

## OF LOGS AND MONKS

Sometimes the Monks like to take exercise walks in the woods - the ever beautiful woods - God's woods. Sometimes, too, solitary monks like to go into the woods, where it is so wonderful to meditate on the magnificence of God. The woods are a sort of temple - a sanctuary - a place constructed by God, Himself. Night and day, the huge majestic trees sing their songs of praise to God as their tall boughs are rustled and tossed about by the wind. A walk through the woods when a gentle breeze seeks its way through the trees, is an experience that cannot be described: it is soul stirring. God's power and majesty and beauty and providence can all be seen and felt in the woods. The numberless little birds, all colors and sizes, all of them singing their praises as they dart about busily doing the things they have to do. Little rabbits, too, hopping about and the squirrels acrobating from limb to limb to limb, and all the other little forest creatures - each one of them fulfilling the purpose God asks of it. Occasionally a tiny bird's nest comes into view: the bird nest - what an architectural marvel is the tiny nest of a little bird. Who taught the little bird how to build its nest? What beauty! What wondrous God-made beauty. How fortunate it is for one to enter such a hallowed place, and how peaceful is the feeling. One speaks softly when one is on a pilgrimage through the woods, lest one's voice should spoil and disturb the hallowed loveliness of it all. Such is the grandeur of the work of the Hand of God. How sad it is that so many people never get to experience the woods.

An even greater sadness it is when man enters in - man with his greed. As soon as man enters the sanctuary, the handiwork of God becomes the scene of destruction and devastation and desolation: the argument presented in favor of progress to the contrary notwithstanding. Such is the scene in the picture below, discovered by the monks on one of their walks.



That walk, however, was fortunate as it led them to this place of devastation. It is in the general neighborhood of the Monastery. The loggers were all gone, their work of destruction completed. They had taken what they wanted and left behind what they did not want - to go to rot and ruin. As they looked about, the monks saw cut logs left behind on the ground to rot - large oak logs. Immediately, the monks envisioned new oak choir stalls.