

discipline is maintained throughout the asylum; and a book is kept in which the conduct of each inmate is daily noted, to be reviewed at the close of the week by the superintendent. This life of active industry is productive of almost uninterrupted good health, and the whole course of training has the most beneficial result on the moral being of these young people. Nothing can exceed their willingness to perform the tasks allotted to them, whether it be in the form of manual labour or of study; whilst the anxiety they manifest that others should share their happiness is most pleasing to witness. Not long ago, a little beggar boy presented himself at the farm—the young colonists recognized in him a former companion of vagrancy, whilst he seemed to look with wistful eyes upon their peaceful home. M. du Clésieuse joined the group, and questioned the wanderer: he found that he would gladly exchange his present vagabond existence for a life of honest labor—but what was to be done?—there was no vacancy in the establishment—every place at St. Ilan was filled. The boys looked imploring from their disappointed companion to their kind master, and more than one voice said beseechingly, “Oh, sir, don’t send him away.” “But there is no room, my boys; what am I to do?” replied M. du Clésieuse—“We will make room for him,” they exclaimed with one voice, “we will share our food and our beds with him; we should be so sorry for him to be obliged to go and beg again.”—M. du Clésieuse gladly yielded to their wishes. The little beggar exchanged his rags for the uniform worn by the young colonists, and soon took his place in the schoolroom and in the field—no more to leave this peaceful shelter until he is sent forth at some future day to occupy a farm of his own, or perhaps to superintend a new orphan colony.

Scenes such as these are of frequent occurrence, and where it is impossible for the destitute stranger to be received into the house, its inmates are at least ever ready to share with him the little they have to bestow, a portion of their daily food.

The attachment of the children to their adopted home is most remarkable. One of them a very good musician, went to Limoges, and for some months supported himself there by his talent, but the recollection of the colony was still strong within him, and on the death of his mother, whom he had taken to live with him, he asked to be readmitted there as teacher.

Another who had become an excellent agriculturist, was early placed in a farm with very advantageous prospects before him, and at first seemed perfectly happy. But one fine day he returned to St. Ilan, and entreated M. du Clésieuse to receive him there again in the situation of overseer, “for,” he said, “I would gladly give up every thing I possess to be once more under

this roof.” His request was granted, and he is now one of the most useful officers in the establishment.

The judicious arrangement made by M. du Clésieuse in establishing several *small* colonies (each consisting of only twenty boys, and three or four oversers), instead of consolidating them in one large body, has much contributed to foster this strong feeling of attachment on the part of the orphans. Each separate establishment becomes a *home*, and the children appear as united as if they truly belonged to one family.

An intelligent eye-witness observes, “I visited, in company with M. du Clésieuse, two of the agricultural colonies that he has founded, and I shall never forget the impression made upon my mind, when, as we approach an extensive common, about twenty boys made their appearance and clustered around my friend, whom they welcomed as though he had been their father. A tame sparrow-hawk fluttered around them, occasionally lighting upon their shoulders. “To whom does this sparrow-hawk belong?” I inquired.

“To us,” replied the children, with one accord.

“And who trained it?”

“We all did.”

This simple answer at once conveyed to my mind an idea of the fraternal union which pervaded the establishment—that “*communism of the heart*” which is the best safeguard against all revolutionary communism.

These boys, who would otherwise have become homeless outcasts, swelling the ranks of pauperism, are thus trained to become happy and useful members of society—whilst the bond which ought to unite together rich and poor in one holy brotherhood is drawn more closely—waste lands are made to yield their increase, and uncultivated minds to become thoughtful and intelligent.”

Truly, the agricultural farm of St. Ilan is a nobler poem than any which M. du Clésieuse could ever have produced with his *pen*, had he devoted his whole existence to literary and artistic labors.

The cost at which establishments such as these may be maintained is very trifling indeed. The annual expense of such a farm is about £300, whilst the incomings amount to about £260 or £56s., leaving only an annual disbursement of about £85.

Each year the land becomes more productive, and the incomings consequently greater, so that, ere long, it is to be hoped these colonies will not only be self-supporting, but even become remunerative to the proprietor. Already the landed gentry in Britany seemed disposed to vie with each other in offering lands, hitherto uncultivated, for the reception of agricultural colonies—and these valuable institutions promise to multiply rapidly throughout the country.