

# The Association of Salesian Co-operators



We wish to call the attention of the Readers of the *Salesian Bulletin* to the Association of Salesian Co-operators and ask them to make the same widely known amongst their friends and acquaintances.

It is a most practical, efficacious and advantageous way of carrying out the wishes and exhortations of His Holiness Leo XIII, and notably those contained in the Encyclical *Graves de communi* on Christian democracy.

This Association was, from its very beginning, warmly recommended by Pius IX who claimed to be inscribed as first Co-operator, and enriched it with the spiritual favours of the most privileged tertiaries.

His Holiness Leo XIII, on his elevation to the pontifical throne, claimed, like his Predecessor, to head the list of the Salesian Co-operators. He moreover said to Don Bosco: *Each time you address the Co-operators tell them that I bless them from my heart; the scope of the Society is to prevent the loss and ruin of youth, and they must form but one heart and one soul in order to help to attain this end.*

Every good christian above sixteen years of age can become a Co-operator, enjoy the numerous spiritual favours, and share in the merit of the good works accomplished by the Salesian Congregation, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and the Association of Co-operators throughout the whole world.

The membership does not entail any obligation of conscience whatsoever, hence not only all members of a family, but inmates, of any institution or college, members of religious communities, confraternities etc. can join it by means of their Superiors.

Each and all may become active Co-operators by promoting with their good example and according to their means and capacity the practice of Religion and works of charity in their respective places.

Each and all may co-operate in the numerous and manifold works of charity and public beneficence carried on in other parts by the following means.



# THE SALESIAN BULLETIN

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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.)

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.)

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.)

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## Mary the Help of Christians.

**T**hat great doctor of the Church, St. Bernard, unable to be present at the assemblies of his religious, set himself to make a commentary on the passage of St. Luke, where the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin is related. This he did, as he himself says, at odd times and in snatches from his sleep, satisfying thereby his tender devotion, and bringing to his soul much spiritual comfort and profit. The result of his writing was the four homilies commonly known as the homilies *Super missus est*. In them this devout servant of Mary reasons out this consoling subject celebrating the dignity

of the great Mother of God, exalting her power and mercy which make her indeed the Help of Christians as the Church has proclaimed her.

In the second of these homilies, commenting on the name of Mary, which he interprets as *Star of the Sea*, he shows how admirably this name befits the Blessed Virgin, whether as symbolizing her spotless virginity, or more especially, her unflinching guidance and protection, which, as a loving mother, she affords to those, who tossed about on the stormy sea of life, call upon her. Then addressing himself to all who are tried by affliction and suffering, of every age and condition, he exhorts all to have recourse to her mater-

nal goodness with unbounded confidence. *In periculis, in angustiis, in rebus dubiis, Mariam cogita, Mariam invoca.*

The holy doctor has also expressed these sentiments in many other passages of his writings. So great was his confidence, so strong his filial affection for the Blessed Virgin that, in one of his sermons on the Assumption, he bursts forth into this exclamation: "Let him speak no more of thy mercy, O Blessed Virgin, who had recourse to thee in his necessities and was left unaided." (1). These words coming from the pen, and springing from the grateful heart of the saint, express likewise the sentiments of the Church, and with her approbation and sanction, they have become the prayer of all christian people—the expression of lively faith and hope of the afflicted soul—commonly known as the Memorare.

This confidence of all christian peoples ever met with its reward. Not to speak of other centuries, the last one does it not, on many grounds, deserve the title of the century of Mary? The numerous apparitions, the many sanctuaries erected, the innumerable prodigies worked in them, the frequent pilgrimages, do they not show on the one hand the tenderness and loving goodness of Mary, and on the other, the faith which has been revived and sustained by a confidence which has always found a ready response in the heart of our Blessed Lady?



We, dear Co-operators, have no need to go far for proofs of this. The life and work of Don Bosco form a continual hymn of praise, proclaiming the power and love of our good Mother. We will let him tell some of the instances of this

(1) *Sileat misericordiam tuam, Virgo beata, si quis est qui invocatum te in necessitatibus suis sibi meminerit defuisse.* In Assumptione B. Mariae Sermo IV.

maternal protection and charity. In the year 1884, speaking to the Co-operators assembled for the conference in the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians, he said:—

It is with great pleasure that I speak to you to-day, considering both what it is that I have to say to you, and also that this year I am addressing you in this church of Mary Help of Christians. It is indeed a pleasure to speak to the Co-operators in this place which we may well call the House of Mary, and the house which she herself has built. *Aedificavit sibi domum Maria.*

I should wish therefore to propose for your pious consideration, and thus enable you to celebrate with devotion this feast of Mary Help of Christians, some of the favours she bestowed from the very beginning on those who lent their aid in the raising and adorning of this her church. Listen then and you will understand that we may say with truth that we are in Mary's house—*Aedificavit sibi domum Maria.*

When the building of this temple was commenced, means were badly wanted. The workmen had to be paid and Don Bosco had not the money. When lo! just then a lady, by his advice, recommended herself to Mary to obtain her cure from a very painful disease, and she was cured. The lady in gratitude made an offering in her honour of the money required to pay for the first fortnight's work. Others hearing of this fact also invoked Our Lady, with a promise of an offering for her new church, and extraordinary favours were bestowed upon them. From that time there followed a long succession of uninterrupted favours and cures, and as offerings poured in from all sides in return for favours received, and to obtain other favours, the church rose higher and higher as if by magic to the glory of the great Mother of God.

When the shell of the building was completed it had to be adorned. Mary Help of Christians also provided for this. You see there, for example, the altar of St. Peter. How was it paid for? I reply:



Mary Help of Christians.

A pious Roman lady who had fallen sick recommends herself to Mary; she is miraculously cured, and writes off that an altar is to be built at her expense in honour of Our Lady, and that is the very one you see there. A little further on you see another dedicated to the holy martyrs of Turin, Solutor, Avventor, and

Octavius of the Theban legion, and to St. Anne; who was it that raised that altar? It was another Roman lady who was also favoured by a special grace through Mary's intercession. She had fallen seriously ill, she promised to erect that altar and she was cured. Passing to the other side you see the altar of the Sacred Heart, and that also reminds us of a favour obtained by a person from Milan, who in return volunteered to defray the cost. With regard to the sanctuary of St. Joseph the erection of the altar, the altar rails, the pictures are the result of copious graces and favours obtained in the same way. The paving of the church, the very pulpit from which I am speaking to you were also given in return for favours received. The statue in gilt copper which towers above the cupola was given as a homage to Mary Help of Christians. The gallery was the gift and the work of a cabinet-worker, and if we wished to pass on to every part and every ornament of the church which are the outcome of favours received we should never come to the end, for the columns, the vaulting, the roofs, aye, every stone and brick might tell of graces obtained through Mary.

In the sacristy again all the representations are so many proofs of Mary's favours. There we have a mother who had her child saved from death, here one delivered from acute pains, in another the fatal effects of a dangerous fall are averted and so on. And here I am obliged to tell you some particulars regarding myself. You know that for some time I was sickly in health and almost unable to fulfil my occupations. Well, on the 15th of this month, the first day of the novena I felt much better. The improvement went on from day to day and now by Mary's help, I feel better than I have felt for several years.

But more; were we able to draw aside the veil, and bring to light the spiritual

favours obtained by her devout clients, what a magnificent hymn of thanksgiving we could sing in honour of Mary Help of Christians. We might mention many pious women who have been consoled by their husbands' return to a good life. How many fathers and mothers, whose children were unmanageable and had gone astray, have seen them brought back again to submission and respect; sinners have wept for their sins, made their confession and begun an exemplary life.

But you will ask why I put all these facts before you on the vigil of the great feast of Mary Help of Christians. I reply: In order to urge you all to confide in her goodness and power, and then you will know what means to use to obtain her favours the more easily. This heavenly Mother holds in her hands the graces prepared for us. She only desires that we should ask for them with all confidence, and promise to aid and promote those works which redound to the glory of God, and her honour, and the good of souls, especially of youth as our Co-operators do. I am certain that all of you who beg favours of Mary will obtain them, provided they are not opposed to your spiritual good....

I ought to tell you that Mary, Most Holy, will grant favours not only to those who come here in this place to pray, but also elsewhere. I am now approaching the end of my days, and I rejoice at seeing that instead of diminishing, the favours of Mary, Help of Christians, increase from day to day both in Europe and America. Every day from one place or another, even from the farthest distances we receive detailed accounts of extraordinary favours obtained through Mary's intercession, and the Salesian Co-operators are often the instruments which God makes use of to propagate more and more His own glory, and that of His August Mother. Rejoice then, and ever cherish the greatest confidence in the patronage of Our Lady.



In the years that have passed since Don Bosco made this address, the wonders worked by Our Lady's intercession have not grown less. The devotion to Mary Help of Christians has spread far and wide, and it has everywhere brought consolation and comfort to the afflicted. Her Sanctuary at Turin has witnessed many a scene of faith and gratitude on the part of her devout clients who had recourse to her in the hour of tribulation. Month after month accounts pour in of signal graces received, and are acknowledged in the several editions of the Bulletin, but many more will remain for ever known only to God.

The few statements we choose for publication, whilst they proclaim Our Lady's goodness and maternal solicitude, have also been the means of shedding rays of hope on many a soul in the dark hours of affliction, reviving the faith which had grown dim in many others whom God in his goodness was bringing back to a christian life, by proving them in the school of sorrow. To all good christians they are a source of joy, since they see their good Mother more widely known and honoured.

These favours and graces are but a further confirmation of the words Don Bosco wrote in the letter he addressed to the Co-operators, as his last will and Testament:—"The most Holy Virgin has by unmistakable signs constituted herself in a special way the Patroness and Protectress of poor neglected children, and in her quality as such, she obtains for those who are their benefactors here, numerous and extraordinary graces, not only spiritual but temporal as well."





## MATTO GROSSO (Brazil).

Among the Bacairjs and the Cajabis.

(Fr. Balzola's correspondence).

(Continued.)

**On the Paranatinga—The first difficulties — Clinging for life to a sack of flour — After the shipwreck—The first meeting—Hopes for the future.**

To tell you the truth, very Reverend Don Rua, at the sight of the wretched canoes which were to convey us for no one knew how long a distance or for how long a time, I felt my courage for the moment abandon me; but trusting in God and in Mary Help of Christians, I decided that we should embark as soon as possible, and having completed the number of those who were to accompany us, on the 3rd of July after 12 p.m. we got into our boats. Imagine the trunk of a large tree scooped out in the interior, 80 centimetres wide and 10 metres long, and you will have an exact idea of our largest boats, one of which I named after St. Joseph, another after Our Lady Help of Christians and a third I called "*Speranza*." The small ones, called "*Salvatore*" and "*Vittoria*," were two spans in width and twenty five in length, and they were destined for the purpose of exploring the river and its banks. We had, naturally enough, to remain crouched in a corner of the boat to make room for the luggage, for all the articles to be distributed among the Indians, and for 40 days' provisions for 20 persons: but in such straits one does not stop to consider the inconveniences, and in the name of the Lord we pushed forward in our splendidly equipped boats. We had

already been more than 500 kilometres on horse back, and now without knowing whither, we were steering down an unknown river where no one had dared to sail since 1892. In that year a company of persons had followed its course for the distance of a few kilometres; but being assailed by Indians some of them were killed and the others succeeded in escaping.

During the first few days nothing out of the way happened, and I took advantage of this state of tranquillity to distribute to all those who formed part of the expedition a medal of Mary Help of Christians. We were in a state of continual apprehension for we had already come to the central part of the Indian territory and we might at any moment be assailed with a shower of arrows. For prudence sake I had armed myself with a double loaded revolver, because one cannot go alone for fifty yards into the forest without being in danger of a sudden attack either from the savages or from the wild beasts, especially the jaguars or American tigers. On the 10th of July having said Mass, which through some presentiment foreboding evil I offered up for the souls in Purgatory, I got into the boat and we went along quietly without any incident until about 3 p.m. when we came to a large rapid with rocks jutting out here and there from the bed of the river. The current was exceedingly strong, and the smaller boats which went on in advance to find the easiest spot for shooting the rapids, were in a moment carried far ahead, away from us by the force of the water. The same thing happened with the boat called *Mary Help of Christians*, thanks to the skill of her pilot, and this quite raised my hopes. The *Speranza* on which I was travelling tried to follow in the same way as the rest had done but whilst steering boldly for the narrowest part of the channel I suddenly caught sight of a large rock hidden by the water at a short distance in front. "A rock," I cried, but it was too late: the boat dashed right into it, the current carried it away, and the oars proved useless. Then the 4 men who were with me jumped into the water and

tried to direct it, but in vain, for there were too many rocks. We called for help, whilst the water rushed with all its force into the boat. The head of the expedition jumped into the water and swam towards the shore. He had almost reached it when he was carried away by the strong current, whilst I was borne away to the deepest part of the river. The boat was on the point of sinking and I looked around for some means of help. But when I found myself up to the neck in water, and the boat sinking beneath me I called out "We are lost, we are lost." "No, no, father," they replied: "cling to this sack," cried one. With one hand I caught hold of a sack of mandioca thrown to me by one of the swimmers, whilst with the other I clutched at the objects floating here and there around me. I was thus carried along by the current for the distance of 8 metres or so. Meanwhile the small boats arrived; I was taken in tow by one of them and led to the shore, whilst the other hastened to the rescue of the leader of the expedition who was on the point of drowning. We then set about saving as many objects as possible, but the waters, in their hurried course, carried away the hosts for the Mass, an iron case containing a small medicine chest, five sacks of flower of which our bread was made, and also my cassock. Not in the least disheartened we placed on the bank the objects rescued and thanking Our Lady Help of Christians for having escaped with our lives, we put out the things to dry. As I had lost almost everything, I had to borrow our catechist's clothes and when we sat down to meals, for want of the proper utensils, which had been lost in the wreck, three of us together, ate from a saucepan lid.

Notwithstanding all this, when everything was dry, on the 12th we again set out on our journey, and after two hours we came to

another rapid larger than the first. With the previous accidents still fresh in our minds we pulled to shore, so that, with the help of a rope, we might get the boats over. In this we were successful and soon after we again launched out into the deep. Our fear of meeting with the Indians now increased every moment, and on the 13th whilst we were slowly sailing along, loud shouts and



Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians, Turin, Italy.

clapping of hands on the right bank of the river attracted our attention. It was an Indian commanding, us to return, making signs that further on we should come across many savages armed with arrows. We at once turned back and made for the opposite bank of the river, whilst from our boat we showed the Indian various objects; one held up a blanket, another a knife, others shirts and handkerchiefs, others nick-nacks of different kinds. He seemed for a moment to grow calmer, and muttering some words which were unintelligible, he signed to us to go back. When he saw one of our small boats detach itself from the others and make towards the



bank where he was standing, he rushed furiously into the forest and a few minutes after, reappeared armed with arrows pointing out where we were to lay the objects, then shouting out something of which we could understand nothing but the words: *Arrú que cho? Arreru?* he ran back into the forest.

Having placed the objects in the spot indicated and the men having retired, the Indian came out with another companion and with great joy they rushed to the objects. I noticed that they seemed to choose out especially those that were made of iron.

Having picked up everything and making signs to us to bring more they withdrew into the forest. This time I wished to go myself with the intention of approaching them, but the nearer I came, the further they withdrew threatening me with their arrows and bidding me to put everything in the place indicated. Seeing it was impossible for me to succeed in reaching them I put down the objects which they at once came to take, and gave me to understand that they were going to call the other Indians.

They went off greatly pleased and we waited till the next day to see if some of them would turn up, but not a soul appeared. Nevertheless our mission was now much more hopeful, for the Indians who had received our presents would let the others know of our way of dealing with them and without doubt they would not act so savagely towards us.

**Hardships and perils — Peaceful meetings—With the Cayabis children — Inspected by the Indians — The black box — Troublesome visitors.**

Buoyed up by fresh hope we again embarked on 14th not without some fear though on account of the rocks and of the arrows which the Indians might at any moment shower upon us from the shore.

An hour later we were not a little disheartened by the sight of a large rapid. To avoid a greater danger, the men jumped into the water and did their best to direct the canoe with their hands; when on reaching the middle of the current, one of the boats dashed with such violence against a rock, as to throw the man who was guiding it a distance of more than three yards. To add to the discomfort, another man wishing to direct his boat across, received a blow in the chest which made him throw up blood, and another sailor was badly wounded in the leg. In

face of such perils and difficulties our courage began to fail and the thought of returning to Cuyabá naturally suggested itself to all of us, putting off to a better occasion our excursion amongst the wretched inhabitants of the forests. Strangely enough however, no one dared to utter the word return, and so after repairing the damage sustained, we again set out on our journey.

For the next few days we continued our course without any new accident and even with better luck, for the rapids and rocks had disappeared. We were however dispirited at not meeting any Indians as yet, since through lack of provisions we would be compelled to return after a few days. Finally on the 18th in the evening a first savage appeared on the riverside, and, in the same way as the others had done, shouting and clapping his hands he made sign to us to bring him some objects. We were soon near him but instead of one there were three. I entered the wood with the intention of handing over to them the presents, but they withdrew with wonderful speed. We placed some objects in the place indicated and retired. Towards night we encamped in a spot where there were numerous footprints of savages, amongst which not a few of children. From this we came to the conclusion that their *Andea* or resort was not far off. Nothing new occurred during the night, but next morning, whilst we were going down to our boats, there appeared on the left bank of the river five more Indians, who, gesticulating and shouting harsh words, to us quite incomprehensible, seemed to be asking us for presents. We at once set about to satisfy them and tried to approach them, but all was useless, for they were seized with fear and ran away. The savages kept on repeating in the same sing-song manner *Ap, Ap Checó? Aru Aruchechó*, and we tried to make them understand that they were to go in search of others in order to get them to move away and not to lose time which was most precious to us; but it was of no use for they followed us along the banks of the river. As we kept advancing their number increased to such an extent that, on reaching a certain point which for them was most advantageous on account of its position, our lives were in serious danger. On the side of the river where they stood, was a hill which gradually sloped down till it reached the water. The Indians occupied the summit and both its sides, and had they felt so inclined, they might in all safety

have started to fight with the most deadly effect as far as we were concerned. However trusting that Divine Providence would dispose their hearts to receive us in a friendly manner, we pulled towards the opposite shore; at the same time two small boats were detached in which we advanced towards the crowd of savages there assembled carrying different articles in the way of presents. Those who landed first tried to place the presents in their hands, but this was not yet possible; the second succeeded in getting nearer but with great difficulty.

Seeing this, I myself advanced with my pockets full of mirrors, necklaces, knives, and other such like things. On arriving with two companions on the bank I was suddenly surrounded by seven or eight young Indians, who with all simplicity held out their hands to receive something from me; I asked them also for a present, and they gave me in exchange some of the little ornaments they wore. Seeing them so well disposed, in giving an object to one of the children I wished to press his hand, but he at once bounced backwards and began to run away. All the others, panic-stricken, followed his example. Perceiving that this might be a source of peril to me, I did my best to call them back by offering them better presents. They returned, but were so distrustful that in handing them some little trifles I had to stretch my arm to its full length, whilst they received them on the tips of their fingers. During this time the other members of our party were trying to do the same as I did, but could never succeed in changing objects from hand to hand. Leaving those to whom I had first addressed myself, I went on to another group and endeavoured in every manner to approach them, and at last I succeeded. I received in exchange from a boy a pumpkin full of a kind of flower which he was eating with great zest, and in return I tried to caress him, but he, suspecting some harm, drew back at once. I made him understand that I did not wish to do him any harm, and as a proof of what I asserted, I went up to an old man who with pleasure and satisfaction smiled at the caresses I lavished upon him.

At last the little ones, seeing our kindness towards them and our way of treating them, came fearlessly towards me and began to inspect me from head to foot, wondering at everything, but especially at the boots. They tumbled in my pockets and felt me all over, as though to make sure that I was a man.

They took away my pocket knife and many other little objects; they even wished to have my Crucifix and the Scapular of Our Blessed Lady: everything they touched they seemed to think themselves entitled to make it their own. It was still worse with my companions, for they had to give up even part of their clothes and their caps. Seeing this the Indians expected me to do the same, and seemed surprised at my wearing a special kind of habit. I succeeded in making them understand that I could not submit to such a condition, and at the same time offered them other toys and clothes for women and children. Among these 150 Indians there were only two women and both willingly approached to receive clothes, blankets, necklaces etc.

Whilst they were searching us, I made a sign to our catechist Silvio to take a snapshot of that strange and to me consoling group: but as soon as the Indians saw the photographer take up a certain position with the little black box, they were alarmed and fearing some danger they began to flee. In order not to give again rise to alarm and suspicion, we had to deprive ourselves of this photograph which would have been a real treat for the readers of the Bulletin.

Whilst we were exchanging objects, fourteen savages of gigantic and robust proportions suddenly issued from the forest. They looked menacing and every one of them was thoroughly armed. From the way they advanced and from their eyes flaming with anger we saw that things were becoming serious and that we were in great danger. However some of the Indians who surrounded us, began at once to call out and to say, I suppose, that we were their friends and benefactors, and they at once advanced with less ferociousness and with strange curiosity. I was the first to go and meet them, offering them handkerchiefs, knives, mirrors; and they very soon changed their opinion of us.

In treating with these Indians I was obliged to sing and dance with them the *barucuru*, a thing I had never done with the Coroados, but which in those circumstances, I deemed expedient and advisable to do. Their dispositions towards the Missionary were good, and I found that they were capable of kindly and grateful sentiments. An old man on receiving a knife from me, joyfully went and cut a branch of a tree and then bending it pretended to break it with his teeth (all of which he had lost) afterwards he used the knife which I had given him, thus letting

me see how useful an object of so little importance was to him. Poor creatures! How many things they received as though fallen from heaven; for it was the first time that the Indians of these woods were dealing with civilized persons! As soon as the fourteen Indians above-mentioned arrived, others began to come down to our canoes, contenting themselves at first with exchanging objects with my companions who were standing in them, but then without any further ceremony, they began to help themselves freely, taking away things that were quite indispensable to us. They even entered my tent, taking away my blanket and pillow, and opening my trunk, began to take the books away. Fortunately for me, the head of the expedition arrived at that moment, and made them give back everything they had taken, with the exception of the blanket. Seeing the danger I might have to incur, he stationed a negro in front of my tent, and the Indians ran to him at once with a spear to scrape his skin, thinking he was painted. Others ransacked the kitchen taking away pots, buckets, spoons etc. so that our poor cook was quite in a fix. They would never have stopped, had I allowed them to continue thus to invade our boats; so instead of going to their *Andea*, where they invited us to go and which must not have been far off, I thought it better to return to the boats, giving them to understand that we would go to fetch other things and return after seven months. Before finally taking leave of them, I distributed to each of them a medal of Mary Help of Christians; they received it with great pleasure as they saw that all those who accompanied me wore one round their neck. Then, as some of them asked me for the Crucifix which I wore on my breast, I seized the occasion to take it in my hand and kiss it, and kneeling down I made signs that the Man represented on it was God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, with whom we should go to live after this life. They remained quite serious during this profession of faith and then burst forth into a solemn exclamation which seemed to mean: "We have understood everything."

**Separation — New fatigues — Treason? — Remarkable boldness — Other difficulties and their sad consequences.**

Worn out with fatigue, we returned to our boats in order to start on our homeward

journey, because we were short of provisions and our excursion was almost completed. The Indians however, some for a good end, others with evil intent, refused to leave us and accompanied us along the two banks of the river. It was already two o'clock and we were still fasting. We therefore determined to row with all speed towards the spot where we had previously spent the night, hoping that by that time we might get rid of the Indians who were already a source of embarrassment to us. But on arriving there after a two hours voyage, a whole crowd of them was awaiting us and they suddenly entered the water to help us to pull the boats ashore. Some fifty savages had started swimming to catch up to us, whilst the foremost jumping on our boats began to carry away everything that fell within their grasp. This seemed likely to make some of the party lose patience and thus undo all that had been done; we therefore resolved to continue the voyage until we found ourselves free from the importunities of the Indians. Some of them insisted on following us in spite of our remonstrances. We never suspected any arm however, since the relations with them had been good, and we therefore continued in all tranquillity to row away. A few minutes later however, we saw an arrow fall into the water, then another and then another, and all in the direction of the boats. We thought at first that they were presents which the Indians wished to make us before finally taking leave of us, but an arrow which just grazed the face of one of the pilots and others which seemed to have been aimed with the intention of piercing our skiffs, made us realise our danger. Suddenly the two men on the boat pursued jumped into the water, calling out to us to move off as fast as possible lest we also should become a target for the Indians. Meanwhile these latter kept discharging their arrows on the other little boat forcing those in it to jump over board if they wished to be safe. The peril was grave and imminent, and we plied our oars as hard as we could, but soon the arrows also reached our boat. Whilst I was recommending those who accompanied me to keep cool, a very sharp one came whizzing along and carried away my hat. I shouted to my companions to be prudent, not to fire yet, as things would only grow worse.

It was truly providential that we were all of us able to refrain from using our arms, for although we might have fired two hun-

dred shots in a few minutes, still it would have told entirely against us and would have been the ruin of us all, for it would have been impossible to escape from the assaults of the hundreds and hundreds who from the neighbouring *Andea* would have run to the rescue of their comrades. After a while the arrows ceased; we came to the middle of the river, and were thinking what to do in this critical moment, when the head of our assailants appeared on the shore, and singing and dancing asked us for objects as though nothing had happened. A look of indignation flashed at that moment in every eye, and our men would have certainly seized their rifles if I had not proposed to them to satisfy the cruel savage as the best and safest plan of action at the time, thereby restoring calm amongst them. Shortly after the very individual who had first been shot at, landed on shore, put down a certain number of objects and calmly returned to our midst. The savages thereupon retired, scattering themselves in the woods.

It was now night time, and we were still without food since the preceding evening, and besides, disheartened by the treason of the Indians, we could not decide what to do. A few biscuits were distributed and then we began to move forward again till far into the night. We pulled to shore after 2 hours' journey in order to take a little rest; but we had nearly all of us to sleep huddled up together in our boats, as it was quite impossible to land as the banks were very high, and there was the additional danger of being shot at with arrows even by night. And then how could we sleep after such a disastrous day? On the morrow new difficulties sprang up to retard our return. We were unable to go up the river owing to the strong current. To remedy this some had to land, whilst others with sticks and oars pushed their boats forward. But soon this strange manner of travelling told upon us and one after another fell sick, till there was not a sufficient number to manage the boats, those who were convalescent being often obliged to take the place of some one just fallen sick, in order not to cause any further delay.

*(To be continued.)*

## TIERRA DEL FUEGO

*(Extracts from Fr. Beauvoir's notes).*

*(Continued.)*

### **Gradually settling down — More boys — Drawn by kindness — Barbarous methods of cure.**

Our hopes were not frustrated. The Indians followed all the ceremonies with keen interest and were much pleased to see the honours thus paid to the remains of one of their kith and kin. Hence they grew more and more attached to us, and although they still betook themselves elsewhere a few days afterwards, abandoning—as it is their custom—the place where one of their tribe was buried, they did not stay away a long time. Before departing they tried to set fire to the cottage where Abuelo had died, but luckily I was informed in time and prevented it; all however that had belonged to the deceased they delivered to the flames.

The Captain soon returned followed by Sebastian and several others. They were beginning to feel and realize the comforts which a little cottage could afford them, and they showed it by returning to live in it from time to time; nay, the Captain earnestly besought me not to give his lodging to any one else during his absence. On our part there was nothing that we wished so much as to see them settle down, for thus we would be able to attend to them more easily and with greater results.

On visiting them one day, when the tribe had again come near the Mission, I noticed that there was a goodly number of children, a rather unusual thing, for the little ones are generally left concealed in bushes for fear that we might carry them off. Entering a tent I took by the hand a little boy about six years of age and invited him to follow me. He would have willingly agreed to my proposal were it not that an old man, who had seen us, hastened to snatch him from me. I had to pocket this affront with seeming indifference, and say no more; but on my return home, I again met the boy and repeated my invitation which he at once accepted, and came with us without any further opposition. There he had his hair cut and was well washed; then clothes were given him to his great delight. He was very smart and lively and good at the same time: he was surnamed Ven, and in holy Baptism

I gave him as Patrons St. Joseph and St. Thomas and as Godfather our beloved Superior Fr. Belmonte.

There was another boy who used to come for bread at the bakery. I tried once to keep him but I failed; so I told the baker to detain him if he were to return. He succeeded, and so after the usual process of cutting his hair, washing and clothing him, we put him with the other boys. He received the names of Joseph Bartolo Horno and was then in his eighth year. Nothing



Fr. Beauvoir saluting the captain of the "Queenfish."

was known about his father; his mother, Felicidad Horno, was baptized some time after.

Another day a lad fifteen years old asked me for bread. "Yes" said I "but you must come yourself for it". There and then I fetched a loaf from the refectory, and, showing it to him I said: "Come here, bread, bread". He came for it although rather shyly. Whilst he was eating I induced him to remain with us; like the others, he was washed and clothed. He was christened with the names of Joseph Angel, and from the incident of the bread, he was surnamed Pan, the first of a large family of that name. About a month before we had received a certain Francis Bosco aged twelve. He had great repugnance to the use of water, and only with difficulty he allowed himself to be washed, and that same night he ran away.

Before the last-mentioned there came to the Mission another boy aged fourteen who

was named Joseph Casa. He was exceedingly fickle and continually going and coming. He was the eldest son of a certain Catalina, whom I had met two years before at Punta Senaia, when, for the first time, I ventured into the Rio Grande with the boats *Maria Auxiliatrice* and *King Irhis*. Fearing ill-treatment at the hands of the stranger, she fell on her knees to implore mercy. She was very much astonished, and delighted at the same time when I gave her a blanket and *yepper* bread and clothes. When dismissing her I said: "I not bad, very fond of Indians, never *pum-pum*; a house in Rio Grande later on: you come there."

It is certainly due to our kindness to the Indians that they never attempted to do us any harm.

She came to the Mission again some time after, sent by the parents of two children whom our men had brought home. Her object was not simply to see them, as she said to us at first, but to take them away, and she tried every means to carry out her plan. We on our part tried again and again to induce her to receive baptism, but in vain: she died without it.

Her body was found later on by some of ours, and I myself aided by Fernando, interred it, since the Indians refused to do so; because, they said, she had been guilty of some great crime, which, however, they never made known to me. Her son Zacarias died soon after and also without baptism. Whilst he was with us he seemed endowed with excellent qualities. One day, feeling unwell, he went, as he said, to see his doctors; but he did not return any more. In July 1895 some bones were presented to me, and it was reported that they were the remains of the unfortunate youth.

When the Indians realized the sincerity of our affection towards them and saw how disinterested we were in our dealings with them, actuated solely by the desire of doing them good and making them happy, their attachment to us became more and more intense. Such was the opinion they conceived of me, that they even consented to bring to me their sick to cure, which was for them a great mark of confidence.

They believe that all diseases are caused by an invisible and most wicked being, which takes possession either of the whole body or of a part according as the pain is all over, or only one limb is affected. Their doctors, or rather magicians resort to a kind of exorcism in all cases. When the patient

presents himself to the doctor he says: *Kualkitan*, that is: "doctor, I feel unwell." *Kispy?* says he? "what is the matter".—*Nain, nain*, replies the other "I feel so and so". Then the doctor rubs the sore part and with his fists beats and punches the poor invalid almost to death. He then breathes into his face, alternating this operation with some ridiculous gesticulations over the sick person whom he afterwards fans with his cloak in order to expel the evil spirit. If this is not sufficient, he shouts and yells and spits upon and kicks and bangs the poor creature, until



Bending his bow.

doctor and doctored alike are completely exhausted. If the seat of the distemper is the stomach, the patient lies flat on his back and the doctor jumps and dances upon the stomach, mingling his cries of despair with the spasmodic lamentations of the unhappy victim. Far from looking with horror on this barbarous treatment, they consider it as indispensable, and even in cases of small importance, the doctor must be summoned at any cost. It was in order to consult one of these doctors that poor Zacharias had left the Mission and died without baptism.

This barbarous superstition finds admirers, not only among those who have never heard us denouncing and condemning it, but even among some who are already christians and might be considered somewhat civilized.

They still retain faith in, and sympathy for it, and this has been more than once the cause of their leaving the Mission. We are endeavouring to stamp out this ridiculous and cruel practice, substituting little by little our manner of curing.

The fate of those who are declared incurable by the doctor is even more horrible.

To shorten his sufferings and agony they introduce two fingers into his mouth and choke him. The corpse is then wrapped up in the deceased's cloak and buried in a hole which they dig as best they can with sticks. On the grave they kindle a huge fire and burn everything which had belonged to the departed; afterwards they quit the place for ever.

(To be continued).



## EQUADOR

### Through the forests of the Apostolic Vicariate of Mendez and Gualaquiza.

(From the correspondence of Fr. Mattana).

(Continued)

#### Our courage put to the test—*Exemplum trahunt*—In the valley of Jungauza—Meeting with Brujo Papué—Captain Sando.

At 12 o'clock the Jivaro Cepiti, son of Captain Tucupì, after making several attempts, was able to swim across to the opposite side and return to us who were impatiently awaiting him, anxious to know if the river was fordable. He told us that it was exceedingly dangerous, because its waters were deep, impetuous and muddy and that only those Jivaros who were expert swimmers and tall of stature would be able to cross it, and they too not without great risk to their life. On hearing this all became downhearted and no one would venture the first into the water. I tried to persuade them to cross all together hand in hand, thus forming a single chain and helping one another to stand and overcome the violence of the current. They were so despondent that the christians as well as the Jivaros tried instead to dissuade me from attempting to cross the river that day. To wait on the shore till the following day was out of the question, for the thick black clouds announced fresh and torrential rain and con-

sequently the waters of the river would increase and hold us at bay for many days; the food supplies meanwhile would have run short and the Jivaros themselves would have become disheartened and would perhaps return to their homes. *Verba movent, exempla trahunt*, I thought: so after arming myself with a strong stick and having taken off my cassock, shoes and everything except my shirt and drawers, I made the sign of the Cross and entered the river accompanied by the Jivaro John Cayapa of Gualaquiza, one of the strongest Jivaros of the company. I went forward *in nomine Domini*, till the waters, having come up to my shoulders, threatened to choke me, but then what with walking and swimming, in a few minutes I succeeded in crossing the dangerous river and reached the opposite shore. The christians and the Jivaros were full of astonishment, for they never dreamt that I would succeed or even attempt to cross it the first, and they looked at me from the shore with eyes of compassion as though they were sure of some misfortune. When the Indians saw me struggling against the fury of the menacing waters, they sadly bewailed my fate and kept repeating: "Father Francis will get drowned"; they were on the point of jumping into the water to save me at the peril of their own lives. It was a great relief to them when they saw me safe and sound on the opposite side. Transported with joy they exclaimed: "Oh, Father Francis, you are very brave, you swim very well, and you had a very wide river to cross." Then plucking up courage all followed my example, passing, though with great difficulty, the dangerous river. Whilst waiting for the christians and Jivaros to cross the river and bring their belongings with them, I spent my time swimming in order to get more accustomed to it if I should have to cross other rivers larger and even more dangerous, as also in order to be able to help my companions, should they run risk of drowning.

Satisfied with our success we set out again cheerfully on our journey, each one carrying his bundles and climbed up the hill in front of us. After a few hours march we halted because some Jivaros felt indisposed and because further on we would not have found any water to drink, for cooking purposes and also for the celebration of Holy Mass. We put up our tents and I set about looking after the sick, and with the help of the confrère Avalos and of certain Jivaros also, I prepared the supper whilst the others went to the

chase. When all was ready we ate our supper with the best of appetites. Then having prepared the game which had been brought in shortly before for the following morning, we calmly lay down to rest.

An hour had hardly elapsed when it began to rain in torrents and with such a crash of thunder and lightening that it seemed as though every tree in the forest was rent asunder. Fortunately there were no accidents, the only inconvenience being that we were deprived of sleep and got an undesired bath into the bargain. Very early in the morning we lit a big fire to dry our clothes and prepare for breakfast. Towards six, having erected a small rustic altar, I offered up Holy Mass at which my companions received Holy Communion. Having made our thanksgiving and had breakfast, we again set out and towards 12 o'clock we reached the summit of the mountain which separates Indanza from Junganza. We halted a while to take some badly needed rest and to enjoy the beautiful panorama of the valley of Junganza; shortly after we began to descend into it. In a few hours we reached the river of the same name and continued our journey on the right bank, passing through various abandoned hamlets of the Jivaros. At 4 p. m., we crossed the Junganza, and with difficulty climbed up the bank which was very steep. The great valley of Junganza might be brought in touch with civilized populations by opening a road from Junganza to Chordeleg passing through the wood which divides the two territories of Pan and Chordeleg. By passing through this wood we come into the midst of the Jivaros who occupy the fertile valley of Junganza, which at present is almost depopulated. The climate of this valley differs but little from that of Indanza. There are no marshes. In the centre there are very few plants, but its slopes abound in every kind of produce. The river is smaller than that of Indanza; it runs from North to South and after a while turns to the East. The Junganza is bordered on the East by a range of hills which separates it from Chupianza, on the South by another large range called by the Jivaros *Mocha*; on the West by a mountain of the same name which divides it from Indanza, and in the North by the mountains and forests of Chordeleg and Pan.

(To be continued).



# Salesian



The *Italia Reale Corriere Nazionale* announced some time ago that in the coming spring a Congress would be held in Turin on the subject of Festive Oratories. This notice, as might be expected, met with general approbation and applause, both on account of the importance of the subject in itself, and the suitability of the place agreed upon. It was at this very town that on the 8th of December 1841 our good father Don Bosco opened his first Oratory under the patronage of St. Francis of Sales followed afterwards by those of St. Aloysius, the Guardian Angels, St. Joseph, and St. Augustine. Besides these, the number of Festive Oratories for both boys and girls at Turin is most hopeful and gratifying. The new Congress is welcome then and it comes as the forerunner of many others to be held in other Italian cities and in other countries.

It is chiefly on institutions of this nature that the religious, moral, and civil regeneration of society depends. We are not the first nor the only ones to recognise and proclaim this important fact. In this we do but echo the words, and follow the guidance of our great leader, the Holy Father. "Redouble your efforts" Leo XIII exclaimed some years ago, and we have placed these words at the head of the Bulletin, "redouble your efforts and talents to withdraw children and youth from the snares of corruption and unbelief, and thus raise up a new generation" (1).

(1) At the annual meeting of the Catholic Prisoners' Aid Society, held on April 17th, Lord Llandaff remarked, that the energies of the Society could not be more usefully employed than in caring for the boys. Figures collected by Sir E. du Cane showed that about fifty eight per cent of the population of the prisons had begun a career of crime before they were fifteen. It was obvious that to stop the river of crime at its source they must get at the boys.

Now, where more than in the Festive Oratories can this important restoration be accomplished?—than there, where the children of the middle and lower classes are gathered together? Of those very classes which are daily growing in influence, and assuming such an important place in the social destinies.

Montesquieu has said that there are some bad examples which amount to real crimes and that more states are corrupted by the violation of good morals than by the violation of the laws. Now what better and more efficacious means could there be to arrest this moral decay, and to remove from the individual, from the family, and from society this threatening danger than the institution of the Festive Oratories where the young people are kept from idleness, and drawn away from the sight and the company of evil doers? Here they are solidly instructed and educated in religion and morality, and in the exercise of the christian virtues which must be their mainstay through all the trials of life.

Early years and the time of youth is the period on which the whole of our life is formed, so that one is generally in manhood and old age what he was as a boy and a youth. Hence it is plain why all the really great educators have made the time of childhood and youth their chief study, and the work of their life. They understood that the formation as well as the regeneration of society is based on giving an education in keeping with the dignity of a christian to the youth of our towns and more especially of the middle and lower classes, since these are usually more neglected and more likely to be seduced and become instruments of evil. From this fact appears the usefulness, nay, the necessity of Festive Oratories where the child, the lad, may find not only a refuge, a



safeguard from the dangers that surround him, but also the help and influence which mould his character.

What is the grandest work in human life? asks a Pagan writer, Quintilian; and he replies: To conquer vice. No victory is more honourable than this. Many rule peoples and cities, but very few themselves. Now it is exactly this which is attained in an Oratory wisely organised, namely, where without any politics, the soul and body, the moral and physical forces, the imagination and the will, education and instruction, the sentiments and the life of the intellect, the free expansion of the soul, and the efficacious direction of authority find their scope, their life, their development, their guide. There is found in a training such as this that refined christian sense, which must always be the foundation of modern society, the only guarantee of that healthy life which is the most seasonable application of the first of the evangelical precepts, that of charity. To think that the school is enough for this is to shut one's eyes to facts. "We know by experience," an illustrious writer observed some years ago, on witnessing the sad spectacle of the growth of vice in proportion to the spread of godless education, "we know by experience, and common sense and the most elementary psychology guarantee the inference, that if the instruction is founded on religion and surrounded by a religious atmosphere, it will act as a principle of morality, whereas the instruction in which this foundation and atmosphere are wanting, acts on the contrary as a destroying principle.

Now the Festive Oratory which completes and sets aright the work of the school, supplies the deficiencies of home training, and even aids the salutary action of Religion. What would you wish a pastor of souls, even the most vigorous, pious, and accomplished, burdened as he is with his ministry to the adults which very often absorbs all his energy, to do on feast days for the children and young people, that is for the most numerous and most needy part of his charge. He evidently cannot and ought not to abandon the one for the other. Besides that, to deal with youth special aptitudes are needed, a natural vocation, a theoretical and practical knowledge, and a particular spirit of self-sacrifice which are not common to all. Nor is this the case only in the large cities and populous centres, but everywhere; the smaller

cities, the larger villages, and even rural districts need the Festive Oratory if the young generation is to be brought up with a sound, practical, religious training.

Among the personages that have manifested their approval and appreciation of the forthcoming conference on the Festive Oratories we cannot omit to mention H. E. Card. Svampa, Archbishop of Bologna, whose letter is well worth reproducing. "I have learnt with great satisfaction" he writes "that in the coming May, a congress on the Festive Oratories is to be held in Turin. The work of these institutions is the first which originated in the heart of Don Bosco, of saintly memory. The present age demands as a social need these Oratories which bring together on feast days the more neglected of the children of the people, and by means of music, games, entertainments etc., endeavour to instil the principles of sound education which they do not receive at home, in school, or much less in the workshop. I feel confident that the Congress will serve to show forth the importance of the Oratories, and the way of managing them to the best advantage. I feel most grateful to H. E. Card. Richelmy, to the Very Rev. Don Rua, and to the Committee of Promoters, for the proposal which I willingly accept, namely, to have my name enrolled among the Eminent Cardinals, Patrons of the Congress. May this my participation serve to make known the great esteem I entertain for the Salesian works, and especially for this which I consider the most proper of Don Bosco's Institutions, namely the Work of Festive Oratories.

The following is the report of H. M. I. on the day schools of Battersea.

*Boys' School.*—"The instruction is given diligently and with satisfactory results on the whole. Considerable improvement was noted at the second visit of Inspection".

*Girls' School.*—"The discipline and training are excellent. The teaching is earnest, and good sound progress is being made by the scholars."

*Infant School.*—"The children are trained and taught with good method and very successful results. The general efficiency of the School does the staff much credit."



# GRACES AND FAVOURS OBTAINED

through the intercession of

# MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

[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. All manuscripts, however, are carefully deposited in the archives of the Sanctuary.—ED.]

**Turin (ITALY).**—I can well say with St. Bernard that I have never had recourse in vain to the protection of Mary Help of Christians. In several afflictions I experienced the immediate effect of her powerful intercession.

Not long ago I fell dangerously ill and my life was despaired of. The doctors began to speak of surgical operations, but I had recourse to her, and had prayers offered in her sanctuary. Not only was I soon able to get up, but regained strength and health as if by miracle. Would that I were able to consecrate my whole self and all that I have as an expression of gratitude for this visible protection. Unable to do so, I make a modest offering, and promise to exert myself to spread devotion to her under the invocation of Help of Christians.

October, 1901.

E. MARTINI.



**S. Chiara d'Asti (ITALY).**—For some years past I had prayed for a grace of great importance to me, and had obtained other people's prayers, but in vain. Our entreaties, our efforts were fruitless and four years passed thus between hope and disappointment. Fresh difficulties were added to the existing ones, and rendered the expectation of this long wished-for favour keener and keener. Thank God the hope of seeing my wishes fulfilled never deserted me, but that day seemed very far distant.

One day I came across a copy of the *Salesian Bulletin*. I opened it and felt drawn to read

the accounts of the graces which Our Lady, Help of Christians obtains for those who have recourse to her with confidence. A voice seemed to say to me: Why don't you do the same? The hopes which had grown dim were at once revived, and at that very moment I promised to give public expression to my gratitude in this same periodical, if I obtained this long desired favour, and to have a Mass said at her altar. Meanwhile I began a fervent novena in her honour.

Great indeed is the power and goodness of Mary. The novena was hardly over, and I could already with a heart full of joy raise the hymn of thanksgiving. The grace so much longed for had been obtained, and quite in accordance with my wishes. May this public acknowledgment and expression of grateful feelings, serve to discharge at least in part the debt I owe to her, and may she continue her maternal protection towards me, and those who have been the instruments of her mercy.

October, 1901.

G. ANFOSSI.



**Savoie (FRANCE).**—A few days ago I wrote to you asking for a novena in order to obtain through Our Lady's intercession the conversion of a person advanced in years, and now in danger of death. We have had since the consolation of seeing him receive the priest, and I intend now to fulfil my promise by sending you the enclosed offering.

I would ask you for another novena for this same intention, and also for another person dear to me, who stands in great need of another favour. Be so good as to make these favours known in the *Bulletin*.

January, 1902.

P.



**Guttstadt (EAST PRUSSIA).**—I am glad to inform you that the grace I wished for,

and for which, at my request, you have offered up a novena in honour of Mary Help of Christians has been granted. The sickness, which according to human judgment was to last several weeks, was ended as if by miracle, and I ascribe it to the prayers offered up. I had then promised to have it published in the *Salesian Bulletin* and I would now ask you to do so. I would ask you also to continue to pray for me so that Our Lady Help of Christians may assist me in approaching trials. I enclose an offering for a Mass in her honour.

January, 1902.

M. H.



**Rye (ENGLAND).**—Please find enclosed P.O. of five shillings as a thanksgiving offering for a temporal favour received whilst making a novena to our Lady Help of Christians.

April, 1902.

F. L.



**Mullingar (IRELAND).**—I enclose an offering of five shillings from a person in acknowledgment of a favour received by her through a novena to our Lady Help of Christians.

April 14th, 1902.

Sr. M. BAPTIST.



**Verviers (BELGIUM).**—Let those who stand in need of graces have recourse to Mary Help of Christians.

My father had been a sufferer for several months. Four doctors had visited him, and all had declared that nothing more could be done for him, and death was not far off. Having thereby lost all hope of human remedies we had recourse to Our Lady Help of Christians, and not in vain. After having made a novena to this good mother, we saw our dear patient regain health and all dangers disappear. Thanks be to the Madonna of Don Bosco. I am fulfilling my promise in having the favour published.

Jan. 22nd, 1902.

A. G. (S. C.)



**Belfast (IRELAND).**—Very Rev. Father Rua, I am sending a small offering as a token of gratitude for a favour received

through the intercession of Mary Help of Christians.

Hoping you will not forget me in your prayers.

Jan. 8th, 1902.

JOHN O'NEILL.

*To obtain favours needed, Don Bosco recommended the frequent use of the Sacraments and the practice of a novena consisting of three Paters, Aves, and Glorias to Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, with a Salve Regina, making at the same time a formal promise of sending an alms according to one's means to the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians.*



## TO THE READER.

When applying for a copy of this periodical, please state whether you already receive our "Bulletin" (Italian, French, Spanish, German, or Polish) 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.

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## THE STORY OF THE ORATORY

OR

### DON BOSCO'S OPENING APOSTOLATE.

#### CHAPTER XLIV.

**A suggestion from Urban Ratazzi**  
**—The first foundation of a society**  
**suiited to the needs of the age—**  
**Reflexions of Don Bosco and re-**  
**commendations of Mgr. Fransoni.**

The Oratory of St. Francis of Sales, by thus bringing boys together on feast-days, and by sheltering and educating the children of the people was rendering every year most signal services. Hence it came to pass that many, who knew and admired the good thus accruing to society, would have wished to see this work established on a solid and lasting basis; and many, both priests and laymen, from time to time mentioned this matter to Don Bosco. In order to comply with the wishes of so many benevolent persons, Don Bosco would have willingly set about to form a society to carry on the work; but the attitude of the Government just at that time made him deem this undertaking useless and perhaps even dangerous. Leaving therefore everything in the hands of God, he went on in his usual way saying a kind word to all who approached him on this subject.

One day however, Urban Ratazzi himself, with whose name our readers are already familiar, happened to make to him this very same proposal. It seems that Divine Wisdom, Who is "playing in the world"—*ludens in orbe terrarum*—was pleased to make use of this very man—who along with Count Camillus Cavour had been among the first to take steps for the suppression of religious congregations—in order to remove all hesitations from Don Bosco's mind and to urge him to found that Society which, afterwards when firmly established, was to take the place of many others swept away by the revolution. This fact is so singular and of such an importance for the Oratory, that it seems well worthy of special mention here.

One day in 1857, the Minister Ratazzi sent for Don Bosco, and, speaking to him for some time about the result of the lottery,

about the work of the Oratories and the advantage which the Government might expect from them, he addressed to him words somewhat like these:

"I hope, Don Bosco, that you will live for many years to come to educate the many poor boys you have with you; but you are mortal like everyone else, and if you were suddenly called away what would become of your work? Have you already thought the matter over? If so, what measures do you intend to adopt to secure the existence of your Institute?"

To such an unexpected question, Don Bosco answered half seriously, half in joke:

"To tell the truth, your Excellency, I have not reckoned on dying so soon; I have thought about procuring some help for the present, but not as to the means of carrying on the work of the Oratories after my death. Now, since you have mentioned the matter, might I ask you, in my turn, by what means do you think it possible for me to establish such an institution on a safe footing?"

"In my opinion", replied Ratazzi, "you should select a certain number of laymen and ecclesiastics, form a society under certain rules, imbue them with your spirit, teach them your system, that they may not merely give you assistance, but may carry on the work after your departure".

At this suggestion a light smile played on Don Bosco's features. It was a well-known fact that Ratazzi, seconded by his colleagues, had in 1854 laid before the Piedmontese House of Deputies and in the following year carried through, the first law for the suppression of religious orders, which for centuries had existed in the Sardinian States; hence it seemed strange to Don Bosco that this very same man should advise him to institute another of these Congregations. He therefore replied:

"But does your Excellency believe it possible to found such a society in these days? The Government suppressed two years ago certain religious Communities, and is perhaps preparing now to do away with the rest, and do you think it would allow the establishment of another of a like nature?"

"I am fully acquainted", replied Ratazzi, "with the law of suppression and also with its scope. This law is not in your way at all, provided you found a Society in accordance with the requirements of the times and the laws now in force."

"And what would that mean?"

"It should not be a Society which has the

character of *manomorta*; but a Society in which each member keeps his civil rights, submits to the laws of the state, pays the taxes and so forth. In a word, the new Society before the Government would be nothing more than an Association of free citizens, united and living together, and having the same benevolent scope in view."

"And can your Excellency vouch that the Government will allow the institution of such a Society and its subsequent existence?"

"No constitutional and regular Government will oppose the founding and development of such a Society, just as it does not prevent but rather promotes, as it does, commercial, industrial and other similar Societies. Any Association of free citizens is allowed, as long as its scope and acts are not opposed to the laws and institutions of the State."

"Well", said Don Bosco in conclusion, "I will think the matter over, and since your Excellency shows so much kindness to me and to my boys, if necessary I will make bold to have recourse to your wisdom and authority."

The words of Ratazzi, who was looked upon in those days as an oracle in political affairs, were for Don Bosco as a ray of light, and made that appear to him feasible which, owing to the nature of the times, he did not think so before. He had, a short time before, made the acquaintance of Father Anthony Rosmini, and he used to go at times to confer with him as also with his immediate successor, Father John Baptist Pagani; this latter even cherished a hope that Don Bosco would attach the Oratory to the *Institute of Charity*, founded by Rosmini a few years before. But after the above-mentioned conversation Don Bosco set about to form a distinct Society, which should have for its principal scope the care of neglected youths, and he accordingly laid its first foundations. He began by framing and writing down certain rules according to the scope of the new Society; he interviewed certain priests and laymen of Turin, who, on hearing of his projects, willingly offered their services. He then also mentioned the matter to his clerics and to some of the best boys of the Oratory and in a short time he was surrounded by a dozen individuals who seemed to him reliable. Everyone, with the intent of doing good to the boys of the festive Oratory and of the orphanage, promised simply to obey Don Bosco and to fulfil such offices as might be possible to him.

Some of these members remained at their own homes limiting themselves to help in the Oratory on feast-days, or to teach the night-schools, or visit the boys in the workshops during the week, and seek an honest employer for those out of work or in danger. Others, on the contrary, took up their abode in the Oratory, living in common with Don Bosco, and always at his command.

The foundations thus laid, Don Bosco soon perceived that in order to raise up a building lasting and deserving the blessing of God much more was needed. The Society suggested by Ratazzi was purely a human one. In order that such an Association might live and thrive then and in the future, help from heaven was required. He therefore began to reflect and to ask himself: "Cannot this Society, whilst having a civil character before the Government, acquire also the nature of a religious Institute before God and the Church? Cannot its members be free citizens and religious at the same time? I think so myself for in any State a Catholic may be subject to the king or to the republic, and subject at the same time to the church, faithful to both, observing the laws of both".

Don Bosco did not remain satisfied with his own conclusions, but conferred on the subject with learned and pious persons, and treated of it at length with his spiritual director Father Cafasso. He wished also to consult Mgr. Louis Fransoni our much beloved Archbishop; and as he was unable to go to Lyons, where that champion of the Church was still in exile, he wrote to ask him for his advice. The illustrious Prelate gave his full approval to Don Bosco's plan, encouraged him to carry it out, and in order to place him on the safe road, he recommended him to go to Rome, and to ask of Pope Pius IX advice and suitable direction. Don Bosco complied willingly with the exhortations of his Archbishop, who, in his turn, on hearing that Don Bosco was going to Rome to lay the matter before the Holy Father, sent him from the place of his exile a most favourable recommendation. In this document the excellent Pastor showed his great benevolence and goodwill towards Don Bosco, praised his charity and zeal for the education of youth, laying stress on the religious and moral good which he had already done at Turin by his Oratories, and most earnestly entreated the Holy Father to lend him assistance his advice and the support of his Authority.

## CHAPTER XLV.

**Don Bosco starts for Rome—Prayers of the boys—The orphanage of Tata Giovanni and of St. Michael at Ripa—Charity schools—Conference of St. Vincent de Paul—Festive Oratories—Visit to Cardinal Antonelli—Audience of Pius IX—His blessing—Rules of the Pious Society of St. Francis de Sales—Interview with Cardinal Gaude—Don Bosco's return to Turin.**

The 18th of February 1858 will ever mark a memorable date. At 8.30 a. m. with the feelings of a father about to part from his beloved children, Don Bosco took leave of his boys and set out on his first journey to Rome. In those days a journey to Rome was not so easy nor even free from dangers, hence, as prudent persons were wont to do, Don Bosco also made his last will in order, as he said, that there might be no obstacle in the way for the Oratory should he be destined to fall a prey to the fishes of the Mediterranean. This very measure of prudence served to render his departure all the sadder so that many of the boys, seeing him leave the Oratory, could not restrain themselves from crying bitterly.

The cleric Michael Rua accompanied him as his secretary; but the boys of the Oratory, like affectionate children, accompanied him with their good wishes, and with their heart and mind were constantly with him. Every morning a select number of the more devout amongst the boys went to Holy Communion; many made visits to the Blessed Sacrament during recreation time and not a few practised various mortifications in order to obtain for him a prosperous journey. The prayers and self-denial of so many loving children could not but be most pleasing to Our Lord, who hearkened to them and bestowed abundant blessings on their father.

I shall not stop to relate here minutely all that happened to him in his journey by land and sea, nor all that he did in Rome; but I shall here note down only what seems to have some relation with this story, leaving the rest for another work and another time.

They travelled then from Turin to Genoa by railway, from Genoa to Civitavecchia by steamer and the rest of the way by carriage, and reached the Papal City on the 21st of February. There he was the guest of the noble and illustrious family of the Count De Maistre at the Quattro Fontane, and was treated with the greatest attention and cha-

rity. During the very first days he made the acquaintance of the most distinguished personages in the city and began at once to visit the most celebrated places.

Although I am unable to follow him in every step, I must not omit to make some mention of the visits he made to certain charitable institutions for boys from which he drew light and comfort to promote ever more and more our spiritual and material welfare.

On the 27th of February he went to visit the Orphanage which bears the name of *Tata Giovanni* and it proved to him a source of great pleasure both on account of its origin and scope, as also for the system there adopted which much resembles ours. Towards the end of the past century a poor mason named John Burgi, seeing every day numbers of boys wandering in rags and with bare feet through Rome, was touched with compassion, and provided a refuge for a certain number of them in a small house hired for the purpose. God blessed the work and the number of boys kept increasing; the premises were enlarged and the boys full of gratitude and affection began to call their benefactor by the name of *Tata*, which is the dialect for father. Hence the Institute acquired the name of *Tata Giovanni* which it has kept ever since. Burgi's means were very slender, but, kind-hearted as he was, he felt in no way ashamed to go and beg for his adopted children. Pope Pius VI, under whose Pontificate this Institute sprang into existence, became its great benefactor, and his successors followed his example.

Boys are there taken from nine to fourteen and are kept till they are twenty; the older and more virtuous boys are placed in charge of the others, and those most advanced teach the others the elements of reading and of arithmetic. Some clerics and laymen give the evening classes. The greater number of rescued boys learn a trade, choosing the one which suits them best. As there were no workshops attached to the Home, they go out to learn a trade in different workshops in the city just as our boys used to do in the beginning. Some are allowed to study arts and sciences, but only after giving long and satisfactory proof of an eminent piety and of talent.

The Institute is placed under the protection of Our Blessed Lady assumed into Heaven and of St. Francis of Sales. The hour of rising and of going to bed, the dormitories, the surveillants, each room having a Saint

for Patron- in short everything seemed to bear the stamp of our Oratory, and Don Bosco was pleased to find that he had planted at Turin the work of *Tata Giovanni* without even knowing it. Works of charity are all more or less similar, since they all have God for their author and are inspired by the Church and they change neither with time or place.

Pius IX, as a simple Priest, had been for seven years Superior of this Orphanage. This explains the special benevolence which he showed towards it as also towards our Oratory which even at that time bore to it a marked resemblance. In that year the boys there numbered 150.

A most interesting visit was that which he made on the morning of the 6th March, to the hospice of St. Michael at Ripa, which then gave shelter to some 800 boys. Cardinal Tosti, president of the establishment, was kind enough to accompany him over the whole place. On visiting the workshops Don Bosco found trades there as amongst us; but most of the boys were occupied in design, painting or sculpture and several in a printing press. Pius IX in order to benefit this institute had granted it a privilege, in force of which the school books used throughout the Pontifical States could only be printed there. Don Bosco felt great satisfaction at seeing so many boys thus placed on the path of virtue and of an honest life; he must also have conceived the holy desire and asked of God to bring his boys at Turin up to the same number. A few years later his desire became a reality.

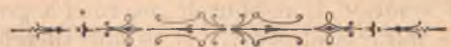
There are several other visits deserving of mention in this work. In the afternoon of the 3rd of March the illustrious Duke Scipio Salviati took him to Santa Maria dei Monti to visit the schools supported by the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul, which numbered about sixty. The master made them read a little, then recite the catechism, and finally work out a few sums of arithmetic. The boys were intelligent, attentive to every question, and replied without becoming in any way confused. Don Bosco wished also to know if they understood what they read and on questioning some of them he found that in some cases it was not so. He accordingly gave the master a few polite and prudent hints on the subject which were received by the latter with gratitude. On the whole he found this school conducted on the lines of charity schools, which aim in a special manner at rescuing boys from the perils of the streets,

at instructing them in the truths of faith and in the precepts of christian morality, and at giving them an education suitable to their condition without pretending in any way to make them learned above their station, which would end by making them ambitious and conceited, useless to themselves and perhaps even harmful to society. Of the same nature were the evening, day and festive schools for the externs and artisans of our Oratory.

That very evening Don Bosco went to assist at a Conference of St. Vincent de Paul, opened under the title of St. Nicholas. The president was the noble Marquis Patrizi, nephew of the Cardinal Vicar. On being requested to say a few words to the members, Don Bosco gave them a short address exhorting them to cultivate with great ardour the spirit of the Conferences, but to look upon and promote as a work of predilection the protection of poor and abandoned boys. Don Bosco had already with the help of Count Charles Cays established in the Oratories at Turin these same Conferences amongst the grown up boys, under the title of annexed Conferences and this he related to his auditors, exhorting them to practise the same in the evening schools at Rome. The Conferences amongst youths had for scope to train them in good time in the practice of works of charity towards the most needy families, and at the same time by these means to induce them more easily to send their children to catechism.

He also paid a visit to the festive Oratories. He devoted to this end a whole Sunday which fell on the 14th of March. The Marquis Patrizi, mentioned above, served as his guide. In the morning he visited the Oratory of Our Lady della Quercia. In a large sacristy some forty boys were assembled who by their behaviour and their vivacity bore a marked resemblance to his little urchins at Turin. Mass, Confession and Communion for such as were prepared, catechism and a short instruction, these were the functions held for their benefit. Two priests attended to them one by hearing confessions and the other by minding them. Some members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul taught catechism and directed the practices of piety, whilst the Marquis himself signed the notes which every boy took home with him each Sunday.

(To be continued.)





## A Son of Don Bosco.

— 1850 — 1895 —

### LIFE OF MONSIGNOR LASAGNA, Salesian Missionary, Titular Bishop of Tripoli.

Nor could it be otherwise, as his devotion to Mary Help of Christians, which was already so deeply rooted in him, was, by what took place at the Oratory in the course of that year, made more and more fervent.

Don Bosco in his ardent desire to draw souls to Jesus Christ through devotion to our Lady, —*ad Jesum per Mariam*—had conceived the bold design of raising a magnificent Sanctuary, to which the faithful from every country would come to implore succour in their afflictions from Her, whom the Church has proclaimed the Help of Christians. The imposing edifice, commenced in 1865, seemed to rise by magic. In a short time the city of Turin, to its astonishment, saw raised a majestic cupola surmounted by a statue of Mary in the attitude of blessing the inhabitants. Soon also the good tidings spread that the new sanctuary would be blessed by his Grace Archbishop Ricardi of Netro, on the ninth of June 1868. The activity displayed by Don Bosco in those three years in collecting the means for his gigantic work is incredible; but rather than he, we should say it is Mary Help of Christians who procured the means, by obtaining countless favours for those who contributed to the erection of her shrine. So true is this that D. Bosco, in the book entitled *Wonders of Mary Help of Christians*, went so far as to place at the beginning of it: *Ædificavit sibi domum*, "She hath built Herself a house", and Mgr. Gastaldi, then bishop of Saluzzo, at the solemn octave of the consecration, did not hesitate to say that every stone of that church recorded a grace and a miracle of Mary. It is not therefore astonishing if at the Oratory these heavenly

favours and miraculous cures were much spoken of, as also the opening of the new church and the festivities held on that occasion.

The heart of Louis rejoiced at seeing so great honour paid to Mary Help of Christians, and he neglected nothing which might infuse also into the hearts of his pupils tender sentiments of piety and confidence towards Her. Frequently, and especially on the vigil of her feasts, he spoke to them in warm terms of their good Mother Mary, and he made them learn by heart verses on the Blessed Virgin, and wished to have her image in the school well adorned, thus accustoming his pupils, one might say, to study under the maternal vigilance of Her who is the Seat of Wisdom. On his own part these feasts in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians, the example of D. Bosco and his very actions contributed powerfully to remove from his devotion that superficial character which at times discredits it, and served to make it solid and practical. He besought her with fervour and he offered to her every pain and labour. In that scholastic year also, since both on account of his ill health and new surroundings, not only his joys were intermingled with afflictions, but his path seemed more than ever strewn with thorns, in him grew more and more devotion to our Lady of Sorrows: he made his own the tender sentiments expressed in a beautiful poem to the *Mater Dolorosa* of Peter Alexander Paravia, Professor of Italian literature at the University of Turin from 1832 to 1857, and which Louis had learnt by heart when at Mirabello. If Louis Lasagna was able to persevere in spite of that moral prostration into which he had fallen and of his physical weakness, it was due to his tender devotion to Mary and to his unbounded confidence in D. Bosco.



## CHAPTER X.

A sign of perseverance—His religious profession—Sent to the College of Lanzo for his health—New occupations.—His studies—The choice of books—A good lesson in pedagogy.

ALL the changes which have been related until now took place whilst Louis Lasagna was yet free from any moral bond to the Society of St. Francis of Sales. Perhaps the devil, knowing that there remained but a short time for him, *sciens quia modicum tempus habet*, redoubled his assaults in order to try once more to withdraw him from that state of life and make him go back to the world. God, however, who especially manifests his infinite wisdom in drawing good from evil, permitted all this in order that our young cleric might not be drawn solely by his enthusiasm to embrace a manner of life fraught with privations and sacrifices, filled with crosses and so contrary to human inclinations.

Thus in the course of those two years, by walking in the path of virtue, of humiliation and of self-denial, he was able to form a correct and complete idea of the Salesian life; and if the difficulties met with, had failed to make him turn aside from the way he had begun to follow, this fact alone was a sufficient sign that, with the help of God, he would persevere.

Many a time in his intimate conversations with Don Bosco, he laid open to him with filial confidence his frequent failings and the discouragements which from time to time weighed him down. The good father, who knew him thoroughly and knew also how he could be depended upon, thought it opportune to cut off at a single blow every doubt and hesitation, breaking thus, as he was wont to say, the horns of the devil by the religious profession. Hence he told him plainly to prepare to take the holy vows in the coming September. On the nineteenth of that month 1868, in the modest chapel attached to the house of Trofarello, after he had prepared himself by a fervent course of spiritual exercises directed by Don Bosco himself, Louis Lasagna had the happiness of consecrating himself entirely to God by the religious vows. He had seen others on this occasion, present themselves to the altar trembling; he had heard them pronounce the form of their irrevocable consecration to God with a voice interrupted by sobs, and he himself felt a thrill through his body, when he considered

the grave obligations that were entailed by this contract with almighty God; but at his turn, driving away all fears, with an heroic and generous will he made the sacrifice of himself. He set out from Trofarello with a heart flooded with a joy that was even reflected on his countenance. He carried away with him the sweetest recollections of the memorable act he had accomplished, and at the same time he was more than ever determined to combat with all the forces at his command those evil tendencies, which he had learnt to know better during these spiritual exercises, and marked the particular remedies which he intended to make use of in order to obtain a complete victory.

In the beginning of the new scholastic year our young Salesian resumed his regular duties at the Oratory at Turin. Unable to restrain within bounds the eagerness of his zeal for the progress of his pupils, he overtaxed himself so much as to quickly undermine his health; on this account in the December of the same year, the doctors advised his superiors to relieve him of his class and to give him a change of air if they wished to save his life. Don Bosco, ever careful about his son's health, sent him to the College of St. Philip Neri at Lanzo. The climate there exactly suited him. At the time when he happened to be sent there all the principal offices had already been assigned to the members of the community. He was indeed received with great charity by the Director, Father Lemoyne, who also paid every attention to his health, however when he became fit to undertake some duty, as he had not been taken into account, he had to be content with some occasional and humble work, but which served also to make more evident the great progress he had made in the spirit of self-denial. He was entrusted with the care of the little boys whom he had to attend to both by day and night, and especially in seeing to their tidiness and cleanliness. Louis fulfilled these duties more suited, one might say, to a servant than to a cleric, so unostentatiously and with such charity as to greatly edify his confrères. By this we do not mean to say that, in the secret of his heart, he did not at times experience the revolts of self love against this obedience; but only an intimate friend, to whom, as was his custom, he had opened his heart with all frankness, was able to know the efforts he had to make in order to check this rebellious passion and how much the victory had cost him. The Director, who on his part had

silently observed and studied his new subject was soon convinced that in him, on account of his talent, his energetic spirit, and still more for his piety and strength of character, he would find a valuable helper, so he took the best means to foster his devotion and his love of study, and at the same time used every precaution to strengthen his weakened health.

Lasagna on his part already highly appreciated Father Lemoyne whom he had heard very often spoken of, and now being placed under his direction, he felt himself drawn irresistibly to him; during the time he remained at Lanzo he loved him dearly and placed in him unbounded confidence. Every wish of the Director was to Louis an order to be promptly obeyed.

He also thought himself still more fortunate in enjoying the fellowship of other members already distinguished for ability and great virtue, and he strove to follow their examples. As some of them had also been his school-fellows, they knew how to make allowance for, and charitably put up with his too lively, and at times even impetuous character and thus spared him unpleasant occurrences. These and other circumstances served to restore to him that bright and cheerful countenance which he had through life, and brought back that charm and joviality of conversation which seemed for a time to have faded away; hence those years which he spent at Lanzo were looked upon by him as the happiest period of his life.

Lasagna knew how to turn into account the leisure which he had by revising his philosophy, and willingly accepted the charge of preparing two younger confrères for examination in this subject. He also applied himself to the study of theology with very great ardour under the guidance of his learned Director. Gifted with a penetrating and powerful mind, he would first form a comprehensive general idea of the whole treatise he set himself to learn, and then come to master the details of each question. He was not content with a superficial acquaintance, and spared himself no pains in order to arrive at a clear and thorough knowledge and acquire a full command of the subject of his study. His brilliant examinations were a proof of the passion with which he studied ecclesiastical sciences and of the soundness of the method which he followed.

Even then he showed remarkable good judgment and discernment in the choice of his books. He preferred those authors who

treated of science or literature, avoiding those many productions the reading of which, even when it is not the ruin of faith and good morals, is at the very best a sheer waste of time. The advantages of this judicious discernment in reading and study became even more evident when he was appointed to teach the most advanced classes, and when he presented himself for the examinations for his degrees at the Turin University.

Finally, whilst dealing of this period of his life, it is well worth mentioning the high idea which he had formed of an office which, though humble in itself, is very meritorious before God, namely that of minding the pupils. The wise instructions and fervent exhortations of his superiors contributed very much to this effect. His lively faith moreover and ardent zeal soon convinced him that there is nothing more pleasing to the Sacred Heart of Jesus than to prevent, by means of conscientious vigilance, that a pupil should have the misfortune of piercing that same Adorable Heart by falling into sin. He too, when in his turn will be appointed Superior, in addressing his confrères on the office of surveillant, will dwell on these ideas so earnestly and forcibly that many of them will ambition that office. A good lesson for those employed in the education of youth.

(To be continued.)



**Our Co-operators are kindly requested to pray for the repose of the souls of the following lately deceased:—**

- Mrs. Catherine Schatz, *Alexandria* (Egypt).
- Rev. Bro. Evaristus, Marist Brothers, *Iberville* (Canada).
- Right. Hon. C. I. Redington, D. L., *Killiney, Dublin* (Ireland).
- Rev. Joseph Peters, S. J., *Adelaide* (Australia).
- Mrs. Mary Lynch, *Adelaide* (Australia).
- Mrs. Ellen Donovan, *Adelaide* (Australia).
- Mrs. Honoria Ryan, *Adelaide* (Australia).
- Mrs. Margaret Etheridge, *Adelaide* (Australia).
- Miss C. O'Loughlin, *Adelaide* (Australia).

**R. I. P.**

PERMISSU SUPERIORUM

Gerent, GIUSEPPE GAMBINO.—Salesian Press.—Turin, 1902.

PRAYER — by praying for the object and intentions of the Association.

ALMSGIVING — by contributing according to their means to the support and development of the many institutions of the Society for the education of destitute youth; also to the support and extension of the Missions among pagans, and on behalf of the lepers.

PROPAGANDA— by making the Association of Salesian Co-operators more widely known and increasing the number of its members; by bringing the works of the Society to the knowledge of well-disposed and charitable persons, by enlisting the sympathy of them and of all who have at heart the rescuing and christian education of youth and the good of civil society.

Any person desirous of being enrolled may apply either *To the Very Rev. Michael Rua, Superior General, Salesian Oratory, Valdocco, Turin (Italy)*; or *To the Very Rev. C. B. Macey, Salesian Schools, Surrey Lane, Battersea, London S. W.*; or to the Superior of any of the Salesian Houses.

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To our friends and Co-operators, who would like to make Don Bosco's works more widely known, we strongly recommend the circulation of a pamphlet entitled: *Don Bosco's Apostolate and other Sketches*. As many copies as are requested will be forwarded in return for any offering. Apply to the *Editor of the Salesian Bulletin Salesian Oratory, Turin, Italy*; or to the *Very Rev. C. B. Macey, Salesian Schools, Surrey Lane, Battersea, London, S. W.*

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