

II.

THE BY-LAWS FOR

THE HERMANO MAYOR AND THE CELADOR.

The Rule of Union which the Hermano Mayor of the Holy Confraternity of the Brotherhoods of the Company of our Father Jesus formed, they must observe under the direction of the Hermano Mayor of the *Rincones* ("Corners") in order to preserve the true spirit of said Company, and secure the benefits for which they hope.

The aim of the Brotherhood is the imitation of our Father Jesus by perfect observance of all the duties of a fervent Christian, the which will be secured by secret penance with prayer; and, above all, by the intercession of our most holy Mother Mary and the holy Archangel Gabriel, to whom all the Brothers will have a penitential devotion.

ARTICLE. I. This Brotherhood, being a religious society, the Hermano Mayor is obliged to inculcate in his subordinates perfect obedience to all the authorities and all the prescriptions of the church.

ART. II. The Hermano Mayor is invested with full power for the observance of the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the sorrows of his most holy Mother, jointly, in the habitation at the holy times of Lent and others that are opportune for the worship of God by all the Brothers. In order to perform the sweet service of penance and prayer, according to custom, he shall make all understand that the place of the gatherings is sacred to the worship of God, therefore there cannot be permitted in it any action offensive to God; and, in case anyone errs therein, the Hermano Mayor has authority to impose upon him a heavy penance.

ART. III. As the Union bears the title of Brotherhood, so all the Brothers must have mutual love to one another as such. If any difficulty arises among the Brothers, the Hermano Mayor shall act as a competent judge, and if one of the parties among whom the difficulty exists is not willing to justly submit himself to the decision of the

said Hermano Mayor, he is authorized to impose a penalty proportionate to the offence.

ART. IV. During the time of the penances the Hermano Mayor shall try not to allow any Brother who performs the services to be seen by the public, truly holding that the service of Penance is agreeable to God when it is not done for show; according to the precept of the Gospel: "Let not one hand know what the other does." Therefore by this Article is abrogated all public penance and only that is authorized which is done in the silence of night or in a secret place.

ART. V. The Hermano Mayor each year shall make arrangement to obtain the customary alms for the celebration of the Feast in honor of our Redeemer, and that may be said the accustomed Mass. Without grave reason, no one shall be dispensed from paying these alms.

ART. VI. Every time that any Brother falls sick, in case he has not wherewith to obtain his cure, the Hermano Mayor shall get it from his subordinates, also alms that he may receive the Holy Sacraments. In case God demands his life, the Hermano Mayor shall call a meeting of the Brothers that the deceased may have ecclesiastical burial.

ART. VII. No Brother who may live in evil estate, and is warned against his sin, but does not correct it, can remain in the Brotherhood.

ART. VIII. All the Brothers who live evil lives shall be expelled, unless they give proof of correcting them.

ART. IX. Inasmuch as the vice of drunkenness is one of the most scandalous, no Brother can be allowed to continue in this vice, and if, after he has been admonished three times, he follows the same course, then he may be expelled from the Brotherhood.

ART. X. From this time forward no one may be admitted to the Brotherhood without consulting the Celadores, who jointly with the parish priest shall judge as to whether the candidate is worthy of membership.

ART. XI. The Hermano Mayor is in duty bound to remind all the Brothers that, at least once a year, they must partake of the holy sacraments of Confession and

Communion, and unless they so do, they cannot be admitted to the Habitation.

ART. XII. The Hermano Mayor and the Hermano Celador are authorized to punish severely all those who shall publish the penances or censures given secretly to the Brothers to correct any faults against the Rules; and, if after being reprov'd, it is known that they are still revealing these matters, they shall be expelled, whatever may be their office in the Brotherhood.

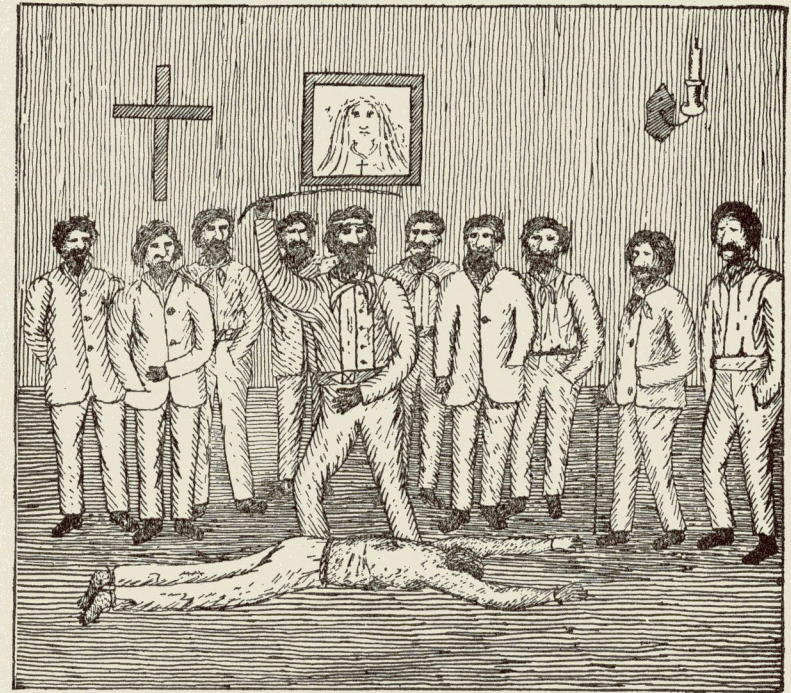
ART. XIII. The Hermanos Mayor and Celador shall arrange and observe with the greatest care that the Brothers, while they are gathered in the Habitation to say the prayers of the Rosary and of custom, shall utter nothing profane against God or their neighbor.

ART. XIV. The Hermano Mayor and the Hermano Celador, must give the Brothers to understand that inasmuch as they have embraced this Rule under promise to God to observe it, they are in conscience bound to God to maintain themselves faithful to God in the same; remembering that inasmuch as God does not fail to give due reward to those who submit themselves to this Rule, so also will he punish those who disobey it.

Given with honest consent to the Rules approved to by the Minister of the Church, this 12th day of March, A. D. 1875, by me, the *Hermano Mayor en General* of the Brotherhoods of the Division below:—In Conejos, Territory of Colorado.

Finally I command and urge every Brotherhood of my charge that they keep the observance which the aforesaid articles specify, serving God with the sole end of obtaining the fruit worthy of Penance,* and that they impose the light and heavy punishments. The heavy when it is against God or their neighbor, and it shall be according as the conscience of the Hermano Mayor or Celador may dictate. The light punishment when it is not anything against God or their neighbor. In this the guilty shall carry the cross and say certain prayers in memory of the passion and death of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

*It will be seen from this sentence, now repeated, that this so-called "Holy Brotherhood" is a penitential society—simple salvation by their own sufferings, in imitation of the Great Sufferer; not the acceptance of his sufferings for their righteousness.



The Celador punishing a Criminal.

III. ADDENDA TO THE RULES.

1. ENTERING THE "DWELLING, OR HABITATION."

I will tell you what I remember about how they enter the Dwelling:—

The Penitente knocks at the door and says:—"God knocks at this Mission's doors of his clemency."

Those within reply:—"Penance, penance, which seeks salvation."

The one without answers:—"St. Peter will open to me the gates, bathing me with the light in the name of Mary with the seal of Jesus. I ask this confraternity—

He—Who gives this house light?

They—Jesus.

He—Who fills it with joy?

They—Mary.

He—Who preserves its faith?

They—Joseph."*

In this it is clearly seen that there shall always be contrition having in their devotion Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Then entering, he adores the Saints which may be there; after which he has to say:—"My Lord Jesus Christ, I am a sinner come to perform my devotion." Then turning to those present he says:—"Pardon me, my Brothers, if in anything I have offended or been guilty of Scandal."

All shall answer:—"May God pardon him who is already pardoned of us." After this he passes around on his knees, asking their blessing, kissing the hands and feet of all, then rises up and says:—"Holy and good night may God give you. How do you do?"

* In the English, the rhyme of this is lost, for it is a stanza of six lines:—

"¿Quién ésta casa dá luz?

Jesús.

?Quién la llena de alegría?

María.

?Quién la conserva en la fé?

José".

If, perchance, any one is unwilling to forgive him, the poor fellow has to strip and prostrate himself on the ground, and the unforgiving one takes a rope (see Celador and unfaithful Penitente) in hand and punishes him, giving him three blows. Then he again says:—"Pardon me, my Brothers, if I have offended or been guilty of Scandal." In answer they shall say:—"May God pardon him who is already pardoned of us." P.

2. THOSE WHO MAY JOIN

Are men and women, also children as young as ten years. The women meet in separate Habitations, as decency requires, for otherwise the exposure of person would be too shameful, the rule being to strip to the waist, either for punishment as immediately above and elsewhere described, or for penitential "exercise;" but the women are known to so undress in churches in Old Mexico, priests being present, having only the cover of darkness to hide the nakedness of both. This lack of exposure is even then only partial, where white shoulders can gleam even through tropical gloom.

All the Romanist Orders have, or tend to have, female organizations—men to whom is denied matrimony must get hold of women by some means—and an organization in the world, not even matrimony itself has such a hold on women—by means of the confessional, with its tyrant grip. This one of flagellation, most naturally of any of them; because its origin in Africa and its beginning, religious and amative, of Greece and Spain in Europe by adoration of women deified by fanaticism or passion. Penitential torture becomes easily the sole religion of the harlot who, sinning (1. Cor. vi.: 16) with her body, applies the punishment thereto!

3. THE MODES OF PENANCE.

The regularly prescribed penance, "the thing of obligation," is the pricking the flesh of the small of the back by the Picador with his sharp flint or piece of glass

bottle, and then scourging the flowing wounds with the *disciplina*; but other and more fanatically severe modes prevail, as the penitential zeal increases. This discipline of obligation generally lasts for an hour's march on the outside of their sacred Habitation—then the penitente has his back washed with “Rosemary water” by the Coadjutor—to go out again and again as his zeal moves him. Cacti of two classes, at least, I know to be worn on the bare back and breast:—the long branching *entraña* or “walking stick” cactus, and the round, half globe of those that are about the size of a bushel measure. They also crawl over the smaller cacti of the same shape as the latter, and over the wide-spreading prickly pear, on bare knees, in their *via crucis*.

They twist fence-wire, the old-fashioned smooth kind, around ropes, and lash themselves with these, as well as with the *entraña* to show their “*bowels* of compassion” to their souls. They not only whip themselves, but pray others to do the same for them. They will lie down across and in front of the door of their Habitations that the rest of the Brothers may use them as doorsteps. They carry crosses as elsewhere described, and this seems to be almost of obligation, in their imitation of the Nazarene; but to this they add crosses and beams of wood strapped across the backs of their necks by ropes tied around the cross, whose length may be eight feet, with the cross-beam of four, of a diameter of four inches, and around their arms, until the rope sinks to the level of the discolored flesh. The crosses they drag are often fifteen to twenty feet long, and of eight feet of cross-bar, with a diameter of eight or ten inches. The reader will see them in the illustrations either dragged or piled up at the door of the Habitations.

Besides this use of “beams,” not in their “own eyes,” either, they fasten them on their ankles by log chains and drag them, either alone or in connection with a dragged or carried cross. Ropes are also wrapped around their bare legs, sinking deep into the flesh, and they drag themselves haltingly along, the meanwhile scourging themselves “according to obligation.”

But the real danger lies in three special modes of excessive penance:—

1. Where the *Penitente* asks the *Picador* for an unusual number of cuts with his *Pedernal*. As there are “three meditations of the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ,” they back up to him and say: “For the love of God give me three.” This seems to be the minimum, which is really six, as they cut on both sides of the spine. But they can and do increase the number with—“For the love of God give me the five wounds of Christ,” or with “the love of God” repeated each time, they ask for “the seven last words of Jesus,” “the ten commandments!” “the forty days in the wilderness!” etc.; and as this means twice the number of bleeding wounds for every three, five, seven, ten, and forty *ad liquidam*, so to speak, it will soon be a dangerous flow of blood; and but for the *agua de Romero*—Rosemary water, and other healing or antiseptic fluids or dressings used, there would be extreme danger to life, especially after three days and nights of intermittent flagellation. An hour generally measures the regular “exercise” of blows on these wounds. See the article of the Constitution on the duties of the *Coadjutor*.

2. Where he asks the Brothers to aid him in his fanatical rage. In *La Costilla* of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico in 1866 occurred as desperate excesses as ever characterized the Tertiaries. Two men tied or had tied two *reatas* to their bodies in such manner that when recumbent their bodies were the knots in the middle of two ropes passing each other and drawn by two crowds of men; one of the ropes was fastened at the base of the trunk and extending headward, the other at the shoulders and stretched feetward; they were then dragged over stones, stumps, cacti, and *chico*, every obstruction tending to double them up and make more severe the blow on their bent backs, or they were thrown into the river and dragged out, etc., till death. Word of the murder was carried to the Commandment at Fort Garland forty miles north, but when the rescuing squad

of soldiers got there, no sign of such barbarity was left visible. The bodies had been hidden. The custom being that when any die in penance, they are secretly buried, and not even the relatives of the deceased are told of his burial-place for a year.

Another plan of dragging is to have the Penitente tied at the waist with two *reatas*, and then he is pulled about. If he can be thrown down, they are privileged to drag him about. The extent of damage done himself will be due to his penitential zeal, his unconsciousness from some over-strong contact with stone or stump, or the excitement of his contagiously enraged fellow penitents. Just as in Papal inquisitorial tortures, the inventive genius is stimulated to devise excesses and verily outdo the very Nazarene aided by the Cyrenian.

A case where the volition of the *Penitente* seemingly could not have had free play, is that recorded of a child seen lying naked on a bed of cacti, made up on a slow-moving springless *carreta*, whose groaning wheels in the long five miles of road might drown the sufferer's cries, if threats did not!

3. So a crucifixion soon becomes an imitative necessity, *Por pasión*, as they sing:—

Por Pasión.

En alto levantado	Sediento y desamparado
Blasfemado de salones	Su cuerpo está destrozado
En medio de dos ladrones	Y denegrado el color

Por Pasión.

A poor but nearly literal version makes this:—

For Suffering.

On high lifted,	Thirsty and deserted,
Blasphemed by saloons	His body is mangled
Between two <i>ladrones</i>	And in color blackened.

For Suffering.

If anyone will read the finely descriptive article of Charles F. Lummis in this book they will see how terrible and truly imitative it may become, even to nails and agony. The *blackened* feet are hinted at in the last line of this stanza taken from a *via crucis* hymn of their own.

If, after several days of flagellation, the crucified is left long with his lone guard, as our picture represents him, and the cold wind from the Range comes down on his denuded body, exhausted by loss of blood and lack of circulation on the part of what remains in his wounded and bleeding frame, his death from pneumonia is sure, if not from weakness and congestion.

As to cruel crucifixion, they would put Calvary to shame in their futile attempts to imitate Him who died on the Cross but not *by* it, for His death was from a broken heart, and asks in response a "broken heart and not sacrifice."

The number of these crucified unto death used to be several annually, those that escaped with their lives, maimed in body or otherwise fatally hurt, must have been more, as these rites are not only celebrated in one chief, Jerusalem-like, locality, but are as numerous as their different Dwellings or lodges. Even at this late date there are four or more in the one county of Huerfano with its 3,000 Mexicans—what must it be in one such as Mora with its 30,000 population?

IV.

THE PRIEST'S PART.

The membership is ever under the Priest's eye. Brotherhoods are established by him in conjunction with the *Hermano Mayor en General* or *Conciliario*, the eleventh officer or general superintendent. Before the penitential exercises are undergone, the "Penitente" goes to confession, and the Penance is over, on Saturday of "Holy Week," the list of those who have "fulfilled their devotion" is given to the priest. It can be seen from the By-Laws, written for the Rincones, by a priest, that he takes good care of his financial income from the fraternity. The closing exercises of Holy Week or "Good Friday" night are held in the nearest church, or if none near, the "Morada" (Habitation), and it is made hideous