

creation during the warm weather. The grounds are ample, comprising spacious gardens and orchards, and all the members of the seminary, priests, tutors and pupils, resort thither once a week in summer.

From the summit of this mountain, the view is exceedingly picturesque and beautiful. The island itself, and the eastern shore of the St. Lawrence—pouring the mighty floods of the great lakes into the Northern Ocean—are thickly inhabited to the extent of many miles. The parish churches are numerous, and every where surrounded by the neat white cottages of the peasantry clustering around them. The rapids of Lachine in a perpetual foam above the sweet island of the nuns on the South; the charming island of St. Helen's, with its fortifications in front of the city, and the lofty mountains of Vermont and Chambly in the azure distance on the east and south-east; with a level plain, sprinkled with villages, farms, orchards, and gardens, all around from the St. Lawrence to the Ottawa, spreading beneath the feet of the beholder, combine to make up a landscape such as is rarely excelled, either for luxuriance, variety or beauty. But enough—perhaps already too much—of description. I will now proceed to graver matters.

Among the religious and other public institutions of Montreal demanding the attention of the inquisitive stranger, the monastic establishments of the Roman Catholics are not the least prominent. The history of *Monachism*, from the days of Paul, the Egyptian, who leads the van in the army of the monastic saints as the first Christian hermit—to say nothing of the Essenes and Therapeutes, the recluses, of Palestine and Egypt before the commencement of the Christian era—is rich in instruction and of absorbing interest. The first monastery was founded, according to the Romish legend—and the tale is a beautiful one—in the deserts of Upper Egypt, by the aforementioned Paul, in connexion with St. Anthony, in the year 303; or thereabout. Female monasteries, or convents of nuns, were instituted about a century afterward. Both have been at times eminently useful, and both at other times eminently corrupt. They have served as places of refuge, from persecution, of retirement and repose from the cares of the world, of religious study and meditation, and as schools of learning, benevolence and virtue.—They have also at times degenerated into dens of debauchery and crime. Still, when we consider that it was to them, for many centuries, that the world was indebted for all it knew of letters and religion, and that they were the abodes of such meek and holy spirits as Bede and Thomas-a-Kempis, it is not to be taken for granted by every opponent of the Roman See, that a monastery must necessarily be the vestibule of hell, and every recluse worthy only of such an abode.

With such views and impressions, I was of course glad of