, nor disperse or conceal the inmates, as they have done since they published such a charge against the "Awful Disclosures."

## PART I.

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### ACCOUNT

OF

### THE ATTEMPTS TO ABDUCT MARIA MONK.

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#### CHAPTER I.

Discouragements and Difficulties attending the first Publication  
my Book.

I HAVE had various trials to undergo since my escape from the Nunnery, many of which I have particularly stated in the sequel of my Narrative, which is contained in the last editions of my "Awful Disclosures." Other trials, however, have been my portion, some of which may have arisen in part from my want of acquaintance with the world, and others from the peculiar situation in which I was placed, among persons as ignorant of me, as I was of them. I have met with none, or at most but very few indeed, who were at first prepared to believe my story; and some have long remained incredulous, at least in part. The doubts expressed by respectable persons around me, have often given me extreme pain: for they always intimated want of confidence in me.

Besides, I have sometimes had to feel very keenly the effects of my self-conviction; for, in more than one instance, I have heard disparaging remarks thrown out by the inconsiderate or unfeeling. Perhaps it is not to be wondered at, then, in spite of the resolution I had formed, of making known my experience to the world, if I should have felt, at some periods, a desire for retirement and tranquillity, in some place, no matter how humble, where I might be free from trials like these.

At a period a little preceding the publication of the first edition of my book, I was much disquieted by the circumstances in which I found myself. I felt extremely uncertain what reception awaited me, and supposed that in case public incredulity should render the sale of my book very small, I should be involved in heavy pecuniary responsibilities, without the remotest hope of deliverance. What the laws of the country might condemn me to, in such a case, I knew not; but I sometimes apprehended they might be severe.

Now, while I was in such a state of mind, I received a letter, which excited my curiosity in an uncommon degree. I had directed the penny-post to bring to my lodgings any letters addressed to me, because several intended for my hands, had been lying a long time in the Post-office. He left one for me one day, dated in New York, written in Canadian style, half French and half English, and signed F. P., which I, of course, understood for the initials of Father Phelan, the father of my child.



I presumed, at the first sight, that the letter must be a forged one, for I could not persuade myself that Father Phelan would visit New York, at so inclement a season, or that he would invite me to hold an interview with him. Yet, on the other hand, the style and language of the letter, as well as the signature, reminded me strongly of him; and my curiosity was excited, to discover who it could be, that had made so good an imitation. The letter invited me to go, between the hours of two and three, to the corner of Franklin Square and Ferry street, as the writer had something important to say to me.

I thought there could be no danger in going there, to see who the impostor might be; and the distance being short from my lodgings, although the weather was bad, I went. Near the corner I saw a man, whom I immediately recognised. It was Father Phelan; and he accosted me with mildness, told me he had something of importance to say to me, but wished to avoid observation, and proposed that I should go somewhere to a more retired spot. Without much reflection, I consented to accompany him, making a resolution, however, to keep on my guard, feeling some dread of placing myself in his power.

We proceeded to a very considerable distance from the place of meeting, he asking questions, and making remarks about my Disclosures, &c.; and at length he pointed at a house, which he proposed to enter, that we might converse at leisure. I, how-

ever, pointed at another, which had a shop, and looked something like an inn, and told him I would not object to entering there. He consented; and we seated ourselves in a room which was shown us, I telling him, that I would not trust myself in his power, as I had reason to fear the consequences, but that in that place I was not afraid of him. He spoke as if disposed to quiet my apprehensions; and then entered into a long conversation, in which he showed that he was well acquainted with the contents of the affidavit I made in Montreal, in August, 1835, and which was left in the hands of Mr. Ogden, the King's Attorney. He, it appeared, must have had it in his possession, although it had been retained against my will, and I had not been able to regain it, after presenting it as a ground for judicial investigation.

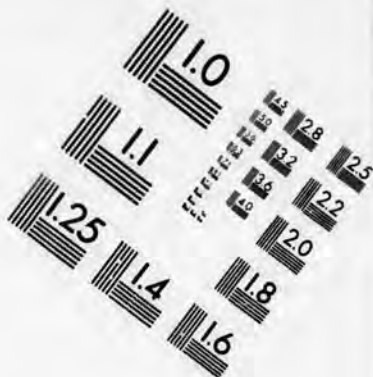
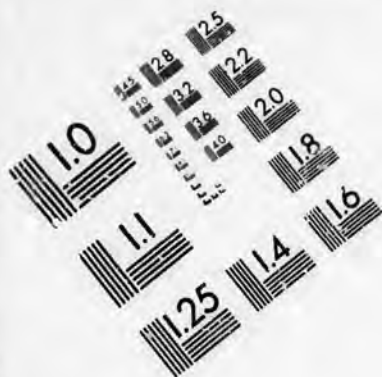
He made different inquiries about my plans and intentions, and spoke of my intended publication with much solicitude, but in such a manner as to show that he supposed it contained nothing more than the manuscript he had seen. He remarked that the priests in Canada did not blame me for what I had done, being disposed to throw it all on my advisers. He said he was glad I had not mentioned his name in speaking of the death of St. Frances, and in another case, in which also I had called him a priest. He would rather not have it published that he was engaged in either of these scenes.

He inquired whether I had any difficulty in get-

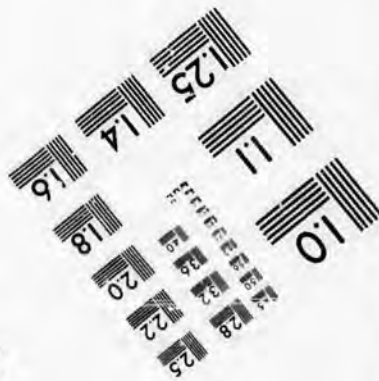
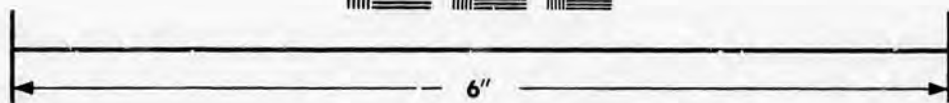
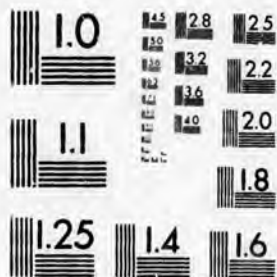
ting the work published. I told him that in the present state of things, money was wanted to carry it on, which I had not at my command. The stereotype plates had not been paid for. He immediately said, that he would supply me with money, to a large amount if I wished, if I would let him have the plates. I did not refuse this offer, for, at the time, I did not know that I should ever be able to publish the work, nor was I sure that it would be safe for me to do it, on the one hand, or useful to the world, on the other. It was evident that the prospect of getting possession of the plates, raised great hopes in his mind; and he showed much earnestness in pressing his request. It appeared to me, however, that he had a very erroneous idea of the importance of this object; for he seemed to think that if he could once get the stereotype plates, the work would be effectually and forever suppressed; whereas I could at any time have prepared another.

Although Father Phelan had invited me to an interview, on the pretence that he had something of much importance to me to communicate, our conversation took such a turn, during most of the time I was in his company, that the promised information was left out of view. He several times adverted to things in Canada, but told me nothing of much importance or any thing there. Once or twice also, he spoke of our child: but in such terms as to displease me very much, making some such expression as this, that he would rather it should have its





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brains knocked out, than be brought forward as a witness against him.

The only thing I can recall, which might be considered as any thing like the important information he had said he had to communicate, was his declaration that those in whom I confided, in New York, were not my friends, but in reality my enemies. Of this he gave me no evidence, and of course I was not much disposed to rely on his word: yet I felt, as I had often done, that there was then but few, very few, who entirely relied on my story, or who seemed disposed to treat me with kindness and friendship. Whatever I might think of those around me in New York, however, I would not allow myself to confide in him so far as to be put off my guard; and I let him clearly understand, that although I was willing to talk with him, I was determined to regard him with caution and suspicion.

After a long interview, we parted; with an agreement to meet on a future time at a particular place where I was to acquaint him with my determination concerning the sale of the stereotype plates. On the same day, I intimated to one of my acquaintances, that I knew how to obtain money, if it was thought best, in exchange for the plates; but this caused an alarm among those who felt interested for me, and measures were soon taken which rendered the assistance of Father Phelan quite unnecessary.

Accordingly, at the second interview, he learned from me, that the work was beyond his reach,

which appeared to produce a momentary regret; but he soon remarked that that was a matter of no very great importance, for there was to be a publication in opposition to the work, as soon as it should appear, which would prevent the people of the United States from believing it; and besides, if I would leave New York, return to Canada, and reside there, as he wished me to do, I could come out with a public denial of it, and that would have all the effect he could desire.

Soon after this time I changed my residence, and stayed a while at Wehawken, in New Jersey, opposite New York. As I occasionally visited the city, he found opportunities to meet me several times, in different places. He sometimes requested me to see him again, always professing to have something more to say to me. It might, perhaps, be thought, that it would have been more safe, proper, or judicious, in me, if I had refused all interviews with him from the first: but I began with a belief that some one had attempted to impose upon me; and after I had found it to be Father Phelan himself, who had come on from Canada, and was urgent to converse with me, I found no particular objection to make against another and another interview; and feeling more and more confident that he dared not make any attempt to do me injury, or to get me into his power, while I conducted with caution, I saw him time after time; and if any one is to suffer from this publication of it, it seems to be himself rather than I. Whatever my readers may

think of my prudence or imprudence, however, they will not forget that I have had little instruction, in the course of my life, in the opinions and customs of society, out of the Convent; and I am telling facts, not undertaking to apologize for what has happened.

I will therefore proceed to remark, that when Father Phelan proposed a place for meeting me, it was commonly a different place from that where we had met last, and I uniformly refused to meet at the place proposed, and chose another. Always when I went there, I found he had taken his station at a distance from it, where he could observe my approach, and that he always seemed to discover me a considerable time before I saw him.

He informed me one day, that there was a priest with whom he had been conversing, who wished to see me, and asked my consent to an interview. I refused, and so resolutely, that although he appeared to wish it, he soon ceased to urge that request, but proposed to let him stand at a distance, so that he might see me, while we were conversing together.

Father Phelan wrote me a letter, while I was at Wehawken, enclosed in one superscribed to the person at whose house I stayed, requesting me to meet him on one of the occasions above referred to. It was not signed; but I knew the author from the hand, and other internal evidences. After my return to the city, and while in a retired situation in the upper part of it, near the Dry Dock, he sent

me another letter, by two boys, in which he desired that I would meet him at a particular corner near the Park, at nine o'clock; and although I was not on the spot till about eleven, he came up and accosted me, and prevailed on me to take a turn down Spruce street, and one or two others, while he communicated some requests with much cogency. There was, he said, a woman in another part of the city, somewhere above Broadway and Canal street, who was much disposed to befriend me, and in whom I might place entire confidence. He recommended to me to go and see her, and to take up my abode with her, as I should be sure of good treatment. He added that the lady was much more a friend to me than to him; which led me to suppose that she did not fully confide in the character of priests, and was suspicious of his intentions towards me. What he said was calculated to make me think she might be one of those Roman Catholic women, who know something of what I know, and at the same time that she possessed humanity enough to afford me aid and protection, while she credited my story. I refused to visit the house he indicated to me; but the character he gave of the lady, I did not forget.

This was the last time I saw Father Phelan. When we separated, he requested me to see him again, near the same place: but I did not comply with that desire. A considerable time afterwards, a letter was brought to my lodgings, by two boys, which bore some marks of his; but I am unable to say with certainty, whether he was the writer or not.



I am not sure of the precise time at which he left New York; but I believe it was not far from that period. Such was the state of my feelings arising from the perplexities attending the preparation and publication of my first editions, that I sometimes felt great uncertainty about the course I ought to pursue. I sometimes feared that my pecuniary affairs might become seriously embarrassed, and apprehended that one or another individual might yet involve me in great difficulty, in case my book should prove unsuccessful, as I sometimes thought it would. Being very ignorant of the laws, as I before remarked, I for a while lived under the impression, that I might be at any time imprisoned for debts I had not yet the means of paying. The incredulity of many Protestants with whom I met, often weighed heavily on my spirits, and led me to ask myself, to what purpose was I disquieting my mind, and exciting the enmity of the priests; when some of those whose benefit I wished to promote, seemed as suspicious of my motives and as hostile to me as those whom I denounced.

## CHAPTER II.

Reception of my first editions by Protestants—Newspaper aspersions and opposition—Depression and discouragements—Wish to retire into obscurity with my infant—Measures taken to effect my desire.

THE violent denunciations of my book which I read in several Protestant newspapers, and the malignant and often unfounded attacks made by some of them against the few persons who had first believed my tale and befriended me, helped to depress my spirits: while the Montreal affidavits contained several things that greatly wounded me. Some of those documents cast the most unfounded aspersions upon my character, which it was impossible for me at once to remove by opposing evidence, from the very nature of the case; and these, I had no doubt, must have produced impressions on the minds of some honest people, unfavorable to me. But none of these causes gave me half as much pain as the affidavit of my mother. That long paper, (which the reader will find in the Appendix to the new editions of my "Awful Disclosures,") contained so many aspersions of my character, and was written in such a spirit, that I knew not which must suffer most in the opinions of the virtuous, my parent or myself. Those who have feeling, will probably not wonder that in such circumstances poor Maria Monk should sometimes have felt a great indifference to passing scenes, and even to life itself. Cer-

tainly, I think some excuse will be found in them for my frequent change of purpose and varying views of things.

An incident occurred about this period, which led to some painful thoughts. A woman, in a plain black dress, and accompanied by a boy, obtained an introduction to me one day, by making fair representations to some of my friends, on pretence of having been converted from the Roman faith, after receiving an education in a Convent in France. She said she had always entertained a high idea of the sanctity of nuns, and could not be persuaded to doubt it, by any of her friends, until she had read my book, which she was now unable to disbelieve, on account of the internal evidence of truth which it presented. She wished to converse with me, and put a few questions, that her mind might be a little further enlightened. She was therefore introduced, after giving her name and address, which was that of a teacher of a private school in the lower part of the city.

This lady having expressed a wish to see me in private, we withdrew for some time, during which she said some things which led me to suspect her being a Roman Catholic in disguise. She put several questions to me, which I think must have been put into her mouth by some priest. From other expressions, I became convinced that she knew much of nunneries. She then turned to ask some questions about my infant, and remarked, that she could not bear to see the child of a priest—she thought it

a pity it should live—it would be a kindness if somebody would take it out of the way—she could hardly keep her hands off from it—she wished its neck was wrung. I began to be somewhat agitated, and was glad to get back into the other room among the family. But there, strange as it was, she repeated one or two of these expressions about my child; yet left a piece of money in its hand on going away. The impression this interview left with me, was painful, although so unintelligible was the stranger's conduct.

She afterwards made me two or three calls, when she seemed still more wild and crazy than before: for she once brought a young man with her, whom I never saw before nor since, but whom she told me she had induced to consent to marry me, urging me to take him without delay for a husband. I answered the woman very shortly, but it did not discourage her. One of my friends soon afterwards called at her school, and informed her that she could not be again admitted to see me; when her appearance and manners were so equivocal as to excite some suspicion that she had some project in view, but nothing further has ever come to our knowledge in relation to her.

Since I have spoken so much at length on the state of my feelings about that period, I may add, that the recollection of scenes in the Convent still continued at times to distress me. Although it appears to be gradually diminishing, it has not yet entirely passed away; and about the period of which I speak,

it was more vivid than it is at present. I still occasionally revert to one event and another which I have there witnessed, and sometimes review some of the circumstances through which I have passed, at different periods of my life, with distressing feelings. I have also reason to believe, that some superstitious ideas inspired in early life, are not easy to be entirely eradicated, even after the judgment has been convinced of their erroneous nature.

As an evidence of the excitability of my fears in sleep, I may mention, that a female friend who lodged in the same bed with me about the time of which I was speaking, waked me one night from a most distressing dream. She informed me afterwards, that on coming to bed after I had fallen asleep, I sprung wildly up, seized her, and with the appearance of extreme terror, endeavored to throw her from me, and to avoid her. When she had succeeded in waking me, it was a long time before she could compose me. I had been dreaming that the priests had me again in the Black Nunnery, and were just laying hold of me to inflict upon me some dreadful punishment. Some time in the last spring, I was informed by a young Canadian, whom I had formerly known, and with whom I had several times met within a few weeks in New York, that a man had arrived from Montreal who had expressed a desire to see me. He had represented himself as a firm believer in my "Disclosures," and as being in possession of facts calculated to corroborate them, which he was deterred from



publishing merely by a regard to a branch of business in which he was to engage on his return home. I consented to an introduction, as did those friends with whom I commonly consulted in such cases; and he made me several calls, in which he conversed at first in a manner corresponding with what I had been led to expect. But on one or two occasions, when no one else was present, he intimated sentiments of a different nature, and expressed suspicions of the motives of my Protestant friends. He also threw out remarks which led me to suspect that he had had intercourse with some of the priests before leaving Montreal. I was displeased with his apparent duplicity, and gave him little encouragement to proceed: so that if he had any project, he did not make it known to me.

Not long after my last interview with Father Phelan, and when I presumed he must have been gone back to Canada, I formed the resolution one day of calling on Mrs. B., of whom he had spoken in such favorable terms. I found the house in which she had lodgings without difficulty; and, on introducing myself to her, met with a very kind and friendly reception. I had been afraid to go there with Father Phelan, or during his stay in the city, even alone, because it was a place he had recommended, lest some plan might have been formed to get me into his power. I never, I believe, thought of going to any house which he proposed, without the reflection that I might have my mouth stopped with a plaster, or in some other way.

Mrs. B. expressed great interest in me; and her friendly reception induced me to speak of my own affairs and feelings with perfect frankness, in a private interview she gave me in a room by ourselves. When she heard my expressions of anxiety about the results of my publication, she advised me to proceed no further, but to give up all. And this she urged, not on the ground that it would injure the priests, but merely as what was expedient for myself. She did not question the truth of any part of my story—far from it, she appeared to admit and believe it all, and to entertain feelings of great enmity against the priests. But she remarked that I had done much, indeed quite as much as anybody could reasonably expect of me; and now I ought to withdraw from a situation that exposed me to many unpleasant things, and tempted those around me to make false professions of regard for my interests, that they might gain something for themselves. She told me that if I was disposed to live with her, I should enjoy all the advantages of retirement and comfort, and she would undertake to ensure me a pleasant home as long as I should wish to remain.

She went on to say, that if I would consent, she would take a house anywhere out of New York, and make Father Phelan furnish the money necessary for our expenses, saying, however, that I need not go to Canada. To all this I objected, and then hinted at a kind offer I once received from one of my uncles in Montreal, which she said she would advise me to accept, if I would not agree to her plan.

She then urged me to bring away my child from my lodging ; and go directly to her. She was unable, however, to get any promise out of me ; for although I believed her sincere in her professions of friendship, I felt some fears of trusting myself wholly in the power of any stranger devoted to the Roman Catholic faith.

I once conversed with her about my mother's affidavit. She offered to write to her, as an old acquaintance, to make inquiries on the subject.

I had another interview with Mrs. B. soon after the publication of my book, when she pointed out several little things which she considered as inaccurate or inconsistent ; and when the Montreal affidavits came out, she told me they would probably ruin the work, by convincing the public that it was false.

I had some conversation with her, some time subsequently to this, on the expediency of having some man to take charge of my affairs ; when she proposed her husband. When I objected to him as a person unknown out of his immediate sphere, she seemed displeased ; and when I mentioned the name of a clergyman who I thought might possibly undertake the task, she expressed anger, and said if I trusted him I should be a beggar—it would be jumping from the frying pan into the fire—and she went on abusing me in rather severe terms. She went indeed, so far, that I left the house, telling her I would never return ; but she called me back, and explained a little, wishing to remove unfavorable impressions from my mind.

## CHAPTER III.

Letter from Father Phelan to a friend—His propositions reiterated—  
A letter from my uncle—His arrival in New York—Interview with him.

SOME time after this, (how long I do not know with precision,) I received an invitation from Mrs. B. to call at her house. I complied, when she showed me a letter from Father Phelan, in which he invited me to go to Canada. I examined the letter, and had reason to believe it was from him, partly because it contained an expression, ("cher cœur"—dear heart,) in the first sentence, which was alluded to at the close as a mark of its genuineness, and which I felt confident no person but he would have used, as it was one which he had often introduced in conversation in the Nunnery.

Mrs. B. then told me she had received a reply to her letter to my mother, in which she declared that she had neither written nor signed the affidavit which was published as hers; but that she had been prevailed on by the agency of some of the priests to allow it to go out uncontradicted—some person having written and published it in her name. She then produced the letter and showed it to me; and I recognised my mother's handwriting, which is very peculiar, and almost impossible to be mistaken. She, however, refused to let me carry away either of the letters.

She then urged me to apply to Father Phelan and, notwithstanding my unwillingness, wrote an answer, which she insisted on my signing, though it contained nothing that appeared to me of much importance. On other occasions she showed me more than one letter from Father Phelan, in which something was commonly said of me or my affairs; but during all this time I maintained an unshaken resolution never to trust myself in his power, or to confide far in any person who I might suspect of being confederate with him.

It happened, that owing to circumstances similar to some I have before detailed, some time in the month of May, 1836, I made up my mind, that I had better withdraw, if possible, from the excitement and trials to which I had been so long subject, and retire into obscurity in some country place, where I might spend my life unknown. I thought that I had perhaps done all my duty—I had revealed as much as would be believed. In this strife of mind, I naturally recalled a flattering offer made to me by an uncle one day, in August, 1835, during my visit to Montreal, after my exertions to bring my charges to a legal investigation had failed. I thought I might safely apply to him. I accordingly wrote him a letter, requesting him, if he could, to come to New York and remove me to some retreat such as I have described; and taking it to Mrs. B's, asked her to forward it for me to Canada. This was a step which Father Phelan had never proposed or even hinted at; and one which, I presumed, he



would not be likely to approve of. It was one which I thought would effectually secure me from the power of the priests, of whom I felt as much dread as ever. If Father Phelan had even made the most distant suggestion in favor of it, that alone would have been sufficient to deter me from deciding upon its adoption. Mrs. B. took my letter with readiness, and promised to forward it to Canada.

After a few days, I called again, when Mrs. B. gave me a letter from my uncle, in which he acknowledged the receipt of mine, and expressed his willingness to comply with my wishes, but said I had written in such a manner that he apprehended I might change my mind, and wished me to write again if I adhered to my intention. He added, that he had sent on money, and Mrs. B. could accompany me part of the way to Montreal. I wrote again, accordingly, repeating the former request, but declaring that I could never consent to trust myself in Canada, and received an answer to that letter also, in which my uncle still expressed doubts of the firmness of my purpose, and requested that I would still write once more, saying, on the receipt of my letter he would immediately set out for New York. From the time when I made up my mind pretty decidedly to go, I began to speak of it freely with some of my New York friends; but they opposed me, and argued with me against it.

I happened to call once more at Mrs. B's, too soon, as I knew, for my last letter to bring him from Montreal, when her sister told me my uncle was already

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in town. I replied that I could not believe it; soon after which she said he was in sight in the street, and a person entered directly afterwards, whom I recognised as him. My feelings almost overcame me. Whatever was the cause, I was quite unable to speak, and could hardly stand. His unexpected appearance in so sudden a manner, filled my mind with many painful thoughts and apprehensions; and I immediately began to realize that I had in fact a great repugnance to a step which I had before considered as easy and pleasant. Some of my friends had solemnly warned me against trusting myself in the power of any one from Canada, without some good security; and the thought of what might be my fate in case I should, when too late, find my confidence betrayed, quite overpowered me. At the same time, the sight of a person just from Montreal, revived many of the most distressing recollections. I was able at length to master my feelings, and engaged in conversation with my uncle.

He spoke as if he expected to take me off without delay, and appeared surprised when I expressed a doubt of being ready immediately. After conversing together for a time in the house, we walked out, and conferred at leisure on several topics interesting to me. He told me, that although he had at first thought only of having me with him at his residence near Montreal, as I preferred not to return there, he was willing to change his abode; and would remove to Vergennes, in Vermont, if I chose. Being a bachelor, he could easily change his residence;

and he was willing to repeat to me the propositions he had made to me while in Montreal last summer, viz. to support me and my child for life, give me the care of his household, in place of his house-keeper, without requiring me to contradict any thing I had said, although I had now published a book, and then had only made an affidavit. The only condition he would require of me, was, that I should henceforth be silent about those things which had given me so much trouble, and never publish any thing more about the Nunnery. He seemed to think that I should thus save myself much vexation and anxiety; not intimating at all that he wished me to be silent on account of the priests, whose part he did not pretend to take. So far, indeed, was my uncle from appearing as their advocate, that he cursed them whenever they were spoken of, and seemed to have not much better opinion of them than I had.

He spoke also of my book, and of the measures taken in relation to it, as well as of my being a ward in Chancery, with such familiarity as to surprise me. He informed me that he had made many inquiries on these subjects, mentioning bookstores at which he had called, individuals with whom he had conversed on different points, without letting them suspect who he was, and documents to which he had had access; and claimed to know more of some of my concerns than I did myself. All this showed a great interest in me; and I naturally attributed it all to his regard for his unfortunate niece. He told me that the result of his inquiries into my affairs, was,

that I had placed too much confidence in several persons, who, under fair pretences, had gained great advantages to themselves; and from that time afterwards, he occasionally threw out insinuations against some of those whom I had most confided in, with the mention of circumstances to which he gave an unfavorable aspect. This might arise, I thought, from his partiality for me, and I was disposed to excuse him, as he was not acquainted with those persons, and I could not prevail on him to be introduced to them.

Before my uncle parted from me, he told me I might say, if any of my friends inquired about him, that he was soon going to New Haven for nine days. He went to within a short distance of my lodgings, and then appointed to meet me the next day at a house in Chrystie street, where I understood lodged a Miss F., a friend of Mrs. B. Some of my friends whom I informed of my interview with my uncle, were incredulous, thinking it was not himself, being apprehensive that some plan was on foot to get me into the power of my enemies. They therefore began to put some impediments in my way, objecting to my leaving home, and endeavoring to amuse me in the house. The next day, however, I called at the house indicated by my uncle, where I found Miss F. in company with my uncle and two other men, one of whom, a tall man, somewhat lame, I recognised as Mr. F., her brother. This man I had occasionally seen in my childhood, at my mother's,

in Montreal, but never knew much about him, or whether he had any profession.

His sister, who is a mantuamaker, is a Canadian by birth and education, and has numerous and respectable family connexions in Canada. One of her cousins, I know, is a priest; and I might have said the same of Mrs. B. How long Miss F. has lived in New York, I do not know. She boards in a Protestant family, as I soon discovered, as he requested us to speak nothing but French, for fear I might become known to those in the house.



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## CHAPTER IV.

Arrival of several Canadians—Interviews with them.

I HAD but a short interview with my uncle that day, and soon returned home, without speaking to either of the other men. I asked him, however, who they were, and he informed me that they had lately arrived from Canada, on a mere visit. I inquired whether they came with him; and I now remember that he did not answer, but spoke of something else. The next day, as I was walking in that part of the city, I was met by those two men, who addressed me with cordiality; saying, they had learned from my uncle that I intended to leave the city and live with him. They said he was a good man, and they thought it would be a wise step on my part. I should by all means accept of his propositions; but I ought to avoid the Catholics. "But," said I, "what are you but Catholics?" They smiled, and answered, "Ah, but we are not such as you need to fear—we don't count ourselves Catholics."

They told me that my uncle would perhaps want to see me occasionally, if I did not go at once; and proposed to fix on some way in which he might give me information. They thought the best means would be by writing, and leaving a note in some safe and convenient place. They said it would be better not to have my uncle introduced to my friends,

because they would probably wish to prevent my departure.

All this time they did not urge me to go, but constantly spoke of my journey as of what I had freely determined on, and on which they would not influence me, except so far as to express their approbation of my decision, and to say, that the sooner I went, the better it would be for me. Before they left me, they mentioned that one or two other Canadians were in the city, whom they thought I might like to see. I made no objection to seeing them, as they said they felt a friendly interest in me, and would be pleased to have an interview.

They told me also, that while I remained where I was, they, as well as my uncle, would feel much anxiety for me, and would wish to be assured of my welfare very frequently; for they had so bad an opinion of those who professed so much friendship for me, that they believed they had very evil designs, and would be glad to murder me. I could not persuade them that this was out of the question, and they insisted that in order to satisfy them, they must have some way in which they could ascertain from time to time whether I was still in my present lodgings, and alive and well. They proposed that I should spend much of my time in my chamber, the window of which they got me to point out to them; and to appear at it whenever I might see my uncle or either of them passing. In case they had any written communication to make to me, they would raise their hands in passing, two or three times; or, if the

rainy weather continued, they would open their umbrellas once or twice, as a signal, so that I might take an opportunity to visit the spot agreed on for the deposite of their notes, and so ascertain where and when they might wish me to speak with them.

I had made up my mind so decidedly in favor of leaving New York, and placing myself under my uncle's protection, that I gave several of my friends distinctly to understand that such was my intention, as I have before stated. Fearing that their misjudged kindness (as I then considered it) might raise embarrassments in my way, I however did not intend to communicate to them the exact period when I intended to leave them. Indeed, I did not myself agree with my uncle on any precise day and hour, until a few days beforehand. He passed my lodgings on Sunday, the 22d of May, and stopped to converse with me. We then pitched upon Wednesday, the 25th of May, at — o'clock in the afternoon. At that time I was to meet him at Mrs. B's; or if any thing prevented, I was to go where I could with my child, and such of my clothes as I could bring with me, when he would be prepared soon to remove me beyond the reach of pursuit or inquiry.

I had been under much excitement and disquietude for many days, and my trouble only increased as the period approached. I had done much to try the friendship of those around me, who had argued with me against the intentions I had avowed; but their interest in me was not so cooled but they continued to watch me and take kind precautions to prevent my elopement.

I did not inform them when I intended to set out on my journey, but they had a suspicion of it.

I was at home on the afternoon of Sunday, May 22, and while I was sitting at the parlor window, my uncle and another man stopped before me on the sidewalk, and began to talk with me. My uncle proposed to me to leave the house and go with him. He said, Mr. S. is now in church, you can come as well as not. I replied that I would not go without my child. He inquired where it was, and I told him a girl had taken it to Williamsburg. He made particular inquiries about the time when she was to return, the way, and the appearance and dress of the girl, to which I readily replied. He then soon left me, with his companion.

After a time, the girl returned with my babe; and of her own accord began to tell us that she had been much alarmed by the conduct of a man who had accosted her on board the ferry boat. She described him in such a way as to convince me that it could be nobody but my uncle. He had approached her, spoke of the child, offered to take it in his arms, called it his own, spoke to it, played with it, and was hardly to be prevented from taking it away from her. She was unwilling to give its mother's name in the boat, and suppressed it, but refused to part with it, saying she was not permitted to let a stranger take it. The man, however, at length became so urgent, that she was obliged to tell him she would certainly call for help if he did not desist.

## CHAPTER V.

*My arrangements to leave New York—Accidental defeat of my plans—Disappointment—Alarming intelligence—The secret operations of my enemies exposed.*

I DID not inform my friends of the time we had agreed on for my departure, for that I feared would entirely defeat my intention. I sometimes felt a little doubt of the kindness of their feelings, so many imputations had been cast upon their motives by my uncle and his acquaintances. Even when I believed them sincere, I thought they misjudged concerning my real interests. From something that took place, as I since have learned, my friends were very suspicious that I intended to leave them on Wednesday; and they were doubly watchful of me that day.

Knowing my unwillingness to be separated from my babe, they felt little uneasiness about my leaving them, so long as they had her in their possession; and I found an opportunity to go round to Mrs. B's about 3 o'clock on Wednesday, to request my uncle to wait for me in a carriage at a near point, where it would be more convenient to join him in three-quarters of an hour. I then set off for home to get my babe, he accompanying me a part of the way. I stopped a little in Grand street, to wait for an omnibus, when I felt a wish to see a family once more whose residence was near, and from whom I had received many marks of disinterested kindness. I went in and told them I had called to take leave,



as I expected soon to leave New York. They were a little apprehensive, as I since have learnt, that I might then be on the eve of my departure, and wishing to detain me as long as possible, urged me to sit again when I rose to depart. Their urgency was so strong that I complied, and twice afterwards was persuaded again to seat myself. At length I got away, and hastened home to get my infant; but here I had to encounter a new delay. Two of my female acquaintances were in the house alone; and when I entered I hoped they would not oppose my wishes. To my disappointment, however, they made decided opposition to my getting possession of my child, good-naturedly it is true and with every expression of interest in her and myself, but so resolutely that I could do nothing. At length, after an hour's delay, I got my babe into my arms, and proceeded to the corner of Avenue D and Houston street, where I was to have met my uncle about two hours before. He was not there, but I presumed had got weary of waiting for me, and perhaps becoming suspicious of my intentions, might have gone away in disgust.

At a corner not far off, I was accosted by three of the Canadians I have before spoken of, though, such was the excitement of my feelings, I cannot remember which they were. They told me my uncle had been waiting for me at the time appointed, and that they were willing to go and request him to wait for me at Mrs. B's, at the same time advising me to get into an omnibus. They immediately set off in haste, and I was on the point of fol-

lowing them at once in the first omnibus I could find, when it occurred to me that I had better return home a moment for my clothes, which I had previously arranged to take with me. I therefore called in at the house of a woman whom I had occasionally seen, and requested permission to leave my child there for a few moments, till I could return home, adding something else which I do not very distinctly recollect. She not only consented to this, but expressed a willingness to go and help me bring away my clothes, when she understood that I had no one to assist me in carrying them. Leaving my child, therefore, we proceeded together to my lodgings; but on reaching them, I found that my departure with my infant had caused much excitement among my friends. One of them had already gone to the police to prevent, if possible, my departure from the city; and the news had been communicated to some of the newspaper offices, under the full persuasion that I had been unsuspectingly decoyed into the power of my enemies, and that, if I were once got out of the city, I should probably never again be heard of.

The two kind females whom I again found alone in the house, were therefore rejoiced to see me again, but they were much more resolute than before in opposing my wishes. One of them stepped out and called her brother to her aid, who promptly came, and interposed such impediments to my leaving the house that I found myself again disappointed, and compelled, though at the time with pain and regret, to abandon the plan I, as well as others, had taken such trouble to accomplish.

I afterwards learnt that some of my friends, who had heard from me that my uncle and other persons from Canada, were making arrangements for my departure from New York, had consulted on having them apprehended. Application was first made to one of the city magistrates, but he gave it as his opinion that whatever suspicion might be had, there was not evidence enough to act upon. A lawyer was consulted by another of my friends, who recommended the immediate adoption of measures for their apprehension; in consequence of which, he applied at the upper police. The magistrate, after hearing the state of things, thought the circumstances very strong, and that they gave room to presume that a serious plot had been formed to get me away. He called the next day to converse with me, accompanied by another person; but when he had considered the circumstances at leisure, he remarked that they appeared to have kept just within the bounds of law, and never to have transgressed, so that they had not committed any overt act which might have rendered them amenable. He expressed surprise at the evidence he found of their caution, and said it was clear to him that they had been acting under *first rate advice*.

I confess that it was pleasing to me, that they were not to be proceeded against; for it was painful to think of having persons arrested on a high charge, with whom I had so recently been on terms of apparent mutual confidence.

I still continued firm in the belief that the propo-

sitions made by my uncle, and warmly approved by the Canadians I had so often met, were in good faith, and dictated by a sincere interest in my welfare. I fully believed their story, as they had repeatedly declared it, viz.: that the plan originated with my uncle when I was last in Montreal; that neither his Canadian companions nor any one else had known of it, or had any interest in carrying it through; that it was entirely owing to accident that my uncle had met with any of his acquaintances in New York; and that the pains they had taken to induce me to accede to his wish, grew out of their friendly disposition towards me.

An occurrence took place, however, a short time after the events which I have narrated above, which produced a sudden and very powerful change in my feelings. An evening or two after the disappointment of my plans, a gentleman called on me, with whom I had been acquainted for several months, and in whose character I had reason to place entire confidence. He made some remarks, and asked three or four questions which filled me with surprise. I at once perceived that he had some knowledge of the Canadians I had conversed with, which nobody but an intimate acquaintance could have communicated. It is not my design here to convey a particular account of this interview, as the time has not yet arrived when it will be proper to do so. I will only add, that in a few sentences my friend introduced several expressions which had fallen from the lips of the Canadians in my hearing, and

alluded to a few circumstances to which they also had alluded; and although both the expressions and the circumstances would have been, of themselves, unworthy of any serious regard, in the connexion in which they came up; they convinced me, in a most serious and cogent manner, that I had but just escaped a deep laid and dangerous plot. One subject to which allusion was thus blindly made was the same to which the Canadian already mentioned, had alluded in a private interview with me. I shuddered; for I saw, to my own entire conviction, that the seventeen Canadians, instead of being my friends, and merely casual visitors in New York, had come here only for the purpose of inveigling me back into the power of my enemies; and that they had been for many days practising profound duplicity merely for the purpose of deceiving me. Even if this, though strongly indicated, was not in fact fully proved, yet I had unquestionable evidence that the person from whom the questions proposed to me had proceeded, must be intimately acquainted with the character and intentions, the motives and plans of the Canadian troop—and I turned, with the deepest solicitude, to my friend, to inquire what information he had of them and their operations. To my questions he replied, with solemn declarations that I had barely escaped from a plot which had been long maturing in Montreal; and that the individual primarily engaged in directing its accomplishment, had acted under the promise of a reward of fifteen thousand dollars in case of success.



## CHAPTER VI.

Recollection of several things which happened at different periods—  
Records made by me of my "disclosures"—My first opinion of Miss  
Reed's book—Intention to confess while in the Bellevue Asylum—  
Interview with a New York lady about to become a nun.

SINCE the publication of my first edition, I have had different things brought to my memory, which I had forgotten while reviewing in it the past scenes of my life. Some of these have presented themselves to me while meditating alone, by day or by night; and others have been brought to mind by conversing with others. I have seen a number of my former acquaintances, and in my interviews with them, my memory has often been refreshed on one subject or another.

During a conversation I had in March last, with Mr. John Hilliker of New York, who by so kindly persisting in taking me from my exposed retreat, saved my life as I believe, and introduced me to the Almshouse, he recalled to my mind a paper which I held in my hand when he found me in a field. I did not mention that paper in my Sequel, because I did not think of it. He mentions, in his affidavit, that I refused to let him see it, and tore it in pieces, when I found he was resolved to remove me. I had made up my mind that I was soon to die. Indeed, although I have felt unwilling to declare it heretofore, my intention had been to die by starvation, in the lonely place where I had taken my abode. Sometimes this resolution failed me for a

time, and I would eat, and even send the little boy who visited me, to buy a few cakes. Sometimes, also, I thought of destroying my life by other means; but still thinking it would have some merit in the sight of God, to disclose the worst of the crimes I had witnessed in the Nunnery, I determined to leave behind me a record which might be picked up after my death, whenever and however that event might come upon me. I therefore one day sent Tommy to buy me some paper; and, understanding I wanted to write, he brought me an inkstand and pen, as I believe from his mother's house. I wrote a brief statement of facts upon the paper, and folded it, I believe, in the form of a letter, after signing it, as I think, with my Christian name only, "Maria." This was the paper which Mr. Hilliker endeavored to obtain, and which I tore, to prevent it from being seen, when I thought death was not so near as I had supposed.

The Sunday before the birth of my child, I again wrote, with similar feelings, and in a similar style, and hid the paper. But I afterwards took it again and burnt it.

While I was in the Asylum, a gentleman who had Miss Reed's book, ("Six Months in a Convent,") read some passages in my presence, which irritated me so much that I spoke to him with passion, and I fear almost insulted him. I had never heard of such a person or such a book before, but I believed every thing I heard, because it corresponded with my own experience, so far as it went; but I thought, at that moment, that it was wrong to make known such

things to the world, as it was calculated to injure the Church: in such an unsettled state did my mind continue to be for a considerable time. It was perfectly evident to me, however, that the institution where she was, must be materially different from the Black Nunnery, as it was far from being so close, or governed by such strict rules. She also had been in it too short a time to learn all; and besides, being only a novice, it was impossible that she should be fully acquainted with many things which are communicated only to nuns.

While I was in the Asylum, I had once made up my mind to confess to Mr. Conroy, after receiving his invitations and threatening messages, being strongly urged by some of the Catholic women about me. It happened, most fortunately for me, that I was befriended and advised by an excellent woman, Mrs. Neil, who took great pains to instruct and influence me aright. When I had decided on obeying the summons of the priest, Mrs. Neil came in, and having ascertained my intention, urged me to reflect, and impressed it upon my mind, that I was responsible to God, and not to man, for my conduct, and that his power and authority over me were only pretended. I believe I had then sometimes more confidence in priests than in God Almighty. She assured me that I had rights, and had friends there who would protect me. I then determined not to go to Confession.

I have generally found it easier to convince Catholics than Protestants of the truth of my story,

if they come to me with doubts or even unbelief. Since the first appearance of my book, I have received visits from a great number of persons in consequence of what they had seen or heard of its contents; and among these have been a considerable number of Catholics. While I am able to say that I have had the satisfaction of removing all doubts from the minds of some Protestants whom I have seen, I must confess that in general I have received the greatest satisfaction from interviews with intelligent Catholics. The reason of this is, that I know better how to treat the latter in argument. Having been one myself, I know where their difficulties lie, how to appeal to their own minds, and how to lead them to correct conclusions. Perhaps I can best convey my meaning to my readers, by giving a brief account of some of the interviews alluded to.

There is an interesting little girl whom I have repeatedly conversed with, (the daughter of an ignorant Catholic woman,) who has enjoyed some of the advantages of instruction in the scriptures, and submits with extreme reluctance to the ceremonies which her mother requires her to perform, in compliance with the requisitions of her priest. She believes my book, and she has reason for it. She has acknowledged to me, though with shame and reluctance, that, when compelled by her mother to confess to Father \*\*\*\*, in his private room, he has set with his arms around her, and often kissed her, refusing money for the usual fee, on the plea that he never requires pay for confessing pretty girls. He told

her the Virgin Mary would leave her if she told on it. His questions are much the same as I have heard. All this I can believe, and do believe. I need not say that I tremble for her fate.

During the first week in March, 1836, I received a visit at my lodgings in New York, from a young woman, of a Protestant family in this city, who had received a Roman Catholic education. She called, as I understood, at the urgent request of her mother, who was exceedingly distressed at her daughter's intention to enter a Canadian nunnery.

Part of our interview was in private; for she requested me to retire with her a little time, where we might be alone; and I found her intention was, by certain queries, to satisfy herself whether I had ever been a Roman Catholic. She inquired if I could tell any of the questions commonly asked of women in the Confession box; and on my answering in the affirmative, she desired me to repeat some, which I did. This satisfied her on that point; and I soon became so far acquainted with the state of her mind, as to perceive that she was prepared to avoid the influence of every argument that I could use against the system to which she had become attached.

She confessed to me, that she had given five hundred dollars to the Cathedral, and a considerable sum to St. Joseph's Church, and that she had decided on entering a nunnery in Canada. I inquired why she did not enter one in the United States. To this she replied, that she had only one objection; her



Confessor, Father Pies, having told her that he would by no means recommend the latter, and greatly preferred the former, because the priests had entire control over the Canadian nunneries, which they had not of those in the States. This, and some other parts of our conversation, took place in the presence of other persons: and on hearing this declaration of the priest, the motive of which was to us so palpable, a lady present laughed outright.

While we were alone, on her expressing a doubt of the crimes I have charged upon the priests, I said, but you admit that they have said and done such and such things, (which I do not like to repeat.) She signified assent. Then, said I, how can you pretend that any thing is too bad for them to do? I also said, you admit that they have asked you in the Confession box, whether you ever wished to commit bestiality. She replied, "Yes; but if we have not evil thoughts, there is no harm." "You admit that they have treated you with great familiarity at confession?" She replied, that she confessed to her priest while he sat in a chair, and that he had; "but," said she, "you know a priest is a holy man, and cannot sin." And when I pressed her with another question, she confessed that her priest had told her she could not be sanctified without having performed an act commonly called criminal, and replied in a similar manner.

She was ashamed or afraid to assert her full faith in some of the doctrines she had been taught, when I loudly and emphatically demanded of her,

whether she did indeed credit them. This was the case with her in regard to the pardon of sins by priests, the existence of purgatory, or a middle place, &c. She spoke of these and other subjects as if she believed in them: but when I said, "Do you believe it really and truly?—you do?" she invariably faltered and denied it.

She spoke of my "Disclosures" as untrue; and I got it out of her, that she had conversed with her priest about me at Confession, who had assured her that I was not myself, not Maria Monk, but an evil spirit, in short, the devil in the form of a woman. After considerable conversation, however, she admitted that my book was undoubtedly true; but still she refused to do, as I told her she ought after saying what she had, come out and be a Protestant.

She informed me that her Confessor had a great desire to see me, and inquired if I would consent to an interview. I replied, that I would readily agree to see him, in the presence of Dr. Brownlee, but not alone; and she went away without leaving me any reason to hope that she had been released from the power of superstition, or had any intention of gratifying her mother, who was so deeply distressed at the prospect of her daughter's ruin.

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## PART II.

## FURTHER DISCLOSURES.

## CHAPTER I.

Recollections of my Noviciate in the Hotel Dieu Nunnery. Miss Durançeau.

WHILE I was a novice, there was a young lady of our number from the Tannery,\* named Angélique Durançeau, with whom I was somewhat acquainted, and of whom I had a favorable opinion. She was about eighteen, and at the time of her entrance had every appearance of good health. After she had been there a considerable time, it might be about seven months, (as I know she was not near the period when she could make her general confession, that is, at the end of the first year,) I saw her under circumstances which made a strong impression on my mind.

I had received a summons from the Superior to attend in the Novices' sick-room, with several other novices. When I entered, I found Fathers Savage and Bonin reading a paper, and Miss Durançeau on a bed, with a look so peculiar as quite to shock

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\* A village a few miles from Montreal.

me. Her complexion was dark, and of an unnatural color, her look strange, and she occasionally started and conducted very singularly indeed, though she never spoke. Her whole appearance was such as to make me think she had lost her reason, and almost terrified me. The Superior informed us that she wanted us as witnesses; and the priests then coming forward, presented the paper to Miss Durançeau, and asked her if she was willing to give all her property to the church. She replied with a feeble motion of the head and body, and then, having a pen put into her hands, wrote her name to it without reading it, and relapsed into apparent unconsciousness. We were then requested to add our signatures, which being done, we withdrew, as we entered, I believe without the sick novice having had any knowledge of our presence, or of her own actions.

A few hours afterwards I was called to assist in laying out her corpse, which was the first intimation I had of her being dead. The Superior, myself, and one or two other novices, had the whole of this melancholy task to perform, being the only persons admitted into the apartment where the body lay. It was swelled very much. We placed it in a coffin, and screwed on the cover alone. On account of the rapid change taking place in the corpse, it was buried about twenty four hours after death.

Not long after the burial, two brothers of Miss Durançeau came to the Convent, and were greatly distressed when told that she was dead. They complained of not being informed of her sickness: but

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the Superior assured them that it was at the urgent request of their sister, who was possessed of so much humility, that she thought herself unworthy of attracting the regard of any one, and not fit to be lamented even by her nearest friends. "What was she," she had said, according to the declarations made by the Superior, "what was she that she should cause pain to her family?"

This was not the only occasion on which I was present at the laying out of the dead. I assisted in three other cases. Two of the subjects died of consumption, or some similar disease; one of whom was an old-country girl, and the other a squaw.—The latter seemed to fall away from the time when she came into the nunnery, until she was reduced almost to a shadow. She left to the Convent a large amount of money.

Several stories were told us at different times, of nuns who had gone into a state of sanctity in the Convent. One, who had excited much attention and wonder by prophesying, was at length found to be in such a condition, and was immediately released from the duty of observing the common rules of the Convent, as the superior considered her authority over her as having in a manner ceased.

It was affirmed that many priests had been taken to heaven, body and soul, after death.

The following story I was told by some of the nuns and the superior while I was a novice, and made a considerable impression upon my mind.—After catechism one day, a dove appeared in the



room while the nuns were kneeling and engaged in prayer. It addressed one of the nuns and the Superior, not only in an audible voice, but in a string of French rhymes, which were repeated to me so often that I learnt them almost all by heart, and retain several to this day.

"Un grand honneur je vous confere,  
"Aussi a vous, la Superieure."

These were the first two lines. In the sequel the dove informed the audience that in eight days the spirit of the nun should be raised to heaven, to join its own, and that of other souls in that blessed place; and spoke of the honor thus to be conferred upon the nun, and on the Superior too, who had had the training of one to such a grade of holiness.

When the day thus designated arrived, a number of priests assembled, with the Superior, to witness her expected translation; and while they were all standing around her, she disappeared, her body and soul being taken off together to heaven. The windows had been previously fastened, yet these offered no obstacle, and she was seen rising upward like a column moving through the air. The sweetest music, as I was assured, accompanied her exit, and continued to sound the remainder of the day, with such charming and irresistible effect, that the usual occupations of the nuns were interrupted, and all joined in and sang in concert.

## CHAPTER II.

Story of Ann, the Scotch Novice—Letters of her lover—The Superior's deception—Miss Farnes—Ann's determination to leave the Convent—Means taken to persuade her to stay.

THERE was a young girl, named Ann, who was very stout and rather homely, but not of pleasing manners, though of a good disposition, seventeen or eighteen years of age, to whom I took a liking. She was a novice with me, and the time of which I am to speak, was not long after I returned from St. Denis. The Superior also displayed a partiality for her, and I found she was much in favor of having her received as a nun, if it could be accomplished. She was very handy at different kinds of work; and, what I believe chiefly induced me to regard her with kindness, she was a fatherless and motherless child. She had a beau in town, who one day called to see her at the nunnery, when she was going to confession.

I was with the Superior at the time, who, on being informed that the young man was there, and of his errand, requested me to go into the parlor with her, to meet him. He put into the Superior's hands a parcel and three letters, requesting her to give them to Ann. She took them, with an expression of assent, and he withdrew. Just as he had gone, Ann came hurrying into the parlor, saying that some one had told her that the Superior had sent for

her. The Superior rebuked her sharply, and sent her back, without, however, showing her what she had promised to give her. Ann said, that she had understood a young man (mentioning her visiter) had called to see her. This the Superior denied, telling her never to come till she was wanted.

When Ann had gone, the Superior told me to go with her to her room, which I did. She there first made me promise never to tell of what she was going to do, and then produced the letters and package, and began to open them. One of the letters, I remember, was folded in a singular manner, and fastened with three seals. In the parcel was found a miniature of the young man, a pair of ear rings, a breast pin, and something else, what, I have now forgotten. The letters were addressed to her by her lover, who advised her by all means to leave the Convent. He informed her that a cousin of hers, a tailor, had arrived from Scotland, who was in want of a housekeeper; and urged her to live with him, and never renounce the Protestant religion in which she had been brought up.

I was surprised that the Superior should do what I felt to be very wrong and despicable; but she represented it as perfectly justifiable on account of the good which she had in view.

I considered myself as bound to be particularly obedient to the Superior, in order that I might make my conduct correspond with the character given of me to her, by Miss Bousquier, who, as I have mentioned in the sequel of my first volume, had shown

me an evidence of her friendship by recommending me to her, and becoming, in some sense, responsible for my good conduct, to induce her to receive me back into the nunnery. This was a strong reason for my complying with the Superior's wish in the case of which I am speaking.

Since I have alluded here to the period of my return to the Convent, I may remark that the Superior took some pains to ascertain, by her own inquiries, whether there was substantial reason for reliance on the favorable opinion expressed to her of me by Miss Bousquier. I recollect particularly her inquiring of me whom I had conversed with, while at St. Denis to persuade them to enter the Black Nunnery: for Miss Bousquier, I understood, had informed her that I had shown my attachment to the Hotel Dieu, by making favorable representations of it while with her engaged in keeping school. To the Superior's inquiries I replied, that I had urged little Gueroutte to become a nun. She was the daughter of Jean Richard, as he was familiarly called, to distinguish him from a number of other men of nearly the same name: for he had extensive family connexions in that place. He lived opposite Miss Bousquier, so that I had had frequent opportunities to converse with his daughter.

But not to detain my readers longer on this digression, I will return to my story and poor Ann, the Scotch girl. Having received particular instructions from the Superior, I promised to endeavor to get into her confidence, for the purpose of influen-

cing her to take the veil, and to proceed in accordance with the directions given me. The Superior told me by no means to make any approaches to her at once, nor indeed for some time, lest she should suspect our design; but to wait awhile, until she could have no reason to think my movements might have grown out of the circumstances above mentioned: for Ann appeared to be uncommonly penetrating, as the Superior remarked; and of course much caution was necessary in dealing with her. Some time subsequently, therefore, I cannot tell exactly how long, I engaged in conversation with her one day, in the course of which she remarked that Miss Farns, a confidential friend of hers, who had spent a short time in the nunnery some time before, was soon coming back.

This Miss Farns had come in on trial, while I was in the Convent, and I had often heard the Superior say, that she must be separated from Ann, because they were so much together, and so often breaking the rules. Ann now told me in confidence, that her friend was coming back, not with any real intention of staying, but only for the purpose of giving her some information favorable to herself, which she had obtained. This she wished to become fully possessed of before she would decide whether to leave the Convent or not.

All this I communicated to the Superior, who then began to look for Miss Farns' return, with a determination to treat her with every appearance of kindness. She often, in the mean time, gave me lit-



tle delicacies, with directions to share them with Ann. Miss Farns soon presented herself for re-admission, and was admitted without any difficulty, not being required even to change her dress. This occurred, as nearly as I can recollect, about six weeks after the affair of intercepting Ann's letters; mentioned a few pages back, and somewhere about the close of summer, or the beginning of autumn.

Being allowed to do pretty much as they chose, Ann and her friend were much together, and generally engaged in deep conversation: so that, as the Superior declared, it was evident they were forming some plan for secret operations. I tried several times to get near and overhear what they were talking about: but I could not learn any thing. The next day Miss Farns departed, saying she never intended to return; which offended the Superior so much, that she said she would have the doors shut if she ever came again.

The same evening Ann requested me to tell the Superior, that she wished to get her clothes, that she might leave the Convent. I went to the Superior's room, where I found Father Bonin sitting on the sofa talking with her. When they were informed of Ann's message, the Superior said, she would let the girl go at once back to the world, and be given up to the devil. Bonin argued a good deal against this. The Superior replied, that she had set the old nuns at work, but without success; they had not been able to influence Ann as she desired; and it was a shame to keep such a creature within holy

walls, to make the flock discontented. At length she decided on the course to pursue; and turning to me, said: take her up stairs, give her her clothes, yet argue with her in favor of remaining in the Convent, but at the same time tell her, that I am indifferent about it, and care not whether she goes or stays.

I accordingly returned to Ann, and telling her that she might follow me up stairs and get her clothes, led the way, and delivered them to her. In obedience to my orders, I lost no time in representing her intentions to depart from our holy residence as an insinuation of the devil; and told her that he was trying his best to draw her out into the world, that he might secure her for himself. I told her that he had a strong hold upon her, and she ought to use the greater exertions to resist his temptations; that the Superior thought it might be better on the whole if she departed, because her influence might be very injurious to others if she remained; yet that I felt a deep interest in her, and could not bear to have her perform her intention, because I well knew that her throwing off the holy dress that she then wore, to take her former one, would be the first step towards damnation.

"You need not talk so to me," replied Ann, "you have done the same yourself." I told her that if I had, I had lived to regret it, and was glad to get back to the Convent again. After a while an old nun came up, called me aside, and said the Superior wished me to continue talking with Ann; and, in

case I should prevail with her to remain, to make her go down and beg pardon for the scandal she had caused by her conduct, and ask to be taken back again into the flock of the good shepherd, as the Superior was often called.

Poor Ann at length began to listen to me; and I got her to repeat to me all that Miss Farns had said to her during her late short visit to the nunnery. The amount of it was, that if Ann would come out at dusk, and go to a particular house, she would find her relations waiting for her, who had arrived from Scotland—they were, if I mistake not, her brother and cousin. Having prevailed upon her to break her engagement to meet them, I soon persuaded her to go down stairs as a penitent, and there she humbly kneeled, and in the usual manner kissed the feet of the Superior, and all the novices, and begged and obtained a penance, which was to serve as an atonement for her offence. This was, to fast three mornings, ask forgiveness of all her companions on the same days, and perform acts of contrition.

That evening the Superior called me to tea in her own room, when I told her all that I had learnt from the confession of Ann, who I knew was fasting at the time. When the Superior understood the plan proposed by Miss Farns, she spoke of her in very severe terms, and then commended me, saying that I ought to rejoice at having saved a soul from hell, but ought to guard against pride, as I had accomplished what I had undertaken only by the help of the Virgin Mary.

Ann continued to behave as she had promised, and we heard nothing more of any attempt by her friends to get her out of the nunnery. Not long after, however, she was taken sick, and I ascertained, from observation and inquiry, that the cause of it was her discontentment, as she complained of loneliness. I felt compassion for her, and told the Superior that I thought she ought to be treated with more leniency. She said she would get some of the old nuns to talk with her a little more.

Ann was received, in due time, as a nun. I was not present at the ceremony, but I afterwards met with her, and several times had a little conversation with her.

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## CHAPTER III.

Miss Ross.—Our early acquaintance.—Her request.

THERE was a girl whom I knew from a child, a Miss Ross, the recollection of whom gives me deep pain: for I know too well that I have been the cause of great misfortunes to her. I remember being with her at different times in my early days. After our family removed to Montreal, and had our residence in the Government House, we often had calls from persons of our acquaintance, as many were fond of walking in the garden, or green, as we commonly called it.

Such of my readers as have visited that city will be likely to remember the place of our residence: for the Government House, of which my mother is still the keeper, is of very large size: (I have sometimes heard it spoken of as the most ancient in America.) It was said that the foundation stones of that and the old French church were laid on the same day, as recorded. The gateway is of stone, and it is furnished in a manner becoming the residence of the Governor of the Province. The garden and green are of great extent, and present fine walks and flowers; and as the former overlooks the esplanade, to which it is adjoining, it was a favorite resort on Sunday afternoons, when the troops are on parade.



Miss Ross, I recollect, one evening in particular, paid me a visit with a Miss Robinson; and we amused ourselves together in the green. Her mother lived a little out of the city, near the Lachine road. She was a Scotch lady, and possessed a large property. When Miss Ross grew up, she became attached to a young man of my acquaintance, and indeed a relation of my mother; but when it became known, she found her mother very much opposed to her wishes.

While I was a novice in the Hotel Dieu, Miss Ross came in as one; and we had frequent interviews together, as our acquaintance still continued, and indeed we had always been friends. She became informed of my design of taking the black veil—I presume I must have told her of it myself; and one day she told me, that she had sometimes thought of becoming a nun, but still felt but little inclination that way; yet she requested me to do her the favor to inform her how I was pleased with that mode of life, after I should have been in long enough to form an opinion. If I thought she would be happy as a nun, she desired I would frankly inform her; and if not—as I was acquainted with her disposition—that I would warn her against it. We often conversed on the subject afterwards; and it was repeated, and plainly understood between us, that I was to tell her the exact truth, as she would probably be guided entirely by my opinion in the course she would adopt.

I went through many preparatory steps before my

admission, as I have mentioned in my first volume, took the veil, and passed through some of the scenes which I have before spoken of, before I ever particularly reverted to the request of Miss Ross, so far as I now can remember. One thing, however, I here stop to mention, which I omitted to say in my first volume, and which I might forget hereafter, viz:—that soon after my admission as a "Received," the Superior gave me the charge of her room, that of the old nuns, and the adjoining community-room; and thus kept me for about three months in a degree more separate from the other nuns, than I should otherwise have been. This brought me more into intercourse with the Superior, and in the same proportion made some other nuns regard me with jealousy: for some of them occasionally, in some way or other, would express dislike towards me. Perhaps this state of things the more disposed me to confide in the Superior.

After I had been a nun for some weeks, I cannot tell exactly how long, I recollect that as I lay awake one night, I began to think of Miss Ross, and to recall the conversations we had held together in the novices' apartment. All at once it occurred to me that I might probably do a great benefit to myself, an honor to the nunnery and to true religion, as well as save her, by inducing her to take the black veil, especially as she had so much property to add to the funds. At the same time the thought presented itself to my mind, that by so doing I should gain a very exalted place in heaven for myself: for I had

already heard a great deal said, and had repeatedly read the same in our book, that to bring a person into a Convent, was one of the highest kinds of merit. I soon made up my mind to communicate to the Superior all I knew; for although I questioned at once whether it would not be shameful and sinful to betray the confidence of my friend, this was easily got over, by the thought of the vast benefits to result from it, especially to herself.

The next day I told one of the old nuns that I wished to speak with the Superior: for as this was commonly required, and nuns could not go into her room without leave, I conformed to custom. I was soon admitted, when I told her all Miss Ross had said to me, and added, that I wished to get her to take the veil. I apologized for my private conversations. She said they were perfectly justifiable.— I think I never saw the Superior express more satisfaction than she did on the receipt of this intelligence. She appeared overjoyed; listened to all I had to say with great attention, and highly approved of my proposition. When I informed her of Miss Ross's attachment to young ———, she replied that that might explain the state of her mind; for the old nuns had for some time spoken of her depressed appearance, and she had mentioned at confession that something lay very heavy on her mind.

The Superior appeared from that moment to devote her whole attention to the consideration of the subject. She seemed for a time almost lost in thought; and remarked to me, "We must consider

this matter; we must consider the best way to bring her into the nunnery: for some persons are harder to get out of the devil's power than others. After a little time she told me I should be sent to read the lecture to the novices, and she would tell the old nuns to allow me to converse with Miss Ross, which they would not let me do, as I well knew, without her express orders, as it was contrary to the rules. She then told me many things to say to Miss Ross, and some of her instructions she repeated to me, so that I might not be at a loss when I should converse with her, no matter what objections she might raise.

Among other things which I most distinctly recollect, she told me to assure her, that as to the happiness of a Convent, no person could possibly be more happy than nuns; for there we were assured of the favor of God, and of heavenly enjoyments after death; that while in the world, other young women would draw us off from our duty, and occupy our minds with thoughts that would do us harm: there we were exposed to no such dangers. The sinfulness of vain thoughts might appear to us very trifling, but it was very different in the sight of God; and how could we hope to resist the temptations surrounding us in such a manner in the world? If she made any allusion to her attachment to the young man before mentioned, the Superior told me to declaim against it, as an abomination to think of such a thing in the nunnery; that I could not converse with her if she spoke of it again, as not a proper person. If she appeared to hesitate at my

proposition, I was to tell her solemnly, that my offer was a direct invitation from Jesus Christ to become his spouse, which could not be rejected without great guilt.

The Superior told me that I should be richly rewarded if I succeeded. She thought I would soon be made an old (or confidential) nun; and she would give me a most precious relic, with a piece of the heart of Mary Magdalen, and intercede for me with the Virgin.

After I had listened attentively to all these instructions received from a woman to whom I looked with unbounded respect and veneration, I left her, prepared to put them into practice to the best of my ability, much excited with the hope of accomplishing what I thought a truly great and meritorious act, and one that would ensure the salvation of my friend.

The reader may perhaps here recall the disclosures I have heretofore made, of the crimes I had witnessed, and the sufferings I had undergone before this period of my convent life, and wonder how I could possibly have been so far deluded, as really to believe what I was thus prepared to say. Such, however, is indeed the truth; except that I must allow, that my conscience repeatedly disturbed me, and seriously too, with the suggestion that I should be guilty of direct deception, if I said, either that I was happy in the Convent, or that I had at all times unshaken faith in any of the declarations I was about to make. More than once, too, I was shock-



ed at the idea of deceiving my confiding young friend. But as I believed what I had been so often taught, about the virtue of deception in certain circumstances, I did my best to smother my scruples.

The promised arrangements were made by the Superior; the old nuns were instructed not to interrupt any conversation they might witness between Miss Ross and myself, and I was directed, at the appointed hour, to read the lecture. I thus easily found the opportunity I sought, and was soon with Miss Ross, while the old nuns appeared very busy in another part of the room, and unobserving. Though under a repeated promise to reveal to her the state of my mind, now that I had been long familiar with the secrets of the nunnery, I most cautiously guarded myself, and assumed what did not belong to me—the appearance of one devotedly fond of the institution.

I told her that I had now been long enough a "Received" to be able to express an opinion; and I must inform her that we lived a most happy life within the institution; that I would urge her, as a friend, to take the veil, and withdraw from that world which was so full of temptations. To this she lent a very serious ear; and I saw that my words produced a solemn and saddening effect upon her feelings. She replied that she felt quite undecided what to do. She seemed solicitous to be still farther assured of the happiness I had spoken of as enjoyed by the nuns.

When she touched that subject, I addressed her

exactly after the manner directed by the Superior, and speaking rather harshly, inquired of her, "Do you condemn the life of a nun then?" She instantly answered, "No;" and she easily admitted all I said about the attention paid to the comfort of those in the Convent. "But," said she, "my mother is very much opposed to my taking the veil; she is a widow, and you know we are bound to honor and obey our parents—nature teaches us that." The Superior had furnished me, in French, with an answer to this objection; and as we were accustomed to converse in English, I had only to translate her words, which were,

"Les droits de nos parens ne sont pas devant les droits de notre religion."

"The claims of our parents are not before those of our religion."

"I shan't be a nun!" said she, with determination. I talked with her, however, some time, and she began again to listen patiently.

I then added, that Christ had commanded us to "forsake father and mother" to be his disciples, and that we must have trials and tribulations before we could enter the kingdom of heaven. She told me that she felt then less inclined to the world than she had when we had last conversed together; but at length she alluded to Mr. —. "Never mention," I exclaimed, "such abominations! It is sin, it is defilement to speak of such a thing in so holy a place as a Convent." This I said very much in the manner and tone which the Superior had used in dictating

it to me. I then added, "Now this is the only obstacle which the devil puts in the way of your salvation—and see how he tries more to prevent you, the nearer you are getting to it. All that you have to do, then, is to resist the more."

And the repetition of these expressions has brought to my mind many others which I often heard, not only about that time, but frequently before and afterwards. One brings up another; and to speak of objections that might be made to any of our nunnery doctrines, or to hear a question asked about our way of life, naturally calls to my memory the replies which were made to them.

"Are you at liberty to buy a farm, and sell it when you please? No—Then how can you give yourself to a young man when you please?"

"Must we not obey our parents?—Quand les droits de la religion sont concerné, les droits de la nature cessent."

["When the rights or claims of religion are concerned, the rights (or claims) of nature cease."]

When the question is put to an old nun—"What made you become a nun?" the regular, fixed answer always is, with a peculiar drawl—"Divine love." But such things as these, although they come up very strongly to my mind, may perhaps appear to be not worth mentioning.

The conversation I held with poor Miss Ross was much longer than I can undertake to give a full account of; but after I had over and over again painted the happiness of a nun's life in the brightest

manner I was able, and assured her that I had never known blessedness before I had entered upon it, I told her that I had had some inspirations from heaven, such as I had never enjoyed before, and that she would have the same. I also told her with solemnity, that she had now received, through me, an invitation from Jesus Christ, to become his bride; and that if she rejected it, it would be a sin of deep ingratitude, and he would reject her from the kingdom of heaven; that it was her duty to enter the Convent as a veiled nun, without regarding the feelings of her mother, or any other obstacle; and that she was bound to obtain all the property she could, and put it into the treasury of the institution.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Story of Miss Ross continued—Plan to get her into the Nunnery for life—Arrangements—Execution of our design.*

It was very easy for me to see that what I said had a great effect on Miss Ross. I found it impossible, however, to make her promise me to take the veil. She persisted that she must see her mother first. I then left her, and went to the Superior's room; where I informed her of all that had passed. She appeared very much delighted, and treated me with great condescension and kindness. She said, however, that we should yet have to do much; for it was plain to her that the novice had very strong scruples to overcome—and she added, that the devil's influence was very powerful over some persons. We must therefore pursue a plan which would require great caution and skill on our part, but which, she had no doubt, would prove successful. This she communicated to me in few words. That evening the Superior told the nuns that she had been warned in a dream that some one was in great temptations, and desired them to say a Pater and an Ave for her.

We were to disguise ourselves, and appear to Miss Ross, I as Satan, and she as the Holy Mother. Miss Ross must be brought alone, and with solemnity, to some place where we could carry through



the deception without interruption, and with the best effect. The whole of her plan she communicated to me; but as we had several rehearsals to go through in preparation, instead of repeating her instructions, I had better relate what was done in conformity with them.

When we were prepared to go through with our parts, in order that we might become familiar with them, she gave me an old robe, which she made me wrap around me, and the devil's cap, head, and horns, which is kept to scare the nuns, few of whom know of it. Thus I was concealed, every thing except my eyes, and then approached a spot where we imagined the novice to be lying. I addressed her in a feigned voice, and invited her to become my servant, promising her a happy and easy life. In an instant, at a moment when we supposed her to be making the sign of the cross, I stopped speaking, and hastily withdrew. After a short time, I returned, and made other propositions to her; and then, after flying again from the cross, again came back, and promised her, in case she would comply, to ensure her marriage with the man she loved. I then retired once more; after which, the Superior approached, and with as sweet and winning a voice as she could assume, said that she had listened to what had passed, and had come to assure her of her protection.

After I had become familiar with my part in this sad farce, and acted it to the satisfaction of the Superior she took measures to have it performed for the

last time. In this also I had a principal part to perform; for I was directed to hold another conversation with my deceived friend; and, in obedience to instructions, on Saturday evening took her into the Examination of Conscience room, and informed her, that I had been inspired by the Virgin Mary to tell her, that if she would go into the nuns' private chapel, the Holy Mother would speak with her. I informed her, however, that it would not be at all surprising if the devil should appear to her, and endeavor to prevent her from holding so happy an interview; and that if she should be tempted, she must cross herself, and Satan would instantly leave her, because he could not withstand the power of the sign. Then telling her that she must keep a strict fast on Sunday evening, I informed her, that on Monday morning I would be with her again.

In the mean time, the Superior, with the help of one of the old nuns, Saint Margarite, and myself, had darkened the private chapel as much as we could, by means of black curtains, and placed only a single light in it, and that a taper, burning by the side of the altar. We also took down the cross, and laid it on the floor, with the head turned towards the door, and the foot towards the altar. When all was prepared, I went to Miss Ross, and conducted her into the chapel. I told her to lie down upon the cross, with her arms extended, in the attitude of the crucified Saviour, which she did; and then bound her eyes tight with a bandage, all just as the Supe-

rrior had ordered, telling her she might otherwise see a horrid sight. I then retired by the door, just outside of which, the Superior was standing; and there I was covered with the old robe; for although it was so dark, the eyes of the poor girl were blinded, and her head purposely so placed, that she could hardly have seen us under any circumstances, yet the Superior said, perhaps she might peep a little and see us. If this plan failed, she said, she must resort to some other.

We were both completely disguised; and I had not only the dress on, and devil's cap, but a slice cut from a potato, and slit in different ways so as to resemble great teeth, which was crowded into my mouth. The front part of my cap had been turned up inside, and I painted my cheeks with some red paint the Superior gave me; and she afterwards put on more, thinking I had not enough.

After I had left Miss Ross in the chapel about a quarter of an hour, the Superior signified that it was time to return, and begin my temptation. I therefore approached her, and standing a little distance from her head, repeated some of the words I had been taught; and the circumstances are still most distinctly before me, so that I remember the words as if I had uttered them only yesterday. Perhaps one reason of it is, that every few minutes during the whole time, my conscience stung me severely, so that I could scarcely go on with my part.

"Are you a fool," said I, "to be lying there in such a posture, for that God of yours? Had you not better serve me?" She raised her hand, without speaking, and made the sign of the cross, saying, "Jesu, Maria, Joseph, ayez pitié de moi." (Jesus, Mary, Joseph, have pity on me!) I waited no longer, but immediately retired softly, as if I had vanished. After standing a few minutes beside the Superior, just outside of the door, without either of us speaking, she touched me, and I approached the poor novice again.

"Would you not like to come out of this place," I asked her, "and serve me? You shall have nothing but balls and pleasure of all kinds." Miss Ross made the sign of the cross again, and I vanished as quickly and silently as before. In a short time I entered again, and told her, "If you will only leave this nunnery, I will do any thing for you you wish—I will get you married to the young man you love so much."

Still the poor unsuspecting girl, though doubtless terrified, made the sign of the cross again and again; and at length I left her saying "Jesu, Maria, Joseph, ayez pitié de moi." I then took off my dress, when the Superior made me sit down, and signified that I must not make the slightest noise. She remarked, 'Well, if this plan does not succeed, I will try force.' She then went in and addressed her, in French, in this manner:

"I am your Holy Mother, (which means the Virgin Mary,) I have been listening to your faithfulness,

and will adopt you as one of my children. Are you willing to become one of my daughters? If you are, you must join the sisters this week, and make your vows before another Sabbath passes over your head; for I am afraid the devil is making great plans to get you. But if you have your vows made, I think you will be safe."

She then asked her if she was willing to give up all she had to the Holy Church, and told her, that unless she would part with all, she could not accept her. She then promised her her protection, if she was willing, and retired saying, "Peace be with you."

In the afternoon I was sent to request her to go into the Superior's room, as she wished to speak with her. On entering it, we found the Superior of the Convent and the Superior of the Seminary both there. The former addressed her, telling her that she had had a vision, in which she was told that the young novice who was doing penance in the chapel, was acceptable in the sight of God. At this, Miss Ross appeared quite overjoyed, but scarcely able to speak.

The Superior then told her, that she ought to listen to any advice I might give her, for she had entire confidence in me, and she ought to be guided by my counsel. She requested her to return to the novices' department, retire into a corner, and determine what she would do. She then whispered to me, and desired me to remain with her until the Superior of the Seminary went away, which I did. She then



told me to go to Miss Ross again, and coax her to be received almost immediately.

I went accordingly, and endeavored to get a promise from her to that effect, but I was unable. She persisted that she must see her mother before she could take the veil. I inquired of her the reason. She replied, that she wished to give to the nunnery all the property her mother could spare her. This I communicated to the Superior, who told me to say that her mother should be sent for the next day. Her mother came, and had an interview with her, in which she learnt her daughter's intention to become a nun. This she opposed to her utmost; but all the arguments and entreaties she used, were utterly vain—she could make no impression. Her daughter had wished to see her only to tell her that such was her resolution, and to request her to deliver her that afternoon, all the money she intended over to give her. The widow retired—the money was sent—Miss Ross took the veil on the Wednesday morning following, and brought a large contribution. I was not present at her reception; and I do not think it necessary to say any thing further on a subject, which is, and ever must be, all my life, one of the most painful with which I have had any connexion. I will only add, that although I often saw Saint Mary, (as she was called, after her supposed patroness,) I never spoke with her after her reception. Opportunities, it is true, were not very frequent; but, when they were offered, she repeatedly seemed disposed to speak to me. I saw,

at length, that she was becoming a favorite with Jane Ray, which pleased me, knowing that she would be of some service to her, and befriend her. Many a time she would fix her eyes upon me, and it seemed as if they would pierce through my soul.

## CHAPTER V.

More recollections of Jane Ray—Her confessions of her history.

ONE of the nuns was from St. Mark's, and bore the name of St. Mark. Her father visited the Superior one day, and requested her to have the nuns pray for him daily for a short time, leaving with her a considerable sum of money to pay for their intercession. Such things were occasionally done by different persons. He also sent about forty dollars to his daughter, with a desire that they might be distributed among the nuns, to purchase whatever they might wish for. The Superior informed us that it was quite inconsistent with the rules for the nuns to receive such presents, but that, considering the devout character of the giver, she would not entirely forbid the execution of his request. She therefore furnished us with some molasses to make into candy, and allowed us an unusual degree of liberty during a part of a day. A considerable quantity of molasses was made into candy by some of the most skilled in the process: though by no means as much as forty dollars' worth. The Superior, however, had a trick played on her in consequence of the indulgence: for some of us attributed it to a desire of pleasing the rich contributor, and not to any kindness towards ourselves.

When the time for evening prayers had almost

arrived, Jane Ray proposed to drop a little warm candy in the chairs of the Superior and two old nuns. This was soon done; and in a few minutes those seats, as well as the others in the community room, were occupied, and the prayers going on. At the close the Superior attempted to rise, but fell back again into her chair; and at the same moment the two old nuns did the same. After a few unsuccessful attempts, their situation became evident to all the assembly; and there was a great embarrassment at once among us all, arising from a disposition to speak and to laugh, opposed by the endeavor to suppress both. The scene was a very ludicrous one, and Jane enjoyed much amusement before the Superior and the old nuns could be set at liberty.

Jane Ray would sometimes seem to be overcome and lose courage, when detected and exposed for some of her tricks, even though not condemned to any severe penance. I have seen her cry, and even roar, after committing some breach of rules; and then retire to a corner; and after composing herself, begin to meditate a new trick. This she would commonly carry into effect with success; and then, laughing aloud, declare that she was satisfied and happy again.

Sometimes she would submit to penances with perfect indifference, though they made her the constant object of observation. To punish her for her habitual negligence in dress, she was once ordered to wear an old nightcap until it fell to pieces; but still

she was seen again as usual, with her apron half on and half off, and with stockings of different colors.

She would occasionally slip into the Superior's room, steal pass tickets, and get into the hospital with them; and this she did so boldly, that she was the occasion of the tickets being disused. Sometimes she would bring a Roman Catholic newspaper out of the Superior's room, and give it to the nuns to read; and sometimes repeat to us what she had overheard said in private.

Sometimes scenes of great agitation would occur, and things would be carried to such a state, that one and another of the nuns would become desperate, and resist with violence. For it is to be remembered, that unspeakable practices were sometimes resorted to, at the will of the priests or bishops, countenanced by the Superior; and sometimes, as I have stated in my first volume, required on the authority of the Pope.

Jane Ray sometimes appeared as a loud and violent opposer of what were considered the established rules of the Convent. She would break out in denunciations of the priests, and berate them in a style which it would be difficult to imitate, if it were worth while. Other nuns would sometimes exclaim, "Are you not ashamed to show so little respect for the holy fathers?" "Why are they not ashamed," she would reply, "to show no respect for the holy sisters?"

Some of the best opportunities I ever had for conversing with Jane, were at night; for during a con-



siderable time she had her bed opposite mine, and by watching for a moment, when she could do it without being seen by the night watch, she would slip over to me, and get into my bed. Thus we have often spent hours together, and she found such occasions very convenient for communicating to me such plans as she devised for amusement or revenge. I sometimes lent an ear to her proposals, quite against my will; for I commonly concluded with a solemn confession of the wickedness, as I supposed it, in which she thus induced, and sometimes almost compelled me to engage. Indeed, it often happened that I had nothing to do in the morning, as it were, but to beg pardon; and when I was asked why I had so much of that business to do, I commonly laid it to Jane Ray. She, however, appeared to take much pleasure in the stolen interviews we thus had; and when we were obliged to lie at a distance from each other, she told me that it caused her to weep more than she had ever done in her life.

I naturally felt much curiosity to learn something of the history of Jane Ray, and repeatedly asked her questions intended to lead her to tell me something of her family, her former residence, or life. But, although so communicative on most other subjects, on this she evidently did not like to speak. Repeatedly have I known her to waive my inquiries, and many times, also, when I spoke very plainly, she would become silent, and refuse to speak a word. All this unwillingness, only served to increase my desire to know the truth, but I never was

able to draw from her any thing more than a very brief and general account of herself ; for never, except on a single occasion, did she comply with my wishes so far as even to speak on the subject.

One night, when she had secretly left her bed and entered mine, she happened to be in a very communicative mood, though she appeared more depressed and deeply sunk in melancholy than I had ever known her before. She then informed me, that she had become attached to an officer of the British army in Quebec, in whom she confided to her ruin, believing that he intended to marry her. She left her parents, and after a time proceeded with him to Montreal. There he invited her to visit the Hotel Dieu Nunnery, as a curiosity ; but to her surprise, she suddenly found herself deserted by him, and the doors closed upon her. From what she observed or heard, she soon learnt that this was done in consequence of an arrangement made between the officer and the Superiors of the Seminary and Convent, the first having paid a large sum of money to have her shut up from the world.

I understood her to say that the officer was an aid-de-camp of the former governor of Canada, Sir Peregrine Maitland. The priests, she believed, knew her story, but few of the nuns, she thought, had any knowledge of it except myself.

## CHAPTER VI.

My fear of the priests—Arguments used to keep us in subjection—  
Old nuns.

I WAS kept in great fear of the priests, by pretences they made to various kinds of power. I was once confessing to Father Bedar, who is now dead, and told him I had something on my conscience which I did not like to communicate. He said to me, "I have power to strike you dead this minute; but I will not. I will spare you. Go and examine your conscience, and see if you cannot come back and tell me what it is that you now conceal."

I was much frightened; for I believed what he said, and supposed he could have taken away my life on the spot by only wishing it. I therefore immediately went to the examination of my conscience with fear and trembling.

I have remarked in my first volume, more than once, that we were told it was a duty to submit to the licentious wishes of the priests. This we were urged to on various considerations. We were told, for instance, that being consecrated to God, we were not our own, and even our persons were not to be regarded as at our disposal. Out of considerations of gratitude, too, we were told, it was our duty to suppress the doubts and misgivings which would sometimes arise in our minds, when we allowed our consciences to present the nature of our life in its

own proper light. If there were no priests, we were reminded we could never get to heaven; and it would be ungrateful in the extreme, after being insured of eternal life by their kind offices, if we should deny them any wish whatever.

In spite, however, of all that was said, our feelings often revolted, and arguments were renewed. Not only so, but now and then, as I have before remarked, penances of different kinds were often resorted to, to suppress them.

One of the tales told us by the priests, was this—intended to prove the power they exercise by means of sacraments which none but they can administer. I recollect that it was recounted to us one day at catechism, by one of the fathers.

"I was once travelling," said he, "in a desolate region, when I saw something flying like a white dove. Believing it to be the Holy Spirit, I followed it, and it led me to a house, over the door of which it stopped. I went in, and found an old man on his death-bed, who had never been baptized, nor ever heard of any religion. I baptized him; and he went off straight to heaven."\*

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\* Among my early recollections, are many anecdotes illustrating the peculiar opinions and ceremonies of the Canadian Catholics in and about Montreal. My grandmother, Mrs. Mills, was a Scotch woman, and a firm Protestant. She had a handsome estate about four miles distant from the city, on the Lachine road, where I repeatedly visited her. She was required, like everybody else in the parish who was able, to furnish, in her turn, what is called "holy bread," which is given out in church by the priest before sacrament, but eaten afterwards. The preparation of it was attended with much trouble and some expense;

One reason why I did not like to approach the cells occupied by the imprisoned nuns, was this: the Superior had told me that they were possessed by evil spirits, and that I must always make the sign of the cross on going into the cellar.

There are seven sins, as we were taught, which priests cannot forgive, viz: that of refusing to pay tithes to the church, injuring dumb animals, setting a house on fire, hearing a Protestant preach, reading Protestant books, and one more which I do not remember. These, however, can be forgiven by the Bishop or the Grand Vicar.

From what I heard and observed at different times, I had reason to believe that a serious mis-

for there were to be eleven loaves made, of different sizes, though they were all of considerable weight. They were made with a good supply of eggs and butter, and took about a bag of flour. They were ornamented on the top with Peter's cock crowing, having on his head a tinsel crown, and were starred over, in a particular manner, which required great painstaking, and often cost many trials before they would be done right. My grandmother used to say that it always cost her ten or twelve dollars to prepare the holy bread; and the sacrifice of her feelings appeared to be still more reluctantly submitted to; for she called it, in her broad Scotch dialect, a service to the *Deevil*.

She was a regular devout attendant on public worship; notwithstanding her advanced age (above eighty) and the distance from her church, in Montreal, she seldom or never failed to attend, although in consequence of certain unhappy circumstances in her family, she could not for some years command the services of the horses in the barn, and always had to walk. I have lately conversed with a Protestant clergyman residing in Canada, who spoke in high terms of my grandmother, and said he had often overtaken her on the road home from church in the snow, and taken her up in his sleigh.

After her death, the Roman Catholics dwelling in her neigh-



understanding existed between the Bishop and Father Richards. I have heard it hinted, in some way, that the former would probably have had his residence in the nunnery but for the latter. But this I state only as what I have been told.

The term "old nun," I did not particularly explain in my first edition. It did not refer entirely to age. None of the nuns, indeed, were old women. For some reason or other, none of them appeared to me to be above forty years of age, and few more than thirty. I never knew what made the difference between them and the common veiled nuns, like myself. It was easy to see that they stood on a different footing from the rest of us, but what that

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borhood held her memory in great dislike, and were not allowed to pass over any part of her farm unless they had holy water about them, for fear of being beset by evil spirits.

A man I knew, whose name it is not necessary to mention, the son of a Protestant mother, wished to marry a Catholic woman, but knew he would be disinherited if he did so before she disposed of her property. The priest allowed them to live together as man and wife, with the intention to be married at a future time. When the neighbors began to talk about them, the priest gave the woman permission to turn Protestant for a time, and to be married by a Protestant clergyman, which was done by Mr. Black. After the death of her mother-in-law, she threw off all disguise and avowed her Catholic sentiments again.

As this worthy couple lived in the house of the parent, in accordance with custom they had to have the house blessed by a priest, before it was thought to be proper or safe to inhabit it. Accordingly the ceremony was performed, of driving out the devils; and a considerable sum of money was paid to the priest, I believe about a dollar for each window in the house. The man (who appeared to have no real principle) had a priest on his farm as many as seven or eight times to my knowledge, to bless his

footing was I never could thoroughly understand. They had a separate sleeping room, which I have described, and exercised much authority, not merely in overseeing and directing operations in the nuns' and novices' departments, but were allowed to inflict various punishments without consulting the Superior, and sometimes did punish with great severity.

I sometimes imagined that there might be some formal introduction to the dignity and authority of an Old Nun, and that a higher grade existed, above that of the "Received." It has occurred to me as quite possible, (from what I knew of the difference between novices and veiled nuns,) that "Old Nuns" might have taken some peculiar oaths, and submitted to rules of a special nature. All this, however,

ground, and to secure his crops from insects: for some of his neighbors had persuaded him that it had been cursed in particular spots where a Protestant minister had trodden, when he visited it during the life of his mother, so that it was unfit to produce the priests' blessed grain.

The ceremony of blessing ground and seeds is one very commonly practised in those places in Canada, where I have been. Before a farmer plants, he takes a handful of seed to his priest, who blesses it, before it is fit to grow; and receives a sum of money for it, commonly, I believe, as many shillings as there are grains. These are to be mixed with the rest of the seed before sowing, and then you are sure of a good crop.—At sowing time the priests have often a good deal to do in this way, and receive much money. The farmers often pay them in grain instead of money, which is commonly the best that is to be had. I know that an uncle of mine commonly bought his seed wheat at the Seminary, because it was the best he could obtain. The priests have in this way a good deal of trade and enter to carry on, as is well known in and about Montreal.

I inferred only from their conduct, and the concert and understanding which they appeared to have with each other and the Superior. No further light could I obtain on the subject; and I am still as much in the dark as ever, although the Superior once gave me much encouragement to hope that I should become an "Old Nun."

Some of that class, as I began to say, were far from being old; and indeed a number of them were below thirty years of age, according to my judgment. As for their real names, families, or personal history, I knew as little of them as others. We called them, familiarly, Ma Mere (my mother,) or Ma Tante, (my aunt,) and commonly obeyed them without delay when they laid their commands upon us.

I have no doubt, that, whatever was the process by which "Old Nuns" are made, the reason of the elevation of a "Received" to that dignity, is her superior cunning. It was in consequence of my success at imposture, that the Superior told me she hoped I might become one; and the old nuns whom I best knew, were among the greatest adepts at duplicity I ever saw.

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## CHAPTER VII.

*Shaving the hair in the Nunnery—Disputes about money—A Nun admitted for money.—Influence of jealousy.*

Among the practices in the nunnery, is that of shaving the hair of the nuns on their admission.—This is done to most, but not all; as the hair of some is more easily disposed in a manner thought necessary to the proper arrangement of the head-band and veil. My hair was shaved on my reception, and frequently afterwards. At the time of my escape from the Convent, it was very short; since when it has been growing, and it is now about six inches long. We used sometimes to shave each others heads, and I have done it for other nuns.

It is a rule, that no novice shall be received who is not in sound health. Miss Louise Bousquier, of St. Denis, owed her escape from the life of a nun to an affection of the head, on account of which she was discharged from her noviciate when within about three months of the period when she would have taken the veil.

Sometimes the priests would come to the Superior to borrow money of her, when she would show liberality towards some, but others I have heard her blame for not paying what they already owed her. In several instances I knew difficulties to arise from money affairs.

One day I heard a conversation between the Bishop and the Superior of the Seminary about a quantity of plate which an old lady, on her decease, had bequeathed to the church. The Superior wished to appropriate it to the expenses of the Seminary, but the Bishop claimed it as his own. He said he wanted a set of plate, and would have it sent to his house for his own use. The Superior replied, that he could do that as soon as he had paid the price which he could get for it at the silver smith's. The Bishop asked him if he knew whom he was talking to ; and things seemed likely to rise to some height, when I left the room.

I heard a conversation, soon after my admission as a nun, between the Bishop and the Superior of the nunnery, in her room. The Bishop was complaining that he could not get his proper dues from the priests : for, as I understood, each priest is required to pay two English shillings out of every dollar he receives, for his support in the Seminary ; while the whole of the profits of every high mass for the dead, is considered the property of the Seminary. The Superior of the nunnery replied, that the priests would be better able to pay all their debts if they did not gamble so much ; and the state of the country at that time was unfavorable, and little money was to be had. The Bishop said he must preach a sermon to the people, to make them more liberal in their contributions.

I saw a nun one day whose appearance struck me in a singular manner. She was conducting a



priest through the sewing room, and had a large bunch of keys, like an old nun. I could hardly tell what to think when I looked on her. It seemed as if I must have seen her before, and yet I could not remember when or where; and I had an impression that she could not be a nun. For some reason or other which I could not understand, I felt a great anxiety to know something about her, and inquired of Jane Ray, but she could tell me but little or nothing. I then asked leave of the Superior to speak with Sainte Thomas,—for that I understood was her name.—She consented, on condition that we should converse in her presence. I accordingly addressed her: but, much to my mortification and surprise, she replied very coldly, and showed at first no disposition to interchange more than a salutation with me. She soon, however, took an opportunity to write something on a bit of paper with a pencil, and to slip it into my hand, which I eagerly read as soon as I could safely do so; and there I found an explanation of her conduct. She intimated that she was unwilling to confide in the Superior, but wished to see me alone the first opportunity.

We soon after had a secret interview, for one night she stole into my bed, and we lay and talked together. She then appeared quite unreserved, and perfectly cordial, and repeated that she believed the Superior was only a spy over us. We soon found that we had been acquaintances in former years, and had been in the Congregational Nunnery together, but after her leaving it, I had met her twice in the

street, and heard of her from some one; her family being so wealthy, we had no intercourse in society. She was from a place behind the mountain, where her father, I believe, was a grocer, and a man of wealth. She had an uncle McDonald.

I learnt from her the circumstances under which she entered the nunnery; and they were peculiar. She had not passed a noviciate, but had purchased her admission without such preparation, by the payment of a large sum of money, as she had peculiar reasons for wishing for it.

My restless anxiety was thus in a degree relieved, for I found that my impressions were right, and that St. Thomas was not a nun in the common meaning of the word; but, on the other hand, I found I had been deceived in believing that all admitted into the Convent, had to pass through the same long trial and training to which I had been subject.

The state of things in the nunnery cannot be fully understood, without a knowledge of the fact, that much jealousy always exists between some of the nuns, on account of their preferences for particular priests. And yet a priest once told me, that there was more wrangling done in the Seminary about nuns, than any thing else.

Saint Clotilde died while I was there, of a natural death; and I heard one of the other nuns say she was glad of it, because she had drawn off the affections of a priest from her. The priests often bring in little delicacies into the nunnery for their

favorites, such as fruit, confectionary, &c. and give them without the Superior's knowledge; and sometimes make them much more valuable presents.

There was a nun who entertained a very bitter spirit towards me. This was Sainte Jane; and a cross, disagreeable creature she was as I ever saw. She would sometimes get close by me on purpose, while employed in ironing, or some other kind of work which required us to be up, and in time of silence stand upon my feet, in order to make me speak and get a penance. She once complained to the Superior, that she saw me looking from a place in the nunnery which she mentioned, and heard the voice of some person speaking with me. Although this was utterly false, the Superior thought I might have some intention of escaping, and sentenced me to the most severe penance I ever endured—viz: to live on bread and water for three weeks. This diet appeared to reduce my strength; and I suffered more severely than usual from the kneeling posture at prayers, which was always peculiarly distressing to me, and made me almost desperate, so that I would sometimes almost as readily die as live.

## CHAPTER VII.

Manners of the Canadian Priests—Confessions of crimes by some of the Priests—Story told by Aunt Susan, of her visit to a Quebec Nunnery—Nuns in Priests' dresses—Sister Turcot.

THE priests who are natives of Canada, are generally very clownish in their manners, and often quite brutish in their vices. The nuns would sometimes laugh at seeing a Canadian priest from some country parish, coming in with a large piece of bread in his hand, eating it as he walked. A large proportion of the priests are foreigners; and a constant intercourse appears to be kept up with France, as we often heard of such and such a father just arrived from that country. These are decidedly the worst class. Most of the wickedness of which I have any knowledge, I consider as their work. If I should repeat one half the stories of wickedness I have heard from the mouths of some of the priests, I am afraid they would hardly be believed; and yet I feel bound, since I have undertaken to make disclosures, not to omit them altogether.

It is not uncommon for priests to recount anecdotes of what they have seen and done; and several stories which I have heard from some of them I will briefly repeat.

A country priest said one day, that he knew a priest in a parish better off than those of the Seminary, for he had seven nuns all to himself.

A priest said to me one day, that he had three

daughters in Montreal, grown up. Their mother was a married woman. One of the daughters, he added, now occasionally confessed to him, ignorant, however, of any relationship.

Another said he was once applied to by a man for advice, in consequence of suspicions he had of his wife, and quieted his suspicions by telling him a falsehood, when he knew the husband was not jealous without cause, he himself having been her seducer.

It may, it must offend the ear of the modest to hear such exposures as these, even if made in the most brief and guarded language that can be used. But I am compelled to declare, that this is not all. I shall stop here, but lest my readers should infer that it is because there is nothing more that could be said, I must first make the solemn declaration, that *there are crimes committed in the Hotel Dieu Nunnery too abominable to mention.*

I remember a variety of stories relating to confession, which I have heard told in the nunnery by priests; who sometimes become very communicative when intoxicated. One of their favorite topics is Confession. One of them showed a watch, one day, which he said was worth a hundred dollars. He had received it at confession, from a fellow who had stolen it, telling him that he must see it safely restored to the owner, while his intention was to get it into his possession to keep, which he did, and boasted of what he had done.

I have known priests to sit and talk about what



they had done in the Confessional, for three or four hours at a time; and I have heard one give another instructions how he might proceed, and what he might do. One priest, I know, paid another fifty dollars, to tell him what was confessed to him by a young woman for whom he had a partiality, or what he called love. Sometimes one will request another to send a particular lady to confess to him, either on account of her beauty or her property: for considerable sums are in such cases obtained from the rich.

In the country the common practice is, so far as I know, to fix the price of Confession for the year at some particular rate: as two bushels of wheat out of twelve; or if the person is not a farmer, a sum of money.

A priest one day said to another in my hearing, You confess such a young lady, mentioning her name. She does not like you, I understand, because you kiss her. She is rich, and you have more rich persons to confess than I think is your share.

I knew a country priest, on a wager, drink a shoe-full of wine. I was once near the priests' parlor, (as I have called it,) when I heard two of them in an altercation, about the speed of two insects; which led to a wager, on the question whether that insect would move quicker over a hot brick or a cold one. They told me to put a brick in the cold, while they heated one on the stove; and when both were prepared, they actually tried the

experiment. This scene caused great excitement and loud talking. I have mentioned it to give an idea of the manner in which much time passes in the nunnery.

One day when I was employed in the hospital, Aunt Susan came in, one of the old nuns, who had been absent for several days, and just returned. The circumstances which I am about to relate were brought to my mind the other day, by reading in Rosamond's book about the priests in Cuba taking her into a monastery in disguise.

Aunt Susan was something like Aunt Margaret, in having something the matter with her feet which made her rather lame. I noticed something strange in her appearance when she came into the hospital, and found that she was unable to apply the cup in cupping a patient for whom that remedy had been prescribed, although she had been remarkably skilful before, and now appeared to try her best. I thought she must have taken too much wine, and undertook to perform the operation at her request, which pleased her so well, that she sat down and became very talkative, in a manner little consistent with the rules and practices of the institution.

She told me that she had just returned from Quebec, whither she had gone some days before from our Convent, on a visit to the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of that city. She had gone in the dress of a priest, in company with some father, and had an opportunity to witness the arrangements and habits of that institution. She went on to make remarks on dif

ferent subjects which had come under her observation, while I was employed in operating on the patient. She represented the rules in the nunnery which she had visited as less strict, or less strictly regarded, than our own; and said there was much less order, peace, and quietness, than we enjoy. The Superior, she said, had less command over the nuns, and they were less orderly, and not so well contented. She had a cousin there, as she informed me, a Miss Duraudeau, who was very stubborn, and unmanageable. If she were Superior, she declared she would half murder her for her rebellious conduct.

All that I knew about the story told by Aunt Susan, was what she told me. I did not see her in the dress of a priest, but I had reason to believe that the nuns often left the Convent in such a disguise, and that this part of her tale was by no means incredible. Indeed, during my stay in the Hotel Dieu, I personally knew more than one case of the kind.

There was an old nun, notorious in Montreal, known by the name of Sister Turcot, her family name. I was one day employed in the hospital, when I saw her enter dressed like a priest, in company with one or two fathers. She spent a few minutes there, during which she went up to one of the patients' beds, and performed prayers instead of one, and with such address that I should never have suspected any thing irregular, I think, if I had not known her appearance as well as I did. It was with

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the greatest difficulty that I refrained from laughing at a sight so ludicrous. She was at the time on her way out of the nunnery, in company with the priests, and after a short delay left the hospital, and went, as I supposed, into the street.

But I had still stronger evidence than this, of the departure of nuns in open daylight, in the dress of priests; for I was repeatedly called in to help them put on their disguise. I have dressed the nun Sainte Felix, three or four times; and a hateful creature she was, in consequence of her jealous disposition. She was always thinking some one else a greater favorite than herself, with some priest.

The place where the change of dress was usually made was the Superior's room; and in the closet in the adjoining passage, at the end nearest her door, were always kept a number of priests' dresses, nearly a shelf full; as well as several black-hooded cloaks, like those worn by the Sisters of Charity.

A priest once told me, that he had three nuns to take out of the Convent that day, and was troubled to know how to do it. He had often taken out one at a time, and had sometimes thought he might lose them if they were disposed to run away. He commonly directed them to limp as they passed along the streets;—"for," said he, "many of the priests do so, and they might pass very well for limping priests; and in our dress, how can you tell a man from a woman? But," he added, "now I have got three; and if I should undertake to lead them all

out together, the devils of women might start off three different ways at the first corner we come to, and how could I catch them?"

The change made in the dress, when a nun disguises herself as a priest, is complete. All the clothes of the latter are assumed. They pass through the public rooms in going out of the nunnery, and are often absent for several weeks.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

A visit to the Bishop's—My Reception—My Occupations—The Bishop's Visitors—Return to the Nunnery.

ALTHOUGH it is a painful duty, I feel it incumbent on me to give my own experience, on the subject of disguising nuns as priests, that they may leave the Convent unobserved.

The Superior one day informed me, that I was to pay a visit to the Bishop on the evening of the next day. The intelligence surprised me; and, as no further information was given me, I did not know exactly what to think of it. The period of which I speak might have been about a year after I took the veil.

On the evening appointed, I was taken to the Superior's room, and furnished with a priest's dress, which, in compliance with her directions, I put on. Father Phelan, who was present, then conducted me out of the Nunnery soon after dusk, according to my recollection. We passed down towards my mother's house, across Notre Dame street, and round Citadel Hill, till we reached a house which I had never before known for the Bishop's, and stopped at the door. No house adjoined it on my right. We rang; and the door was opened by the Bishop himself, which greatly astonished me. He received us with kindness, and led the way up to the third story, where we stop-

ped and sat down. Supper was soon ready, which was a rich one.

The room in which I was, was that in which I remained during my stay, and the only one in the house which I ever entered. It had windows looking upon the street, but in the rear the remaining part of that story appeared to be taken up with dark cupboards, which I afterwards found contained clothes and other articles, in considerable numbers. There was a large staff, which the bishop said was of solid gold, and cost seven or eight thousand dollars.

After Father Phelan had gone away, the Bishop invited me to play cards, which we did on that and other evenings; commonly the game called "catch the ten." The Bishop's table was set with a complete service of plate, marked with two letters, one was L. I spent a part of almost every day in a small apartment or closet in one corner of the room: for as there were commonly frequent calls on the Bishop, when persons were admitted to that room, he chose to see them alone. The custom was, when any person called, for the servant to give notice to him by ringing a bell; and if he wished to have him brought up stairs, he would ring one in reply; but if not, he took no notice of it. There was a supply of excellent wines and confectionary, in a closet in the large room, which was always open.

During a part of my stay, I was employed in cleaning and putting in order the Bishop's money,

which he kept in an iron chest in the closet I have mentioned. He told me that the silver and gold very soon became tarnished by lying there, and that he found it necessary to have it cleaned once a year. I should judge that he had ordered a nun to be sent from the Convent, partly to perform this task. He said that sometimes, when he had a large sum of money to pay for land, he had felt quite ashamed to give only tarnished silver and gold.

I worked for hours at rubbing the coin, with chamois cloth, to make it bright, and had to arrange it all with care upon a table, before putting it away in the chest. The silver was principally half dollars, which the bishop told me to place in piles of six. The gold was kept in a beautiful little box, and was quite tarnished, so that he made me wipe it over and over several times, before he was satisfied with its appearance.

Besides these, he had a large amount of money in bank bills, principally of five dollars. These he made me smooth out carefully with a hot iron, which was brought to the door. When that was done, I put them in parcels of fifty bills each. The iron chest was studded, and locked itself when the door was closed. While I was astonished at the quantity of money I handled, I observed that I was closely watched by the Bishop; so that, if I had wished, I knew I could not have taken any of it without discovery.

Priest Bourgette was the most frequent visiter at the bishop's during my stay, but he never saw

me, although he was sometimes there seven or eight times a day. Father Phelan also came often; but generally during the bishop's absence, who rode out every day. Whenever the bishop went out he locked the door and took away the key; but when Father Phelan came in his absence, he opened it with a key of his own, as I suppose unknown to the bishop. He repeatedly inquired of me what the bishop had said about him; and seemed very anxious to ascertain whether he stood high in his estimation or not. Father Tombeau or Tabeau, also had a key, and sometimes used it, but, I believe, with the bishop's knowledge, although he never happened to see me there.

The partition of the little room, or closet, was so thin, that I could distinctly hear conversation held in a considerable part of the great room. Tombeau came in one day and said to the bishop, I have had a good day at confession, (with something like an oath,) throwing down a quantity of money on the table. The bishop replied, that so it appeared, and gathered it up. On another occasion he came in at evening, and said, "Well, I am going to the nunnery to-night;" to which the bishop replied—"Very well, I have nothing for you to do."

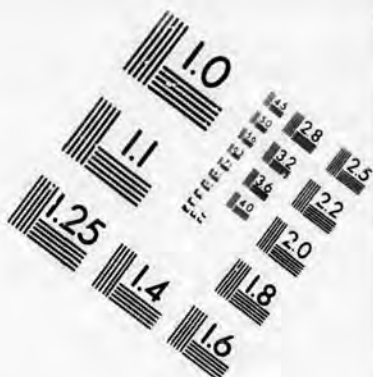
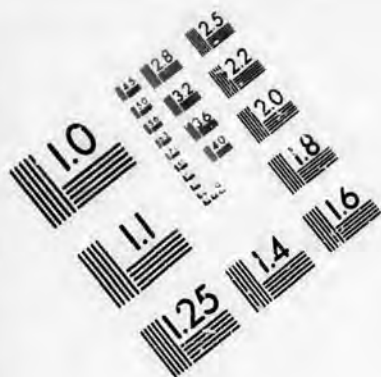
One day a number of gentlemen came to see the bishop, and sat a long time conversing about some land which he was buying. A notary was present, whose name I heard, but cannot now re-

call; and Mr. Sullivan, a gentleman of Montreal, whom I had often seen from a child. He remained a considerable time after the others were gone, and then I had to listen to the most vile conversation that I ever heard.

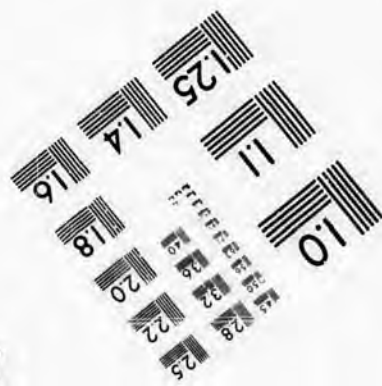
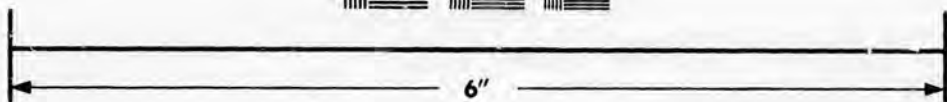
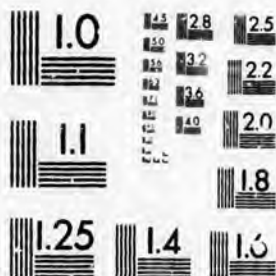
Persons came in at different times to confess; but as the bishop seated himself at the other end of the room, I heard little or nothing of what they said. One day a woman came in who called herself Mrs. Green, of Montreal, and made a long complaint against her husband for ill-treating her. I got a sight of her face through the keyhole, and found her quite handsome. This woman had a dog with her, which caused some annoyance by barking. She afterwards called several times; and once, I think it was on her third visit, was accompanied by another woman, whose voice I thought I recognised as soon as I heard it. After a little time I ascertained to a certainty that I was not mistaken; but the discovery was one of the most painful I ever made. She confirmed the account the woman had given of the conduct of her husband, and afterwards conversed with the bishop on other subjects; for she remained there probably not less than an hour and a half. The bishop told her, that the next time the Governor came to town, he wished her to get him another interview with him, to which she replied, that she always did what she could to oblige him. They had also a long talk about some furniture, which she had lent him, and never received back. He said he







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had sent it back to her at the Government House.

The reply which the bishop finally gave to Mrs. Green was, that she need not live with her husband, but that she must confess to him daily. He afterwards told me he would not have had me seen by one of those visiters for any thing in the world.

Soon after I came to the bishop's, I found that he was finishing the composition of a hymn, which he was making, to be sung to a war song, beginning with these words:

"En allant, marchant, contre les canons,  
A travers des feux, des feux des bataillons."

He had the papers by him on which he was writing it, and would often sing a part of it over and over. I will give from memory a verse or two, of the seven or eight of which it consisted, and most of which I might recall, as I have since heard it repeatedly sung in the Convent.

De tous les biens que Dieu nous donne  
Les biens qu'il est le mieux charmaît,  
Ce n'est ni l'or ni la couronne,  
Mon Dieu Sauveur dans destiné.

*Chorus.*—O Dieu de mon cœur, O mon dieu Sauveur,  
Jesus plaint destrait  
Ma joie et mon bonheur,  
O quel cruel martyr.\*

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\* This, like some other specimens of French, I have written down from memory, without pretending to accuracy, or even to a meaning in every word—I do not understand it all myself, though I suppose the original had a meaning.

I soon became extremely weary of staying in that place, and asked for permission to return to the Convent: but it was not allowed me until I had been there about twelve or thirteen days. Much apprehension was expressed lest I should be discovered on the way; but at length, the arrangements being made, and I dressed again as a priest, left the house with Father Phelan, and walked to the nunnery, which, bad as it was, I was glad to see.

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## CHAPTER IX.

*Attend in the Parish Church as confessor—The persons who confessed to me—My return to the Nunnery.*

A REGARD to truth requires that I should not charge other persons with assuming the office of a priest, without admitting that I have done so myself, if my testimony is necessary to convince my readers that such things are ever done.

Early one morning, Father Bonin told me that he was quite indisposed, and felt unable to perform the task of confessor in the church, which devolved upon him, and he thought I might take his place, and go through the ceremony without being discovered. The priests have often expressed in my hearing a dislike of sitting for hours in the confessional box, as a dull and wearisome task; but Bonin appeared at that time to be somewhat indisposed, and offered to tell the Superior if she asked for me. I did not make any serious opposition to his proposal; and he went on to give me instructions how to proceed.

He told me that I must first put on his clothes and gown, and cover my head with his hat, and then proceed to the church through the subterranean passages, enter the first confessional box by the chapel of Saint Magdalen, near the high altar, with all the familiarity I could assume, take my seat, put on a little cap which I should find there, cover my face with his handkerchief which he gave me, and pro-

ceed as I should think proper with such persons as should present themselves, remembering to speak in a feigned voice. Particular instructions were necessary to enable me to find my way to the church; and he told me first to go through the subterranean passage leading into the cellar of the Congregational Nunnery, then turning a corner a few steps distant from the door, descend into another and follow it to the end. There I should find a light trap-door, which I could raise with my head. This would admit me into the sacristy of the church, from which to my station the passage was direct.

After receiving such instructions in haste, though at greater length than I have given them here, and having dressed myself in his clothes, I set out on my errand; but the garments were so much too large for me, that I found some difficulty in proceeding. I went down into the nunnery cellar, proceeded to the farther end of it, opened the low door to the subterranean passage I was first to enter, and soon reached its extremity. Following my directions, though still in almost total darkness, I grouped my way round a corner of a stone wall, and found a staircase, (I think of eleven steps,) down which I cautiously proceeded, then, by putting up both hands, so as to touch both sides of the passage to which they led me, I found my way along without much difficulty, except what arose from the size and weight of my dress. I had two falls in consequence of this; but, not receiving any injury, after a pretty long walk I saw two or three streaks of

light above, and mounting a few steps, I found the trap-door of which I had been informed. Pressing my head against it a little, it easily rose, and I entered an apartment above ground.

At the time when I left the Hotel Dieu, it was scarcely daybreak, but the light was now so much stronger, that I could distinguish objects with clearness; and, proceeding at once towards the high altar, and the chapel of Saint Magdalen, I made for the first confessional box. There I saw a number of persons of different descriptions, kneeling, on both sides of the box, engaged in preparing for confession; but I walked with as firm a step, and an air of as much unconcern as I could, kneeled before the altar, and said (or appeared to say) a prayer, then entered the box, closed the door, and took my seat on the little narrow bench on which the confessor sits.

But by this time my feelings had materially changed; I found myself in a place from which I could not retire without being again exposed to observation, and in which appearances required that I should remain a long time. I had a difficult task before me; I knew I must say something to those who were about to address me, and yet I knew but little of a confessor's duties. Besides, in spite of the levity and thoughtlessness with which I had consented to undertake the task, I now felt something like a conscientious scruple, as I drew on the cap, pushed by the curtain, and covered my face with Bonin's red silk handkerchief with a yellow border,

so that a trembling came over me. I leaned my head upon my hand, and for a few instants heartily wished myself out of a place which I still regarded as sacred.

All these thoughts, however, passed through my mind much more rapidly than I have described them. I had hardly time to sit down by the lattice work, cast a glance through it about the church, and reflect, that although a confessor can see every thing from his box, he is himself in the dark, and entirely concealed from all inspection, when I heard a low and mournful voice murmuring in my ear—

"Mon père, benissez moi, parce que j'ai péché."

These words, with which confession commences, came from an old man, who had earliest taken his place by the confessional box in the morning, and who, according to general custom, was entitled to the first hearing. I let him run on with his story without interruption, and was glad that he made it long, as I dreaded to trust myself to speak. He said, "I have performed the penance which you laid upon me, and I have sinned but once since my last confession, when I got into a passion with my wife. But you ought to know what kind of a creature she is, and how impossible it is to get along with her in peace." He at length brought his tale to an end, and then, to my surprise, asked me for absolution. Up to this time I had not opened my lips, and did not like to trust my voice, even in the lowest tone; but the thought of being called on to bestow absolution, ignorant as I was of the Latin

form which I knew was necessary, although I had heard it repeated, was dreadful to me. I therefore spoke in a rough voice, and told him he must perform a penance for the sin he had committed in being angry with his wife, by saying five acts of contrition and five Ave Marias that night on his knees by his bedside, and repeat the same the next day, after which he might come again for absolution.

The old man then rose, and sorrowfully went away ; while a young lad who had been long waiting next him on his knees, pushed up as close to me as he could get, and began to tell his "father" how he had got into a dreadful predicament, through the enmity of a woman who was disposed to do him all the harm she could, although she had an interesting daughter for whom he had the highest respect. He said that the mother was then in the church, having come to confess and accuse him ; and he believed she had done so already. He then went on to tell the particulars of the circumstances attending his case, and how a little act of civility and kindness which he had shown the young lady, had been misrepresented. He said he had come hoping to get some indulgences that morning, but feared that he should be refused. I replied that that was out of the question until some future time. He then asked for a penance. I had become quite amused by his foolish talking, and now asked who lived in the house of the old woman ; and on learning that there were several persons, told him he must kiss her feet that night in the presence of all

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the family. He replied that he could not do that ; but I insisted that he could not be let off from such an act of self-denial.

After this boy had gone away, a woman came up and held up to me a handful of silver, saying she had told a great many lies to her mistress, (she was a servant in a house in the city,) and had brought me three dollars, mostly in British shillings, to pay for high mass, which, she said, she thought would procure her forgiveness for the whole. She handed the money to me, and I took it, telling her her wish should be granted.

A young country girl afterwards presented herself, with a long story about a trick she had tried, to find out whom she was to marry, and the fear she had that the Devil had appeared to her. She had gone about dusk to a bridge, on the advice of her mother, and thrown one of her garments to the opposite bank of the brook, when a young man suddenly appeared, and restored it to her. He had indeed the form of a good young man she knew, but she thought perhaps it might have been the Evil One in his shape. I told her she had been guilty of sacrilege, in having any thing to do with such tricks ; and laid a penance upon her which I am sure she must have found both difficult and vexatious, saying that I could by no means forgive her until she should have performed it. "My father," she exclaimed, "but don't you remember what you forgave me last year ? and yet it was something worse than what I have now confessed." I replied

that this case was rather a difficult one, and I must communicate with the Bishop before I could give an answer.

After this a woman took her place at the lattice, and began a confession of a nature not proper to be repeated, disclosing a character which disgusted me extremely. I was obliged to listen in silence, for I could not invent any way to interrupt her; but was glad when she had done. I do not recollect the order in which all appeared whom I confessed that morning, and shall not attempt to give it; neither can I fix with absolute certainty the exact number.

One man told me he had come for absolution for the sin of drunkenness, which he had recently committed. I told him to get drunk again daily, and return at the end of the week, and he should be absolved from all together; for I thought from what I had seen in the Convent that drunkenness was its own best punishment.

A girl brought me a parcel of money which she had stolen from her mistress, requesting me to restore it to her, and informing me that her mistress' name would be found in the parcel. This I took, and on her asking me to bestow absolution upon her, I told her to do an act of contrition, and ventured to say something over in a low voice which she could not distinctly hear, and making the sign of the cross with my hand, I sent her off well satisfied that she was pardoned.

Another girl approached, addressing me in these

words: "My father, I was unable to come when you wished, but I have come now." Not knowing why she had been sent for or directed to come, I dismissed her, as I had done others, by telling her to come at another time.

One fellow asked my permission to give his father a good beating; for he said the old man had conducted so of late, that he did not know how to get along with him. He often took opportunity when he was absent, to give away things in the house; and he was afraid he would soon strip it of all it contained. He could not tell why he had been seized with such a whim, but he thought that a good whipping might very probably reform him, and he wished to know how much money he must pay me for leave to do it. I inquired whether his father really deserved such treatment. He replied that I might be sure he never would have proposed it if he did not. I told him I could not give my consent then, but directed him to come again.

An older man confessed things which ought never to be repeated, and not less shocking than those before alluded to in speaking of the confession of one of the females.

There were two little lattices opening to the confession box, as usual; and sometimes I sat at one and sometimes at the other, according as the applicants stationed themselves. The curtain always fell as I left one side before I raised that on the other; and the door being kept closed, and every other part being tight, I was so much in the

dark that I knew I was invisible, and ran no risk of detection from any thing that could be seen, even if I had not kept Father Bonin's handkerchief constantly over my face. At the same time, as I mentioned before, I could at any time peep through the lattice, and distinctly see a great part of the church. Whenever I looked out, however, I was distressed to find that there were numbers of persons still kneeling near the box, waiting their turns for confession, so that, in spite of all I had listened to, I saw no prospect of being soon released from my unpleasant situation.

One of those who addressed me, was a fellow who slyly showed me a bundle, which he told me contained some jewelry that he had brought to give me. He had stolen a quantity, he said, from a man from whom he had before stolen four times since his last confession, and had brought half of it to me. I was quite shocked at his communication, and shrunk from receiving the bundle, telling him I could not at present determine what directions to give him.

The last person I confessed was a poor simpleton, who acknowledged with great appearance of contrition that he had eaten a piece of liver on Friday. I felt by this time so weary of my business, and so much perplexed to find a way to escape from my box, that I answered him rather shortly, telling him to do a penance for the offence he had committed, the next time he ate liver, by putting on it an equal quantity of mustard. At this he exclaimed,

saying there was never such a thing in his father's house; and went away complaining that I was more severe with him than at his last confession.

I had by this time made up my mind, that it would be folly to try any longer to confess all who were waiting their turns; and that I might as well desert my post then as at any other time, for I must go abruptly sooner or later, if I intended to get away before noon. I therefore rose as the last mentioned fellow withdrew, and having changed my cap for the hat, in a hasty manner stepped out of the box, without saying a word to any of those around me, kneeled a moment at the altar, and crossed into the sacristy. Lifting the trap-door, I descended into the passage, and made my way as fast as I could in the dark, first to the cellar of the Congregational Nunnery, then back to the Hotel Dieu. Returning to the Priests' room, I found Father Bonin, to whom I gave an account of my proceedings, while I exchanged his hat and coat, &c. for my nun's apron and veil.

The Superior was present, and when she heard me say that a bundle of jewelry had been offered me, and I had refused to receive it, she betrayed strong feelings of contempt and anger, saying—

"Vous etes plus bête que je ne pensais."

(You are a greater fool than I took you for.)

And then she scolded me very severely for missing such an opportunity to get something valuable.

I gave the English shillings which one of the



women gave me, to Father Bonin; but when I informed him that I had left the confession box without confessing all who were prepared, he found much fault, and expressed himself with some severity; so that I have seldom felt more unhappy than I did after the close of that morning's task.

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## CHAPTER X.

Death of Priest Bedar—Frightening Nuns to get Money from their Parents—Trick played on Saintes Margaret and Susan—Similar Trick on St. Charles—Story told me of Mrs. Milligan—Her attempt to escape from the Nunnery.

During the first appearance of the Cholera at Montreal in 1832, I witnessed the death of Mr. Bedar, a priest, who came to the nunnery sick. Whether he was conscience-struck, or not, I do not know; but I never saw a man die a more awful death. I spoke to Father Richards about him, saying, that I thought his faith must be weak, as I was surprised a Christian man like him should dread the approach of death.

Father Richards replied, that his mind was not strong enough to bear with the joys which his spirit received from another world. His spirit, he said, was already in heaven. I had been called to sit up with him the night before, and I had set up with him all night. At different times in the night, he would ask for a crucifix, and then occasionally would throw it from him, as if he was afraid to appear before it. At different times in the night, he wished to speak to one of his nieces, who was a novice, before his death, which was granted him. He said to Father Richards, that it was the last request he had to make, and he desired to be left alone to speak to her for a few minutes. Father Richards left the room, and went

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towards the Superior's apartment; but requested me to try to overhear what was said, through the door, which was not quite shut. He told me the old man was so overjoyed that he did not know what he was saying.

I therefore stood and listened, when I heard him request his niece never to become a nun, but to leave the nunnery before a fortnight, which she did three days after his death. I was a novice at that time, and it was but a little before I was received. As I was preparing to become a Veiled Nun, it struck me as very strange; but still I thought, as Father Richards had said, that Bedar was so overjoyed with a view of heaven, that he did not know what he said. I had witnessed the sickness of one person before, who appeared to be like a man in horror, and the recollection of it was awakened at that time.

Mr. Savage, the priest, told me, after the death of Mr. Archambeau, that while, on the evening before he died, he was praying for him in his room, near the window, he heard a noise like singing and instrumental music, which he could not at first account for, until an angel appeared, and told him that there was no more need of praying, and that they were already preparing a crown in heaven to receive Mr. Archambeau.

Not very long after I took the black veil, the Superior, on two occasions, remarked to me, that some nuns had parents so unwilling to part with their money, that in order to get it for the use of

the Convent, it was necessary to resort to extraordinary means; and that fear was sometimes the most successful. Soon afterwards she told me to stop at her room that evening on my way to bed. With this I of course complied, and when I reached the passage in which is the staircase leading to our sleeping-room, with the procession of nuns, I left them, and entered the Superior's apartment.

On her bed lay a singular object, something like a rude mask, with holes cut for eyes and mouth, and painted in such a manner as to appear quite hideous. She informed me that she had need of my services: for there were two nuns, Sainte Margaret and Sainte Susan, (not the lame Sainte Susan, whom we called "la boiteuse,") whose parents withheld money which the Convent ought to have; and they must be frightened. One of these women slept on one side of me, towards the end of the room, and the other on the other side, beyond the staircase, and both at some distance from my place. The Superior informed me, that she wished me to be disguised, to represent the devil, to visit them in succession, and in a feigned voice to urge them to withhold from the nunnery all the money they could. She remarked, that if I should urge them to give to the Convent, they would of course think it their duty to withhold; but, as whatever came from the devil must be wrong, they would probably act contrary to his advice, whatever it might be.

She then took off my apron, let down my black

gown, took the thing I have spoken of from her bed, and placed it on my head. It proved to be the shell of a pumpkin, hollowed out, shaped, cut and painted; and it went over my head so as to cover it entirely, and show an awful face in front. She then repeated her instructions to me; and the time being elapsed when the nuns were probably all in bed, and some of them asleep, she sent me up stairs to execute my commission. I mounted to the sleeping-room, and slipping along as quietly as possible, found my way to the bedside of Sainte Susan. She seemed to be dozing, for she did not at first appear to be aware of my presence, but directly raised her eyes and started with fright, then crossing herself, looked at me without speaking.

I addressed her, as I had been directed, in a feigned voice, telling her that she ought by no means to let her parents give any of their property to the Convent, to a set of people so religious, but to spend it in pleasure and dissipation, at the theatre, and parties. She crossed herself again and again, and then I withdrew, passed along the passage, and turning in again, stood by the side of Sainte Margaret. She was wide awake, and shrunk from me as soon as I approached her. I repeated my diabolical counsel to her, pretty nearly in the same words, and after withstanding two or three crossings, left her, and hastened down to the Superior, where I gave her an account of what I had done, and left my mask, and then returning quietly, retired for the night.



A short time afterwards I learnt from her, that the parents of the two nuns had been solicited by their daughters to make liberal presents to the nunnery, and had given something, but so little that the Superior was very much dissatisfied.

One night, sometime after this, when I was going up to bed, the Superior called me into her room, and told me she wanted me to frighten another nun for her. St. Charles, she said, had been concealing something from her confessor for two or three weeks; and the way to make her bring it out, was to terrify her.

I had some acquaintance with the nun of whom she spoke. She was a young woman who had been occasionally in the apothecary's room, and I had conceived a considerable regard for her. I did not like the thought of doing any thing unfriendly to her; but the Superior's will was not to be opposed, and I was not accustomed or prepared to show any backwardness in complying. She told me that I was to disguise myself as the Devil, and, in his character, urge St. Charles to persist in withholding her confession.

She then went to a cupboard, and brought out a sheet, which she put round me, and a singular thing, which, on being unfolded, proved to be a cap, with lappets to hang down the back and over the face. The former was black and the other white; it had two cows' horns sticking out at the sides.— This she placed upon my head; and after some instructions sent me to the apartment in the common

sleeping room occupied by the young nun. I proceeded cautiously along, according to the Superior's directions, stepped in, as I believe, unnoticed, and took my stand beside the bed of St. Charles. The light was feeble, and she could have had only an indistinct view of her unexpected visiter. I instantly perceived that she was extremely terrified. She had only the power to cross herself and say, "Sainte Marie, Joseph, &c. have pity on me." I however staid near her, told her that I was pleased that she had resisted the persuasions of her confessor, and hoped she would continue to disobey him. She repeatedly crossed herself, and murmured over and over her prayers to the saints for mercy; and at length, presuming I had done enough, I withdrew, returned to the Superior's room, was relieved of my disguise, and permitted to go to bed.

The next day, as the Superior afterwards informed me, St. Charles showed great urgency to see her confessor, and made a frank and full exposure of all the sins she had so long and so obstinately concealed. The effect of this scene, however, was as great on my own mind as on hers, though in a different manner. I never afterwards heard of the appearance of the Devil, or any evil spirit in the sleeping room with any degree of faith. It always brought fresh to my mind my personating him, and led me irresistibly to conclude, that the Superior had only employed some other nun in my place. This I have not the least doubt she repeatedly did. I feel little less confident, however, that there were nuns,

and a considerable number of them too, who were never so employed, and were not let into the secret. The fears expressed by some of those who had been visited by such spectres were too genuine to leave any room for doubt. However, the impression was kept alive in the Convent, and the fear of evil spirits operated powerfully, I believe, on many; and every now and then a new case of the Devil's appearance would be reported, which was commonly soon followed by prayers, said in the presence of all, for the perseverance or greater holiness of some nun under temptation.

Among the persons with whom I became acquainted in the Congregational Nunnery, was a girl named Mulligan, or Milligan, who helped to teach me bark-work, considerable quantities of which are sold at the Convent, in Montreal, as visitors well know. This branch of work, by the way, is not very difficult to learn. The bark is purchased of the furriers in the city, and worked in the dry state. The porcupine quills with which it is sewed, are purchased already colored; and their points are commonly touched with a little wax.

Miss Milligan spoke with something of an Irish accent, from which I concluded that she had Irish parents, being herself, I believe, a native of Upper Canada. Her manners were rather reserved, yet of a much superior order to those of many of the women around me, so that I regarded her with peculiar respect. I think her family must have been uncommonly intelligent and respectable. She was

in her novitiate in the Congregational Nunnery at the time I knew her.

During the time when I was employed in the Hospital of the Black Nunnery, Father Bonin told me the following story of events, which, I understood, took place about the time when I was received. This Miss Milligan, who had been for some time a Congregational nun, being attached to a man much older than herself, made her escape by night, ran off with him into some adjacent part of the United States, and was married to him by a magistrate. The priests, however, got an early alarm, and Father Bonin, with some others, joined in the pursuit. "We liked her so well," said Bonin, "that we could not think of losing her. We would rather have lost three of the flock than her." The couple were overtaken in a very short time after their marriage, and the bride was brought back to Montreal, and put into the nunnery again. There she soon became, or feigned to be, reconciled to her former situation, so that she was set free from all uncommon restraint. On the Sabbath, as I have remarked in my first volume, the Congregational nuns often go in a procession to church. Miss Milligan was allowed to join them, and was on her way through the streets, when her husband suddenly appeared, accompanied by two other men, and seizing her, carried her to a carriage, and attempted to take her off.

Father Bonin, however, interfered, as he stated, and with some difficulty, assisted by others, again

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recovered her. The husband then prosecuted the priests, and a public trial took place, which resulted in their favor, it being decided that the marriage was not legal, having been performed only by a magistrate; and the poor man was obliged to pay several hundred dollars to the priests. I heard expressions made by some of them on receiving the money: They said they would have no objection to having several of the nuns run away, if they could get as well paid for it.

Some years ago there was a priest who was put into the madhouse. I was not acquainted with the reason at the time, but I have since learned from a young woman who was in the Congregational Nunnery about the period when it happened, that he ran away with one of the Congregational nuns. He was taken a few miles from Montreal and brought back; and, for fear he would expose the dreadful deeds done there, they put him into the madhouse, and he is there, I believe, to this day.



## CHAPTER XI.

Father T. B. McMahon—First Recollections of him—His habits in the Nunnery—A Fight in the Priests' Parlor—Similar Occurrences.

I HAD an acquaintance with Father T. B. McMahon before I met with him in the nunnery. He used occasionally to call at the Government House. When the Governor visited Montreal, the priests sometimes wished to hold an interview with him in private, after the public reception of citizens was concluded. McMahon once applied to my mother, in some way to procure him an interview, and as it was obtained, he expressed much pleasure, and some gratitude to her. They commonly were anxious to get a sight of the rolls of officers, when a new detachment of troops arrived from England; and this could be done by making favor with some one who could admit them into the Government House, where they were accessible. The cause, as I understood it, was this: No Roman Catholic is allowed to hold an office in the British army; but those who renounce that religion are admitted. Such as have renounced it are marked in some way on the lists; and those names the priests used to get and copy off, that they might afterwards visit the officers, and get them to attend their church. From what I saw and heard, I judged that the priests supposed that many of them had renounced only that they might become officers.

I saw Father McMahon so often, and heard of him so much before I entered the nunnery, that I suppose I was about as well acquainted with his character as many of the citizens of Montreal; and to those who have intelligence, and are free from bigotry, I would appeal for the truth of what I say in the next paragraph. He was intemperate, and often was to be seen lolling from side to side in a calache, when driven through the streets, by one of his spiritual children, as he called the man; though he was held in such repute for sanctity, by many of the ignorant Canadians, that they would say he was holding communion with God, and had his spirit in heaven. He was sometimes complained of to the bishop, who would often let him off, calling him the persecuted McMahon.

After my entrance into the Veiled Department, I often saw McMahon's character displayed, under even less disguise. He was a great friend of the Superior, and spent much time in the indulgence of his favorite vice, intoxication, as he enjoyed great freedom in the nunnery. He often drank himself fast asleep, and then was accommodated with a bed until he was able to walk. When he was sick, too, and resorted to the "Holy Retreat," he was allowed as much indulgence as any of the priests. This was the case at a period when he was confined there by two of the most loathsome diseases known in the world.

I was more than once ordered by the Superior to make punch for her and Father McMahon; and

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I have known them to drink until both were evidently affected by liquor, indeed, to such a degree, as to present a disgusting appearance. Several of the old nuns were also addicted to drinking. I was one day directed by the Superior to go with another nun, and lift McMahon from the floor to the sofa in her room. We obeyed her orders, although the task was a degrading one, under the circumstances in which we found him. There he lay and slept until towards night, when he awoke, groped his way to the Seminary, through the subterranean passage, and came back in clean clothes, in time to say vespers in the private chapel. And this was not a solitary instance of a similar kind: for several times afterwards, I knew of his being in a state not less discreditable to his morality and religious character.

In consequence of his influence with the Superior, he had authority to demand the best wines whenever he pleased. These were kept, in considerable quantities, in the first range of closets, in the cellar next to the stairs, at the end; as I well knew, by being often sent to bring up some: for McMahon has sometimes used a very profane expression, when demanding the best wine—"Bring us," he would say, "some of the blood,"—alluding to the blood of Christ.

There were many occasions on which the Priests' Parlor was a scene of riot; more than one in which they proceeded to violence. I was one day alarmed, by hearing the Superior direct an

old nun to go to the Seminary through the subterranean passage, and call for help, as there was a quarrel in the apartment. There was much noise there; and when the door was opened, two priests appeared, who had been fighting for some time, and were bleeding as if half dead.

The priests' room in the nunnery, was frequently thus disturbed by disputes, quarrels, and fighting. The causes were different, and I generally knew something of them, especially when I was employed in waiting on the priests, as I have mentioned in my first volume. I was often sent to carry waiters loaded with refreshments and liquors to the door, where I would set them down, and after knocking, retire. So when the priests wished any thing removed, they would set it outside, and knock for me to come.

They would often get deeply engaged in gaming, either there or in some other room; and I have known them stake the profits of their next mass—play, and lose them. Afterwards quarrels would sometimes arise when the account was to be settled; as the winner, perhaps, would claim that it was to be the profits of a high mass, whilst the loser would say it was a low one. Even after such a question had been settled, the winner would sometimes charge the loser with promising a high mass, and paying a low one; and then high words and blows would ensue.

On Saturday afternoons, the priests were accustomed to assemble in their parlor, or private room,

in the greatest numbers—sometimes twenty or thirty of them would be there together, drinking and gambling. One day the bishop came in with a black eye, and a priest asked him how he had got it, insinuating something, in reply to which the bishop told him he lied. The priest answered that he cared for neither bishop nor devil, and soon struck at him, and knocked off his hat. The others interfered; and when some remonstrated, and explained the enormity of the sin, the offender, though half intoxicated, threw himself upon his knees and humbly begged pardon, promising to pay him all the fees he should receive before a particular time, which he mentioned.

On another occasion, a party of seven or eight, who were drinking together there, at an entertainment given by the Superior of the Seminary, fell into a terrible battle. The cause of it, as I gathered afterwards, was this: A song had been made in ridicule of Bishop Lartigue, I do not know when, by some of the American priests, with whom he was not popular. On this occasion, most of those in the room being Americans, some of them began to sing it, after they had been drinking together for some time. Those who were in favor of the bishop, got angry at this, and they proceeded to blows. The Superior of the Seminary, who was one of the party, struck old Father Bonin, when two others came up to take his part. The table was covered with cut glass tumblers, &c. sent in by the Superior of the Seminary, and in a short



time two of the party were dancing on it, and kicking it about in all directions. The floor thus became strewed with broken glass; and in a violent scuffle which ensued between them all, several fell, and were badly cut.

In the midst of it came in Bishop Lartigue, who attempted to stop the fight, but could not succeed for some time, and got one or two severe blows himself, from nobody knew who. The noise and confusion were dreadful. The nuns present were all frightened, but could do nothing, and the Superior of the Convent stood by wringing her hands, and crying bitterly. When the battle was over, one of the nuns was sent to Father Bonin, to dress a wound he had received, but was too much agitated to do it, and I took her place. The old man had a long and deep cut near the temple, and bled very freely. He said he had fallen upon a piece of glass and cut it, but told me he had long wanted to give the bishop one good knock, and had taken advantage of the confusion to strike him in the face.

I found afterwards that his story was very likely to be true; for the bishop had a good large bruise near his eye, which he did not like to have seen, and in consequence spent the remainder of the day in the nunnery. After sunset his calache was sent for, in which he took his departure for home.

Some of the most alarming scenes I ever knew, were the fights which now and then took place in the nuns' dortoir at night, between priests. One

night, when I was sitting up in the sick room, I heard an alarm, and ascertained that such a quarrel had taken place there, in which an old nun, (old Saint Mary,) had had a limb broken in attempting to suppress it. Two priests were fighting, when she interfered, and received a blow from one of them. which laid her up for a long time, and from which, as she used to say, she never entirely recovered.

## CHAPTER XII.

Remarks on my own state and feelings, during the last few months—  
Reasons why I did not publish all I knew in my first book—Reasons  
for making new disclosures in this volume.

SINCE the completion and publication of my first edition, I have experienced so much kindness and sympathy among persons of different classes, who have taken an interest in me, that I feel less like a lonely and friendless female, and suffer no less from the apprehensions of falling into the hands of those enemies whose power I was then inclined too much to magnify and to dread. I have realized, from experience, what one of my earliest female friends in New-York tried to make me believe while I was an inmate of the Bellevue Asylum, that no Roman priest could exercise over me, in this country, any of that authority to which I had been subject in Canada, and which I was informed was claimed by Conroy and Kelly.

It is but seldom that I am visited, in my dreams, with those awful recollections which so frequently haunted me when I closed my volume which has already been before the public. I was then often rendered miserable by visions which would for a time seem as vivid and real as truth; and those who were near me at night would tell me that I screamed and spoke French. But now I have been for weeks an inmate of a kind and sympathizing Christian family, and enjoyed the attentions, the counsels,

and the care of friends with whom God has blessed me; and now, with improved health, a constitution shattered, but apparently improving, and feelings more uniform and tranquil, I have reviewed my sorrowful life with more care and deliberation, and not only brought together the contents of the preceding pages, but recalled a considerable amount besides, which I have thought ought now to be recorded and published.

I am now, perhaps, better able than before to judge what kind of information is most important to be laid before the people of this country; for, having conversed with many of different stations in life, I have found not only that they are desirous of learning the truth, but what kinds of truth it is they are most ignorant of.

While preparing for my first book, the question often presented itself to my mind, what class of facts within my knowledge, ought I to publish, and what, if any, it would be proper to withhold? Before I could form any satisfactory plan on this subject, it seemed necessary to fix upon some general principles to serve as a guide; and after much reflection, I decided upon the following:

In the first place—although some things which I had to communicate were of such a nature as ought not to be mentioned without solid reason; yet, such was the important object to be gained by their avowal, and the necessity of having them understood, that I could not long hesitate in bringing them out. After I had overcome the extreme

reluctance I naturally felt to present myself voluntarily as a participator in dreadful and shocking scenes, I still might question, whether by narrating them, even with the most scrupulous caution, I might not propagate something of the very evil of which I had to complain. But I was among a people who had no suspicion of the existence of enormities with which I had been familiar; and there was nobody but myself able to open their eyes. It seemed to me to be important to the people of the United States, that they should know the characters of the priests and nuns of Montreal, as I had seen undeniable evidence of their being connected with others in this country, and having considerable influence with them. If allowed to go on, who could tell how far they might succeed in bringing things to such a condition as they are in Canada? I therefore determined to run the risk of putting the modest to the blush, by the disclosure of truths necessary to be known for the safety of a state of society which I had already seen enough of to admire and love. In making such disclosures, however, I determined to use the most guarded language, and as much brevity as could be made consistent with a clear exposure of what seemed most necessary to be known.

In the second place, there was a considerable amount of information of which I was in possession, which I had received from others, and could not vouch for on my own responsibility, and with that full and entire confidence with which I could



state facts of which I had been a witness or a participant. This I resolved to pass over in silence, at least the great body of it, that I might run no risk of introducing any thing erroneous into my book, whose accuracy I designed to render proof against any attack whatever. Facts of this class I have therefore thus far abstained from introducing.

In the third place, there was one more class of statements which I had it in my power to make, concerning which I felt greatly at a loss. These were things of which I had been an eye-witness, but the publication of which would draw into the ranks of my opponents many individuals and many feelings not touched by my first volume. It is true, so long as I withheld these from the public, I might be chargeable with only an imperfect development of what I proposed to unveil; but some considerations had weight with me on the other side.

Perhaps if I should disclose the whole at first, my tale might appear too far surpassing belief. Indeed, my experience has done much already to persuade me that such would have been the case. I have suffered much pain from the doubts expressed of my story by intelligent persons and Protestants, who could plead neither want of education, nor prejudices against me—merely on the ground that I told incredible things. What would they have thought, if I had begun by telling all I knew?

Another object I had in view, was to confine the public attention to the Hotel Dieu, and not permit the eye to wander from the centre and source of

evils. To that the attention of my readers has been heretofore confined, notwithstanding the efforts made by my enemies to distract it. The time has come, however, when I feel it my duty to proceed to other disclosures and other scenes.

I would, however, assure the public, that it has cost me many an effort to overcome my repugnance to enter upon them. I have passed many a sleepless night, while pondering on the question: Shall I reveal other truths, or let them be for ever unknown? It has appeared to me, however, that those other facts which I am acquainted with, ought not to die with me; but that every thing important to be known, which I have either witnessed myself or had proved to me by sufficient evidence, should be brought before the world.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Two of the vows taken after I was received as a nun—Father Bresseau—His story as he narrated it—His reception from the Bishop—His introduction into the Nunnery wounded—His Death.

I MAY perhaps have excited the curiosity of some of the readers of my first volume by my allusion to my three vows, and yet withholding them. I could not make up my mind at that time to mention them; and now, after much consideration, I have hardly known whether I ought to give them to the American public, or to pass them over in silence. I have ascertained, however, since I have conversed with so many persons of different characters and stations in this city, that very little knowledge exists in relation to Convents, and the character of our Canadian priests and nuns, which, it seems to me, ought to be better understood. Besides, I have undertaken in this volume to disclose things not mentioned in my former one, which are intimately connected with the purport of those vows, and indeed quite dependent upon them.

In doing this, which I have deliberately concluded to be a part of the solemn duty I owe to the world, it must be recollected by those who might be most disposed to blame me, that the fault is chargeable, not upon her who proclaims the evil, but upon those who commit and conceal it.

The import of the *First Vow* was this:—that all officers and citizens admitted into the nunnery in priests' dresses were to be obeyed in all things.

The *Second Vow* was—that there are things in the Island, which, if I know, I will not disclose.

These two vows, and a third one, led to the commission of many crimes.

Some time after I was received, to my great amazement, after we had retired to our sleeping room one night, a man in the dress of a priest spoke to me, whom I recognised to be a gentleman, who resided but a few streets from my mother's.—I spoke to him, and asked him if it was not he; I told him it was of no use to attempt to deceive me, for I knew him. He requested me never to mention that I had seen him there; and informed me that he had given five hundred dollars to the Seminary for permission to come in under the garb of a priest, through the subterranean passage. He informed me that many British officers were admitted in the same manner.

Not many weeks after my reception, an old priest, Bresseau, came into the nunnery one day; and not long afterwards, in the priests' sitting-room I found him in a state of intoxication. He began by saying how little he cared for the bishop, and then spoke on a subject which seemed to be uppermost with him—a controversy which existed between the bishop and himself. Without any encouragement on my part, beyond that of being a listener, which I could not very well avoid, he told me a long story, the substance of which I very well remember, although I do not know that I had recurred to it in many months, until it was accidentally brought to

my mind by a little circumstance which occurred just before the following record of it was committed to paper.

Priest Bresseau, as he stated, had been for many years stationed at the parish of Barqui—the position or distance of which I do not know. It was, I believe, out of the districted country, and I presume, is not to be found on the Montreal calendar. How long he had his residence there I did not understand; but long enough, as he said, to have a family of seven children in the house of a woman of the parish, and one of four in another. Besides, he mentioned a third case of a somewhat similar nature.

Bishop Lartigue, as my informant declared, had practised on this plan in many instances—viz: when he saw that any country-priest was making money fast, he would soon send another to take his place, and remove him to some less lucrative situation.—In the circumstances above mentioned, Bresseau received an order from the bishop to leave his parish. He wished to remain, however, long enough to make provision for the support of his children, and determined that he would remain at all hazards.—“He cared not for the pope or bishop,” as he told me; and resolved to do as he pleased. He therefore resolved to take the only means that he knew of, to obtain legal authority for remaining in his parish. The Governor of the province, as he stated, had a right, at least in certain cases, to prevent the bishop from removing a priest; and he peti-



tioned him to interfere in his behalf. In this he was successful; and he was suffered to retain his place. The bishop, of course, could not but be displeased at such an interference; and the circumstances of the case Bresseau either knew, or presumed to be extensively known among the clergy.

In time he succeeded in the object he had so much at heart; for he accumulated money, and by *some* means got enough *to purchase three or four farms*, which, or the incomes of which, he secured for the support of his children. He then determined to hold out in his opposition to the bishop no longer, feeling rather conscience-smitten at the thought that he had set his authority at defiance. He did not wish to remain in the position of a determined opponent of him, and decided to proceed to Montreal, and have the matter properly arranged, so that he might again enter into a good understanding and connexion with the Seminary. He added that he had recently arrived in the city, and was expecting the bishop's return, who was then absent on one of his tours of visitation, and expected to return before many days. It appeared that he had found no impediment to his entrance into the Seminary, and he certainly was received with freedom in the nunnery, as he had been indulging in a too free use of wine when I saw him.

I heard some of the main points of Bresseau's story corroborated by remarks which fell from several other priests in conversation, particularly Bonin, who spoke of the conduct of Bresseau in his

opposition to the bishop, with much applause. He said that if he should ever hereafter be well stationed in any country place, he never would submit to be driven out of it. He would be as bold and resolute, and have his own way.

It was no uncommon thing to hear priests speak in strong terms against Bishop Lartigue, when they supposed they might do so without its reaching his ears. I have heard some of them curse him, and use different French terms of contempt. At the same time there were always numbers of the priests who would on every occasion advocate his part.

Some time after the occurrences above mentioned, I was in the sick-room one day, attending on the sick nuns, when several priests came in great haste, and asked me where Dufresne was, (he was then Confessor in the nunnery.) I replied that he was probably in the chapel; when they desired me to send Sainte Susan for him immediately. We went into the little sitting-room adjoining, which I have so often mentioned before, and waited a short time for Father Dufresne. While there, the priests spoke of there being a dreadful state of things in the Seminary: a scene of violence and bloodshed, which had induced them to come through the subterranean passage to obtain assistance. Bresseau, they said, was severely injured; they left him lying bleeding and helpless, and they presumed he would die.

Sainte Susan soon returned without Dufresne,

whom she could not find; and then the priests sent me to call the Superior, as they wanted permission to bring Bresseau into the hospital of the nunnery. Some said he could be brought through the underground passage, to avoid observation. Others said no; he could not be, but had better be brought in a caleche into the nunnery yard—but the gates must be instantly closed, to shut out the spectators.

I hastened off to find the Superior, and, having delivered my message to her, she returned with me to the sitting-room. The priests told her that there was a terrible affray in the Seminary, caused by Bresseau's appearance. The bishop, who had recently returned, had found him there, and ordered him out. Bresseau refused to obey, and the bishop attempted to force him out, when one and another came to the aid of each, and a scuffle and a fight ensued, with chairs for weapons, in which the offender had been severely, and probably mortally wounded.

"That is exactly as it should be," replied the Superior, on hearing the news: "that is what those must always expect who disobey their superiors. That is the proper reward for those who are rebellious. It is his own fault, and the right punishment has befallen him—let him die."

The priests told her that they wished to obtain her permission to bring the wounded man into the hospital. "That," said she, "would be setting a bad example, and encouraging disobedience in others. The devil will have him—let him die."

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At length, however, she appeared to relent, and said she would admit him out of charity, and for the love of God; though not for his own sake. One of the priests, therefore, hurried off under ground, to have Bresseau brought from the Seminary. I think it was Bonin who carried the message.

It was not long before I saw a caleche coming through the yard; and when I was near enough to observe distinctly, I saw Bresseau in it, with his head leaning on the left, and a long wound on his right temple, from which the blood was flowing freely. Several priests were round him, endeavoring to stanch the blood with a towel, and a substance, which I believe grows in Canada, called *vestrilieu*. Their efforts, however, appeared to be in vain: for the blood continued to flow freshly in spite of their exertions.

Bresseau, I found, was not so far gone as to have lost his senses, or the power of speech: for I soon heard him cursing in a great passion. "That rascal of a bishop," said he, "has done it for me, with the kick he gave me in the stomach with his boot."

When the carriage stopped, he was taken up by three or four priests, and carried into the priests' sitting-room, or parlor, and laid on a bed.

It happened that while the caleche had been on the way from the Seminary, and in passing along the street, the wounded priest had attracted the notice of several passengers; so that a number of

persons were immediately at the nunnery door, to learn what was the matter. The answer made to them, as I understood, was, that the old man had fallen down stairs in the Seminary, and was on his way to the hospital to be taken care of.

The care of Bresseau was assigned to me; and I was employed much of my time in attendance on him. Of all the profane and infamous men I ever knew, I thought I never had met with his equal. Yet, what made it the more remarkable, I understood he had several sisters who were very respectable ladies. He was always in bad humor, and gave vent to it in volleys of curses, and language otherwise most offensive.

I had reason to believe that he was attended more than once by the nunnery physician, Dr. Nelson: for I was several times told by the old nuns, that the doctor had given such and such directions about him. Among the instructions given me, as by his authority, was one to let Bresseau have no more brandy. When he learnt that this was to be denied him, he cursed the doctor, and then once more abused the bishop; saying, that after death, if he found he had the power, there was not a devil in hell that he would not send to torment him. He one day handed me a tumbler to get some brandy for him; and on my refusing, he threw it at my head. I was so much frightened, that I screamed and ran away.

Bresseau lingered in the nunnery, I think, about three weeks. Several priests came in, at different



times, to ask his pardon in any thing they might have offended him. He freely granted their requests, but always with the condition, that they should, on every occasion that might offer, give the bishop a blow for him. He often indulged in the most severe language against the bishop, but was usually more guarded in the presence of the old nuns, who sometimes checked him when he went too far, by threatening to tell the Superior. He knew that she had the power of turning him out of the nunnery when she pleased, and that if he were turned out, he would have no better accommodations than those afforded by the Seminary. There he might stay in his room, and receive the attentions of a man, but the treatment of the sick is vastly inferior in that institution, to what is secured to them in the Hotel Dieu.

The Superior one day called me to her room, saying she wished me to fix a cap for her to go out with. I went to the drawer to get one out, when I heard the bishop's name mentioned as entering, and was, therefore, induced to pay attention to the conversation, which ensued between him and the Superior, when otherwise, it was possible, I might not. He told her she had taken an improper step, in admitting Bresseau into the nunnery. She had done that which she had no business to do. The consequences would be bad—for if he had remained in the Seminary, he would have humbled himself, and submitted to his authority, but now he was encouraged to set him at defiance.

It would be worse for his soul, as he would suffer punishment in the next world for his disobedience. The Superior listened to the reproof of the bishop with seeming respect, and did not attempt to justify herself entirely. "We are all apt to err," she said; "I as well as others. I thought I was doing right, and intended to do so—but I may have done wrong."

Bresseau gradually grew weaker and weaker, but lost nothing of his temper. One day I had got him some soup; but on presenting it, he found it warmer than he wanted, and cursed it in an awful manner. A few moments after, having left the room, I was informed that he had breathed his last.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Nuns' Island What I heard of it in my Childhood—The different Islands so called—Priest L'Esperance—My visit to Nuns' Island.

JANE RAY, in a conversation she once had with me, told me that she had been at Nuns' Island, and mentioned strange things in relation to it, which made a considerable impression on my mind. Of the place to which she referred, I had before a little knowledge, as much, I suppose, as is possessed by most people in Montreal, and the vicinity. I knew that there were several islands in the St. Lawrence called Nuns' Islands, of which the three principal ones have large buildings upon them. Some of these must have been noticed by almost every person visiting Montreal, particularly the one nearest that city, which belongs to the Gray Nuns, and is in full view from Laprairie, and the ferry. Many travellers from the United States must also have noticed the Black Nuns' Island near Lachine, several miles up the river. I had often seen it when visiting my uncle, who lives near that town; and had heard reports and suspicions concerning it.

A considerable part of it is shut in by a high stone wall, which encloses three large buildings of the same material; but I never had been with any person who gave me any description of it from personal knowledge, as all access to it was said to

be most strictly forbidden, even by law, except to the priests, and those permitted by them. My uncle sometimes sold cattle to persons employed to purchase for the island, but never visited the place. Some of the neighbors, particularly old country people, I have heard call the place "The Priests' Wives' Island." I sometimes used to look towards it with some curiosity; but even from my uncle's garret window, little of the buildings was discernible except the chimneys, according to my recollection, the view of them being intercepted, I think, by some high land on the great island; the other Nuns' Islands, as I might have mentioned before, being called "*Les petits isles*"—*the small islands*. Thus it was that I knew little about the subject on which Jane Ray spoke, on the occasion above alluded to; but what she said, although spoken with reserve, and an air of mystery, impressed me with the conviction that the island was the scene of strange things.

I must also stop here a moment to remark, that this was not the first intimation I had in relation to that place, though what I had before received was very indistinct. It was conveyed to me in one of the three oaths, which I was required to take immediately on my taking the Black Veil, as the reader will find in my first volume.\* Those oaths I felt much unwillingness to communicate in that book, because they bound us to perform things of a revolting nature, and because they are connected

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\* See page 135; and Awful Disclosures.

with disclosures which I thought best to reserve for the time. In one of those oaths I had made a most solemn promise to do every thing, that might be required of me at Nuns' Island, and never to speak in the nunnery of things which I might witness there. This was accompanied with the most dreadful imprecations on myself, in case I should violate the oath: as that I might be sunk to the lowest place in hell, have the worst of devils for my tormentors, and never see the face of the Savior. No information was given me, however, from which I might form any idea of the condition of Nuns' Island, or the scenes transacted there. I could only form an unfavorable idea of the place.

I may stop here a moment, to speak of the Priests' Farm. The Priests' Farm is a piece of ground not far from Montreal, of which I repeatedly heard mention made while I was in the nunnery. Father Phelan told me most of what I then heard said about it. No person, as I understood, is ever admitted there without permission from the Seminary. Priests, under penance for offences committed in their parishes, are sometimes sent there for a time. I have reason to believe that some old nuns are constantly kept there, and that others are frequently taken to and from there and the nunnery, but always in priests' dresses.

Father Phelan told me, that if a priest wishes to get a handsome woman in his power, he sometimes manages to get her to the Farm, and then her friends never hear from her again. He told



me also that the priests are sometimes punished there, who have offended their superiors, by means of a cap, which is drawn over their head and face, and destroys life almost at once. From what he said, I should judge that the cap might be in some respects like that I have worn in the Nunnery, and that it was frequently used. If those in authority are disobeyed in any manner, he said, the offender is sure to be punished at the Priests' Farm.

There was a young priest, named L'Esperance, very ignorant and disagreeable, whom I saw a few months after I took the veil. I had confessed to him when in the Congregational Nunnery. He came to the Black Nunnery several times, and I had several conversations with him on different subjects, particularly one Sunday, when he wished me to stand by and see that he was not cheated at cards. But one day he made a proposition to me, which I thought I ought to communicate to the Superior. He informed me that he was going to the United States as a missionary, and invited me to go with him, as a teacher, and privately live as his wife. He said that the Bishop would doubtless permit me to leave the Convent in secret, and we should never be known. I made little reply to this proposal; but took an early opportunity, when I found the Superior in her room alone, to acquaint her with it. It was one day while I was fixing a dress for her. She expressed great displeasure, and evidently appeared to regard the subject very seriously.

I soon after found that she had informed Father Phelan, for he spoke of the proposal, and said, "Je lui donnerais un coup qu'il ne faut pas un second." [I will give him a dose, (that is, either

blow or a drink,) that shall be the last.] From this time the Superior and others began to talk to me of paying a visit to Nuns' Island. She sometimes said it would be good for my health, as I needed air and exercise; but I found that both she and Father Phelan had a particular wish that I should go; and I was disposed to obey them, as I considered it my duty. I found that the Superior appeared, to L'Esperance, to give in and be his friend. Something I now understand, which I could not as well penetrate at that time. I have no doubt of the meaning of the expression of Father Phelan, which I have given above, although its meaning is of itself rather equivocal.

At length the time was fixed for my visit to the Island, and I was to go in company with L'Esperance, at a late hour of the night, and in disguise, to avoid discovery. At the time appointed, I was taken into the Superior's room, had a black cloak thrown over me, (such as are worn by the "Sisters of Charity," in the streets of New York,) and the hood pulled over my head. This was taken from a cupboard near the Superior's room, where a supply is always kept. We then left the Convent by the same door through which I afterwards escaped, turned to the left round the end of the Veiled Department, and at the gate opening on St. Jo-

seph's street, found a coach (charrette) into which we got.

We took our seats in the carriage, and the coachman drove to the Seminary, where he stopped, and my companion alighted, rang a bell, and was admitted by the yardman, who then came out and addressed a few words to me, and remarked that it was a raw night, and rather late to cross. I am unable to speak with certainty of the season, but I think it must have been early in autumn. After a delay of fifteen or twenty minutes, L'Esperance reappeared, with another priest, who took his seat without being introduced, or named to me. I did not remember ever to have seen him, and did not afterwards learn his name or any thing concerning him.

The city streets were still as we passed through them, and nothing occurred worthy of notice, until we reached the bank of the St. Lawrence, at a solitary spot, some distance below the outskirts of Lachine. There we went down the bank to the river's side, where we found a boat with two men, who were addressed by my companions familiarly as Pierre and Jacques. They received us at once, as if they had expected our arrival; and, indeed, complained that they had been obliged to outstay the appointed time by an hour or two.

These men I recognised, having repeatedly seen them at the nunnery, on errands to the Superior. Sometimes I had seen them eating in the yard, when they happened to be there about dinner

time. They brought the green trees, or branches, every year, which were put up before the Nunnery, at the time of the Procession, which is held in commemoration of the Savior's entrance into Jerusalem, when a priest walks under a canopy held over his head, while lighted candles are carried, flowers are strown before him, and all the Congregational Nuns are out.

The boatmen were evidently much besotted with liquor; and I had afterwards reason to believe that they were kept in this condition, most if not all their time. We were, however, at length safely landed, and I found we were on Nuns' Island.

We proceeded up from the shore, passed under the shade of trees, over turf still green, if I recollect right, and soon reached a gate in a high wall, where one of the priests rang a bell. An old man opened it and freely admitted us, as if prepared for our arrival. Indeed, it was evident that he had expected the arrival of visitors, for he told us we should find a light in the building. The priests seemed well acquainted with the place, and led me across a yard, towards three large edifices, two of which stood at right angles. We entered the one on the right, by a door which opened into a narrow passage, on the left of which an inner door led us into a room with plain furniture, in which we found two old nuns sitting, and I think, knitting.

Here also, we found that our arrival had been expected: for the women were not at all taken by

surprise, but received me with cordiality, and appeared to have been sitting up till that late hour, on purpose to await us. Here I took a seat and sat for some time. The old nuns brought me some refreshments, of which I partook; and then one of them led me to a chamber near the end of the building, in which were two or three very wide beds, at least one of which was occupied by women. Into one of the others I soon got, at the proposition of my attendant, and she threw herself down upon one of the others, near me, and entered into some conversation, with much appearance of kindness, in which she mentioned that information had been sent from the nunnery, that our party would arrive at the island that night, and that the gardener, as well as themselves, had been duly notified of it.

In the morning I found that I was at liberty to go where I pleased, without leaving the walls, as no ceremonies were to be performed, or prayers said, as in the nunnery. I was under no obligation to rise at any particular time, there was no fixed hour for breakfast, no processions were to be formed, no time of silence to be observed, and, which was still better, no penances were to be apprehended. I took advantage of the freedom allowed me, to make some observations on things around me. The following description embraces things which I subsequently observed, and is introduced here to make it more complete. An imperfect plan of the place has been made from



several hasty drawings made with my own hand, amended in some points according to descriptions I subsequently gave. I do not pretend to perfect accuracy in all things, for that cannot be reasonably expected in a case of this kind. As in my plan of the Veiled Department of the Nunnery, so here, I insist that the relative position of buildings and apartments, doors, windows, stair-cases, the furniture, and uses of different parts, as far as I give them, are substantially correct; and in relation to this place, as well as to the Convent, I solemnly declare, the truth of my narrative will be established whenever a fair examination of the place shall be made. To that test I appeal, and on that evidence I rely. What I have to say of Nuns' Island may be by many questioned, or perhaps wholly discredited. To such persons I will say—I have furnished you with all the evidence in my power, and would gladly give more if it were at my command. I take it upon myself, spontaneously, and without any other motives than a desire to publish the truth, the declaration of things, which must expose me to the enmity of many persons. If this volume is proved false, my former one will of course lose all credit, and my character must be past recovery. I shall be condemned as a false-hearted, though probably a pretty ingenious fabricator, and must lose the confidence and countenance, the society and kindness of such friends as I now possess. These considerations would lead to the presumption that what I am to

say is not a deliberate forgery ; but my readers may ask for more decisive evidence.

To them I would say, that in the river St. Lawrence lies Nuns' Island, and on that island are the edifices I describe, surrounded by their wall, and carefully secluded from the approach of all but the priests, nuns, and their confederates and victims. Within that wall are many visible and tangible witnesses, ready to bear testimony to my truth. If access can be obtained, and the premises examined, you will be convinced, and I shall be justified. Maria Monk tells a tale which it is important to people of America to know ; but she may perhaps excite only the unbelief, the contempt, or condemnation of some by her attempt to open their eyes : but whenever Nuns' Island shall be examined, her veracity will be established beyond the reach of suspicion, and then, I rejoice to think, her motives will, and must be appreciated. This confirmation she may, perhaps, not live to witness ; but she has the satisfaction of anticipating it as a thing absolutely certain, as well as the hope to indulge, that her child will at some future day reap some benefit from it, in the regard of those among whom she may dwell.

## CHAPTER XV.

Description of Nuns' Island, and the Buildings on it—Reflections on the Position I assume in making further Disclosures—Commission given me by Father Phelan—Its Execution—My Terror at the Thought of Poisoning—Confined by Illness.

NUNS' ISLAND, (that is, the Black Nuns' Island,) lies in the St. Lawrence, not far, I think, from the middle of it, a little below Lachine. The wall encloses a considerable space, but yet leaves an extensive pasture outside, with fruit trees scattered about it, and room for two or three small buildings. It is so high as to shut out the view of the edifices from any near point, except, perhaps, the roof and some small part of the upper stories. It has but one gate, which is generally closed, and sufficiently watched by three or four yardmen, to keep out all persons not allowed to enter, viz. such as bring no permits from the Bishop, or the Superior of the Seminary and Hotel Dieu Nunnery. The yardmen, as at the nunnery, are never allowed to enter the buildings, unless it be such parts as are devoted to the stable, fuel, &c.

The buildings are three in number. The largest stands in front, the second behind it, and the third at right angles, on the right, as you enter the first; and the last is that which I first entered. Entering the first building by the front door, you find yourself in a hall, with several doors. The

first story rooms along the front are sleeping-rooms, and two of those in the rear are spacious and elegant sitting-rooms, with windows that open upon a gallery, which extends along the rear, and one end of the building on the left hand. With it a door communicates from one of them, and this is the only way of access to it from this side of the building, which looks towards Montreal. In the gallery we sometimes walked for exercise.

The first large room had elegant blue merino curtains with tassels. There was an ottoman in it, of blue cloth, bound with black velvet, with raised corners, so formed as to afford a distinct seat on each side, being the most elegant thing of the kind I ever saw. In one corner of the room was a sofa. The walls are pink, and the cornice is of rich alabaster work, a piece of which I picked up one day on the floor.

Adjoining this apartment is the dining-room, which, like it, is carpeted. The walls are colored blue, and the windows without curtains. Except during meal times, a table commonly stood in this room, with papers on it. From this room is a door opening, (like the windows,) upon the piazza, which is the only direct access to it from any of the rooms.

Beyond the dining-room is a large spare-room, and another of some kind beyond that.

The staircase to the second story leads on from that below, as well as up to the garret. Near it is a large stove for warming the second story in

the winter; and doors open on several sides. One of them leads into a place which I thought very singular, and the use of which I could not imagine. It is a large room without furniture, with a stone floor, lighted, I believe, only by a small grated window, with about four panes of glass. In the midst of this room is a small one, capable of containing about twenty persons, entirely unfurnished, and perfectly dark. The partitions are so thin, that I think a conversation might be overheard through them, even if conducted in a low voice.

At one end of this story are four bed-rooms, each with two windows, a bed, and other plain furniture. These rooms are warmed by one stove, placed in the middle partition, pipes from which extend both ways through the other partitions.

The entrance to the basement is at one end. The second room in it is the kitchen, with a large baking furnace and roasting jack, and several small furnaces, in a corner. A large table used to stand in the middle, and the steps lead up outside to the gallery, which is supported by timbers. The next room has a stone floor, and the remaining one on that side of the basement, a wooden floor. On the front side, and adjoining, is a small cellar with only a little light admitted through a narrow window, which I have peeped through from without. The remainder of the front cellar is all in one room, and used for storing fuel.



The second and smallest building, which is in the rear of this, I was in but three times. It has two stories, with a number of small rooms, and little furniture. It appeared to be principally devoted to the priests, when I was there, as I recollect seeing a number of priests there, and several musical instruments lying about.

The third building has a staircase leading up from the visitors' room, which I first entered, into the second story, which is occupied by sleeping-rooms, with a passage on one side into which they open.

I have been in the garret of the third building. It is not partitioned off into rooms, but all thrown into one, if I except a small part towards one end, where pigeons are caught. There is a large looking-glass, so placed that the birds may see themselves in it as they fly by; and, some wheat being scattered near, considerable numbers are caught, most of which are killed, and sent to market in Montreal. The pigeons, being deceived, and taking their own shadows for other birds, are induced to stop, and are then attracted in by the food, until they cannot escape. This is a very common way of taking them in Canada. While in the garret, I sometimes looked out of the windows, and enjoyed a fine view. I could see the river St. Lawrence for a considerable distance, with boats of Canadians or Indians passing down, or crossing to the village of Caughnawaga, which was also in sight, as well as the river's banks for some miles. According to

my recollection, there are windows only at one end, and on one side of the garret.

They have a *ciergerie*, or candle-room in one of the buildings, where, however, only tallow candles are manufactured; there is sometimes a good deal of work to be performed in that branch of business.

One day Father Phelan met me in the Pink Room, and informed me that he had something for me to do. I of course did not dare to object, much less to disobey, after the solemn obligations of my oath, and the hazard, or rather certainty of punishment. I felt myself to be no less in the power of others there, than when I was in the nunnery, and believed that disobedience would be as surely followed with a heavy penalty. Besides, I believed that all authority was vested in the Priests, by the divine law; and was disposed, on this account, (at least a great portion of the time,) blindly to follow their commands and indications, without presuming to question the propriety of them.

Father Phelan told me that I should meet with L'Esperance in the other building, that is, the second, in an apartment which he mentioned; and he wished me to take him to a chamber, which he described, and give him a glass of wine. I should find two bottles, he informed me, in the cupboard in that room, one of them marked with a paper, and that I should pour out for him a tumbler full from that, and might drink some from the other myself. Now I knew that L'Esperance was much

addicted to drink, and always ready for wine. I might, under other circumstances, have questioned the object of the step required, or inquired what was the reason for proceeding in such a manner; whether there was any thing mixed with the wine in either bottle, and if so, what, and in which. But how could I dare to do so in my present situation? I can hardly think that any consideration would have induced me. I therefore proceeded to the place indicated, and met L'Esperance, invited him to take some wine, and led him to the apartment. On opening the cupboard, I found two bottles, as I had been told I should, one with a paper upon it; and filling a tumbler from it with red wine, and another from the other, I presented the former to L'Esperance, and taking the other, began to drink. Suddenly it occurred to me, with an impression of horror, which I cannot describe, that if there was poison in the wine I had given to the priest, I should be the cause of his death. Phelan had threatened, in the Convent, to give him a dose that should be his last; and was not this the way in which he intended to accomplish his purpose? My feelings were entirely too strong to be restrained. I became in an instant overpowered with the conviction of the truth; and I believe that no threat or punishment in the power of those around me to inflict, would have induced me any longer to pursue the plan on which I was proceeding.

I turned round to look at the priest, and saw that he had not hesitated to take off the draught I

had presented to him, and was then drinking the dregs of the cup. What I felt, it would be useless for me to attempt to describe. I put down the glass I held in my own hand, a considerable portion from which I had swallowed, and hastened out of the room without speaking, in a state of mind distressing beyond endurance. I left the house, ran across the yard to that from which I had proceeded, rushed into the room in which I had left father Phelan, and threw myself upon the sofa. A new thought had occurred to me on the way. Perhaps my wine had been poisoned, either by design or accident: for how did I know that the paper had not been put upon the wrong bottle, or what reason had I to confide in the honour of any person who would treat another as I supposed L'Esperance had been treated? In my extreme agitation of mind, I did not stop to reason: but my fears led me to believe the most dreadful thing which suggested itself. I therefore at once embraced the idea that I was poisoned, and was soon to die in agony. I began to cry, and soon to scream with horror, regardless of every thing around me. Some of the old nuns came to my assistance, and first asked me to be quiet, and then commanded me, lest others should learn the cause; but for a long time they found it impossible to pacify me. From some remarks which fell from them, I plainly understood that they had been watching me while I was giving L'Esperance the wine, probably through a glass door.

My health was seriously affected by the occurrences of that day, so that I was removed to a bed, and there was confined about ten days, suffering for a time great pain. My strength became gradually restored, but it was long before I could prudently leave my room.



## CHAPTER XVI.

Companions in Illness—Their Mysterious Appearance, and Melancholy Deportment—Confessions of Angelique—Miss Gordon—Young Women from the U. States.

THERE were several beds in the same room, occupied by young women, whose health was feeble. While I remained in the room, there were several changes among the other occupants: for sometimes one would enter, and occasionally another would leave us. The names of many I never heard, and some of them seemed to be almost entirely unknown to each other. These were commonly reserved and silent, apparently averse to communicating any thing, and not well satisfied with their condition or company. Some of those who left the room while I was in it, I afterwards met with in some of the apartments; but others I never saw again nor heard of.

What could be the object of having so many young women assembled here—who they were, and whence they had come, were natural questions: but at first I had no one to answer them.

The reserve and depression observable in such as I have mentioned, were not by any means exhibited by all. Several of my room-mates, on the contrary, were very willing to converse, and indeed quite communicative. From these I soon derived information which explained what would

otherwise have appeared mysterious. I may, perhaps, best convey to my readers the impressions which I received, by giving it to them as I myself received it.

There was a young woman who occupied the bed directly opposite mine, who was called Angelique. She was among the most communicative of all, and one of the first who talked with me. She felt no unwillingness to make known to me her history, and conversed with apparent frankness and sincerity. She was of middling stature, slender, with dark eyes and hair. She informed me that she had once been in the Congregational Nunnery, but arrived at the Island a few weeks before from New York, where she had resided for some time; and that her visit to Canada was owing to her intimacy with a distinguished personage, at whose house she used frequently to resort. She stated that she used to go to his residence sometimes in the dress of a man, at evening; and on one occasion felt much apprehension of being discovered. She happened to be late, and had to make so much noise to gain admittance, that she attracted the attention, not only of two men who appeared to be at watch on a neighboring corner, but of the neighbors, who raised their windows to see what was the matter, when, seeing a head with a night-cap at the window, some one laughed in a way calculated to express, and at the same time to excite suspicion. She continued in this practice until it was thought necessary, for the sake of con-

sealment, to send her to a retired place for a time; and she accordingly proceeded to Canada, and was received on Nuns' Island. She informed me further, that she had then become a mother, had had her child taken from her immediately, and had not seen it since; and expected to return to New York when her health should be restored.

She told me that most of the young women I saw, were from the United States. They were the victims of priests, who had access to them in the schools and nunneries, to which they were attached. Some, I understood, were "Sisters of Charity," as they are called in this country, who had left their missions for a time on similar emergencies; but most of them were natives of the states, attached to the nunneries there, either as nuns, novices, or scholars. These had come off under different pretences; the place of their retreat, as well as the cause of their journey, being kept a profound secret from their friends. I got the impression that Angelique was one of the "Sisters of Charity" herself, though I am not certain that she told me so.

She urged me to return to New York with her, saying I should prefer it to Canada, and used such arguments as she supposed would incline me to accede to her proposition. As for herself, she said she should suffer nothing on account of her expedition to the island, as nobody could ever discover that she had gone there for any thing but a common visit to Canada.

One of the young women, who conversed somewhat freely with me, was called Miss Gordon, which I presume was her real name. She was small, good-looking, with light hair, and had a scar on her lip. She told me that she had been in a Convent in some part of the United States, but not as a nun—I suppose, as a scholar; and had come to the Island for the same reason as many of the others, having been sent there by the head priest. She was soon to return, and told me that she was resolved to leave the Convent, and to return to it no more. She carefully abstained from mentioning the place of her residence; and this is all I recollect about her, except that her infant had been taken from her, (as I was informed was the common practice,) to be placed in the *Orphan Asylum*, at the Gray Nunnery.

Several of the young women told me they had come from the United States, and mentioned their places of residence; but from my ignorance of the country, I did not particularly regard them, nor can I now remember them. One said she had been there several times, and had sent several infants to the Gray Nuns, and hoped to live to come a dozen times more. I judged her to be one of the "Sisters of Charity," because she wore a hood like theirs.

One of these young women had a peculiar scar on her cheek, and a mole on her lip, which I well remember, and should know again anywhere. I have wished, when meeting any of the "Sisters of Charity," in New York, to have their hoods

raised, as I might, perhaps, recognise some of them. Possibly I might find the peculiar scar, and the mole on one of their faces, or something else, I have seen on Nuns' Island—at least so I sometimes think. I have been told by a young Catholic woman, in New York, that many of the "Sisters of Charity" are Canadians, and that she knew one who could hardly speak the English language. I recollect to have seen several, at different times, while in the school of the Congregational Nunnery, taking leave, to go on missions to L'Amerique, as they sometimes called the United States.

One of the women remarked, in conversation one day, that the priests had more children born on that Island in a year, than there commonly are in a good-sized country village.

There were several arrivals of young women, while I was on the island, and several left it, but I never saw them coming or going, and was commonly left to infer it from circumstances which came under my notice. Some of the priests, I believe, were frequently going and coming: as there is no obstacle in the way of those who have the necessary authority.

A few days before my leaving the place, I missed Angelique from her bed, and on inquiry, was informed that she had left the island. She might have been gone a day or two before I missed her: for as we went to bed and rose when we pleased, we were not regular in our hours, and did not expect to find each other regular.



She was not seen by me again, nor have I heard of her since that day. I am still sometimes reminded of her, or some of the other visitors at Nuns' Island, when I meet one of the "Sisters of Charity" in the street.

After the restoration of my health, I began to leave my room, and visit the different apartments as before. I commonly spent most of the daytime in the large building, (No. 1,) and often sat at the window, at the end of the dark passage, enjoying the air and the view, which was extensive and agreeable.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Occupations of Men and Women on Nuns' Island—A Heart-broken Woman—Conversation with her—My Departure from the Island and Return to the Hotel Dieu.

It would be impossible for me to form any estimate, on which I could place reliance, of the number of men or women I saw on Nuns' Island. There was no regular time for breakfast, dinner or supper. No bell was rung, no notice was given for meals, any more than for retiring at night, or rising in the morning. Food was always prepared and ready, when any of us were disposed to eat; and we went when we chose, alone or in company, to the eating-room, at one end of the building, and helped ourselves in true Canadian style.

Many of my readers may not be aware of the style of eating practised among many of the lower Canadians. So many of the priests are of Canadian origin, that their meals in the nunnery, and on the island, are often disposed of in a rude and unmannerly way, with but little use of knives and forks. We often ate standing, while on the island, and it was common to take even meat in the fingers.

As there was no general call, or occasion for assembling at any time, the inmates resorted to their rooms, or lounged about the galleries, yard, or sitting-rooms, as they pleased; so that it would have

been impossible to count them all, even if I had been disposed. But I did not ever think of doing so.

Some of the priests, as I understood, were there on penances. This was indeed a merely nominal thing. Priests who have been complained of by their parishioners, in a formal manner, are sometimes sent by the bishop to Nuns' Island, and sometimes to the Priests' Farm, to satisfy their accusers with the form of punishment. I had reason, however, to believe that they generally suffered no privations, and were far from regarding their residence as a place of punishment. On the contrary, I often saw them partake of indulgences. The edifice numbered 3, was specially devoted to the priests: but they enjoyed much liberty, and were allowed to go wherever they pleased.

Among their occupations, some occasionally spent a while in reading; and I saw a number of books lying about in several rooms, which the women were not expected to look at. Some played flutes and sang. I have sometimes heard several of them play together. Most of their music, however, was vocal; and while I was on the island I heard a variety of songs sung, particularly those which were most popular in the nunnery.

The women, that is those whose health would permit, had a variety of work to perform, particularly with the needle. Sometimes an order would come from the Superior of the nunnery, to make a number of towels or sheets, and sometimes six

or eight shirts were ordered for some priest, in great haste. The old nuns would call upon us to assemble, and gave us no peace till they were done. Orders sometimes came for the Seminary, Nunnery, Priests' Farm, and Bishop. It commonly happened, however, that the greater part of the job was performed by a few of the most industrious or good-natured ones; for the cross and indolent would contrive to get off their part on whoever would do it. At certain seasons of the year large quantities of soap were made, and then old Aunts Margaret and Susan are sent from the nunnery to manage that department. Butter and cheese are made from the milk of the cows kept on the island; and several of the nuns most expert in making them, are employed in the dairy.

I had often noticed a young woman, apparently rather older than myself, with a peculiarly unhappy and depressed countenance; but I had never spoken with her. One day I was set to sew with her on the same piece—a sheet which was to be made. We sat together sewing a whole afternoon, during which little or nothing was said by either of us. When it grew too dark to do any more, and our work was laid aside, we kept our places, and she began to converse with a degree of freedom which I had not expected. We were at the end of the long gallery in the building No. 1, near the window where I often sat, and knew that we could not be overheard.

She began by saying that she was lonely and

unhappy; and spoke of the wretchedness of such a situation, to which I replied with equal freedom, and in such a manner as to lead her on to say more. Indeed, she must have known, that if she gave me opportunity to accuse her of complaining, and to get her subjected to severe penances or punishment, I equally committed myself.

She then went on to speak of her early life, and the place of her former residence, which I do not recollect, although she named it. I have the impression that it was somewhere in Upper Canada, a retired and pleasant spot. She said that she longed to get away from the nuns and priests, but knew not how. She was a nun in some Convent, I do not know where; and her Superior was very harsh in her treatment, and had put some dreadful penances upon her. Once in particular, she had nearly destroyed her life; for she made her lie, for several weeks, upon a bed made of ropes, which weakened and injured her so much, that she was unable to sit up for six weeks. If we could contrive any way of escaping from the Island, we might find our way to her native place, where she would be certain of getting a good and comfortable residence, for me as well as herself. At the same time she spoke of it as utterly hopeless, shut up and watched as we were. She spoke of the penances she had endured, with a kind of horror; and said it was hard for her to believe that it was by means of such sufferings that anybody could get to heaven. Indeed, she said heaven must be a



dreadful place, if such trials as she was subject to were the way of introduction to it.

She did not speak particularly of the occasion of her visit to the Island: but, from the state of her health, and other circumstances, I had no doubt that it was similar to that which had brought many others there.

I found that her melancholy was that of despair. While speaking of her home, she seemed, indeed, to forget, for a moment, that it was impossible for her ever to see it again, and exclaimed, "O, how happy we should be, living there together!" But then, when recurring again to her actual condition, she assured me that she constantly prayed for death, and sometimes thought seriously that she would take her own life.

I felt very much for her, and once told her I would almost venture to attempt an escape with her. She said that would be entirely useless—we had no chance at all. I afterwards trembled to think how I had exposed myself, and that she might possibly inform against me: but this she never did.

I was not particular in noticing the number of days I spent on Nuns' Island: but I believe I was there very nearly three weeks. I am certain, at least, that three Sundays passed while I was there. One evening an old nun told me I was to return to the nunnery; and that night I set out in company with three priests, and several nuns, after putting on a black cloak and hood, as before.

Savage was one of the priests, and Bruneau another. The latter was then confessor at the nunnery. Sainte Mary, I remember, was one of the nuns in company, and two others were old nuns, who expressed much regret at leaving the place, saying, that if there was any thing to be done in the nunnery more than common, they must always be sent for.

We proceeded from the gate of the wall on foot to the shore, where Jacques and Pierre were ready with their boat; and having entered it, they rowed across to the river's shore, where we found a charette waiting for us, in which we rode to the city. The driver stopped at the nunnery gate, from which I had started with L'Esperance, and having alighted and rung, we were admitted into the nunnery through the chapel, the sacristy, and the long passage I have more than once alluded to, in my former work. Proceeding to the Superior's room, she received me; and, having made me take off my cloak and leave it there, she conducted me into the nuns' sleeping-room, where I retired to bed.

The next morning, when Jane Ray met me, she addressed me with a sarcastic look, saying—"Well, so you've been to the White Cats' castle?"

I never heard the name of L'Esperance mentioned after this, except on two occasions. Father Phelan one day remarked, "So you gave him a good dose!" thereby confirming my belief, that he

was dead with poison, if evidence was wanted to make me feel certain of it. A considerable time afterwards, while I was in the sick-room, I was called to attend a mass, to be celebrated in honor of L'Esperance; so that his death was then no longer to be doubted.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Dr. Nelson—His visits to the Nunnery sick-room—A night visit to the vaults—An alarm at night.

THE following chapter has been written since the preceding was in the printer's hands. The contents were brought to my mind by certain recent circumstances. I have occasionally thought of them before, but did not think of writing them.

I have remarked more than once, I was employed, for several of the last months which I spent in the nunnery, in attendance on the nuns in the sick-room. This is numbered 3 in my plan of the second story, given in my first volume. I have now to mention some circumstances which occurred in the course of that time, previously to which I may state a few things in relation to the practices there.

Dr. Nelson commonly paid his morning visit at about nine o'clock, and after he was gone, the office of the Virgin Mary was performed, which occupied a long time, and consisted of many prayers, &c., attended with various and tiresome postures, which often quite exhausted my strength. We would have to sit, stand, kneel, bend, &c., till, at the close, I have been obliged to throw myself upon the floor from extreme fatigue. After the conclusion of the office, the sick nuns were supplied with their luncheon.

Dr. Nelson had often much to say to the Superior. But one day I observed him in conversation with her, after he had visited the sick, at a time when I wished him away. It was Monday morning; and then there was always an additional amount of work to be done, and more hurry than usual in doing it: for at that time more priests than on other days come into the nunnery; and as they frequently passed through the sick-room, the Superior wished to have every thing in good order. The sheets were changed on that day, and the Superior, who was always particular in having things right there, would insist on our being quick.

It must have been on a Monday morning when I saw the Doctor talking with the Superior, because I remember that when I saw him, I thought he would interfere with my prompt performance of the laborious task I had before me. The Superior soon called me to her, and, I remember, used a term which she often did when disposed to coax us to any thing—

“Vien à ta mère, ma petite-fille.” (Come to your mother, my little daughter.)

I approached her, and she made me take a seat between her and the Doctor, when she informed me that she had something to say which I must not repeat. “The Doctor,” said she, “wants the corpse of St. Agnes, and will give forty dollars for it. He will come this evening to get it; and when all is still, you must come down to my room. Do not



"Mention any thing of this to the old nuns, for they will tell the Bishop."

She then gave me two keys, which I took; and then attended to the work I had to do. That evening, at about half past nine, I went down to the Superior's room, ready, in case of meeting any one by the way who might question me, to say that I was on business to the Superior, as she had told me to answer. I was surprised to find Dr. Nelson with her. They both rose, and proceeded with me through the first story, to the little covered passage leading into the sacristy. Crossing that, we came to a door at the corner, which I had never noticed before; and that the Superior intended to open, but found she had left the key behind. She therefore made me and the doctor wait while she returned to get it; but after a time she came back, having been unable to find it.

The Superior then said that we must go another way; and leading us to the door which opens into the church of the Convent, went under the altar and raised a trapdoor. Below this was another, fastened by a large iron bolt, which the doctor removed; and beneath we saw the steps which led into the vaults.

I had been in the vaults before, but not by this way. There is a trapdoor in the floor of the church, not far, I should think, from the middle, but nearer the altar than the front door; and by what I had gone down on some occasions of burial. The steps were carpeted. One night, I recollect,

I was sent there with some others, in consequence of the fears of the Superior, who thought old Susan might have left some fire there, as she had gone down with a light. I well remember the dread with which I passed along the gloomy place, and the thought that some of the many dead persons there might rise and catch hold of me.

But to return to the occasion of which I was speaking. The doctor, I remember, remarked that he had never been there before. When he had opened the door, he came up, and going to the front door of the church, called in two men who were waiting there, and then we all went down together. The smell of the place was oppressive and disagreeable, as I had before found it. The men took the coffin of Sainte Agnes, brought it up, and carried it into the street. The Superior and myself accompanied them to the door. It was a hateful night, the air, I recollect, was cold; and I stood a little behind the Superior, till the doctor and his men were gone; when she closed the door, and locked and bolted it. The handle, I recollect, was brass, and the inside considerably ornamented.

Some things occurred in the nunnery which I never fully understood. There was a dreadful alarm one night, during my attendance in the sick room, the recollection of which is very painful to me. While I was sitting up, I heard shrieks at some distance, but so loud that I sprung up immediately, as did all the sick nuns who were able. As soon as I recovered myself, I told them to re-

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turn to their beds and lie down; for I knew the Superior would blame me severely, if she should come in and find them in such confusion. The screams, however, continued, and they would not pay any attention to me, until they ceased, which they did in a short time. They then lay down, and every thing became pretty tranquil again. It was very plain, however, that the curiosity of all was excited by so extraordinary a noise, though they were not allowed to talk about it, and of course kept silence. My first thought was, that some person was undergoing great suffering in the little room to which I have several times referred in my first volume, as the room of the three states, or the Purgatory chamber: but the sounds seemed too distant for that, and I presumed the sufferer, whoever it was, must be farther off in some apartment in that direction. There was a shrillness in the sounds at first that made me think the voice that of a nun; but they afterwards seemed more like that of a man.

While I was reflecting on the subject, after the lapse of a short time, the Superior opened the door, and passed rapidly through the sick-room, accompanied by a few old nuns, without speaking a word. She afterwards passed again and again. The last time she passed, I was in the sitting-room; and it happened, (owing to her flurry, as I presume,) that she locked the door that led into the sick-room. A few moments after, the screams began again, more loud and dreadful than before, so that

I sprung up and pulled at the door, to prevent another scene of confusion among the sick nuns, and then first found it locked. I could hear them moving, and perceived that they were in a dreadful state of horror. Every moment the shrieks seemed more terrific, till it appeared as if several voices were mingled, at their highest pitch. At length they ceased, and I never heard a word said on the subject afterwards, nor obtained any light whatever of the origin or cause. The night I spent seems to me one of the most dreadful I can recollect in the whole course of my life.

I have seen the short letter from Dr. Nelson, (the nunnery physician,) which is inserted in the book called "Awful Exposure," published by Messrs. Jones & Leclerc, in opposition to my "Awful Disclosures;" and as he professes never to have seen me in that institution, it has occurred to me that I may assist his memory, not only by narrating the preceding account of our visit to the vaults of the church to obtain the body of Sainte Agnes, but by requesting his attention to other circumstances which he can hardly have forgotten.

I would therefore address myself particularly to Dr. Nelson, and ask him if he remembers, about the spring of 1834, entering the nuns' sick-room, (No. 4, in the second story of my plan of the veiled department,) and speaking with a patient who occupied the bed in the corner on the right hand. Does he remember a little nun, in attendance at the time, whom he called into the adjoining sitting,

room, (No. 3,) and directed her not to tell the Superior his opinion of the case until he should call again?

Does he remember calling again that afternoon, dressed in a colored round jacket, figured waistcoat, white trousers, and grayish colored hat, accompanied by a tall, handsome young man, with light hair and a gold watch chain, who had often been sent by him before with messages about medicines, &c. ? Does he remember, that after speaking and laughing with several patients, and saying something to or about "little Mary," (a nun whom they both knew,) he spoke with the sick nun first mentioned, who was bathing her feet on the left side of the room? Does he remember calling the little nun in attendance again into the sitting-room, and telling her to state to the Superior his opinion of the case, with his advice to have her removed up stairs? Does he recollect the name of that little nun to whom he gave the message? If not, I can assist him. Her name was *Maria Monk*.

Perhaps he may have forgotten also in what place he commonly washed his hands, and what he said one day to a nun as she handed him a towel. Also, the oranges he brought in privately for little Betsey, and his request to have them placed in the cupboard, to be given to her a few at a time, to avoid the notice of the Superior.

For that young girl, little Betsey, I felt, and always shall feel, a peculiar interest. She had beautiful black eyes, was remarkably handsome, and

her disposition was to be friendly and true. I did not mention her in my first volume, lest I should be the cause of her suffering in some way or other. It is not my intention now to add more than a single paragraph respecting her.

She told me one day, that in consideration of a sum of money paid to Father Dufresne, by a young officer, whose name she mentioned, he was allowed to take her from the nunnery, and place her in a hired lodging in a part of the Government House, not under my mother's charge, where she remained for several weeks. She was present at the theatre and at other public places, where she appeared under a feigned character, and was afterwards brought back to the nunnery, as a large sum of money was pledged for her restoration.

I also know, from certain facts, that this was not a solitary instance of the kind.



## CHAPTER XIX.

*Specimens of songs sung by Priests in the Nunnery—Reason why they are introduced here—Song of La Brunette—Bonjour Prêtre.—François Margotte—A Parody—Les trois jolis Vicaires. Les prêtres du Séminaire. Le joli prêtre. Les prêtres s'en vont. Les gens de New York. Mon cher père.*

I WAS always fond of music from a child. I have never received much instruction even in singing: my only teachers having been a few priests, who, as I mentioned in my first volume, used occasionally to come into the nunnery on Saturdays, and lead the nuns in performing some of the chants and hymns which were used in the chapel

In my childhood I heard a variety of songs, particularly among the Canadians, and in the French language; but in the nunnery I often used to hear the priests sing a number which were entirely new to me. All these contained expressions more or less disgusting and immoral; and there is not one of them which I have been able to recal, that I should be willing to see printed in full. Indeed, although there are but few which I can now remember entire, there are verses or lines in all which a regard to morality should never allow me to make known. A few specimens I have concluded to give, of such passages as are not objectionable, with a general account of the nature and subjects of the rest, since I have been advised to do so, by persons whose opinions I respect.

I should remark, by the way of explaining why

I have never mentioned them before, that the thought even of alluding to them in a book, never occurred to me, until a few weeks before the present volume was put to press. I had often caught myself singing my infant to sleep with tunes I had heard in the nunnery; and my friends had frequently noticed that I sung airs with which they were unacquainted. But I never mentioned the peculiar character of nunnery songs to any of them, or repeated a single verse of them, until one day when the subject was introduced by accident, while conversing about the fight that occurred between Bishop Lartigue, old Bonin, and other priests, which I have described in a previous chapter of this volume. I then alluded to the affray. I was questioned about its origin; and having mentioned the offensive song which was the cause of it, I was asked for others. Several persons, being informed of their nature, expressed the opinion that they contained in themselves an important kind of evidence, and a desire that something respecting them might be introduced into the present volume. After some hesitation I consented; and such extracts and remarks as seem proper, will be found on the succeeding pages.

I may remark, that those who have urged me to take this step, have done so on the following grounds:—1st. That if it should prove that these songs are not known in Canada, out of the nunnery, as I believe to be the case, they will afford a strong evidence to the reader that I must have learnt them

in the nunnery, which is the fact. 2d. That being sung by priests, and in some cases at least, composed by them, they afford witness to the truth of what I have said of their character and conduct, thus condemning them out of their own mouths. Certain it is that they are very favorite songs with them, especially some of the most objectionable; as I have heard them, in spite of myself, repeated over and over again, particularly when the priests were engaged in drinking and gaming.

I am not well acquainted with the French language, and there are some words and lines here which I do not understand, and cannot get explained. I never saw any of these songs on paper before.

## 1. LA BRUNETTE.

La Brunette allait à confesser;  
 La Brunette, allant, ié ié ié.  
 Dites donc moi si je suis noire,  
 Ou si mon miroir me dément.  
 O ma belle, vous êtes si peu brunette,  
 Que dans le confessional on n'aperçoit pas tant.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 J'ai mis la main dans sa goussât,  
 Je tirais six cents livres.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 The Brunette went to confess—  
 Tell me if I am so very dark-complexioned.  
 Oh no, you are so little of a brunette  
 That it is hardly to be perceived in the confessional.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 I put my hand into her purse,  
 And took out six hundred livres.—&c. &c.

(The remainder it is better to withhold.)

## 2. BONJOUR PRETRE.

Bonjour, prêtre ! Jean Marie !  
 Ou étiez vous veiller samedi ?  
 J'ai été veiller dans le Convent,  
 Avec Marie. Elle n'a point faite la betisse  
 Que tu m'a faite quand je viens icit.  
 C'est trop mal m'ordonner,  
 Pour venir de Ruisseau borré, &c. &c.

Good day, priest, Jean Marie !  
 Where did you spend Saturday evening ?  
 I went to spend it in the Convent  
 With Mary. She did not play me such a trick  
 As you play me when I come here.  
 It is too bad to make me come  
 From Ruisseau borré.

(Ruisseau borré was the parish in which this priest resided.)

## 3. FRANCOIS MARGOTTE.

Une fois un prêtre qui s'appelle François Margotte,  
 Il s'habillait bien prêtre  
 Pour aller en promenade. \* \* \*  
 " Bonjour, Monsieur Godreau."  
 En faisant les farreaux,  
 En faisant les manigances,  
 Des civilités à la compagnie,  
 Il s'est fait une belle entrée  
 Il se jisse de parler  
 Des affaires de consequence.

(The father of the young lady mentioned, then begins)—  
 Parlez, parlez, mon ami le prêtre,  
 Vous pouvez parler, vous avez de l'esprit—  
 Sans compter de l'indiscrèt,  
 Vous êtes un homme de génie.  
 J'ai entendu parler que vous êtes vanté.

Pour vous recompenser, nous allons vous donner  
 Une épelle bien manchée

There was once a priest named Francis Margotte, who dressed himself very clean to take a walk.

"Good-day, Mr. Godreau," (said he,) making his bows; and with compliments to the company, he made a handsome entrance, and began to talk about things of consequence.

(Here follow several verses which I but imperfectly remember. They intimate, that after coming into the house disguised as a citizen, making a citizen's bow, and talking of common things, of which a priest is ignorant, he meditated how to carry out to effect a plan for the ruin of Godreau's daughter, which he had boasted to some of his friends that he could accomplish. Here the father is introduced as addressing him:)

"Speak, speak, friend priest: you can talk; for you have wit. In spite of your indiscretion, you are a man of genius. I have understood what you have boasted of. To pay you, I am going to give you a shovel," &c. (And then the song gives an account of a beating the priest received with a fire-shovel, and his ludicrous complaints.)

#### 4. A PARODY ON A HYMN.

Alleluia, le pêtre s'en va.

Alleluia, la fille s'en va.

Alleluia, les vêpres sont dits, &c. &c.

Hallelujah! the priest is going.

Hallelujah! the lady is going.

The evening prayers are said, &c.

The remainder of this, which is a parody on a hymn, I will never repeat.

## 5. LES TROIS JOLIS VICAIRES.

Celui là qui a fait ce chanson  
 Sont trois jolis Vicaires.  
 En venant d'un voyage  
 Ils se sont arrêtés  
 Faire faire un souper, \* \*  
 Tout pendant le souper  
 Il faut lui raconter  
 Les aventures de dame Margotte.  
 Je vous dis en vérité  
 Qu'elle a mérité  
 Une chanson composée.

*Chorus*—Chantons les chansons,  
 En vidant les flacons,  
 Sans épargner le bouteille,  
 Le verre à la main,  
 Bannissant le chagrin.

The authors of this song were three jolly Vicars.  
 On their return from a journey they stopped to sup.  
 (*something forgotten.*)

During the supper he wanted to hear the adventures of Dame Margotte.

I tell you in truth that she deserves a song.

*Chorus*—Let us sing our songs,  
 While we empty our flasks,  
 Without sparing the bottle,  
 With the glass in our hand,  
 Banishing care.

This song was long, and the chorus I have heard often repeated, by a large company of priests, till all would ring again.

There is also a parody on a hymn beginning thus:—

O, que je suis heureux !  
 Je trouverais celui que j'aime !  
 O, que je suis heureux,  
 Je tiens le roi des cieux !



O, how happy am I,  
I shall find him whom I love!  
O, how happy am I,  
I have got the king of heaven!

The parody on this hymn is so profane and shameless, that it used to shock me to hear it, for it impressed me with the dreadful conviction, that the priests were perfect infidels and atheists. I felt certain that they would never have sung such things if they had any belief in a God.

#### 6. LES PRETRES DU SEMINAIRE.

Les prêtres du Séminaire font faire un repas,  
Que les Protestants ne s'en plaignent pas,  
Ils s'ont mis en plusieurs classes—  
Avec du vin magnifique,  
Dansants leur musique.

*Chorus*—L'Eveque est arrivé de France  
Avec les pardons et les graces,  
Vivants, chantants, divertissons nous,  
Puisque l'Eveque est arrivé de France,  
Avec des pardons et des graces.

The priests of the Seminary made a feast,  
That the Protestants should not complain,  
They put themselves in different classes  
With magnificent wine, dancing to their music.

*Chorus*—The Bishop has come from France,  
With pardons and favors—  
Come, let us sing and divert ourselves,  
Since the Bishop has come from France,  
With pardons and favors.

#### 7. LE JOLI PRETRE.

Il-y-a un joli prêtre, qui a un joli ventre.  
Cuisant, cuisant, cuisant, un joli cuisant.  
Le nombre, un joli, joli nombre.

Les genoux, les jolis, jolis genoux.  
 La main, une jolie, jolie main.  
 Tous ces prêtres l'amour les prends,  
                                 pipon, pipon  
 L'amour les prends. \* \*  
 Et quand le dimanche est arrivé,  
 A la grande messe elle veut aller.  
 Quand elle est dans l'église entrée,  
 L'épergisse d'or à elle présenté.  
 O mon dieu ! Quelle belle dame !

This describes a handsome priest—with the remark, that all the priests fall in love. Then it speaks of a young widow who came to live in his parish, and attracted the attention of the confessors on entering the church at high mass. The rest of the song is taken up with descriptions of the quarrels the priests had about her.

#### 8. LES PRETRES S'EN VONT.

Les prêtres s'en vont aux cabarêts, boire la chapina,  
 Un verre à la main, et la fille aux genoux.  
 L'amant, passant par là, se mit à dire au prêtre,  
 Ah, trista mina ! N'allez plus au cabarèt  
 Boire la chapina.

The priests go to the cabarets to drink chapina ;  
 A glass in their hand, &c.  
 A lover passing by says, Ah trista mina !  
 Go no more to the cabarets,  
 To drink chapina.

#### 9. LES GENS DE NEW YORK.

Les gens de New York se sont vanté,  
 Que l'église lassait approcher ;  
 Ils ont fait un requête,  
 Pour presenter à l'Evêque.

Và, là, tu iras,  
Il s'en repentira !

Et l'Eglise de la Protestante  
Ce n'est qu'un boucant ;  
Et tout le tems il veut se moquer  
De la sainte Eglise de mon Seigneur.

Và, là, tu iras,  
Il se'n repentira.

Buvants, chantants, divertissons nous,  
Pour le jour veut arriver  
Que tout ce boucant  
Sera jetté à terre  
Par nôtre Seigneur.

The men of New York have made a boast,  
(I do not understand this line.)

They made a request to the Bishop—  
Go on, go on, you may go on,  
But you'll repent before you're done.

The church of the Protestants  
Is only an abandoned house ;  
And is always deriding  
The holy church of Our Lord.

Go on, go on, you may go on,  
But you'll repent before you're done.  
Drinking and singing, let us divert ourselves,  
For the time is coming  
When that abandoned house  
Will be thrown down to the ground  
By Our Lord.

#### 10. MON CHER PERE.

" Mon cher Père là pour l'Amérique,"—&c.

" Je décrirais les belles,  
" Et tu auras de moi nouvelles."

" Mas il-y-a dans l'Amérique  
" Des filles plus jolies, plus jolies que moi ;

"Et vous confesserez des filles  
"Plus jolies, plus jolies que moi;  
"Et tu penseras des filles  
"Plus jolies, plus jolies que moi."

"Non, ma belle, je penserais toujours a toi!"

This is for two voices—for a priest and a young lady, to whom he has been Confessor. The occasion of the song is his departure for the United States, which are often called l'Amerique, (America,) in Canada.

*Lady*—"My dear father is going to America."

(Then came in several lines which I forget.)

*Priest*—"I will describe the ladies, and so you shall get news from me."

*Lady*—"But there are in America  
Ladies more fair, more fair than me;  
And you will confess ladies  
More fair, more fair than me;  
And you will think of ladies  
More fair, more fair than me."

*Priest*—"Oh no, my fair, I shall always think of you"

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## CONCLUSION.

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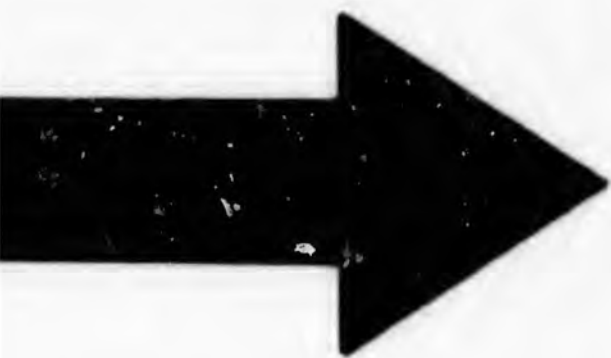
I HAVE now concluded all the "further Disclosures" which I deem it important to make, in relation to the Hotel Dieu Nunnery. There are many incidents which have been brought to my memory, while I have been employed in preparing the preceding pages; and I might name and describe many other persons with whom I had some acquaintance, or of whom I heard particulars of different kinds. It is necessary, however, to put some limits to myself; and, although I may not be the best judge of what is most important to be known to my readers, I think I have not kept back any thing indispensable to them.

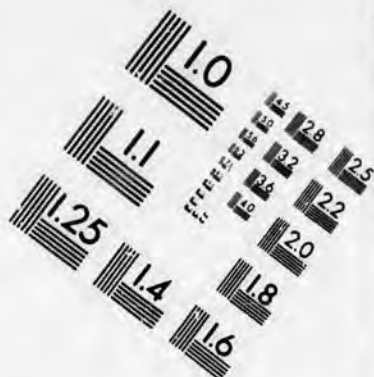
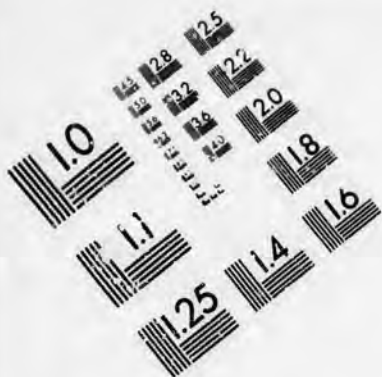
So far as I have been able, consistently with truth, and the interests of many, I have endeavored to avoid giving pain to individuals, by exposing what I know, even though they be culpable, and some of them highly so. My object has not been wantonly to destroy peace; and of this I think several persons will be convinced when they find that I have not mentioned in this book things which they know I am acquainted with.

The public will easily understand why I did not allude in my first volume to the fact that I saw

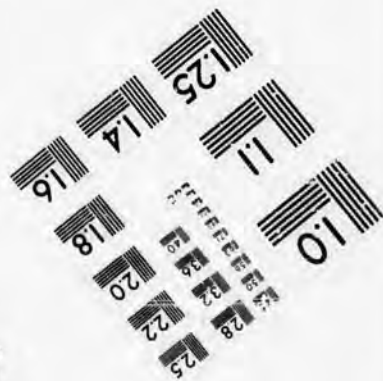
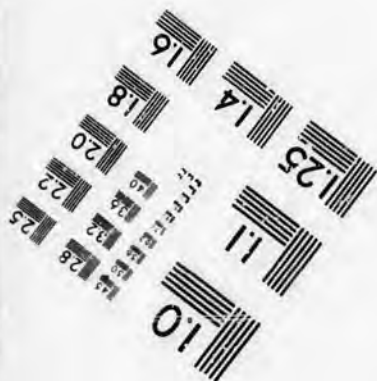
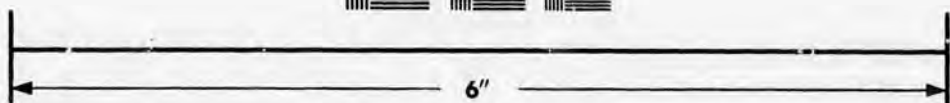
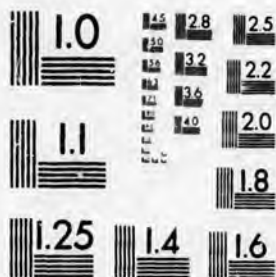








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American females at Nuns' Island, under the circumstances in which I have here described them. I was afraid of the consequences at that time, because I thought that was one of the last things the priests would be willing to see published; and that something coming so near home, would imbitter some against me, more than any thing I could say about deeds done at a distance, and in a different country.

I now take leave of my readers, with a belief that I have done all that can be required of me, and with a sincere wish, that while my disclosures may save some innocent and unsuspecting females from sufferings like my own, I may be enabled to spend the rest of my life in retirement and peace, amongst those who will protect a feeble woman and her harmless child, and in the midst of the blessings of virtuous society.

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