



EDITORIAL NOTES.

A GENTLEMAN of Montreal handed us, the other day, a very peculiar document. It is an affidavit of the mother of the notorious Maria Monk. It was taken and sworn to in Montreal, before William Robertson, M.D., J.P., on the 24th October, 1835, and signed by Isabella Mills, widow of the late William Monk and mother of the supposed ex-nun Maria. Mrs. Monk was housekeeper of the "Government House," the old Chateau de Ramsay, where the Commander of the Forces, and the Governor-General always resided during their stay in Montreal. The document refers to incidents that transpired over half a century ago and the recollection of which is almost a thing of the past. Yet it is a clear unmasking of one of the first creatures to start the "ex-nun" business. It might be interesting to some of our readers, and we will give it in one of our next issues. In connection with this subject we have a paper, read by Mr. R. C. Lyman, before the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal, on the 18th June, 1891, regarding the underground passage between the Hotel-Dieu and Seminary, at St. Paul Street and St. Dizier Lane. A curious confirmation and contradiction of the false statements of the famous Maria. Both of these documents combine to revive an interesting item of old Montreal history.

THE thanks of the public are certainly due to Alderman James for his energetic action in bringing before the Police Committee the question of an investigation into the detective service and the many complaints made, both publicly and privately, by leading citizens regarding the loose manner in which the work of that branch has apparently been done for some time back. Since the committee of investigation has been appointed Alderman James has been in receipt of a great number of letters expressing the thanks of interested citizens. The committee chosen to investigate into the question consists of Aldermen James, Kennedy, A. Dubuc and Jeannotte. Since this sub-committee has received its mandate to proceed with the much-required and universally-desired investigation nothing of any consequence has been done. Whose the fault? We are not yet prepared to reply. But this much we know; at the date when the first meeting was called only two of that sub-committee put in an appearance. The two were Aldermen James and Kennedy. Of course the two could not proceed with an investigation of that importance. It is to be hoped that there will be no shifting or shunting of the enquiry; and when the next meeting takes place that all four of these members of the council will be on hand. It is a matter too serious to brook delay. In fact, the members of the detective force, in face of the accusations and insinuations that are abroad, should be the first to demand that the question be probed to the bottom; they should be anxious to clear

themselves of any suspicion of the nature alluded to in the public and private complaints made by prominent citizens. We hope that Alderman James' move will be backed up by the press and that success may attend his efforts.

THERE is a genius from San Francisco, Rev. Dr. F. J. Masters, superintendent of the Presbyterian Chinese mission, who is now at the World's Fair, and who claims that a Chinaman discovered America. It is thus the Boston Herald tells the story; it is amusing indeed:

"Dr. Masters claims that about 499, or 1000 years before Columbus discovered America, five Buddhist priests came from China to Mexico, being driven across the Pacific by the Japanese current. One of these priests, Hweisum, returned to China, and his trip to Mexico, called Fusong in his diary, is recorded in the 250th volume of the imperial archives of the Chinese empire.

The priest describes Fusong very fully, and it applies remarkably closely to the knowledge of Mexico given by Prescott and other historians of the Toltec and Aztec period.

To corroborate this many of the customs of the ancient Peruvians and Mexicans are similar to the customs of Chinese and Japanese, and there are striking phonetic resemblances in their languages.

Ethnologists on the Pacific coast have also noted marked resemblances between the Chinese and the Indian tribes of British Columbia, and Chinese coins hundreds of years old have recently been unearthed in British Columbia."

Surely, after this, St. Brendan's claims should be looked upon with more favor than they have been by a great many. We are under the impression that the Arabs discovered America, and that the Indian tribes are merely descendants of the sons of the desert. Perhaps Prof. Wiggins, or some other discoverer, or inventor of theories might be able to cast some light on the subject. Baron Munchausen is unfortunately dead, or we might have expected to hear from him. Between them all poor Columbus has but little show. But wonders will never cease, since it has been found that Bacon wrote Shakespeare.

SOME person signing himself "Enquirer," wrote to the Witness last week, calling attention to a paragraph in the memoirs of the notorious Major Le Caron, the most unprincipled scoundrel that ever darkened the two continents, and in which that spy and perjurer, refers to a Bishop of the Canadian North West, or Manitoba, who incited the rebels into action and whose approbation was given to the revolt made against authority in that country. The writer wants to know how Mgr. Tache's protestations of loyalty to Great Britain agree with the action of the Bishop Tache referred to in the diary of the arch-informer of the century. We can tell him, Mgr. Tache's protestations of loyalty are the out-pouring of a heart that has never had a pulsation that was not in accord with the spiritual and temporal interests of Canada. Major Le Caron, has been, through all his life, a traitor to every cause, an informer on all his friends, a

spy in service of conflicting parties, a liar in private, a perjurer in public, and the blackest character that this century has produced. We have our opinion of the man who quotes Major Le Caron, in order to cast a doubt upon the sincerity of such a man as Mgr. Tache.

In speaking of the grand ceremony of the recent dedication of England to the Blessed Virgin and St. Peter, the Liverpool Catholic Times says:

"The important function which took place at the London Oratory yesterday, when the country was formally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St. Peter, was a ceremony which takes the mind back to the Catholic practices of the pre-Reformation days. Special devotion to Mary and to St. Peter was one of the most marked characteristics of the people from the time when the faith was first introduced until the Catholic tradition was broken in the sixteenth century. Catholics are taking up the threads of the past and restoring customs which brought blessings innumerable on the land. This is to them a work of love and true patriotism, and they enter into it with cordial earnestness. Yesterday, throughout every part of England, they, in spirit, joined in the ceremony which took place at the Oratory, and on Sunday next they will by their presence attest their interest in its repetition within the walls of their own district churches. At the same time they will beg of God to hasten the day when the country shall become once more "the dowry of Mary," and a nation united to the See of Peter by the firmest spiritual bonds."

IT HAS BEEN predicted that Mayor Desjardins is likely to occupy the seat of Chief-Magistrate of Montreal during three years. It is most probable that he will be re-elected by acclamation next year. If so the elections of 1895, being the first under the new law that calls for elections once in two years, the present incumbent would not be disturbed after his second year. In fact, if Mayor Desjardins continues as he has commenced we believe that the city would be the gainer in such a case. It is not often that a chief-magistrate of any large city displays more judgment and adaptability to the office than has the present Mayor during the recent important public events.

WE RECEIVED a letter from His Lordship Bishop Sweeney of St. John, New-Brunswick, in which the reverend prelate refers to our comments, of the week before last, on the statement of His Honor Judge Jette regarding the Irish clergy of New-Brunswick and the French Canadian people. His Lordship agrees with THE TRUE WITNESS in the statement that the charge is totally unfounded. The letter, which we are permitted to make use of, says: "I have lived in this Province, for nearly fifty years, since my ordination to the priesthood, in constant communication with both Irish and French, and I have never seen anything to justify such a mischievous accusation. In all the French parishes there are French priests, with schools, and convents encouraged by the clergy as far as the circumstances of the people

justify, and within the last month I have administered the Sacrament of Confirmation in a majority of the largest parishes of the French district, and everywhere, among both the French and Irish, I saw the evidences of faith, charity and good will." We need add nothing to these words from the venerable Bishop of St. John. The fact is that the remarks which called forth our comment of two weeks ago must have been the outcome of irreflection, for certainly they could not have been based upon an exact study or knowledge of the situation in New-Brunswick.

"THE LABORS OF THE APOSTLES; THEIR TEACHING OF THE NATIONS," is the title of a neat and elegantly bound volume of some two hundred pages, by the Right Rev. Louis DeGoesbriand, D.D., Bishop of Burlington, and published by the well-known Catholic House of Benziger Brothers, New York. The work has just been issued from the press and is sold for one dollar. The name of Benziger Brothers, as publishers, would be a sufficient guarantee of the worth of any Catholic publication; but when we find that it comes from the pen of Mgr. DeGoesbriand, the author of "Christ on the Altar," "History of Confession," and other splendid works, a seal is set upon it that at once insures its success. In his preface the Rt. Rev. author thus speaks of the scope and purpose of his book:—

"I intend to write regarding the labors of the apostles, and the origin of the Christian religion. I invite you to follow me to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and other points in the Holy Land, as well as to Tarsus, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Athens, Rome, Alexandria, and many other places. . . . I write for the sake of men of good-will, and all must acknowledge that a very simple and easy way to find the truth is to see how the early Christians were converted. Was it by reading the New Testament or by the teaching of those whom Christ had commissioned to preach the Gospel? The way to the truth must be the same now as it was eighteen hundred years ago."

We trust that all of our readers, who can afford it, will secure a copy of this little book.

MR. HYACINTH LAYSON, ex-priest, of whose conversion there were rumors afloat some time ago, has published his "last will and testament," which occupies a page of the Paris Figaro. He states that he is seventy years of age. He leaves "his spiritual apostleship," to his wife and son. He desires that his last words be "France, the soul, God." If ever the old proverb "whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad," were exemplified, it beyond a doubt is in the case of Pere Hyacinth. The idea of an apostle bequeathing his mission, by will, to his wife, is something too funny to be taken seriously. It is, however, a pretty fair sample of the folly of which the fallen from grace can be guilty. It is, indeed, lamentable to see the efforts such men make to create sensations and to keep alive the scorching fire of unwholly notoriety.