

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.
- L. 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.

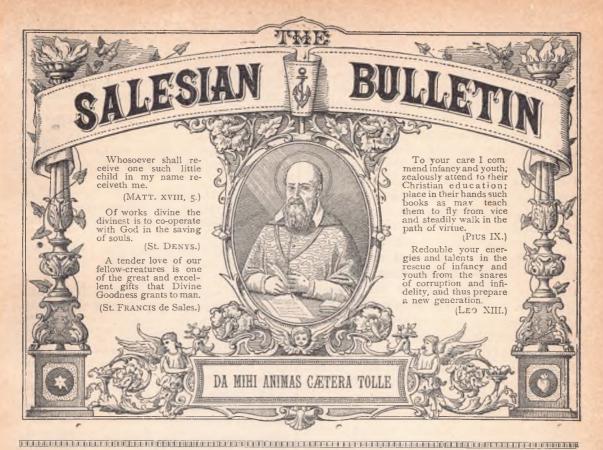
The names of the Associates who have passed to eternity during the year, shall also be forwarded to the Members of the Association, in order that they may be remembered in the prayers of all their brethren.

[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 Prenary 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 Sacarments 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.



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A GREAT DISASTER.



reached us from Patagonia since the publication, in our last issue, of the cablegram from his Lord-

ship Bishop Cagliero, Vicar-Apostolic of Patagonia to our venerable Superior-General, regarding the effects of the flood in that country. Not only is the painful message confirmed, but intelligence of inundations having prevailed throughout the greater part of Patagonia is to hand. The Rio Negro and the Rio Colorado in the north, the Rio Chubut in the centre, and the Rio Santa Cruz in the extreme south of the land, have overflowed their banks and spread ruin and desolation for miles and miles around.

The once flourishing towns and villages, built along these rivers have suffered severely: in some cases they have been laid in ruins. Viedma, Conesa, Pringles, Roca, Rawson, Gaiman, and, perhaps also Chosmalal and Junin have shared this latter fate. And in all these places, the Salesian missions, which cost our Fathers and the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians years of hard work and sacrifice, have in a few short hours been destroyed, or damaged in such a manner by the raging flood as to be unserviceable. It is, however, consoling to relate that amidst these distressing events there are no casualities to deplore. For this God be thanked and praised!

The Salesian Missionaries first entered upon the vast region of Patagonia in 1879, after a journey of several months' duration from Buenos Ayres across the dreary Pampas. The year following they succeeded in founding two large Institutes: one at Viedma, the other at Patagones, towns situated on the opposite banks of the Rio Negro. Since then Salesian Houses, or, at least, Missionary residences have been established in almost every important centre of population; and our devoted "fishers of men" gradually scattered themselves over this immense wilderness, seeking out the Indians in the encampments and announcing to them the saving Truths of our Holy Religion. Now, these missions are in part destroyed; and our Fathers, who alone know what toil and sacrifice they have cost to establish, must begin over again their arduous work in many places. We adore, however, the inscrutable designs of Almighty God in allowing this great calamity to overtake our Society, and we repeat with holy Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord, so it is done; blessed be the name of the Lord."

We now place before you, dear Readers, a letter from Bishop Cagliero, Vicar-Apostolic of Patagonia, to a member of the Salesian Community, concerning the disastrous event. At the same time we warmly recommend the Patagonian missions to your charity.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am writing to you from the scene of the disaster.

Viedma has been literally razed to the ground. Only four blocks of buildings remain standing. Among these is our own block, comprising the Salesian Institute of Arts and Trades, the episcopal residence, the Convent of the Sisters of Mary Help of Christians, the Homes for orphans and Magdalenes, besides the two hospitals for men and women.

There seems to be something miraculous in the preservation of these establishments.

In Conesa, the only houses that have withstood the flood are those of the Salesians and the Nuns, which, moreover, like the Ark of Noah afforded shelter to many who managed to reach them.

At Pringles, the Salesian Mission House has partially collapsed; whilst at Roca, the Home of the Nuns, and the Church are in ruins. The only building that has escaped destruction is the new Salesian Institute, which was but recently terminated and was to be inaugurated at the same time as the new railway—which, by-the-bye, has also suffered greatly from the inundation.

The news I have received from Chubut is

very distressing.

Our new missionary residence which had been lately erected in Rawson, the capital of the territory, has been washed clean away together with all the other buildings of the little town.

I am as yet ignorant of the fate of Chosmalal and Junin; but rumours are being circulated that these towns have been destroyed.

So far as I have been able to ascertain, there have been no lives lost. Thank God for this!

As the waters of the Rio Negro have greatly decreased, men are now actively engaged to drain the flooded town of Viedma. Four pumps are continually at work.

The College chapel and the Convent chapel have not suffered except from the mud and

excessive dampness.

But much damage has been done to the other buildings, and it will require a large outlay to strengthen the badly-shaken, and in some cases tottering, walls of our Institutes, etc., and to restore the parish Church which is in a dilapidated condition.

The inhabitants of Viedma, Pringles, and Conesa are flocking to Patagones. Every day brings a fresh contingent of refugees, among them many poor children who come to us for food and shelter, and we have not the heart to send them away. In the present crisis, a daily ration is served out to all the destitute.

The distress of the people, moreover, is beyond description. I recommend you and others, therefore, to collect alms for their relief.

Wishing you every blessing, I remain, etc.

GIOVANNI, Bishop of Magida, V. A. of Patagonia.

The following article, which throws some light on the disastrous effects of the inundation caused by the overflowing of the Rio Chubut in Central Patagonia, is taken from the Buenos Ayres La Voz de la Iglesia of August 12th:—

On the 9th inst. there arrived at our port by the Santa Cruz, two Salesian Fathers from Rawson (Chubut), accompanied by eleven little orphans, six of these being natives. On the boat were also three Sisters of Mary Help of Christians from the same Mission with three little Indian girls. They have been obliged to seek refuge here, as their mission no longer exists. It was destroyed by the terrible inundation of the Rio Chubut which levelled Rawson to the ground. The ravages resulting from the overflowing of this river are far greater than those caused by that of the Rio Negro.

noon, however, that the Nuns and their alumnic could be transferred to a place of safety, since it was only then that a way made of tables, beams and planks, leading from the Convent to a spot out of reach of the water, was available.

A benevolent Italian family living on the eminence, kindly placed their dwelling at the disposal of the Nuns and their pupils.

His Excellency Colonel O'Donnell, Governor of Chubut, gave proof of great activity and admirable prudence in the emergency.



Viedma after the Inundation.

On July 23, the inhabitants of Rawson were warned that the Rio Chubut had swoollen to such an extent that an inundation was imminent. The people, however, gave the matter very little of their attention, contenting themselves with merely removing the few articles which lay outside their homes.

Four days later, namely, on the morning of the 27th inst., an impetuous torrent of water came rushing over the banks of the river and entered the people's dwellings on all sides. In the short space of three hours it rose to the height of four and a half feet in the interior of the houses, and for a whole week remained at that level. When the water gave signs of diminishing, all the houses had collapsed,—only the Church remained standing, but it was in a very bad condition. The Salesian College had fallen in, and nothing but ruins were left of the Nuns' Convent.

The Fathers and their pupils together with the greater part of the population gained a neighbouring elevation where they were out of danger. It was not until late in the after-

Not content with sending a number of carts and boats to the relief of the people, he himself rode to all the houses in his carriage. and succeeded in helping out of a dilemma many a poor woman and child who had no means of leaving their temporary prison. Thanks to the prompt and generous action of the authorities, not a single life was lost. Under their directions, small huts were improvised on the hill with pieces of zinc and other available materials from the ruined houses below, and thus shelter was provided for all. At this moment that unfortunate population is still to be found on that elevation, awaiting the bountiful hand of charity to furnish it with the means wherewith to rebuild the modest town. Unlike the people of Viedma, who found refuge from the flood in the town of Patagones (which lay in sight of them on the other side of the Rio Negro), the inhabitants of Rawson are obliged to remain where they are for the present, as they are far removed from any centre of population.

The Superior of the Mission of Chubut,

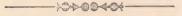
having left two Salesian Fathers to attend to the welfare of the unfortunate men, women, and children camping on the hill at Rawson, has come to Almagro to knock at the door of his brethren and beg food and shelter for his precious charge of ten little orphan boys. The Nuns with several native girls have likewise journeyed thus far to seek refuge with the Sisters of their Congregation in this The deplorable condition of these forlorn little ones will suffice to give an idea of what the homeless inhabitants of Rawson are forced to suffer. We are sure the people of Buenos Ayres, who are well-known for their benevolence, will not fail to take a charitable interest in them.

The journey of the refugees has been long and tedious. It was not until a week after the inundation that they were able to find waggons to take them to Trelew, the nearest town, which lies about ten miles from there. Owing to the flooded state of the country, they had to take a round-about way, and instead of ten miles they traversed at least twenty-five miles to reach that town. They remained in Trelew three days, and, at the end of that time, set out for Port Madrin on the New Gulf. Here they were treated with great kindness and hospitality by the authorities, who let then want for nothing. A few days later they left in the Santa Cruz bound for Buenos Ayres, arriving here on the 9th inst.

These Fathers and Nuns have not words enough to praise and thank the officers of the vessel which brought them here, for the great kindness they lavished upon them.

We hear that the effects of the inundation have been much more disastrous at Gaiman, which lies about thirty-six miles away from Rawson in the Valle Superior—the centre of the Welsh colony. The whole valley, which has an area of about nine square miles, was swamped, and in less than three hours all the dwellings were washed away. The Salesian Chapel, an edifice only recently built, is in ruins. The inhabitants of the town saved themselves by climbing the hill-sides. It is calculated that there are about 3,000 people on those hill-sides without food or shelter!

May God touch the hearts of the people of Buenos Ayres. They will not, we are sure, be backward in lending a generous hand to their unfortunate brethren of the South.



DON BOSCO AND HIS WORK OF SALESIAN EDUCATION.

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The following interesting article is from the gifted pen of the Hon. A. Wilmot, M. L. C., and appeared some time ago in the "South African Catholic Magazine."



ore than four hundred thousand poor boys are educated in the true sense of the word by a new order of clergy whose efforts are so wonderfully successful that

a little attention to their history and methods seems desirable. One secret of this extraordinary success is to be found in the fact that "the preventive system" in disciplinary matters is invariably adopted. This is the only plan which Don Bosco ever would approve, and it was always inculcated by him as the surest ground-work of Christian education. A very characteristic feature of the method is the total absence of every sort of violent punishment. The observance of rules is obtained by carefully instilling into the youthful mind a true sense of duty, and by highly appreciating every little effort in the path of virtue, while shortcomings are forestalled as much as possible by assiduously removing occasions likely to give them birth. The principles of the New Testament are above all things and at all times applied, or in other words, the chief aim of the Salesians is to make their pupils good Christians. As a means to this end, daily attendance at mass, fervent prayer, and above all frequent confession and communion are prescribed and very carefully attended to. This does not in the least hinder the boys learning their lessons and their trades well, in fact it is the most powerful means that can be used to make them ready and anxious to do their duty in whatever state of life it may please God to place them. Nothing is more outrageously fallacious than the idea that to learn the law of God adequately, that is, every day, and as the principal and most necessary part of all education, is to sacrifice the temporal interests of the pupil and prevent society which subscribes to these institutions getting the full benefits which it has a right to demand. The exact contrary is the case. A good obedient boy who acts from principle does his work necessarily better than the youth whose moral sense received no competent guidance and whose passions are uncontrolled by the just restrictions of religion. Then so far as Society is concerned any education that is not permeated by efficient religious instruction is a gross fraud, as its subjects are merely given weapons wherewith to fight against order and morality. If at the most impressionable period of life the seeds of Christian virtue and dogma be sown and cultivated they may be expected to bring forth fruit, but if this be neglected the tares of indifferentism, unbelief, and self-gratification spring up, and result in a crop most injurious

to prefigure his future life. He saw himself in a meadow near his house in the midst of a great multitude of children at play. A great many in this crowd were blaspheming and behaving badly, at which he lost patience and rushing on the offenders began to chastise them. At that instant a white-robed person with glorious radiant face suddenly appeared and turning towards little Bosco said: Not with blows, but with charity and gentleness you must draw those friends of yours to the path of virtue; and she ordered him to preach a



Viedma after the Inundation.

to Society. Teaching arithmetic, reading and geography will never train up citizens to be honest, truthful and industrious, while to relegate religious instruction to Parents and Sunday schools is simply to leave the mass of poor boys without any religious instruction whatsoever. Certainly Don Bosco could never have succeeded had he not firmly believed that Christianity cannot be thoroughly understood nor efficiently practised unless it be the Alpha and Omega of education.

John Melchior Bosco, one of the greatest practical philosophers of the present century, whose studies of social problems and methods of solving them deserve profound attention, was born in a peasant's cottage in the Archdiocese of Turin on the 16th of August 1815. He was the son of a man who had to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, and in due course he joined in his father's daily toil. He had however been religiously educated, and was a boy of pious disposition and great mental capacity. When only ten years of age he had a singular dream which seemed

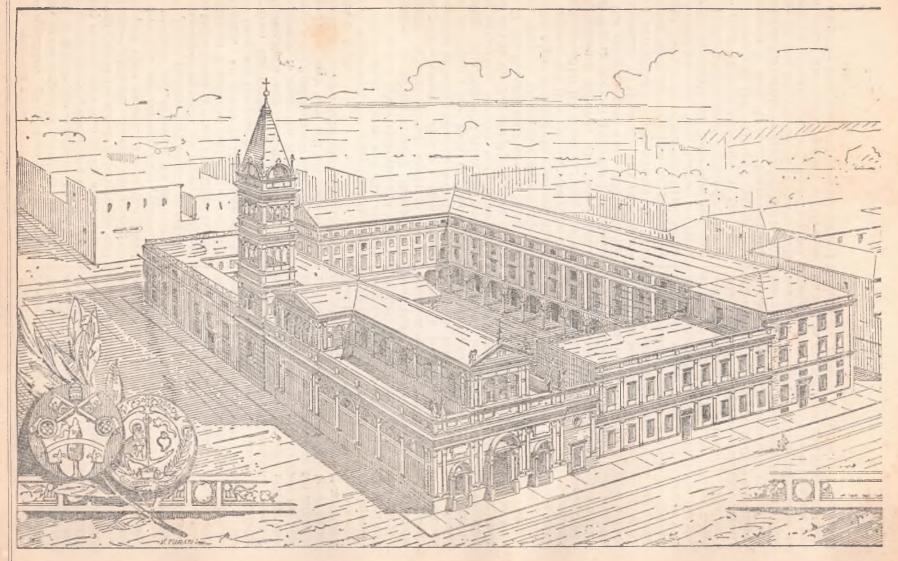
sermon on the hatefulness of vice and the beauty of virtue. He tried to excuse himself, and burst into tears, but the white-robed figure encouraged him and said that it was only necessary to begin and she would help him. As he was about to begin there appeared a lady of majestic deportment, and at the same time, instead of the crowd of children, a multitude of beasts of every kind came in sight. He was almost stupefied at this spectacle but was reassured by the lady, who said: Behold the field of your action; here is where you must work. Be humble and be strong, and what you now see happening to these beasts you must do for my children. Then at once a new spectacle appeared. The wild animals were changed into lambs which, bleating and skipping, playfully chased each other around the white-robed person and the majestic lady. Little John Bosco then was almost mad with joy, and in his excitement awoke and found that it had all been a dream, -a vision of the future however. thoroughly and literally fulfilled.

After surmounting great difficulties John Bosco concluded his religious studies in 1841, and received holy orders at Turin. Although offered a benefice he thought it wiser, on the advice of the Abbé Caffasso, to remain at the Athenaum in order to perfect himself in the study of pulpit eloquence and moral theology. It was nevertheless at this time that he commenced to assemble the little urchins of the town on Sundays and holidays. He possessed a wonderful influence—that of real sympathy and love—over the most turbulent and undisciplined boys. He also began to show that great attribute without which no one can become a ruler of men—the power of choosing good lieutenants. these occupations did not in the slightest hinder Bosco's collegiate success, as he passed brilliantly through a course of philosophical and theological studies at the university of Turin. Then his armour was completely fitted on, and he plunged more deeply into the fray. A great phase of the social problem was now before him. Hundreds of waifs and strays-poor whites in every sense of the word—growing up to become the wild beasts who prey on society and are hunted down by its protectors. His philosophy enabled him to see that the only efficient remedy was the application of the rules of Christianity. It was necessary to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to instruct the ignorant. Funds were obtained, schools built, institutions founded. A recent biographer tells us that it would be long and even painful to follow Don Bosco in his new capacity of schoolmaster; or, without dwelling on his unheard of, toiling and trudging, to simply enumerate the annoyances and persecutions that had to be undergone because of sectarian spite and official intolerance. Years even passed in unuseful struggles, and at last his opponents ceased to throw obstacles in his way because they found that by doing so they merely increased his success. At last John Bosco possessed an efficient staff of teachers chosen by himself, and work went on successfully. "Little by little the mustard seed of the Gospel planted in Valdocco by the holy Priest, stretched forth its branches far and wide, and many a homeless wanderer came and nestled in its friendly shade."

The great object of the Salesian Institution (named in honour of St. Francis of Sales) is to rescue immortal souls from misery and sin. Their chief work is that of imparting Christian education to destitute children, and in doing so they try to make them good

citizens in every way, as not only are they instructed in duties to God and to their neighbours, but they are taught trades to enable them to gain an honest living. Great populous centres, as well as unpretending villages in Italy, France and Spain at this moment exhibit demonstrative proofs of the success of the movement. In the first-named country alone there are fifty establishments, while in Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Poland and England the work has commenced. South America is beginning to benefit, and a time is not far distant when the merits of the system will be recognised in every country of the world. In the Salesian Bulletin we are informed that on the last day of January, 1888, the good Father Don Bosco passed to his eternal repose, but that his sons-confiding in Divine Providence and in the charity of the followers of Jesus Christ -have continued his charitable institution for the benefit of religion and of suffering humanity. One of the judiciously selected lieutenants has succeeded to the post of Captain, and now the Salesians have as Father General the Very Reverend Michael Rua, who was born at Turin in 1837, and now in his native city directs the operations of the entire organisation.

Italy at present suffers under the load of burdens greater than she can bear. Here is an extensive country absolutely without minerals, and with no manufactures worthy of the name, reduced in consequence to rely entirely on the land. But the Fiscal policy of the Government is so exceedingly oppressive and unwise that there is no inducement, but rather the contrary, to do anything to develop the resources of the Nation. Land is taxed more than forty per cent., food is dear, labour scarce, and the people starving. A Scotchman in business at Florence for six years, gave us a pathetic account of the manner in which industry and enterprise are completely crushed. There is only one idea, that of being a great first class power with a huge naval armament and large army. The fable of the frog in the fable who desired to swell himself into an ox is being realised. Everything is sacrificed to war business in Abyssinia. Education, viticulture, manufactures, are all neglected and insolvency must soon result. The natural consequence is that there is an intensely impoverished and discontended people with a greater influx of children not provided with means of education. Indeed the destitute and the unemployed are danger-

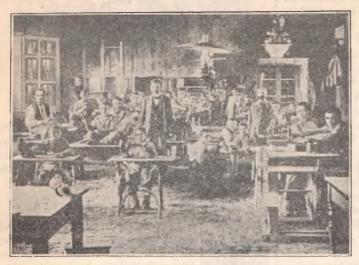


THE SALESIAN CHURCH AND HOSPICE OF THE SACRED HEART, ROME.

ously numerous while thousands of emigrants are constantly going from Genoa to find work in the Argentine Republic. In such a state of matters the Salesians are tasked to the utmost to feed, clothe and educate hundreds of poor boys who would otherwise be brought up in the streets to become the wild animals—anarchists, thieves and murderers who prey upon Society. The harvest indeed is plentiful, but impossibilities cannot be surmounted, and although the followers of Don Bosco perform very extensive work, it is impossible to admit all those who apply. The Government is "very liberal" to the Salesians, as it does not confiscate any of their buildings. Of course in Italy there are no poor laws, and the poor have suffered heavily from the confiscation of the funds of religious, both men and women, who used generously to assist the distressed. So far however the Salesians have escaped and it is hoped that their turn will not come to provide additional funds for the unified Government of Italy.

Let us now visit two of the Salesian houses in Italy-one at Turin and the other in Rome. It is a bright clear day and there is pleasure in swiftly rolling through the streets. A great church seems to be the goal of our journey. This is a surprisingly handsome building dedicated to God in honour of "Mary, the Help of Christians." Stately aisles, beautiful altars, fine paintings and statues—an elevated taste in architecture and in the fine arts placed at the disposal of religion, and used entirely in its service. This is, of course, a church for the district, where everyone who chooses to attend is welcome, but it is specially the church of the boys-of all the waifs and strays, of all the neglected children, who may consider that it is their own. Immediately adjoining is the great Palazzo where 950 boys are educated.... In the centre is a great courtyard surrounded by lofty areades and here we see most joyous troops at play. Joy beams from every countenance and health is written on every face. Games are being carried on briskly and there does not seem to be much supervision necessary. One of the great guiding principles of the institution is to make the boys happy and certainly they seem to succeed. Some hours each day are devoted to harmless amusement, and in this time lessons are laid aside, the tailor puts down his thimble, the carpenter his plane, the printer his composing stick, and all unite in obtaining that healthful pleasure without which life would be found to be only a burden and religion but an unthankful task. The dormitories, refectory and workshops are all lofty and well ventilated and the system adopted is the very opposite to the "sweating" one. The branch to which the greatest attentions seems to be paid is that devoted to printing and bookbinding, which is on a large scale, and from which a considerable income must be derived.

Let us now visit another of the fifty institutions in Italy-that of Rome. It is situated on a new part of the city, close to the railway station. The Church of the Sacred Heart is one of the handsomest of the recently built ecclesiastical edifices of the eternal city. It is really a charming building. both in the exterior and interior. Indeed it quite surprises every stranger, and its cost must have been so great as to show the hold the Salesian work has upon the affection and charity of the people. The great building adjoining is of such noble proportions that it would not be at all a misnomer to style it a palace of education. Here, however only four hundred boys are instructed, fed and clothed in the building. Of course the Sacred Heart Church is used for general public wants as well as by the boys, and is attended by a large congregation. In residence there are twenty-two priests, thirty clerics and twenty-two lay brothers. In answer to questions about the institution, we were informed that some parents pay for their boys, but for the most of those sent nothing is received. Of course the waifs and strays have to be clothed, fed and educated gratis. In course of time their labour gives some return, but nevertheless the expenditure must necessarily be large. To obtain funds numbers of lay-people are enrolled in a third order as "Zelators," and the funds collected by them are used to further the great objects which the Salesians are endeavouring to attain. We were taken through the institution and specially observed that the dormitories, lavatories, school-rooms and workshops were all that could be desired. From the flat roof at the top we looked upon the gardens, villas, and orange trees of the vicinity. The boys whom we encountered were all clean, neatly attired, and seemed both healthy and happy. Kindness here as everywhere else is both the great bond of union and the infallible Wisdom of course so means of success. flavours it as to prevent imposition and put an end to disobedience and vice. The Salesians are masters of the art of successful management—and this is a fact which becomes patent to every careful observer. In summer the boys get up at 5:30 a.m., and in winter at six a.m. Every one has to hear Mass and join in morning prayers; Communions are frequent. Breakfast, at eight o'clock, consists



A Workshop of the Salesian Institute, Rosario.

of a sufficient quantity of bread. At dinner, which takes place at twelve noon, there is soup, meat, and bread, a slight repast at four p.m. and finally supper, composed of the same materials as dinner, at eight in the evening. Work at trades, lessons and play

are all mapped out until eight p.m., when the day finishes. The juniors have three and a half hours of recreation and the seniors two and a half per diem. Shoemaking, tailoring, carpentering, and printing are all being carried on. In Turin we saw beautiful artistic carved wood work, and if boys show that they possess an aptitude for any special avocation this is no doubt attended to. Love conquers labour, makes toil a pleasure, sanctifies work, and literally converts into lambs the wild animals of Don Bosco's celebrated dream.

"to be present at the feast of the 'Festive Oratory,' given at our Salesian College of San José, when I saw assembled, no less than 560 boys, and where I could appreciate, decerca, the admirable lines on which the worthy disciples of Don Bosco are carrying out the

ideals of that great man and philanthropist. Truly, their system of education, is based on the doctrine of love, practically following out the precepts set forth nineteen centuries ago by the Saviour of mankind, a doctrine and system which are giving the most excellent results among the destitute of our cities as well as among the savages of the Chaco, and the desolate wastes of Tierra del Fuego. The boys whom I saw present, would have been so many more vagabonds or idle loafers, up to any mischief, and instead there they were, of their free will, enjoying themselves in correct lines, at the same time that the good Fathers were losing no opportunity of

instructing them in the principles of religion and morality.

"The band of music formed by the little artisans, which was organized only three months ago, has made wonderful progress, and I heard two or three tunes played in very

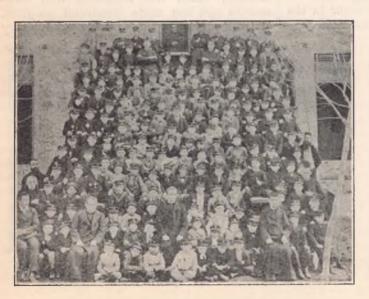


Group of Children of the "Festive Oratory", Rosario.

THE SALESIAN COLLEGE OF SAN JOSÉ, ROSARIO.

had the pleasure, on Sunday last"—writes the special correspondent of the Buenos Ayres Standard to that paper of September 3,— correct style by its 24 performers. This tour de force, because it undoubtedly is one, is due to the untiring efforts and energy of the Father Superior of the establishment. There were some theatricals got up by the internal pupils, which greatly contributed to the amusement of the little folks present. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was afterwards given by the Rev. Father Emmanuel Montaldo, followed by a short and well-timed address, encouraging the boys present to come every Sunday and to bring their friends with them. This address was delivered by Rev. Father John Farinati, the Superior of the Festive Oratory, a worthy and practical follower of the methods instituted by the founder of the Order. During my stay I passed a very pleasant half hour in conversation with Father Valentine Bonetti, who, though a young man in years, is old in knowledge and in the true devotedness to his work. He gave me many interesting details of the work being done by the Order in many parts of the world. I also met the genial librarian of the college, Rev. Brother Thomas Noblet, who was making himself ubiquitous and generally useful, although, as he told me in confidence, he was only playing third fiddle in the proceedings of the day. Modesty of the calling, eh?

"All through I had an opportunity of seeing the splendid work being carried out by the Society and the discipline, blended with kindness, which is noticeable in each and every detail; and when I saw those five hundred odd boys of our oi polloi assembled there I could not help thinking that but for



Superiors and Alumni of Salesian College, Rosario.

institutions of this kind we should have that number more or less as a future addition to our atorrante class, incread of as many more useful citizens in the country."



COLUMBIA.

IN BEHALF OF THE LEPERS.

Father Rabagliati has written the following interesting letter to our venerable Superior-General, in which he gives an account of an expedition in search of a suitable site for the erection of a Leper-asylum:—

VERY REV. AND DEAR DON RUA,



N accordance with the wishes of the President of the Columbian Republic that I should resume the undertaking in behalf of the lepers, I left Bogota in company

with one of our alumni, very soon after Easter and came to the Department of Santander to begin operations, as it counts more lepers than the rest of Columbia. As a first step it was decided to erect three lazarettos, each

large enough to contain from two to three thousand leners.

It may, no doubt, cause you. dear Father, and the Readers of the Salesian Bulletin, much surprise to hear speak of building, in this Department alone, three lazarettos, each to accommodate over two thousand lepers, and I can perfectly understand your feelings. If a European nation were so unfortunate as to enumerate among its twenty or thirty million inhabitants so many as eight or ten thousand infected with leprosy. such a state of things would be regarded with horror, and nothing would be left undone to remove the frightful infection. Here, however, matters are viewed in quite a different light. In the Republic of Columbia

there are no less than thirty thousand lepers. Now, with the exception of two thousand who live in the two lazarettos at Agua de Dios and Coatratacion, and about sixty others in a third lazaretto at Caño del Loro, the lepers are scattered over this vast country, living in the towns and villages, and at liberty to go where they please. And so far nothing, or very little, has been done to destroy this dreadful monster of leprosy: it has been allowed to pursue its course almost unmolested, and, consequently, has made fearful havoc among the people of Columbia. Then there are the two lazarettos at Agua de Dios and Contratacion. To carry on these no less than half a million dollars are annually expended by the State; yet they are lazarettos only in name. Someone has even called them manufactories of lepers! and experience has taught me that this expression is no figure of speech. The unlimited intercourse between the sick and healthy people there; the circulation of the paper money which has been in the leper villages; the markets frequently held there: the intermarriage of lepers and nonlepers, and a thousand other causes make Agua de Dios and Contratacion veritable hot-beds of infection.

In my last letter I informed you of my arrival in Pamplona. I also told you that I expected to be leaving there shortly with a party of gentlemen in search of a suitable site for a lazaretto. During my sojourn in town, a meeting was held at the episcopal residence, in which his Lordship the Bishop, five doctors, several influential gentlemen of the town and the present writer took part. We met in order to exchange views about the leper problem, and to decide on the locality I might explore with a hope of finding an advantageous site for a lazaretto. Our choice fell on the regions situated in the eastern quarter of the Province, about 20 leagues from Pamplona. A young doctor of considerable ability, as I myself had occasion afterwards to experience, volunteered to accompany me on this expedition; another gentleman, an engineer, offered me his services: whilst three others well acquainted with the district also joined our party. His Lordship likewise assigned me a priest chosen from among the parish priests of the neighbourhood, in case I should stand in need of his ministrations, for a journey such as ours over mountains and through virgin forests with innumerable wide and deep rivers to cross, is fraught with no little danger. Having completed the necessary preparations for our expedition which we reckoned would engage us about a fortnight, we set out on our journey. Our little caravan consisted of fifteen persons: seven of these formed the official commission, if I may call it such, whilst the others were attendants, such as the guide, the cook, the muleteers for the conveyance of the provisions, two men armed with axes to clear the way for us in the forests, and a friend of the tribes of Indians who dwell in the locality we were about to explore. Most of the party carried a rifle slung across their shoulders; and all were supplied with revolvers so as to be prepared in case of meeting with jaguars, or pumas, or venemous reptiles with which the forests of these warm climes abound. My only weapons were the Crucifix and a medal of our Lady Help of Christians: other weapons would have been useless in my hands as I have never handled other in all my life.

At the very outset of our journey I had a disagreeable surprise. The priest accompanying us, in the course of a long conversation, said to me: "Father, if the leperasylum it is intended to establish in this province, is only capable of containing two or three thousand lepers, I myself could undertake to fill it. Look! up there is Labateca. my parish," he continued, pointing out to me a village on the brow of a hill. "It numbers about five thousand inhabitants. Without exaggeration, a fourth of them at least are lepers. There is in my parish a family of twelve, all of whom are afflicted with leprosy. The people working in the fields are for the most part lepers. A large proportion of the different fruits, cheeses and sweetmeats on sale in Pamplona, Bucaramanga. and Cucuta, the chief towns in this province, have been gathered or made by leper hands." The doctor, on his part, assured me that of the twenty thousand inhabitants of S. Andrea in the Garcia Rovira province, no less than eight thousand are lepers. You can well imagine my surprise, dear Father, on hearing this intelligence. But careful consideration of the matter, only makes one wonder that it is not much worse. Most of these poor creatures are unprovided-for, and to keep body and soul together must work. Since their own townspeople very naturally refuse to purchase the produce of their industry, even when offered them at a very low price, they have it carried to market by their healthy friends or relatives, and there disposed of. The tainted produce is eaten or handled by people not suspecting the deception; the poison unconsciously inhaled; and the frightful disease makes its appearance where least expected. It is thus quite easy to understand the extraordinary

prevalence of leprosy in Columbia. And there is no hope of this state of things emending until the authorities seriously make up their minds to protect the healthy portion of the population from pestilence by isolating the lepers,—not denying to these latter, however, that benevolent care and solicitude which they have claim to in compensation for the sacrifice they are called upon to make by separation from relations and friends.

We passed our first night in the wilderness in an empty hut; and on the following morning after my companion priest and I had celebrated Mass, at which the whole party devoutly assisted, we continued our journey. But we soon found ourselves face to face with a not inconsiderable difficulty. We had reached the River Margua and must cross to the other side. The banks on each side rose to a height of about sixty feet, and, on looking down from where we were standing, we could see the waters, which recent rains had greatly swollen, rushing furiously along, dashing against boulders and rocks, and we were almost deafened by the thundering noise they made. A bridge formerly spanned the river at this point but had now disappeared, an emergency the likelihood of which had not crossed our minds. The only way to reach the other side was by quite a primitive mechanism, and one of a most fragile and hazarduous kind. It consisted of nothing more or less than four long lines of strong cable: two, covered with loose boards very little over a foot in length, over which to walk, and two above for the hands to hold by. It is perhaps needless to say that this rough contrivance rocks most dangerously beneath the traveller at every step.

At this sight we stared at one another in mute astonishment and shook our heads, as much as to say: "No thanks, it's too much of a risky business." For more than half-an-hour we stood there, unable to make up our minds to attempt the crossing. The man in charge of the cable-bridge passed to and fro thereon several times to try and convince us that there was no danger; still no one moved. Then he offered to carry us over one by one on his shoulders. This offer made in all seriousness was received with an outburst of laughter. Such a thing was quite out of the question. What was to be done? To turn back would be folly, and yet there was no other way than the cable-bridge to reach the opposite shore, except by swimming across the river; and no one would have dared to trust himself to the raging waters, even though he were an expert swimmer. We were revolving these things in our minds, when our guide, divesting himself of his boots and stockings, grasped the two wires above firmly, and stepped with great care on to the frail bridge. We almost held our breath as we watched him make his way slowly across, and we uttered a sigh of relief when he safely reached the other side. Our courage returned; in a few moments we, too, were barefoot, and picking our way with the utmost caution over the passage. At times one or other of us would stop on the way to take breath; this was a sign for the keeper to cry out: "Avoid looking below!" But how was it possible not to look below: the path was so narrow that we must observe where to place our feet at every step we took. The crossing took us about three hours to accomplish, and we did so without meeting with any accident. Our relief was great indeed. We could not refrain from congratulating one another as though we had escaped from some serious danger. Even the keeper congratulated us. "Well done!" he exclaimed. "I was not at all astonished to see you hesitate about going across the bridge. General X., so brave on the field of battle, on reaching this point had not the courage to proceed, and preferred to turn back. Others who dared not trust themselves to walk across, have consented to be carried blindfolded. Others, again, during the summer when the river below is less boisterous, prefer to swim across." As soon as we were all safely landed, this man made the journey to the other side and back twelve or thirteen times to bring us all our belongings, the mules, of course, excepted. These were made to swim across at a point, which appeared to be less dangerous than elsewhere. The resistance the poor beasts offered before they could be induced to enter the water, showed clearly that they were not unaware of the danger attending their crossing. A great deal of time was lost in getting them over, but they, too, were eventually landed in safety. By this time the afternoon was far advanced, so we decided to pass the rest of the day and the coming night at the keeper's dwelling, instead of pressing onwards and spending the night in the forest.

That evening we witnessed a scene which made our blood run cold. A woman crossing the cable-bridge stopped half-way, and began to gesticulate wildly, to shout, and to jump about as though bereft of her senses. he did not take the least notice of the two wires

to hold on by; in fact, she could not avail herself of them seeing that one of her hands firmly grasped a bulky sack of things swung across her back, and the other carried a bundle of sticks. She continued her mad antics for sometime, and we stood by watching her with wide-open eyes, unable to say a word or do anything to stop her, expecting every moment to see her fall into the raging waters beneath. After some time she paused, and, then, bent her steps close to where we were standing. "The poor woman is crazy", remarked our host in answer to a query put to him by one of the party. "What you have just seen her do, she does every day and several times a day. How she has managed thus far to escape unhuit passes my comprehension. I have endeavoured, times without number, to make her desist from crossing, but I have only to leave this place for a few minutes, and lo! there she is at her post, in the middle of the bridge, singing and jumping about, apparently heedless of any danger, and as though it were the choicest spot on earth for such demonstrations. Several years ago her husband was bit by a serpent in the woods close by, and died from the effects. His death so affected his widow that she began to show symptoms of insanity, and eventually she lost her reason altogether. No one seems to take any care of the poor creature. She has several brothers but they have basely deserted her. She has also an only daughter, who, however, on account of her youth, is unable to render her mother any service; besides, the latter, in her present state, cannot bear the sight of her. This forlorn child shares my home with me, and she looks up to me as to a father."

I was moved to pity on hearing this sad story. On my return journey, a week later, I had the unfortunate mother and daughter taken to Pamplona with the view of placing them in one of the many charitable institutions of that town. A home was at once found for the child, but it was a more serious matter to provide for the poor demented woman. When I was suddenly called away from the town, she was being detained in the prison pending the search for a more convenient place; and this, the Bishop assured me on my recommending the case to him, he would use his influence to find without delay.

The following morning, we resumed our journey. As we began to leave behind us the dwelling wherein we had spent the

night, we cast a final glance at the cablebridge, with the wild incident of the previous day still fresh in our memory. Whilst we were looking, one of the party made this observation: "The poor funatic we saw yesterday dancing and singing on that dangerous concern that rosses the ravine, will assuredly end by falling headlong into the river one of these days unless she is prevented from making use of the crossing. The same may be said of our own country. It, too, is tottering on the verge of a horrible precipice, -leprosy. Dark, indeed, is the prospect looming in the distance. And the Columbians are merry and gay, and give not a thought to the future. When they least expect the danger, it will be upon them, and they will precipitate into the abyss, unless the note of warning that is now being sounded throughout the republic is heeded." A very apt and just parallel, I could not help thinking.

(To be continued).

Some idea of the life of the Salesians and the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians at the Leper Colony of Contraction (Columbia) may be gathered from the following passages from a letter by Father Evasius Rabagliati to the Corriere Nazionale and quoted by our esteemed contemporary the London Tablet:—

I arrived in this Lazaretto on the 12th of May, after 38 days on mule-back, up-hill and down-dale, in search of suitable sites for lazarettos in the Santander province, in order that such lepers as we may not be able to receive here in Contratacion may be segregated elsewhere. Ours is the sole leper settlement in the whole of this immense territory of Santander—now so terribly scourged by the dread disease. I cannot be mistaken in estimating the victims of leprosy, in this department alone, at 25,000. There are thousands of others in other parts of Columbia. It is truly terrific to see how the scourge spreads in this region.... Lepers are to be found everywhere—in cities, towns and villages. They are met in the public squares, and on the highways; the sight of them surprises no one. No wonder then that here, where the disease is free to spread, it has, within a short time, killed such enormous numbers.....

For about two years there have been three Salesians here—two priests, and a clerical student who manages the infant school. There are five Sisters of Our Lady Help of Christians (Salesian nuns). The Sisters take

care of the lepers in the hospitals, and also in their own homes when necessary. One of them is specially told off for the work of the girls' school. The Lazaretto of Contratacion began in 1867 with 27 lepers, who were brought here by force. There now are 950, and there would be many more if only room could be found for them, and if there were food and clothing. The other day a man of 84 arrived after a two months' journey. He had only come 50 leagues, to be sure; but at 84, on foot, to a 'leper, whose flesh hung in rags, and on roads like ours, only slow walking is possible. He was ordered here by the authorities, and arrived more dead than alive. There was not a place to put him in. Still, we could not let him die by the roadside ... and some of the sick in a hospital closed up their ranks out of compassion for the old man, and thus made a corner for him, where a "shake-down" was prepared. The same day the Sisters began to give him religious instruction: most of the sick who come here are (almost blamelessly) ignorant in matters spiritual. In this way he is being prepared for death.... I am convinced that all, or nearly all, the lepers who die in the lazarettos save their souls, because they receive the last Sacraments and are well prepared. And such is not the case when lepers die elsewhere.... In this fact lay the chief reason why the son of Don Bosco who writes to you, travelled, worked and planned for some years past, to gather the unhappy lepers into asylums. Moreover, these efforts have for their secondary object the saving of this dear land of Columbia from the poison in its blood; to preserve the healthy moiety, which play with the danger ...

The Salesians' house here is the property of the Lazaretto. It belonged formerly to a leper family. A "coat of white" (not even limewash) was given it, and the transformation was complete. The three sons of Don Bosco fearlessly entered it, and will remain in itwho can tell how long? There are five little rooms, in two of which there is nothing but a bed: there are besides two holes, also called rooms. One is meant for a kitchen, and the other for a store room, but there are never any goods to store-unless, indeed, a collection of tears and sufferings could be placed there! -and the kitchen range consists of just three stones; three hammocks serve for beds. There is a chair a-piece for the religious. The chairs are carried from place to place, as needed. There is a table for meals, but no earthenware; a few books in a corner of one of the bed-rooms, in another, two leather cases of linen—not enough for three. Such is the inventory of this Salesian house.

The Sisters are no better off. They have three instead of five rooms, or rather two, for one of the three is to be turned into a chapel. A corridor is their refectory, and serves for their brief receations. The kitchen is a den, open to the rain and to all the winds of heaven. Here at the cost of health, time, and weariness, they daily prepare the food for the missionaries and for themselves. Another great fault in their house is its position on a steep hill, approached by a bad road, and at some distance from school, church and hospitals....

In 1892, when our Don Unia first went to the Lazaretto of Agua de Dios, a few leagues from Bogota (the capital), he found house and cots even worse than what we have here now. But before long all was changed. The house was made larger and better; a little garden was added, a small bath-room, and, adjoining the house, a beautiful oratorio festivo (play-room, class-room, and chapel combined) for the children. The chapel, which to begin with was a veritable stable of Bethlehem, was transformed into a little paradise, with ornaments, sacred vessels of every description for divine worship, a fine altar, and statues of various saints sent from Turin and from Barcelona. The hospital, at first a miserable shed, with space for but few beds, became what a hospital should be. About a hundred beds were put into four spacious wards—the bedsteads being good; many of iron. For each sick person a numbered metal seat was provided. The courtyard is amply large. There are gardens and baths for the use of the sick; a grove in which they can move about in the hot part of the day; and a chapel in the midst of the wards-so that the inmates can profit by it even without leaving their beds. There are rooms suited to the needs of the Sisters in attendance; and there is a noble supply of linen, &c., besides a most convenient iron kitchen-range, a gift from Turin....

Don Unia, vowed to poverty, had nothing of his own. The Salesians of Bogota can hardly make ends meet, and provide for the two hundred orphans under their care.... Columbians taxed themselves one centesimo per head, for "Father Unia's collecting card," and with the sum thus obtained, the hospital (costing several thousand Columbian scudi) was built. The lepers themselves gave of their poverty, enough to buy church ornaments,

and to begin the "school-play-prayer-room." The Lazar Society of Bogota sent some money; but all the rest came from Europe. Don Rua, Don Bosco's successor, sent out 1,000 lire from a young lady. Turin sent cooking-stoves, beds, chairs, chandeliers, pictures, and many other welcome gifts. Barcelona provided statues, and Milan and Lecco sent harmoniums for the church, and instruments for a band. A rich German Protestant sent 18 cases containing all the earthenware and linen necessary for the hospital, as well as a piece of silk "for a cool soutane for Don Unia." Later, this gentleman sent three thousand scudi for the lepers. The good Father goes on to enumerate other gifts; and then he asks if there are no charitable people to do for the 950 lepers of Contratacion what others have done for Agua de Dios. Will no one send a cooking-stove which burns wood? for of coal they have none at Contratacion. Will no pious soul send church furniture and ornaments? (There is only a tin chalice there now.) Rochets, albs, and candlesticks are all badly wanted. Will no one send a statue of Our Lady, Help of Christians? of St. Francis, the Salesians' patron; of St. Lazarus, the canonized leper; or an harmonium for the church? or instruments for a little band? or house-linen for the colony? or clothing for the lepers-some of whom go in rags, and others have not had a complete change of clothing for four years? The Father begs for damaged goods from shopkeepers and manufacturers. He says: "The climate being mild, we want light things. There are more women than men; and about 200 children." "It seems as if henceforward the lepers belong to us, and are our exclusive property," writes Father Rabagliati, quoting the biography of Don Unia: and he wants to make welcome the Salesians' inheritance "in this most choice, and vet most unhappy, portion of the flock of Christ." But to do so he must appeal to the charity of those beyond the frontiers of Columbia. He says, writing to Italians, that there are Salesian houses all round them, whence gifts would be forwarded; there are the Columbian Bishops in Rome who would also undertake that anything destined for the lepers should reach the lazarettos, and there are other South-American Consulates to which application might be made.

There can be no doubt that the Salesian Fathers at Orbel-street. Battersea, would forward contributions from England. If misery have a claim on charity, surely there was never a stronger claim than that of the lepers.



On Sunday, September 17th, the Rev. Gregory Domanski of the Salesian Society, attached to St. Joseph's College, Burwash, was raised to the priesthood, and on the following Sunday sang his first Mass in the Church of the Mission. We offer our hearty congratulations to the newly-ordained minister of God. Ad multos annos!

As the demands for English-speaking subjects of the Salesian Society are becoming more numerous every day, a portion of the Salesian Seminary at Ivrea (Northern Italy), has been set aside for the reception of English and Irish boys and young men who wish to embrace the ecclesiastical state. Youths who feel called to such a life should communicate with the V. Rev. Father BARBERIS, Salesian Oratory, Turin, Italy,

THE Cape Argus, of August 22, says:-"The South African Catholic Magazine is now printed at the Salesian Institute, and very well printed too. It opens with an interesting little Spanish story 'Carmita.' Mr. A. Wilmot, whose pen is generally employed on the magazine, has an interesting summary of Capt. Boileau's paper on the Nyassa Tanganyiha Plateau. Dr. Kolbe contributes a very thoughtful article on 'The Five Contradictories of Faith.' His personal statement has been already dealt with. 'A Native Hunt in the Transkei' is a spirited little description by an anonymous contributor. The 'Professor's Arm Chair' is resumed, and the Corner' is well up to its high mark."

In Columbia (South America) the sons of Don Bosco have been engaged for some years in assisting the poor, suffering lepers, who, it appears from trustworthy statistics, number thirty thousand in that Republic alone! The first step in this direction was taken by the late Father Unia of the Salesian Society, who is called the "Apostle of the Lepers of Columbia." Since his death, four years ago.

the work has been taken up by Father Rabagliati, Provincial of the Salesians in Columbia. He has visited almost every district of the Republic, in order to place himself in touch with the spiritual and temporal needs of the lepers, and held conferences and meetings for the purpose of awakening a charitable interest in their behalf. In the face of almost insurmountable difficulties, he is pursuing his course with an earnestness and constancy of purpose that cannot but be admired. And the outcome of his efforts is a veritable crusade in favour of the most wretched beings on earth. It is his intention to provide the poor lepers with the comforts of our holy Religion, so as to help them to bear their misfortune with patience and fortitude; to better their material condition with the assistance Government and the people afford him; and to take the necessary precautions to prevent further propagation of the dread malady.

Public opinion is favourable to the scheme set on foot by Father Rabagliati to build lazarettos and to isolate the lepers, for the people of Colombia are awakening to the awful reality that the disease of leprosy is spreading amongst them in an alarming manner. It is now no longer confined to the poor and lowly, but is working havoc in the ranks of the wealthy and the aristocracy, of the priesthood and the Sisters of Charity. In the Santander Province alone, the number of victims among the better classes is incalculable: in Bogota, Father Rabagliati is acquainted with many cases. He also knows several priests who have caught the infection: one of these is at present in the Leper Village of Agua de Dios, whilst others are living isolated at their own homes. A sister of Charity, born in France, who has been engaged in the noble work of her Congregation for several years past in Columbia. suddenly became aware that she had contracted the dread malady. She had been attend. ing to the sick in an hospital at Bucaramanga but had never entered a Leper House; how then did she catch the disease? No doubt whilst ministering to the sick, as it is not unlikely that among them there may have been one or two with those particular diseasegerms. This unfortunate Nun, whom we may rightly regard as a victim to charity, has lately been sent to the Leper Village of Agua de Dios.



[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.—Please have Masses celebrated for the Souls in Purgatory for a favour received.

SR. M. G., Belcourt, (U. S. A.).

Our Lady's Intercession.—I enclose a small offering in thanksgiving for several favours I have received through our Lady's intercession,—one favour being the recovery of a brother who was dangerously ill.

M. F. (England).

Restored to Health.—I desire to have two Masses said in honour of the Divine Infant of Prague and our Lady Help of Christians in thanksgiving for restoration to health of my daughters. I had made a Novena, and promised to have the favour published in the Salesian Bulletin in the event of my prayers being granted.

MRS. J. O'B., Foynes (Ireland).

A Debt of Gratitude.—I desire to acknowledge a debt of gratitude I have contracted with our Lady Help of Christians. A short time ago my little son fel, dangerously ill, and as his state caused me alarm, I had recourse to our Blessed Lady in my affliction, promising, if she obtained his cure, to send an offering to the Salesian Institute and to have the favour published in the Salesian Bulletin. After my prayer and promise I felt quite confident of our Lady's assistance, and I was not mistaken, for the burning fever which was consuming my child's life soon left him and he was spared to me.

J. CABAUD, Motte-Servolex (Savoy).

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Thanksgiving.—The enclosed Postal Orderis from Miss C.S., Sunderland (England), who desires Mass of thanksgiving in honour of our Lady Help of Christians for temporal favour received. Miss S., also expresses desire for public thanks.

* *

Faith and Prayer.—I am sending you a donation, to be used as you think best, which my mother made a promise of sending if her prayers were heard.—Thanks to Almighty God her desire was fulfilled.

MISS F. F., Chicago (U. S. A.).

. .

Confidence Rewarded.—Please have four Masses said in thanksgiving for a great and long prayed-for temporal favour, and also to ask for temporal favour the obtaining of which would be a great boon to the community.

SR. M. B., Devizes (England).

* *

It is with great pleasure that I send you the enclosed donation as a thankoffering which I promised, some time ago, if I were granted a favour that I desired very much. I have now to thank God and our Blessed Lady for having heard my petition.

M. H., Monkstown (Ireland).

...

Mary Help of Christians.—I send herewith five shillings—with a request to have a Mass celebrated in honour of Mary Help of Christians—a thank-offering for an important favour granted, namely, the restoration to a school of an endowment which had been taken from it by heretical Trustees.

B. T. C., Ireland.

*

Health of the Weak, pray for us.—Having heard from a friend of mine who is interested in your work, of the favours she had received through the intercession of Mary Help of Christians, I recommended my little boy, who was to undergo an operation, to our Lady's care, promising, at the same time, to send an offering in favour of your Missions if he came out of the ordeal all right. I am thankful to say that he did.

B. C., Athlone (Ireland).

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

Ignatius Rigano-Mangeri, Acireale (Sicily); Annette Bernasconi, Agno (Canton Ticino); M. G. C. S., Alexandria; Anne Bolle, Asti; John Barbero, Bellinzago (Novara); Frances Tamborini, Bagnaria (Pavia); Henry Asnago, Barlassina (Milan); Rev. John Lenzy, Bleggio (Austria); Rev. D. Z. Perrod, Brusson; A Salesian Co-operator, Casale; Elizabeth Prosperi, Careggine; A. Vellati-Bellini, Castelletto (Ticino); Caroline Rodano, Castiglione d'Asti; Teresa Vagliano, Cigliano; Dominic Gnoato, Cittadella (Padua); Catherine Ellena, Collegno; Dominic Graziano, Crescentino; Joseph Tobelli, Crodo; John Visani, Faenza; Mary Mattio, Falicetto; Julia Amici, Forlimpopoli; C. Palese, Gemone (Udine); Louis Bletton, La Thuile (Aoste); Rev. Charles Figini, Lecco; Mary Dealberti, Milan; Francis Dabormida, Monastero Bormida; Mary Ravettino, Moneglia; Augusto Frutta, Montechiarugolo; Rev. Peter Cassi-Canale, Monterano (Rome).

INTENTIONS.

The Members of the Association of Salesian Co-operators are recommended to pray for the following intentions:—

Rev. L. C. (South Africa):—Special Blessing on Native Missions just about to open.

Grace of energy in the work of ministry.

Conversion of some non-Catholics who seem solicited by the grace of God.

Conversion of Catholics who have given up the profession of the faith.

Conversion of Catholics who have given up practice of their faith.

Perseverance for Catholics who have often given way to the habit of intemperance.

Fervour in the service of God for several persons on whom graces have been abundantly bestowed.

Religious Vocations.

A. S., Mullinavat (Ireland):—Recovery of a child's sight.

W. G., Dublin: - A particular intention.

M. F., Liverpool:—Extrication from a pecuniary embarrassment.

A Girl in Trouble:—Deliverance from melancholy and depression.

J. D., Dublin:—Conversion of the members of family who have wandered away from the practice of religion.

A. S., Calumet (U. S. A.):—Recovery of health. Sr. M. B., Devizes (England):—A spiritual and temporal favour.

D. J. S., Preston (England):—The speedy reconciliation of two persons.

B. C., Athlone (Ireland):—Recovery of two persons, one of whom suffers from an ulcerated stomach, the other from loss of memory.

THE STORY OF THE ORATORY

OR

DON BOSCO'S OPENING APOSTOLATE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Society of Mutual Succour— The Spiritual Retreat at Giaveno— The Merchant and the Monkey.— At the "Sagra di San Michele."



Albert granted the civil reforms embodied in the *Statuto*, of which we have already spoken in a previous chapter, several as-

sociations came into existence in Turin, apparently having some philanthrophic purpose in view; but under the mantle of charity they aimed at perverting the ideas of the people in matters of religion and politics. One of these associations especially, the socalled Società degli Operai (Workingman's Society), revealed its anti-Christian character from its very beginning. Many good people who joined it, realising very soon that a snare was laid to entrap them, promptly beat a retreat; but not a few unfortunately remained and before long "went to the bad." In order to counteract the machinations of these ungodly associations, and hinder many of the boys and young men frequenting the Sunday Oratory and Night Schools from giving their names to dangerous societies, Don Bosco conceived the happy idea of founding an association among them for the material as well as the spiritual advantage of its members. He spoke to the older lads on the subject; he explained to them the aim. the conditions, and the advantages; and his idea was most favourably received. The association, under the title of Società di Mutuo Soccorso (Society of Mutual Succour), was inaugurated on the 1st of July 1850, and admirably realized the hopes of its founder. In this manner, Don Bosco became the originator of the innumerable Societies or Unions of Catholic Workmen, which are to be found to-day in nearly all the towns of Italy.

In September of that same year, Don Bosco took his boys to Giaveno, a small town about twenty miles to the west of Turin, for a week's spiritual retreat in the *Petit Séminaire*, which was placed at his disposal for that purpose, the students of the College being at

home for vacation at the time. All the boarders of the Salesian Hospice, and & goodly number of those attending the three Oratories who succeeded in obtaining permission from their parents or employers, took part in the retreat. With Don Murialdo at their head, they made the journey on foot, singing hymns and songs on the way. Arrived at Avigliana *, they made a halt and sat down to dinner on the border of one of the beautiful lakes. It was on this occasion that the boys made the acquaintance of Don Alasonatti, a pious and benevolent priest. who from that day conceived such an affection for Don Bosco and his Oratory that not long afterwards he joined Don Bosco in his noble work, and became a second father to the poor children of the Oratory until his death. The preachers of the retreat were Canon Arduino, Rector of the College of Giaveno, and Don Bosco. As there was room enough in the College for a large number of boys besides those of the Oratory. some of the boys of the town were also induced to take part in the pious practices. This retreat, it is needless to say, was of great spiritual benefit to the lads.

During this retreat, Don Bosco frequently spent the time of recreation in the company of the boys, questioning one or other of them on the subject of the sermons, and as to what struck them most. One morning he preached on Scandal; when the boys crowded round him during recreation in the afternoon, he began to ask them what he had been preaching about. The first that he questioned remained silent, unable to give an answer; the second did the same; so did the third, the fourth, the fifth, and so on. "Oh! povero me," exclaimed Don Bosco seeing that no one appeared to have the least idea of what the sermon was about. "I must have been speaking in Greek, or else you were

^{*} This ancient town which contains more medicival buildings and Roman remains than any other [in Piedmont], is passed by the Turin-Modane railway. The Church of San Pietro, said to have been a temple of the goddess Feronia, with wooden ceiling and ancient paintings; the parish Church of San Giovanni in Gothic style with paintings by Defendente De Ferrari and Moncalvo; the Town Hall, containing a small museum of local antiquities, are well worth seeing. In the town, medicival towers, houses, gates and walls still exist; and on a cliff that rises between the town and the lakes are the ruins of a castle, once an important fortress and the dwelling of the Counts of Savoy. It was destroyed in 1690 by Catinat. About three quarters of a mile distant from Avigliana are two lakes divided by a narrow isthmus.—Guide to Turia.

dreaming!" At length a little urchin was heard to say: "I remember something."—"Well?"—"The story of the monkeys."

The anecdote in question which Don Bosco had related by way of example, was as follows.

Once upon a time, a peddler was overtaken by the night in a wood far from any town or village. It was a summer's evening; the moon shone in the heavens and the stars twinkled, and the poor peddler, weary and worn-out after a hard day's tramping from one place to another, chose a sheltered spot near a giant tree where to pass the night. In order to shield his head from the falling dew, he opened his chest of wares and extracted one of the night-caps, of which he had a large stock, and putting it on his head, he lay down and was soon fast asleep. Now the branches of the tree under which the peddler was taking his rest, were alive with monkeys, -in fact he was in monkey-land. The little creatures had watched the man below in attentive silence, and no sooner had he dropped off to sleep than one of their number quietly descended from his perch to the chest. Thrusting his paw inside, he drew out a night-cap, and, without more ado, gravely donned his trophy and then returned to take up his position as formerly. One after another his brethren proceeded to do likewise, until there was not a night-cap left. The peddler slept soundly on, and, for the first time in their lives, the inhabitants of monkey-land slept with night-caps on. Meantime the shades of night began to disperse as the first signs of dawn, the harbinger of approaching day, made their appearance in the east. The sun had hardly arisen above the horizon, when our friend the peddler roused himself. Great, indeed, was his surprise and his grief on finding that all the nightcaps had disappeared from his box. "Thieves have been here," he cried, "and ruined me!" On a closer examination, however, he became doubtful as to his first conclusion, reflecting that had thieves been there, they would have carried off everything. The poor man was sorely perplexed. At this point he heard a slight noise above his head, and on looking up he was almost dumfounded to see all the monkeys in night-caps. "Ah! there are the villains," he cried; and he at once began to try to frighten them by shouting at them and pelting them with stones, in order to make them give up the stolen goods; but the monkeys ran from branch to branch, and seemed disinclined to gratify him. Several

hours thus passed; the poor peddler had shouted himself hoarse and tired himself with his unusual exertions, yet all to no purpose. Mad with rage, and hardly knowing what he was doing, he seized his night-cap, which he had worn until then, and flung it on the ground in despair. At this sight, the monkeys felt themselves irresistibly impelled to do likewise, and a shower of night-caps descended to cheer the heart of the disconsolate peddler.

"Children," Don Bosco had said in conclusion, "act more or less in the same fashion as monkeys. When they see others doing what is right, they feel drawn to imitate them; when what is wrong, the attraction to do likewise is still greater..."

On finding that the boys retained with great difficulty any of the many things expounded in the sermons, Don Bosco took great pains to have his sermons replete with examples and anecdotes to serve as illustrations of what he wished to inculcate, hoping thereby to make an impression on the boys' imagination, and in this manner to pave the way to enlightening their minds and touching their hearts. And he succeeded beyond his expectations.

As a reward for their good behaviour, Don Bosco took his boys for a walk, on the day after the close of the retreat, to the Sagra di San Michele*, a famous abbey situated

* This is the name commonly given to the Abbey of San Michele della Chiusa, founded in 964 by Hugh de Montboissier, (an ancestor of Peter the Hermit), a rich gentlemant of Auvergne, condemned by Pope Sylvester VI. as a penance for some crime to live in exile for seven years, or build a monastery on the Alps. It rises on the Monte Pircheriano or Mount of Fire (960 metres above sea-level) at the opening of Val Susa... This spot is ... most attractive from the historical and archælogical interest of the medicaval buildings, the grandeur of the panorama and the beauty of the place.... The imposing building is in the early Lombard style, which is preserved in most of the exterior, the interior, and especially in the façade, the sides and the grand flight of stairs leading to the Church. It is certainly one of the finest of the ancient abbeys of Piedmont, and, as such, has been declared a national monument, It is both church and fortress, in fact, in the XVIIth century it was for some time used as such with walls. bastions and towers, amongst which the tower that gives it such a characteristic outline as seen from

From the top of the abbey the panorama is splendid, embracing the whole of the Alpine circle, the plains of Piedmont and Lombardy. A steep rock is shown to the visitor, whence, so runs the legend, a girl invoking the aid of the Virgin leapt, when fleeing from some villain who followed her with evil intent, and was found at the foot unharmed. This rock is called Il Salto della Bell'Alda (Fair Alda's Leap)—Guide to Turin.

on one of the mountains surrounding Giaveno. The brass band of the town joined the party to enliven it with its gay music. The walk up the mountain was a pleasure of a most enjoyable kind. Don Bosco was mounted on a donkey, and surrounding him were the boys who formed a kind of cortège to their amiable leader; they journeyed along in this fashion, singing and chatting gaily. Now and then, they came to a halt; the band struck up some lively music which echoed and re-echoed among the mountains, producing a most striking effect. The birds frightened at the unusual noise, flew wildly from tree to tree; the people in the fields below stopped at their work to listen; and the donkey with ears erect, brayed long and loudly as though to show that his musical ability was not inferior to that of the young musicians. In this way, the time slipped by unnoticed, and the holiday-makers arrived at length at the Sagra, and were most kindly received by the Fathers of Charity who had charge of the celebrated sanctuary. They then visited the venerable pile of buildings, and heard from Don Bosco's lips, who acted as their cicerone, a sketch of its history and treasures which was calculated to render their visit of much interest.

At mid-day, Don Bosco and his flock were intertained to dinner by the Fathers of Charity, after which a concert, embracing a select programme of vocal and instrumental music, was improvised by the boys in honour of their benevolent hosts. The rest of the afternoon the good Fathers spent in the boys' company, taking them round the extensive and picturesque grounds, and showing them the wild beauty of the romantic spot which was such as to excite wonder and admiration. When evening set in, they all assembled in the Church where Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given. On leaving the Church, the little party crowded round the good Fathers to thank them once again for their kind hospitality and bid them adieu, and then took the road home in excellent spirits. There was no monotony about the homeward journey; sometimes, they marched to the stirring music of the band; now they sang; and at times they prayed, or listened to Don Bosco relating some delightful stories of which he seemed to have an inexhaustible supply.

The object of the writer in giving a somewhat detailed account of the above events, which left such a lasting impression on the minds of those lads who had the good fortune to take part therein, is in order to give some idea of how Don Bosco strove to render the practice of our holy Religion agreeable to his children, having ever before his mind those words of the prophet David: "Serve ye the Lord with gladness."

(To be continued).

Exchanges and Periodicals Received.

Catholic Missions.

azinc.

The Ave Maria (Notre Dame). Dominica Guardian. The Harvest.

The Catholic News (Preston). Kamloops Wawa.

lates of Mary (Kilburn).

Heart (Glastonbury). Annals of Our Lady of the S. Church Progress (St. Louis,

Heart (Watertown). Catholic Watchman (Madras).

New Zealand Tablet. Poor Souls' Friend and St. Jo-

seph's Advocate.

The Rosary (Woodchester). The Indian Advocate (U.S.A.)

Sacred Heart Review (Boston). The Southern Cross (Adelaide). Ohio Waisenfreund (Columbus). South African Catholic Mag- The West Australian Record (Perth).

English Messenger of the S.

Heart. The Salve Regina (New Orleans). Missionary Record of the Ob. De La Salle (New York).

Franciscan Tertiary (Dublin). Annals of Our Lady of the S. Niagara Rainbow (Canada). The Flight (Baltimore).

> Mo). Catholic Standard and Times

(Philadelphia, Pa.). Candian Messenger of the S. Heart (Montreal).

Annals of St. Joseph (W. De Pere, Wis.).

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