

"This is the "Grey Nunnery, Sir," were the words uttered by my Jehu, as he drew up before a stately building of massive stone, covering an extent of several acres, extending from Dorchester, by Guy, up to St. Catherine's street. "But, my good man," said I, "the establishment I want to visit is one of the oldest in the country, and what I see before me is of recent date, nay, more it is only in its infancy as I conjecture from the unfinished wing. Is there no error here?" These last words were uttered in a querulous tone, for although old enough to have acquired experience, I am not yet master of my feelings when on asking to see one thing I am shown another, but my conductor, evincing no surprise, answered me with the greatest simplicity that: "For good reasons, the old "Grey Nunnery" had been partly thrown down and the Sisters with all their poor folks had come to the new one. If you go inside, Sir, they will tell you all about it."

This was just what I intended, fully resolved to see all worth visiting in the British Provinces and mentally hoping nothing would happen, this time, to hinder me from accomplishing my design.

Thirty years ago, on the 8th of July 1852, I came to Montreal with a similar intention, and arriving by the evening train, put up at the St. Lawrence Hall. The following morning a fire broke out in the East end, which spreading with such rapidity, among the wooden tenements, set that whole part in a blaze. Eleven hundred houses were consumed during the day. The heat which was already great, becoming intolerable through the intensity of the flames and the suffocating smoke, made me shift my quarters and fly from a city which, though surrounded by the magnificent St. Lawrence on one side and the Ottawa river on the other, was devoid of Aqueducts to furnish sufficient water to quell the raging element. I fled from Canada and like the "Wandering Jew," I have been literally flying ever since. The old proverb says: "A rolling stone gathers no moss," but I say, every one to his own taste. Mine is a preference for leaves, and like all old people I gratify it, in adding new sheets to the journals sent from time to time to the young folks for whom I scribble off descriptions of the places I visit. To former manuscripts, which certain nephews and nieces of mine assure me they read with interest, I add the present details relating to the "Grey Nunnery," all of which I have taken from the life of the Foundress or received viva-voce from the Sisters, while, as the Janitor of the Institution calls it, "Going around."

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