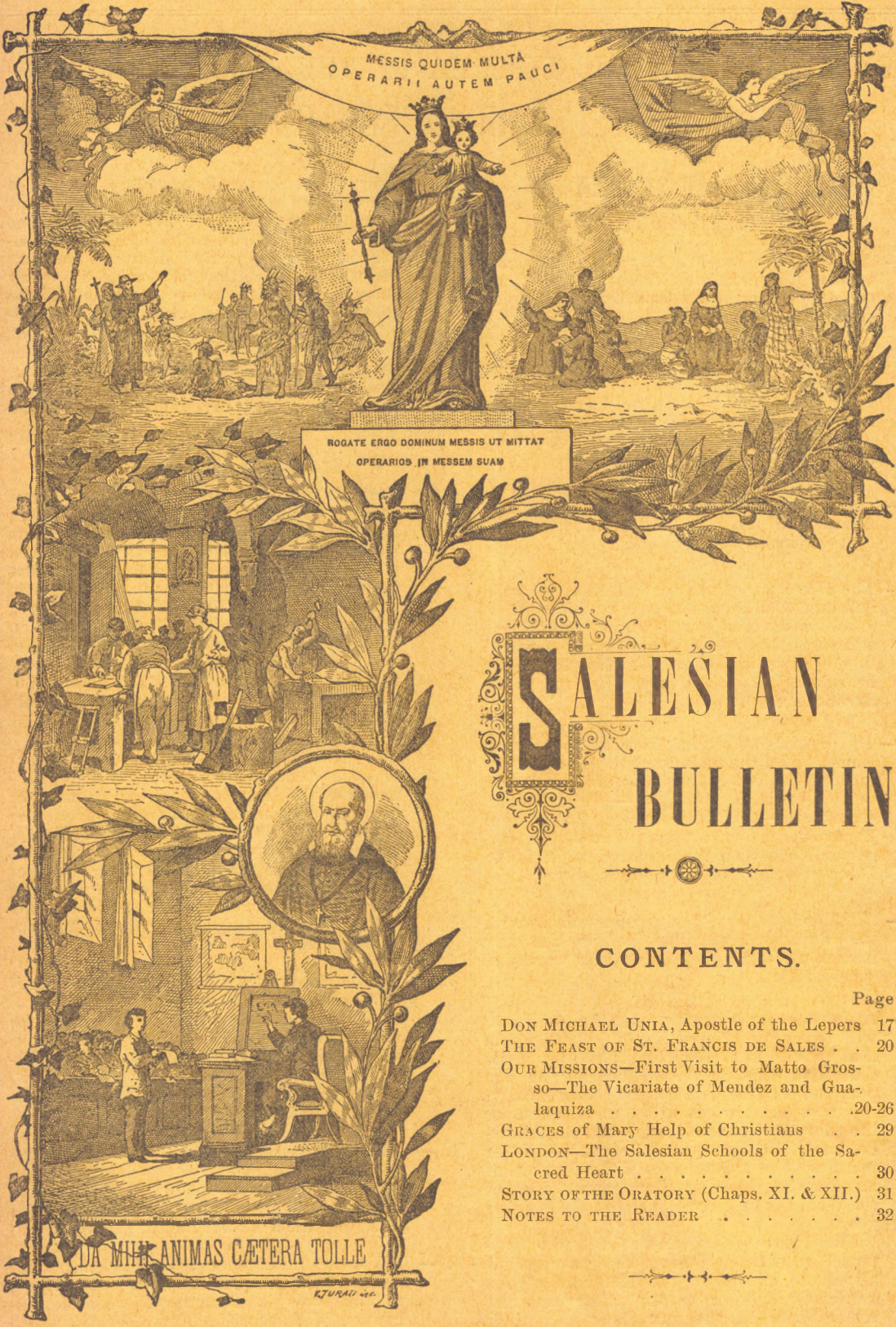


Correspondents are earnestly requested to repeat their Postal Address in every letter.



# SALESIAN BULLETIN

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## 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 on 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.

ON Michael Unia was born at Annuziata, a small hamlet on the left bank of the River Eriero near Rocaforto, in Piedmont, on the 18th of December, 1849.

He received a strictly religious education from his parents, and a priest imparted to him the rudiments of grammar and arithmetic.

In 1876, he came to Don Bosco with the noble resolve of dedicating himself to the advantage of the poor and outcast, by entering the Salesian Society, and becoming a priest. This ardent desire he had felt from childhood,

but had been obliged to abandon it, until then, owing to the many obstacles that crossed his path.

After some thirteen years, spent in discharging the duties of not a few important offices in the Salesian Houses of Italy to the full satisfaction of his Superiors, rather Unia was chosen as Superior of the Expedition to Columbia in 1889.

Soon after his arrival at Bogota (capital of Columbia) he learnt of the existence of the Leper Village at Agua de Dios, situated among the mountains, and about three days' march from the capital. How his heart bled when he heard of the miserable condition of those poor creatures, abandoned by parents and friends, and deprived of the consoling influence of our holy religion! This latter thought so touched him that he came to the heroic resolve of dedicating the rest of his days to alleviating the sufferings

THE APOSTLE OF THE LEPERS.  
DON MICHAEL UNIA

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DA MIHI ANIMAS CÆTERA TOLLE

Whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name receiveeth me.  
(MAT. 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.)

THE SALESIAN BULLETIN

of these poor outcasts of humanity. Hence he asked permission of his Rector Don Rabagliati, to go to the Leper Village and administer to the wants of the inmates, but not until he had repeated his request with pressing solicitation was he able to obtain an affirmative reply. This generous determination of a noble heart cannot certainly be better expressed than in Don Unia's own simple and touching words, which we quote from one of his letters to our Superior-General, Don Rua:

"The Lord has deigned to shower His heavenly favours upon me! For I attribute to a most signal grace of God, an inspiration I have had to dedicate myself to the spiritual care of a numerous band of poor lepers . . . . No less than six-hundred of these poor stricken ones lie festering in the Lazaretto of Agua de Dios, a place about three days' march from Bogotá.

"Unhappy wretches! Not only are they banished from their homes, and scrupulously repudiated by friends and relations, and almost forgotten by the rest of their kind, but, worse than all, they have no priest, and, therefore, no religious comfort to throw a heavenly ray on the long, dark years of torment, or let a single drop of consolation fall on the torn and desponding heart.

"Turning over and over in my mind the sad condition of those poor wretches, the thought struck me . . . .—What if I were to go amongst them? . . . .—At first, I must confess, the idea thus suddenly presenting itself, caused a sensation of vague terror to pervade my every sense. But calm and reflection soon followed, and I resolved to think the matter seriously over. It soon became the chief food of my reflections, and grew so easy of accomplishment, that I no longer saw any difficulty in realizing it, if my Rector, Don Rabagliati, would only let me go.

"The arrival of the new missionaries from Turin gave me fresh courage—it would be easy to do without me now—so I waited on the Rector and broached the matter to him. On hearing such a proposal from me, Don Rabagliati seemed horrified.—'If the question were about myself,' he answered, 'I should go without a moment's hesitation, but expose a brother to evident peril of impending death, this I never will do'.

"'But the question is not of exposing me; you simply condescend to my desire, in other words, you permit me to follow the interior impulse of my own heart.'

"'Before arriving at such a decision, think well on what you are about.'

"'For months I have thought of nothing else!' was my reply.

"Nevertheless he put me off for a few weeks. But my tranquillity was gone, and the Rector enjoyed very little peace, for, day by day, I managed to have the lepers of Agua de Dios ringing in his ears. At last he said to me: 'Well, if you want to go amongst those unfortunate creatures, I dare say I should not hinder you, so you have my permission to go and remain there.' . . . ."

Don Unia on receiving this reply, followed, without further delay, the generous impulse of his heart, and set out immediately for Agua de Dios, whence he despatched a letter to Don Rua at Turin, informing him of the step he had taken. Now a slight incident occurred which gives us an occasion of admiring the excellent spirit of obedience that animated him.

Whilst this letter was making its way across the ocean, our Superior-General, unconscious of Father Unia's departure for the Leper Village, addressed a despatch to him imposing upon him a journey to the city of Mexico to settle matters regarding the formal acceptance of an educational establishment, and assume its direction and management. Father Unia, under the impression that this letter was a reply to his own, although greatly afflicted at the idea of leaving his beloved lepers, made immediate preparations to return to Bogotá, with the intention of setting out for Mexico.

When it was known that Don Unia was about to take his departure, great was the grief of the poor inmates of the Lazaretto. The thought of their being separated so soon from their newly-found friend, and whom they had already learnt to love and call by the name of Father, was too cruel to bear. They immediately despatched a telegram and letters to the Superior-General of the Salesian Society, supplicating him to allow Father Unia to remain with them. An example followed a few days later by the Archbishop of Bogotá and the President of the Columbian Republic on learning the news of Don Unia's withdrawal. It is needless to say that Don Rua instantly revoked his former orders, and renewed the approval already granted with tears and fulness of heart on the first perusal of his son's generous sacrifice.

Who can describe the joy and consolation of the poor lepers at receiving this news!

The letters sent to our Superior-General, on this occasion, are letters overflowing with thanks and gratitude, and reveal the great affection they bore towards Don Unia. "The name of Father Unia," to give their own words, "has become to us the symbol of love and charity, and with pride and veneration he is spoken of even in the humblest cabin of our village. In Bogotá, the capital of the Republic, he is considered a hero who offers his life on the altar of Charity;—all are full of admiration for this pious priest, and before long his fame will be universal, for virtue in supreme degree deserves to be made known wherever the rays of the sun illumine the earth."

And in truth the press of Columbia, and afterwards that of America and of Europe, spoke of Father Unia in glowing terms. And the humble priest, unconscious of anything extraordinary in his actions, was heard frequently to exclaim: "What have I done that should excite admiration? Are not the poor lepers our brethren? Have not, perhaps, these poor creatures, cut-off as they are from Society, a more than just pretension to our sympathy and love? Ought not, then, our means and our very lives be employed in their behalf?" Sublime expressions of a compassionate heart that knew so well the precept of fraternal love.

From the first moment of his entrance in that village, the hospital was the place of his predilection. Here he found those who were in a more advanced stage of the loathsome disease, and he did all in his power to console and exhort them with his paternal loving tenderness. One day, on being reminded that it was his duty to use every possible precaution to keep himself clear of the fell malady, Father Unia remarked: "Leprosy, you must know, renders these poor people extremely sensitive. Were I to show repugnance in my intercourse with them, they would hate instead of love me. Ere yesterday a poor creature embraced me and expired in my arms. Suppose I had tried to shake him off he might have died cursing me, and I should ever accuse myself of his unchristian death. Believe me, if we wish to be of any assistance to these poor sufferers, we must love, not loathe, them for their misfortunes."

The person who referred to us this episode, gives us some of his impressions on a visit to the Leper Village:

... "Accompanied by Father Unia" he writes, "I enter the hospital where lay

some fifty invalids; the first that my eyes fall upon on crossing the threshold of this home of horrors, is a young man about 25 years of age. A doctor, also stricken with leprosy, is standing beside him. Two very young Sisters of Charity are bending over his miserable body, which looks like an ulcerated skeleton from head to foot,—one of them is washing the fetid ulcers with a disinfectant, the other covering them with filament. It is a sublime spectacle of Christian charity!

"As soon as the poor leper sees Don Unia, he calls him, 'Father'. The priest approaches the bed, clasps the hand extended to him, and finds for this wretched sufferer words of such charity and resignation that he succeeds in making the already languishing eyes of the agonizing creature sparkle with joy.

"I confess I had not the courage to resist any longer the sight of those heart-rending tortures; so I retraced my steps from the hospital with an overwhelming sense of horror . . ."

It would be impossible for us to condense in these few lines the numerous services Father Unia rendered to the inmates of the Lazzaretto. Besides the spiritual advantages he was able to bring them, that are always a salutary balm, he was also able to show them in a practical manner that they were no longer abandoned and forgotten, by introducing the Sisters of Charity, these generous daughters of St. Vincent, who by their tender and loving care have done much to alleviate the sufferings of the lepers. It is owing to Father Unia, if the Government and population of Columbia now take a more practical interest in the welfare of the victims of leprosy, for he for the first conceived that great project of erecting a larger leper hospital, capable of accommodating the 27,000 lepers of that Republic,—to realise which, Father Rabagliati Superior of the Salesians in Columbia, is now traversing the cities of the State and holding conferences everywhere.

The Government, be it said, highly appreciated the efforts of Father Unia. They gave him full power over the entire Leper Village, placed at his disposition the telegraph, and in every way showed their admiration for and gratitude towards him.

And now he is gone! Poor unhappy lepers! What must have been your grief and pain when learning the news of your dear friend's death, when hearing that he

who had been your comforter and father was no more! But dry your tears and be consoled, for from heaven he will obtain for you by his prayers new champions, who, following his example, will sacrifice all they hold most dear on earth, even life itself, and you will continue to be the object of their sympathy and affection, as you were for Don Unia.

## TURIN.

### THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS.

**O**N the 29th of January last, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, Patron of the Salesian Society, was kept with more than usual solemnity in the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians at Turin. At half past ten o'clock, Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by his Lordship the Bishop of Novara. Gounod's Mass of the Sacred Heart for four voices was rendered with faultless intonation and marvellous precision by the choir of the Oratory—upwards of three hundred voices—under the able conductorship of Maestro Dogliani.

In the evening an eloquent sermon in honour of St. Francis was preached by his Lordship the Bishop of Novara, after which Dr. Leto, Bishop of Samaria, imparted Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

To add to the solemnity of the festival a classical painting by Henry Reffo, (a photo-type of which we give on the following page), forming the altar-piece of the chapel dedicated to St. Francis de Sales, was unveiled. The chief feature of the painting is a life-size figure of the amiable Bishop of Geneva, kneeling before the Crucifix in his private Oratory, engaged in composing his inspired *Treatise on the Love of God*. He has for a moment suspended writing and, in an ecstasy, seems to penetrate the veil that hides from man the secrets of Divine Love. From a bright cloud emerge a number of Angels who are admiring the written pages, and, whilst they seem to impose silence, they themselves have suspended the gentle rustling of their wings as though not wishing to disturb the ecstatic Saint. In the background are faintly discernible the outlines of the Madonna and Child and St. Catherine in their respective niches. This completes the classical painting that only the Catholic Faith, mistress of true art, is able to inspire.



## BRAZIL.

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

(Continued.)

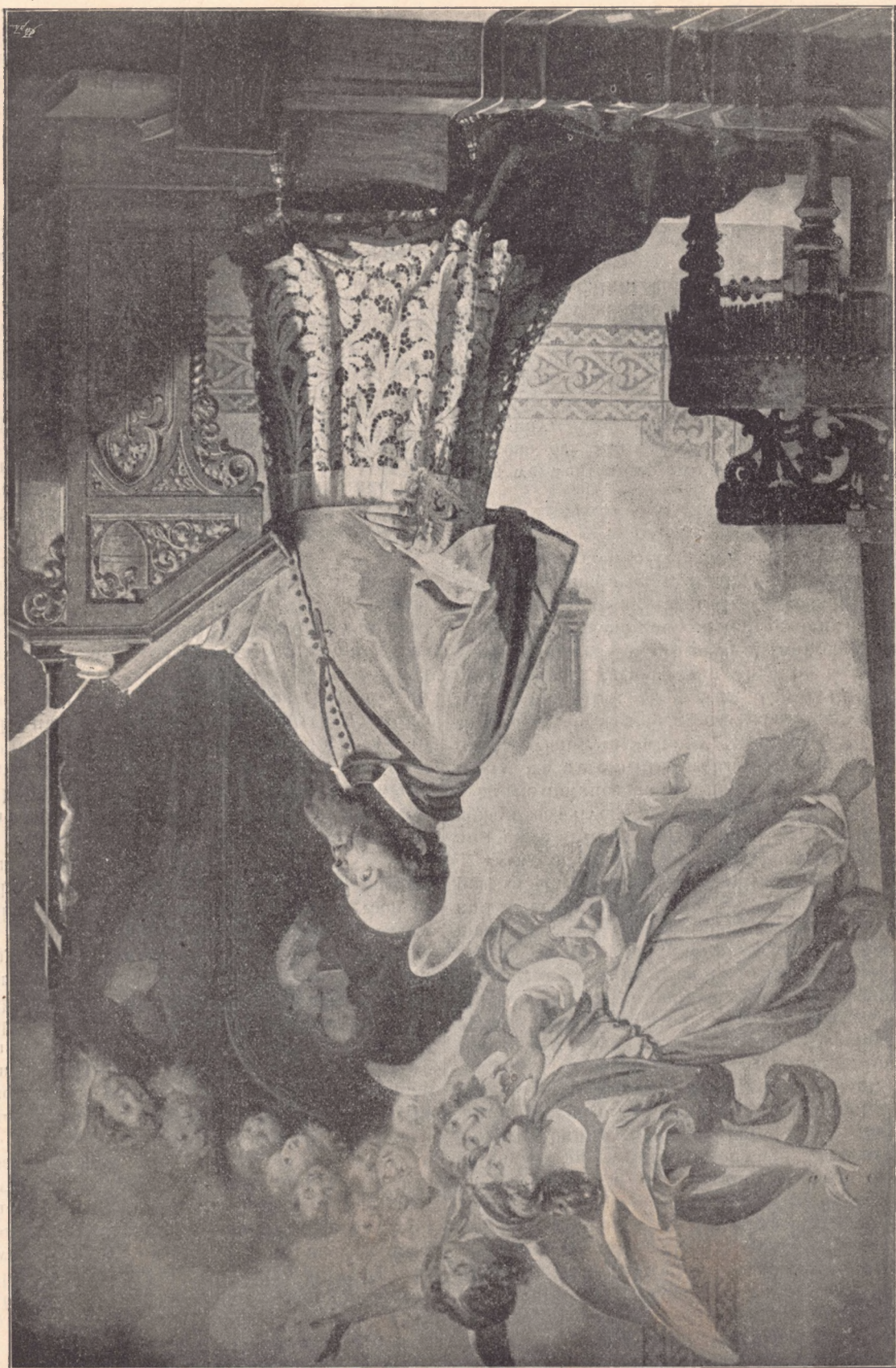
THE BANKS OF THE RIO PARAGUAY —  
IN THE TORRID ZONE.

**O**N the 4th day of June, our dear Father Solari, Father Arthur Castello, Br. Colli and the catechist John Ruffies arrived by the steamer *Diamantino* under the guidance of their Superior, our good Father Anthony Malan. These are the Salesians chosen to begin the difficult mission of Matto Grosso. We have selected that distant point because it is the most central of South America. Moreover, encircled as it is by the different tribes, it seem to be the strategical base from which to organise and send out expeditions having for object the conversion and civilisation of the Indians.

I joined, then, my confrères on board the Brazilian steamer *Diamantino* which weighed anchor on the morning of the 6th, in order to ascend the placid waters of the Paraguay. I was accompanied to the boat by the Minister of Public Worship, the diocesan Administrator, the Rector of the Seminary, the sons of the Ambassador of the Argentine Republic, several priests, the President of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Mr. Sambonini and many other friends. Had it not been for the funeral obsequies for the repose of the soul of Mr. Richard Garcia, Ambassador of Uruguay, which were going on at that very moment, their number would have been far greater. Mr. Richard Garcia died in my arms the day before, fortified with all the rites of Holy Church.

Seeing ourselves together once more, before separating for a long time, we could not but feel consoled at the manifest and visible blessings God had bestowed upon us during this journey.

We had every facility on board the steamer for celebrating Holy Mass every morning.



On ordinary days, we celebrated in our own cabin, but on Sundays we did so in the saloon for the greater convenience of the passengers. During that Mass hymns were sung which Father Solari accompanied on the harmonium. This instrument, which he has brought along with his other luggage, will be a source of great delight to the savages later on.

By this time we were nearing 24° South Latitude, and next day we entered the torrid zone. As we advanced, the heat became more and more intense. On the right we had still the undulating, smiling banks of the Paraguay with the hills in the distance, their luxurious vegetation and their gigantic trees, covered with lovely creepers, enlivened by bright flowers.

Here and there flights of birds of every size and colour, and on the dark green of the forest the swans and herons stood out in marvellous relief.

Now and again under the shadow of magnificent banana or palm trees little shepherd huts are seen. These shepherds and a few peasants live here in a continual solitude. Poor people! Even in a case of the utmost urgency, what a time they require to reach town, travelling, as they do, in small boats. The land route cannot be used for the simple reason that it is quite impracticable, on account of the dense forests, and the want of bridges over the sometimes wide torrents which are numerous and frequently swollen.

On the opposite bank, namely the left, we still have the Chaco with its low, marshy ground, inhabited exclusively by wandering Indians, who, in the rainy season, retire little by little towards the high mountains of Bolivia.

Impenetrable forests of palm trees, cedars and other tropical trees of great value, the *chebroche* and the *jacarando*, abound there. When we passed through these regions, the waters had already retired very much and the poor Indians had approached. We met large bands of them here and there before reaching our destination.

*VILLA CONCEPTION—THE POOR INDIANS  
OF THE CHACO.*

On the 7th we arrived rather early in the morning at Villa Concepcion. Innumerable little boats filled with Indians were at once seen rowing towards the steamer, surrounding it and sticking to it as to dear life.

They had come to beg for biscuits, cakes, sweets, presents of any kind, all of which they value very highly. Their mode of dressing was reduced to its simplest form and in many cases shining streaks of bright red or black paint took the place of raiment. It was towards this point that the Indians were coming in great numbers with the skins of tigers and other wild animals. They exchange them for salt which they stand in need of, and spirits which they like exceedingly, but do not stand in need of.

For all these reasons, I intend stopping here a few days on my return, to make myself well acquainted with the character of the Indians amongst whom I intend making a short excursion, to do the poor things some good, if possible. In the meantime, the steamer had started again, and after three more days, we reached the port of Corumba in the evening of the 10th.

As we advanced the heat became more and more stifling and intolerable, and the mosquitoes lively beyond endurance.

In the distance mountains began to appear, whilst we were still surrounded by immense forests rising in swampy ground. Two or three times we came across some elevated parts, but think they were the result of man's labour rather than that of nature. A few hundreds of Whites and Indians were living there, engaged in felling enormous trees, and shaping them into beams which are then transported to Buenos Ayres, Monte Video and even to Europe.

*THE SIBERIA OF PARAGUAY.*

As we went along, we passed the port of Pacheco or Bahia-Negra, the Siberia of Paraguay. That name is given to it, not because of the proverbial cold attached to that name, since the heat is intense, but because all the incorrigible drunkards, disturbers of society and other criminals are transported there. This place being near the Brazilian confines, a garrison is kept there.

It was up to this point that our lamented Father Angelo Savio conducted his daring explorations. This dispenses me from entering into particulars about them as he has given them himself far better than I could. I will only say that I felt sick at heart when I saw on the shore so many brutal men and women, unclothed savages and rough soldiers. There, far away, among the forests, without priests, without Church,



without restraint of any kind, need we be surprised to say that, little by little, they begin to live like animals?

*CORUMBA, CAPITAL OF MATTO GROSSO.*

I told you we reached Corumba on the 10th inst. Although this city, by its population and position, is the second in Matto Grosso and the rival of Cuyaba, I would not like you to compare it to any of our European ports. It is in reality smaller than the most insignificant village in our own country. Its population is, at the most, not counting the soldiers of the garrison, 3000. The Customs' Offices are here and all the steamers stop at this point, because it is impossible for them to go higher up, as the water is no longer deep enough to carry them. For any one whose place of destination lies further up the river, there, is nothing left but to submit to his lot and go on board very small steam launches, to prepare himself for even worse means of locomotion. Soon even these launches have to stop and the passengers have to embark in low, flat bottomed boats called *Chatos*. These tiny vessels are propelled by men. They have a long pole which they push into the bottom of the river and against which they lean. Needless to say, the passengers have to submit to a continued series of shocks and lurches. We, like any ordinary Christian, had to submit to this.

At Corumba we were received by Father Tarzio, Rector of the parish and the Consul of Bolivia. Next day I went ashore to visit the Church, the Commander in charge of the garrison, Colonel Horace, the Italian Consul, Mr. Carcano of Milan and other very amiable persons who next day saw me back on board. The military band playing away as fast as it could, preceded us.

The poor old Parish Priest is alone and quite discouraged. He has to deal with many strangers, speculators and adventurers, and has a little parish of some hundred square miles. No wonder he feels depressed a little!

There is only one school for boys and another for girls under the direction of Religious and Nuns. They might in time change the aspect of things and places, and do some good to the little town erected on chalk rocks, broiled by a burning sun and given up entirely to traffic and business. Let us hope the day will come when we shall be able to give them a helping hand in their toil. May God grant it!

*THE PLEASURES OF THE JOURNEY!—  
ON THE RIO CUYABA.*

On the 11th of June, when night set in we were already packed on the little steamer on which we were only able to take a small hand bay. The rest of our luggage we had to leave at Corumba, because the water was not deep enough for a heavily laden vessel, and the steamer was continually in danger of running aground. It was, therefore, necessary to freight it as little as possible. Together with the passengers eighty or more, we had about forty mulatto soldiers, without counting their wives and numerous children. The steamer could only boast of a very limited number of cabins reserved for ladies, but happily the pilot was kindly disposed and he gave us his. Fore and aft as well as on the sides of the steamer there were small, narrow open corridors. In day time they were used to walk in and as dining rooms, but at night they were changed into sleeping apartments. Every body arranged himself as best he could. A travelling rug served for a mattress, and a bag for a pillow. Happy he who can sleep anywhere and is gifted with an iron constitution. Stiff limbs and a sore back will be all he takes away as a souvenir. But unhappily I did not come off so lightly and did not enjoy that kind of rest in the least.

We had now been travelling for weeks in these marshy lands where as the sun rises so do heavy vapours which the night had condensed into rain or mist.

When I awoke I felt all the symptoms of rheumatism getting hold of me and attacking in a special manner my shoulders, back-bone and loins. I had a bad time of it and my face became covered with all sorts of spots and marks, and I was so poorly that even now I am not altogether as I ought to be. But I am happy to say that not any of my companions were in the same state, and cheerfulness and courage have not been wanting for a moment. The little steamer stopped every twenty four hours to take in a supply of wood, used instead of coals. It also called at different places where some hardy pioneer had constructed a hut and was engaged in the cultivation of rice in the swamps.

After two more days we left the Paraguay on our left to enter the San Lorenzo on whose banks the Coroados camp. After twenty eight hours navigation on the peaceful waters of the San Lorenzo we left it on our right

and entered the mouth of the Cuyaba with all its capricious windings. Nothing worth mentioning occurred till then, but as the water became less and less deep the crocodiles which infest the country appeared.

*THE CROCODILES AGAIN— AN ABUNDANCE OF BIRD AND FISH.*

We passed at a yard or two from them but that did not trouble them in the least. Stretched out on the wet sand, in little groups, their ugly heads raised, they displayed double rows of sharp and formidable looking teeth; staring at us with saucer-like eyes they remained as motionless as the sand on which they rested. It was forbidden to shoot at them; otherwise we could have killed numbers. The skin of these animals is remarkably tough and is, therefore, appreciated by the manufacturers of trunks and handbags. But only the Indians care for hunting them, and even then they have to be compelled to it by the imperative voice of hunger. Whilst gazing at the crocodiles below us, a strange chattering was going on overhead caused by numbers of parrots, large and small. The little ones green in colour are called *cotorritos*. The others pride themselves on a feathery plumage of red, green, blue and all the other colours of the rainbow. They are gifted with a splendidly curved beak and large eyes of all colours. They are called *Arraros*. The savages train them and keep them in their huts. There they spend their days in peace and bliss until they have to say good-bye to their feathers. The Indians pluck them out and use them for the embellishment of their person on grand feast days. They wear them then in the shape of head-dress and cinctures. The parrots enjoy great privileges and esteem because they are thought to be the receptacles of the souls of the departed members of the tribe. What is really remarkable in these rivers is the enormous quantity of fish. The *pacu*, *dorado*, *piraputanga*, the *king-fish* and hundreds of others, are to be found there.

There are some, too, that are very brightly coloured, agreeable to the eye, and delicious to the taste.

Poor little things! just like everything else they cannot enjoy perfect peace and happiness. Numerous and ferocious beyond description are their enemies. The crocodiles, the chameleons and even the tigers, enjoy them at their meals and are very dexterous fishers. The tiger, for instance, dives, takes

a swim and with his claws snatches here and there at everything that comes near. But we must not forget the *water-wolf* and the *Capinara*, two large amphibious mammalia, the first of the size of a cat, the other that of a large dog. They both live on fish. They both also dig their dens on the banks of the river and live mostly in the water. But who can enumerate the extraordinary variety of aquatic birds that frequent the rivers. Some of them measure more than eight feet across the wings; others are gifted with such tremendously long legs and necks that if we forgot God created them like that we should call them regular monstrosities.

But notwithstanding the great number of fish that daily serve for the food of their enemies they are still so numerous that the fishers (men this time) have very little trouble in filling their baskets. They simply place a barrier across a creek in the river, let the water run out and then gather up the fish with the shovel. They bring them in barrows to immense caldrons where they are boiled, and the oil extracted from them. Poor people make use of that oil to garnish their lamps and to cook their dinners with. At the time of the heavy rains, September and October, the rivers overflow and the female portion of the fish species, in order to snatch their young from the all absorbing stomachs of the crocodile, etc., penetrate by the stream into the temporary lakes formed by the river.

When the rains are over and the waters begin to subside, the mothers with their numerous offspring, retire in good order to the river, where, in this way, the population is kept up in respectable numbers. But it very often happens that one of these lakes has all communication with the river cut off by the hand of man. The water is then run off and the fish collected in cartloads, and then converted into oil.

*THE FAZENDA DA ATERRADO AND ITS TRAGIC HISTORY.*

The boat goes on. On an artificial elevation, a kind of knoll, rises a house; *Fazenda da Atterrado* is its name. The house is silent, ruin has fallen on it, but it stands there as a solemn warning:

Years ago in that very same house, together with his wife, children and workmen, there lived a man called Figueredo. Cattle breeding and the cultivation of wheat were his occupation. Provided with good guns in order to strike terror into the Indians, they

shot down anyone who ventured within their reach. And many are the Coroado Indians who were thus sent into eternity.

Again one of them had been shot down by these savage whites, more savage than the Indians they pursued. The ball that killed their friend wounded the heart of each Coroado. No! not any longer would they be trampled upon. What right had these strangers to their land! what right had they to kill in so cowardly a manner their companions. None whatever, and revenge was sworn by the children of the forest.

Time went on. The so called civilised whites were working in their fields and the Indians did not lose their time. Hidden behind a tree, a bush, in the river, anywhere, the Indians watched the movements of the settlers. They guessed that on such and such a day the men would be away and they signalled to their brethren; they took counsel and dispersed.

Night set in, the day had been hot, and Figueredo with his men wended their way home. As he approached his house he could not help wondering at the silence that reigned there. His children who always came to meet him, where were they? Fear penetrated his heart, he hastened his steps, approached the house, opened the door, uttered an heart-piercing cry and fainted.

There before him lay his wife, the children he loved, mutilated, dead. His wife's last action on earth, he saw had been for him; she had laid the table, prepared his supper. But the savages had been there, and in the plates on the table stood the blood of all those he loved best on earth.

Figueredo still lives. Taken away from the scene of horror by his servants to a distant land, he still sees that awful sight; he wanders about calling for his dear ones, but no one answers his call. And on the spot where so terrible a revenge was taken, a cross now rises. Deeply moved by the tale, I blessed that emblem of forgiveness praying to God that the day might come when the gentle influence of that sacred sign of our Redemption would be felt all over these forests.

*NEARING OUR DESTINATION—ONLY STUCK  
ON A SAND-BANK!*

In the evening of the 15th we stopped before a rustic house, where beside his saddled horse a messenger stood waiting. He had been sent out by the Governor of

the State to enquire whether the Missionaries were on board.

As soon as he was informed of our presence, he jumped on horseback and disappeared in the narrow footpaths of the forest. This was a clear sign that very little of our journey then remained. But a little higher up the river stretched out very much; the force of the current diminished, and permitted sand banks to form and multiply in alarming proportion which barred our course.

The captain had all the bags, luggage, and other heavy objects placed on a large barque which we had been towing behind us from the last station that we stopped at. The steamer was thus lightened and we ventured onwards and succeeded very well. We hoped to reach Cuyaba next day, but we expected too much, and did not.

Early in the morning of the 17th, Sunday, as we were making our preparation before celebrating Holy Mass, the steamer was shaken frightfully. We all rushed on deck to see what was the matter—"Oh nothing!" said the captain, "we have only got stuck on a sand bank." That was the second time. After trying all sorts of methods to get afloat again, we had to give it up as a bad job and wait. There we were, with a scorching sun overhead, waiting for the fulfilment of the captain's promises, because he had given his word to take us to Cuyaba. A few minutes later we were called to dinner, the last on board the steamer, and immediately afterwards we left the *Coxipo* for ever.

*A FORMIDABLE ENEMY—CUYABA AT LAST!*

The soldiers, their wives and children remained on board, but we were conveyed to the barque where we were crushed and squeezed in all directions, beyond imagination. How long that night was! it seemed to be never going to end, and then the mosquitoes, what a bother they were! and how savage and cruel too. I had thought to protect myself against them by wrapping myself up well in a good blanket and putting three pairs of socks on, but all this was no protection whatever, at least for me. With great efforts the barque was jerked forward by ten robust men armed with long poles. Streams of perspiration ran down their faces and backs, and whilst we were keeping off the mosquitoes and listening to the tramping of the boatmen's feet and their monotonous song, we were during our spare moments looking at the stars and sighing to the moon, for sleep was out of the question.

At last morning came. The barque neared the bank of the river and was tied to the roots of a strong tree to let the exhausted sailors take some rest.

As for us we ran ashore to give our poor martyred legs a little exercise, and have a wash; it was urgent!

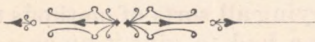
We, then made a careful inspection of our clothes.

A biscuit and a slice of sausage formed the menu of our breakfast, but still we enjoyed it very much whilst sprinkling it with clear water from the river.

This done we continued our way to Cuyaba which we reached on the 18th. We were received with the sound of cannon, bells and music, by his Lordship, Bishop Charles d'Amour, the Governor of the State, Generals, Magistrates and all the citizens with great warmth and affection. They all escorted us amidst thick clouds of dust to the Church of San Gonzalo where a solemn *Te Deum* was sung. *Deo gratias.*

✠ LOUIS, *Bishop of Tripoli.*

(*To be continued.*)



## ECUADOR.

### THE VICARIATE APOSTOLIC OF MENDEZ AND GUALAQUIZA.

*We copy the following from the diary of Father Francis Mattana. It is a faithful and exact chronicle of the Salesian Mission of Gualaquiza from April to December.*



APRIL 1st.—This very first year of our Mission we have been able to celebrate the functions of Holy Week in our little Chapel. These functions were attended by a few Christians and several Jivaros. We had the adoration at the Sepulchre, solemn procession, washing of the feet, blessing of the font and several instructions. The whole was terminated by a good number of Communions which certainly must have been pleasing to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

On Easter Sunday I was obliged to celebrate two Masses in order to give all the opportunity of being present thereat, because Fr. Spinelli had gone to spend these festivities with the people of S. José. Last Monday our dear Brother Panchieri started on a long and

difficult journey to Mendez. I remain alone for a fortnight with our confrère Jurado and eight white boys who live with us. A respectable number of Jivaro boys, who come and go when and where they please, know how to make the Sign of the Cross, recite the *Pater, Ave* and *Gloria*. They also know the Spanish alphabet. Great is the affection and esteem the savages have for us. They come to us from all quarters, because all over the South it has been spread that at Gualaquiza good and affectionate Fathers have arrived, who give themselves up entirely for the good of the Indians.

\* \* \* \* \*

APRIL 16th.—From Easter till now I have been able to baptise several children of the Jivaros, the eldest being not more than ten years of age.

Yesterday we solemnised the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph. A Mass in plain chant accompanied on the harmonium, a short instruction and a procession in honour of St. Joseph, were the items of our programme. I was very much consoled at seeing a great number of Jivaros join the ranks and follow in the procession.

Yesterday was, also, the first time we used the harmonium and the Jivaros, in ecstasy over such a marvel, asked whether the singers were shut up in the instrument.

\* \* \* \* \*

APRIL 20th.—I have visited several families of Jivaros and I have great hopes of many conversions. An old veteran, nearly a hundred years of age, and acting as priest to the savages, has promised me that before dying he also will become a Christian, and receive baptism. I hope he will decide soon, because his example will certainly be followed by many others.

The other day when I went to make a visit I came across the bones of a poor Indian woman killed by the enemy a short time previous. I got down from my horse, picked them up and brought them to the Mission. Two days afterwards I buried them in the Cemetery. Some Christian Jivaros knowing that the enemy was watching for her, had poured water over her head as for baptism. She was murdered two days after that. Let us hope that her soul is now in Heaven.

\* \* \* \* \*

APRIL 30th.—The missionary must also sometimes be a doctor. One morning last week, immediately after Mass a few Jivaros arrived here in great haste, asking

for me for a sick call. I at once saddled a horse and went off with them. After travelling for about an hour, and that not always on horseback, across glens and forests, we reached the *tambo* of the sick person. He was lying flat on a long table made with the bark of trees, turning continually from side to side, a prey to violent pains. He was surrounded by many Indian men and women, come to console him. At my arrival they burst out into cries of joy and jumped about shouting:—*Padre Francisco, pronto, pronto remedio, que ya moriendo estando nuestro Mascho*: “Father Francis, a prompt remedy, for our Mascho is dying.” When the noise had ceased, the sick man wanted to embrace me with great marks of affection, and repeated several times:—*Padre, pronto tomando remedio: no tomando remedio, moriendo*: “Father, be quick with the medicine, otherwise I shall die.” I questioned him, examined him well and came to the conclusion that a good rubbing would do him good. So I set to work at once. I gave him something hot to drink that provoked a heavy perspiration. Shortly afterwards, the sick person began to smile and thank me, and the scene of sorrow was changed into one of joy and rejoicing for that family who loudly thanked me, crying out unceasingly: “Father Francis has healed our Mascho”. In the midst of all this joy, I noticed a Jivaro all alone lying in a corner. It was the poor *brujo* or doctor of the place, who, notwithstanding all his skill and tricks, had not been able to cure Mascho. He had watched me with great curiosity and seeing how easily I had cured the sick man, was extremely humiliated.

\* \* \* \* \*

MAY 5th.—In a few days I shall start for Cuenca, on business concerning this Mission, and after that I shall undertake a mission at Sigsig, being asked to do so by the good Rural Dean, Father José Piedra, after which, I intend to visit all the Christians of our Parish.

\* \* \* \* \*

MAY 15th.—Last Wednesday, the 9th, I left Gualaquiza in charge of Father Spinelli and the Brothers Panchieri and Jurado, and started for Cuenca where I arrived at 9:30 a.m. I was accompanied by a certain Michael Romero and three Jivaros, two of whom are Christians.

We had a very bad time of it. The first

night, we had to pass on the banks of the river San José, protected only by a big stone, because the river was so swollen that we could not cross it without our horses. Next day the water had lowered a little, but not enough to prevent our incurring evident danger of getting drowned, horses and all, if we attempted it. Thanks, however, to God and Mary Help of Christians, we effected the crossing happily, and reached Cuchipamba in time for Mass, after which I baptised a child. Also at Chigiünda I had to exercise my sacred ministry.

At Sigsig and at Bartolomeo I experienced once more the cordial hospitality of the Rev. Father Piedra. At Sant’Anna we had to sleep on the ground in our rain-soaked clothes and after the fatigues of a long day. It was fortunate that we found a hut so that we were protected from the wind.

\* \* \* \* \*

MAY 23d.—The object of my visit to Cuenca was to transact some business for the mission, to pay up some old debts and contract a few fresh ones even heavier than the former. I left quite satisfied.

Romero, who was with me, received a nice souvenir and very encouraging and consoling words from his Lordship the Bishop; the three Jivaros were the object of the admiration of all by their great docility. The latter only stopped three days in Cuenca. On Sunday the 28th, I was already at Gualacea *en route* for Sigsig. Also at Gualacea I found two dear friends in the persons of the vicar and curate of the parish.

\* \* \* \* \*

JUNE 2nd.—Yesterday the feast of the Sacred Heart finished the octave of Corpus Christi at Sigsig; an octave which is kept with great solemnity in the diocese of Cuenca. The V. Rev. Dean had left his parish entirely to my charge. Every day we had exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, *Missa Cantata*, Sermon, Vespers and Benediction, and the people were very devout at each service. In the evening, up till 11 o’clock, I was in the confessional, so great was the desire to receive the Sacraments. The sick also were visited and the Viaticum taken to them.

Those were indeed days of blessings and graces, and I return thanks to God with all my heart for his kindness and goodness towards me during that time. The sweet emotions and consolations I experienced

during those days shall never be effaced from my memory.

In the middle of this octave I received a letter from Panchieri, telling me that Father Spinelli had fallen dangerously ill and had been unable to celebrate Mass, and serious fears for his life were prevailing.

At the announcement of such news I threw myself before the Blessed Sacrament and asked Jesus, for the good of our mission, not to allow such a misfortune and to cure our dear confrère. On the eve of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, another letter telling me the fever had left Father Spinelli and that he was recovering, reached me. Tranquillized on that point I returned towards Gualaquiza with the intention of visiting every family in this vast parish.

\* \* \* \* \*

JUNE 12th.—I arrived yesterday at Gualaquiza and I cannot say how I was longed for. Having left Sigsig, I visited the population of Chigüinda, Rosario, Cuchipamba, S. José and Aguacate, giving in each place an opportunity to all of approaching the Sacraments, assisting at Mass and hearing the Word of God. I visited all the sick, gave some baptisms and blessed a few marriages.

\* \* \* \* \*

JULY 1st.—The other day I took a human skull away from some Jivaros. They were carrying it about in triumph as a sign of victory in one or other of the wars never wanting amongst them. I buried it in unblest ground as the poor Indian had not been baptised.

The number of our pupils goes on increasing. We have twenty boarders, some whites some Jivaros, and others who come to our schools as day scholars. The education of the girls has been confided to a lady, until the arrival of our Nuns.

\* \* \* \* \*

AUGUST 10th.—I have received news from Quito. Our dear Panchieri, whom I had sent there to get some money for our missions, writes that our poor confrères of Quito are as badly off as ourselves. He adds that Father Calcagno has had some serious trouble with enemies of the Catholic Missions and that it has greatly affected his health. We pray for him and place our confidence in God's Providence which will not fail us.

\* \* \* \* \*

SEPTEMBER 20th.—Last Sunday the 10th, we had the first distribution of prizes to

the pupils of both our schools, preceded by an exhibition of the work done, and a *conversazione* in honour of our Founder Don Bosco. The works exposed were a writing desk, a few chairs, a portmanteau, tables and other productions of the joiners' workshop, compasses and ornamental metal work of various descriptions from the blacksmiths, several articles of clothing and under-linen, the work of the tailors and girls.

Songs and recitations were also given by our pupils, boys and girls, white and swarthy, externs and interns, to the great admiration of the Christians and Jivaros, who expressed also their love and respect for the Fathers who came to teach them to cultivate their land and work for their good and that of their children. The prizes were given for competency in religion and literature and for satisfaction given to the masters of the trades and vocal music. Next day we had several applications for admission to the Home. But to take them it is necessary that we should be more numerous and our material means larger. We have begun the construction of a new Church, the old one being quite a ruin, open to wind and rain. We also began a new House because the present hut we occupy is unfit for further use. When it rains we stand in need of our umbrellas inside, as much and even more than outside, but the works are stopped for want of funds. As soon as Providence comes to our assistance we shall both push the constructions on and receive a larger number of boys. Thus we shall be able to work more efficaciously for the good of the Jivaros.

\* \* \* \* \*

NOVEMBER 20th.—About the middle of this month, I met with a serious accident from which I escaped almost miraculously. Returning from a few visits to the Jivaros, one afternoon, in company with five or six Indians, we had to cross the River Gualaquiza, when the saddle-strap of my horse broke and I was thrown against the stump of a tree. Somehow my feet got entangled in the stirrups and the horse fell with its heavy body right on top of mine. In order to extricate itself, the impatient beast began furiously kicking to right and left, not failing, meanwhile, to give me a good share of blows. My Jivaro companions started shouting, crying and weeping, and as for me, death staring me in the face, I had recourse to Mary Help of Christians.

At last, thanks be to God, the horse disengaged itself from the saddle and arose to its feet, leaving me more dead than alive. I tried to get on my feet again, but could not bend my back and fell on the ground. After a while I attempted again with the aid of the Jivaros, but the pains I felt were so severe that I had to sit down at once. In a neighbouring hut they found a new saddle and with great difficulty and immense pain I was lifted on horseback, and kept there.

Slowly, slowly we returned home. Each step of the horse seemed like a hammer-stroke all over my body. I assure you that I reached home more dead than alive. I could not stand any longer and I was obliged to go to bed, thinking I should not leave it very soon.

Wishing good night to my confrères, I told them I was better, in order not to frighten them, but my private opinion of the state of things was altogether different. The pains were cruel and seemed to increase. I turned with confidence to God and to Mary Help of Christians, and had recourse to the intercession of a Saint I have a great devotion to. And oh wonder! scarcely had I done so and applied his relics to my bruised person, than the pains vanished and I felt I was really cured. I cannot say the joy it gave me, and falling on my knees, I thanked my heavenly protectors most heartily.

Next morning, to the great astonishment of all, I went to awaken all my confrères, presided at meditation and invited all to join me in thanking God and our good Mother Mary Help of Christians for this singular grace.

\* \* \* \* \*

DECEMBER 1st.—A war has broken out between the Jivaros, a deadly, exterminating war. Already there are several wounded and dead, and I am called to give the assistance of my ministry to the dying. A good number of Christians and Jivaros with horses are waiting for me outside.

It seems that for the missionary there is no danger and that it is our duty to advance slowly and prudently with the Cross in hand to pacify them all.

May God and Mary be with us!



(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.**—I feel called upon once again to give thanks to Our Lady Help of Christians, this time for the successful issue of two painful operations undergone by my young daughter and youngest son, and for two other favours received. I enclose an offering and desire to have two Masses said in our Lady's honour.

If it were possible to have this grace published in the *Salesian Bulletin* I should be truly grateful.

MRS. MARY M. MAXWELL-SCOTT,  
*Lilystone Hall, Stock.*

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**The Novena counselled by Don Bosco.**—The undersigned Erminia Imperatori, writes to inform us that she made the Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to Mary Most Holy Help of Christians, counselled by Don Bosco. The object of the Novena was to obtain the grace of a much wished for cure, by promising to render public thanksgiving in the pages of the *Salesian Bulletin*. She now fulfils this promise, declaring with the most lively gratitude, that before the Novena was over the favour was granted from Heaven. May this tend to the greater glory of God and to revive confidence in the intercession of Mary Most Holy Help of Christians.

ERMINIA IMPERADORI.

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**Cure of a malady in the eyes.**—Four years ago, in the Autumn Vacation, I was afflicted with a disease in the eyes, which delayed my return to College. I was

again attacked by the same malady after my return, so that I could not do my school work, and I was on the point of going home again. At this point my Professor advised me to have recourse to Mary Most Holy, promising her an offering if she obtained for me the longed for grace. Following his advice, I made a promise that if, on the next day, I were able to serve at the Altar, I would have the grace published in the *Salesian Bulletin* and in the *Catholic Readings*, and would send an offering of five francs to Our Lady's Sanctuary at Turin. Nor was my trust in this good Mother misplaced, seeing that not only was I able to serve at the Altar on the next day, but I began to get better and better, and little by little became perfectly cured. From that day to this, I have not suffered in my eyes anything more than a slight disturbance once, and through the whole of this Winter, my chest has caused me no suffering at all, as it used to in former years. I attribute all this to the goodness of Mary, and I am glad to fulfil my promise. Whilst asking pardon of this good Mother for delaying my thanksgiving so long, I beg her to continue to help me with her powerful intercession, so that I may obtain another much longed for grace.

A SALESIAN PUPIL, *Spezia*.

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

Rev. Fr. Giamello, Cortemiglia; Joseph Blati, Castelrosso; Catherine Vallino, Saluggia; Josephine Bertinetti, Rivarolo; F. L. from M. A., Mondovì; Vincent Battù, Casalborgone; Rev. Peter Barassi, Gerola; Mary Arduino, S. Stefano Ravero.



## LONDON.

### THE SALESIAN SCHOOLS OF THE SACRED HEART.

The 16th and 17th of January last, were days that had long been looked forward to by the children of the Salesian schools of the Sacred Heart. A tea-party is always given to them at Christmas by Madame Henry Whiting, a lady well known for her piety and generosity.

This year it was found impossible to give all

the children their treat on the same day, owing to the great increase in their number. There are now between six and seven hundred of them counting boys, girls and infants.

On the first day Madame and Miss Whiting accompanied by Mrs. Paul Whiting and family, arrived at the school at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The girls opened proceedings in the recreation room which had been prettily decorated for the purpose. It was crowded to overflowing with the school-children. A very interesting programme had been prepared by the good Sisters of Notre Dame who have charge of the school; and if it were not an invidious task to make distinctions, we should be inclined to single out the three following pieces as deserving very high praise:—The trial scene in "The Merchant of Venice," the scarf drill and "Grandmother's Dream." Some of the girls showed real histrionic talent. Next came the distribution of prizes, after which the Rev. Fr. Macey rose and said that Madame Whiting wished him to thank them all for their interesting entertainment, and in a special manner the good Nuns and excellent teachers who had prepared the children so well. He concluded by saying that they would now adjourn to the schoolroom where they would perhaps find something almost as interesting awaiting them. Needless to say, the tea-party was a great success, the bonbons all that could be desired and the kindness of the Rev. Fr. Macey, Madame and Miss Whiting, who themselves waited upon their merry little guests, gratefully appreciated by all. The evening was closed with the performance of the cantata *The Forty Robbers*. We will say nothing of the screams of laughter evoked by the genial Morgiana or by the contortions of the *donkey*, but content ourselves with observing that if we have only congratulations to offer the young actors for their first performance, their second one, on the following night, deserved something even more. Their success is due to the skilful training of the Rev. Fr. Rabagliati. The morrow saw a repetition of the previous day's proceedings. An address was read by one of the boys, and afterwards a very interesting programme was gone through. Here, again, we confine ourselves to mentioning three pieces of special merit:—a very beautiful *Ave Maria*, an action song given by the younger children, called *Chinaman*, and a dialogue entitled "the Miller of Mansfield." The prizes were then distributed, and the children, this time the boys and younger children only, went into the schoolroom for tea. Once more the same scene was enacted, Madame and Miss Whiting again kindly attending to the wants of the children.

After tea *The Forty Robbers* was given a second time and with great success; and the children went home happy and grateful to all those, who, for Our dear Lord's sake, had done so much for them.





## THE STORY OF THE ORATORY OR DON BOSCO'S OPENING APOSTOLATE.

CHAPTER XI.—(Continued.)



THE Sacred History was followed by a compendium of Ecclesiastical History, which was productive of great good amongst the boys. Worthy of special mention are the reasons which induced Don Bosco to undertake this work.—“Devoted for many years,” he says in his preface, “to the instruction of the young, and wishing to endow them with all the most useful knowledge, I looked all about for a short course of Ecclesiastical History, which was suited to their capacity. Although I found a few which were all that could be desired, from many points of view, yet, for my purpose, they were either too voluminous, or too discursive on the subject of profane history; and what I could not help observing without indignation was that some authors seem to be ashamed of speaking of the Roman Pontiffs and of the most luminous facts which directly regard the Holy See.” Don Bosco dedicated this little work of his to the Provincial of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Turin, to whom, amongst other things, he said:—“I know very well that I am acting against your modesty and humility; but as the work has been written only for the greater glory of God and the spiritual advantage of the young in a special manner, in whom you are completely wrapped up, thus, you see, all pretexts for opposition are taken away.” These two works of Don Bosco were found to be very well adapted for the young, both on account of the judicious selection of facts, the easy style in which they were explained, and the delicacy of the expressions used there. They were, therefore, welcomed with applause, and were largely spread to the immense advantage of youth, whose welfare was always uppermost in the every thought and affection of that holy man.

In the meantime the classes went on full sail, so to speak, and Don Bosco added to his other classes a drawing class and another in arithmetic and the metric system, which, in a short time, was to be enforced by law. But here another book was necessary, which would have been looked for in vain, else-

where, at that time. The unwearied master was not dismayed, and applying himself to the work, as a good mathematician, produced a little book entitled:—*The Metric Decimal System reduced to Simplicity*, which, edited with great clearness of ideas and in a popular form, was received at that time with great praise.

I conclude this chapter with the observation that the love of truth obliges me to point to Don Bosco as the founder of Sunday and evening classes. These classes are now spread all over Italy, to the great advantage of individuals and families of somewhat straitened means and are of great service to the nation. Honour to whom honour is due.

CHAPTER XII.

**Don Bosco at Sassi—The pupils of the Christian schools—Juvenile Outbreak—Double embarrassment—Charity supplies for a miracle—Death of Gregory XVI and election of Pius IX—Fatal illness—Love and affection of the boys for Don Bosco—The cure—A happy feast—Visits to Becchi.**

In all times and in all places boys have shown themselves well disposed towards those who love them sincerely and who seek after their real good. Crowds of children and boys thronged round the person of our Divine Saviour, because he loved them better than a tender father does his children. A Saint Philip Neri went about surrounded everywhere by boys, whom that *Apostle of Rome* treated with indescribable kindness. And in our times, too, how much Don Bosco was loved by his boys, the following facts which are now going to be related form an incontestable proof.

Besides the work of the Oratory and the schools, Don Bosco also exercised the sacred Ministry in the prisons, the Cottolengo Hospital and the Refuge; hence there was very little free time left for himself. Now he worked incessantly all day long, so that in order to compile the books which were necessary to him and which I spoke of before, he had to study and work at night, a thing which proved well nigh fatal to him. In a few weeks time his health, already weak in itself, became so much worse that the doctors advised him to desist from every fatigue, unless he wished to meet with an irreparable disaster in the prime of his life. Fr. Borel who loved him and who did more for him than a brother, seeing him in this dangerous

state, sent him to pass some time in the house of that worthy priest Fr. Peter Abbonioli, curate of Sassi, a little village at the foot of the hill of Soperga. He remained there during the week until the Saturday evening, when he used to return to the city to pass the Sunday at the Oratory and with his boys.

In spite of the charitable attention of the kind priest and the good air of the place, that stay did not bring Don Bosco the improvement in health which was necessary to him. One of the causes was that, owing to his being so near to Turin, the boys of the Oratory went there very often to visit him, and together with those from the country they ended by giving him not a little to do. And not only did the Oratory boys come to see him now and then at Sassi, but the pupils of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* came, too, and on one particular occasion placed him in a double embarrassment, although by no means the first. It happened in the following way.

Amongst the schools under the wise direction of these Religious, were the municipal ones of Turin, called the schools of St. Barbara and frequented by several hundreds of boys. Don Bosco used to go there every week to hear Confessions in the adjoining chapel; some went to him at the Oratory; almost all were his penitents. Now, at the end of Spring in that year they had their Spiritual Exercises. During the holy Retreat they had been waiting for Don Bosco, and in the hope that he would go there as usual, scarcely one of them had thought of going to Confession to anyone else. In the meantime the last day of the Retreat came, and by degrees the boys came into the College from their homes and not seeing Don Bosco there, with their masters' permission, went to look for him at Valdocco. Not finding him there, and hearing that he was at Sassi, they went off in small bands in that direction, some thinking that Sassi was a house called by that name, and others that it was a place not far from Turin. Poor little fellows! They did not know that between going and coming back they would have a tramp of several miles. When they saw that they would have to go outside the city and cross the River Po, they ought to have abandoned their design and returned to College; but consideration was never the virtue of the young, and listening only to the pleadings of their hearts, the boys at the back followed the leadership of those in front, and pushed boldly on.

The weather was rainy, and after reaching a certain point, as they did not know the place, they lost their way, and went in search of Don Bosco through meadows, fields and vineyards. The people who met them asked:—

—“Where are you going? Whom do you want?”

—“We are going to Sassi, and we want Don Bosco: Where is Sassi? Where is Don Bosco?”

—“You have lost your way”—answered the villagers—“you will have to turn back, go round, and up the hill: and then who and where Don Bosco is, we don't know. The parish priest of Sassi is not called Bosco; moreover there is no priest in the country with such a name.”

—“Anyhow,” answered the strayed youngsters, “they told us that Don Bosco was at Sassi, and there he must be.”

Others, falling back on the ignorance of the first, making use of a *quid pro quo* asked:—

—“Where is Sassari?”

The people answered with a laugh:—

—“Sassari is in Sardinia, and you will have to go there in a ship:”—and so the poor youngsters remained in distress.

Finally, after being put on the right way, some from one part, others from another, the boys arrived at different times at the priest's house. There were three hundred of them, covered with perspiration, smothered with mud and mire, and so worn out with fatigue and hunger as to cause pity.

(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.

Communications and offerings may be addressed to our Superior-General:

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

### The Salesian Bulletin

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*The whole Institution depends for its support upon the Alms of the Charitable.*

*In connection with the Salesian Congregation is the*

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*The conditions of Membership are very simple:*

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