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ROGATE ERGO DOMINUM MESSIS UT MITTAT OPERARIOS IN MESSEM SUAM

# SALESIAN BULLETIN

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DA MIHI ANIMAS CAETERA TOLLE

## EXTRACTS FROM THE DIPLOMA OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN CO-OPERATORS.

### CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT of the Association.

1. — All who have reached 16 years of age may become CO-OPERATORS if they so desire, and seriously intend to act according to the spirit of the Association.  
\*
2. — The Association is humbly commended to the protection and benevolence of the Sovereign Pontiff, and of all Bishops and Priests in their respective dioceses and parishes, on whom it shall depend without reserve in everything relating to our holy religion.  
\*
3. — The Superior General of the Salesian Congregation shall also be the Superior of the Association of Co-operators.  
\*
4. — The Directors of the several Houses of the Salesian Congregation are authorized to enrol new Members, whose names and addresses they shall immediately forward to the Superior General, so that they may be regularly enrolled in the Register of the Association.  
\*
5. — In districts wherein there is no Salesian House, when the number of the Co-operators amounts to at least ten, one of them should be selected as President—preferably an ecclesiastic—who will assume the title of Decurion, and take upon himself the correspondence with the Superior, or with the Director of any of the Salesian Houses.  
\*
6. — All Members may freely communicate with the Superior, and lay before him any matter whatever they may deem worthy of consideration.  
\*
7. — At least every three months, the Associate will receive a printed Report of the works that have been accomplished; the proposals that have come to hand, bearing on the purposes of the Association; and finally, the new enterprises to be undertaken for the glory of God and the good of our fellow-creatures. In the Annual Report this latter point will be treated more diffusely, so that Members may have a clear general idea of the Works to be accomplished in the ensuing year.

The names of the Associates who have passed to eternity during the year, shall also be forwarded to the Members of the Association, in order that they may be remembered in the prayers of all their brethren.

[The "Salesian Bulletin" has long since taken the place of the printed Report spoken of above.—ED.]

8. — Every year, on the Feasts of St. Francis of Sales and of Our Lady Help of Christians (January, 29, and May, 24) the Decurions should organize assemblies of all the members in their respective districts, so that the whole Association may unite in spirit and prayer with their brethren of the Salesian Congregation, invoking for one another the continued protection of these our Glorious Patrons, and the grace of perseverance and zeal in the arduous undertaking that our charity and the love of God have imposed upon us in conformity with the spirit of our Congregation.

### RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.

1. — There is no exterior practice prescribed for the Salesian Co-operators. In order, however, that their life may in some points approach to the life of Professed Religious, we recommend to them the following; that is to say, modesty in their apparel; frugality in their meals; simplicity in their furniture; reserve in their speech; and exactness in the duties of their state: they should also be careful to have the repose and sanctification prescribed an all Feasts of Obligation exactly observed by those over whom their authority extends.  
\*
2. — They are advised to make a Spiritual Retreat of some days in the course of every year; and, on the last day of every month, or on such other as may suit their convenience better, to make the exercise of a holy Death, going to Confession and Communion, as though it were really to be their last. For the annual Retreat, and also on the day upon which they make the Exercise for a Holy Death, they can gain a Plenary Indulgence.  
\*
3. — All the Associates should say one "Pater," and one "Ave," daily, in honour of St. Francis of Sales for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff. Priests, and those who recite the Canonical Hours, are dispensed from this Prayer. For them, it will suffice to add their intention to the recitation of the Office.  
\*
4. — They are recommended, furthermore, frequently to approach to the Sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist; the Associates being able, every time they do this, to gain a Plenary Indulgence.  
\*
5. — All these Indulgences, both Plenary and Partial, can be applied, by way of Suffrage, to the souls in Purgatory, with the exception of that for the hour of death, which is exclusively personal, and can be gained only when the soul is about to enter into eternity.

this excellent work by all the means that Christian charity suggests. The English edition of the *Salesian Bulletin* has tried so far to discharge this duty among the Co-operators of English-speaking countries, whilst the Italian, French, German and Spanish editions of the same have accomplished on a larger scale theirs, in other parts of the world. Whilst we wish to express our heart-felt gratitude to our readers for their fore-bearing sympathy in the shortcomings and irregularities that unforeseen circumstances have forced on us in the past, we entreat them to continue their kind support and help us to further our object. They can easily do so by bringing the Association of Salesian Co-operators to the knowledge of their relations and friends and by enlisting as many as they can in this noble and excellent work of charity. We plead in behalf of destitute children who, by hundreds and thousands are, at this very moment, depending

It is intended to be a bond of union between the Co-operators and the members of the Salesian Family for their mutual encouragement and to stimulate their zeal in supporting and spreading

the Gospel in foreign missions. The Salesian Congregation has undertaken in behalf of the education of youth and the propagation of the progress of the various works which the Co-operators is to inform our dear Co-operators. The chief object of this periodical and volume of the *Salesian Bulletin*.



TO OUR READERS.



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DA MIHI ANIMAS CAETERA TOLLE

(St. FRANCIS de Sales.)  
 Goodness grants to man,  
 lent gifts that Divine  
 of the great and excel-  
 fellow-creatures is one  
 A tender love of our  
 (St. DENYS.)  
 of souls.  
 with God in the saving  
 Of works divine the  
 divinest is to co-operate  
 (MAT. XVIII, 5.)  
 Whosoever shall re-  
 ceive one such little  
 child in my name re-  
 ceiveth me.

To your care I com-  
 mend 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 ener-  
 gies and talents in the  
 rescue of infancy and  
 youth from the snares  
 of corruption and mi-  
 delity, and thus prepare  
 a new generation.  
 (Leo XIII.)

THE SALESIAN BULLETIN

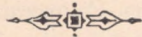
upon the Salesian Congregation for their spiritual and temporal welfare. We plead in behalf of thousands of Indians who are waiting for the beneficial influences of Christianity. The very nature of this Association is such as to place it within the reach of every good Christian and enable him to take an active part in this noble Apostolate. Every good Christian may become a zealous Co-operator and contribute efficaciously in this noble work and have a share in the many benefits and favours granted to them by the Sovereign Pontiffs. Even members of Religious Communities or Confraternities may easily form part of it, since it entails no obligations whatever, and opens a new field to their charity. They can assist with either moral or material means according as their circumstances permit. Everyone wishing to become a Salesian Co-operator may have full particulars and diploma of enrolment by applying to the Revmo. Don Rua, 32, Via Cottolengo, Turin, or to the Very Rev. Fr. Macey, 64, Orbel St., Battersea., London.

\*

This paper is sent to all Salesian Co-operators who express the desire of receiving it. No charge for subscription is made. Whatever offering may be sent to defray expenses is left entirely to their good-will to decide.



## LETTER OF DON RUA TO THE SALESIAN CO-OPERATORS.



Dear Friends and Co-operators,



**I**N the course of last year, I had the pleasure of visiting several of our good Co-operators on the very field of the labours their charity had suggested to them. It would be impossible for me to describe to you the great joy and consolation I felt at witnessing with my own eyes the zeal, generosity, and spirit of self-sacrifice that animate them in furthering the Salesian Works. These, I may add, are making, by the grace of God and the co-operation of these pious persons, rapid strides, widening the field of their action and

producing consoling fruit, particularly to the advantage of youth. Even whilst sojourning in foreign lands I felt that I was not among strangers, but formed part of a family-circle, the members of which are united by the most tender ties. In speaking with these kind friends I felt that between us there existed a perfect harmony of thoughts, affection and desires; I observed that they listened with pleasure to what I had to say, and heartily welcomed the proposals I made them. It were needless to repeat that I returned from similar journeys with my heart overflowing with joy and gratitude.

But yet, how few in number were the Co-operators I was able to visit! How many there are I know only by name, and whom, perhaps, I shall not have the pleasure of seeing here on earth! It is this thought that induces me to take every occasion that presents itself of addressing you, dear Co-operators, at least by pen. It is this thought that determines me in the present instance, to write you this letter in a simple and familiar way, wherein I will give you a slight *résumé* of the principal items of the year just ended, and lay before you my projects for the coming one.

### SALESIAN HOUSES FOUNDED IN 1895.

You have certainly, not forgotten the determination expressed in my letter of last January about not opening any more Houses during the course of the year. And you, dear Co-operators, who no doubt approved of, and appreciated this prudent decision of ours, will be happy to learn that we have faithfully adhered to it.

From this you must not think that the activity which we were so fortunate as to acquire in the school of our beloved Don Bosco, has ceased or even slackened.—Such a misfortune, thanks be to God, has not taken place! But, according to the resolution then expressed, we have directed our thoughts to the Houses existing already and to the *personnel*, in order to consolidate the former, and train the latter for the several ends and requirements of our humble Society.

So as not to linger, however, by the way Divine Providence has mapped out for the Salesian Congregation, on the 4th of September last, whilst the solemn Eucharistic Congress was being held at Milan, the foundation-stone of the St. Ambrose Institute was laid in that city. The charity of the Milanese, who have already done so much for the

Salesians, will not languish, and they will, moreover, help us to complete the work begun under such propitious circumstances.

In following this resolution of not opening any new Houses, it was our intention to except those for which we had already formally pledged ourselves. Such are the Orphanages at Gorizia in Austria, and at Tournay in Belgium. We thought it also opportune not to delay the opening of Festive Oratories at Gualdo Tadino in the Diocese of Nocera Umbra, at Oulx in Piedmont, and at Busto Arsizio in Lombardy. I must also mention the foundation of a Festive Oratory at St. Vincent des Horts in Spain, and of a public-school in the already existing Oratory of Toulon in France.

But whilst making every effort to put a limit to the further spread of our Congregation in Europe, I had to provide for the more urgent necessities of the various missions of America. In order to prevent the Indians of the *Teresa Cristina* Colony from being dispersed and thus lost to Christian civilisation, we were obliged to accept the direction of the aforesaid Colony made over to us by the Governor of Matto Grosso (Brazil). The tears came to my eyes on hearing that the Apostle of Matto Grosso, Mgr. Lasagna, was disposed to undergo any sacrifice whatever rather than let slip such an opportunity of making one more step towards the conversion of those poor savages. The SALESIAN BULLETIN will shortly publish an account of the first attempts the Salesians attached to the *Teresa Cristina* Colony have made use of, to raise from their abject state those unhappy creatures, who seem to have only the outward appearance of human beings.

The Missions of Tierra del Fuego during these last few years have had a wonderful development, so much so that the number of Missionaries stationed in those regions has become too small. The Prefect-Apostolic, Monsignor Fagnano himself came to Turin to make known the needs of the Mission, and so efficiently pleaded the cause of his poor Fuegians that he was able to return with a numerous band of Salesians.

In announcing to you the last expedition of Missionaries, which was also the most numerous since our Missions were undertaken by Don Bosco, we took care to make known to you the several countries they were destined for. You will remember that we were obliged to come to the aid of the Missions existing in Mexico, Ecuador,

Chili, Brazil, Peru and Venezuela. Whilst, yielding at length to the pressing and continued solicitations of the President of Bolivia, we have also founded two Industrial Homes, one at Sucre the other at Pax in that Republic.

You were, perhaps, surprised to learn that the Missionaries who sailed for foreign parts exceeded a hundred in number. Yet with what good reason Monsignor Costamagna exclaimed in his parting discourse that all those persons were like a hundred drops of water in the vast Ocean.

*THE SISTERS OF OUR LADY HELP OF  
CHRISTIANS IN 1895.*

In order to give you a complete sketch, it is necessary to add a few words regarding the works the Sisters of Mary Help of Christians have been able to accomplish during the past year. In the first place they took possession of the House of *San Giuseppe*, not far-distant from the Mother House in Nizza Monferrat destined to form the *personnel* necessary for the Institutes and Missions. At Canobbio they accepted the direction of an Hospital; whilst at Gaveno, thanks to the generosity of a pious Co-operator, they were able by means of an Academy to enlarge their field of action. A College has been begun at Trino, where the Nuns have the intention of setting up a school of Domestic Economy for grown-up girls. At Lugagnano, through the generosity of the Parish Priest, they have been able to open an Infants' School, a Festive Oratory and an Industrial Home.

You will also be glad to know that the Sisters have at last founded an Infants' School in Rome close to the one supported by Protestants. Our Nuns of Spain have likewise undertaken the direction of an Orphanage at Ecija near Seville.

Turning now to America, I must notice the Expedition of Priests, Catechists and Nuns to the Republic of Ecuador under the leadership of Monsignor Costamagna, for abundant fruit is expected from the co-operation of the Sisters of Mary Help of Christians among the Jivaro Indians. Some of the Nuns will take up their residence at Cuenca, whilst the others will go as far as Gualaquiza, centre of the Vicariate Apostolic.

Our deeply lamented Monsignor Lasagna opened the way for the Nuns to Matto Grosso, where they have founded two Residences, one at Cuyaba, the other at the

*Teresa Cristina* Colony. In Brazil, they have also opened the new Houses of Araras and Lorena. And I must not forget to mention the new foundations of Mendoza in the Argentine Republic, and of Puebla in Mexico.

Finally, the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians who went to Tunis last year to take the direction of the *Regina Margherita* Orphanage, on leaving there took possession of an Academy in the neighbouring town of Manouba, with Schools and a Festive Oratory.

#### ROSES AND THORNS.

If we pause awhile and consider the vicissitudes of the year that last night was lost in the bosom of eternity, we will immediately open our eyes to the fact that it has been for our Pious Association one more than any other full of both pleasant and painful events, of joys and sorrows, of roses and thorns.

We were filled with a holy joy at seeing grow daily more and more the esteem and veneration that surrounds everywhere the name of our ever beloved Don Bosco, who continues to live in his works. We, likewise, received great consolation from the happy news sent us by our Institutes and Missions, so visibly protected by God. The numerous and, we sincerely hope, solid vocations that Mary Help of Christians has deigned to bring us, are indeed fragrant roses. Yes, it is for us a source of great comfort to see ourselves surrounded, sustained and encouraged by an ever-increasing band of zealous Co-operators, who divide with us the Mission Divine Providence has assigned to our care. Speaking for myself, I must say that the year 1895, will be a memorable one, for it marks the date of my devout Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. On recalling to my mind those sacred Places, I once more feel those self-same pious sentiments I experienced in visiting Nazareth, and in prostrating myself before the Crib at Bethlehem and before the Holy Sepulchre. I bless with all my heart the Lord who has disposed that my sons should labour to the advantage of the youth in that country, wherein Our Saviour dwelt, and which was trodden by the Holy Family. I also desire to tender you my most grateful thanks, dear Co-operators, for having aided me in carrying on our Houses in Palestine.

But not even here do the roses end for the past year brought us still other consolations. I had hardly returned from my pilgrimage to Italy when I had the honour

of assisting at such a sublime spectacle of faith, zeal and charity, and, I must also say, of sympathy for our humble Society that even now my heart is touched and full to overflowing. You already understand that I am speaking of the First Salesian Congress. I shall never be able to express the gratitude I feel towards their Eminences the Cardinals, their Lordships the Archbishops and Bishops who deigned to honour the assemblies with their presence,—towards learned Bologna that accorded us such generous hospitality, and towards all the Congressists who so generously and unanimously took part in our reunions. The date of that Congress is written in the Annals of our Pious Society in letters of gold.

The 23rd of May last was also a day of great rejoicing for the Salesians, for on that day the humble Society of St. Francis de Sales saw Monsignor Costamagna, one of her sons, raised to the Episcopal dignity in the Church of Mary Help of Christians at Turin. In the shadow of this Sanctuary he had been received when a child by Don Bosco, who trained him in the way of virtue and piety, and prepared him for the combat of the Apostolate.

On the last day of October, moreover, and in the same Church, we had the consolation of witnessing Monsignor Costamagna at the foot of Our Lady's Altar surrounded by a numerous band of Salesians who had come there to bid adieu to parents and friends before setting out to the conquest of souls in far-off America. It was certainly a great comfort to my paternal heart to receive news a month later of the happy arrival of my sons at their destination. And to add to my joy letters arrived about the same time assuring us that our confrères in America had suffered nothing from the stormy Revolutions that had broken out in the Republics of Peru, Columbia, and Ecuador.

But with these roses were to be intermingled some very sharp thorns: such was the will of God Who knows how to draw good from evil, and who ceases not to love us even when visiting us with tribulations. The first to pierce my heart was during my sojourn in the Holy Land. I was on the point of bidding adieu to the inmates of our House of Beitgemal and setting out for Nazareth, when the news of Father Dalmazzo's death was brought me. The loss of this dear and beloved confrère would have been a bitter pang for me even had his death been peaceful

and tranquil, but to know the manner in which he was taken from us inflicted such a profound wound on my heart as will, perhaps, never again be healed.

And yet who would have thought that in the course of the same year we were to receive still more grievous news? The railway disaster that in a moment snatched from us Monsignor Lasagna, the Apostle of Uruguay and Brazil, and five other Missionaries was to be another of those sharp thorns. How full of bitterness was this heavy blow for me, you have already an idea, worthy Co-operators, since you deigned to take so much interest in my sorrow by writing me letters full of delicate sympathy. It was a source of great consolation for me to see you assisting in such numbers and with such devotion at the funeral services celebrated in all our Institutions to implore eternal repose to these our dear departed ones. Oh, I pray you to continue in helping me with your prayers and with your alms to maintain and carry on the Missions and the numerous works that generous and zealous Missionary, Bishop Lasagna, whose untimely and early death we lament, had so well begun and organised.

The joy the Salesian Family felt at the consecration of Mgr. Costamagna, was to be preceded, however, by a very painful loss. On the eve of that day we accompanied to his last resting-place our beloved Father Sala, Economist General of our Pious Society, and one of the most hard-working sons of Don Bosco.

The funeral services for the victims of the sad railway accident, were hardly over when another death came to cast a gloom over us and fill us with great sorrow. Don Unia, the Apostle of the Lepers of Agua de Dios, who had but recently returned from Columbia, where he had recovered from a most dangerous malady in an extraordinary manner, was seized with a sudden illness at Turin and passed away on the 9th of December last. Thus the joy of once more seeing him amongst us, was so soon to be followed by the bitter pang of separation. My grateful thanks are also due to you, dear Co-operators, for the expressions of sympathy and condolence which many of you sent to console me in this bitter trial.

And now, since your benevolence towards us is so great, as to cause you to consider our troubles as your own, I take courage and make known to you yet another thorn,

namely, a notable decrease in material resources. It is not my intention to investigate the cause, but it is enough for me to point out the painful fact that during the year 1895, the alms sensibly diminished, so that we could scarcely provide for the absolute necessities of our works, those works which have no other support than that of the charity of our Benefactors. God has willed thus in order to render our faith in His Providence daily more lively and confident.

#### MISSIONARIES AND MISSIONS.

This our confidence in Divine Providence was put to a double test in the last expedition of Missionaries. It was of vital importance that they should set out to help their confrères who were impatiently awaiting them, and who were beginning to sink under the ever increasing pressure of a burden already grown beyond endurance. Monsignor Costamagna had also to hasten his departure so as to arrive at his Mission before the periodical rains begin, since they render the ways impracticable for six months in the year. And, in the meantime, we had only a small part of the sum required to defray the expenses of their journey, whilst it was also indispensable to provide them with suitable outfits, and other necessities for the Missions. It was this that caused Monsignor Costamagna to exclaim that he should be obliged to beg by the way.

Imitating the entire confidence in Divine Providence that so distinguished Don Bosco in the whole course of his mortal career, after mature thought, I was induced to borrow a large portion of the money required for the voyage and thus facilitate the departure of our Missionaries, with the promise, however, that I would come to their aid in their Missionary work and expenses. They have departed, but the debts contracted remain. This is the reason you received my circular letter, when the Missionaries had already set sail for America. Oh, then, do not fear that your contributions will not arrive in time, or be unneeded. I take this opportunity of tendering you my most grateful and heartfelt thanks for the alms you have already sent or intend to send to aid me in paying off the heavy liabilities I have been obliged to contract in order to come to the assistance of our Missions.

By becoming members of the Pious Association of Salesian Co-operators, you have become our fellow-workers; and if the sons of Don Bosco have been able to undertake

and bring to such a flourishing state their Institutions and Missions, after God—allow me to repeat it—they are indebted to you, dear Friends and Co-operators, and by means of your unflinching charity they will be enabled to enlarge their field of action. What would become of the Salesian Works if your co-operation were unfortunately to languish or cease altogether? If it were not presumption on my part to avail myself of the example of St. Vincent de Paul, I should, like him, desire to present you with an infinite number of poor children and neophytes, saying: “Their life and death are in your hands. Help me to save their souls.” If, then, during the past year some of our dear Friends and Co-operators did not come to our aid, I would earnestly entreat them to perform this act of charity as soon as possible, as our needs are so pressing.

PROJECTS FOR THE YEAR 1896.

In our present position, beloved Co-operators, you will easily understand that, notwithstanding our zeal for the salvation of souls, we shall be unable to enlarge our field of action very much during the present year. It is a matter of necessity, however, for us to multiply our prayers to the Lord of the Vineyard that he may send us a large number of labourers to gather in the harvest; it will also be our duty to continually implore Divine Providence to come to our aid in our most urgent needs. In this way we hope to give satisfactory replies to the numerous demands made us, or at least to the more important ones.

To pass over in silence those coming from Europe, I desire particularly to call your attention to the Mission of the Cape of Good Hope, where the Right Rev. Vicar Apostolic invites us with pressing solicitation to co-operate with him in the conversion of that population, and to take under our special care the youth among whom Protestants are already making propagandism.

It would be a great consolation for me were I enabled to found a House of Arts and Trades in Alexandria (Egypt). I am glad to see the generous efforts the zealous Co-operators of that city are making for this purpose, and, in all probability, their exertions will be crowned with success.

It seems that Divine Providence has also prepared for us a field of action among the youth of Palestine, who stand so much in need of instruction, and of being trained in the Arts and Trades, and Agriculture.

With feverish haste Protestants, Schismatics, and Jews have founded colonies, opened schools, and are doing all in their power to make proselytes. Hence the necessity of sustaining our holy Religion by every means in our power, even at the cost of great sacrifices.

Several American Republics, in fine, are stretching out their arms to us, beseeching us to open Industrial Schools for the children of the people.

CONCLUSION.

Before closing this letter, allow me to express to you an ardent desire. The Salesian Congress of Bologna aimed at making known the spirit that animated Don Bosco and impressing it more and more upon the minds of the Salesian Co-operators. May Our Lord grant that the holy end that august assembly had in view be gained, that that fire of ardent zeal which wholly consumed the life of Don Bosco be also enkindled in our hearts, so that we too may cry out with him: *Da mihi animas.*—“Give me souls.” Vouchsafe, dear Co-operators, to unite with me in asking this great grace for all the members of our Pious Union.

Nothing more now remains for me to do but to pray Our Divine Saviour to shower down upon you all, and upon your relations and friends, His choicest blessings. May God in his infinite Goodness grant to all a long life, fruitful in good works, and crowned at length by the death of the Just.

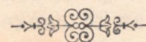
I recommend to your charitable prayers the members of the Salesian Family, so that they may accomplish all that Divine Providence expects from them. Kindly remember also in a special manner to the merciful God, those whom an untimely death has snatched from us, and all our dear Co-operators who have already passed from this life.

Pray also for me, and believe me, with the most profound respect and the liveliest gratitude,

Dear Friends and Co-operators,

Your humble and very grateful Servant,  
MICHAEL RUA.

Turin, January 1, 1896.





## DEATH OF MGR. LOUIS LASAGNA AND FIVE SALESIAN MISSIONARIES.

### FURTHER PARTICULARS.

*We give the following particulars of the terrible disaster to which Mgr. Louis Lasagna, and five other Salesian Missionaries fell victims. We are quoting from a letter sent by the Salesians of Brazil to Don Rua, and from the Brazilian papers of Rio Janeiro and Juiz de F6ra.*



**A**FTER giving a very successful Mission in Guaratinguetá, Monsignor Lasagna set out again on Nov. 5th. There were with him his secretary Fr. Bernardine Villaamil, Fr. Dominic Albanello, Fr. Dominic Zatti, a cleric William Bruckhauser, two Brothers, the Superioress of the Sisters in Brazil, Sr. Teresa Rinaldi, Sr. Petronilla Imas, Directress of the Hospital of Ouro Preto, Sr. Mary Causirat, Directress elect of the new House at Ponte Nova, Sr. Julia Argenton, and four other Sisters belonging to the same Congregation of Mary Help of Christians, also a lady named Lusso, the mother of a Salesian, and attached to the Houses of the Sisters of Mary Help of Christians.

The object of this journey was the foundation of an *Agricultural School* at Cachoeira do Campo, and of *two Academies for girls* at Ouro Preto and Ponte Nova.

All went well as far as Barra do Pirahy, where they set off again by the express for Lafayette and Ouro Preto.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, they arrived at Juiz de F6ra, and after a short stay, the train started again at express speed. Next to the engine there was a goods truck, then the special carriage, which the Government had kindly placed at the disposal of Mgr. Lasagna, next to this was the Mail-car, and last of all the 1st and 2nd class carriages.

At that moment some of the Sisters were reciting the Holy Rosary, others were keeping the Hour's Watch in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; Frs. Zatti and Albanello were saying their Office, the Bishop and his secretary were also engaged in pious devotions.

About three quarters of a mile from Juiz de F6ra the goods train from Lafayette appeared. The driver saw the danger and shut off steam, but the trains were too close to avoid a collision. The driver of the train with the Salesians in, with a courage deserving of the highest praise, at the risk of his own life, at once stopped his engine, so as to avoid a greater disaster.

It was a matter of seconds, but it cannot be described in words. The two engines were dashed to pieces. The Mail car was telescoped by the shock right into the carriage where the Salesians were, crushing first the Sisters and then the Bishop and his secretary, and stopping within a yard of Fr. Albanello, who saw at his feet a Sister and a cleric covered with blood. Invoking Mary Help of Christians, Fr. Albanello gave the holy absolution, and with Fr. Zatti's help, pushed the Sister and the Cleric through the window and then they got out themselves. Oh, my God, what did they see! A heap of ruins and the person of the Bishop, horribly mutilated, and all around, the silence of death.

Thousands of people ran up, and after two hours hard work in the midst of heavy rain, the bodies of Mgr. Lasagna, his secretary Fr. Villaamil, Sr. Teresa Rinaldi, Sr. Petronilla Imas, Sr. Edvige Braga, Sr. Julia Argenton and a stoker, seven in all were recovered.

All the others were still breathing, but with wounds more or less serious.

Mrs. Lusso had only one leg sound: the rest of her body was dreadfully fractured and bruised. She survived only eight days. Sr. Paulina Hertzmann was severely wounded in the head, and had a foot and an arm broken. It is a miracle she is still alive. The other Sisters and the Cleric will be well in a fortnight, if no complications set in. The bodies were carried to the neighbouring House of the Redemptorist Fathers, who showed themselves true angels of charity. They watched with the two Salesian Priests all night and paid every attention both spiritual and temporal.

The injured were received in the houses of two excellent families, and the doctors of the town did all they could for them.

It is easy to imagine the consternation produced not only in Juiz de F6ra, but even through the whole state of Minas Geraes by this sad news, as soon as it became known. Beginning with the Bishop right down to the last priest, from the head of the

Government down to mere private persons, there was general mourning in the whole of Brazil.

The sad event became known about mid-day on Nov. 6th. All that evening, during the night and throughout the next day, enormous crowds gathered on the scene of the accident, and at the hospital to enquire about the state of the wounded. Sadness was clearly marked on every face.

The bells of the Cathedral and of other Churches began to toll mournfully, nor did they stop until the mortal remains of the illustrious dead were laid to rest, those Crusaders who were about to carry into that State the works of their ardent zeal.

The Rev. Vicar of Juiz de F6ra, at once sent telegrams to the President of the State, the Minister of Worship, the Bishop of the Diocese, the Vicar General, and the Salesian Houses in Brazil.

Soon telegrams came from all parts of the Republic to Juiz de F6ra, asking for details and manifesting the sorrow felt throughout Brazil.

The Municipal Council of Ouro Preto suspended its labours in sign of mourning, and charged a Commission to represent it at the funeral; the County Council of the capital did the same.

The Administrative Authorities of the Hospital of Ouro Preto telegraphed at once to the Vicar of Juiz de F6ra, charging him to give a solemn funeral to the dead, to place wreaths on their biers and to represent it at the obsequies.

The same orders were also immediately given by the President of the State, to be carried out at the expense of the Government itself.

We will say nothing of the grief felt by the Salesians and the Sisters of Mary Help of Christians in Brazil, at seeing themselves deprived in a single instant and in such an awful manner of their beloved Superior and five other colleagues in their Apostolate. Fr. Peretto, Director of the House of Lorena, and three Sisters of the House of Guaratinguet6 went at once to the place of the disaster to mourn over the dead and to assist and comfort the injured. Meanwhile Fr. Foglino, Director of St. Paul, went about exhorting the others who felt this fatal blow very deeply, to resign themselves to God's holy will.

On Nov. 7th, at half past nine, an immense crowd thronged the Church of the *Gloria* at Juiz de F6ra, in order to assist at the

solemn obsequies which took place in suffrage for the souls of Mgr. Lasagna and his six companions.

The Church had been placed in mourning. The victims of the catastrophe were placed in the nave in the following order.

In the centre, on the catafalque, lay the coffin of the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Tripoli, surmounted by the mitre and the other insignia of the episcopal dignity; by his side were the bodies of Fr. Bernardine Vilaamil, Sr. Teresa Rinaldi, Sr. Petronilla Imas, Sr. Edvige Braga, Sr. Julia Argenton and the stoker. Their coffins were covered with natural and artificial flowers, and with wreaths and garlands placed there by the different families in the city and the representatives of the various Associations.

After the celebration of full sixteen Masses in the presence of the dead, the Rev. Vicar Fr. Venanzio Cafe, assisted by sixteen other priests, sang a Solemn Requiem Mass; after this followed the Absolutions. Worthy of note was the great recollection of that crowd of people, and the evident sorrow felt by all hearts.

There were present at the function all the most important families in the city, the representatives of the civil and military authorities, of the Religious Orders and the scientific Societies. The Court of Justice was represented, the law students of Minas Geraes, the population of Ouro Preto, that also of Cachoeira do Campo where the unfortunate Salesians were going, the Hospital of Ouro Preto, the papers *La Paix*, the *Correo de Minas*, the *Baudolin*, *L'6toile du Sud*, the *Journal de Brazil*, the *Tharol*, etc.

When the Absolution were over, the Rev. Vicar gave a most touching discourse, eulogising the victims of this sad disaster and especially Mgr. Lasagna who had deserved so well, not only of Uruguay but in a special manner of Brazil and the State of Minas and Geraes.

The burial took place immediately afterwards. This was at 1 o'clock. Six thousand people are calculated to have been present at it.

All the representatives mentioned before were present. The coffin of Mgr. Lasagna and that of his secretary were borne by Salesians and Redemptorists. Those of the Sisters were carried by some ladies of the city.

Moving discourses were made at the cemetery by the authorities.

A sumptuous mausoleum is going to be erected at the expense of the State.

## DEATH OF DON UNIA

### THE APOSTLE OF THE LEPERS.

**S**HORTLY before mid-day, on December 9th, in the Oratory of Don Bosco at Turin, Fr. Michael Unia, Salesian Missionary and Apostle of the lepers at Agua de Dios (Columbia) peacefully breathed forth his soul to God.

This intrepid Missionary had arrived in Turin about a week before his death. He had started from Bogotá on October 14th last, by order of the doctor and his Superiors, leaving the whole Mission in grief. A terrible disease had struck him down on the field of his heroic labours, and he was taken to Bogotá in an almost dying state.

Many doctors came to see him, but they were unanimous in declaring that there was no ground for hope.

Public and private prayers were offered up to Mary Help of Christians for his cure, and after a day or so, as though by miracle, he passed from death to life. Shortly after this, on the Feast of the Assumption, he went to the Church to celebrate there a Mass of thanksgiving.

Mary Help of Christians willed that he should go to her Sanctuary at Turin to die. He had already desired to return to his lepers, but this was inexorably forbidden him, and he was ordered to return to Europe instead. He arrived at Turin, still somewhat suffering. His malady had been brought on by the frightful state in which he was, when amongst the unhappy lepers of the Mission. Nevertheless, there was no serious fear for his life.

On Saturday, the vigil of the Immaculate Conception he felt himself overcome with an unaccustomed weariness, and did not come down to breakfast, but took it in his room. The following morning he came down at 4 o'clock to celebrate Holy Mass, but as the Church was still shut, he went back to his room. Later on he felt violent pains in the stomach. The doctor came, and at once prescribed prompts remedies. On the next day, however, he seemed better, his mind was clearer, he was able to speak, he received many visits from Don Rua, and took part in the prayers which were offered up for

him. However, the disease came rapidly to a crisis and he died peacefully in Our Lord.

At this very time Fr. Evasius Rabagliati, the Superior of the Salesians at Bogotá, is traversing the cities of the Columbian Republic. He is holding conferences everywhere to obtain help to remove the lepers of Agua de Dios and many others to a new lazaretto to be erected in a much more favourable place. The Committee, constituted at Bogotá for this purpose, is working untiringly with the authoritative support of the Government and of all charitable hearts, in order to bring to a practical issue the plans of Fr. Michael Unia. Whilst all this is going on, he has gone to Heaven, after offering up his prayers at the Altar of Mary Help of Christians, whence, many years ago, he set out with the Missionary's cross. From Heaven he will help with his prayers the work which he cherished so ardently on earth, and the Salesian Mission of Agua de Dios will succeed wonderfully.

It seems that the great works carried on there, needed victims and new intercessors in Heaven. A victim has been found, and we hope, too, a new intercessor in Heaven.

The Governor of Columbia had given to Fr. Unia full powers in the whole lazaretto, had placed at his disposal the Post and the Telegraph, authorized him to travel free through the whole Republic, and shewed towards him deep gratitude and admiration. He had friends and admirers amongst men of every party. The name of Fr. Unia and his companions has always commanded general respect. Fr. Michael Unia was in the prime of life. He would have completed his forty-sixth year on Dec. 18th.

Whilst the body was lying in state in the *chappelle ardente*, great numbers of persons of every age and condition came to visit and pray in his presence. Oh if the lepers of Agua de Dios could have seen him, as he lay there peacefully, in cotta and stole! But the news of his death had already reached them, as Don Rua promptly telegraphed to the Archbishop of Bogotá and the Colombian Government. They will not be orphans; other Salesians will continue the work begun by Fr. Unia.

We may add that the news of the death of Fr. Unia has filled the whole city with grief. The papers of every shade of opinion spoke of it in feeling terms.

The funeral processio' took place on the 11th inst. A local paper remarks that the

sacred functions bore the appearance of a feast rather than a funeral. Early in the morning the body was removed to the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, and many were the Masses and prayers offered up there for the soul of the dear one departed. At 9 o'clock the procession began. More than nine hundred boys from the different Salesian Institutions, and the Sisters of Mary Help of Christians, preceded the corpse. The Oratory band united its plaintive strains to the mournful singing of the *Miserere*. The sacred ceremony was conducted by Don Rua, the Superior General of the Salesians. A long line of representatives followed the corpse. Amongst these were the Secretary of the Archbishop, Canons, Parish priests, people of all ranks in society, magistrates and others. They came, too, from Fr. Unia's native village and diocese. Several Catholic Associations also sent representatives with their respective banners.

On their return to the Church, a Solemn Requiem Mass was sung, and a numerous band of friends and admirers accompanied the mortal remains of Fr. Unia to his last resting place. Before the corpse was laid in the grave, a zealous Co-operator spoke in warm terms of the deceased.

May the great soul of Fr. Unia look down from Heaven and help us to carry on the Mission which he so zealously began in behalf of the lepers, for the glory of God and the good of souls!

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#### EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF DON BOSCO.

On the 31st of this month the eighth anniversary of the death of our beloved Founder Don Bosco occurs. Let us all remember that beautiful soul of his with special suffrages, and let us honour his memory by new manifestations of zeal and charity for his Works.

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A Conference of Salesian Co-operators will be held in the Church of the Sacred Heart, Battersea, London, on the 29th inst., at half-past three in the afternoon.

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### BRAZIL.

#### LETTER OF MONSIGNOR LASAGNA. FIRST VISIT TO MATTO GROSSO.

(Continued.)

ON THE RIO PARAGUAY—AN UGLY  
CUSTOMER—A SAD SCENE.



EARLY in the morning of the 16th of May, after celebrating Holy Mass as usual in the same cabin, we went on deck to admire the beauty of the Paraguay, on whose waters we had been sailing for the last ten hours. Although we still had on our left the low and swampy grounds of Chaco, the panorama improved splendidly. On the right we had the fertile soil of the Republic of Paraguay, and in the distance beautiful hills and mountains, covered with luxurious vegetation, became plainer and plainer.

The banks of the river narrow considerably as we go along, and the water becomes clear and transparent. Under the overhanging trees bordering the river, we discover numerous crocodiles, the personification of laziness, and called by the name of *jaccaré*. They lie quite motionless, staring at us with saucer-like eyes, which seem to ask us what business we have to come and to disturb them. We fired several shots at them, but they did not even condescend to stir an inch. Their scales were so hard that our bullets glanced off them. The rivers at their affluents are full of these ugly creatures, and the further one ascends towards the Equator, the more numerous they are to be found. So great is their number, that they are a real obstacle to navigation.

The Indians alone make use of them and hunt them when no other game is to be found. They feed on its loathsome flesh, and their very persons contract the repulsive smell proper to the crocodile.

The presence of these frightful animals renders all attempt at bathing quite out of the question, no matter how much one may



**DON MICHAEL UNIA**

of the Salesian Society,

**APOSTLE OF THE LEPERS OF AGUA DE DIOS.**

(Died at Turin, Dec. 9, 1895.)

desire it. And in fact it is not the first time these crocodiles have seized and devoured those who have been imprudent enough to attempt it.

Captain Nocetti told us that a few years ago he had on board the son of one of his friends. During the hottest part of the day, taking advantage of a few moments when the vessel lay still, the unfortunate youth stripped and dived. All of a sudden he uttered a heartrending cry. All hands on deck were soon assembled on the starboard, and saw the struggles of the young man and the water turning red with his blood. The captain seized his gun, fired, wounded the crocodile, but accidentally killed the boy. He endeavoured to console himself with the thought that the corpse would, at any rate, receive Christian burial. This, however, was poor consolation for the afflicted parents.

*FLOATING ISLANDS—PLEASANT MEMORIES—  
THE GEOGRAPHERS' DISTRACTION—THE  
WAR OF EXTERMINATION.*

The current drags along with it large leaved aquatic plants. These plants gather together in great quantities and in such compact masses that they form real islands. So much so that, when I watched them defile before me, I almost instinctively looked to see if these floating islands carried with them any stray animal. My imagination carried me back to the vivid descriptions of these islands portrayed in the sermons of that gifted preacher, Mgr. Belasio. I had heard them some twenty years ago at Mirabello when quite a boy, and they are still present before my eyes.

I seem still to see that dear old man leaning over his pulpit and with hands and eyes and all the magic power of his delightful voice, word and gesture paint vividly and to the very life, the little stray rabbit, carried away by the current on the small flowery meadow.

At first it lifts up its nose, pricks up its ears, as though dazed by the fear of being drowned; then reassuring itself on seeing such delicious food, it ends by taking delight in being gently rocked up and down on this enchanted Eden. From this fairy island, it is charmed at the sight of the ever-changing panorama, the rapid succession of plains, woods and hills. But, alas, all this vanishes suddenly and the little thing is swallowed up by the waves. Too true a picture of the reckless existence and miserable end of so many youths who place their trust

in the passing and deceptive appearance of this wicked world!

The Paraguay and the Paraná also form many islands, which, in a few years, are covered with a strong and vigorous vegetation. But when the floods come, they break up these islands to form new ones, dragging along with them the uprooted trees and shrubs which are going to form new banks and new islands. The result of it all is that it drives geographers to distraction, as it makes it impossible for them to trace with precision the course of these rivers, since, without a moment's notice, they change it. This is why any vessel that navigates these waters must take a special pilot on board, who is able to almost guess, more through practice than nautical skill, the caprices and little tricks that the impetuous and ever-changing currents of these rivers like to play on him.

We stopped for a few hours at Humaito, the first village in Paraguay, then al Villa del Pilar. Father Thomas Bettinetti, an old professor at our *Collegio Pio*, has charge of the parish. From there I sent my respects to the President of the Republic, Señor Gonzales and to Fr. Arrua, the Reverend diocesan Administrator.

The land on the left of the river still belongs to the Argentine Republic who appropriated it as conquered territory, after the famous war which Paraguay had to sustain with Brazil and the Argentine Republic 1864-70.

That war was really one of extermination. The tyrant of Paraguay, Francesco Solano Lopez, led all his subjects to be slaughtered, although they gave evident proofs of intrepidity and heroism without example in the history of South America.

But all was useless. After a six years desperate, titanic struggle, the united forces of the enemy crushed poor Paraguay which was defeated and destroyed. Brazil by right of conquest extended its frontiers to Rio Apa. The Argentine Republic took possession of the territory of *Misiones* and went as far as Pilcomayo.

In order to form some idea of the ferocity with which the war was carried on, and what the consequences of it were, let me tell you that at the present day the male population of the country, not counting children, is 28,000, whilst the female portion of it exceeds 400,000. Argue from this the number of the victims both of war and famine.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE ROUTE—  
A RICH HARVEST.

At the mouth of the Pilcomayo a fortress, occupied now by a garrison of soldiers of the Argentine Republic, has been built. All the immense territory stretching to Santa Fé, the province of Santiago, del'Estero and Salta is very marshy, low, unhealthy and subject to continual inundations. With the exception of two or three elevated points, no portion of it is populated. These places are occupied by plantations of sugar canes, and engage some thousands of hands in their cultivation and in the manufacture of sugar.

The journey from Pilcomayo to Assumption, the capital of the Republic, is not very long, and we reached there on the 17th of May at 1 p.m., nine days after our departure from Monte Video. I will not stop to describe the enthusiastic reception prepared for us nor the festivities organized and the work I took part in. If I am not mistaken, I have mentioned them in a previous letter. Neither will I now dwell upon the projects I then cherished and which I communicated to you in haste.

Besides in a short time I shall have to return to Chaco to make acquaintance with the Indians, to cross the entire Republic, to visit the celebrated tribes of the Kaingua. Moreover, I intend to make for the upper courses of the Paraná in order to traverse all the forests of *Missiones* and thus rejoin Uruguay higher up. By this route I also hope to descend little by little towards Paysandu and then to Monte Video.

It is necessary for me to have a clear idea of all the wants of the immense field opened to our missionaries, in order to provide for them in time and ensure the success of our enterprise.

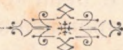
It is a long, weary and difficult voyage, but it is, nevertheless, of the greatest importance, and I hope Our Blessed Lady will help me to accomplish it, in order to mark out by my journey the way our dear confrères on the mission will have to follow.

And now your turn has come, all you who feel the fire of zeal burning in your hearts. Turn hither your eyes, direct hither your steps all you who feel yourselves called to noble and courageous enterprises for the salvation of souls, and the greater glory of God. A rich harvest of sacrifices and triumphs, sharp thorns and heavenly consolations, the crown of victory and the palm

of the martyrdom of immolation, will not be denied you. New horizons open out before the intrepid apostles of the savages, new worlds open wide their gates to the Angels of Christian civilisation, the heroes of the Gospel. Of you also the present and future generations will sing: *O quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem, evangelizantium bona.*

✠ LOUIS, Bishop of Tripoli.

(To be continued).



## ECUADOR.

### THE VICARIATE APOSTOLIC OF MENDEZ AND GUALAQUIZA.



OUR good readers and Co-operators have already seen in the past numbers of the *Bulletin* (May to August, 1894) an account of the first visit of the Salesians to the newly erected Vicariate of Mendez and Gualaquiza. We are glad to be able to say that a permanent Mission has been at length established there. From several interesting letters that we have received from our confrères, we gather that they have definitely settled down and that their work in this new field is already yielding consoling fruit. Thanks to the assistance of Divine Providence represented by our good Co-operators, many difficulties have been overcome, and we entertain very sanguine hopes for the future of that Mission. We intend to give our readers a few short extracts taken from the correspondence with the Salesians there, so that some idea may be formed of what has yet to be done.

#### The Departure—From Quito to Cuenca.

The band of Missionaries destined for this new Mission left Quito on Feb. 5th, 1894. There was again renewed the touching scene that takes place whenever the beloved members of a family have to part. The boys and members of the House at Quito, wished to give a token of their affection to these new apostles with whom they had lived for so many years on terms of the strictest friendship.

The distance from Quito to the place of

their destination was very considerable, and owing to the mountainous nature of the region they had to traverse, they were compelled to use mules. On their way they halted at Latacunga, Ambato, Mocha and Riobamba.

Everywhere they met with a most cordial reception from the friends and admirers of Don Bosco. All this kindness fully made up for the sufferings which they had to endure in their journey.

Riobamba already possesses a Salesian House, and here we need scarcely say, they were received with open arms. After resting for some days they left this place, passing Chupalla on their way. The good parish priest of the village, to show his gratitude for a grace which he had received from Mary Help of Christians, bestowed every attention on the sons of Don Bosco and thought himself happy in being able to do so. He even presented them with a generous offering at their departure. When the Missionaries were approaching Quenca, but still at a good distance from the town, they were met by some of the members and boys belonging to the College of Saint Louis. This College has been already opened for some time, and is a very useful Institution. The presence of the Salesians there is due almost entirely to the kindness of Fr. Matorellè. This good Co-operator claimed to be the first to receive them, and showed by facts the deep interest that he takes in the works of the Salesians.

#### Leaving Civilisation behind— Gualaquiza—The Indians.

Upon setting out from Quenca the Missionaries left behind them the civilised portion of Ecuador. Then it was that the perilous part of their journey began. But if they had then opportunities of remembering that they were Missionaries, it is true they were not without consolation. In the different villages that they passed on their way, the inhabitants eagerly seized the opportunity to fulfil their religious duties, and thus the Missionaries had to begin the exercise of their sacred ministry at once.

On the 1st of March they made their solemn entrance into Gualaquiza. They had to pass under several triumphal arches prepared by the natives. A broken bell announced that they were coming, and they were received as messengers sent from Heaven. Their first visit was to the little Chapel, in order to give thanks to God for their safe arrival.

We give all that follows in the words of the Superior of the new Mission.

The first day after our arrival we lodged with our friend Mr. William Vega with whose help we were also able to arrange the Chapel and make it a little more fit to shelter day and night Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist. The Indians of the neighbouring places came to join those of Gualaquiza and a great number of them stopped with us. Many a night I have been obliged to give up my blankets and even my cloak and cassock to cover them a little. The first night I did not sleep a wink, the presence and well-known character of the natives having anything but a reassuring effect on me—but, after that I placed myself under God's protection and slept soundly.

#### The First Baptisms—The Needs of the Mission.

When one considers the character of these Indians, even involuntarily the words of the Scripture: *Nisi Dominus edificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui edificaverunt eam*, rise to the lips. Is perhaps the time come to gather in the fruit of the labours borne by those zealous apostles, the sons of St. Ignatius? Oh! may God grant it! On the two Sundays we spent here, the little Chapel was unable to accommodate all the Jivaros who came to assist at divine service. We had to erect a kind of pulpit by the door in order to be heard by those outside as well as inside the Chapel. We have baptised three Jivaros and are instructing others, and now there are six boys, sons of white or mixed race living with us.

Work will not be wanting for the Sisters. If they could manage to prepare an expedition for this place by the beginning of next year, it would be capital. Our own *personnel* also will have to be augmented and we hope you will send us some confrères not afraid of work or sacrifices of any kind. But how shall we be able to meet our expenses? I recommend myself to you, dear Don Rua, or rather to the charity of our Co-operators, because we must build a Church, workshops, schools and also a shelter for ourselves, and we have no cash whatever and plenty of debts.

You would like to know what we live on here. We have neither bread nor wine, but *maize, yuca, platano* and a little meat. For drink we have tasty *ciccia* or pure water, but we are all in excellent health.



It is Father Calcagno's intention and our own to consecrate the whole Vicariate to the Sacred Heart. This new House, according to the desires expressed by the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, will be known under the name of the *Colegio y Misión de San Francisco de Sales*.

The first of the boys we received as a boarder is called Michael, a name so dear to all of us, as it reminds us of your our, dear Father. This circumstance we look upon as a guarantee of further blessings and prayers. We enjoy a delightful climate here, and the soil, which is very fertile, gives an abundant supply of maize, sugar, coffee, *yuca* and *platano*.

To-day Panchieri leaves for an exploring expedition towards the East of the Vicariate, in order to prepare a map to be presented at the next equatorial Congress.

Receive, dear Rev. Father, the homage of your children, our pupils to whom we speak daily of you and who thus know and love you because they understand you desire their welfare. Please to remember us to our dear Superiors.

I conclude, Very Rev. Father, by asking your blessing and begging you to believe me always

Your obedient son in J. C.

FRANCIS MATTANA.

## The Feast of St. Francis de Sales.

The Feast of our glorious Patron, St. Francis de Sales occurs on the 29th of this month, and we exhort our Co-operators to do all in their power so that this Feast may be distinguished in a particular manner above all others. They should endeavour to approach the sacraments of Confession and to hear Holy Mass in honour of St. Francis de Sales, bringing with them their families, too.

Our venerated Don Bosco used to recommend most urgently, that every year, at the Feast of St. Francis de Sales or shortly after, the Salesian Co-operators should hold a Conference, according to our Regulations.

For this purpose he himself would go to several cities. Our Co-operators in Rome remember this in a special manner, for Don

Bosco held Salesian Conferences there at the end of January or the beginning of February at the Tor di Specchi for many years. Illustrious Cardinals and Prelates have deigned to take part in them.

This practice of holding Salesian Conferences at the Feast of St. Francis de Sales has, thanks be to God, kept on spreading even to the present time. We wish that our friends would help us to introduce it in every place where there is a considerable group of Co-operators.



## THE STORY OF THE ORATORY

OR

### DON BOSCO'S OPENING APOSTOLATE.

CHAPTER XI.—(Continued.)



**E**VEN when the Oratory was at the *Convitto* of St. Francis of Assisi, Don Bosco had seen the necessity of giving a little schooling to his boys, many of whom did not even know how to read. Some of them, though already advanced in years, were nevertheless entirely ignorant of the truths of Faith. Seeing that for boys of this class verbal instruction alone would make their course of religious instruction too long, he tried to teach them how to read, on Sundays, so as to enable them to study the Catechism by themselves. At that time, though, this class, owing to the lack of a suitable place, had to be somewhat limited in number. At the Refuge and afterwards at the Moretta House, as I mentioned in its proper place, Sunday and evening classes began with some regularity; but they received a great development when the Oratory was transferred to the site where it is now.

In order to gain a prompt and more perceptible result in his scholars, Don Bosco made use of the following method. For a Sunday or two, he made the boys repeat over and over again the letters of the alphabet and gave them some spelling; after this he took the little diocesan Catechism, and from it he made them repeat one or two of the first questions and answers, as much as they were able to read; these he then gave them for the lesson to be studied during the week. On the following Sunday the same matter was gone through over again, other questions and answers were added and so on. In this way, after a few

weeks he obtained as a result that some were able to read and study by themselves whole pages of Christian Doctrine. This was a great help, for otherwise, the older and more ignorant boys would have had to pass some months before being sufficiently instructed to make their Confession and Holy Communion.

The Sunday classes were advantageous to many, but they were not enough, as not a few of the boys of feeble intellect forgot during the week all they had learnt on the Sunday. To avoid this difficulty, and to help his boys better, Don Bosco promoted very ardently evening classes, as we have already had occasion to note. These classes established through his zeal and energy and on a much larger scale than in the Morretta House, quickly produced two good effects:—They encouraged the boys to attend punctually in order to enrich their minds with useful knowledge; and at the same time they made it much easier for Don Bosco to keep them away from danger at night-time, to instruct them better in religion, to direct them to God and to make them good Christians, which last was the special object of all his labours.

But from what source did Don Bosco procure masters for these classes and for so many boys?—He made them himself, and this is how he did it. Amongst those who frequented the Oratory, there were some with good heads, who desired a more extended instruction, in order to gain a better position for themselves in the world. Now, Don Bosco made a selection from these, and gave to them at suitable hours gratuitous instruction in Italian, Latin, French and Arithmetic, but with the understanding that they, in their turn, were to come and help him in teaching Catechism, and in giving classes to their companions on Sundays and in the evening.

The experiment, although it cost Don Bosco much labour and fatigue, succeeded admirably. These little masters, numbering about eight or ten in the beginning, increased afterwards, and not only were they of great assistance in teaching the other boys, but they were also more successful themselves in following honourable careers in the world. In this way there began at the Oratory the category of students who continue to furnish, even now-a-days the Works of Don Bosco with masters, professors and surveillants for many of his Institutions in Italy, France, Spain, England, Austria, Switzerland and America.

With these and other helps like them, the Sunday and evening classes progressed far beyond the common expectation. It was then that Don Bosco, after finishing the reading of the little Catechism, experienced a great difficulty in finding another text-

book that was suitable. He examined all the Sacred Histories that were commonly used in schools in Piedmont, but none seemed to him to supply the need. Want of popularity, too elevated a style, long and out of place questions were the common defects. Many facts, also, were explained in terms which might cause unsuitable ideas to rise in the minds of the boys. Besides, almost all neglected to bring out the salient points, which should serve as a foundation to the truths of Faith. The same may be said of things which regard external worship, Confession, the Blessed Eucharist, Purgatory, the Papacy and the like.

In view of all this, what did Don Bosco do? Although, as I have heard him say many times, he felt great fear in giving his writings to the Press, nevertheless, he overcame himself out of love for his boys. Accordingly, by applying himself, he composed one free from the defects alluded to. In this way *Don Bosco's Sacred History for the use of Schools* was published. The most important facts narrated in the Bible are explained there in correct language, in an easy manner and in a clear style, so that children have no difficulty in understanding the narration and keeping it in their memory. Joined to the story were short moral considerations, suited for the young. There was added, too, at the end an index of places proper to the Sacred Geography, with their modern names.

(To be continued.)

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## NOTES TO THE READER.

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