

LAY BROTHERS AT WORK.

A COMMUNITY OF ANGLICAN MONKS IN NEW YORK STATE.

The Only One In America—How they Were Founded, and What They Do—Lives Devoted to Religion and to Service for the Poor and Suffering.

If some day you should chance to be driving along the country roads in the central part of Dutchess county, New York state, says the N. Y. Sun, a great golden cross, high uplifted above the tree tops, may now and again appear to your surprised vision. It keeps you company at every turn of the way, sharply silhouetted against the sky, glowing clear in the morning light, or crimsoned with the rays of the setting sun. An unexpected feature in this mountain landscape, the cross is the visible sign of a unique religious movement, and the guiding star to an interesting charitable institution.

Approaching from the south you come upon a new roadway, roughly made of broken stone, breaking into the woodland, which a little beyond becomes an open grove of trees, beneath whose branches you catch a glimpse of a straggling yellow building, conspicuous in this land of old-fashioned country farmhouses by reason of its newness its air of serene comfort, and the bell and cross rising from one of its gables. When you arrive a pleasant-faced young man, clad in a triar's gown of sober brown, greets you warmly, while under the trees are groups of young men and boys whose features for the most part bear the ineffaceable marks of privation, sorrow and disease. This is the chapter house of the Brothers of Nazareth, and these are their wards.

The experiment that is carried on at Priory Farm and that has now almost passed beyond the experimental stage has a twofold character. It comprises a purely religious life and a charitable work. The Order of the Brothers of Nazareth is the only lay Anglican brotherhood in the world; it is one of only three orders, clerical and lay, in the church in the United States. It is the most recent manifestation of the contemporary revival of interest in the religious life in the Anglican church, and derives its inspiration, even if it does not directly trace its descent, from the celebrated English order known as the Cowlsey Brothers, at Cowlsey, near Oxford.

Brother Gilbert, the Superior of the Brothers of Nazareth, entered upon the special work of his life when, in 1877, he became a postulant in the Society of St. John the Evangelist, the Boston branch of the Cowlsey order. Subsequently he went to England and served a novitiate of two years at Cowlsey, and then, returning home, rejoined the Boston society. This experience was far from satisfying to him, however. He never felt quite at home in the order, which did not at all points meet his spiritual needs or seem to offer to him the best opportunity for work. So, after a time, he came to New York, and for a few months labored with the Holy Cross Fathers, the order which has the Rev. Father Huntington, the distinguished Episcopal monk, at its head. In 1886 the idea of a lay order dedicated to prayer, devotion, and the service of man, quite distinct from any clerical order, came to Brother Gilbert, and out of this inspiration came the Brothers of Nazareth.

The order was of slow growth. For a time Brother Gilbert was its only member, but soon other earnest and devoted men were attracted toward it. Some of these found their first enthusiasm unable to stand the test of severe self-denial and dropped back into the world, but enough have remained to place the order upon firm footing and to insure its gradual expansion. The object and purpose of the community has been defined as "the service of God in acts of prayer and devotion, and the service of man in such work as laymen may perform for the bodies and souls of their fellow-men." Much time is spent in religious meditations, but there are no austerities practised save in the matter of simple ways of living and in menial service for the sick, poor, and friendless who are taken care of. The religious life and menial work are interdependent, one stimulating and supporting the other.

It is not easy to become a full member in the order. The probationary period is long and exacting. Abundant opportunity is given to those who find that they have mistaken themselves to drop out of the ranks, and, truth to tell, may seem to be called, while few are chosen. The candidate receives six weeks as a visitor and then serves a year as a postulant and three years as a novice. After that, vows are taken for a three years' period for five successive times. Then, after nineteen years of probation, final vows for life may be taken.

The habit of the Brothers is a long brown garment bound at the waist by a leathern girdle from which a crucifix is pendant. About the house they wear a brown skull cap, and upon the street a low crowned black hat with stiff, broad brim.

The first active work undertaken by the order was the management of St. Andrew's Cottage, a summer home for boys established at Farmingdale, L. I., by the Holy Cross Mission of New York city. That work has been growing in extent every year, until now between 200 and 300 boys are cared for in the course of the summer months. The cottage is now entirely in the hands of the Brothers of Nazareth, and is conducted by them as an adjunct to their principal establishment. In the autumn of 1886, after the first summer at Farmingdale, a large, old-fashioned frame house on East 120th street, adjoining the Harlem Hospital, was secured, and became the All Saints' Convalescent Home for Men and Boys. Later on a home for boys was opened, but this was given up in order that the Brothers might be free to take charge of the parochial school for boys in connection with the Mission Church of the Holy Cross. When the permanent buildings for the order on Priory Farm were completed, it was thought best to concentrate most of the work of the order in that one place. Another work in which the Brothers are engaged every summer is the maintenance of the clerical retreat at "Rubberg," near the village of Ellenville, in Ulster county. There are several cottages, with a small but attractive oratory in the establishment, and Episcopal clergymen of moderate means have opportunity for summer rest there.

But Priory Farm, which was established a year or more ago, has become the permanent home of the order. There are

over 400 acres in the property, which is part of the manorial estate of the well-known De Peyster family. The land was given to the Brothers of Nazareth by Mr. John Watts de Peyster and Mr. Richard Stevens of Hoboken, and the buildings were erected by the generosity and active cooperation of Gen. de Peyster, Mr. Stevens, Bishop Potter, Miss Mary Benson of Brooklyn, Miss Grace Wilkes and others.

The institution is not endowed and is not yet self-supporting. A practical farmer has charge of the land, and what with the customary products of the fields, the dairy, and the chicken house some advance has been made toward supplying the material wants of the household. But it requires a great deal to support the family of from fifty to sixty people that the Brothers care for here and elsewhere, and so contributions from the charitable must still be depended upon for current expenses. There are times when it is not easy to make both ends meet, and when the extension of the work that is always pressing is hampered by lack of resources. But Brother Gilbert has a great deal of energy and worldly sense mixed with his apostolic fervor and Christian devotion, and he has thus far been able to carry on his enterprise successfully.

The first building erected at Priory Farm was a long, low structure, designed for consumptive boys and young men. There are several wards on the ground floor, with accommodations for twenty-five or more. The rooms are large, light, and airy, with open fireplaces, and pictures on the walls; they are furnished with iron bedsteads, and the linen is immaculately clean and sweet. At the south end of this building is a large sun parlor, entirely enclosed with glass, and adjoining it an inner parlor where on three pedestals are busts of Mr. de Peyster, Mrs. de Peyster, and Mr. de Peyster's father. Over the mantel of the open fireplace is a tablet with this inscription: This tablet is placed by Gen. de Peyster in remembrance of the poor wait, John Gram, whose closing days, cared for by Brother Gilbert, O. B. N. inspired the idea of this eleemosynary institution.

The floor above is an attic. A narrow passageway divides it lengthwise, and on either side are eight sleeping apartments for the Brothers. In striking contrast to the wards below, these rooms are small and severely furnished. An iron bedstead, a table, a chair, a commode, a crucifix over the head of the bed constitute the entire furnishing of each room. A slanting roof makes it impossible to stand upright, save in the doorway, and a single round window gives scant light and air. Over each door in the hallway is a tablet bearing the name of a saint of the Church.

At the north end of the building on the ground floor are the two dining rooms, furnished with antique oak extension table and chairs, and opening from this, with folding doors, is the chapel, which is the architectural gem of the place. Connected with the Consumptive Home by a narrow two-story structure in which are the upper and lower reception halls is All Saints' Convalescent Home, the principal building on Priory Farm. The general air of this Home is that of comfort and refinement. In the square fronting the house are beds of flowers, and golden rods, daisies and other flowers of the field fill vases on the mantels throughout the house. The upper hall has a handsome jardiniere, a desk, a bearskin rug, and a cuckoo clock to sing the hours and half hours. Guest chambers are over the parlor, and these are substantially though plainly furnished. The building is furnished with closets and bath, and is heated by steam and lighted by gas.

These things are confusing at first. They do not seem to harmonize with one's idea of what the monastic life should be. "But," says one of the Brothers, "these comforts are for our patients. We want to help them on to health and to right living, and to that end we seek to make their home as pleasant as can be. For ourselves we are content with the simplest ways, but those whom we care for are of the world, and we aim to give them the reasonable enjoyment of worldly things. The medieval monastic life is not possible in these days even if it were desirable. The activities of modern life forbid the recluse. The spirit of religion is not more devotion than help to our fellow men, and so we must adapt the old-time spirit of devotion, separatism, and self denial to nineteenth century needs and nineteenth century methods.

The daily religious life of the community is highly devotional. Rising hour is at half past 5 o'clock, and the recitation of "Lauds and Prime" comes at 6, Holy Communion at 7, and general prayers at 7.30. Breakfast is at 8, and the "Feres," 7.30, is followed by meditation. At noon "Sot" is recited, and immediately after follows dinner. At 3 comes "None," at half past 5 tea, at half past 6 vespers, at half past 8 evening prayers for the household, at 6 "Compline," and at 10 o'clock retirement for the night. On Sunday there is preaching if a clergyman happens to be visiting, or, lacking the presence of a priest, a sermon is read by Brother Gilbert, who has a commission as a lay reader.

Plenty of work there is during the entire day. The only hired help in the house is the cook. Some of the inmates of the Home assist in the lighter tasks, but most of the work is done by the Brothers, even to the waiting upon the table where they serve their patients before partaking of food themselves.

Thus they speak of their duties: "Do you think the life of a Brother is an unpractical life?" Come and try it of a washing day, with dozens of clothes to cleanse, three meals to get for a family of fifty, beds to make, accounts to keep, the boys to be 'minded,' and see if you'll find much time to dream, or more than just enough space between whistles to roll down your sleeves and go over to the chapel for your offices at 6, 9, 12, 3, 6, and 9, and your meditation.

"Plenty of work there is, good hard work of all kinds too, from scrubbing a floor or swinging a hammer to laying out the dead or serving at the altar. Yet the real business of the Brothers is prayer, and the chapel is the place where they do their best work and where they feel most at home."

One of the special works that the Brothers of Nazareth have designed to carry on is to care for a certain class of boys; those who are too old to remain in orphanages and not old enough to support themselves; those who cannot be received in orphanages because they are past the age of admission, and those who, while not vicious, are inclined to evil and will not submit to parental authority, especially sons of widows,

who through struggling for daily bread, must leave their children more or less to themselves during the day, so that, without restraint, they spend much time in the streets learning the evil which is so easily acquired in our large cities. These are the boys who will be taken into this new school building, the construction of which has already begun.

TOUGH SNAKE STORIES.

Marvellous Narrations of the Reptiles in the Philippine Islands.

Among the incidents related by an American who resided twelve years in the Philippine Islands are the following: In the warehouse in which I slept on the plantation in Mindanao, a tame python was kept to clear out the rats, which were a formidable nuisance. The snake was fifteen feet long, brown and yellow in color, and was as docile as a dog. At first it was rather trying to my nerves to have him glide over my bed, and not unfrequently he would coil himself up at the foot and go to sleep, but I soon got used to him. He was regarded as utterly harmless, but subsequent events showed that this was a mistake, and that his powers for mischief were awful.

We had a German boy in the office, about eighteen, a very sturdy lad, and a thorough hoodlum. He was in the habit of teasing the snake, catching it by the tail and annoying the poor brute in various ways. One morning I heard a loud scream from the interior of the go-down, and running saw the boy holding on to the edge of a cask and the snake just uncoiling from his body. I ran to him, and he dropped to the floor stone dead.

On examination by the doctor it was found that every bone in his body was not only broken, but smashed almost as completely as if done with a hammer. One of the native hands saw the whole affair. Jacob had put his foot on the python's tail and was at once caught near the throat by the snake's teeth, and quick as lightning three coils were thrown round his body. He gave one shout and all was over. People who discredit the killing of large animals by snakes have no conception of the enormous strength of these reptiles.

Our plantation bordered on a swamp—here called a tili—and this was alive with snakes, while in the river that flowed through it were man-eating crocodiles. Our cook, a stout native woman, had been seized as she was drawing water by one of these monsters, and escaped with the loss of her right leg, which was crunched off above the knee.

In order to avoid danger all vegetation was hoed up around our buildings. This was to destroy harbour for snakes. Of all these "tipiclonga," or chain viper, was most dreaded. It is very poisonous and aggressive, and, unlike most venomous snakes, will not flee the presence of man. To clear the compound or yard of snakes the natives would drive in a number of half-wild hogs that are raised at every station. They make short work of the reptiles.

The existence of man-eating snakes has been doubted by naturalists, but I can prove the fact from my own experiences. In 1886 I was living at Ti-Rando. One of our servants was a short, broad-shouldered Javanese named Picul. He was a cattle-herder, and frequently in the woods. Several times he had told us of the existence of a monster python fifty feet long, not a mile from the plantation. I gave him a gun and buckshot to kill it, but it never materialized and we became incredulous.

One day Picul was missing. His gun and hat were found in the woods and brought in. One of the native hunters examined the ground and gave his opinion. Picul must have been caught by a snake, as no blood had been shed, but there had evidently been a struggle. The next Sunday, in company with an Englishman named Mason and some native trackers, I took the woods to look for our lost servant. The natives led us to the edge of a track of submerged land covered with long grass. The water was about three inches deep. Here in the mud was the track of a big snake. The depression made by the body in the mud was quite eighteen inches wide. Suddenly one of the men called out "Sook! sook!" (look! look!) Three hundred yards away the water was agitated into waves, and gliding towards us was a yellow snake that looked one hundred feet long. The head was as large as a bucket. It was a bright yellow striped with black. To watch it gliding towards us was trying on the nerves, but we waited, and at forty yards gave it two loads of buckshot in the head. It reared ten feet out of the water and lashed about, but finally sank, and the natives hauled it on the bank with a rope. It was just thirty-eight feet long—our fears had added the other six. To keep it from the white ants it was at once cut open and skinned. Inside was the lower jaw of a human being and a leg and thigh bone, while a loin cloth was rolled into a perfect knot no bigger than a man's fist, and this Picul's sisters identified. So the poor fellow had fallen a victim to this horrid reptile.

Famous Rapid Readers.

It has been said of the late Justice Lamar that he was able to read a newspaper article or a page of a book at what seemed to the observer to be but a glance. Manifestly this faculty or capacity gave him great advantage over ordinary men. He was able to devour books as if he were a literary glutton, with the difference that his powerful memory enabled him to digest at leisure what he had absorbed in haste.

Macaulay possessed the same faculty, perhaps in a yet higher degree. He would take up a volume for an evening's intellectual enjoyment, and before he retired had the contents fully impressed upon his marvellous mind. Dickens was another of these remarkably rapid readers. George Eliot's "Adam Bede" came to him one day. Before his bedtime he had read it and had pronounced this remarkable dictum: "That book was written by a woman." Others required days of leisure to read it, and the question of authorship was the riddle of the time in literary circles.

Charles Sumner was another man who possessed this happy faculty. A book, whether it was a volume of law or diplomatic correspondence or a work of fiction, passed under his eyes as if by a quick succession of glances. It was the same with Daniel Webster, who himself stated to a friend that when in college, he read "Don Quixote" in a single night. In the case of both these distinguished men, what they read in this way reappeared in a new dress in their speeches and in their writings.

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Rolling in His Wealth.

The company had been telling stories about their dogs and their marvelous achievements. One man had described the artful way in which his dog buried bones; another how his, it he gave it a penny would go to the baker's and buy a bun.

At last a quiet man, who had been sitting in silence, spoke up. "I had a dog once," he said, that people were in the habit of giving coppers to, but he never used to buy anything with them. In fact, for a long time we had no idea what he did with his money.

One day, I was rummaging about in an old disused shed, when suddenly I came upon him rolling on his back in something I could not see what. I spoke to him, but he was so occupied he did not notice me. "I went nearer, and what do you think I discovered? The dog was lying in quite a heap of copper coins, that must have taken him months to collect, and seemed to be enjoying himself thoroughly. At first I could not make out what he was doing, but then it struck me. The old rogue was rolling in his wealth."

As She Viewed It.

A well-known Scottish divine on one occasion tried to explain to an old lady the meaning of the scriptural expression, "Take up thy bed and walk," by saying that the bed was simply a mat or rug easily taken up and carried away. "No, no," replied the lady. "I cannot believe that. The bed was a regular four-poster. There would be no miracle in walking away with a bit of mat or rug on your back."

His Last Resource.

A forlorn Irishman, reduced to the extreme stage of poverty and destitution as a last resource made inquiry at a marine-store as follows:—"Do you buy rugs and bones here?" "Yes," was the reply. "Then, be jabbers," said Pat, "ye may put me on the scales."

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Intercolonial Railway.

On and after MONDAY, the 11th SEPT. 1893, the trains of this Railway will run daily (Sunday excepted) as follows:

WILL LEAVE ST. JOHN:

Express for Campbellton, Pugwash, Pictou and Halifax..... 7.00
Express for Halifax..... 15.30
Express for Sussex..... 16.30
Express for Point duChene, Quebec, and Montreal..... 16.55

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A Freight train leaves St. John for Montreal every Saturday night at 22.30 o'clock.

Express from Sussex..... 8.25
Express from Montreal and Quebec, (Monday excepted)..... 10.30
Express from Montreal (daily)..... 10.30
Express from Halifax, Pictou and Campbellton..... 18.40
Express from Halifax and Sydney..... 22.30

The trains of the Intercolonial Railway are heated by steam from the locomotive, and those between Halifax and Montreal, via Lewis, are lighted by electricity.

All trains are run by Eastern Standard Time.

D. POTTINGER, General Manager.

Railway Office, Montreal, N. B., 8th Sept., 1893.

YARMOUTH & ANNAPOLIS R'Y.

SUMMER ARRANGEMENT.

On and after Monday, June 26th, 1893, trains will run daily (Sunday excepted) as follows:

LEAVE YARMOUTH.—Express daily at 8.10 a.m.; arrive at Annapolis at 11.55 a.m.; Passengers and Freight Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 1.45 p.m.; arrive at Annapolis at 5.00 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 1.45 p.m. Arrive at Yarmouth at 4.32 p.m. LEAVE ANNAPOLIS.—Express daily at 1.05 p.m.; arrive at Yarmouth at 4.45 p.m.; Passengers and Freight Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 5.50 a.m.; arrive at Yarmouth at 11.45 a.m. LEAVE WEYMOUTH.—Passengers and Freight Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8.13 a.m. Arrive at Yarmouth at 11.05 a.m.

CONNECTIONS.—At Annapolis with trains of the Windsor and Annapolis Railway. At Digby with City of Monticello for St. John daily (Sunday excepted). At Yarmouth with steamers of Yarmouth Steamship Co. for Boston every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings; and from Boston every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday mornings. With Stage daily (Sunday excepted) to and from Barrington, Shelburne and Liverpool.

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