

## MONTREAL GOSSIP.

A great deal of sentiment is being expended on that forty year old "antiquity," the Methodist church on St. James street. Leaders have been written about it, poetry has been written to it, and it has been called "an oasis amid the desert of lofty business offices, warehouses, stores, and other worldly accessories by which it is surrounded." Happily for travellers in the actual desert the oases therein found are accessible at all times, not on Sundays only, at easy and "genteel" hours. Many writers on the subject of the old church have taken a little trip backward into the past and enlarged upon the enlargement of the various Methodist churches of Montreal. In one newspaper we read that "in the year 1808 the cause of Methodism had so far prospered that subscriptions were raised and the first Methodist meeting-house in Canada was erected in St. Sulpice street. The building still exists and stands immediately in the rear of the Church of Notre Dame. It is now used, as an inscription on a board above the doorway denotes, as the office of La Fabrique de Notre Dame." So far so good—but why is there not a word about the Rev. Mr. Richard, who superintended the building of the church, and who, so his congregation proudly said, was going to "convert the Sulpiciens?" The answer to that question lies in the fact that the Sulpiciens converted him. Or more correctly speaking, the grace of God did. How it happened I have not yet succeeded in ascertaining, but certain it is that while dwelling in the near vicinity of the Catholic parish church, and strenuously preaching against its doctrines, Rev. Mr. Richard's heart was illumined with the light of Faith. He humbly asked instruction and was baptized into the Church, after which he gave himself wholly to the service of God, studied for the priesthood and became an ordained member of the Community of St. Sulpice. His first charge was a little congregation which he gathered in old Bonsecours, then a holy and devotional spot, breathing of the past, and not yet profaned by modern improvements.

Father Richard for many years filled the office of *economus* in the Seminary. He also had charge of the Irish Catholics of the city, by whom he was much beloved and to whom he sacrificed himself. He died of typhus, contracted in the fever sheds, in the year 1847, probably the only shepherd evolved from the Methodist body in Montreal who has "laid down his life for the flock."

Sabbath School is a term usually connected in one's mind with the Gentile Sunday. It means to most ears a place wherein the rising generation are instructed in the law of Moses and the New Testament, where books are loaned out weekly, containing stories of the life and death of abnormally good children, who never ran on Sunday, nor told a fib, nor coveted their neighbour's rocking horse, and who on the two-hundredth page went to heaven by as direct a route as did the prophet Elias. Then in summer the average Sabbath School has its picnic, at which the young lady teachers and the young gentleman teachers indulge in a mild flirtation, and the children indulge in unripe fruit, birds nesting, wading and bad colds. In winter, who does not remember the "Tea Party" at which doughy cake and weak tea is distributed as a set off to a musical festival calculated to infuse a knowledge of geography and a brotherly love for the heathen. Many and various are the hymns of those "Evangelical gatherings."

"From Greenland's icy mountains  
And India's coral strand,  
Where Afric's sunny fountains  
Roll down their golden sand,"

is perhaps one of the best known, but there are others in vogue of less stately rhythm, for instance:—

"If I should steal, or stories tell,  
I'm pretty sure to go to hell."

And if it be an American Sunday School there is this choice and well reasoned ditty:

"The Lord is great, I calculate,  
He will the godly bless,  
And if I tries to tell lies,  
I shall be saved—I guess!"

In fact, so Protestant is the term "Sabbath School" in contradistinction to our "catechism," that it seems strange to read of the Rabbi Marks of the Temple Emanu-El having gone to

Quebec to organize a Hebrew Sabbath School in that town. Rather hard it will be on the poor little Israelites, who will be debarred from a share in the games and fun of a Saturday afternoon, and set down to pucker their poor little brows over the study of the law of Moses. The government has given a grant of two hundred and fifty dollars towards the organization and support of the school.

By the bye, we read in one of your Toronto papers that recently, in the St. James Square Presbyterian Church, a young lady, a graduate of the General Hospital in Toronto, was solemnly set apart for the work of the Presbyterian Medical Mission at Honan, China. Now, in what did the "solemnity" of the "setting apart" consist? And what is she set apart from? And who set her apart? And by what rule or precedent? Is the "sweet girl graduate" (I presume her to be such) sternly prohibited from flirtation with any youthful follower of Esculapius who may be practising his profession in the Flowery Land? Or is she "set apart" from the possibility of converting, captivating, and marrying a convalescent Chinaman, according to the ritual—I beg pardon—service—of the holders of the creed of Calvin? And what is the outward and visible sign of this "setting-apart"?

Everybody is out of town, which is why "Gossip" is so scarce this week. At least, the ladies are all out of town, and the men, of course, never gossip! The suburban resorts are all full of health seekers. The ultra fashionable people have followed the "Canadian Court" to the Metapedia and Dalhousie, and the enterprising people have undertaken journeys over less beaten tracks. Our worthy mayor has been sojourning on the

"dismal shore

Of cold and pitiless Labrador."

Some patriots have gone to British Columbia, others to Lake Nonimingué, in our Provincial Northwest, and one enterprising journalist, of more than local fame, is meditating a holiday trip to Japan. Truly this is a wonderful age!

Pilgrimages to Beaupré are very numerous, and the remarkable cures at the shrine of La Bonne Sainte Anne are many and well attested. From all parts of our land come the sick and suffering to pray to the beneficent Mother of Mary Immaculate, and owing to her powerful intercession the *Ter Deum* of thankfulness almost incessantly floats over the broad St. Laurence and echoes amid the grand Laurentian mountains. It is beautiful, this faith of our Canadian people in their holy patroness—and sometimes it is pathetic. Who does not remember the incident, so graphically told a few years ago by Joachim Miller, of the young French Canadian mother, herself little more than a child, who travelled down from Quebec with her dead baby in her arms to ask its resurrection from the good Saint Anne?

Does the Saint ever give back life, I wonder, awaken buried memories, renew dead virtues, rekindle an extinct faith, restore a lost friend? Among the visible memories which yearly take place at the shrine, are there also invisible ones—known only to God? I think so. I hope so, for:

"If we are fortunate enough to find grace before thee, O holy mother Anne, we may expect everything from thy intercession. Amen."

OLD MORTALITY.

## THE MAIL ON PRAYER.

The *Mail* has essayed many departures of late, but it has never receded farther from all Christian principles than within the last week or two. During the past two years it has attacked the Catholic Church and her institutions unceasingly, and has enjoyed the acclaim of its ultra-protestant friends. The editor has, for a moment, descended from the protestant horse, and now mounted upon another Rosinante, and like a new Don Quixote ridden forth to seek adventure. If we are to judge by the many letters which have appeared he has encountered a wind-mill, and with no better success than his ancient prototype. The *Mail* has come out clearly and distinctly Agnostic.

It quotes with some satisfaction the words of a bishop of a church, whose chief characteristic has ever been *compromiso*. The Anglican Bishop of Manchester was addressing a body of