

action from facts not fully understood. The restriction to seven hours of sleep, seven hours of silent hard manual labor, seven hours of church devotion and three hours of silence and religious contemplation, all supported physically upon one vegetable meal a day and a narrow plank bed, covered with a thin straw pallet, seems to most

men to be the discipline of a gloomy prison house for the mortal body and perhaps for the soul. It may be so, but at Gethsemani, among the eighty-seven silent members composing the house, one sees at least only smiling faces, active concentration upon every duty in hand for the moment, with a gracious, simple kindness and hospitality that speaks volumes for some kind of happiness reigning there. Whether of soul rising supreme above the wants of the body, or of body and soul united above the rivalry of worldly struggle—every observer must solve the facts of those peaceful and smiling countenances for himself.

The rigor of the Trappist life has served to surround its members with such isolation from the world that it has inevitably attracted the imagination of those who have observed it at a distance. It has been the inspiration of some fine fiction and poetry, and every monastery is invested with traditions, romantic, tragic or curious, concerning the personality of monks buried there from worldly contact. This is not the place to consider that aspect.

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The first half century of the Abbey of Gethsemani were years of bitter and hard struggle for bare existence, during which its members barely rose in numbers above forty. They labored with Spartan fortitude with the poor and stubborn soil, gradually rising from log huts to a brick shelter, year by year and acre by acre, converting the sour and acrid wilderness to a blossoming garden of grain, earth fruits, vineyards and orchards. Fire destroyed their mills and schools, but the work thus lost was patiently resumed, and in 1885 the brick quadrangle was completed, the lay and abbey churches were consecrated in all their bareness, and the labor of beautifying and accumulating treasures for the splendor of the sacred edifice was begun. Nevertheless, the