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SANCTUARY OF MARY HELP OF CRISTIANS

TOMB OF DON BOSCO

THE



SALESIAN

BULLETIN



DON BOSCO.

SALESIAN PRESS * * * * *

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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 persons desiring to become Members of this Association are respectfully solicited to send their name and address to the *Very Rev. Michael Rua, Superior General, Salesian Oratory, Turin, Italy*, who will be most happy to enrol them and forward their Diploma of Admission, as well as the *Salesian Bulletin* every month.



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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THE ENCYCLICAL LETTER
Of His Holiness PIUS X.

To the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops and other Ordinaries in peace and communion with the Apostolic See.

By this time, many among our readers have already had in their hands the first Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Pius X., commencing with the words: *E supremi Apostolatus cathedra*. This precious document so anxiously expected, is indeed an outpouring of his heart aglow with apostolic zeal, eager to bring to mankind true peace by a sincere return to Jesus Christ Our Saviour. The words of the immortal Leo XIII.: "We must re-

store Christ to His own rightful possession (1)" find an echo and a worthy comment in the first letter of his Successor.

Unable to give it in full, we reproduce some of the salient passages.

THE POPE'S INTENTIONS.

The Holy Father, making his own a pathetic passage of Saint Anselm, Archbishop of Can-

(1) Encyc. *Tametsi futura prospicientibus*.

terbury, expresses the feelings of dismay and reluctance which he experienced in submitting to the formidable burden of the Pontificate; sentiments caused also by the greatness of his Predecessor and by the disastrous state of human society. He then unfolds his purpose and designs.

"Since, however, it has pleased the Divine Will to raise Us, weak as We are, to such a height of power, We take courage *in Him Who strengthens Us*; and setting Ourselves to work, relying on the power of God, We declare that Our one intention in assuming the Pontificate is *to restore all things in Christ* (2) so that *Christ may be all in all* (3). No doubt there are those who, measuring Divine things by human standards, will endeavour to discover what are the secret aims We have in view, and to misrepresent Our intentions, referring them to wordly scope and party purposes. In order to do away with vain hopes, We proclaim to them with all sincerity that We do not desire to be anything, and that, with God's help, We will be nothing before human society but the Minister of God, of Whose Authority We are the depositary. The interests of God shall be Our interests, for which We are resolved to spend all Our strength, and Our life itself. Wherefore, should any one ask of Us a watchword, as the expression of Our will, this one We will always give: "*To restore all things in Christ.*"

PEACE BY A RETURN TO GOD.

He, then, briefly describes the great evil of society—apostasy from God, and raises our hope with the assurance that victory cannot fail to be with God's party, according to the Divine promises.

"But this does not prevent us also, according to the measure given to each, from exerting ourselves to hasten the work of God—and this, not only by persistently praying *Arise, O*

Lord, let not man be strengthened (1), but also—what is more important—by asserting and upholding, both by word and deed, and in the most open way, the supreme dominion of God over men and all things, so that His right to command and His authority may be fully realised and respected by all. This is required of us, not only in force of a duty which nature imposes, but by the welfare of the human race. For, Venerable Brethren, who can avoid being appalled and afflicted at seeing the greater part of men, whilst deservedly boasting of the progress of civilisation, fiercely fighting against each other, so that it would seem as though strife were universal?

"The desire for peace, no doubt, is to be found in every breast, and there is no one who does not earnestly long for it. But to strive after peace without God, is absurd; for, where God is absent, so is justice; and where there is not justice, it is vain to hope for peace. *Peace is the work of justice* (2). There are many, We are well aware, who, in their yearning for peace, namely for the *tranquillity of order*, band themselves into societies and parties which they style parties of *order*. Hopes and labours lost! For, there is but one party of order which can bring back peace amidst the disturbed state of affairs, and that is the party of God. It is this party, therefore, that we must advance; to it we ought to draw as many as we can, if we are really prompted by the love of peace."

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

This return to God can only be done through Christ; and the way to reach Christ is the Church. To obtain this much desired end, the Holy Father proposes as a first means the formation of the Priesthood, exhorting Ecclesiastical Superiors to make it their first care "to form Christ in those who are destined from the duty of their vocation to form Him

(2) Ephes. I, 10.

(3) Coloss. III, 2.

(1) Ps. IX., 20.

(2) Is. XXXII., 17.

in others." His preference, he declares "is and ever will be for those who, while cultivating ecclesiastical and literary erudition, devote themselves more closely to the welfare of souls, through the exercise of those ministries proper to a priest zealous of the Divine glory."

The Pope dwells next on the necessity of Religious instruction.

"Who can fail to see that, since men are led by reason and liberty, the principal way of restoring the authority of God over human souls is religious instruction? How many there are who hate Christ and detest the Church and the Gospel, more through ignorance than through wickedness of mind, of whom it can be justly said *they blaspheme whatever things they do not understand* (1).

"And this is found to be the case, not only among the people at large and among the lowest classes who are, on that account, easily led astray, but among the educated classes, and even among those who are endowed with no slight erudition. The result is, for a great many, the loss of the Faith. For, it is not true that the progress of science extinguishes the faith, this is done rather by ignorance; whence it happens that, the more ignorance prevails, the greater is the havoc wrought by unbelief. And this is why Christ gave the command to the Apostles: *Going forth teach all nations* (2)

"But in order that this apostolate and zeal for teaching may produce the desired fruit,

and that Christ may be formed in all, let every one bear well in mind that nothing is more efficacious than charity. For *the Lord is not in the earthquake* (1). Vain is the hope of drawing souls to God by a zeal that is bitter; nay, even to attack errors with bitterness, to



Pius X.

reprehend vices too vehemently, sometimes does more harm than good."

CATHOLIC ASSOCIATIONS.

"It is true, Venerable Brethren, that in this difficult task of restoring the human race in Christ, neither you nor your clergy should

(1) Jude 1., 10.

(2) Matth. xxviii., 19.

(2) III Kings xix., 11.

exclude all assistance. We know that God has recommended every one to have care for his neighbour (1). For it is not priests alone, but all the faithful without exception, who must concern themselves with the interests of God and souls—not, of course, on their own responsibility and following their own individual views, but always under the direction and authority of the Bishops; for, to preside over, to teach and to govern, is granted in the Church to no one except you *whom the Holy Ghost has placed to rule the Church of God* (2). Our predecessors have long since approved and blessed those Catholics who have banded together in societies of various kind, but always for the good of religion. We also have no hesitation in awarding praise to such excellent institutions, and We earnestly desire to see them propagated and flourish in town and country. But We wish that all such associations aim first and chiefly at the constant maintenance of christian life among those who belong to them. For, it is indeed of little avail to discuss subtly many questions, or to discourse eloquently of rights and duties, if all this is dissociated from practice. The present time demands action—but action which consists entirely in observing with fidelity and in their entirety, the divine laws and the precepts of the Church, in the frank and open profession of religion, in the exercise of works of charity of all kinds, without regard to self-interest or wordly advantage. Such bright examples of so many soldiers of Christ will be far more effective in moving and drawing souls than mere words and lofty discussions; and it will easily come about that, when human respect

has been driven out and prejudices and doubts removed, a great many will be won to Christ; they, in their turn, will become promoters of the knowledge and love of Him, which are the way to true and solid happiness. Undoubtedly if in every town and village the Commandments of God are faithfully observed, if respect is shown to sacred things, if the Sacraments are frequented, and the ordinances of Christian life fulfilled, there will be no need for us to labour further to see all things restored in Christ. Nor is it for the attainment of heavenly blessings alone that this will be of service—it will also contribute largely to temporal welfare and to the advantage of civil society. For, when this condition of things has been secured, the upper and wealthy classes will be just and charitable to the poorer, and these will be able to bear with calmness and patience the trials resulting from straitened circumstances; the citizens will obey, not their own passions, but the law, they will deem it a duty to show reverence and love towards princes and all those who are in authority whose power *comes from no other but from God* (1). What more? Then, at last, it will be clear to all that the Church, such as it was instituted by Christ, must enjoy full and entire liberty and independence from foreign dominion, and that We, in demanding that same liberty, are not only guarding the sacred rights of Religion, but are also providing for the common welfare and security of nations. In truth *godliness is profitable for all things* (1), and when this is safe and flourishing, then truly *will the people sit in the fulness of peace* (3).

(1) Eccli. xvii., 12
 (2) Acts xx., 28.

(1) Rom. xiii., 1.
 (2) I Tim. iv., 8.
 (3) Is. xxxii., 18.



Help the Souls in Purgatory.



PREY to intense suffering, separated and kept at a distance from their Supreme Good, tortured by the remorse of having so often outraged Him, exiles from their heavenly home—how pitiable is the condition of the Souls in Purgatory! Each one cries out to us, who are still pilgrims of this earth, to stop and see if there be any sorrow like unto their sorrow.

Moreover, to make their pains more keenly felt, is added the knowledge that their sufferings can bring them no merit, no reward. To suffer here below, constitutes, for those in a state of grace, a virtuous action, and is a fruitful source of merit, which is all the greater according to the degree of resignation; hence the Saints during their lifetime were eager for nothing more than to suffer for Jesus Christ. They said with St. Paul, that the sufferings of this world are as nothing compared with the glory awaiting them in heaven. But on the contrary, the pains of Purgatory are not attended by any greater glory in heaven: though they do remove all obstacles in the way of its possession, still the title to paradise remains the same as at the moment of death.

Besides that, to suffer here below, is, for a disciple of Our Lord, a thing most glorious in itself, for he becomes thereby more like unto his divine Model: it clothes him, as St. Ignatius says, with the livery of his heavenly Captain; so that, if he had the choice of arriving at the same degree of virtue and of

glory by an easy or a thorny path, he would prefer the latter, solely to imitate his Master more closely. Such is not the case with the Souls in Purgatory. Their suffering brings no such recompense.

Moreover, they have no longer at their disposal the means of satisfaction — no more sacraments or sacramentals, no more almsgiving, fasts, indulgences, not even prayer for their own deliverance would be harkened to.

In this pitiable condition, powerless to obtain for themselves the least solace, they turn to us: and how comforting, how consoling is the thought, that we can succour their helpless state, and easily bring to them relief and solace.



The millions of individuals who are banded together by common religious interests, and yield obedience to the same authority — no matter how wide apart the places in which they live — form but one and the same religious society.

Such is the Church of Jesus Christ. Its parts—that which is on this earth, still struggling and battling for the attainment of the incorruptible crown; the other, whose members are already in the blissful enjoyment of their victory; and lastly, the one embracing those who are still detained in the cleansing flames of Purgatory—constitute but one immense family.

To this admirable society are to be

applied the words of St. John the Evangelist: *Societatem habemus ad invicem, et sanguis Jesu Christi emundat nos ab omni peccato* (1). We living on this earth, the saints in heaven, and the Souls in Purgatory are held together by bonds of mutual, social fellowship; for, all, though not in the same way, have the same interests, and all are partakers in the benefits of Christ's Redemption; each and all are under His gentle yoke. The Precious Blood which is to save us, is the same which has saved the Saints and the Souls in Purgatory. The light of truth which enlightens us in our pilgrimage, is that which illumines the Saints in the Beatific Vision, and the Holy Souls awaiting their deliverance. It is the same law which governs us, whose observance is rewarded in heaven, and the slight transgressions of which are punished in Purgatory. It is the close fellowship that exists between the living members of the same body, as St. Paul expressively says, and therefore there exists among them a strong sympathy and an eager solicitude for the common weal, just as in the body one member is careful and solicitous for the well-being of the other.

In force of this close union it is given to us to assuage their suffering, to become their benefactors.



What the Apostle affirms of the primitive christians—that they had all their goods in common, putting together for the general use the price of their belongings—is a beautiful figure of that which really passes between the Head of the Church with the members of the Church triumphant, and the poor needy members of the Church militant and suffering. All the merits of Our

Lord and His Saints are a treasure in which we, as long as we are in a state of grace, can participate, rendering thereby the little good we do of infinite value, and satisfying in the best manner possible, for the debts we have contracted with the Justice of God on account of our sins. They are treasures in fine which we can apply to the Holy Souls, while still retaining the merit, personal and inalienable of the good works themselves. Indeed, by our prayers, fasts, alms, communions, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we are able, in the measure allowed by God, to take the merits of Our Lord and His Saints and descend with them to Purgatory, and enrich, so to say, the suffering Souls with them, enabling them thereby to go more quickly to heaven where they will repay our charity with unfailling gratitude.

What joy and consolation a christian soul must experience at the thought of this beautiful Catholic doctrine. Our dear departed ones, who loved us well, as we loved them, though gone before, are not separated from us. We do not, indeed, still behold them, except in the memorials they have left us; we hear no more their words, except in the flashes of the past brought back by the memory; we have mourned their loss, as it would indeed be unnatural not to do; but consolation is left us in the great communion of prayers and merit which establishes such harmony among all in Heaven, on earth and in Purgatory.

While, then, we rejoice in often visiting in spirit the mansions of eternal bliss, we should as often descend among the Holy Souls, bearing with us the fruits of our good works to be offered for their relief and speedy deliverance.



(1) I John. 1, 7.



COLOMBIA

For the poor lepers. The first Provincial Lazaretto.

(Letter of Fr. E. Rabagliati.)

Medellin, June 30, 1903.

VERY DEAR AND REV. FATHER,

THE truth of the old proverb "Man proposes and God disposes" has been verified here. During the three months which have elapsed since my Superior sent me to this city, I have been unable to carry out the task imposed upon me by obedience: I have followed the guidance of Providence instead. Fr. Albera sent me here to make two foundations, one for the Salesians and another for the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians, but—owing to the civil war only just ended, and its consequences which will certainly last many years—it has been impossible to carry out either of these projects. Whilst awaiting the solution of present difficulties, I have turned my attention to the lepers residing in this distant department of Antioquia.

Appalling increase of leprosy—Is it contagious?—Is it hereditary?

With regard to the lepers, who form the subject of this letter, two things are certain: the first, that forty years ago, according to medical experts, there was not a single leper in the department of Antioquia; the second,

that to-day, scattered up and down in greater or lesser numbers, about five hundred, or perhaps even eight hundred or a thousand may be found. I learnt these facts from the doctors appointed by the authorities to examine and fight this terrible monster—leprosy. Even at the lowest computation, that the lepers in this department do not exceed five hundred, the situation is one of the greatest gravity, looking both to the past and to the future.

Forty years ago no one was afflicted with this disease, to-day there are, at least, five hundred lepers. How many more persons will be suffering from it in another forty years, unless means are taken to destroy this evil? One case only, coming here by chance from the department of Santander, which is the great centre of leprosy in Colombia, in forty years has produced at least five hundred, and perhaps a thousand. How many will these five hundred or one thousand produce in another forty years, if they are left free to live, travel and work where they please without any restriction?

In the famous Berlin Congress of 1896, there were fully one hundred and twenty experts gathered together from all parts of the world, the highest authorities in the knowledge and study of leprosy, and all these eminent doctors unanimously agreed, that leprosy, being a parasitic disease, must be reckoned highly contagious, if not even hereditary. Since then, there is hardly a doctor of any repute who dares to say, and much less to teach, that leprosy is not contagious. To maintain an opinion contrary to that of the Berlin Congress is at least rash.

Therefore, if leprosy, of its own nature, is highly contagious, because it is parasitic, it must either be destroyed where it exists, or it

will spread if left to itself. The chief cause of the enormous and rapid spread of leprosy in this Republic of Colombia is to be found in the indifference of so many who, till now, did not trouble themselves about this disease, judging it to be harmless. And the reason of this indifference was the too general conviction that this disease was not contagious. This conviction gained ground because many doctors taught publicly that leprosy was not contagious. We must add, in fairness, that there was some excuse for this belief.

In fact, it has often been remarked that a healthy person may live in a leper hospital for one, two, or even ten years without contracting the disease. "Therefore, leprosy is not contagious," they said, "for, if it were, how can you explain that such or such a one has left the hospital in good health and has since shown no signs of the disease?" We have also seen that in a family, one member contracts leprosy, and for many years, those living in the same home have not become infected. "Therefore," they concluded, "it is certain that leprosy is not contagious: this is an evident proof."

Frequently, appearances are all in their favour. There are many hundreds of healthy people, living at Agua de Dios, mingled with a thousand lepers; and during many years, there has not been a single clearly proved instance of infection. For more than ten years, several Salesians and ten Sisters of Charity have been nursing these sick people, and so far none of them have contracted the disease. The same has been the case at Contractacion with the Salesians and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, who have been there for the last six years. So, I repeat, appearances are entirely favourable to the contrary opinion.

But then, I ask, how can we explain the enormous increase of leprosy which may be daily observed in Colombia, if contagion be not the true cause? It is maintained that it is not hereditary; though this is mysterious and hard to believe. A thousand times have I seen infants, and even children a few years of age, without the least sign of disease, in the arms of leprous mothers. But I have also re-

marked that it is towards the age of ten or twelve that the first signs of the disease become apparent. Sometimes even later, at fifteen or twenty years of age—sometimes they never appear when the disease encounters uncongenial subjects. Anyhow, it is certain that if leprosy were an hereditary malady, all the children, who have the misfortune to be born of leprous parents, should sooner or later become lepers: but this is not so. The children of lepers are born healthy, and remain so for some years: if later they become diseased, it is not through heredity, but by contagion.

In this matter my conviction is firmly rooted, although at every step, I encounter difficulties which I cannot explain, and on which neither doctors nor scientific works throw any light. The example of Father Damien, the celebrated Belgian religious who died in the islands of Hawaii, is too recent to have been forgotten. For ten years he took care of the lepers in those islands without any bad consequences; after the lapse of ten years the first signs of leprosy appeared, and in two years brought him to the grave. This instance alone proves clearly that leprosy is truly contagious; though we cannot tell when or how the contagion is communicated.

In my opinion, the gravest and most convincing fact is that which is now taking place in Colombia. In reading its history, I find that at the beginning of the 19th century, about a hundred years ago, the lepers in this Republic numbered only ninety-two, almost all in Santander. To-day there are, at the lowest computation, thirty thousand, and perhaps more.

Surely, those are blind who say that it is not contagious, having before their eyes the destruction and ruin caused by this great evil, and the numberless victims it has made and continues to make.

The effects of two conferences—Interview with the Archbishop—Decided to stay—First arrangements.

From one of the pulpits in this great city, I spoke of these and many other things, seeking to rouse these people from the depths of the delusion in which they are plunged. In the presence of all the civil and ecclesiastical

authorities, of the doctors and a vast multitude, I gave two conferences treating of leprosy in Colombia. They were successful in obtaining the desired result.

After the first, the Archbishop called me into the sacristy and began at once:

"You have taken away all the pleasure that the announcement of the conclusion of peace, after three long years, had brought us. What I have heard has filled my heart with deep sorrow: I knew nothing of all that you have said this evening from the pulpit. How terrible is this evil! Poor Colombia!"

After the second conference on the following evening, before a still greater concourse of people, he called me once more and enquired:

"Will you not stay with us? I believe that your conferences would immediately bear fruit if you would consent. I believe that all, both those in authority and private citizens, are ready for any sacrifice in order to abate, at least partially, the great evil in our midst. The first Provincial Lazaretto might be erected in Antioquia to receive our five hundred or thousand sick. But it is necessary that you should remain to put yourself at the head of this movement. Public opinion is favourable, the enthusiasm is general, there is no lack of money, but the man is wanting. If you leave us, we shall fall asleep as before on the brink of the abyss; and it may be that, at a future awakening, the evil will have so increased as to be beyond remedy. The Governor, his Ministers—in fact, all think as I do. Stay here; all will be done, and done quickly."

"It is impossible, Your Grace, quite impossible. At *Agua de Dios* and *Contratacion* I have left hundreds and hundreds of my friends, the lepers, in grave want; during these three years of the war they have lived on the alms I collected in Bogotá, which I sent them each week. Unless I go back soon, many will die of hunger, especially at *Contratacion*."

"You are quite right," replied the Archbishop, "you are interested in their welfare, and you are unwilling to abandon those dear lepers who need you so much. But, if we were to give you the alms for your invalids, would you then stay with us?"

"But I am a religious, Your Grace, and I could not do so without the permission of my Superiors at Turin."

"I will see to that," he then said, "I will write at once to Don Rua, whom I have seen twice when travelling to Rome, and I am sure the permission will be obtained; meanwhile I take all responsibility on myself."

I took time to consider, the subject being so important, before giving a final answer. But, subsequently, being strongly urged by the Governor, his secretaries and many private individuals, I decided to remain. Then I began to write in the newspapers an appeal for alms for my lepers of *Agua de Dios* and *Contratacion*, and in less than a fortnight, I received 100,000 pesos, which I sent at once to Bogotá to be divided between the two Lazarettos. Being thus relieved from anxiety regarding our dear protégés, by securing food for them for several months, we began by seeking a suitable spot for a large leper-hospital in the environs of the city; and one was found at a distance of about a league and a half. I consulted the members of the Medical Academy of this city who gave their cordial and unanimous assent.

In the legislative code of Colombia there is a law called *de las mortuorias y donaciones entre vivos*. By this law so much per thousand on all left by will, or by deed of gift, is due to the public exchequer, and this sum is then to be employed in works of charity by the Government. This law was made for the benefit of the slaves, and was in force until the middle of last century. When slavery was abolished, the law was maintained in favour of lepers, or rather to combat the disease which then threatened to increase. I telegraphed at once to the President of the Republic and the Ministry at Bogotá to enquire whether, in the event of establishing a leper hospital at Antioquia, they would allow us to use the revenue accruing under this law.

A favourable answer was returned, and orders were sent to the authorities to hand over the capital in hand, 108,000 pesos. I then begged the Governor to form a Committee of gentlemen, empowered to receive this money, as well as the alms I might collect for this

purpose, and asking at the same time that this Committee should undertake the work of building the Lazaretto.

This was done. Two architects were appointed to make the plans on the model of the photographs I had brought from Bogotà, already approved by the Governement and by the Medical Authorities of the Capital, without whose permission no hospital may be built. Everything being so far arranged, on the 15th of December, with a cordial blessing from the Archbishop, accompanied by an old friend from Bogotà, I set out from Medellin towards the South-east Province to visit the inhabitants and collect alms for the foundation of this first Provincial Lazaretto.

**Difficulties of the journey—Plan of operation—
Touching examples—A faithful companion.**

Travelling is slow, and cannot be otherwise in these countries: the only means of conveyance is on mule-back; but in some places even this fails and one must go on foot, because the sight of certain precipices has such an effect upon the nerves, that it would be the height of imprudence to ride. Here trains and tramways, motor-cars and carriages are unknown. Even horses, which travel rapidly in the plains, are useless in this mountainous country, and the only means of transport is the mule. If it be a good one, things do not go so badly; but if it is bad, tired, or ill-tempered, as too often happens,—as the readers of our *Bulletin* are aware—then travelling becomes a torture.

The Governor himself gave us the mules, two for riding and one for the baggage: but who can tell in how many battles these poor beasts had been, and how many journeys they had made! Certainly they were more like *snails* than mules. But after a few days, one fine morning, going to fetch them from the field where they had been put the previous evening, they were not to be found. During the night, finding but little grass, they accomplished a wonderful feat... they jumped the fence and returned straight to Medellin, obliging us to continue our journey on foot.... Soon,

however, we were able to hire other animals, to our great advantage, for these were much better and less mulish than the first.

My *modus operandi* in this expedition was the following. On arriving in a town, I called at the house of the parish priest and presented my credentials. But these were never required; the Archbishop by telegrams and circulars had prepared my reception. Then, with the help of the parish priest and the mayor, a list of the principal inhabitants was made, to all of whom a printed invitation was immediately sent, asking them to attend the conference to be given in the Church on the following day, always a Sunday or Feast-day. For the rest of the people, notices were posted at the corners of the streets or in the principal square, giving clear information as to the day, the hour, the place and the subject of the conference.

Among the chief inhabitants, four or six were chosen belonging to different political parties, an *indispensable precaution in these places to allay suspicion*, and with these a Committee, with President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary, was formed. Then the conference was given. I began with the announcement that the Archbishop of Medellin graciously granted an Indulgence of 80 days to all who would listen to the Conference, and 80 additional to those who would give me an alms for the poor lepers. Then I spoke for an hour on leprosy, lepers and leper-hospitals, on the necessity of founding these, and concluded with soliciting alms from all present, seeking to excite emulation between one town and another. Finally I announced the establishment in the town of a branch of the *Bank for the Lepers*, saying that the Directors would be the four or six Members of the Committee, giving their names.

The plan was a marvellous success. In the first town I collected 8100 *pesos*; in the second 9379; in the third 23,738; in the fourth 25,353; in the fifth 39,536; in the sixth 42,736... and lastly reaching the town of *Concordia*, in which I said that if they were in true *concord* they would overcome and surpass all their rivals. I collected the large sum of 63,272 *pesos*. In

short, the total from twelve towns was 291,175 pesos 80 cents.

Having established the Bank, which usually took six hours, from 12 till 6 o'clock on Sundays and Feast-days, and distributed the shares of the same to the rich, in proportion to the alms given, never less than 100 pesos, nothing was wanting to complete the work except the alms of the poor, and of those, who either would not or could not, become share-holders of the Bank. This was the most fatiguing part of the work and was reserved for Monday, and sometimes also Tuesday, when one day was insufficient. I went round the town accompanied by members of the Committee, calling at all the houses more or less poor, and receiving everywhere much or little according to each one's means. How touching were my experiences in these visits! How often I was told: Take this, Father, it is all we have in the house; we are so poor! But the lepers are poorer still!" and speaking thus, they gave me the few reales, all they possessed. This touched me more than the bank notes given by the rich.

I shall never forget the following which happened to me in *Bolivar*, the most distant of the towns visited. I entered unexpectedly a poor person's house and was received by the mistress of the house, mistress of nothing, for she had nothing to give. Whilst regretting that she must let us depart empty-handed, all at once she stopped, and, as if moved by a sudden inspiration: "Take this, Father," she said, "it is the only valuable objet I have in house;" and so saying she took a gold ring from her finger and gave it to me. "This is an unnecessary luxury," she continued, "and I can very well do without it; it will be of more use to your poor lepers who are dying of hunger and are unable to work."

In another town the following interesting occurrence happened. At *Titiribi*, entering a poor cottage we found each of the family with a small piece of paper money in hand, ready for the collection. Meanwhile a boy of seven years was weeping bitterly in a corner. I tried to console him with a caress, thinking his mother had put him there as a

penance; but I was unsuccessful, the weeping did not cease, but went on increasing. Having gone about twenty paces from the house, I saw the boy running after me, smiling and happy, wiping his tears with the back of his hand; "*Tome, Padrecito,*" he cried, "*my limosnita también,*" and he gave me a peso. Then I understood the cause of his tears; this dear child wept because he had nothing to give me. As soon as some one gave him the money, his tears were dried... How beautiful and precious the tears of this innocent child, and still more beautiful and precious his tender heart! May God bless you, dear child, may He preserve you from leprosy and from all evil, and make you a saint.

I must also remark that in the third town, called *Fredonia*, I found a wonderful parish priest. When I was leaving he said; "I wish to accompany you in your expeditions. Your mission is so grand, so pleasing in the eyes of God, so useful to men, both to the sick and to those in health, that I have decided to help you as far as I can." He telegraphed at once for permission from the Archbishop who sent it *ipso facto*, as there were two other priests in that parish. This good priest accompanied me as far as *Amaga*, the last town I visited. An excellent priest, most virtuous and full of zeal for souls. As soon as he arrived in a town, after enquiring if I needed his services, he went to the Confessional, which he never left whilst any penitents remained. At four o'clock in the morning, he was up and went at once to the Church to offer his services to any who needed them. He took all possible care of me, both in travelling and wherever we stopped. I looked upon him less as a companion than as a visible angel sent by Providence to lighten the fatigues and render my mission more fruitful. On leaving me, he said: "For this mission of the lepers I would go with you to the end of the world, if the Archbishop gives me permission."

I did not forget this generous offer, and on reaching Medellin, I spoke to the Archbishop, who made no difficulty about granting what he asked. *Deo gratias!* I shall thus travel with less anxiety; and in case of accident, I shall

have at hand a good priest who will give me absolution and help me to die well. Thus you need no longer be anxious about me, dear Don Rua. If it be God's will that I should go on working for the benefit of the Colombian lepers, He can preserve me from all accidents; and if not I shall not, be alone, nor die without help. I have now secured this priest, and I shall keep him as long as I can.

Back to Medellin—Other projects—Conclusion.

When I returned to Medellin and related the success of this first expedition, the Archbishop exclaimed: "For my part I consider this result one of Don Bosco's great miracles. To collect so much money, in such a short time, after a three years' war, when on all sides one hears only of devastation, misery and famine, is truly inexplicable. *Digitus Dei est hic!* Dear Father Rabagliati, this work is holy, God wills it; Don Bosco wills it; go on courageously, no other proof is needed to convince us that the work of the lepers is dear both to God and to men."

After a fortnight's rest in the College of the Jesuit Fathers at Medellin, who treat me as one of themselves, having settled all the necessary preliminaries for the establishment of the *Bank of the Lepers* in all the towns of this department, accompanied by my dear Father Ortiz (the priest spoken of above) I shall set off for the Southern Province; and we shall remain there until the winter rains, rendering the mountain tracks impassable, oblige us to return to this city. I shall then devote myself to the superintendence of the buildings which I am now leaving in the hands of the members of the Committee and the builders. I do not think the first provincial Lazaretto will be completed before twelve months have elapsed. When it is finished, unless obedience disposes otherwise, I shall go to Santander where the greater number of lepers is found, to build not one, but several Lazarettos to shelter 25,000 of these poor creatures who suffer, live and die God knows how.

From what I have said you will easily understand, dearest Father, how grand, and at the same time, how difficult and dangerous is

the mission of your Salesian son. I have therefore the right to ask and hope for a special blessing, which I should wish for daily in the *Memento* of Holy Mass, because the dangers to which I am exposed are of daily occurrence. May the Lord preserve you many years to your devoted sons, for the welfare of our Pious Society and for the greater glory of God and the good of souls. Such is the fervent prayer of

Your devoted son

EVASIUS RABAGLIATI, Priest.

Editor's Note. — His Grace the Archbishop of Medellin, in his circular letter of the 6th of December, speaks of the Mission of our dear Fr. Rabagliati in these words: "The Rev. Fr. Evasius Rabagliati, of the Salesian Congregation of Don Bosco, having come from Bogotà for the express purpose of beginning this work of salvation in our midst, will make a rapid visitation amongst the people of Antioquia for the purpose of soliciting their charitable help, so that the work now beginning, may not be paralysed for want of funds, but that it may be completed as soon as possible. It is unnecessary that I should beg that your Reverence and the faithful committed to your care would give your best help to this worthy priest so that his laborious mission may produce all the fruit expected from it."

PATAGONIA

(TERRITORY OF NEUQUEN.)

**Pastoral Visit and Mission of His Lordship
Mgr. Cagliero
Vicar Apostolic of Patagonia.**

**The Ford of D. Anselmo.—Sorrowful memories.—On the Pre-cordillera.—In a ditch.
—A romantic night.—In the veteran's hut.**



ON the 15th of January, Mgr. Cagliero accompanied by his Secretary, by the Missionaries, Fathers Milanesio, Gavotto and Franchini, and a brother catechist, started in the direction of Neuquen. The caravan consisted of thirty mules and spare horses in charge of an *arriero*, a small conveyance with the baggage, and a strong wagonette for the Bishop and his Secretary. We

had stopped on the right bank of the river Neuquen, at a spot where the water is lower and the passage consequently more easily made. This place is called for some unknown reason the *ford of D. Anselmo*: it recalls sad memories and has been the grave of many victims.

At a short distance from this ford, some weeping willows, in their silent language, indicate to the traveller the tomb of our dear Missionary Fr. Francis Agosta, who in the prime of life and hope as a glorious soldier of Christ, disappeared in the deep and impetuous torrent of Neuquen, a martyr of zeal and charity. Father M. Gavotto and the *baqueano* nearly shared the same fate when they endeavoured, in vain, to rescue him. The Bishop, on beholding those waters, and remembering the precious life sacrificed there, prayed fervently that God would grant peace and eternal rest to the soul of the dear departed.

A large and strongly built boat carried us to the opposite bank with our two conveyances and baggage. The horses swam across, having to struggle against the strong current which threatened to dash them against the rocks. It took us a good two hours to put our caravan again in order, and only towards midday could we roast and eat a little meat, sitting on the stones washed by the torrent, whose water supplied us with drink. The grand and rocky mountains of the Andes Pre-cordillera opposite, seemed to regard us with compassion, seeing us at their feet ready to face the toilsome and steep ascent.

There was only one road, the *old* one made by the Indians, for the *new* road constructed by the Argentine troops following the course of the rivers and torrents, was destroyed two years ago by the floods. Ours was truly the road to Caivary: on all sides we saw nothing but stones and precipices, crags and rocky heights which filled us with dread.

The road being so bad, the Bishop and I, mistrusting our horses, went on foot; whilst the other missionaries rode, and the soldiers with the mules dragged the carriages empty, and in danger every moment of being dashed to pieces.

We marched the whole of the afternoon, alternately over rocky heights and through fertile valleys watered by limpid streams and cultivated by Indians and the hard-working Chilians.

The rays of the setting sun lighted our path and showed us in the distance the lofty crests of the *Cordillera del Viento*, *Thromen* and *Domullo*, white with perpetual snow. On the right hand were the barren and stony sides of the mountains, on the left dark, narrow gorges full of rocks and precipices so that



Neuquen Territory.
Tricau Malal — Cordillera del Viento.

further progress seemed impossible. By prodigious exertions, the three soldiers who accompanied us succeeded in bringing safely through so many obstacles carriages and horses, mules and baggage... But notwithstanding the greatest care, in a precipitous descent the beasts upset the waggonette where the Bishop and Fr. Milanese had again taken their seats. In seeking to avoid a fall, Mgr. Cagliero sprained his arm, causing him no little pain. All rushed to help replacing the boxes and altar furniture, and we resumed our way as night was coming on. But once more, when we least expected it, the vehicle was again upset: after this the Bishop continued the journey on foot and was thus saved a more serious fall. Nevertheless,

in the darkness of the night, whilst trying to creep along the edge of a deep ditch, he slipped and fell to the bottom, injuring his left foot...

It would have been foolish to continue our journey whilst the road became every moment more perilous: night had fallen and the Bishop was indisposed. The unfortunate caravan stopped, therefore, on the edge of a frightful precipice, which the waters had hollowed out, apparently for our grave. We had reached the foot of a ridge of the Cordillera, called by the Indians *Talquimilán*. The Providence of God, which never foresakes those who trust in Him, showed us amongst the dense foliage an empty hut situated near a purling rivulet. On the hard floor of this miserable shelter we rested a few hours. The Bishop lay down on a bed of rushes, but the pain of his bruises prevented his enjoying a moment's sleep. At the dawn of day, whilst we were preparing to say Mass, several mountaineers arrived to welcome the Bishop, to ask his blessing and to have their children baptised. Though still suffering, His Lordship administered the Sacrament of Confirmation after Mass and gave these poor people instructions how to lead a Christian life.

These good folks, taking pity on our critical situation, helped us to extricate our vehicles and put us on the right road. This heavy work lasted more than three hours, during which we were obliged to transport the altar furniture and the provisions on our backs. Having refreshed ourselves with some food, provided by these good shepherds, we resumed our march. When we had forded the stream *Talquimilán*, which gives its name to the surrounding hills, we met a poor Frenchman, who had taken up his abode on the river bank. We asked him if the road to *Norquin* were good: *Bueno y sin peligros* "good and quite safe," he replied. Being accustomed to see the goats climbing over these rocks, no doubt he thought we could do the same... Crossing a stream shortly afterwards a worse catastrophe threatened us; for our vehicle was on the point of upsetting when the Bishop luckily restored its equilibrium by leaning to the opposite side. This incident decided him to make the rest of the day's journey on foot and I accompanied him.

The mountain was lofty, and the ascent difficult under the scorching rays of the sun. Bathed in perspiration and with burning faces (after three hours of toilsome ascent and descent) we reached an elevated plateau, from which we looked down upon a beautiful valley, covered with cornfields and watered by the torrent *Triláuthúe*. We soon discovered a cottage inhabited by an old soldier, who, as a reward for his services to his country, had received from the Government this portion of fertile soil. This good veteran was much surprised to see us arrive at an hour, so inconvenient by reason of the heat, but it was both a great pleasure and singular honour for himself and his family to receive in his poor dwelling the Vicar Apostolic of Patagonia. We therefore entered his humble abode, excavated in one of the rocks of the *Triláuthúe*, where we were hospitably entertained.

Two hours later, the other Missionaries with the rest of the caravan arrived, including soldiers, *arriero*, horses, mules and carts, but so worn out with fatigue, that His Lordship decided to rest there until the next day. The news of the Bishop's arrival spread like lightning through the valley, and these simple peasants came eagerly to see, for the first time in their lives, their beloved Father and Pastor. Many Indians brought their children to be baptised and confirmed: it seemed as if the Guardian Angels showed them the way and prepared them for these heavenly favours.

There was work for all in the functions of our sacred Ministry. The following morning, the hut was transformed into a chapel, and the good people heard Mass celebrated by the Bishop, receiving Holy Communion with the simple faith of the early Christians. The Baptisms and Confirmations were numerous.

Ascent of the Loma del Viento.—In the valley of Norquin.—Mission of Quili-Malal.—A centenarian guest.

The valiant old soldier, with four of his strongest servants *peones*, insisted on accompanying us to help us in fording the *Triláuthúe* at various points and in the arduous ascent of the *Loma del Viento*—a precipitous mountain

so called because the winds are sole masters of its lofty peaks. It was impossible to travel in the cart, and the poor Bishop, who had lost confidence in horses since his bad fall on these very rocks in 1887, was obliged, against his will, to make use of our trusty *alazán* (a cinnamon coloured horse) in order to cross the stony torrent and attain the rocky summits of the *Loma del Viento*.

We marched from seven o'clock in the morning until three in the afternoon. From these lofty heights we enjoyed an enchanting

and rocks which sheltered us from the wind, so that we could kindle a fire and prepare the supper which was to replace the dinner, since we had been unable to have any all day.

But where to find wood and water? A good Chilian, who as an expert *baqueano* conducted our caravan, with leaves and roots of trees torn from the soil made an excellent fire, and a soldier with three blows of a pickaxe in a ditch, removed a few stones and found enough water to boil the kettle which *gipsies* always carry with them. The temperature at night



Patagonia—Norquin Valley, seen from Trolón.

and ever-changing view, azuretinted peaks and groups of mountains which seemed to divide and cast themselves into the abyss. The ascent of *Loma del Viento* resembled Hannibal's passage of the alps, and many other obstacles were still to be conquered,—the summit of *Trolón!*—an outlying spur of *Loma del Viento*. Passing through a mountain gorge, called *Mallín Redondo*, we had to hasten our steps to escape the pestilential *Huecú*, a place where animals become dazed, tremble and fall. This phenomenon is attributed to certain noxious plants or to pestiferous exhalations from the soil.

Towards evening we had reached the last peak of *Trolón*. Here we halted amidst stones

was piercingly cold, almost freezing, so that many of us, unable to sleep from the cold, imitated the astronomers and counted the stars...

At early dawn, the soldiers hastened to collect the baggage and riding animals which had strayed down the mountain in search of food and water. The Bishop's horse, the meekest and quietest of our beasts, arrived the first; Fr. Franchini's and my faithful *brown* followed. Whilst we partook of a *matesito* they were saddled, and leaving Fr. Milanesio and Fr. Gavotto to escort the conveyance, in the Bishop's company we undertook the perilous descent. From the summit of *Trolón* we caught sight of the valley of *Norquin*, an immense amphitheatre of mountains watered by the river

Agrio, with fruitful fields, verdant meadows, numerous flocks and herds, with dwellings scattered here and there. What a magnificent spectacle!... We beheld against an azure background gigantic mountains launched in the atmosphere, ocean-like waves on a tempestuous sea. Rising above the rest like a lofty promontory, we saw the *Serra Velluda* always clothed in a white mantle, the Volcano of *Antuco* and the famous *Copohué* at the base of which hot springs abound.

The descent lasted five hours, and they were five hours of terror, if not of agony. All our efforts were bent upon remaining firmly in the saddle, and our horses tried to pick their steps safely on the brink of frightful precipices, so as to avoid slipping over and being dashed to pieces in the rocky depths. Sometimes we allowed the poor beasts to choose their own path, sometimes we led them ourselves until worn out with fatigue we reached the foot of the lofty mountain, in the valley of *Durazzo*. Here we were received with the greatest kindness by a good Chilean family in their poor hut. Continuing our way we proceeded by winding paths to the vast plain of *Norquin*. The burning rays of the sun urged us on, and we urged on our horses so as to reach more speedily a small house at the foot of a formidable group of rocks, resembling an impregnable fortress. On this rocky plain the Argentine Artillery, in 1880, fired their cannon, making known that the Territory of *Neuquen* was no longer in the possession of the savage tribes of the *Araucani*, but belonged to the Queen of la Plata and to Christian civilization.

At sunset the whole caravan set off for *Quili-Malal* (red sheepfold) where many good Christians and not a few Indians were looking forward to the evening service. *Quili-Malal* is a verdant plain of oval shape with abundant pasturage, watered with many rivulets; it is protected from the winds by the surrounding mountains, and is the central point of other valleys where the population increases daily. Our stay in *Quili-Malal* was of eight days, so as to give an opportunity to all of hearing the Word of God, of assisting at Mass and receiving the Sacraments. Meanwhile Fr. Milanese and Fr. Gavotto set off to evangelize the valleys of the river *Trucumán*, twenty-five leagues further on. Our chapel was a miserable

cottage, whose walls of bare brick and thatched roof of branches, we adorned with the hangings we carried with us for that purpose. It was the abode of a good man from the province of Mendoza who was delighted to lend it to us for the Mission services. The Bishop and his Secretary found shelter in a shed, Fr. Franchini and the Catechist amongst the brushwood, and the Soldiers in the open air.

During the eight days of preaching and religious services, caravans of Christian families arrived in succession, anxious to fulfil their religious duties. Many children were baptised, and amongst those confirmed, were old people of seventy years and upwards. The Indians, also, from the neighbourhood came forth from their *toldos*, and with their families attended the mission to have their children baptised with some older people who were still pagans. We were unable to persuade two poor old men to become Christians, for, with obstinacy equalled only by their ignorance, they said: *Nosotros indios viejos; y indio viejo ya no servir pá cristiano*. "We are old indians, and old indians are of no use to make Christians."

A good old woman, more than a hundred years of age, attended the mission. She had made acquaintance with and entertained His Lordship on the banks of the river *Ariléo*, during his first pastoral visit in 1887, and was anxious to see him once more and receive the holy Sacraments. Still strong and robust she rides her horse with youthful vigour. She was accompanied by her sons, old and grey-haired, and a troop of younger descendants. She remained four days with her numerous family, and during this time the Bishop, on account of her great age, invited her every morning to take a little coffee, and at mid-day shared with her the soup made for us by our good soldiers.

Another poor sick woman, judging that death was not far off, had herself conveyed in a *catango* (a cart used in the Cordilleras) to the Mission, so as to receive, probably for the last time, the Holy Sacraments. On account of her serious illness, Holy Viaticum was administered to her, and every possible care was lavished upon her during the day and night she spent at *Quili-Malal*. In returning to her poor hut she never ceased thanking Our Lord and His Blessed Mother for the graces she had received.

(To be continued.)



Battersea. The Schools of the Mission.

THE Battersea Parish Magazine announces that a bazaar is being organized there in aid of the schools of the Mission, and that it will be held on the 19th, 20th, and 21st of November.

The day-schools of the mission have hitherto maintained a high standard of efficiency, as is evidenced by the reports of H. M. Inspectors; and this notwithstanding the many odds and disadvantages attending a Catholic school in a very poor district. It has now become a necessity to replace the boys' school, in order to provide more accommodation and meet the requirements of the Educational Authorities as a condition to be allowed to carry on the work.

No catholic who prizes his faith, can fail to realise the necessity of a catholic school to secure the christian upbringing of the children, and as the principal means to prevent their being lured away by ignorance and vice. "Where the right education of youth is concerned," wrote Leo XIII. (1), "no toil should be too great, no labour too arduous. In this respect the highest praise is due to numbers of Catholics in various lands, who at great expense, and with still greater perseverance, erect and maintain schools for the education of their children. It is fitting that this salutary example should be imitated wherever circumstances seem to require it; but first of all let it be engraven on the minds of parents that home training has, beyond all doubt, immense influence on the character of children."

(1) Encyc. *Sapientiae Christianae*.

In honour of Mary Help of Christians.

FROM far and near, accounts have been received of solemn celebrations held to commemorate the Coronation of Mary Help of Christians, and on the occasion of her feast. It has been indeed a universal tribute—a world-wide chorus of praise and thanksgiving which has been raised in honour of our Heavenly Patroness. The record of this year will note a landmark in the progress of the devotion to her under the title of Help of Christians.

Many of these reports have appeared in one or other of the eight different editions of the *Salesian Bulletin*. Limits of space prevent us from reproducing them here. The few gleanings we propose to give in these columns, will be read with pleasure and edification by the many clients of Mary, who must rejoice in seeing her more and more widely honoured: they will serve also, we hope, to promote her devotion.

At Arequipa, Peru, the Bishop of the diocese, made the forthcoming festivities the subject of a pastoral letter, wherein he dwelt on their special character in connection with the works of Don Bosco. He referred in feeling terms to his own impressions and recollections of a visit to her Sanctuary in Turin, and continued:

"As your Bishop and Pastor, we must second the views of our Holy Father, the Sovereign Pontiff. We recommend, therefore, in a special manner devotion to the Mother of God, Mary Most Holy, Help of Christians, so that you may share abundantly in the favours which she merci-

fully obtains for all who have recourse to her in their necessities. O that we may have the consolation of seeing soon completed the Sanctuary which is being built close to the Salesian institute, and which will be the monument to our Divine Redeemer, raised by the town of Arequipa at the commencement of the twentieth century!

"It will be a comfort to us, beloved children, to prostrate ourselves there before the altar, and implore God's mercy through the powerful intercession of Mary Help of Christians, whose image is to be set up there for veneration. She will draw to her Divine Son, Our Redeemer, the hearts of all the inhabitants of Arequipa, and show herself the Helper of the poor and of the orphans."

He, accordingly, gave special directions for services to be held in preparation for the feast, which was to be kept in the Cathedral on the 24th of May, and exhorted all to take part in them. A communication from a Co-operator of Arequipa related how the faithful responded heartily to the invitation of their Bishop; and the 24th of May was observed with unwonted splendour and devotion. His Lordship officiated Pontifically, assisted by the whole Chapter, in the presence of the civil and political authorities of Arequipa and a large number of Representatives of religious Communities and Catholic Associations.



His Eminence Cardinal Richard and the Salesian Congress.

THE venerable Archbishop of Paris, H. E. Cardinal Richard, being unable to attend the Congress personally, sent the following letter to our Superior General:

"You have kindly invited me to the International Congress of Co-operators which is to meet in Turin.

The duties of my pastoral office and my eighty-five years of age do not allow me to be present; but I am anxious to join the Eminent Cardinals, the Archbishops and Bishops who have accepted your invitation, and I send most willingly my participation in the Congress of Turin.

I have always admired and encouraged the Salesian Institutions. I fondly treasure the memory of their venerated Founder, whom I was privileged to see several times and who, on his death-bed, gave me his blessing.



For the lepers of Colombia.

FROM the correspondence published from time to time in the *Salesian Bulletin* some idea may be formed of the frightful spread of leprosy in Colombia, and of what urgent need there is of some measures in order to save a whole population from the ravages of the dire disease.

That which, for obvious reasons, is imperfectly stated there, is the heroic labours of those who have been spending themselves for years in the service of the hundreds of unhappy beings of the two existing Lazarettos. By their self-sacrifice and devotedness, life has been rendered less unbearable, prolonged agonies have been assuaged, and, by ministrations marked by genuine sympathy and the purest charity, christian sentiments were infused in many who would, otherwise, have died cursing and in despair.

He who has taken great part in this work, and who has been untiringly pleading the interests of the lepers, the Very Rev. Fr. E. Rabagliati, has come over to Europe with a view of furthering the cause to which he has devoted his life. In 1897 he visited the leper Hospitals at Bergen in Norway, and sought the advice of the illustrious Dr. Hansen, a specialist of wide-repute in the treatment of leprosy.

Fr. Rabagliati has been now commissioned by the Government of that Republic to make arrangements in order to combat effectually the spread of leprosy.



N.B. When writing to our Superior General, the Very Rev. Michael Rua, correspondents are kindly requested to repeat their full address in each letter, with their title, Rev., Esq., Mr., Mrs. or Miss.

CANON ANTHONY BELLONI, S. C.

Founder of the Institutes of Bethlehem, Cremisan, Beitgemal
and Nazareth

IN the evening of the 9th of August, at Bethlehem, passed away the Very Rev. Anthony Belloni, S. C., Apostolic Missionary and Canon of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. With him, a consul remarked, one of the most venerable figures of Palestine has disappeared. He had there been for years the Father of the orphans: and his name is fondly remembered and held in veneration, even among the schismatics and mussulmans.

Leaving to others the task of writing a full record of a life so well spent, and to pourtray the venerable Canon in all his attractive simplicity, we purpose only to give in these columns, where his name occurred from time to time, a brief sketch of his career; a tribute due to his memory and to those who have been the benefactors of his works.

Canon Belloni was born at Sant Agata, Riviera, on the 20th of August 1831. After studying in the diocesan Seminary of Albenga, he entered in 1855 the College Brignole-Sale of Genoa, a Seminary for foreign Missions. There he completed his ecclesiastical studies, and was ordained priest two years afterwards. The Congregation of Propaganda destined Fr. Belloni to labour in the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and he sailed for Palestine on the 22nd of April, 1859.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem, Mgr. Valerga, soon discovered and appreciated the good qualities of Fr. Belloni, and appointed him professor in the Seminary of Beitgiallah, where the young priest soon endeared himself both to colleagues and pupils.

Almighty God had singled him out for a great work and to carry out some special designs of His Merciful Providence. The duties in the Seminary did not exhaust the energies of his eager and enterprising spirit. Hence, early du-

ring his sojourn at Beitgiallah, towards 1862, Fr. Belloni commenced to assemble in a hired room some poor neglected boys, whom he helped as well as he could. He taught them catechism together with the elements of arabic, aiding them at the same time to learn a trade by which they might earn their bread.

Fr. Belloni succeeded at last in establishing on a firmer footing the work so needed and which he had fondly cherished: though only God knows at the cost of what toil, privations and sufferings. The narrow room of Beitgiallah eventually developed into the present Orphanage of Bethlehem, where 350 boys are educated, of whom 130 are boarders and 220 day-pupils.

Thanks to the generosity of an illustrious English convert, the Marquis of Bute, he was able to purchase at Beitgemal, six hours journey from Jerusalem, a vast plot of ground on which to start an Agricultural Colony. These two institutions were soon followed by others no less necessary.

The need was sadly felt of a *Patronage*, which should afford protection to many a poor youth exposed to dangers, and also a training school in order to supply country places with good christian teachers, and thus stave off the inroad of non-catholic influence. Too often, emissaries of sects, taking advantage of the ignorance and poverty of the people and drawing from the large resources at their disposal, make use of what temporal assistance they give in order to spread their errors.

And Divine Providence did not fail to bless the efforts of the zealour priest. Encouraged by the words and generosity of the Holy Father, and provided with letters of recommendation by His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, he travelled over Italy, France, Belgium and Holland in order to gather the funds

necessary to carry out the works he contemplated. The reception accorded him by the people of Bethlehem on his return, made up, in some measure, for the fatigues and worry he had to endure; but at the same time it made also more evident the necessity of hastening to the assistance of that good people.

With the means he had collected, he was able to procure some land at Cremizan, about one hour distance from Bethlehem: a healthy locality which tradition makes the scene of the baptism of the Ethiopian; and a pool there still bears the name of St. Philip. Availing himself of a lease granted by the Turkish Government, he had a house built on the slope of a hill. This house he destined to the training of postulants who would devote themselves to agriculture and to the cultivation of the vine in order to aid in the management of the colony. The summit of the hill commands a splendid view: right in front Jerusalem rises majestically with its high walls and various sacred buildings. Further on, is the Mount of Olives with the lofty tower built by some Russians, while halfway between, the eyes meet the Convent of the Prophet Elias and the Hospital of the knights of Malta. Every spot, almost, round about is associated with some fact of the Old or of the New Testament. The country is planted with vineyards and orchards, the only resources of the people. The new institution was indeed a blessing, since it trained boys to till lands which had long been left neglected and unproductive.

Another important achievement of the industrious, untiring zeal of Canon Belloni is the Church erected in honour of the Sacred Heart, situate just in front of the cave where Our Divine Saviour was born. It seems singularly appropriate that the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the fountain of love from which our Redemption proceeded, should be thus honoured on the spot where the first manifested Himself in His Sacred Humanity. This Church, besides replacing the inconvenient chapel of the Orphanage, is of great assistance to the population of the neighbourhood.

Having founded and carried on all these works, Canon Belloni turned his thoughts to the means of securing their continuation and further

development. Accordingly, in 1891, he resolved, together with his fellow-workers, to join the Salesian Society founded by Don Bosco. With the additional personnel he had thus obtained, he was able to strengthen the staff of his institutions, and, moreover, to turn his attention also to the poor boys of Galilee, especially of Nazareth. There also he acquired a plot of ground in order to start an agricultural Colony;



Canon Anthony Bellony, S. C.

later on, when the necessary firman was obtained, the building of the Institute was also commenced.

About this time, the good Canon, though worn out by age and fatigues, undertook another journey through Italy, France and Belgium, in quest of help to provide for pressing and increasing wants, and also to thank and bid farewell to some benefactors who had generously assisted him for a number of years.

His return to Bethlehem was the cause of universal rejoicing. The schismatics and Mussulmans themselves joined with the Catholics in

a common and imposing demonstration of affection and esteem.

His health, so undermined already, broke down completely shortly after his return. He saw the last hour fast approaching and with calm and fervour prepared to appear before his Divine Master.

In his last days, he was comforted by the visit and benediction of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Mgr. Piavi; and among those who called on him during his sickness, were Mgr. Piccardo, Auxiliary Bishop, the Greek Catholic Bishop, the Italian and French Consuls, the Superiors of Religious Communities. He breathed his last at 9 o'clock p. m., after a short agony surrounded by his confrères and pupils.

His funeral, though simple in character, was a triumph; a spontaneous and imposing demonstration of the profound grief in which his death had plunged the whole population. The Patriarch of Jerusalem sent his Auxiliary to officiate in his place at the obsequies, which were attended by the Superiors of the Religious Communities of Jerusalem, two Consuls and even representatives of schismatic bodies and Mussulmans.

Although we hope that he is already in the enjoyment of the reward that Almighty God bountifully grants to His faithful servants, we would ask for him the suffrages of our readers and Co-operators.

R. I. P.



Two days before his death, he wished to express once more the profound gratitude he always cherished towards those who had been the instruments of Divine Providence, and had assisted him in carrying on his charitable works. He, accordingly, addressed to them a letter: we think it a duty to reproduce it here.

The Catholic Orphanage of the INFANT SAVIOUR

BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem, August 7th, 1905.

(Palestine)

My dear Benefactors,

It is thirty-eight years since, by disposition of Divine Providence, I set to work as well as I could for the salvation of poor orphans. With the grace of God, I succeeded in building four homes, and several hundreds of souls have been saved: this good has been accomplished through the help of God and the concourse of charitable persons.

Seeing that I am now near the end of my life and unable to carry on the management of this work, in agreement with the Superior General of the Salesian Congregation, the Very Rev. L. Nai has been appointed Provincial of these Institutes in Palestine, and the Rev. C. Gatti Superior of the Orphanage of the Infant Saviour at Bethlehem.

Before leaving this world, I feel it a duty to thank with my whole heart all my Benefactors and all the charitable people who were so good as to come to my assistance. I will continue to the end of my life, and also after my death, to pray that Almighty God may deign to reward you for your charity towards my poor children. I also recommend myself to your prayers, and beseech you to continue your benevolent support to my Successors.


Men pass away but the works of God remain. God, in His goodness, will not fail to recompense you, as in the past, for all the sacrifices that you will make for the support of this work. I entrust it to you, and my last wish and entreaty is that it may continue to be the objet of your benevolence, as it was during my lifetime.

Invoking on you and on all those dear to you the blessings of God,

I remain

Your most grateful and devoted Servant
ANTHONY BELLONI.

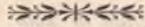




THE STORY OF THE ORATORY

OR

DON BOSCO'S OPENING APOSTOLATE



CHAPTER XLIX.

The Turin Magistrates and the servants of the Oratory —Politics and riches of Don Bosco—Decision of Urban Rattazzi—Explanation and petition of Don Bosco to two Ministers.

A FEW days after the enquiry related in the previous chapter had taken place, the Magistrate Chiapussi (at whose instigation is not known) called before him several men, who had been at the Oratory—some of whom were still employed as heads of the workshops, or as servants, and others who had found situations in the town.

Of these he made many enquiries in order to find out what were Don Bosco's politics, and whether Pius IX had sent him money to enlist soldiers: but none of them could make any statements damaging to our house.

Amongst those thus questioned was one Dominic Goffi, who had been our head shoemaker and at that time was the doorkeeper. This man was about forty years of age and had known Don Bosco for a long time, he was crippled in his legs, but fluent of speech. Although this was his first appearance before the public Authorities, he was not frightened but answered frankly and courageously:

"Your Worship has questioned me about Don Bosco's politics; I have known him many years and I reply that his only policy consists in the consideration of how to provide bread for his poor boys."

"But, does he not speak to you about joining the Pope's soldiers to make war on our king?"

"He has certainly made no such proposal to me, because I am a cripple and should have to be carried; but as doorkeeper, I have much intercourse with my companions and the older boys, both boarders and externs, of the Oratory, and I can assure you that I have never heard

any one say that Don Bosco has spoken any such words. He often speaks of fighting the devil, with the arms of prayer and the frequentation of the Sacraments, but he does not meddle with the wars, nor with the soldiers of this world."

"It is said that Pius IX has sent him a large sum of money; and do you know anything about it?"

"In 1858, when Don Bosco was in Rome, I remember that Pius IX. gave him a sum of money to provide a feast for all the boys who attended the three Oratories of Valdocco, Porta Nuova and Vanchiglia: but I have never heard, and I do not believe, that since then he has sent so much money, as you say. If that were true, we should not see Don Bosco continually going forth to beg in Turin for the support of his orphans, and he would not be so constantly tormented by his creditors. Your Worship may imagine the scenes which, as doorkeeper, I witness with compassion. The creditors, knowing the hours when he is accustomed to go out and return, lie in wait for him, and then one implores, another complains, and yet another uses threats in order to get paid. The poor man promises to satisfy all, that no one shall lose a penny, but that for the present they must have patience, for he has nothing, absolutely nothing. When I was myself the shoemaker I know the leather-merchant sometimes refused to supply him, because Don Bosco was unable to settle his account at once. And do you believe, sir, that if Don Bosco had so much money, as is reported, he would not use it to prevent these annoyances?"

"And the money which he sends to his brothers, with which they buy farms and build houses and palaces, where does he get it?"

"This is not true, sir, for Don Bosco has neither father, nor mother, nor sisters, but only one brother who works in the fields with his sons."

"But I have been told that, during the holidays, he takes his boys into the country at Castelnovo d'Asti; to whose house does he take them?"

"He takes them to his own house; but this, far from being a palace or a large farm, is so small that the boys can scarcely find shelter from the inclemency of the weather, crowded into the stables and lying upon straw."

"It may be as you say, but you cannot deny

that Don Bosco receives money. Can you tell me who are his chief benefactors?"

"Certainly Don Bosco must have benefactors in Turin who supply him with funds, otherwise hundreds of poor boys whom he maintains, would die of hunger or would have to be turned into the streets; but I do not know who are his benefactors. I wish that all the inhabitants of Turin were benefactors of Don Bosco, including yourself and the other Magistrates. If you can, help Don Bosco, and your alms will be well employed."

These words, spoken gaily by this good servant of God, made them all laugh, and one of the police, joking, said: "His name is Goffi (blockhead) but he speaks as a wise man."

Like the first, these local and personal enquiries ended in nothing, because amongst us nothing was done or said such as evil tongues had accused us of. To the suggestive and cunning questions, the answers given both by the boys and the servants were so appropriate and unanswerable, that they seemed to have been suggested by their Guardian Angels. We might even see verified in them what Our Divine Saviour said in the Gospel: "Lay it up therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before how you shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist and gainsay (1)." Such considerations moved us to thank God heartily, and to behave as good christians, being assured that He would still extend to us His powerful help.

There vexations were for us all, and especially for Don Bosco and Fr. Alasonatti, a real trial; but through the goodness of God these were turned to our advantage. It was no slight advantage to gain by these means the sympathy of good men, and even of those who were not of his way of thinking in religious matters, but who were considered honest citizens, loving true liberty. The better class of newspapers undertook his defence, gaining for him esteem and sympathy both at home and abroad; and our benefactors, with true charity and compassion, helped him the more willingly for the love of God. Some, even of the Members of Parliament, did not fear to stigmatize the annoyances we had suffered as an abuse of the law and described them as illegal and impolitic acts; illegal, because contrary

to the statute; impolitic, because they were calculated to injure an Institute which gave food, lodging and education to several hundreds of destitute boys, many of whom, without such a home would have given great trouble to the Government.

Amongst others, Urban Rattazzi (no longer one of the Ministers, but only a Deputy or Member of Parliament) sent for Don Bosco, and, when he came to his house, made him give a full account of all the inquisitors had said and done. On hearing all that had passed, he was very angry and offered to interpellate the Ministry in Parliament. He said:—"I am not a lover of priests, but I esteem good work by whomsoever it is done and to whatever party he may belong. The Ministry, by harassing and permitting its officials to harass similar Institutes, is guilty of injuring the cause of philanthropy, and commits a crime which should be denounced by all civilized nations." Don Bosco thanked the ex-Minister for his good intentions in our regard, but decided that it was not desirable to have these facts published in the House of Parliament, choosing rather to leave our cause in the hands of Divine Providence and make use of peaceful means. For this end, he wrote and sent to the Minister of the Interior, Louis Farini, and to the Minister of Public Instruction, Terence Mamiani, a brief explanation in the form of the following petition:

To His Excellency the Minister,

I beg respectfully that you will be kind enough to read these brief explanations regarding the House called the Oratory of St. Francis of Sales at Valdocco. On Saturday, the 9th instant, by order of the Ministry a search was made in the class-rooms and dormitories, enquiries regarding the providing of food, the income and expenditure and also as to the funds by which this work of charity is maintained. I cannot guess the motives underlying this Government measure, but if Your Excellency will be so good as to explain them, I can assure you that I shall be able to give you complete satisfaction, without further trouble to the Government and without causing an irreparable injury to the work of the Oratories. Meanwhile I humbly beg you to remember that:

1st. I have been in Turin for twenty years, and have spent all my life in the sacred Ministry in

(1) St. Luke xxi.

the prisons and hospitals, seeking also in the streets and squares for destitute children, so as to bring them up respectably, teaching them either to work, or to study, according to their capacity and inclination..

2nd. I have always striven to fulfil my priestly duties without receiving or asking any stipend. On the contrary, I have used, and will continue to use, all my means in the construction of the building and in the maintenance of the boys received there.

3rd. I have always most carefully avoided politics; I have taken no part either for or against the changes which have recently been made; and, to prevent any party spirit, it has even been forbidden in this house to mention politics. Therefore, no one has ever had anything to do with newspapers. I have judged that thus a priest can exercise his charitable Ministry towards his neighbour in all times and places, and under every kind of Government. But, whilst I assure you that I have always avoided politics, I can with equal frankness certify that I have never said, or done, or encouraged anything against the laws of the State.

4th. My schools have never been legally approved, because they are charity schools. But the Inspectors and the Ministers of Public Instruction knew all about them, and gave their tacit approval by personal visits, coming to assist at the examinations, as was done by Cavaliere Baricco, Inspector Nigra, Cavaliere Aporti and others. They showed their approval also by giving money and books, and sometimes by dispensing from fees, and also by letters. I send herewith the copy of one only of these from the Minister Lanza, in which he encourages the work of the Oratories and of the classes which are held there. The explanation of this favour of the Minister of Public Instruction, may be found partly in two orders of the day, one of the House of Senators, the other of the Deputies, in which the king's government is advised to maintain and promote works like those in question. It is true that the law Casati requires for teaching certain formalities, the preliminaries of which I was arranging with this Minister, who has always been and is our special benefactor. These arrangements would certainly have been completed before the beginning of the

scholastic year 1860-1861, in which must be put in force the general application of the law, art. 379.

5th. For some years the workshops being overcrowded, and the demands for admission increasing, a larger number of the boys have devoted themselves to study. Now I have a good number who are earning their living elsewhere, some as certificated teachers, others as musicians and others again who, having completed their ecclesiastical studies, are labouring in the sacred Ministry in various countries.

If Your Excellency, after reading the above, wishes to take some further steps in this matter, I shall be quite ready to submit. I only beg of you humbly that the matter may be arranged privately, as a father who wishes that these good works should be done in the best possible way: but not with threats and menaces, by which sometimes these works are irreparably damaged.

Having now made known to you what is weighing on my mind, I commend my poor boys to your kindness, begging your sympathy in the trouble they have experienced; and, wishing you every blessing, I have the honour to remain with esteem and gratitude

Your Excellency's devoted servant

JOHN BOSCO, Priest.

Turin, June 12, 1860.



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Printed and Published at the
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This Magazine is sent to Catholics who manifest a desire to become Members of the Association of Salesian Co-operators, and concur in helping our Society in any way whatsoever.

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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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