

'belonged to the village club, and the funeral of a member was always largely attended by his fellow-clubmen. We had a very old green parrot allowed to wander at will about the house and garden. The creature on one occasion climbed to the top of a high fir-tree in the garden which overlooked the churchyard, and seeing a very large assemblage at a funeral below, screamed out in most distinct tones: "O Lord, what fun! what fun! O my eyes, what fun!" This, indeed, was an accident, but there was a general want of decorum about the Church in those days.'

MARIA MONK.

THE FIRST SHAM NUN.

THE STORY OF AN INFAMOUS PLOT.

LAST week we gave the substance of the wild anti-convent story attributed to Maria Monk—a story which is being circulated in this Colony by the notorious impostor and sham nun who accompanies ex-priest Slattery upon his tour. We likewise proved, from the sworn affidavits of Mrs. Monk (Maria Monk's mother), of Dr. Robinson, J.P., and of other residents of Montreal that Maria Monk—whom Mrs. Slattery belauds as an angel of light—was a half-witted creature, a thief, vagrant, notorious liar, and prostitute, and of such evil life and morals that she had to be dismissed even from a refuge for fallen women. The small beginnings of this filthy romance falsely attributed to her are to be found in the following portion of the affidavit of Dr. Robertson, of Montreal, which was sworn before Benjamin Holmes, J.P., on November 13, 1835:—

'On the 9th of November, 1834, three men came up to my house, having a young female in company with them, who, they said, was observed, that forenoon, on the bank of the canal, near the extremity of the St. Joseph's suburbs, acting in a manner which induced some people who saw her to think that she intended to drown herself. They took her into a house in the neighbourhood, where, after being there some hours, and interrogated as to who she was, etc., she said she was the daughter of Dr. Robertson. On receiving this information they brought her to my house. Being from home when they came to the door, and learning from Mrs. Robertson that she had denied them, they conveyed her to the watch-house. Upon hearing this story, in company with G. Auldjo Esq., of this city, I went to the watch-house to inquire into the affair. We found the young female, whom I have since ascertained to be Maria Monk, daughter of W. Monk of this city, in custody. She said that, although she was not my daughter, she was the child of respectable parents, in or very near Montreal, who from some light conduct of hers (arising from temporary insanity, to which she was at times subject from her infancy) had kept her confined and chained in a cellar for the last four years. Upon examination, no mark or appearance indicated the wearing of manacles or any other mode of restraint. She said, on my observing this, that her mother always took care to cover the irons with soft clothes, to prevent them injuring her skin. From the appearance of her hands she evidently had not been used to work. To remove her from the watch-house, where she was confined with some of the most profligate women of the town, taken up for inebriety and disorderly conduct in the streets, as she could not give a satisfactory account of herself, I, as a Justice of the Peace, sent her to gaol as a vagrant.'

Thus, when she found that, owing to the personal attendance of Dr. Robertson, her story as to her relationship to him could not be maintained, she serenely shifted her ground and represented herself as the daughter of other persons in Montreal who had kept her for four years chained in a cellar. Later on she gave up the cellar story for one which, it was pointed out to her, would be much more profitable. She then represented herself as having been an inmate of the Hôtel Dieu during the very four years that she had previously said she had been chained in a cellar by her 'curru-el parents.' A week or two later—towards the close of November, 1834, she became an inmate of the Magdalen Asylum, a home for reclaiming fallen women to a virtuous life. She remained there until dismissed for bad conduct in the following March. According to the affidavit of Mrs. McDonnell, the matron of the institution, Maria Monk never once hinted, during all this period, 'that she had been an inmate of the Hôtel Dieu convent, or of any convent whatever.' The new version of her older melodrama story of her father's cellar forms a notable chapter in the history of shams and swindles. It arose in the following way:—

A PRECIOUS TRIO.

In the course of her sinful career the roving unfortunate drifted to the slums of New York. There, in a house of ill-fame, she was taken up by a reprobate preacher named Hoyte, who had been dismissed from the sect to which he belonged for disgraceful swindling in money matters. Maria Monk became Hoyte's paramour. We have seen how her mother testified on oath that Maria was a hopeless and unconscionable liar, and that Dr. Robertson, J.P., of the same city—whose daughter she had falsely represented herself to be—declared on his affidavit that he 'considered her assertions upon oath were not entitled to more credit than her bare assertion, and that [he] did not believe either.' Maria Monk's splendid mendacity was exploited to its fullest extent by the rogue Hoyte and two other male adventurers with whom he associated himself. Maria was an exceptionally gifted everyday liar. But she was shy of soaring to the dizzy heights pointed out to her by the enterprising Hoyte. Hence it took time and much persuasion before her story attained its full perfection in the *Awful*

Disclosures of Maria Monk. The precious trio—or one of them—had got possession of a scarce and infamous tract which had been translated from the Spanish or Portuguese in 1781, and entitled *The Gates of Hell Opened*. The editor of the Boston *Pilot* had a copy of this vile tract in his possession. Hoyte and his fellow-conspirators decided to induce Maria Monk to pose as an ex-nun, to alter the names in the pamphlet, and to republish it as her actual experience. Their was money in the business, and money was what Hoyte and Co. were after. Obviously, if Maria Monk's mother could be induced to enter into the conspiracy, a great point would be gained. The enterprising trio therefore set out for Montreal, accompanied by the frail Maria, who, at this time was only 18 years old. Here Maria broke away from Hoyte and returned to her old haunts. The affidavit of Mrs. Tarbert (a friend of Maria's mother) states that once, when sent by Mrs. Monk to look after the roving unfortunate, she found her 'in a house of bad fame.' And here we pick up another strand of the conspiracy. 'Maria Monk,' says Mrs. Tarbert, 'then told me she would not go to him (alluding, as I understood, to the father of her child) for that he wanted her to swear an oath that would lose her soul forever, but jestingly said, would make her a lady forever. I then told her (Maria): "do not lose your soul for money." Mrs. Monk's affidavit shows that Maria again returned to Hoyte, but again flitted, abandoning her illegitimate child, then only a few weeks old. Hoyte delivered the child to Mrs. Monk. She, in turn, once more requisitioned the services of Mrs. Tarbert in tracing out the half-witted unfortunate. Maria was found, but refused to go to her mother's house. Mrs. Tarbert tells us in her depositions 'that Maria Monk had borrowed a bonnet and shawl to assist her to escape from that man Hoyte,' and that she requested deponent to return them to the owner. This was on August, 1835. Mrs. Monk's affidavit tells what followed and brings us a further stage forward in the story of this scandalous conspiracy of calumny:—

THE CONSPIRATORS AT WORK.

'Early in the afternoon of the same day, Mr. Hoyte came to my house with the same old man, wishing me to make all my efforts to find the girl, in the meantime speaking very bitterly against the Catholics, the priests, and the nuns; mentioned that my daughter had been in a nunnery, where she had been ill-treated. I denied that my daughter had ever been in a nunnery; that when she was about eight years of age she went to a day-school; at that time came in two other persons, whom Mr. Hoyte introduced; one was the Rev. Mr. Brewster; I do not recollect the other reverence's name. They all requested me, in the most pressing terms, to try to make it out my daughter had been in the nunnery, and that she had some connexion with the priests of the seminary, of which nunneries and priests she spoke in the most outrageous terms; said that should I make that out, myself, my daughter and child, would be protected for life. I expected to get rid of their importunities in relating the melancholy circumstances by which my daughter was frequently deranged in her head, and told them that when at the age of about seven years, she broke a slate pencil in her head; that since that time, her mental faculties were deranged, and by times much more than at other times, but that she was far from being an idiot; that she could make the most ridiculous, but most plausible stories; and that as to the history that she had been in a nunnery, it was a fabrication, for she was never in a nunnery; that at one time I wished to obtain a place in a nunnery for her, that I had employed the influence of Mrs. De Montenach, of Dr. Nelson, and of our pastor, the Rev. Mr. Eason, but without success. . . . After many more solicitations to the same effect, three of them retired, but Mr. Hoyte remained adding to the other solicitations; he was stopped, a person having rapped at the door; it was then candle-light. I opened the door, and I found Dr. McDonald, who told me that my daughter Maria was at his house in the most distressing situation; that she wished him to come and make her peace with me; I went with the doctor to his house in McGill street. She came with me to near my house, but would not come in, notwithstanding I assured her that she would be kindly treated, and that I would give her her child; she crossed the parade ground and I went into the house and returned for her; Mr. Hoyte followed me. She was leaning on the west railing of the parade; we went to her; Mr. Hoyte told her: *My dear Mary, I am sorry you have treated yourself and me in this manner; I hope you have not exposed what has passed between us; nevertheless I will treat you the same as ever, and spoke to her in the most affectionate terms; took her in his arms; she at first spoke to him very cross, and refused to go with him, but at last consented and went away with him, absolutely refusing to come to my house.* Soon after Mr. Hoyte came and demanded the child. I gave it to him.

'Next morning Mr. Hoyte returned, and was more pressing than ever in his former solicitations, and requested me to say that my daughter had been in the nunnery; that should I say so, it would be better than one hundred pounds to me; that I would be protected for life; and that I should leave Montreal, and that I would be better provided for elsewhere; I answered that thousands of pounds would not induce me to perjure myself; then he got saucy and abusive to the utmost; he said he came to Montreal to detect the infamy of the priests and the nuns.'

In her affidavit—which is a very lengthy one and was sworn on October 24, 1835—Mrs. Monk deposes that she gives her evidence on this subject 'wishing to guard the public against the deception which has lately been practised in Montreal by designing men, who have taken advantage of the occasional mental derangement of her daughter, to make scandalous accusations against the priests and nuns of Montreal, and afterwards to make her pass herself for a nun who had left the convent.'

MARIA SELLS HER SOUL.

Despite her depraved character, Maria Monk, as we have seen, long resisted the wiles and entreaties of the reprobate Hoyte, and refused to take the final and fatal step of passing herself off as an