

GOOD DONE BY FRIARS IN ENGLAND.

A Brief Account of the Work of the Order of St. Francis in England.

More than seven centuries ago there was born, in 1182, at Assisi, in the Umbrian Province of Italy, a man who was to transform society, and was to become one of the heroic figures of the world.

The tradition of their sympathy, kindness, and universal helpfulness survived for many years after they had been driven from the land, and has been cherished for all time in the pages of Warwickshire's immortal son, which present, not the distorted friar of the political satirist, but the friar as he really lived and moved and had his being.

The bitterness of religious dissension is happily dying out amongst us, and at Oton, where a fair was held, we have lately had a practical illustration that the friars have not lost their old charm.

The movement begun in Italy soon spread to other countries, and in September, 1224, one of St. Francis's earliest disciples, Brother Agnellus, of Pisa, with eight companions, three of whom were Englishmen, landed at Dover, and proceeded first to Canterbury and then to London and Oxford.

One of the deepest longings of the soul is for some basis of truth, independent of its own fluctuating judgments. The churches that make the most of the principle of authority, like the Roman Catholic and the Episcopal, are those which are appealing most successfully, even to the democratic masses.

Thirty years after their first coming, the Franciscans had forty nine convents, with two thousand friars. Foremost amongst the leaders of thought and action, their power was bitterly resented by those who were less successful, and the satires made upon them have survived to our days, thanks to the power of the printing-press, which counted the friars among its first supporters, while the memory of their good deeds, imprinted on the inarticulate hearts of the people, was buried in their graves.

When the Franciscans first fixed in Coventry they had no charter of foundation, as being not endowed with lands here with the Church, the structure of both was wholly made at the cost of good people, and this order of friars was very much esteemed and revered by all sorts of people is evident enough.

far and near, and was of no small benefit thereto; which pageants, being acted with mighty state and reverence by the friars of this house, had theatres for the several scenes, very large and high, placed upon wheels and drawn to all the eminent parts of the city, for the better advantage of the spectators, and contained the history of the Old and New Testament composed in old English rhymes.

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THE "WATCHMAN" ON AUTHORITY IN RELIGION.

Catholic Review.

We take pleasure in quoting the whole of the following candid and vigorous paragraph from the columns of our esteemed contemporary the Watchman, of July 30:

Protestants may learn a needed lesson from this Encyclical. The impression is widespread, especially in the non-Episcopal churches, that the true way to win men to faith is to minimize the claims of a supernatural revelation. It is assumed that any assertion of authority is repugnant to the modern temper and must alienate men.

Nothing is more common than the attempt to commend religion to tastes and prejudices. The idea that revelation speaks to man with an authoritative voice, which commands submission, is regarded as *effete*. But there is that in man which demands direction, guidance and certainty.

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the fact of there being a great many different kinds of Baptists, and that in each denomination there are wide differences of opinion both among the preachers and private members, would seem to indicate that the decided assumption of the "tone of certainty" and the account of authority which becomes a prophet of the Most High, on the part of any preacher, might be met with an equal tone on the part of some one who differed from him.

The Watchman couples Episcopalians with Catholics as insisting upon authority. The difficulty with our *societas* Anglo-Catholic friends is that they are trying to be Catholic without the essential principle of unity and from the Mother Church. The preach the necessity of submission to authority, but when you ask them what the Church teaches there is, if possible, a greater babble of confusion in the answers than in all the other leading denominations put together.

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THE TREATY STONE OF LIMERICK.

There rests upon a pedestal close to the Thomond gate of the old historic city by the Shannon, a stone or rock upon whose time-worn surface was inscribed the signatures to a compact, the violation of which sealed the fate of Ireland throughout two centuries of penal proscription, says W. J. Parcell, in the New World.

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Do Not Join Them.

Whatever may be the animus of secret societies in the Old World, it can not justly be maintained that they are anti-Christian and anti-Catholic in this country. The Supreme Chancellor of the Knights of Pythias, in an address delivered at the biennial convention of the order lately held in Cleveland, referred in these many terms to the action of the Holy See in forbidding Catholics to be members of the order: "The result has been a considerable loss of membership. I have found in a number of States where the Catholic membership was large that we have been visibly affected by reason of it. Of this I do not complain. No member by his holding Pope Leo XIII. Edited by John Gilmary Shea, LL.D. With a beautiful frontispiece of the Holy Family and nearly four hundred other illustrations. Elegantly bound in leather. Greatly admired by our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII., who sent his special blessing to the publishers; and approved by every Archbishop and Bishop.

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the hope that as the noble river sweeps under the ancient Thomond Bridge, past this great rocky memorial, that its waters will not long leave the pier upon which it rests, until a United Ireland has undone the evil work which followed the betrayal of Gluckel's treaty by the English Parliament.—Boston Pilot.

THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT.

BY LOUISA MAY DALTON.

One is not obliged to agree with the sybarite who said that he did not see how any one could be unhappy as long as there was violet velvet in the world. But it must be admitted that the objects which greet the eye of the outer man have much to do with regulating the currents of conscience and behavior which are forever flowing in the deep stream we term life.

Some months ago a discontented and bloodthirsty anarchist in Chicago, after murdering his wife and six innocent children, took his own life. One who visited the house after the tragic event was struck by the pictures upon the walls. These were, without exception, portraits of the anarchists executed after the Haymarket riot—revolutionary and inflammable cartoons, scenes taken from the most hideous events in history; and the backgrounds and frames were of the color of blood. Such sights as this make the assertion that red is the color of sin seem less fanciful. It is proved beyond question that bright red acts upon the nervous system of some animals; and these lurid reminders of crime may have had their share in influencing this particular monster.

This rule works both ways. Outward cleanliness, for instance, is reflected upon mind and heart. Any mother will testify that her children behave with more decorum when freshly dressed; that their minds are less susceptible to defilement from bad associates when their bodies are clean.

The effect of our surroundings is simply incalculable. Who does not know the peace of mind which a systematic tidiness gives? The most wearing trials are more easily borne if the house is set in order. The tiles to which all flesh is heir become less if the view from the window takes in a running brook instead of a dozen smokestacks. A tea-rose in a glass set by a sick man's bed is medicine. A bunch of violets given to a child has made a little poet out of a street waif. The decorative in nature is as essential as the practical. The vine which climbs over the rock has as fine a mission as the rock itself. The butterfly, preaching of the resurrection, has a nobler message than a field of pumpkins.

Men are often taught by their surroundings what no amount of precept could impart. Catholics know this well. The statues of Our Lady in the school-room, the Stations of the Cross in the temple of the Lord, the frescoes, the crucifixes—all help to make a sacred panorama whose influence is perpetual and akin to the divine.

Nature is a wise mother, but we will not obey her. She tells us that the objects about us help to make or mar us, and we do not listen. She sets us praiseworthy examples, and we disdain to follow them. She spreads beauty before us, that it may be reflected in our character; and we imprison ourselves in brick walls. And Mother Nature forgives us so much and so often that we forget that forgiveness sometimes comes too late.—Ave Maria.

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