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SANCTUARY OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS



TOMB OF DON BOSCO

THE ❁ ❁ ❁



SALESIAN,

BULLETIN



DON BOSCO.

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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:

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 heathens, 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.



THE
SALESIAN
BULLETIN

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

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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Leo XIII. and Education

I.

THE voice of Leo XIII. has ceased to sound in the ears of men. Of him, however, may be repeated with full justice that, although he has departed from this world, he ceases not to speak—*defunctus adhuc loquitur*. He will continue long to speak eloquently and forcibly by the examples of his life and by his teaching.

The record of his noble deeds is treasured up and enshrined in the Ecclesiastical Annals, and will shine forth as a luminous example and model.

The documents of wisdom, moreover, which he has bequeathed to the Church, have proved, and will prove to the whole world like a beacon of light guiding amidst the dark, entangled maze of errors which has overspread the earth.

With clear, unfaltering accents he pointed out the right path—a striking contrast to those outside the Catholic Church who pose as spiritual leaders of men. He spoke as "one having authority," as the Successor of St. Peter to whom Christ has entrusted the office of confirming his brethren.

Of all the principal questions affecting the welfare of his children, aye of mankind, none escaped his solicitude. To all, as circumstances and time demanded, he devoted his attention and care, and promoted to the utmost of his power the interests of Religion and the weal of the human race.

One of the things, therefore, which could not but be very dear to his heart, was certainly the christian education of youth. Hence, as often as he could, he insisted on the paramount importance of education, to be worthy of the name,

being based on and permeated by religion. For, whilst instruction may store the intellect with knowledge, religious education alone can give the right use of such knowledge; it alone can enlighten the mind of man with regard to his moral obligations, strengthen the will in the practice of duty, develop virtuous habits; thus effectually promoting the good of individuals, of domestic and civil society.

It is true that in many places, and—it is pleasing to remark—especially among English speaking peoples, Catholics have shown how dearly they prize education informed by christian spirit. They have faced bravely many and great difficulties, and imposed on themselves heavy sacrifices in order to secure it for their children. Their consistency and earnestness have forced themselves on the attention and consideration of men of no religious principles and have been quoted as an example and a contrast. Their strenuous, persevering efforts have elicited, at times, even sympathy and admiration from adversaries. It will be instructive and encouraging, in any case, to read the words which the late Pontiff uttered in this regard, though at times in relation to different places and circumstances, either deploring existing evils, or trying to ward off threatening dangers, or exhorting to spread the advantages of christian education.



On the 26th of June, 1878, writing to Cardinal Monaco La Valletta, then Vicar of Rome, the Pope animadverted on an ill-advised resolution, an insidious compromise, in force of which the religious instruction was to be imparted to those catholic children only whose parents had made an expressed demand for it.

“This provision,” he said, “of imparting religious instruction only to those children on whose behalf parents shall make an express application for it, is a derision. It is hard to understand how the authors of this ill-fated disposition should have failed to perceive the harmful impression it must make on the mind of

children to see the teaching of religion placed on a condition so different from that of other subjects.

“The child, in order to be incited to a diligent study, needs to be impressed with the importance and necessity of what is being taught; what interest, then, can he feel in a branch of study towards which the school authorities show themselves so unconcerned and hostile?

“And then, if there were (as it might happen) parents who either through wicked disposition, or oftener, through ignorance or carelessness do not think of securing the benefit of religious teaching for their children, there would be a large number of youth deprived of this salutary instruction to the serious detriment of those innocent souls, not only, but also of civil society itself.”

Mentioning next the law that makes elementary education compulsory, and even imposes fines on the parents in order to secure attendance, he remarks how ruthless it is at the same time to deny the pupils a training so useful for their after life.

“Is it not cruel,” he says, “to cause these children to grow up without any religious notion or sentiment, and thus in ardent youth they should find themselves face to face with the lurements of passions unprotected and unprovided, without restraint, certain to be dragged down the slippery paths of crime? It is a deep sorrow to our paternal heart to see the deplorable consequences of this reckless measure, and our grief is increased by the thought that the incitements to vice are now stronger and more numerous than ever.”

He then turns to parents, teachers, and to all having authority placing before them their grave duty. “There is need of bringing before the mind of every catholic the most strict duty which in force of natural and divine law binds them to instruct their children in the supernatural truths of faith, and the obligation that those having authority in a catholic city have, of favouring and promoting its fulfilment.”

Remarking on the pretext on which

some would discard the teaching of catechism, as old-fashioned and not in keeping with the condition of the age, he replies: "Who can assert that till now the teaching of catechism has not proved beneficial? Is it not the teaching of religion that has renewed the face of the earth, that has sanctified and softened the mutual relations of men, that has refined the moral sense, and brought on that christian wisdom which acts as

catechism. For the sake of such precious fruits which have been already reaped in the past, and which may be justly looked forward to in the future from such teaching, not only should it not be banished from schools but rather promoted in every way."

The letter goes on to state that it is irrational and cruel to rend the child asunder, as with a Solomon's sword, by severing his intellect from his will; as the former is educated, so also the latter



Don Albera's visit to Nietheroy.

a moral restraint in checking excesses, condemns injustice and raises christian peoples above all others? Will any one say that the social conditions of our age have rendered it useless and even harmful? But the safety and prosperity of nations can have no safeguard outside of truth and justice of which the present age has so great need, and whose rights are preserved untouched by the Catholic

must be trained in acquiring virtuous habits and in the attainment of the last end, and closes with the remark that "the teaching of catechism ennobles and raises man in the proper estimation of his own dignity; leading him to respect at all times himself and his neighbour."

In these words is briefly summed up the most beneficial action exercised at all times by Religion.

Don Rua's Representative in America

(Extracts from his Secretary's Correspondence)

HALF way between Araras and San Paulo lies Campinas, a town which, for importance and population, ranks second in the State of San Paulo. What movement everywhere! and nearly all seem to be immigrants.

Our House is situated on the side of the town opposite to that of the railway station. It occupies a lovely position which commands a view of the whole city. All the confrères and pupils were awaiting us at the station and we crossed the town in a special set of tramcars kindly placed at our disposal by the Company. The band occupied the first, the others carried over one hundred boarders and the boys of the Festive Oratory; lastly Fr. Albera accompanied by several distinguished gentlemen of Campinas and our benefactors.

During the journey, the conversation turned on the calamities which, from time to time, have befallen that city, and in particular on the epidemic which raged there in 1889 and which left hundreds of boys abandoned, without parents and without shelter. The victims of this scourge were most numerous, and Campinas looked more like a cemetery than a town.

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It was then that the Right Rev. Dr. J. Correia Neri, then parish priest of Campinas, but now Bishop of Porto Alegre, conceived the idea of building an orphanage and entrusting it to the Salesians. He soon set to work. As soon as he had got funds together, he sent for the Salesian architect, Don Delpiano to draw the plans, and a portion of the stately edifice was built in comparatively short time. It was entrusted to the sons of Don Bosco in 1897. There are now there over one hundred boarders, besides a considerable number who attend as day-scholars.

A confrère made these items of domestic records the subject of a dramatic piece which

was well performed and very favourably received. Dr. C. Bierrembach, greeting Fr. Albera in the name of the Salesian Co-operators and in the name of his fellow citizens, dwelt very effectually on the beneficial results of a sound catholic education of the working lads; and, alluding to criminal attempts of those very days, he pleaded forcibly for the Salesian work devoted to the training and education of young artizans. "No," he remarked with emphasis, "no, the many lads that are now wasting away in prisons, are not born criminals, as some people affirm; they were led to the path of crime through neglect."

Fr. Albera was bound to acknowledge the cordial reception he had received; and in offering his thanks, he added that the visit he had paid to the workshops—carpenters, tailors, shoemakers, printers, compositors and book-binders—had given him satisfaction; still he noticed that they wanted enlarging, and that there was, moreover, need of adding other workshops, since there were many applications of some standing. Hence the co-operation of all was required so that the rest of the building may be proceeded with and there were there already the iron column destined to support it, which only awaited to be raised in their sockets. This visit to Campinas was very satisfactory and beneficial in its results.

We are at last at Nietheroy: the last house to be visited in South Brazil, the last also in this account but the first in order of date of foundation, and first also, I think, in Fr. Albera's mind. For he cannot forget that the first missionaries landed here twenty-six years ago on a memorable day, the 8th of December, and that Mgr. Cagliero, the head of the band, was the first Salesian to say Mass on American soil.

And in that House this item had not escaped notice. Indeed, as soon as the inmates knew of the projected visit to America

of Don Rua's Representative, they sent a letter to our Superior General, claiming the honour of being the first to welcome him, since the missionaries had first landed there. But their letter reached Turin after our departure, and they were sadly disappointed.

Nitheroy is situated on the shore opposite the Capital of the Federated States, and the bay lies between them.

The Institute Santa Rosa has long ago been mentioned in the *Bulletin* and it is also well known here for the services it rendered during the civil war of 1893. It is also from this Institute that, when in February 1896, all on board of the Cruiser *Lombardia*, with the exception of three or four, were stricken down with a severe attack of yellow fever, Fr. Varchi, on the receipt of a telegram, hastened to the vessel and remained to the very end, rendering all the services in his power.

For this he was highly commended by the Pope's Representative, Mgr. Guidi, and by the Commander of the *Lombardia* Dr. Ch. Borrello. The latter wrote to the Superior of the Institute, and, among other things, he said: "With all my heart I thank you for having sent us a priest who has fulfilled his mission with a zeal, christian charity and perseverance truly prodigious. He of his own accord wished to remain to the very last, as long as there was any need."

And the Italian Government, when acquainted with the generosity, and self-denial with which this confrère had risked his life, insisted on his accepting the decoration of Cavaliere.

So many good deeds could not fail to draw down God's blessings on the House, and in fact the progress made since by that Institute is marvellous. The *Bulletin* has related already, how on the 8th of December 1900, on the occasion of the fourth centenary of the discovery of Brazil and twenty-fifth year

of the Salesian Missions, a splendid monument surmounted by a statue of Mary Help of Christians was solemnly unveiled as a homage to Jesus Christ Our Redeemer and to His Vicar upon earth. The basement is formed by the living granite rock on the top of a hill, and on it is raised a shaft in the shape of a tower about one hundred and twenty-five feet in height. In the lower part, which is of eclectic style, there is a shrine or chapel where Holy Mass can be celebrated: it lends itself very well for open air functions and on the occasion of pilgrimages. The statue which surmounts the monument is of wrought and gilt copper measuring twenty feet.

We arrived at Nitheroy very late at night,



Funicular railway to the monument of Mary Help of Christians, Nitheroy.

nevertheless all the boys were still waiting. The whole Institute was brightly illumined with electric light, and the Statue of Our Blessed Lady was glistening in a glare of light from lamps of various colours. The Superior of that House, so thoughtful and ingenious, could not have given Fr. Albera a more agreeable surprise. The 420 boarders were there arrayed with their band ready to greet Don Rua's Representative whom they had been expecting for a whole year. And the reception he was accorded could not be more solemn or enthusiastic. For that evening, however, Fr. Albera contented himself with

addressing a few words of acknowledgment and then dismissed them.

It is a custom with those boys of Santa Rosa Institute every morning after breakfast to climb up to the monument through a shady walk nearly a mile long. There they sing a hymn in honour of Our Blessed Lady and then merrily amuse themselves. This morning trip they call the hygienic walk, and such it is in reality. On the first morning Fr. Albera was also invited to take part; when a certain stage of the journey was reached, they all stopped, and assembled; then one of them pulled a string and unveiled a slab with the words of "Fr. Albera's avenue" which he read out amidst claps of applause.

After the singing of the customary hymn, Fr. Albera had to take his place on a special platform and there and then a splendid literary séance was given in honour of Our Blessed Lady, evoking the records of the many favours that Mary had shown to the land of the Holy Cross and of the Immaculate Conception, as Brazil is also called. The same who first greeted Fr. Albera, dwelt on the special features of that monument and how it originated, stating that the three hundred thousand bricks that compose the tower represent an equal number of faithful and devout Brazilians. And turning to Fr. Albera he added: "Look how it commands the bay that stretches at its feet! That most charming spot of creation is the Capital of the Federated States. The sailors and travellers, when they pass here before, turn their eyes to the Statue and salute Our Lady *Star of the Ocean*; and at night this statue is also to them a guiding star surrounded as it is by a hundred lights."

The entrance to Rio Janeiro is superb. The bay, which is immense, shows, on its southern side, the characters of a fluvial lagoon, and it is both a gulf and a lagoon.

Along with its three hundred islets it covers nearly two square miles. In one third or more of this area the waters are deep enough to allow large steamers, which are there in hundreds, either at anchor or cruising in every direction, still leaving vast portions of that expanse of water free.

The entrance is flanked by two forts, in one of which, in 1874, was imprisoned the Bishop of Olinda, and later on, that of Pará, at the time of the variance between the Government and the Brazilian Bishops. At first sight, this immense bay has the semblance of a strait; for the granitic rocks from the opposite shores stretch so near as to leave only an open space of about a mile. But then the shores withdraw inward, forming many small bays and armlets ranged in semicircles with their ridges jutting out into islands and islets.

Beyond the channel of the entrance, one is confronted by the whole cluster of hills and elevations which stand out so prominent as to lead him to believe that he is facing the mainland were he not reminded of the sea by the white sails like flecks on the horizon.

How enchanting is the sight of the surrounding mountains dotted with orange groves! They form the outer ridge or tier of this majestic amphitheatre, the inner ones of which are the verdant hills covered with palm trees, and gradually sloping down to the shore. It is indeed a wonder of creation; it may well compare with Naples and Constantinople on the score of beauty.

The Capital of the Federation is also the emporium of the commerce of the Republic; traffic is brisk and kept up by thousands of foreigners that import their treasures in exchange for the rich produce of the soil. The natural beauties are enhanced by those of art—churches, palaces and other buildings, some of which are magnificent.

The population reaches now 900,000, which number would greatly increase were it not that this place, alas! is often visited by yellow fever and other epidemics.





TIERRA DEL FUEGO

(Extracts from Fr. Beauvoir's notes).

(Continued)

Trials—An atrocious crime—A great disaster.

THE first part of the year 1896 had been very prosperous for the Mission, and, as I have related, the Indians also increased in number. But it seems that the enemy of mankind, enraged by what good had been done, and even more by what would be done in future, tried to wreak his vengeance on the Mission and endeavoured to destroy it by fire along with its inhabitants.

But it is written *Portae inferi non praevalent*, and all its fiendish artifices only serve to increase the merits of those who work with confidence to promote God's glory.

One day we at Puntarenas received the unwelcome and unexpected news that the Indians had stolen from the Mission sixty horses, one night when they had been left out. The horses were generally brought together in an enclosure, but this time the man in charge had left them out to stray in the country round as far as the mountain. It was found, however, that they had not been stolen by our own Indians, but by those of Bahia Inutil. It was they who had done us this bad turn: it was a lesson anyhow.

About this time also, the Manager of the *Estancia Pra. Argentina* went out in the country with some of his men and encamped in a wood. They were soon joined by some

Indians anxious to get a few biscuits or some meat. The poor Indians approached them with confidence, for they had seen them at the Mission and thought they would receive the same kind treatment as from the Missionaries. Whilst they were squatting around the fire the Manager conceived a most wicked design and soon proceeded to put it into execution. Two of his men were putting up tents, another was looking after the horses and a fourth one was minding the fire. The Manager told one of the Indians to go to gather some wood. He had barely gone ten yards when the Manager picked up his rifle and shot one of them.

The others were so terror stricken that they did not even attempt to defend themselves and they were shot dead one after the other. No name is bad enough for such a man; he is worse than a tiger for he killed those poor Indians in cold blood, whereas that wild-beast would not attack unless compelled by hunger or provocation. One victim was not enough to quench his thirst for blood, ten were necessary.

The excuse he gave for this atrocious crime was that he feared to be attacked by them! But surely this reason does not justify him; for, armed as he was, he had nothing to fear from those poor defenceless creatures; he should, moreover, have waited for some evidence that they entertained such evil intention, and be on his guard. No one can approve the conduct of a man who kills nine persons simply because he is afraid they may attempt his life. Every one will admit that such an execrable crime, such a barbarous deed, would have deserved exemplary punishment; still this wretch, not only did go unmolested, but he even boasted of his deed as of a heroic action.

The Indians were ten, and one succeeded in saving his life. When the nine were killed this one was told to go for wood, but

he ran away with all his might. He, too, was fired at and wounded but not mortally. He fell to the ground and pretended to be dead. He remained there, no doubt suffering excruciating pains, till night set in; then, when all were asleep, he slipped away and with great difficulty reached the Mission. He had received two wounds, one in the mouth. Under the tender care of Fr. Griffa he recovered in two months, but the two scars remained as a record of that sad day.

The criminal gave the same excuse when one day he came to the Mission. His after life was no better, and he rendered himself guilty of other crimes which, however, it is not the case to relate in these pages.

Although on my leaving the Mission all responsibility had been taken away from me, still I could not but feel keenly whenever any bad tidings happened to reach me from there. Great watchfulness is required in order to avoid certain accidents, which are likely to happen in such places.

In fact a short time after the horses had been stolen the bakery caught fire and was burnt down with all the implements and some sacks of flour. Luckily the damage did not amount to much as the bakery was apart from the rest of the Mission; nevertheless this must have put them to a great inconvenience and trouble.

About a month after, the Mission would have been wholly destroyed by fire had it not been for Mgr. Fagnano.

On another occasion, 12th of December, as the confrères and also the Nuns were about to start for their respective work together with the Indians, they perceived a strong smell as if of something burning, and saw the rooms filling with smoke.

The flames were penetrating through the windows and favoured by the wind they were spreading fast towards the corridor and the rooms. Alarming cries of "Fire! Fire!" soon attracted the attention of the men, who at once set about to bring it under control and quench it. But the strong wind rendered vain all their efforts. Seeing that the fire was steadily advancing and threatened to envelop the whole of the buildings, they hastened to empty the rooms, but it was too late: the wind which blew stronger and stronger was sending the flames in all direc-

tions. In less than two hours the buildings, viz. house, dormitories, workshops, store-rooms, refectories, kitchen, etc., were reduced to a heap of ashes. Very little could be saved.

To make matters worse, Fr. Griffa was then away. He had gone that morning to the shore; and at that time, he was with Joseph Menendez on board of the *Amadeo* which had just entered the Riogrande. About 2. p.m. he and the Captain had noticed a column of smoke that seemed coming from the Mission. When he reached home it was all over. It may be imagined what was his grief when he found himself, in less than two hours, deprived of all he had in the Mission.

But that was not the time for vain, useless lamentations: so they set about at once to put up some shelter with the remaining planks and cover it with sheets of iron, and tried to make themselves as comfortable as they could with that which was left at their disposal until Providence should dispose otherwise.

A part of the house of the Nuns had escaped destruction; but this part had been only partially built and left unroofed through lack of material. This part was now roofed in and arranged for their use and for the girls. A small chapel was put up in a corner of the grounds. The ground was also fenced in. The Salesians and the boys went to live in the cottages of the Indians and in some additional temporary shelter which was put up in the play-ground.

These houses were small and dark, and the wind and rain had free entrance through the chinks and cracks to be seen everywhere.

My heart was wrung with grief when, eight months afterwards, I still beheld the ruins of that disaster. I felt such a pain that I remained for a time speechless, and could not even find relief in tears. *Ita placitum fuit ante te, Domine.* He permitted it; it is well perhaps to try our patience or in punishment of our sins.

But what was the cause of this great disaster? No one knows. Some say that it may have been caused by the fermentation of some hay which had been stacked under a shed before it was quite dry; but that does not seem likely; chiefly as the weather was then very cold. That which

seems more probable is that the Sister in the kitchen, who was in the habit of piling the ashes in the yard, one day charged some girls to do it, and these, without reflecting, threw along with the ashes also some embers which must have been blown on the hay by the wind. Perhaps it may have been caused by some spark from the chimney, as sometimes used to happen. The pity is that it was not found out earlier, in time to quench it.

It was a great disaster and a great blow to the Mission, already flourishing and which had cost 90,000 pesos and the unceasing work of two years for all of us and five carpenters besides. No suspicion could be laid to the Indians; this is evident from the fact that they laboured as hard as we did to put out the fire. When they saw it advancing, they rushed to the rooms to save all they could, and when they saw that it was hopeless they felt pity for us and expressed their sympathy by repeating: "Poor Father! Poor Father! House no more, House no more." Besides they were always so docile and manageable that they never gave any cause for suspecting them. They never attempted to do any harm to us, except once perhaps (for it is not proved) when they tried to steal four of our horses on our first coming to Rio Grande from San Sebastian.

(To be continued).

PATAGONIA

(Territory of Neuquen)

Pastoral Visit and Mission of Mgr. Cagliero, Vicar Apostolic of Patagonia.

(Continued.)

Chos-Malal and its inhabitants—A fruitful Mission.

Chos-Malal is situated in the extreme North of the Territory, and it occupies the best part of a fertile and pleasant valley. Its foundation is of recent date, since it only began in 1889, when it was chosen as the Governor's residence.

On its right flows the river *Neuquen*, from which the Territory receives its name, and on its left the *Curileo* which waters a large portion of the valley of *Chos-Malal*. This small town is, as it were, in the centre of a vast amphitheatre formed by the neighbouring plateaus which encircle it and by the lofty summits of the Cordilleras. The climate is dry; strong winds often sweep over the whole region and the frequent frosts also prove a serious danger to the plants, fruit-trees, the vineyards and gardens which are an ornament to the neighbourhood of *Chos-Malal*.

It is the residence of this Governor and of the Magistrate and it is also the military station of the 7th Cavalry Regiment. The clerks are natives of the Argentine Republic, the tradesmen are mostly French and German, and those engaged in various industries



Ford in Neuquen.

are Italians who also carry on the ordinary crafts. The people of the country and of the neighbouring valleys are Chilians, and they are devout and attached to their Religion.

The mission given in this bright and pleasant village lasted seventeen days, and they were days of blessing and peace. The concourse of people at the sacred functions, both morning and evening, was so great that the modest church was unable to contain them all. Fortunately the windows of the sacred edifice are rather low, and from time to time they and the principal door were thrown open so that those people who were unable to get into the church, might listen to the divine word from the square or from the grounds which lie beside it. Seldom in my life have I witnessed so great a spectacle of

faith and christian piety. The parish church appeared to be one of those famous sanctuaries, to which on days of greater solemnity, pilgrims flock from all parts; and where, day and night, one hears the devout prayers of those who have recourse to God with faith and confidence. The order of the services was as follows: in the morning, from day-break Masses until 9 o'clock. The 6 o'clock Mass was celebrated by Mgr. Cagliari, who also gave an instruction and distributed Communion to a goodly number of people.

The Sacrament of Confirmation was then administered to the grown up; and not un-

ment. This was the function which attracted the greatest concourse of people; at that time the modest little church seemed like a besieged fortress.

The Bishop used to preach two or three times a day, with a zeal and eloquence worthy of an apostle; the assembled multitude listened most attentively; and the word of God wrought marvellous conversions.

Four confessors were at the disposal of the faithful from daybreak till 10 a.m. and from 5 till 10 and even 11 p.m. every day. About half the confessions were of men; indeed, Almighty God wished in this favourable cir-



Gold diggers in Chos-Malal.

frequently there were among them people thirty, forty, and even sixty or more years old. At 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. the explanation of Christian Doctrine was given to the boys and girls of the Parish in order to prepare them for the reception of the Sacraments. At 5 p.m. Confirmation was again given to the boys and girls after an instruction on the obligations of god-fathers and god-mothers towards their god-children. Towards sunset the Rosary was recited followed by a sermon and benediction of the Blessed Sacra-

cumstance to visit his children with his graces, enriching them with his blessing and friendship. It was a source of great consolation for all to know that all living here, with few exceptions, assisted at the sacred functions, going to Confession and approaching the Holy Table with great devotion.

The principal families in the town called several times on the Bishop, who, in every case, returned the visit, leaving the most pleasant impression of the goodness with which the Church, in the person of her

Pastor, loves her dear children. The Governor, the Magistrate, the Commander of the Garrison and all the Authorities of the Territory deserve every praise for the powerful assistance they rendered for the successful result of the Mission.

On the 14th of December His Lordship sent Fr. Dominic Milanese and Fr. Mathew Gavotto on a mission to *Malbarco*, calling at *Matancilla*, *Pichiñires* and *Las Ovejas*, to attend to the numerous families, which had retired with their flocks on the plateaus of the Cordilleras. In these places faith reigns in all its beauty and splendour, and the frequentation of the Sacraments is so general that it is difficult to find anyone who does not receive them and goes to Communion several times during the year. The patriarchal customs, the respect and obedience of the children towards their parents, simplicity, modesty, love for prayer and work joined to a wonderful activity which transforms the valleys of the Andes into fruitful and pleasant fields—all these things cannot fail to impress one and make him wish never to be separated from these good people.

First Communions—In the prisons—A new Institution—At a sick man's bed—Christmas Night.

On the 15th December at *Chos-Malal* the beautiful festivities of the First Communion for the boys and girls took place. It was a memorable day for this small frontier town where one does not know which to admire most, the kindness and courtesy of the people or the prodigious fertility of its valleys, crowned with lofty mountains which contain gold, silver, copper, lead, iron and coal mines and precious layers of marble and chalk and also valuable springs of petroleum and mineral waters.

All those who made their first Communion on this happy occasion offered their fervent prayers to Heaven for the welfare of the Republic, threatened in those very days by the terrible scourge of war. The fathers and mothers of the children also approached in good number to the Holy Table and united their prayers to those of their children to obtain from God peace between the neighbouring Republics.

Mgr. Cagliero's zeal extended also to the

poor prisoners; and for this end, accompanied by the principal civil and military Authorities he went to visit them in order to place himself at their service and help them as far as he was able. These poor people were quite surprised at the goodness of the indefatigable prelate, and all of them accepted the proposal of taking part in the Mission; they assisted in the prison at a triduum of sermons, and to their great satisfaction during the ensuing days they all went once or twice to Confession in order to receive Holy Communion.

When the day of the feast arrived, they themselves prepared and decorated one of their rooms, where His Lordship solemnly baptised three Indians over forty years old and celebrated Holy Mass, during which it was my privilege to administer holy Communion to those poor and humble penitents, the greater part of whom were receiving Our Lord for the first time: thirteen of their number also received Confirmation. After the religious function, which was very beautiful indeed, the Bishop had some bread and chocolate prepared for them and partook of it in their company, talking familiarly with them and giving each one advice as regards living a christian life for the future. These poor people did not know how to show their gratitude towards so kind a father, and all promised to behave always and everywhere as good christians.

Before closing the Mission, Mgr. Cagliero gave in the parish church an interesting conference to the ladies of the town, in order to establish amongst them the pious Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; it was definitively established on that same day. Amongst the new and rising populations of the Vicariate, deprived alike of church and priest, composed of a heterogeneous element (in which may be found representatives of every European nation who emigrate in search of a living and of material interests) piety and the other christian virtues are gradually effaced and end by disappearing altogether. Their very faith is weakened, and with it the thought of God, of the soul and of its immortality: they forget even the end of their creation, the reward of Heaven, with great danger of being eternally lost.

To remedy so great an evil, His Lordship is establishing in all the scattered populations of Patagonia the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart and the Communion of Atonement. It is a wonderful fact that with this pious practice, in a short time piety reffourishes, the Sacraments are better frequented and the practice of the religious duties becomes more general.

A Commission of ladies waited on His Lordship to ask for the foundation of a boarding school to be conducted by the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, a work sorely needed for the christian education of the girls of that region. The Bishop blessed the praiseworthy project, promised to give it his support and urged these good ladies to labour to collect the funds required for bringing their enterprise to a successful issue.

I must not pass over in silence a circumstance which gives us a better idea of the zeal and the spirit of self-sacrifice by which the Vicar of Patagonia is animated.

It was 10 p.m. on Christmas Eve, and he, worn out with the day's work, was resting on a small chair in order to be ready for the Midnight Mass, when a gentleman presented himself and said that a Government official was grievously sick; that his illness might, at any moment, take a fatal turn, and that the poor sick man wished to speak to the Bishop and make his confession to him. His Lordship rose up at once saying: "*Vámonos pronto.*" The sick man was thought to be in the town or near it, whereas he was in a small house about two miles away. As though he no longer felt any fatigue, and by the moon's uncertain light he hastened along and arrived in time to hear the sick man's confession, prepare him to receive the last Sacraments and give him the blessing of Our Lady Help of Christians.

The people meanwhile, assembled in the church, were anxiously awaiting the return of their beloved Pastor who, on arriving at 11.30 proceeded to vest and began the midnight functions. And as though nothing had happened, he said the three Masses, gave Communion by Papal indult, to the numerous faithful, delivered a homily and imparted to all present the Apostolic Blessing.

I must note here that after the lapse of eleven days and on His Lordship's return

from the Mission of *Tricau-Malal*, the sick man had already left his bed and presented himself before him to give him due thanks for his charity towards him and to assure him that Our Lady Help of Christians had restored him to health.

The beautiful feast of Christmas, the solemn closing of the Mission and the peace made on the same day between the two Republics (Argentine and Chili) were a source of universal joy for the people of



Territory of Neuquen.
Carri-Lanquén Lake, where the Rio Barrancas rises.

Chos-Malal. The news of the success of the Mission and of the prayers offered up to ward off the danger of war which threatened between the two adjoining nations, was most pleasing to the President of the Republic, who telegraphed that same day to His Lordship: *Many thanks for greetings and patriotic and noble wishes. Your friend Rocca.*

The fruits derived from this Mission were most abundant, and, we hope, lasting as well.

On the way to Tricau-Malal—The Curileo
—A guard of honour—Triumphal entry.

WHILST Fr. Milanesio and Fr. Gavotto were preaching in the valley of the river *Malbarco*, Mgr. Cagliero and his Secretary, with Fr. Franchini and the catechist Sambernardo, gave a mission at *Tricau-Malal*, a populous village watered by the stream of the same name which has its sources in the *Thromen* (cloud-mountain) and in the *Vento Cordillera*.

At this spot the traveller is surrounded by dales and gorges and river banks; and here and there are numerous patches of fertile soil which are cultivated and watered from the streams gurgling from the neighbouring mountains.

Through the painstaking industry of the inhabitants, these gorges and valleys are covered with crops of *alfarfares* (a leguminous plant valuable for fodder) maize and vegetables. The produce of the soil and the small flock of sheep suffice to supply the wants of this poor but thrifty population. The natural picturesqueness of these places is oftentimes enhanced by their industry. Beside the poor huts thatched with straw and rushes, pretty gardens are to be seen with many kinds of flowers and ornamental plants. The pure and bracing air, the limpid springs, in many cases of mineral waters, make this place lovely and healthy; and, what is more, the untainted, simple life of the inhabitants makes it an abode of virtue and of christian life.

On Friday, December 27th, the feast of St. John the Evangelist, we left *Chos-Malal* with the intention of arriving that same day at *Tricau-Malal*, a distance of just over fifteen leagues—some forty-two miles. At early dawn we forded the rapid river *Curileo*, a word which in the araucanian language means black river; the name is well applied for its waters are somewhat ferruginous. It measures about eighty miles in length; it has its source on the South of the *Domullo* Volcano, and throws itself into the *Neuquen* as it reaches *Chos-Malal*. In the East it receives the small rivers the *Cason-Grande*, the *Molulco*, the *Tucuyo*, the *Nireco*, the *Quihuecô*, the *Mennucos* and the *Chacay-Melêhue*; in the West its waters are swelled by the *Blanco*, the

Chapúa and the *Tricau-Malal* which runs at the foot of Mount *Thromen*. In front rises the high mountain the *Malal-Mahuida* with its bold summit and its steep rocks, rich in gold mines. An enormous boulder beetles at its foot, and from afar it looks like a sentinel placed there by nature to guard the riches contained in the bowels of the mountain.

The road is, on the whole, practicable, but in going up the steep hills it becomes more and more rugged and impassable. Oh how many times we have repented having set out in a cart which, although strong, was nevertheless a source of torture for us during the whole day, owing to the jolting and shaking and tossing about it gave us!

After four hours spent in climbing over the crests of mountains and descending in gorges and deep precipices, we reached the valley of the river *Chacay-Melêhue* whose waters throw themselves into the *Curileo*, and bathe the sides of the surrounding coal mines. At the announcement of the Bishop's arrival, these good peasants erected on the way triumphal arches of wild plants and flowers. It was touching to see these labourers kneeling on the road side or at the entrance of their huts bending their sunburnt brows to receive the pastoral blessing.

We continued our journey and descended amidst sharp, flinty rocks towards the valley which again displayed before our eyes the *Curileo*. Owing to the impetuous current of its waters and its high banks of solid stone, disasters are of frequent occurrence. We ourselves narrowly escaped being drowned in this rapid river. At a somewhat narrow turning, the unskilful driver lost his head and we should certainly have been cast into the raging waters nearly one hundred and fifty feet below, if a mule had not suddenly stopped short, leaning with all its weight on the shafts of the cart which came to a sudden standstill just two steps from the brink of the precipice. His Lordship, taking in the perilous situation, threw himself back into the arms of the catechist Sambernardo who was sitting behind us, while I jumped quickly out on the ground to save myself, clutching at the branches of some small shrubs.

Having escaped this danger, and extricated the cart and animals with the aid of some

men in the neighbourhood, we pressed on till we descried, a long way off, a small house from the roof of which the Argentine colours were flying—a signal for the feasting and jubilation at the Bishop's arrival. In this valley, enamelled with richly-coloured wild flowers and verdant pasture lands, the good people had raised new triumphal arches and were strewing flowers before us. His Lordship, greatly moved, gave all his pastoral blessing.

We were received with marks of great respect and veneration in the modest little house where a simple but cordial repast awaited us. Here Mgr. Cagliero administered Confirmation to fourteen children and addressed to the parents a short but suitable exhortation, urging them all to remain steadfast to their faith and constant in the practice of christian virtues.

In order to reach *Tricau-Malal* we again had to cross the formidable river *Curileo* and to travel along its banks for fully twenty-four miles towards its source. But what enchanting scenery its banks present! What fertile fields and pleasant meadows covered with verdure and many-coloured wild daisies! The guard of honour mounted on spirited chargers grew constantly larger; the arches were now even more frequent, and the inhabitants from the valleys became more and more numerous; all knelt and begged for the episcopal blessing. It was really a touching spectacle and many times, I must confess, I found it difficult to refrain from outwardly manifesting my emotion. In one place called *Los Menucos* we saw the chapel, dedicated a short time before to Our Blessed Lady under the glorious title of *Auxilium Christianorum*. From time to time in the course of the year, Fr. Gavotto visits these good people; he says holy Mass, preaches, hears confessions and gives opportunity to all of fulfilling their religious duties.

From *Los Menucos* to *Tricau-Malal* the roads are impracticable. Our cart was the first to pass over them—people crossing the Cordilleras go on horse-back only, or with beasts of burden—and it was indeed fortunate that

it did not break in pieces. In many of the passes we had to get down from the cart in order not to imperil our lives, and climb over the summits of steep precipices and descend amid the crevices of rugged paths. By crossing table-lands and mountain gorges in this manner, we climbed the colossal *Domullo*, one of the highest of the Neuquen mountains. It is an Araucanian word meaning: "the ever snow-clad mountain." According to the testimony of the inhabitants of this region it is of a volcanic nature, for it has often been observed by them to send forth fire and smoke.

To the North-East of *Domullo* we came across lake *Carrí-Lanquén*, which is nearly fourteen square miles in extent, at a height of 6,600 feet above the sea level. The river *Barrancas* which marks the limits between the Territory and the Province of Mendoza and changing its name becomes the majestic *Colorado*, has its source in this lake. The immense valleys extending between the high mountains and those which lie all along the river form part of the field of labour entrusted to the care of the Missionaries of Don Bosco. From the sides of the *Domullo* hot springs issue forth with a pleasantly murmuring sound.

The vapours which rise from some of the apertures reach at times the height of sixty or seventy feet and are lit up by flames and smoke as though from an engine. Its summit seems to be inaccessible, for the few inhabitants of these desolate regions who have made the attempt have always had to desist from the enterprise. The reason they allege for this is that, when a certain point is reached, the atmosphere is subject to sudden changes, the sky becomes overcast, rain falls in torrents accompanied by thunder and lightning.

The nearer our journey brought us to *Tricau-Malal* and to the cottage of Mr. Caceres who was to give us hospitality, the greater became the number of persons escorting us. In a short time we were surrounded and followed by a band of over two hundred men on horse back, come to meet His Lordship who, as the first Bishop and for the

first time, had come to visit these mountain heights so difficult of access. Groups of horsemen were everywhere in evidence; they had left their flocks, their dwellings and were hastening to the mission. They might be seen descending the steep Cordilleras, riding two, three, and sometimes four, together on one horse. There were heads of families bringing their children; there were mothers bearing their babies in their arms; men advanced in years or in the prime of life, and children: they came to fulfil their duties as christians and to stand as god-fathers or god-mothers for Baptism and Confirmation.

Far away in the midst of a verdant plain and amidst fields yellow with ripening corn we could see a modest structure made of rough bricks, covered over with branches, rushes and dry mud. It was the chapel destined for the Mission and where His Lordship was to pontificate with all solemnity. One solitary window, without panes and without frame, served to admit light, ventilation and dust into the bargain; there was a clumsy framework erected to support a door, but this had not yet been put in.

On this occasion the tumble-down chapel had been enlarged by means of stakes, leaves and branches after the fashion of a bower. The interior adornments were in keeping with the whole of the improvised cathedral; the ceiling was of cloth which time had worn away; the festoons consisted of garlands interwoven with green leaves and wild flowers. A table served as an altar and a few sheets from which hung sacred pictures represented the apse. The candle-sticks were bottles covered with paper of various colours.

Flowers were showered upon us as we entered this basilica of a novel kind, to thank Almighty God for our prosperous journey and to begin the Mission. Mgr. Cagliero, although fatigued by the long and tiring journey, addressed a few words to the people of *Tricau-Malal*, announcing to them the Plenary Indulgence for the Holy Year and the jubilee functions which would in consequence be held. His words full of

charity and unction produced a magic effect on those simple, pious and well disposed people.

Marvels of grace—Enchanting scene—Narrow escape—Timely assistance.

To describe the wonders wrought by Our Lord during this eight days' mission would be well nigh impossible. The crowds of devout people who filled the humble building



Territory of Neuquen.

Rio Curilleo pass.

and the adjoining ground transformed into a church, their fervent prayers and their great desire to hear the word of God, formed a vivid picture of the crowds that followed Our Divine Saviour. From early dawn the confessions began and were followed by the celebration of Holy Mass; every opportunity was given to all to approach the Sacraments after receiving suitable catechetical instruction.

Owing to the great concourse of people, we were obliged to exhort those who had already assisted at one mass, to make room for

those who had not yet heard it. The chapel was always packed, and once inside, it was no easy matter to get out again. The catechism classes were attended not merely by boys and girls, but also by adults; fathers and mothers were to be seen in good number who, in order to remember better the truths of faith, accompanied their children morning and evening to hear the Christian Doctrine explained. The penitential processions assumed an imposing aspect. Order, piety and fervour shone brightly forth during these manifestations of faith: whilst the public prayers and sacred hymns filled the soul with holy emotions and with salutary thoughts. At the conclusion of the evening service, which consisted of the recitation of the Rosary, procession, sermon and the episcopal blessing, the confessions began again and continued until 10 and 11 p. m.

All those who came to the Mission went to confession and communion and some even twice or more. Fr. Franchini went to various dwellings to hear confessions and give Holy Communion to some sick persons who were longing for this favour.

Not only from the neighbouring places, but also from fifty, and sixty miles and upwards, many families had come to see their beloved Pastor, receive the Bread of Angels from his hands and have their children confirmed. They brought with them the provisions required during their stay and also the wherewithal to shelter themselves against the cold night-winds from the neighbouring Cordilleras. As *Tricau-Malal* is not a properly formed town—one only meets with few and wretched dwellings low huts and tents—some were under the painful necessity of seeking the shelter of trees scattered here and there in the grassy plain and on the banks of the stream.

We witnessed at night a marvellous spectacle, something like a grand illumination: they were the numerous fires which the families camping in the neighbourhood were keeping alight to roast their meat and prepare their beverage known as *maté*. Everywhere charity, respect and christian modesty

reigned: all unbecoming speech was banished, everything was orderly, serene and peaceful. The sky showed forth in all its beauty the brilliant stars and the constellation of the *Southern Cross*. The Cordilleras reflected in turn the whiteness of their lofty summits, and the obscurity of their huge flanks and giant shadows; whilst the valley, covered by the black veil of night, resounded with hymns and devout prayers. It was the prayer of peace and thanksgiving to God, after which everyone retired for the needful repose. Everything then became hushed into profound silence. No words could well describe the feelings aroused by this remarkable scene. In these enchanting and still virgin regions of America, the imagination wanders at leisure, and the soul finds itself lifted up to the infinite and seems alone with God.

The eight days' Mission seemed to us very short: they seemed to have passed almost like a flash of lightning. Never, in all my life, have I assisted at such a wonderful spectacle. The faith and piety of the good people of *Tricau-Malal*, are the fruits, after God, of the charity and zeal of our indefatigable missionary Fr. Gavotto, who, since 1890, has traversed these regions, teaching the divine word and sowing the good seed of true and christian civilisation.

The parting day came round sooner and more unexpectedly than we had thought; these good people could not resign themselves to remain without missionaries, and so far from their beloved Pastor. But the time was hurrying on and we were obliged to depart. With tearful eyes they listened to his parting words and received the episcopal blessing which His Lordship—he too greatly moved—bestowed on them. Then, men and women, old and young, all wished to accompany us on foot for a good part of the way; 300 of their number riding their mountain steeds formed our escort for fifteen miles, as far as the grassy valley of the river *Curileo*. Here the Bishop thanked them all, and advised them to return to their houses, as the hour was already far advanced.

They obeyed with heavy hearts, and not without having first repeatedly received his blessing.

Some, who were well acquainted with the locality and with the dangers of the road, prevailed on him to allow them to accompany him as far as *Chos-Malal*. Their company proved a God-send to us, for at a dangerous part of the valley of the river *Chacay-Melehue*, the descent of a certain ditch was so rapid and the corresponding ascent so steep, that the traces gave way; the cart was upset, remaining with the shafts pointing upwards, and we were all but thrown into a hole close by. We should certainly have come to grief if our good friends who accompanied us had not hastened to our aid. They received Mgr. Cagliero in their arms, thus saving him from a certain and fatal fall. I, for my part, was vainly struggling to free myself from the luggage and boxes and other articles which had fallen on the top of me, but I could not succeed without the aid of friendly hands.

We were all frightened lest the Bishop should have suffered some harm; but we were at once reassured when we saw him smile and heard him exclaim: "The devil thought to do us a nasty turn; but he has been thwarted in the attempt and we have escaped in safety: let us thank God and our good Mother, Mary Help of Christians, for having thus preserved us."

Some good Chilians living on the banks of the river near the place of the disaster, came up at once and offered us shelter and refreshment. Two kind women, although greatly upset at the news of our fall, mended and cleaned our clothes with great patience, as also the sacred vestments and the things for the service of the altar.

After an hour's hard work, spent in mending as well as possible the harness of the mules and setting right the damaged cart, we set out again on our perilous journey towards *Chos-Malal*, where we arrived that same day about sunset.

We celebrated with great solemnity and

splendour the feast of the Epiphany, and took a few days' rest in our mission house in company with our confrères Frs. V. Nalio and B. Panaro.

Whilst waiting for the return of Frs. Milanese and Gavotto from the mission at *Malbarco*, we continued at *Chos-Malal* to preach and administer the Sacraments. We also sent our van and cart to be refitted and then set about preparing the requisites for a long and difficult journey over the Cordillera to the South of Neuquen, giving missions here and there in the more thickly peopled centres, as far as *Junin de los Andes*. God only can help us and deliver us from the numerous mishaps and dangers that await us.

In the three missions given in the North of Neuquen, namely at *Chos-Malal*, *Trican-Malal* and *Malbarco*, we had a total of 3184 Communions, 1759 Confirmations, 342 Baptisms and 44 Marriages.

(To be continued).

* * *

THE Christian is distracted by so many material cares, and wanders so easily after trifles, that, unless frequently admonished, he forgets the great truths which are most necessary to be known, and on that account his faith either languishes or falls. To save her children from this peril of ignorance, the Church exercises all her sollicitude and vigilance, and not the least effective help to faith, in such circumstances, comes to her from the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin. Because while we regularly repeat that beautiful and efficacious prayer — the Angelical Salutation — we at the same time picture to our minds and dwell upon the principal mysteries of our holy Religion.

LEO XIII.





The Acts of the Congress.

GIVEN from the summary account of the general assemblies of the Congress given in the preceding numbers, some idea may be formed of the proportions and importance of that reunion. The nature of the questions considered and the practical tone which governed the discussions give good promise of an increase of action and of copious fruits.

It was a common desire that a complete account of the proceedings, together with the most important documents relating thereto, should be issued as soon as possible, as had been done for the Congress of Bologna and Buenos Ayres. The work has been undertaken without delay and actively pushed on, and it will be brought out ere long by the Salesian Press of the Oratory, Turin.

We hope to give some extracts from time to time for the benefit of those who may not have the opportunity of consulting the volume.



Archbishops and the Congress.

THE following is the list of the Archbishops who sent written communications to the Salesian Congress:

Their Graces: F. P. Carrano, of Aquila; J. de Schork, of Bamberg; B. Bonazzi, of Benevento; E. B. da Cunha, of Braga; S. Palmieri, of Brindisi; M. A. Espinosa, of Buenos-Ayres; P. Balestra, of Cagliari; S. M. Sonnois, of Cambrai; F. Hautin, of Chambéry; G. Costagliola, of Chieti; C. Sorgente, of Cosenza; P. Abi-Mourade (of the Greek Melchite rite), titular of Damietta,

Patriarchal Vicar of Jerusalem; A. E. Nunes, of Evora; A. M. Mistrangelo of Florence; F. Nicola, of Gaeta; E. Pulciano, of Genoa; F. de Stablewski, of Gnesen and Posen; A. Jordan, of Gorizia; J. Moreno y Mazón, of Granada; J. Ortiz, of Guadalajara; M. Taborga, of La Plata; E. Tovaz, of Lima; N. Ghilardi, of Lucca; P. Pace, of Malta; P. Gagliardi, of Manfredonia; P. M. Alcacón, of Mexico; L. d'Arrigo Ramondini, of Messina; F. G. de Stein, of Munich and Frisingen; M. Soler, of Montevideo; P. L. N. Bruchesi, of Montreal; J. Schiro (of the Greek rite), titular Archbishop of Neocaesarea; L. Raimondo da Silva Britto, of Olinda (Brazil); C. Caporali, of Otranto; P. R. Gonzales, of Quito; G. M. Conforti, of Ravenna; O. Mazzella, of Rossano; M. I. Casanova, of Santiago (Chili); C. Quattrocchi, Titular of Serre; M. Spinola y Maestre, of Sevilla; J. Giustiniani, of Sorrento; D. Serafini, of Spoleto; P. A. Iorio, of Otranto; T. Costa y Fornaguera, of Taragona; P. Zamburlini, of Udiue; J. M. Cos y Macho, of Valladolid; V. T. Popiel, of Warsaw.



A vindication.

IN an article published by the Rev. Kenelm Vaughan, brother of the late Cardinal Archbishop, in the London *Tablet* on "The religious condition of South America" some remarks and facts are contained which are not out of place in these columns, where mention is often made of that country. Father Vaughan attempted the task, he says, not only as a duty of justice incumbent on

him, but also as a tribute of gratitude that he owes to those most hospitable, but much maligned, Catholic countries, where the best years of his life have been spent.

"I say *maligned* countries. For the generality of people entertain most erroneous ideas respecting the religious status of South America

"The calumnious assertions that are recklessly made to the detriment of the reputation of those Catholic countries are so sweeping, so outrageous, so deeply rooted in the public mind, that many Catholics even believe them and allude to them from time to time, but in a low whisper, feeling ashamed of their South American brethren in the faith.

"Those who are mostly responsible for turning the current of public opinion against those highly civilised and religious countries are, in my belief, the non-Catholic modern travelling sight-seer and bookwriter. As a rule they know next to nothing about the religion, language, customs, and temperament of the kind, cultivated, and hospitable South American people. They confine themselves to visiting merely the cities of the coast. They catch up and credit every idle disedifying story which they hear from their *cicerones* about the clergy and laity. They see in those seaport towns a great deal of European corruption, which, unjustly, they attribute solely to those Catholic countries, thereby falsely representing them as a perfect pandemonium of all that is bad and vicious.

"In the books or articles which they write, they are satisfied with giving graphic descriptions of the vast virgin forests with their luxuriant vegetation, of the majestic rivers that penetrate through them, in a word of the wild grandeur of Nature's scenery in those tropical and semi-tropical regions of the New World.

"They speak of the interesting vestiges to be found of the Inca dynasty. They give glowing accounts of the great cities with their magnificent public building and institutions, and of the agricultural and mineral developments in the interior of that continent, but they are silent as the grave regarding the interior christian life and moral and intellectual advancement of South America, wilfully or carelessly unmindful of the fact that a nation's true work and greatness rest

not on her institutions, or extent of lands, but on her faith, and her love of Our Lord and His truth."

No doubt, as Fr. Vaughan also remarks, there are still deplorable evils there, as, more or less, exist elsewhere; ingrained habits are difficult to remove, and influence of evil from sundry causes are still at work. It is nevertheless pleasing and encouraging to read of such progress as is evidenced by the writer's personal observation.



In Montevideo.

IN the article referred to, Fr. Vaughan confines himself to speak of Uruguay, and more particularly of its Capital.

"In order to give a correct idea of the religious status of this Catholic Republic of Uruguay, let me institute a comparison between its religious condition as I found it, when it was my lot to stand on its shores a quarter of a century ago, and what it is to-day. In drawing this parallel my statements will not rest on arguments, or on anything so absolutely worthless as the scandalous gossip of those who seem to be born into the world, to quote the saying of an ancient legend, with two bags suspended from their necks, a small bag in front full of their neighbour's faults, and a large bag behind filled with their own faults.

"For, these persons are quick to see and cry down the faults of South America, but are blind to the failings of their own countries. My facts will be merely drawn from the tablets of my memory of personal observations, and jottings from my note book. Since the year 1875 the solidly stone-built city of Montevideo has doubled in size and population. Railways also have opened out the interior of the country, and facilitated and multiplied everywhere agricultural enterprises and industries of every kind. But the religious advancement of Uruguay, to which my present remarks will be confined, is more marked than the material progress of that country, which is periodically disturbed and interrupted by bad administration, followed by internal political conflicts."

He then proceeds to make good his assertion by quoting facts and figures, which would take too much space to give here in full. There was then in all Uruguay only one Bishop, that of Montevideo, with no national clergy and only some twenty priests of different nationalities, whereas now there is an Archbishop with two suffragan bishops, there are fifty secular priests all native born, among whom distinguished men of letters, and besides sixty-two priests of religious orders. In 1875 Montevideo was divided into two parishes, since then six others have sprung up with fine churches and parochial schools. In addition there are many convent and hospital churches and chapels and domestic oratories. Educational establishments of various kinds have done excellent work and the effects are visible in the spread of christian spirit, in the practice of religion among all classes of society, in the frequentation of the sacraments and attendance at holy Mass. The active christian spirit has also displayed itself in many works of social action. Clubs and lay associations have been started and well organized, and the good press has attained a high standard under the management of prominent and zealous laymen.

The chief promoters and leaders of this movement have been the saintly and much revered Mgr. Vera and his worthy successor Archbishop Soler.

The religious orders of both sexes contributed most effectually to it. "In 1875," Fr. Vaughan remarks, "there were only four religious orders of men, now there are the Jesuits, Capuchins, Franciscans, Lazarists, Redemptorists, Salesians, Bayoneses, Palotines, the Oblates of St. Francis of Sales, and the Brothers of the Holy Family. These religious men are not drones. They are labouring most heroically and with wonderful success in speeding on the march of Christian progress throughout the length and breadth of the Republic."



In Paysandú.

RELIGIOUS revival, the writer says further on, "is not confined in Montevideo and its vicinity. It is even visible in the far

off rural districts which the pioneering Bishop Vera of holy memory began first to evangelise. Take for example the provincial town of Paysandú, called after its Basque founder and pastor Pai Sandú (*Pai* in the Basque language signifying *Padre*).

"In 1875 I found that mission, which was started in 1776, in a godless condition. It possessed then no school and barely 100 persons made their Easter duties. In 1881 the Salesian Fathers took charge of the mission. On their arrival they were received insultingly with hoots and jeers and stones by the godless people. But undismayed they began their apostolic labours by giving an eight days public mission, at which few attended and only four communicated. To-day the Salesian Fathers have two flourishing colleges where 350 boys and 200 girls receive a sound christian education. The large parish church dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary was formerly in a disgracefully dilapidated state. It is now beautifully restored and painted and to-day as many parishioners assist there at the daily Mass as formerly assisted at the Mass on Sundays. Now on Sundays 2,000 persons attend at Mass and over 1,500 Communion are made there annually; and 30 and 40 persons assist every night at the Rosary and the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The day before my arrival 81 children made their first Communion. The regiment quartered there is marched every Sunday to Mass by its officer who is a good catholic. Paysandú, once so godless, has, through the apostolic zeal of the Salesian Fathers, so reformed that it provides now more vocations to the priesthood than any other provincial town."

A large share in the merit of this happy transformation, we venture to say, is due to the lamented Mgr. Lasagna. Uruguay was for years his principal field of action. His life, which appears now in serial in these columns, is an illustration of the foregoing remarks.





GRACES AND FAVOURS OBTAINED

through the intercession of

MARY HELP of CHRISTIANS

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.

(DON BOSCO in his last letter to the Salesian Co-operators.)

Fognano (ITALY).—A near relation of mine was attacked by a most dangerous brain affection. The illness, after having given signs of bringing a speedy death, developed into complete madness—a state even worse than death. The doctors declared the case absolutely hopeless. Fervent prayers were offered to Mary Help of Christians, with a promise of sending an offering to her sanctuary, and making the favour public in the *Salesian Bulletin* if the sufferer recovered her health, or rather her intelligence. The petitions were fully and miraculously granted.

After remaining stationary for some time, the disease began to slowly disappear, and now the news is received that, to the admiration and wonder of the doctors and all the country round, the lady is again able to attend to her family affairs, and do them even better than before without the least trace of the former malady.

About the same time a sister of mine fell very dangerously ill at Faenza, and the doctors, on account of the strange symptoms, were puzzled as to the proper remedies to apply. I ardently desired to see her restored to health—a desire shared by her sorrowing

parents and family. But there was something else in the case that sorely afflicted me, and that was the news that the sufferer would not hear of preparing for death or of resigning herself to the Will of God.

A novena was made to Mary Help of Christians to obtain her cure, but Our Lady gave her a favour even greater than that, namely a full and perfect resignation, and an ardent longing to leave this world, so that after receiving Holy Communion with great devotion the sick woman begged for the last sacraments. She died soon afterwards in such holy peace and joy, that the parish priest in sending the news of her death said "Weep not over the death of your sister, nay, rather rejoice. Happy we, if our death is such as hers."

June, 1903.

SISTER I. L. M.



Clonakilty (IRELAND).—I enclose an offering for a Mass in honour of Mary Help of Christians in thanksgiving for a favour received. I would ask your prayers for another intention very specially desired.

Sept. 1903.

M. D.



Mayo (IRELAND).—Some time ago I promised to make an offering in honour of Mary Help of Christians, and to have public acknowledgment made if my child recovered from an illness. A change for the better was immediately noticed and the cure was granted.

I would ask you now for a novena for my own failing health promising an offering to Our Lady's Sanctuary.

July, 1903.

M. D. F.



Asti (ITALY).—My mother was twice in one year attacked by a serious illness, but the second time the disease grew so rapidly worse that all hope of a cure seemed lost. The last Sacraments were administered and the malady appeared to be going quickly onward, developing complications of the brain and heart. Death was expected at any moment and all were in great grief and anxiety.

Amid these distressing scenes the thought arose of seeking help from the Madonna of Don Bosco. This good mother soon wiped our tears away and consoled the family already weeping for its mother as one dead. She is now in perfect health. We cannot but regard it as an extraordinary favour and I am going to-day to Our Lady's Sanctuary to thank her for it.

June, 1903.

E. V.



Canada.—Enclosed is a thank-offering in honour of Mary Help of Christians for a very special favour. May this serve to inspire others to have recourse with confidence to her intercession in the hour of need. I would also ask for prayers for another intention.

August, 1903.

N. N.

To obtain favours needed, Don Bosco recommended the frequent use of the Sacraments and the practice of a Novena consisting of the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father three times daily to Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, with the invocation Mary Help of Christians, Pray for us, and the Hail Holy Queen, 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.



Mrs. St. Leger.

ON the 18th of July there passed away at Rondebosch, near Cape Town, Mrs. St. Leger a model Christian lady and zealous Co-operator.

The wife of an anglican who founded and for years edited Cape Town's leading daily paper, she gave many proofs of a true christian charity, which was eventually to conduct her within the portals of the Catholic Church.

As a protestant her spare hours were spent in quietly caring for the poor and afflicted, and especially for the unfortunate lepers confined on an island about one hour's steam from Cape Town.

Some ten years ago in the face of great opposition she cast aside all human respect and became a Catholic. The fresh grace obtained by this step, fired her zeal and deepened her already heroic humility.

It was a source of great edification to other Catholics to see how, in her advanced age, and at the cost of much inconvenience, she spared no efforts to attend at Holy Mass on Sunday, and that at an early hour.

She ever evinced a great love for Don Bosco and took a lively interest in his work. Even latterly when it was almost painful for her to travel, she would sometimes visit the Salesian Institute at Cape Town and do all in her power for its support.

We earnestly recommend her soul to the prayers of the members of the Association

R. I. P.

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

Mr. Samuel Hutcheson, Islandmoyle (Co. Down, Ireland).

Miss Maggie Fitzpatrick, Gargory (Co. Down, Ireland).

Miss Catherine Harper, Bolton (England).

Mr. Peter Cunningham, Killimer, Clare, (Ireland).



THE STORY OF THE ORATORY

OR

DON BOSCO'S OPENING APOSTOLATE.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

(Continued).

It was now mid-day. The clerics, assistants, technical instructors, Masters and boys went to dinner, and the inquisitors accompanied by Don Bosco and Fr. Alasonatti employed this time in going round the house in search of the chimerical *corpus delicti*. They did not leave a single corner or hiding place unvisited; any object in the least degree suspicious was seized upon and taken out of its place. They went to the refectory whilst the boys were there, examining the food and asking them if they were not starved. Afterwards they visited the kitchen the cellar, the bedrooms, the workshops and even the lavatories. In the kitchen they turned the pots and pans upside down, ordered the cupboards to be opened, then the jar of oil and a sack of rice must be inspected. Cavaliere Gatti, who, of the three, was the most eager, seeing a paving stone recently fixed, immediately suspected that underneath he would find the *corpus delicti*, and standing upon it he tapped it with his foot to discover if it sounded hollow. In the same place, a cupboard being opened two mice ran out and Don Bosco began to laugh.

"Why do you laugh?" asked Mr. Masnardi.

"In truth," he replied, "I ought rather to pity you for bringing into contempt your position and authority by such childish enquiries; but I laughed because you have frightened the mice."

Going down into the cellar they searched not only the dark corners but the barrels.

Seeing a large cask Mr. Masnardi asked if it were full or empty.

"Unfortunately it is empty," said Don Bosco.

Then Masnardi got up so as to look inside, showing that he suspected it was full of money and alms, or perhaps of conspirators, like the horse of Troy. Disgusted and ashamed at not finding what they sought, the three inquisitors consoled themselves by saying:

"We have been assured that in this house exists the *corpus delicti*, therefore by searching we ought to find it."

"And I assure you," rejoined Don Bosco, "that in this house there has not been, neither is there any *corpus delicti*, therefore you will not find it, if you search from now till the day of judgment."

They had still to search the dormitories, whither they were conducted. Here they probed and turned over the Mattresses, but the poor things found only a few fleas which, much against their will, they carried away.

It was past two o'clock and the boys, having finished their troubled recreation, returned to their class rooms, if students, or to the workshops, if artisans.

Then these functionaries, giving up their unseemly occupation, returned to the examination of the pupils which was much more to their taste. Don Bosco left them to take a mouthful of food, as he had not yet broken his fast.

To be more at liberty, the examiners went to the prefects room and called in, one by one, the pupils of the second and of other classes, torturing them with questions which would have disgraced any inquisition. In proof of this I give the interrogatory of one of these poor boys:

"To whom do you confess?"

"To Don Bosco."

"Since when?"

"I have been two years in this house and I have always been to him."

"Do you go of your own accord?"

"I go most willingly."

"What does he say to you in Confession?"

"He gives me good advice."

"Tell me; I am most anxious to hear it."

"I have heard that what is said to us in confession is not to be repeated outside. Besides, if you want good advice, you have only to confess to Don Bosco and he will give you as much as you want."

"I have not time to-day. But tell me, does he not say that the Pope is a Saint?"

"He says that the Pope is called Holy Father; and I believe truly that he is a saint, for he is very good and he is the Vicar of Christ."

"Does he not say that those who have taken away part of the Papal States are wicked?"

"These matters have nothing to do with confession."

"But are they not sins?"

"If they are sins, let those who have committed them see to it when they go to confession. I have not done them, consequently I am not bound to confess them."

From this specimen we may judge of the rest. Cavaliere Gatti persisted in his enquiry as to what the professor had said before or after dictating the extract from the Pope's letter: but all were unanimous in affirming that he had added nothing.

Either through weariness or the conviction that the *corpus delicti* was not to be found, the inquisitors, after about seven hours of useless toil, abandoned their unworthy task and took their leave. They took possession, however, of a packet of exercise books, to examine at their leisure in the office: Gatti added a copy of the life of the youth Savio Domenico, found on one of the pupils of the 1st class; and Don Bosco making up a good parcel added also the rules of the house which were then only in manuscript. —When giving them he said, "In these rules, the Ministers will see upon what principles and Moral Maxims the education we give to our boys is based, and they will understand

that, far from giving trouble to the Government, this Institute co-operates in promoting the well-being of families and of society, by training up good children and upright citizens. I hope therefore," he added, "that in future you will leave me and my poor boys in peace."

But through the malignity of certain unworthy officials these hopes were frustrated.

TO THE READER.

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

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

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It gives a report of the progress of the works of the Society, of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, of the Salesian Co-operators; also interesting accounts from the Missions and various matters of edification and encouragement connected with the objects of the Association.

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All communications concerning change of address, or when the sending of it is to be discontinued through any cause whatsoever, should be addressed *To the Editor of the Salesian Bulletin, Salesian Oratory, Valdocco, Turin, Italy*; or, when received from other Houses, to the Superior of the House from which it is sent.

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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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