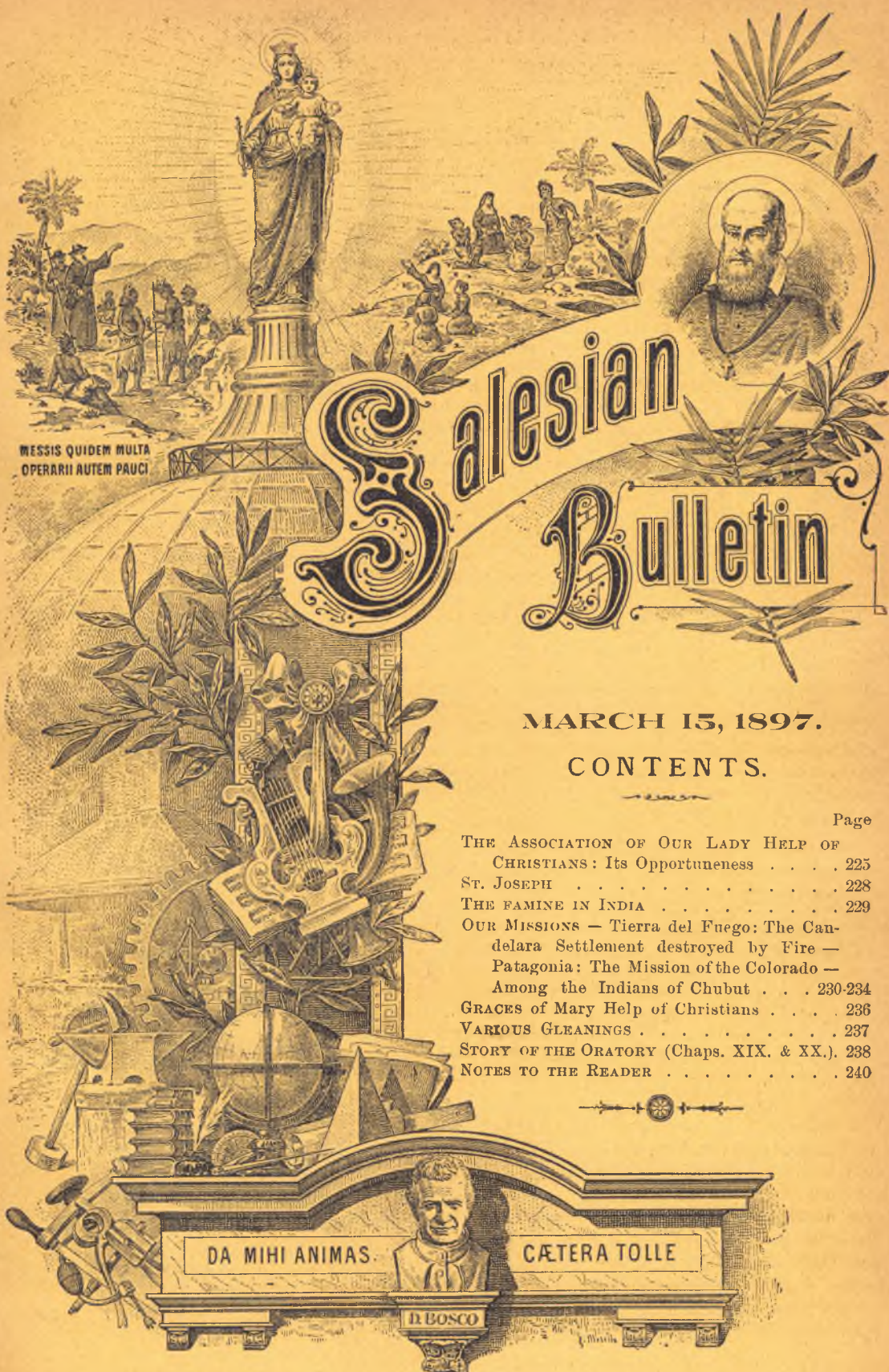


Correspondents are earnestly requested to repeat their Postal Address in every letter.



MESSIS QUIDEM MULTA
OPERARIJ AUTEM PAUCI

Salesian Bulletin

MARCH 15, 1897.

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DA MIHI ANIMAS.



CÆTERA TOLLE

D. BOSCO

THE CHARITABLE ASSOCIATION OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.



ADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP.

- 1.—During the erection of the magnificent Temple, recently consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, at the Castro Pretorio in Rome, it was established that, as soon as the grand edifice were finished, the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin and other prayers should be daily recited therein, and holy Mass offered on Fridays for all Contributors to the Building Fund of this International Monument of devotion to the Sacred Heart. In order to augment these spiritual advantages and admit to their enjoyment a greater number of the faithful, the Charitable Association of the Sacred Heart of Jesus has been established in the above named church; whereby all the members participate in the fruit of six Masses daily, in perpetuity, offered for the intentions of those who are inscribed in the books of the Association and have given an alms of One Shilling once for ever towards the Oratory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- 2.—Two of these daily Masses will be celebrated at the Altar of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, two at that of Mary Help of Christians, and two at St. Joseph's. We may remark that Don Bosco's venerable name is associated with the two last-mentioned Altars, for on them he offered the Holy Sacrifice during his last stay in Rome.
- 3.—Besides the six daily Masses all MEMBERS, both living and dead, participate in the fruits attached to:
 - (a) The recital of the Rosary and the imparting of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, which takes place every day in this church;
 - (b) The devotions performed by the little boys of the Oratory in their own private Chapel, including also the Mass at which they daily assist;
 - (c) All the Services, Novenas, Feasts and Solemnities whatsoever, that are celebrated in the aforesaid church;
 - (d) The prayers and good works performed by the Salesians themselves and by their protégés in their Homes, Colleges, Hospices, Oratories, Missions, etc., in Italy, in France, in Spain, in England, in Austria, in Switzerland, in America, in Asia, in Africa,—in a word, wherever they are established or may be called by Divine Providence.
- 4.—Participation in the holy Masses will commence on the day after the alms have come to hand, all the other spiritual advantages are enjoyed from the moment of inscription.
- 5.—The contributor, we repeat, of one shilling given once for all, is entitled to put his intentions in all the six Masses and all the other pious works, for his own advantage or for that of his friends, living or dead, and to change the intention *in every circumstance* according to his particular wants or desires.
- 6.—Inscriptions may also be made in favour of departed friends, of children, and of any class whatsoever of persons, even without their knowledge or consent.
- 7.—Persons desiring to participate more abundantly in these spiritual advantages may do so by repeating the alms of one shilling, thereby multiplying the inscriptions as often as they please.
- 8.—The offerings thus collected are destined for the maintenance of the boys of the Hospice or Oratory founded by Don Bosco on the grounds annexed to the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Salesians are in duty bound to fulfil all the obligations of the Charitable Association as above described.
- 9.—The names of subscribers will be entered on the Registers of the Association and preserved in the Temple of the Sacred Heart, in Rome, for perpetual remembrance.
- 10.—There are two centres for enrolment, one in Rome, the other in Turin. Address: The Rev. Rector, Ospizio del Sacro Cuore di Gesù, 42, Via Porta S. Lorenzo, Rome; or, The V. Rev. Michael Rua, Salesian Oratory, Turin, Italy.

Approbation.

We approve the "Charitable Association" and we wish it the greatest concourse of the faithful.
Given at Rome, etc., June 27, 1888.

✠ L. M. PARROCCI, Card. Vic.

The Papal Blessing.

The Holy Father has deigned to accord the blessing asked for the Charitable Association of the Sacred Heart.

Given from the Vatican, June 30th, 1888.

ANGELO RINALDI, Chaplain, Sec.

N.B.—A chromo-lithographic reduction of the classic painting, placed above the High Altar in the Church of the Sacred Heart (Rome), will be sent as a "Certificate of Inscription" to the Pious Association for every offering received.

On application full particulars will be given at the Salesian Oratory, Turin, Italy.

THE SALESIAN BULLETIN

Whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

(MATT. XVIII, 5.)

Of works divine the divinest is to co-operate with God in the saving of souls.

(St. DENYS.)

A tender love of our fellow-creatures is one of the great and excellent gifts that Divine Goodness grants to man.

(St. FRANCIS de Sales.)



To your care I commend infancy and youth; zealously attend to their Christian education; place in their hands such books as may teach them to fly from vice and steadily walk in the path of virtue

(PIUS IX.)

Redouble your energies and talents in the rescue of infancy and youth from the snares of corruption and infidelity, and thus prepare a new generation.

(LEO XIII.)

DA MIHI ANIMAS CÆTERA TOLLE

Vol. II.—No. 53.

March 15, 1897.

Registered for transmission abroad

PUBLISHED AT THE "ORATORIO SALESIANO,"—VALDOCCO, TURIN, ITALY.

THE ASSOCIATION OF OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

I.

ITS OPPORTUNENESS.

In our last issue we spoke of the origin of the Association of Our Lady Help of Christians. We now ask, Is this Work opportune? The context will show.

We Catholics have reason to rejoice at the revival of the Christian spirit in this latter part of the XIX. century, and the great headway the Catholic Church is making in all lands. But it is to be deeply deplored that the number of priests to min-

ister to the spiritual wants of mankind at the present day, is insufficient, and that in some countries vocations for the priesthood are diminishing. Everywhere the cry is raised that the labourers are few; and it would be difficult indeed to find a Diocese where the need of a few more Apostolic labourers is not felt.

In Italy, for instance, where hostility against the Vicar of Christ did not delay to show itself in its true light of hostility against God, the education of the people passed into the hands of anti-Christian sects, and Atheism was and is still officially encouraged. The religious Orders were suppressed, and the scarcity of priests began to be greatly felt.

Some years ago the Holy Father, when Archbishop of Perugia, issued a Pastoral Letter which treated almost exclusively of this deficiency. After having made known that in the course of ten years the number

of priests who died had exceeded by ten the number ordained, he goes on to say: "A circumstance that greatly grieves us is that many parishes are asking for pastors and we are unable to comply with their request, that many pious populations solicit us for the consolation of the sacraments and we are not in a position to meet their requirements. If such a state of things continues, the religion of these people will eventually die out, and all on account of the lack of able hands to cultivate this portion of the Lord's Vineyard."

"The scarcity of priests and the falling off of ecclesiastical vocations," says a distinguished Italian writer and ecclesiastic, "are so sorely felt in our country, that the Bishops are greatly concerned regarding the lot of the faithful. If a prompt and efficacious remedy be not forthcoming, we shall be obliged to have recourse to other Catholic countries for priests to keep alight the torch of Faith. When we consider the religious indifference and worldly interests that have taken possession of many families, the baneful education given to youth both at home and at school, the continual insults and revilings heaped on the sacred character of the priesthood in newspapers and novels, it is no wonder that the number of God's ministers is but few, and that the people, like to sheep without a shepherd, stray from the path and fall into the clutches of rapacious wolves." That these assertions are well founded, it will suffice to say that from 1875 to 1885, the number of priests who died reached 10,701, while the number of ordinations was 4,994, namely, less than half.

Turning from Italy to France we are confronted by the same sad prospect. There also ecclesiastical vocations are decreasing, a fact that causes the Prelates of that country considerable anxiety. The statistics show that this decrease has assumed large proportions, and at present manifests but very few signs of abating.

A short time ago Monsignor Bougaud published a small volume under the title of *Le grand Péril de l'Eglise de France au XIX^e siècle*. And what is this danger? The scarcity of priests. This fact greatly distressed the Bishop of Nimes and thirty other French Prelates, who wrote to the author of the above-mentioned book fully confirming and deploring this evil.

The prospect in Spain is not more encouraging, for the number of priests to minister to the spiritual wants of the people

falls far below that required. It is only about two years ago that his Lordship the Bishop of Palencia thus expressed himself in a Pastoral Letter: "The entreaty frequently made to us during our pastoral visitations is, *Monsignore, we beg you to send us a priest as soon as possible.*" Among the conclusions of the Catholic Congress of Zaragoza is to be found the following: "Another of the needs greatly felt is the increase of the clergy in order that the sacerdotal zeal may daily enlarge its field of action." This subject was fully discussed by the Bishops at the Congress held in Sarragona, who also proposed some important practical rules to remedy this deficiency.

It is a double source of consolation and rejoicing for us Catholics to see the giant strides the Church has made in Great Britain and the United States during the last fifty years, but even in these countries the number of priests is but small in comparison to the immense harvest. Our readers, we are sure, have so often heard this want of their countries alluded to, that it would seem almost superfluous to corroborate this point. We will, therefore, limit ourselves to a single quotation. In the course of an address delivered before a large meeting at Heydon, a little over a month ago, his Lordship the Bishop of Salford said that he had at the present moment several places where there were large Catholic populations without church or priest or anything Catholic. He was greatly troubled that he had not priests to send to these places, true Apostles, men with a spirit of self-sacrifice, men that were willing to give their lives to God and His Church for the salvation of souls. Further progress depended upon their having a greater supply of priests.

And the Missions? There as elsewhere, and more than elsewhere, the cry continually raised is for priests. Our readers have only to peruse the letters of our Missionaries to be convinced of this. "Send us labourers." This is the cry on all sides. North and south, east and west, the fields are white to the harvest, but the labourers few.

Is not, then, the Association of Our Lady Help of Christians for encouraging and maturing vocations for the priesthood a really opportune Work? No one will doubt it. May we not, therefore, hope that many of our readers will become members of this Association and aid us in this enterprise? For desiring to follow in the steps of our beloved Founder, Don Bosco, we still struggle

to maintain our Seminaries on a footing of free establishments, with portals open to the poorest of the poor.

St. Denys says that *of works divine the divinest is to co-operate with God in the salvation of souls*. The Work we propose, more than any other, has this in view. If we are then really in earnest not only to save our own souls but also the souls of others, we will take every favourable opportunity and adopt every available means to further such a Work.

II.

THE SPIRITUAL FAVOURS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

We transcribe here the Brief whereby His Holiness Pope Pius IX. was graciously pleased to grant special Indulgences to the Members of the Association. Thus all who exercise their charity in working for the salvation of souls in this Association, besides gaining the great recompense pointed out by St. Augustine, *Animam salvasti, animam tuam praeordinasti*, shall secure the possession of immense spiritual treasures. The Brief is as follows:—

PONTIFICAL BRIEF

OF

PIUS THE NINTH, POPE.

For the Perpetual Remembrance
of the Matter.

A Charitable Association of the Faithful being (as we are informed) canonically instituted under the name of the ASSOCIATION OF OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS, — the members whereof propose to aid young men of good character and with a vocation to the ecclesiastical state, safeguard their vocation, and advance their ecclesiastical studies—We, desiring that this same Association may progress from day to day, and confiding in the mercy of God Almighty and the authority of His blessed Apostles, SS. Peter and Paul, grant to all and each of the faithful of both sexes who have joined, or will, in future, join this Association, a PLENARY INDULGENCE at the hour of death, provided that, being truly penitent, they receive the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist; or, being unable to do so, shall at least repent

of their sins, and invoke with devotion, orally, if they can, or at least mentally, the name of Jesus, and accept death with resignation from the hands of God and as a punishment well-merited for their sins. We also grant in God's mercy, a PLENARY INDULGENCE and remission of all sins, once every month to all Associates as above, on condition that being truly penitent, they go to Confession on any day they choose during the month, and receive Holy Communion in some Church or public Oratory, and then devoutly visiting this same Church or Oratory, shall therein pray to God for concord amongst Christian princes, the extirpation of heresies, the conversion of sinners, and the exaltation of our Holy Mother the Church. This Indulgence may also be applied, by way of suffrage, to the souls of the Faithful who have departed this life in charity with God.

Wishing, moreover, to give the Associates aforesaid, a token of our special benevolence, We hereby grant to them all INDULGENCES, both PLENARY and PARTIAL, that can be gained by the THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI; and by our Apostolic Authority, We furthermore decree, that all INDULGENCES, which are conceded to these same Franciscan Tertiaries on the Feasts and in the Churches of St. Francis of Assisi, may be lawfully and freely obtained by the members of the ASSOCIATION OF OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS, on the Feast of St. Francis of Sales, and in the Churches belonging to the Priests of the Salesian Congregation, provided always that they faithfully fulfil in the Lord the pious practices enjoined for the gaining of these Indulgences. Thus we decree, all things to the contrary notwithstanding.

These present dispositions and details shall be valid henceforth for all future times in perpetuity. We further will that copies, written or printed, of this Letter, when they are signed by a Public Notary and bear the seal of a person constituted in Ecclesiastical Dignity, shall receive the self-same credit as would be bestowed upon the original itself, were it exhibited or shown.

Given at Rome by St. Peter's, under the Ring of the Fisherman, on this 9th day of May, 1876, in the thirtieth year of our Pontificate.

For CARDINAL ASQUINIO:
DOMINIC JACOBINI, *Substitute*.

Place of Seal.

SAINT JOSEPH.



AFTER our Blessed Lady, there is no saint more beloved by the faithful than the sweet and gentle St. Joseph. His life of modesty, humility, industry and devotion is a model for all mankind. And the best proof we possess of his great sanctity and unsullied life consists in the fact that he was deemed worthy by God to be chosen as the Spouse of the Immaculate Virgin, and the instructor, guide, and protector of the Divine Child. For many years he lived in the intimacy of Jesus and Mary, shared their joys and sorrows, in fact his existence was bound up in them. The sublime office that St. Joseph so faithfully fulfilled here on earth, obtained for him the most exalted glory in heaven, a glory that far surpasses that of any other saint in Paradise, and is only inferior to that of Our Blessed Lady. On earth he was the viceroy of Jesus, and now in heaven he still exercises this office. His love, moreover, for us is so great that he obtains from God innum-

erable graces and blessings for all who turn to him for help. Do we want to succeed in our undertakings? then let us have recourse to St. Joseph. This is a secret which, as St. Teresa assures us, never fails. We do not know better how to recommend devotion to St. Joseph than by transcribing St. Teresa's own words concerning her devotion for the foster-father of Jesus:

"I took for my patron and lord the glorious St. Joseph," she says in her life, "and recommended myself earnestly to him. He rendered me greater services than I knew how to ask for. I cannot call to mind that I have ever asked him at any time for anything which he has not granted; and I am filled with amazement when I consider the great favours which God hath given me



ST. JOSEPH.

(From a Statue carved in the Salesian Institute at Barcelona).

through this blessed Saint, and the dangers from which he hath delivered me, both of body and of soul. To other saints Our Lord seems to have given grace to succour men in some special necessity; but this glorious Saint, I know by experience to help us in all. And Our Lord would have us understand that as He was Himself subject to him upon earth—for St. Joseph having the title of Father, and being his guardian, could command Him—so now in Heaven He performs all his petitions. I have asked others to recommend themselves to St. Joseph, and now they too know this by experience Would that I could persuade all men to be devout to this glorious Saint, for I know by long experience what blessings he can obtain for us from God. I have never known anyone who was really devout to him and

honoured him by particular services, who did not visibly grow more and more in virtue, for he helps in a special way those souls who commend themselves to him. It is now some years since I have always on his feast, asked him for something, and I always have it. If the petition be in any way amiss, he directs it aright for my greater good. If I were a person who had authority to write, it would be a

pleasure to me to be more diffusive in speaking of the graces which this glorious Saint has obtained for me and for others . . . He who does not believe, let him make the trial for himself and he will be able to experience the great good which results from commending oneself to this glorious patriarch, and being devout to him. Those who give themselves to prayer should in a special manner have always a devotion to St. Joseph . . . He who cannot find anyone to teach him how to pray, let him take this glorious Saint for his master, and he will not wander out of the way."

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

A short time ago we received an appeal—extracts from which we give below—on behalf of the famine-stricken inhabitants of India. The famine has exercised the most terrible ravages in the Eastern Empire. It is estimated that more than half a million people have already died of starvation, despite the efforts of the Government authorities. Besides, the children abandoned by parents in bitter distress are almost innumerable. Those who are therefore interested in the progress of the faith will do their best to enable the Catholic Missionaries to rescue these little ones and thus place the gift of faith within their reach. In several Provinces the famine is also accompanied by the still more awful scourge of the Plague, which has already desolated the city of Bombay, where it originated, and other centres of population. This is a case which claims a share in our charity. All should contribute something and without the slightest delay.

The following are extracts from an appeal of the Rev. Father Joseph Carroll, O. S. F. C., Missionary Apostolic at Allahabad, India:—

We are threatened with the direst distress. Famine is in our midst, paving the way, perhaps, for the still more terrible scourge of the plague which has visited our shores. Scarcity of rain forbids the sowing of seed. Fearing the loss of the winter harvests, the grain dealers are securing their barns, and selling their stock at prohibitive prices. The cultivators of land are quitting their tenures, and flocking into the towns to seek more profitable employment. Numbers of starving poor crowd daily to the door of the more fortunate Europeans. Children are abandoned by their parents and wander about till they die of starvation, or are called before the local Magistrates

to be provided for. Truly the hand of God is heavy upon the country. I vouch for the statement of a local Magistrate who is of opinion that if Providence does not come to our speedy relief, these northern parts of India will be visited with famine such as the country has not, perhaps, witnessed within the last hundred years. . . . In times like these the Missionary Priest is called into the field of benevolent enterprise. It is his duty to be foremost in peril, where charity invites, and souls are to be saved. Long years of weary waiting and discouragement will do much to cool the ardour with which he entered upon his course of Missionary labour. But now his zeal is quickened in the hope of at length realizing the fond wishes of his life, in saving the souls of those around him *who are seated in darkness and the shadow of death*. He witnesses, even in the dire visitation that threatens, the merciful hand of God opening the way for the salvation of souls. He sees his chance now, and would fain make the best of it. Mendicants flock daily to the door of his humble dwelling, feeling confident that the man of God will succour, when other help fails them. Caste prejudice is laid aside, and the fastidious Hindoo is glad to receive at the hands of the priest, the alms which but yesterday he would have scorned to accept.

But it is chiefly to the work of rescuing children that the Missionary turns his attention during these hard times. If he can but secure these little ones, their education will be in his hand, and they need know nothing of the prejudice of their people. He may, by merely awaiting his opportunity, have as many poor children as the arms of his charity can embrace. In my own case, having declared my willingness to undertake the charge of any starving waifs that may need home and shelter, the Magistrates of these districts have within a few days, made over to me twenty one such orphan children, some of them in the last stage of starvation and wasting disease. With joy inexpressible, I poured upon them the saving waters of Baptism, and added them as tender lambs to the Fold of Christ. . . . Some twenty more are waiting in a district a hundred miles distant, the arrival of my devoted brother companion in St. Francis, Father David, who will proceed to the place and return with them.

The main difficulty that rests with us is to maintain the children whom Providence may thus place in our hands. What can the poor Missionary do who has barely the means of self-support? His only resource is to beg on behalf of those whom God will commit to his care. Our two Native Orphanages, one at Saugor and the other at Bankipore, are destitute of funds to support the children, that are sent to them from all sides. The Mission funds are too limited to give them adequate support. . . . How is this work to continue, and advance as it must in these times of distress? O you in Europe, who have your homes, think of the homeless orphans in the far-away East *who cry for bread and have no one to break it unto them* (Lam. IV., 4) . . .



TIERRA DEL FUEGO.

THE CANDELARA SETTLEMENT DESTROYED BY FIRE.

IN our last issue we announced that a fire had broken out at the Candelara Settlement in Tierra del Fuego. We are now enabled to lay before our Co-operators a letter from Father Borgatello, Superior of the Salesian Mission at Punt Arenas to Don Rua, wherein a detailed account of the disastrous affair is given. As our readers will be able to see, the conflagration has completely destroyed the resources of the poor Missionaries stationed there. This Mission, being far removed from every centre, almost entirely depends for its existence on the Salesian Co-operators, whose proverbial generous charity in similar trying circumstances renders, we are sure, any recommendation on our part unnecessary. Father Borgatello's letter is as follows:

Punt Arenas, December 26, 1896.

VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

THE enemy of mankind, seeing the state of bondage in which he has held the unhappy inhabitants of these regions for so many years daily weakened, is using every means in his power to thwart the efforts of the Missionary and impede, if possible, the complete subjection of the Fuegian savages under the sweet yoke of the Cross. Hence a severe battle is being waged in Tierra del Fuego between Truth and Error.

The news I am about to give you, dear Father, is anything but consoling. About the middle of this month a terrible conflagration totally destroyed the prosperous Candelara Mission. I received the news from the Superior, Father Griffa, and I think I cannot do better than give you the

account of this awful disaster in his own words.

"In the afternoon of the 12th inst.," writes Father Griffa, "the House of the Sisters of Mary Help of Christians took fire—we do not know how,—and in less than an hour the vast wooden structure occupied by the Nuns and the Fuegian women and little girls, the Church, our own House and the Hospice for boys, were a heap of smouldering ashes. It would be impossible to describe our dismay and that of the Nuns and Indians, who were spectators of the fearful scene. These latter, especially, alarmed at seeing such an enormous blaze filled the air with their cries and lamentations. Everything that could be done by us to stay the progress of the flames was done, but all to no purpose. However with the help of the Indians we managed to save a few things of absolute necessity, but they are very little or nothing when compared to the great destruction caused by the voracious flames. The damage exceeds the sum of 100,000 francs, not to speak of our many sacrifices and fatigues during four years....

"Here we are in the wilderness, without a roof and without the means of subsistence, surrounded by a crowd of hungry Indians, who are continually asking us for food and clothing. Our situation is certainly distressing, more so on reflecting that we had sheltered 165 Indians, without taking into account those who paid us periodical visits and remained with us for a few days. Shall we be obliged to abandon this Mission, which promises so much for the Church and the civilisation of these poor savages? Heaven forbid!

"In the meantime, with some battered sheets of zinc saved from the flames, we have managed to construct a rude kind of shelter in the shape of two huts, one for the Nuns and Fuegian women, and the other for ourselves and for the unfortunate Indian men, for we have not the courage to abandon them to themselves. But what are we to do to keep body and soul together? If Divine Providence does not assist us, we will certainly die from cold and hunger during the winter.

"I beg you, my dear Father Borgatello, to communicate these facts to Monsignor Fagnano and Don Rua, at once, so that they may come to our aid in time. And may we not hope that our beloved Superior-General's voice raised in our behalf, will induce some generous soul to succour this

unfortunate Mission? I pray you then to write at once, for you have more means of communication with the Old World than I have, and may Our Divine Lord reward you for your trouble, by granting you a copious harvest of souls.'"

Here you have the contents of Father Griffa's letter, and I am sure that you will take into serious consideration the critical position of our poor confreres in Tierra del Fuego. Contributions, be they ever so small, either in money or articles of clothing, will be a great boon for this poor stricken Mission. I am sure that many of our Co-operators will do all they possibly can in order to concur in the salvation of these poor savages.

We could not remain long insensible of our poor confreres' critical situation, and we therefore, at the cost of no little sacrifice, immediately sent them a few indispensable kitchen utensils, some wearing apparel and a goodly number of sacks of flour.

To know that those good confreres as well as the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians in Tierra del Fuego, bear up so well under this great trial, and that they are resolved to continue to labour on that Mission, notwithstanding the dark future, fills me with consolation, and I am sure that Our Divine Lord will be ever near them, and send them the necessary help.

I beg you, dear Father, to pray and have prayers said for your sons in Tierra del Fuego, because Satan meanwhile is not sleeping, but plotting fresh attacks and biding his time. Bless us all, and believe me,

Your obedient son in Xto,
MAGGIORINO BORGATELLO.

N.B. I had already terminated this letter and was on the point of forwarding it, when I received another letter from Father Griffa, wherein he tells me that a band of savages, taking advantage of the critical state of affairs, issued from the forest and made a raid on the Mission which they robbed of the few head of cattle that still remained and formed the only means of subsistence at the Mission. Notwithstanding this, not one of the 165 Indians who belonged to the Settlement has abandoned it; on the contrary, their number has lately increased by other Indians of the interior joining them, so that at present there are more than 200 at the Settlement.

NORTH PATAGONIA.

THE MISSION OF RIO COLORADO.

Writing from Fortin Mercedes in Patagonia to Don Rua, Father Bonacina sends the following particulars regarding the Salesian Mission there. —

VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,



I am sure you will be pleased to hear some news concerning the Mission at Fortin Mercedes founded only a short time ago on the shores of the Rio Colorado.

Situated half way between Bahia Blanca and Patagones, Fortin Mercedes is in the centre of a vast and populous region, a region perhaps even more populated than that of Rio Negro. It does not enjoy a very good reputation, because until a few years ago, it was considered the haunt of men of the worst type, who escaped the vigilance of the law for the simple reason that the Police Authorities are not to be found within a radius of a hundred and fifty miles.

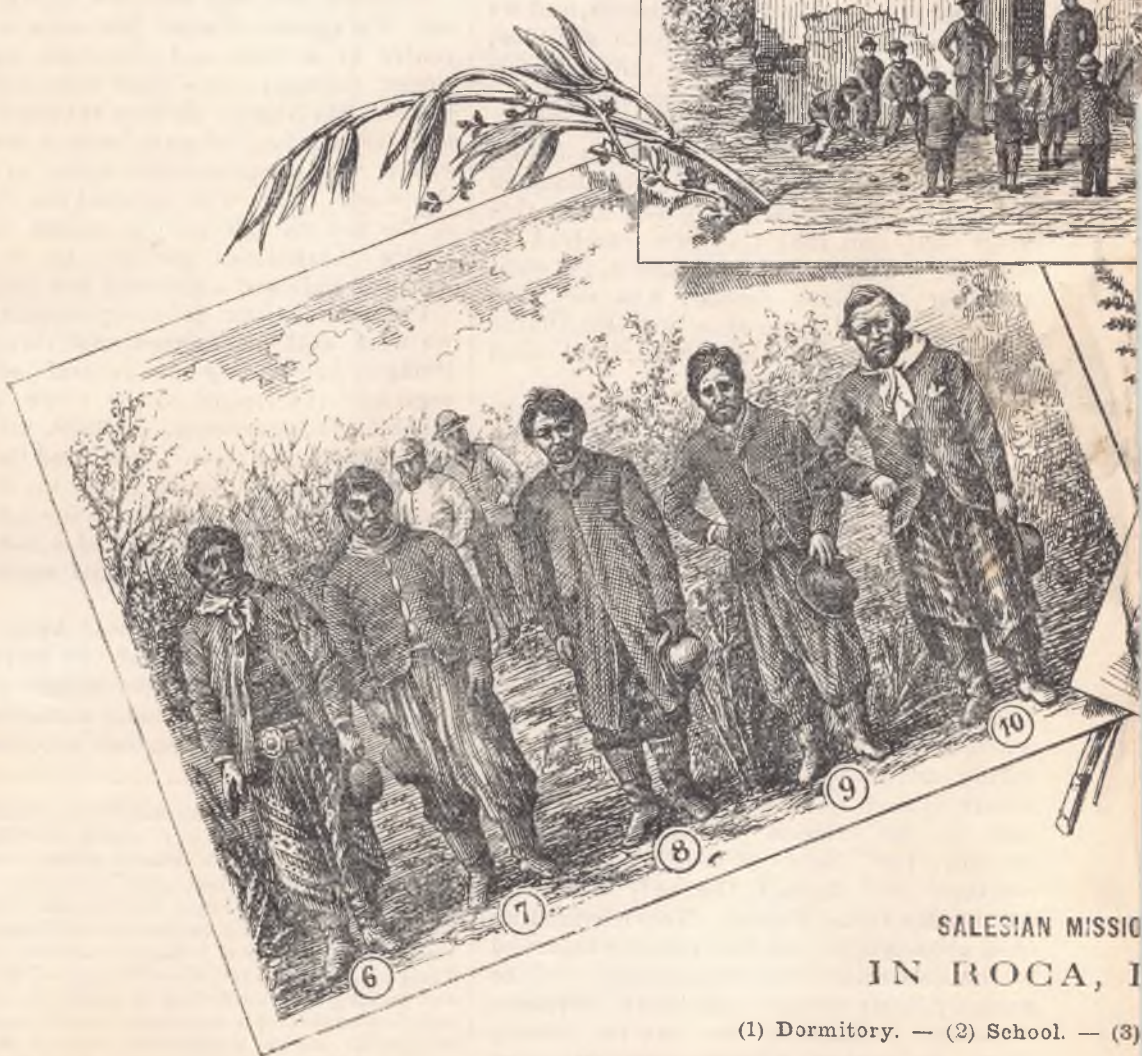
Previous to our definitely settling here, we were well acquainted with this part of Patagonia, having on several occasions preached the Gospel to the white and red inhabitants hereabouts. In 1888, our deeply lamented Father Savio * traversed the whole of this extensive region doing an immense amount of good. In the following years other Salesian Fathers and also the writer of this letter, visited the chief stations frequently.

Bishop Cagliero, our Vicar-Apostolic, in his never wearying zeal for the salvation of souls, wishing to render permanent the fruit reaped during our periodic missionary excursions, decided to establish a residence in

* Father Angelo Savio, one of Don Bosco's most intrepid Missionaries, was among the first boys admitted to the Salesian Oratory, where he was educated and passed a great part of his life. In 1885 he went out on the foreign Missions, and with Apostolic zeal he traversed, in the course of seven years, the immense regions of Patagonia and the forests of Paraguay, sowing everywhere the seed of the Gospel, and seeking with neverflagging ardour to spread the kingdom of God. His Superiors, in 1892, confided to his special care the establishing of a new Missionary Station among the Jivaro savages of Mendez and Gualaquiza in Ecuador, but he died on the frozen heights of the Chimborazo in January, 1893, whilst on his way there. Ed. S. B.

this spot, which, besides being healthy and picturesque, gathers a great deal of importance from its being the key, so to speak, to the Colorado Valley.

A year ago, then, we undertook to found two Orphanages here, one for boys, the other for girls. Mr. Esaudi, one of our zealous Co-operators, has been entrusted with the building of the modest Institutes. The spot chosen for the buildings, which are already beginning to assume a definite shape, is a small eminence, a few hundred feet distant from the Rio Colorado. Alongside the river we have enclosed a plot of fertile land to the extent of 1,850 feet by 515, which, under cultivation, will, we are sure, supply us with abundant vegetable food and fuel. Last winter, and also during the present one, I managed to plant some 500 poplar trees, 200 vines and a goodly assortment of fruit bearing plants.



SALESIAN MISSION
IN ROCA, I

(1) Dormitory. — (2) School. — (3)

(8) The Cacique SAYUHEQUE
(6),(7),(9) His Three Sons.
(10) His Brother.

On the termination of the first three rooms, I at once sheltered twenty poor boys. But our poverty is extreme, and would move anyone to pity. Just imagine, dear Father, that I have not yet been able to procure the necessary bedding for a large number of the inmates, and hence they are obliged at present to sleep on a few sheep skins. However, it is a source of consolation for me to relate that Divine Providence has never let us want for the necessaries of life. The population hereabouts is poor, but willingly helps us, and supplies us with the means to pay the expenses of the Houses in course of construction.

I have contrived to collect a few tools together and fix up a modest carpenters' workshop, wherein the internal fittings of our Houses are being constructed, and some orders from outside attended to. The foreman is a young lad, formerly an inmate of our



OF ST. MICHAEL
PATAGONIA.

Chapel. — (4) Kitchen, Scullery, etc.

(11) The Superiors
and Alumni of the Mission.

Institute at Pringles, who accompanied me when I set out for this place. We now stand sorely in need of a good gardener to attend to the cultivation of the soil and teach the lads this particular branch of industry, and also a good shoemaker.

Last April, three Nuns of Mary Help of Christians took possession of their new abode close by, and they have already received about twenty poor girls to whose religious and moral education they are attending. Adjoining their Institute is a temporary Chapel which is also open to the public.

The good Nuns are overburdened with work. Their number is not at all sufficient for the great needs of this Mission. They are only three and must attend to the education of their twenty pupils, and to the kitchen, mending, washing, etc., of both Institutes.

I need hardly say that, I also find myself unequal to the heavy responsibilities of my own position. Besides the many occupations that form part of my sacred office, I have also to minister to the sick in the neighbourhood, be in the field with the young labourers, and attend to the education of these poor lads.

I should have begged Monsignor Cagliero to send me a confrere or two to help me, but I know the great need of labourers that is felt in the whole Vicariate...

Every day we pray to Our Lady of Ransom, the Patroness of this Mission, to inspire our Superiors and Benefactors to come to our assistance.

Accept, dear Father, the affectionate greeting of these poor children. Bless us and commend us to Our Divine Lord in the holy Sacrifice; and commend particularly,

Your most humble son in Xto.,

D. BONACINA.



CENTRAL PATAGONIA.

AMONG THE INDIANS OF CHUBUT.

(Continued).

Departure from Quichaure — An Unwelcome Visitor.



HE sun was high up in the heavens when the inquiry ended and, as we were anxious to reach the Valley of Teca, the Governor gave the word to depart, after having enjoined upon the two brothers to

keep him informed if anything unusual happened. The exquisite kindness of the good Irishmen, the night's rest, and the fruits I had been able to reap during our short stay at Quichaure had contributed greatly to raise my spirits, and I set out quite happy and cheerful; in fact, all our party were in high spirits.

Only the dogs seemed to take no part in the general good humour, but growled and yelped long and loudly whilst shaking themselves fiercely in order to free themselves of the *garrapatas*. The *Garrapata* is an insect of the parasite family, of a grayish colour, and similar to the common flea. It is exceedingly troublesome and attacks the naked feet of both man and beast. It thrusts its sharp-pointed proboscis into the flesh and sucks the blood until it acquires the size of a small nut. Its sting is highly venomous and produces a huge swelling which is followed by a general indisposition, and frequently by fever. In these valleys one also meets with a spider of the dimensions of a frog. Its head, legs, and back are hairy and speckled with various faded colours. Its whole appearance is repulsive, and gives one the idea of a toad. It runs along swiftly and in a dancing fashion and leaps to a prodigious height; irritated it will attack anything and anyone. It is also armed with a sting that is poisonous, but not deadly. It lives underground and feeds on insects. We also come across several vipers and scorpions; and one of these latter reptiles of the most venomous kind, introduced itself between the skins whereon I was sleeping, but fortunately this unwelcome visitor did me no harm.

The Terror of the Pampas — In the Valley of Teca.

On leaving the Valley of Quichaure, we travelled for some five hours in a northerly direction through a ravine among the Antecordilleras until we reached the Valley of Teca, which lies between two chains of parallel mountains, and is about 90 miles in length and 3 in breadth. The land thereabouts is extremely fertile and well watered, but it is still almost entirely uninhabited. At times, guanacos, llamas and ostriches, frightened at our approach, scattered and fled into the defiles of the mountains. The guanacos, bolder than the rest, would climb up on to an eminence and watch our

movements from their rocky height, filling the air with their loud neighing.

In that valley we came across the old Cacique Foyel, the cruelest and most blood-thirsty Indian of the Pampas, the terror of the Welsh Colony, and intricately in the tragedy * of the three Welshmen I related above. His tribe has dwindled to a mere handful of men, and he is in extreme poverty. This once proud and fierce chief saluted us most humbly, and begged for some tobacco.

At sunset, on the 23rd of November, we arrived at the house of Mr. Francis Pecoraro, an Italian, who received us most cordially, and treated us with every care. This house, which is made of mud and covered with straw, is the only one in the whole valley, the other inhabitants living under tents or in huts made of rushes. As the accommodation of Pecoraro's house was limited, we were obliged to pass the night under our tents.

Here we learnt that the Police Agent of the Indians, in order to thwart the designs of the rascally medicine-man, had summoned the Cacique Sac-mata and the Capitanejo Salpu to announce to them the arrival of the Governor and enjoin upon them to go at once to meet him. This was an excellent opportunity of coming to an understanding with the two chiefs, before their being forestalled by Cayupul. The Governor, therefore, determined to prolong his stay until the arrival of the two Indians, a circumstance most advantageous to my mission.

It is astonishing with what rapidity news is circulated in these regions, where means of communication are so scarce. The day after our arrival, about forty persons assembled here from the most remote parts of the Valley. Two Italians, who own a large flock of sheep, brought me a lamb, and asked me to bless their marriage. Two Spaniards also offered me another lamb, and begged me to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for a relative of theirs who was killed by an accident whilst fording the River Teca.

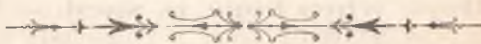
The Arrival of the Indians.

In the morning I prepared the altar in the only room of Mr. Pecoraro's house, and when I began Mass the room was

crowded. A few minutes beforehand the Cacique Sac-mata and one of his sons, his cousin the Capitanejo Prané and several Christian and Pagan Indians arrived. On being invited, they entered the large room, and Sac-mata placed himself near the altar and stood erect or sat on his heels, keeping his eyes steadily fixed on me nearly all the time. The Governor served Mass and also received Holy Communion. After the Gospel, I addressed a few words to the congregation. In order to say something useful to the Catholics without offending members of other religions,—for there were several Anglicans of the High and Low Church, Methodists, Calvinists, and Pagans present—I dwelt on the brevity of our present life, the vanity of earthly things, the uncertainty of the hour of death, the excellence of our soul and the necessity of attending continually to our eternal salvation. My poor words were listened to with great attention, and it seemed to me that they made a deep impression in both Catholics and non-Catholics.

BERNARD VACCHINA,
Salesian Missioner.

(To be Continued).



ON February 2, the annual Salesian Conference was held in the Church of St. John the Evangelist at Turin, our Superior-General, Don Rua, presiding. A discourse was delivered by Rev. Father Graglia, a Salesian Missioner who had arrived only a few days previously from Brazil. He spoke of the vast field of action wherein the Salesians are engaged in that Republic. He spoke of their work among the poor outcast children of the cities, and among the emigrants, but he dwelt at some length on their work among the Coroado Indians in the State of Matto Grosso, an extensive Brazilian province in great part unexplored. He touchingly described the unhappy condition of the poor savages, spoke of the many difficulties the Salesian Fathers and the Nuns of Our Lady Help of Christians have to daily encounter and the necessity of sending out other apostolic labourers in this portion of the Lord's Vineyard. The Conference was brought to a close by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

* See *Salesian Bulletin* of January, 1897, page 203.
—ED. S. B.



[Owing to the great number of communications we are continually receiving for insertion in this column, we are obliged to limit ourselves to the publication of a few extracts (as the expression, more or less, of the others) and the names of all those who desire to make public thanksgiving to their Celestial Benefactress. All manuscripts, however, are carefully deposited in the archives of the Sanctuary; and, perhaps, we shall one day be able to publish them in a separate volume in honour of our Heavenly Queen.—Ed.]

Thanksgiving.—MME CANDIDA GRISOLANO of Sparone, Italy, renders public thanks to Our Lady Help Christians for having delivered her from a painful malady. She sends an offering and desires to have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered up in Our Lady's honour.

* *

Hope when hope is sped.—My son was suffering from a pulmonary disease, and I knew it was next to impossible for him to recover, a thought that made me inconsolable. However, I turned with faith to Our Lady Help of Christians, who always hears the prayers of an afflicted mother, and she consoled me by obtaining my son's cure.

ADELA S. DE ESTEVEZ, *Mexico.*

* *

Health of the Weak.—A servant of one of my friends was dangerously ill with pulmonitis, on hearing which I began a Novena and sent a Medal of Our Lady Help of Christians to be placed around the sick girl's neck, which was done. On the following day a great improvement was noted, and in the course of a few days she was as well as ever. *Evviva Maria!*

TERESA FERRER DE GARCÍA.
Barcelona (Spain).

* *

Auxilium Christianorum, Ora pro nobis.—A child of mine had been suffering for the last two years with weakness of sight. The doctors prescribed for it, but

all to no purpose. I, at length, turned to Mary Help of Christians with confidence and made a Novena in her honour, during which I had the consolation of seeing my child completely cured. May Our Blessed Lady be for ever blessed and praised!

C. SCANAVINO,
Castelnuovo d'Asti (Italy).

* *

From Death's Door.—MME. LOUISA LAGOMARSINO of Haverstraw, United States of America, had been suffering from a grievous malady which menaced her life. In this extreme she had recourse to Our Lady, and promised her that if she obtained the grace of recovery, she would have it published, and also send a thank-offering for the Sanctuary of Our Lady at Turin. Wonderful to relate! The day following her promise she was declared out of danger and is now completely recovered. Grateful to Mary Help of Christians for this favour, she hastens to fulfil her promise.

The following have also sent us accounts of special favours they have received, and desire to render public thanksgiving to their Celestial Benefactress, Mary Help of Christians:—

Caroline Balerio, Salto Canavese; Rev. Joseph Sironi, Monza; Corinna Bezzi, Lavagna; Mary Josephine Alinori, Parma; F. Guglieri, Buenos Ayres; Magdalena Gamba, Turin; Jerome Pinna, Alassio; Louis Berga, Cumiana; Ida Matti, Cuggiono; Antony De Mario Franz, S. Stefano del Cadore; Mr. & Mrs. Antony Belloni, Rancate; Dr. Antony Scotti, Podenzano; Silvia Revelli, Perletto; Catherine Morino, Saluzzo; Rev. Bartholomew Bonvicini, Montebonello; Rev. Sr. Agnes Magdalene Nigra, Castellamonte; Rev. Joseph Settini, Vaiano; Antony Bonanomi, Pontida; Antony Quassola, Novi Ligure; N. N., Catania; Josephine Passini, Turin; A. Lady Co-operator, Fossano; B. Calcaterra, Milan; Candida Rocca; Joseph Sist; The Family Longo-Varchetti, Turin; John Bairate, Turin; Henrietta Malfatto; Theresa Bozzini; John Cresto, Turin; The Family Malgara, Rivoltella Lomellina; Annunziata Giannotti Turin; Ippolita Ferrari, Como; G. Polo, Turin-Pericles Penzo, Chioggia; Margaret Grolfi, Esino; Victoria Coppolo-Chiavari, Brisighella; Joseph Masolini, Faenza.





ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.

It is very obvious to say that if we always knew what God wished, it would be a great help to us in serving Him. We should not surely throw ourselves into open rebellion against the express will of God. Yet practically, in by far the greatest number of our actions, we do know this; and in all of them, if we do not know what he would have us do, we know at least the motive from which He would have us act, whenever we act at all. "Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God." St. John tells us that God is charity. Thus in the whole of the almost infinite and complicated system in which we live, God has contrived all things, quite wonderfully, for these two ends, if they might not more properly be called one end than two; He has arranged everything, first, so that He may be loved; and secondly, so as to enable us to love Him. If we may dare thus to speak of the Almighty, He seems to have no other end in view at all: and He manages things by artifices of almighty power in order to bring this about. This is His rule by which He has done everything. The hearts of His creatures are the only treasures He will condescend to accept from His own creation.—FATHER FABER.

THE CATHOLIC AND THE FREETHINKER.

NOT long ago a Catholic boy was travelling in a railroad car between Brussels and Namur. In the same car was an infidel school inspector. On passing before a Catholic church the boy uncovered his head in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, which he knew was kept in the church.

The inspector, who up to this time had been reading a newspaper, on seeing the reverence paid by the boy to the house of God, began to laugh, and the following dialogue ensued:

"To be sure, my little friend, you must be an altar boy?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, "and I am just preparing for my first Communion."

"And would you please tell me what the curate teaches you?"

"Well, he is just now instructing me in the mysteries of religion."

"And, please, what are these mysteries? I have forgotten all about mysteries this long time ago, and in a couple of years it will be the same with you."

"No, sir, I will never forget the mysteries of the Holy Trinity, of the Incarnation, and of the Redemption."

"What do you mean by the Holy Trinity?"

"One God in Three Persons."

"Do you understand that, my little friend?"

"Where there is a question of mysteries, three things are to be distinguished, to know, to believe, and to understand. I know, and I believe but I do not understand. We will understand only in heaven."

"These are idle stories; I believe only what I understand."

"Well, sir, if you believe only what you understand, will you tell me this. How is it that you can move your finger at will?"

"My finger is moved because my will impresses a motion to the muscle of my finger. This is—this is because—"

"But do you understand how this is?"

"Oh yes, I understand it."

"Very well, if you understand it; then tell me why your will can move your finger, and not, as in the case of a donkey, your ear?"

That was too much for the learned inspector. He made a sorry face, coughed, and muttered between his teeth, "Let me alone, little fellow, you are too young to teach me a lesson." He resumed reading his newspaper, and did not take his eyes from it, until his unpleasant little travelling companion had stepped off at the next station and disappeared from sight.—*The Poor Souls' Friend.*

A PRINCE OF THE BLOOD.

"I say, Martin, stop that, now! How's a fellow going to drink with Niagara Falls coming down on him!"

Louis Ray, or "Rufus," as the boys called him, rose up angrily, with a face as red as his head.

"All right," said Martin Stone, laughing. "Go ahead and drink; I'll pump easy for you."

Louis bent over again, and put his thirsty lips to the spout. This time his tormentor moved the pump-handle about as fast as the hour hand of a watch, and about three drops trickled out.

"Pump, will you?" cried Louis.

"O, yes! I will," roared the other, and that instant Louis was sputtering in a perfect rush of the bright water, while the group of boys exploded with laughter.

This was too much for Louis' fiery temper, and he sprang at Martin, shaking his wet head like a Newfoundland dog, and grappling him fiercely. But, after all, it was a friendly tussle. Louis had far too much sense to take the rough joke seriously, and by the time he and Martin had rolled about on the grass awhile, each trying to get the other under; by the time they had thumped each other a time or two, in boyish fashion, the bell rang, and they went into the schoolroom as good friends as ever.

But something had happened in that sham battle, unknown to anybody except Bustle, the pug, and even he did not know much about it. Martin's bag-strap gave way in the scuffle, his books tumbled out on the ground, and a closely written sheet of paper, caught by a breeze in search of a play fellow, began to play hopscotch over the grass. Bustle gave chase at first, but soon came to the conclusion that the thing had no wings, and went back to bark his earnest and applause at the wrestling match. Away went the paper, across the school's tennis court, through the iron fence railings into the road, there to be trampled deep into an early grave by a drove of cattle passing that way.

Meantime the school routine went on, and presently the teacher said: "Put up your books, boys; I am going to let you decide now who shall get the English prize for the quarter. Martin and Louis—as some of you know—got the same mark on examination, so I gave them each a composition to write last night, and I am now going to read them to the English class, without the name, of course, and let the class award the prize."

There was great excitement amongst the boys, much shuffling of feet, embarrassed coughing, conscious grinning, while Louis got his paper ready and waited to march up to the desk with Martin.

But where was Martin's paper? You and I know that it was being trampled under dusty hoofs, but Martin was perfectly sure that it was in his algebra. No. Well, then, in his History of the United States; and so he went through every book in his desk, of course, without finding it, while Major Price's brow grew darker every minute.

Now, the Major, having received a military education, thought carelessness a much more serious matter than stupidity, and perhaps he was right. At any rate, he was patient with dullness, but carelessness always met with prompt punishment.

"Well, well," he said, shortly, "where are the papers?"

"I have lost mine, sir," said poor Martin, wishing that boys were allowed to cry like girls.

"Then there will be less trouble about awarding the prize," said the angry teacher. "Louis, where is yours?"

There was an instant of silence in the school-room; everybody in the class held his breath. Louis turned red and then pale; then, with a quiet air of determination, he tore his paper slowly across the middle, and said, in a respectful tone.—

"I have none to hand in, Sir."

Instantly the class broke into irrepressible applause.

"Silence!" thundered the Major, and Louis braced himself against the desk behind him. These boys were tolerably afraid of the Major, and if he took this as an indication of insubordination he would be severe. For some

reason the teacher did not speak for a minute, and then he said in a tone they had never heard him use before:—

"Boys, I would rather see a generous thing like that among you than have a prince of the blood in my school! That is what I call loving your neighbour as yourself, and you know who gave us that command and set us the great example."

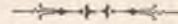
You may be sure that the boys applauded long and loud after that.—*The Sacred Heart Review.*



THE STORY OF THE ORATORY

OR

DON BOSCO'S OPENING APOSTOLATE.



CHAPTER XIX. (Continued).

IT may not be out of place to say here a few words regarding the tenour of life followed by the inmates of the Oratory. They rose at a more or less early hour and descended to the Chapel to hear Don Bosco's Mass, during which they recited together morning prayers and a third part of the Rosary, and some of the boys also received Holy Communion. To enable all of them to fulfil this most solemn act, Don Bosco, every evening, and in the morning before Mass, placed himself at the disposition of all who desired to make their Confession. This is still practised by the Superiors of all the Salesian Houses.

After Mass, the boys partook of a frugal breakfast, and then set out for the city to engage in their respective employments, for the workshops of the Oratory did not exist until 1856. At midday they returned to the Oratory for dinner. It was quite amusing to see the lads with bowls in their hands, crowding around Mamma Margaret or Don Bosco in the kitchen for a portion of soup and *polenta*. The refectory, moreover, was quite elementary, each boy seated himself where and how he could; some in the courtyard on a boulder or log of wood, others on the steps of the stairs; but this seemed only to help their appetites, for the bowls were emptied as if by magic. A spring of fresh water flowed near by, supplying abundant and wholesome drink. Although the dinner was of the poorest, meal time was full of animation and merriment. Don Bosco possessed an effervescent

well of youth and gaiety, and so amused and interested the lads at dinner, that they always looked forward to that hour with pleasure. His table, moreover, was hardly better than that of his pupils; their soup was also his; he had only one extra dish, which by his direction his mother prepared every Sunday, and served daily at dinner and supper, until Thursday evening. On Friday morning she made another *maigre*, and thus the week was supplied. Generally this famous dish was a pasty, and only required heating; after a day or two it became rancid or mouldy, particularly in summer, but Don Bosco would not inspect it too closely, fancying that his mother had sprinkled it with vinegar, however he did not eat it with less appetite. Not one of his fellow clergy, after having tried for some days to partake of his diet, could endure it, and they sought different fare. And this continued to be Don Bosco's diet, until he had a number of clerics and priests of his own, who on account of their studies and occupations stood in need of a more suitable and substantial food.

When dinner was over, the boys washed their bowls at the spring, and put them aside in a safe place. Each one jealously guarded his spoon and kept it by him, as this was a precious article, for who lost it had to procure another at his own expense. Speaking of this useful instrument, reminds me of the following incident that happened to one of the boys. Whilst Paul Conti, an inmate of the Oratory, was on his way to school in the city with a few companions, his spoon fell from his pocket on the path with a ringing sound.

The sight of that utensil raised a general laugh, and called forth a broadside of ridicule at poor Conti's expense; but that worthy, not in the least abashed, and as though to carry a spoon about with one was the most natural thing in the world, quietly remarked: "Well, what are you laughing for? Shall I go to school without my spoon?" And in saying this, he picked up the precious article with imperturbable gravity, and placed it in his pocket.

During supper, the many boys from outside who frequented the Festive Oratory put in an appearance, and at a fixed hour the Night Schools began. As I have already observed, the duty of teaching the different classes devolved almost entirely on Don Bosco. On many occasions, not having been able to sup beforehand, he was obliged

to eat whilst assisting and teaching. It was indeed a quaint sight to see that good Father in the midst of his poor pupils, pause an endless number of times during his supper, and correct one or other of the boys who was reading badly, enlighten others concerning the mysteries of arithmetical science, or give the right note to the little singers, whose harmonies were sometimes anything but harmonious.

Not only in the evening, but also during the day, Don Bosco was busily engaged. While the artisans were at work in the city, he gave lessons at certain hours of the day to several boys from Turin who were desirous of studying, and who in their turn helped him in the Festive Oratory and Evening Classes. With a method all his own, and with that characteristic patience that so distinguished him, in a very short time he enabled them to enter on honourable careers, or be of invaluable service to their parents, if still living, in business matters.

Moreover, he constantly visited the prisons and the Cottolengo Hospital, was the confessor at several Institutes and he found time to write and publish a number of works for the use of the young and the people. But these were not his only occupations; he had still others at home. Being too poor to engage a servant or two, he and Mamma Margaret had to discharge the household duties. It seems that Don Bosco found a relaxation from the tension of mind caused by practical management and literary studies, in manual labour. He was a great help to his mother in the numerous domestic occupations, for he did not disdain to draw water, to sweep, saw wood, light the fire, shell beans, peel potatoes, etc. It was not beyond his skill to cut out and make a pair of trousers, a coat, a waistcoat, and as for sewing up some formidable rent in the garment of a juvenile wearer, why he was quite an adept in that particular art. Nor did he disdain, in case of need, to gird on an apron and prepare the *polenta*, which, on such occasions, was always pronounced to be exceptionally delicious.

And the boys of the Oratory never seemed so happy as when in Don Bosco's presence. How little those forlorn and outcast children had known of the comforts of a cheerful fireside; what a stranger many had been to the love of a father or mother! Hence Don Bosco's paternal affection, his never-changing sweetness, his never-wearying patience touched their hearts; they became deeply

attached to their Benefactor and vied with one another to win a word of praise, a look of encouragement, or a smile of approbation. If true peace and happiness reigned anywhere, they certainly reigned in that sweet home.

CHAPTER XX.

The Beginning of the War of Italian Independence—Juvenile Enthusiasm—The Feast of St. Aloysius—"I have lost my Sins"—Fresh Oppositions.

IN the month of March, 1848, King Charles Albert declared war against Austria, and at the head of a large army crossed the River Ticino to deliver that part of Lombardy that still lay under the yoke of the Austrians. It is not my intention to comment on that circumstance which was the outcome of much distress for Piedmont, and ended by depriving a magnanimous King of his crown and the Oratory of an illustrious benefactor. I shall only take into account those political events that have some connection with the *Story of the Oratory*.

But I cannot pass over in silence the excitement caused by the war of Italian Independence. The event agitated everyone. It was the topic of discussion and conversation in schools, theatres, and in the streets. But the young especially were in an usual state of fermentation, which might have proved dangerous for many of them, had no remedy been forthcoming. When school was over or the day's work done, the young lads armed with long sticks, united together in bands and paraded the streets, going through all sorts of military evolutions. On one party meeting with another, a sham battle was generally the result. These battles, however, were not always of a harmless nature, for the young combatants, in the excitement of the moment, laid about them with such telling effect that the greater number generally retired from the fray limping, and with bleeding noses and broken crowns.

But Turin presented a unique spectacle especially on Sundays and feast-days, when long streets and squares were filled all the day long with those warlike bands, giving one the idea of a battle-field. The Catechism classes, on the contrary, were but scantily attended, and in some parishes, entirely deserted. It was morally impossible

under these circumstances, for the lads of the Oratory not to catch the infection. Several no longer frequented the Oratory, others attended but almost against their will, and passed the few hours there in a gloomy fashion; the games and religious functions no longer had any attraction for them, and very few approached the Sacraments of Confession and Communion.

Meanwhile something must be done to ward off the religious indifference that threatened the boys of the Oratory, and it was not long before Don Bosco, in his zeal for the salvation of souls, adopted measures that were best calculated to ensure success.

(To be continued).

NOTES TO THE READER.

When applying for a copy of this periodical, please state whether you already receive our "Bulletin" (Italian, French, Spanish, or German) and if you desire to have it suspended henceforth, or not.

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The Very Rev. MICHAEL RUA.
Salesian Oratory, — Turin, Italy.

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The Salesian Bulletin

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE
SALESIAN ORATORY, TURIN, ITALY.

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