

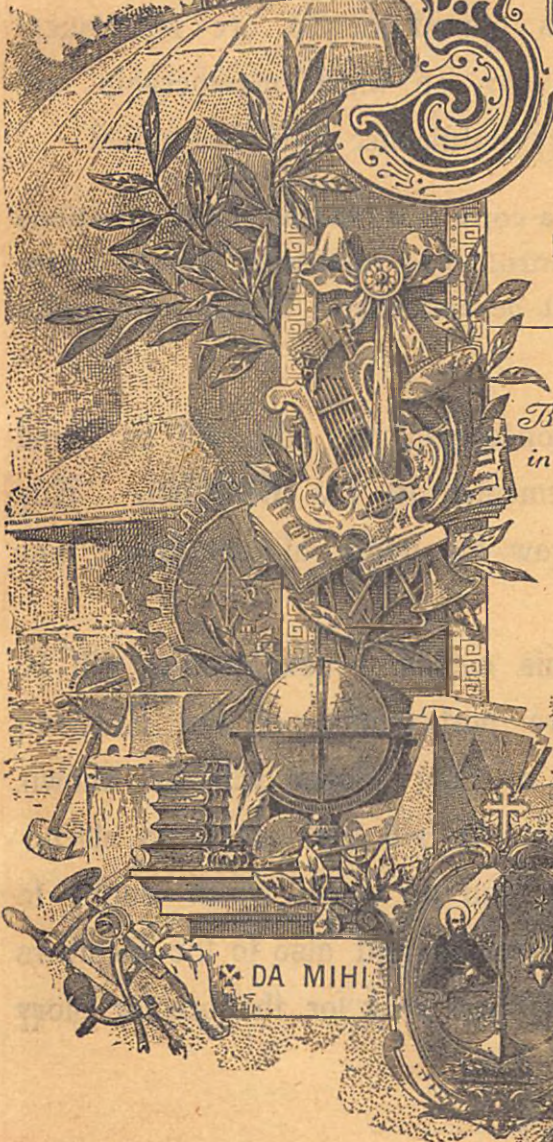


# Salesian Bulletin

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*Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem:  
in die mala liberabit eum Dominus. [Ps. XL.]*

*L. M. S. X. III.*



DA MIHI


ANIMAS CÆTERA TOLLE



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# Important Notice to Readers.

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s announced previously in the **Bulletin**, the Rules of the Association of Salesian Co-operators, together with a summary of the Indulgences and spiritual favours, and appendices, have been reprinted and bound into a neat volume or manual.

A copy of this and a diploma of membership is being sent to all readers. If some of the dates affixed thereto are subsequent to the date of receipt, that is the day on which membership will commence, and on which the plenary indulgence may be gained.

Those readers, who on receiving a copy and reading the instructions and regulations, do not desire to be enrolled as members, should return the two things, and their names will be cancelled. Those who retain them will be definitively enrolled.

Explanations and information concerning the rule will be found in the manual, but will be supplemented by the **Bulletin**. Any member is of course free to withdraw his name at any future time should he so wish.

It is greatly desired that by this means a new impetus will be given to the development and active participation of the Salesian Co-operators, and that the works of Don Bosco will be known, esteemed, and aided more and more. It will also serve to strengthen the bond of charity, of prayer and of work, which ought to unite the Co-operators amongst themselves, and also to the members of the Salesian Society, with whom they work for the greater glory of God and the good of society at large.



# The Salesian Bulletin

Organ of the Association of Salesian Co-operators

Via Cottolengo 32, Turin, Italy.

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## THE COMMEMORATIONS FOR THE TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR SINCE DON BOSCO'S DEATH.

**I**N a great many centres solemn commemorations were held for what has always been regarded in the light of an historical event. As years go by, the memorial meetings gain in importance and influence; it was therefore natural that the quarter of a century should provide the opportunity for special commemorations. Apart from those held by the Society, there was a gathering of all the notable persons in Turin, who were addressed first of all by the president, Signor Gribaudo; he said that after twenty-five years, not only had the memory of Don Bosco not faded away in those who had known him when he lived, but that he had become known to thousands and thousands of others, and the young generations were still flocking around him as of yore. He

compared Don Bosco to those stars, with, according to astronomers, continue to send light to the earth, even after they are themselves spent, and that for many centuries. He referred to the initiative of the past-pupils in the erection of a lasting monument, but, he said, the best memorial is not that carved in marble or struck in bronze, but that which is the result of the love and virtuous example of so many thousands of past-pupils, ever remaining faithful to his teaching.

Then followed the conference given by Signor Cesare Nava, the barrister, which we have previously referred to. It was a magnificent effort both in oratory and material. "When," he said, "an invitation was sent to me to give the discourse for this occasion I accepted it. And I did so without any



hesitation; notwithstanding the fact that I recognised the vastness of the undertaking, and that I could not give adequate preparation to it.

I replied in the affirmative, because there is no denying a favour to the Sons of Don Bosco. It meant some self-sacrifice and some mortification, but one should not refuse his modest cooperation when it is asked to a work, which is the fruit of so much self-sacrifice and so much mortification even to the degree of heroism, from the sacrifices of the great yet humble Founder, to those of the lowliest of his followers.

And again I accepted it to satisfy some sort of demand made by the spiritual needs of man; for amid the vicissitudes of life and the constant turmoil of modern conditions, obsessed by activity and change, one feels from time to time the demand for a little spiritual oxygen, for a glance at an ideal life, superior to the common-place pettiness of our world, and for an ascent to something that is beautiful and pure and noble and to what is heroic in human nature. We should be badly off if these spiritual restoratives were lacking.

In these circumstances, what better restorative for the soul can a man find, than to live for a while in close spiritual communication with the great Servant of God, who was so able an exponent of the moral force to be derived from applying faith to human activity in whatever field it was exercised; of what educative power was to be found in christian principles; with him who, in the midst of the overpowering materialism of his age vindicated the rights of justice and charity; who against the claim of rationalism dominating over science, demonstrated the harmony between science and faith; who was an example of a

generous and complete surrender of self to the good of others; who loved with a mother's love those in distress; who was remarkable for his imperturbable serenity even under the greatest trials a life can know — a serenity inspired by an unlimited confidence in the Providence of God; who knew how to be rich in poverty, and poor in wealth, a living example of how the material goods of this world are to be used?

#### *The complexity and harmony of the character of Don Bosco.*

But it would seem impossible to give you, within the limits of a conference, even the merest outline and characteristic features of the moral being of Don Bosco, at once so simple and so complex; and also some idea of his work, multiform and gigantic as it is, which occupies an entire century and is confined only by the confines of the globe. Nor is it possible, as it is with so many other great men, to separate his moral being into so many aspects, each able to be considered and estimated separately.

There are great men in arts, science or politics in whom their artistic, scientific or political activities are absolutely distinct from their private and familiar life; often indeed the fame acquired by brilliance of intelligence and achievement is diminished or darkened by a low standard in private life; so that their public character and reputation is distinct from it.

There are men of a protean activity — warriors yet artists — men of political and literary eminence — men of science and poetry — in whom the various manifestations may be separately studied and estimated, showing appreciable differences of value and power. Moreover it is customary nowadays to anatomise the great men of the past, the geniuses, the men of power; to follow them into their intimate life, probing into their secrets, arriving at their results by audacity and opportunity.

But this performance on the operating table is not possible in the case of Don Bosco, because all his activities whether interior or exterior, all his religious, educative, industrial, social work, though different in themselves, constitute one unified character, impossible to resolve into parts.

The private life of Don Bosco is not a separate thing from his public life; because it may be said without exaggeration, that from the

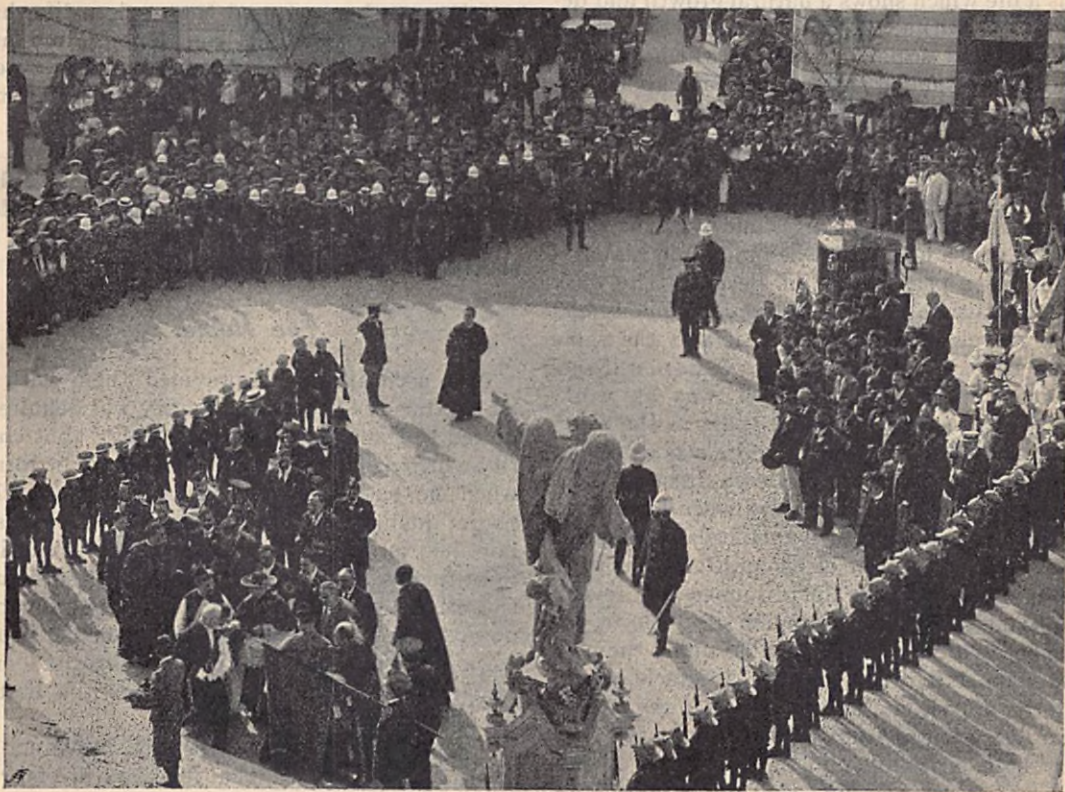


time he came to the use of reason till his death he hardly had an hour exclusively to himself, for his own personal pleasure or satisfaction. Everything in his life was co-ordinated with the apostolate to which he was called.

When as a boy he was taken by his mother to the feasts of the parish, and learnt the secrets of the conjurers, he did not do this for himself, or because his natural quickness gave him a bent for such things; but it was so that he might have the means of entertaining his companions, and

he allowed himself for repose, and he thus prepared himself for his future work even during his unconscious repose. The character of these dreams may be open to examination; but it is certain that even humanly considered they are a proof of the dominating thought of Don Bosco's mind; which did not unbend even in sleep, but which assumed then a greater power and liberty, so as to become prophetic.

Or how again would it be possible to separate Don Bosco's faith, from the charity which in-



MALTA — The reception of His Eminence Cardinal Bourne.

of drawing them to his readings from the Bible and his little instructions in christian doctrine.

The hours that he had to spend in travelling — and those at least ought to have been hours of some repose for him — he occupied with the work of his apostolate, and it is reported that if he was being driven in a conveyance he would get into conversation with the driver, to give him some instruction or counsel; and it happened that, having drawn the man on to speak of his spiritual state, he more than once finished by hearing his confession in the vehicle itself.

Not even his sleep did he reserve entirely for himself; it is a special characteristic of his, that his dreams or visions occupied the few hours that

flamed him, and from the practical activity in religious work, in that of education or instruction? They are all but the manifestation, ever more vast and complex of the great love for humanity which animated him; a love which at the same time had its origin and support in the profound faith which possessed him.

How could Don Bosco be considered merely as a sociologist, separately from his faith; or a Don Bosco absorbed in practices of piety — an ascetic — apart from his fruitful labours on behalf of society. It is clear therefore that the moral personality of Don Bosco, in its complex harmony, constitutes a complete unity in every part, and to attempt to dissect it would



be to destroy it; like the spreading tree, which though ever dividing into a thousand branches, constitute one vital unity, producing flowers and fruits, but if divided into its parts is nothing but a heap of dry and sterile wood.

### *The harmonious continuity of his Work.*

Moreover with Don Bosco it is not even possible to make a rational division of his moral life into various periods of time or activity, having characteristics dissimilar to each other. It is a life which shows a natural growth and development within the one organic design of his religious and social apostolate; which goes on gradually assuming greater extension and intensity; which takes in ever increasing spheres of work, and provides for ever new and wider demands. But the end is always the same, the means are always the same; the ideal which he strives for does not change, and it is the same as that which he had put before him in his early visions as a peasant boy at Becchi. The work that he initiated among those companions had their moral good as its aim; it was the same when he passed through those years of self-sacrificing labour at Moglia; it was at work, though in secret during the years in the seminary at Chieri, for even there he was a teacher and guide to his fellow students; it became his resolution and his *raison d'être* when he entered the sacred ministry, for it then became the need of his soul, the thirst of his spirit, when by his visits in the hospitals and prisons he had revealed to his sight the sorrowful spectacle of the immense moral misery which lay upon the poor and disinherited classes; the spectacle, particularly, of poor and homeless boys in the streets, who live and grow up without any of the salutary light of morality in their religious or civil life. That was the next step in his apostolate, and led directly to the initiation of his educative work. When he took his first boy into his mother's presence and she prepared a bed for his night's rest, we are told that Don Bosco knelt down to pray. He felt, as it were, the first movement of the life of his great work, and at that moment, before a poor boy, he found not only the soul of a little stranger, but also his own. The apostle began the regular fulfilment of his youthful vocation and initiated his fundamental work: the Oratory.

### *The Oratory.*

The Sunday Oratory was set on foot: it was obstructed in a hundred ways, and not merely by the enemies of the Faith; constrained to adopt a roving life, like the early tribes, never-

theless he saw continually increasing around him the numbers of those symbolic sheep, seen in his dreams as a boy.

In a short time — writes Don Bosco himself — I was surrounded by a band of boys and young men, all obedient to my word, all devoted to their tasks, whose conduct I could guarantee on all occasions. To one I gave but a look, and he was ready to go back to his parents from whom he had run away; another, given up to idleness and vagabondage, was placed with a master and became industrious and trustworthy; another, released from prison life, has become the model to his companions; and another, who before was ignorant of the very elements of the Faith, is now devoted to his religious instruction.

But it was through this very development of the Oratory, that Don Bosco became fully acquainted with the economic conditions under which the young laboured, and the misery of the plight in which the majority lay.

### *The Home.*

And accordingly he provided them with a home: thus the exercise of charity was definitely united to the apostolate of the Faith; that charity which displayed itself in an embryonic form, when he exchanged his white bread for the poorer quality which one of his companions, as a boy, had for his meals. And his gentle charity went further still, for it took away all the shame the other boy might have felt in his poverty on account of the exchange; for when the proposition was first made the boy was surprised, and John replied: — Your bread must be better than mine, and I like it better.

To any one who considers this simple act of charity, it will be clear that it shows in embryo the specific character of all Don Bosco's works of charity: respect, veneration almost, for the dignity of the poor; both for the one who was poor in this world's goods, as for the unfortunate being who had fallen into moral abjection. This duty of charity Don Bosco felt so keenly that he was grateful to the poor who were the means of his fulfilling it!

The early days of this work, when he was providing a home for an ever increasing family, constitute the period when Don Bosco displays the fulness of his virtue; when he had the perfect vision of the colossal work which it was his perform; when he shows his unlimited confidence in the ever sustaining power of Divine Providence. Any fibre within him that was not of an apostle's quality would be broken before the difficulties that now threw themselves,



almost, against his work — but were spent and destroyed by the impact.

After having sacrificed his own humble dwelling and his small inheritance in order to realise the ideal before him — "*Da mihi animas*", when stern necessity in a hundred shapes assailed him, when poverty was his only resource, when he was threatened with having nowhere to lay his head — to the advice of the weak-hearted that he should abandon his endeavour which appeared destined to failure —

which must not be forgotten, the co-operation of the mother in her son's apostolate. It was that Mother Margaret, who on the day of her son's first Mass had said to him: "Remember that to begin to say Mass is to begin to suffer; from henceforth you must think only of the salvation of souls, and have no thought for my welfare."

It was the same Margaret, who valuing aright the true mission of the priesthood, had objected to the proposal made to her son, that he should



MALTA — The Reception of the Cardinal Legate.

he simply replied that he had already seen the new Oratory, its church and ground and all its equipment.

Folly it appeared, and for such it was reckoned; even by the one who for some time had been his generous coadjutor. But it was not folly; it was an apostle's faith; the faith of one who sees the future, who sees the path traced out that he must follow, who feels himself called by God and therefore cannot fail.

#### *His mother's co-operation.*

Moreover, during this early period, the period of stress and storm, there is a touching note

go into a noble family as a tutor; who had exclaimed: "What would the salary and position avail, if his eternal interests were to be endangered?"

She found that it was against her noble nature and her Christian instincts to refuse to join her son in his charitable undertakings; she therefore became the mistress of his household, the mother to that strange and unwieldy family of which John was the father, master, educator and spiritual guide. One incident in the history of her sacrifice is worth recording. On a certain day some unruly boys had damaged part of her household goods, and tried her patience more than ordinary. She complained



of it bitterly to her son, saying: "In short, it will drive me mad. How different was my life when I was at my spinning in our old home. I am almost inclined to return in order to finish my few remaining years in peace."

Don Bosco said nothing; he looked fixedly at his mother, then he pointed at the crucifix on the wall. Margaret looked at it, her eyes filled with tears as she replied: "You are right, you are right;" and without further comment she set about her household duties, and no word of complaint ever escaped her again.

It is only those who have an intimate knowledge of Don Bosco that can gauge the grief of his filial heart when his mother was taken away from him by death, particularly as she had become so closely connected with the working of his Oratory. Even during the last years of his own life, Don Bosco never thought of her without emotion, and he frequently spoke of her great qualities, to which he and his work owed so much. The Marquis Crispolti very aptly remarks: "This filial love was remarkable, as also was that he bore towards all his relatives, and which he ever placed as a precept upon his children; his love was able to embrace all humanity, and yet it was devoted to individuals as well: this is a rare accomplishment; for even among the most virtuous and the warmest hearts some are found who have a true affection only for a few, while those whose love extends to many, seldom have it towards individuals."

### *The Professional Schools and Workshops.*

He had long felt the necessity of keeping his boys constantly with him, if their education were to be effective, since the contact with vicious persons soon undid the work of his training, in those whose characters were unsteady and not yet formed. A very humble beginning was made in the shape of a bootmaker's shop placed in the corner of a corridor, and this was the actual foundation of those great technical and professional schools, which constitute one of the chief features and one of the grand possessions of the Salesian work. It should be pointed out that in this as in other undertakings Don Bosco was a pioneer. He who had a precise intuition of the needs of his age, saw the growing necessity for a practical training in the various trades, before which great openings lay in the early nineteenth century; and this training was to be no mere mechanical process, but to include a knowledge of the scientific and artistic

basis on which all the skilled trades are built, and which would come into greater prominence with progress of industry. He set up his trades Schools when no one else had thought of them, and had brought them to perfection, when other institutions with large funds at their disposal were still in a rudimentary state.

Thus the work of the Oratory had brought into being that of the trade Schools, and both carried on their educative and religious work. The tree was the same, though its branches were now growing extensive and sturdy, and the fruits becoming ever more abundant. But while he was thus engaged almost exclusively with the poor, Don Bosco could not help noticing another lacuna in the educational programme of the times and hence he sought to fill it.

### *The College.*

It was not only the poor and homeless that were in need of care and training. The children of the middle classes were badly off for educational establishments, suitable to modest purses, and Don Bosco desired to supply the need. In 1863 at Mirabello the first Salesian School was established, and was destined to have a long line of successors all over the world. In fact so successful have they proved, that it was against them that sectarian hatred was chiefly directed; but they have withstood all attacks, and the outburst of anticlerical fury only served to show how deeply set in the heart of the people was their love and veneration for Don Bosco and his sons.

With the institution of the College it may be said that Don Bosco's work of education of the young was given completeness as an organism. But the extension and importance which it continued to assume brought into evidence the necessity for making concrete an idea, which Don Bosco had brooded over for some time, and which was in fact closely connected with the idea of his apostolate. And had he not the authority of his visions for it? for in them he had seen a whole army of priests and clerics and assistants, to be his companions in his apostolic labours. And now he had these assistants, but it was necessary to form them into a well ordered society, with bonds of union and regular government. All this was done with the providential help of ministers of the Government and the guidance of the Sovereign Pontiff. And then he led his sons forth on new expeditions which have evolved the great works of the missions and emigrants.



### *The preparation for his Apostolate.*

The secret but constant development of the preparation for his vocation is also a remarkable point, for he always felt that he was being moulded for some special object. His intellectual and moral preparation commenced with the light of reason, for he not only devoted his spare time to assiduous study, but he felt the necessity of purifying himself from every feeling of pas-

psychic study of the young, in which his special gifts made him a recognised master, and a leader of educationalists.

As a priest, again, he first went through a course of study and training which equipped him for that voluminous output of literary work, and which revealed him as a mine of knowledge. The after effects indeed, in the great undertakings of his life, show how he had obtained complete mastery of himself, and had been fashioned even at the cost of heroic



BORGO SAN MARTINO — A gathering of Past Pupils.

sion, of conquering every tendency to anger as unsuited to one who was to deal with the trying positions which the work among the young involves.

This preparation was constant no matter what occupations he had to take up, for there was not one which did not stand him in good stead in after life. Not only did he apply himself to the classical studies in which he was so proficient, but he began early to study his companions and others around him, to scrutinise their minds and hearts and to hit upon the best manner of dealing with them. He thus commenced from his boyhood his profound

sacrifice and violence to himself for the work of God.

### *His insight into the needs of the times.*

It has been said, and with good reason, that one of Don Bosco's prerogatives was that of reading the signs of the times, and of being beforehand with the demands of modern life. There have been idealists and sociologists who, in their attempt at reforming society have gone directly contrary to the current of the times.

In the midst of a world of wars and hatred, St. Francis of Assisi seemed strangely out of place,



preaching the love of humanity and of every created thing, fearing almost to tread on the water lest he should hurt it.

Carl Marx, confronted with industrial capitalism which enslaved the workman and sought to bring wealth into the hands of a few, boldly proclaimed the collectivity of property and the means of labour, and called out the people to a war of class hatred.

Don Bosco's method was quite different: and he chose it, not because he lacked in the least the moral courage to oppose the current of the times — for he showed in a thousand ways that he possessed it to an eminent degree; — but because he saw that it was the most suitable way to draw the century in the path of good, and remedy the evil tendencies it displayed.

In fact Don Bosco followed out the example of the Church, sternly immutable where principles are at stake, but which adapts herself to all forms of civilisation, to all centuries and governments, so as to make her apostolate efficacious.

However there were conditions in existence during the past century which counselled Don Bosco not to change the method he had adopted. The principles of nationality, liberty, the moral and industrial improvements in the condition of the labouring classes; principles all founded on the idea of social justice and respect for the dignity of man; such ideas were fast being diffused, and produced corresponding changes both politically and socially.

In all this onward movement, political, scientific or economic, there were excesses and regrettable phases; but there were others that were healthy and good, and that were not to be combated or thwarted. To separate from that movement would have been to separate from society and to have no part in her progress. And how could any apostolate thus succeed?

It was therefore in some measure a duty to take part in the movement in order to prevent, if possible, its excesses; to hinder it from deviating into dangerous paths; to harmonise its newly-found activities and powers with the unalterable rights and laws of God; since science and politics seemed to have joined in a conspiracy against God and his representatives.

The Venerable Servant of God had a mind that was open to every feeling of justice; that was trained and ready to appreciate what was true progress in every branch of knowledge; he was consumed with charity towards every form of misery, want or oppression, and therefore heartily in sympathy with every appeal and movement on the part of the workers for better economic and social conditions. He

was modern in his knowledge, but old in his faith; modern in his social ideas, but old in the christian inspiration of charity; he was the man of his century and a saint as well. Moreover he was in many things an innovator.

### *As an Educator.*

He was an innovator in adopting the preventive system in the education of the young, while the repressive was in full sway; and his defence of the system is a wonderful piece of work: admirable for the lucidity of his ideas on education, which were the outcome of his long study of the youthful mind and heart.

The repressive system, he writes, may put down disorders, but it will hardly cure depraved minds. The preventive system seeks to make a friend of the pupil, who may regard his master as a guide and protector, who will prevent him from falling into trouble, punishment and blame. It may extend its influence beyond the school to after life, for it strives to gain hearts and souls and to attach them by true sympathy... and his chapters on punishments and rewards are the words of an authority and a master in educational experiments.

A well known writer, and my own colleague in parliament, has given his considered judgment on these methods. "Few things" — he writes — have given me so much insight into educational methods as the few chapters left by Don Bosco on education of difficult subjects; and they are the more valuable as coming from one who was no dreamer on sociology, but who was an idealist in education in all its practical forms; and the eminent specialist in mental cases, Lombroso, did not hesitate to assign to Don Bosco one of the chief places among the few who have evolved a rational system of correction and training.

His own personal ascendancy over the young criminals, to whom he had preached the spiritual exercises, was strikingly evinced in the incident of his taking them for a holiday to the country, and then back again to their prison without any attempt at disorder or escape...

The modern views of Don Bosco are again apparent from his action in regard to the press. He saw at a glance what a power it would become, with the daily multiplication of the means of production, and its power must either be turned to good, or its attacks must be met equal vigour; and in other respects his views on modern life were those of a leader and a guide, and he could construct methods to suit every new phase or necessity that was presented to him.

But though he was, as has been shown, in fa-



avour of modern progress in its best sense, he was equally antagonistic to its views, when they led away from God and from the principles of the Faith. Many an evil he traced to the workshop and factory, the school and college where the name of God is banished, except for the blasphemies in which it is insulted. His endeavour was to show that christian principle was the foundation of justice in social problems, and that all the so much vaunted new theories would be useless without it; he would have no separation between faith and science, and showed that none could serve the true interests of their country who were rebels against God. And thus he desired to have this principle realised in all the works that were connected with his name, his society was to be the bearer of them in all parts of the world, and it was by infusing the christian spirit into their surroundings, that all true reform or progress was to be made efficacious; it was to be the great factor in civil life.

But it may now be asked, how did Don Bosco accomplish so great a work? — It has been well observed by an eminent writer that the initiative of this movement was so successful because it rested first on the help of God, and then on that of men, and because when all means seemed to fail, there was more than enough virtue in its founder to cope with all human calculations.

### *His spiritual gifts.*

It was then the eminent virtue of Don Bosco, after the grace of God, that worked this wonderful success; and if certain virtues of his, such as the spirit of charity, the delicacy of feeling, the frankness of his character, his courage and such like may be considered as innate in him, others must be regarded as obtained by his own efforts, by a constant labour of moral perfection, at the cost of much interior strife and spiritual violence.

Impetuous by temperament and by the exuberance of his physical strength he desired to become meek and gentle; and it is related of him that when, as a boy, a companion had tormented him beyond all bounds, he was about to attack his tormentor with all the vigor of his being; but this was only a first movement of instinct, and reflexion dominated it. But the moral force necessary for the repression was so great that his face was bathed in perspiration and he remained as one stunned. But the battle was won and the enemy of souls was conquered.

Of an ardent nature he wished to be patient, because charity is made of patience: and patient he became. Although acute and prompt of

intellect he never hazarded a judgment or counsel without long reflexion, so much did he appreciate the worth of prudence; and if it were something of a serious nature he took time to respond, and sought counsel with others. It was this prudence that made him such a wise counsellor, for Don Rua wrote: By this means Don Bosco was always able to unravel the most difficult cases, and it would be impossible to estimate the number of persons enlightened, consoled and strengthened in their difficulties by his prudent words.

While he forbade any austere penances to his followers, but recommended them to labour constantly, he maintained an heroic austerity towards himself, so that Mgr. Cagliero affirms that Don Bosco led the life of mortification and penance which leads souls to the height of perfection and sanctity. His serenity is proverbial, and is explicable from the fact that his point of vision was so elevated, that even the severest trials of life could not shake his confidence.

There is a classic example of his heroic serenity and strength of mind, which occurred in 1848 during his early priesthood. While he was standing in the church explaining the catechism a ruffian fired at him, and the bullet, aimed at his heart, passed between his arm and his breast. But he showed no alarm, and to the boys who were thoroughly frightened he said: "Are you frightened by a joke, carried out with rather bad grace? Certain ill-bred people cannot play, without being rude. See they have torn my cassock, and spoiled the wall. But let us get on with our catechism."

Moreover while his spirit was as firm and true as steel, he had the most exquisite delicacy of sentiment and affection; but it would be as impossible to give a complete picture of the moral excellencies of Don Bosco, as to describe the beauty of a garden in the height of its bloom; where, in a brilliant sun, the white lily reigns with the deep-red rose, and with the perfumed violet; but none the less it is a perfection which is recognised by all as complete in the character of the Apostle of charity, of faith and social order.

In a century which floated the wildest and most utopian theories for the levelling down of social life; when all the old ideals and institutions were to be fundamentally changed, and the wealth of centuries of tradition to be swept away, in order to fill with their débris the depths of poverty, and when the very authority of God over his creatures was denied: Don Bosco appeared as a prototype of the one truly efficacious power for the regeneration of social



justice and civil progress. Don Bosco did not destroy, he did not overturn; he accepted the world as it was, and despised nothing; he sacrificed nothing that was good. The mountain, the valley and the plain must remain; but up on the mountain, in the valley and in the plain he sowed the good seed with full hands, with constant labour, and taking into account the quality of the ground and the best adapted seed. And then he allowed the sun of divine charity to produce the mircaulous results, to bring forth everywhere flowers and fruit, and sturdy trees with their teeming branches; so



SARRIÁ (Spain) — Reception to the Very Rev. D. Albera, at the station.

that where before had been the sterility of evil, of ignorance and injustice, there succeeded the fruitfulness of good works, of the light of truth and justice.

When his labours on earth were drawing to a close, yet he still endeavoured to utilise his failing strength, it was suggested to him that he had done enough. However he replied with his accustomed humility: "I should have been able to do more.... but my sons will do it."

His peaceful passing away occurred amid the tears of his sons, and his Co-operators; it did not close the period of activity, but initiated another ever more abundant in good; it was as though, when, the spirit of the Founder had become liberated from its body, it was freer to fulfil its high mission. His death was like

that of St. Francis of Assisi who left to his sons his dear lady *Poverty*, that they should love her with faith. So Don Bosco left to his sons as heirs his dear lady *the Salesian Work*, and commanded them to love it in faith. And this they have done to such purpose that that Work has since gained a kingdom on which, as it is said, the sun never sets. It grows as from its own organism, notwithstanding the passing of men, who must necessarily change.

Moreover the spirit of Don Bosco is not only handed down to those who are bound by vows to his society; but also in some degree to those that are his more distant sons; your very Federation of past-pupils is an evidence of it, to which I have had the honor to present a picture of the Venerable Servant of God; for he desired you to be united among yourselves for mutual encouragement and defence, and to form a combined power with his sons. The permanence of his spirit and teaching and work is one of the great proofs of his sanctity; and if the Church, in her rigorous prudence, has not yet decreed the complete triumph of Don Bosco, the voice of the christian people has already raised him

to that honour, and in this case the voice of the people is truly the voice of God.

In regard to this I have one precious recollection of my personal dealings with him, which seemed to me even at the time of its occurrence a symbol and a prophecy.

When Don Bosco was at Milan, as the guest of Mgr. di Calabiana, in order to take part in one of the earliest gatherings of Salesian Co-operators, I was fortunate enough to be in close contact with him during his stay in the city. At the meeting of the Co-operators the Archbishop presided and Don Bosco asked for his blessing; but the Archbishop put the request aside. More than once he repeated his request but to no purpose. At the end of the meeting the Co-operators asked Don Bosco for his bles-



sing, and as he rose to give it, the Archbishop knelt along with his people, to receive the blessing of the humble priest.

In that act of veneration by the Bishop surrounded by his people to the spiritual greatness of Don Bosco, I seemed to see as in a symbol the tribute of honour that the whole Church would one day render as to one of its saints, and which now in fact is already partly realised. But not only the Church offers its meed of hon-

our, but society as well, for all that it has received through his hands. And for that purpose a monument, by a world-wide subscription, is being raised. It will represent the great work accomplished by him, and will show to posterity that in the nineteenth century, by his means, there was an harmonious and indissoluble blending of faith, charity and social progress.

## An account of Our Superior General's visit to Spain

In a previous issue some account was given of the great scenes which succeeded each other during Don Albera's recent visitation in the provinces of Spain. He was accompanied by the Economist General of the Society, Don Bretto, who gave in a series of letters a complete description of the visitation, some of which is here reproduced.

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The first stop was at Mataró. We had reached Portbon about half past three in the morning, and after the inspection by the Spanish customs' officers, we entrained again, expecting to reach Mataró about eight o'clock. In fact a great number of the clergy and others had arranged to meet us at that hour, but we lost a connection at a junction, and had to go round by Barcelona, and back to Mataró; so that it was after nine when we arrived there. Some ceremony of welcome was given, but it was necessarily made brief, for Don Albera was to say Mass for the boys and Community.

On the following day there was held a large gathering of Co-operators, and for their entertainment the boys had prepared an excellent musical programme, for which the band of the School at Sarriá had come to assist. A prominent leader of local society made a speech, which roused the sympathetic approval of all, and in reply Don Albera spoke in Spanish at which the gathering was particularly pleased. Many visits had to be paid in return for those made to Don Albera, and among them was his reception by the Alcalde or Mayor and all his councillors.

At *Barcelona* and *Sarriá*.

On our arrival at Barcelona we found at the station a reception committee to welcome Don

Albera, and a number of motor-cars were in readiness to take us to the School at Sarriá. On the way we passed the College of the Christian Brothers, where the boys were all lined up to give cheers of greeting as Don Albera passed. To the sound of stirring music we entered the Church at Sarriá, where the *Te Deum* was sung, and Benediction was given.

On Sunday was held the great meeting of the Co-operators. There were distinguished members of the clergy and society, the members of the Municipality in a body, and prominent men in various departments of life. To this distinguished gathering the efforts of the actors and musicians were quite equal and the whole meeting was an immense success.

On Tuesday we were taken by Signor Luis Codolar to his seat, some miles out, a mansion that has already given hospitality to the Ven. Don Bosco and Don Rua, and now the host esteemed it a similar honour to be able to give a welcome to Don Albera. The memory of Don Bosco in all this neighbourhood is wonderful; his words and acts are described with an accuracy and reverence as though he had lived among this people; and indeed it must have been that which brought such a vast gathering together at Sarriá, for it was winter time and a spell of severe weather was being experienced just at the time of our visit.

A few days afterwards we paid a visit to the Jesuit Fathers and to the Mayor, and also to two of the Co-operators who were very seriously ill, and to both of whom Don Albera gave the Blessing of Our Lady Help of Christians. Our next place of visitation was across the sea to the island of Minorca, where we landed at Port Mahon. While we were out in the harbour a large boat was seen coming towards the vessel. It was rowed by young men from the Academy



of St. Stanislaus, and brought ont the Representatives of the Governor and of His Lordship the Bishop, the Consul and other gentlemen who came to bid Don Albera welcome to the island.

When we reached the landing stage it was thronged, and it was as though some royal personage was being received, so great is the fame of Don Bosco in these parts, and therefore of his Successor.

It was yet early, so Holy Mass was celebrated in the Church of the Immaculate Conception and large numbers had waited in order to receive Holy Communion from Don Albera. But this was not our destination. We were merely *en route* for the ancient city of Ciudadela, and as we neared that town, later in the morning, we found the roads everywhere decorated, and hung with banners bearing messages of welcome and honour. There were several smaller towns to pass through on the way thither, but all were alike in their signs of festivity, and everywhere the highest authorities, both ecclesiastical and lay, were in readiness to give their greeting and respectful salutation. In each of these districts Don Albera had to give the people the satisfaction of a few words in reply to their welcome, and they seemed to receive them as coming with an authority, and impressiveness that was wonderful to witness.

#### The Arrival at Ciudadela.

If such had been the preliminary manifestations, it may be imagined that the city itself, which was our main destination, was proportionately demonstrative and enthusiastic. Our anticipations were amply verified. It would be impossible to describe the crowd, for everybody seemed to have gathered outside the city to escort the Visitor beneath its ancient portals. At the head of the concourse were His Lordship

the Bishop and his canons, the Mayor, the Judge, all the members of the Administration, all the chief personages of the city, most of them Co-operators of Don Bosco's work.

The Bishop's coach was to convey Don Albera into the city; he therefore left the motor-car for the more dignified conveyance, and sat with the Bishop and the Mayor. At the entrance to the city one of the Councillors gave a brief discourse of welcome, and then to the accompaniment of the band, there was a great procession to the Salesian Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, where the *Te Deum* was sung. The



SARRIÁ (Spain) — Local authorities presented to the Very Rev. D. Albera.

military authorities were present as a guard of honour, and were presented to Don Albera. In the evening a Conference was given in the Church of St. Augustine, and on the following day some of the chief visits were made. His Lordship the Bishop held a grand reception in his palace, and at the lunch the gathering was a great sight. At its close Don Albera was invited to say something about the Venerable Servant of God, Don Bosco. He did so, and the impressiveness of the occasion was such that it was one of those scenes that are indelibly fixed on the mind, as part of those recollections which will never fade.

In the evening of the same day there was the general gathering at the Salesian Institute, followed by a conference to the past pupils,



who had come in large numbers. There were other great gatherings of a similar nature and whenever Don Albera spoke in public, he was listened to as one inspired. The theatre of the place had arranged an opera, but when it was found that the dates clashed with Don Albera's visit, the opera had to be postponed, for there would have been no audience. And amid such manifestations of respect, admiration and enthusiasm the days passed. At the departure the Bishop stopped the carriage at the city gates and desired Don Albera to bless the people, who gave a farewell in keeping with the previous days' welcome. Until the island was left the same spirit of enthusiasm characterised all the proceedings, and the good people of the island of Minorca established a sort of record in the way of giving a welcome to one whom they wished to honor.

#### *At Barcelona.*

On the return to Barcelona Don Albera visited the large Salesian Institute of St. Joseph, the buildings of which have been entirely renewed, and reconstructed within recent years. It is now being further added to by the erection of a Church dedicated to Our Lady Help of Christians, and destined to be of great service in this great commercial centre. Here there were many visitations to make, and everywhere a like display of eager welcome and deep veneration of the Successor of Don Bosco. One of the chief scenes was the celebration of the Feast of St. Francis of Sales in the Cathedral, when there was an immense concourse, and one of the Canons gave a conference on Don Bosco's work.

Various districts were now visited, those of Caudete, Alicande and Campella, and in each there were very full programmes, and no dropping off whatever in the enthusiasm of the receptions. At Valencia, where a very important Institute has long been flourishing, there was a typical concourse of the people — Co-operators and friends. The Conference was given in the Church of San Salvador, under the pre-

sidency of His Grace the Archbishop. On the morrow when Don Albera said Mass the Communions seemed interminable. The Ciborium was emptied, but another had been consecrated at a side altar. So many were the Communicants that some had to be drawn away to a side altar. They afterwards expressed their regret



SARRIÁ (Spain) — Solemn reception to the Very Rev. D. Albera in the Church of Mary Help of Christians.

at not being able to receive from Don Albera, saying that it was like going to Rome and not being able to see the Pope. After a round of visits and ceremonies Don Albera left for another Province.





# Salesian Notes and News.

**London.** The School Term and School Year see their completion at the end of this month, and they bring to conclusion what we may well regard as a satisfactory addition to the annals of our school's history. Like most other establishments, some evolution has been necessary to bring the School to its present stage of advancement, particularly in building and equipment, which may now be regarded as complete, although the future may demand an addition in some direction.

This year, however has brought more than one advantage by the improvements effected on the premises. The new class-rooms have made expansion natural, and they were not provided any too soon, for the accommodation already shows signs of limitation; but that is not surprising, seeing that numbers have risen in proportion, and appear to increase from term to term. However they did not actually pass the two hundred, as had been anticipated as a probability, but they were within two or three of that figure, so that the roll may be considered in round numbers as standing at two hundred, a figure which marks a record for the school.

However, besides the addition to the premises, the grounds have added to their appearance and usefulness by two striking improvements; the long walk, at the side of both garden and playing ground, has been widened, and its covering entirely reconstructed, with a new Calvary at the School end. This enlargement was required by the increase in numbers, for the previous construction had been in use since the opening of the school, when the students were barely a fourth of the present. Moreover attached to this, new tennis courts have been laid out in asphalt, stretching the whole length of the play-ground, and these are undoubtedly a much appreciated improvement and a valuable asset. The School Magazine has, among its illustrations, a very good view of the courts with the boys at play, as well as practice in the cricket nets, which are provided for all the forms.

The Scholastic course has been followed on the precedents of other years. The Oxford Locals, as the chief yearly examination, are

held at the School, while those of the College of Preceptors are held in the city, at the buildings allotted by that College. Each of these examinations has a recognised educational value, apart from that of the certificate, and may be regarded as a safe ground-work either for higher examinations, or for adapting to business careers.

We write too early to give any account of the actual conclusion of the School Year, but among recent events, should be mentioned the visit of His Lordship the Bishop of Southwark, who although coming officially to the Church of the Sacred Heart, was also welcomed by the students. Lines were formed in the new ambulacrum, and His Lordship passed through a sort of guard of honour, which gave him a hearty reception. At the end of the walk he briefly addressed the boys, forty of whom had just received the Sacrament of Confirmation from his hands; before his departure he was approached by the top boys with a view to obtaining a holiday in his honour, and this being acceded to, he passed into Surrey House amid prolonged cheers. As we have touched on the religious side it may be added that His Lordship has just signed and forwarded to us the report of the Religious Examiner who describes all the classes as *excellent*.

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**Farnborough.** Concerning our School and Church at Farnborough, in Hampshire, we are pleased to be able to give our Readers the benefit of the following account from the *Tablet*. "On Sunday last, the Patronal Feast of the church was observed with great solemnity, the occasion being honoured by the Presence of the Bishop of Portsmouth, who in his great kindness came especially to ordain two Salesians in their own church. On his arrival the previous evening, his Lordship was welcomed by the Very Rev. A. Sutherland, S.C., Superior, with the staff and pupils. In the evening the students gave a fine performance of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar." The impersonation of the principal characters of the drama was admirably maintained throughout. J.



Mc. Tague, M. Brennan, W. Hill and G. O'Connor, giving a very realistic rendering of Caesar, Mark Anthony, Brutus and Cassius respectively.

At the conclusion of the play the Bishop, replying to an address of welcome, said that it gave him very great pleasure to be there, and he thoroughly enjoyed the entertainment which had been performed in his honour. It reflected great credit on the pupils, and he thought he could not take a better opportunity to express publicly his appreciation of the splendid reli-

the proud position of their school in the front rank of the educational establishments of the country. Among those supporting His Lordship were Colonel, Moore, and Mr. John Brennan, C.B. (of torpedo fame). On Sunday morning there was a crowded congregation at the 10 o'clock service, at which his lordship sang Pontifical High Mass, and at which Rev. Anthony Fuest, S.C., received the tonsure and the four minor orders, and Rev. Joseph Mc Taidge, S.C., was raised to the diaconate. Assisting his



MILAN — The Salesian Sunday Oratory.

gious and intellectual training which the Salesians Fathers were giving their pupils. He could not show more fully to the public at large his acknowledgment of the splendid work done, than by sending his own students to the school, to receive their early training as a preparation for the ministry, which they were afterwards to exercise in his own diocese of Portsmouth. He felt quite confident that the students would increase their great successes of previous years at the coming public examinations and thus do credit, not only to themselves, but to their parents and their teachers and help to maintain

Lordship were Fathers Sutherland (archdeacon), T. J. Giltinan (deacon) and J. O'Connor (subdeacon), with the Rev. T. Tierney, S. C., as M. C.

In the afternoon his Lordship conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on forty-five candidates, after having given them a searching examination on the Sacrament. The sponsors were Madame Marimich, Capt. D. Alton and Miss Wrenford. The service closed with solemn Benediction, after which His Lordship took his departure amidst a great demonstration of enthusiasm on the part of the students to whom he granted a holiday to commemorate his visit.



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**The First Salesian College** It is fifty years since the Venerable Don Bosco opened his first College, his efforts previous to that having been devoted to his Oratories and Schools for Arts and Trades. This first experiment was tried at Mirabello in Piedmont in 1863, and at the head of the new School was Don Rua, who afterwards ruled the Society as the Successor of Don Bosco for so many years, but who was then only twenty-six years old. The Very Rev. Don Albera, writing to the Co-operators in his annual letter of this year, refers to this event, and adds: "Who would then have thought that in the brief span of fifty years, the Salesian Society would have assumed such vast proportions, or that the humble writer would have been called by Divine Providence to rule its destinies, after Don Bosco and his first Successor, Don Rua?"

It was greatly desired that the Successor of Don Bosco would be able to preside at the festivities arranged for the celebration of the fiftieth year; but he was away in Spain, and it was not possible to postpone the commemoration, which had been fixed for the 27th and 28th of April. On the Sunday morning at half-past seven, His Lordship the Bishop of the Diocese was received at the College, and he said Mass in the Chapel for the boys and Community, giving them an address in keeping with the memorable day. But now the guests began to arrive, particularly the past pupils, in large numbers, and for them, Holy Mass was said an hour later by the Prefect-General of our Society, who was Don Albera's representative.

After the religious functions there was the ceremony of the placing of a commemorative stone, performed by the Bishop of Casale, who was attended by all the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the neighbouring districts. This occasion provided the opportunity for various addresses of welcome and congratulation, and the past students were well represented by the well-known barrister Signor Miglioli. While at the lunch for three hundred guests, there were read messages of co-operation and congratulation from distinguished men in all parts of Italy.

An equally important meeting was held on the following day, Monday, which included a great number of clergy who had been prevented by their duties from attending on the Sunday. His Lordship the Bishop again presided, and expressed his thanks to the School and its Superiors, past and present, for the great assistance it had given in providing so many excellent priests for his diocese. He was responded

to by several of these priests, who are holding positions of responsibility, among them being the Very Rev. Canon Boccassi, the oldest of the past students.

There was again a great gathering of friends, particularly from the vicinity. The Mayor had issued a public notice regarding the celebrations, bidding all take part in the commemoration of a work, which reflected credit on the town, and to which they were as a whole indebted.

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**New York.** An interesting item is given by the *Catholic News*, New York, in reference to the work being carried on by the Salesian Fathers. "Last Sunday" — it says — "a consoling sight was witnessed in the Church of the Transfiguration, when a large band of children, to the number of four hundred and fifty, after a lengthy and diligent preparation, received First Communion and Confirmation. The children assembled early and at half past eight formed in line of procession, and preceded by the banner of Our Lady Immaculate, marched down one side of Mott St. as far as Chatham Square, and then up to the church entrance, where the strains of the organ gave them welcome. The altar was gaily festooned and was aglow with lights. The Sunday-School Teachers who had so faithfully co-operated in the daily task of preparing the children, were at their posts in the church, and rendered splendid service in the direction of the little ones.

The Mass was celebrated by the Very Rev. Fr. Coppo, Provincial, who was visibly affected by the devotion of the children. Just before the solemn moment of receiving, the Rev. Father Diamond, who has charge of the young people of the parish, delivered a very touching and forcible address, and if those well-prepared Communicants remember but a few of his soul-stirring words, the day of their First Communion will be one never to be forgotten. In the afternoon, His Lordship Bishop Cusack administered the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Commenting on the above, one of the Fathers of the New York mission says: The schools of the parish of the Transfiguration have five hundred children, and although the public schools are carried on on broad lines as concerns the freedom of the priest in visiting them, yet because of the various nationalities and religious beliefs found among the children, it is necessary to be always up and doing in regard to religious instruction and practice; otherwise there would be wide-spread ignorance of what we regard as



absolutely vital for the children's temporal and eternal welfare.

In order to secure this the better, there has been established the practice of an afternoon visit of the children to the Blessed Sacrament, and it is quite edifying to see every day great numbers of the children going to the Church near by to adore Him who said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not."

Rampolla, the Protector of our Society, and the press notices were very eulogistic.

Fr. Ubaldi is the editor of a review dealing with ancient christian thought in its historical and comparative aspects, and has long been known for his critical studies in religious Grecian literature.

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Both at Milan and Bologna, and at other large



First Communicants at the Milan Sunday Oratory.

**Rome.** A conference was recently given in the palace of the *Canclleria* at Rome by Father Paul Ubaldi of the Salesian Society, who is a professor of Greek in the royal University of Turin. It dealt with the Grecian literary movement of Christian thought in the first half of the fourth century, the conference being in connection with the Constantine Commemorations. It drew to the palace large numbers of eminent scholars, who were presided over by His Eminence Cardinal

centres there were special days for the first communicants at the Festive Oratories, attached to the churches. These particular ceremonies are becoming more and more prominent in the general endeavor to realise as far as possible the instructions of the Supreme Head of the Church especially in regard to the general religious training, of the young and their early initiation into the sacred mysteries and participation in the Sacraments.







# News from the Missions.

## CHINA.

### Touching scenes of Faith in a lazaretto of the plague-stricken.

(Continued).

Having made the usual round on a certain day, it appeared to me that there was no fruit to be gained, and that even amongst the hospital servants a hostile influence was at work. I had made up my mind to leave... when I heard piercing cries from the side facing the sea. I looked and inquired: — “What is the matter?” — “Do you not see?” — was the careless reply... I looked again and saw a dishevelled woman following a hand-cart on which was placed her child about five years old. The poor woman wished to bring her child to the lazaretto to be nursed, she had come in a boat, but on landing, not far from the lazaretto the child had swooned in her arms and the bearers, tossing it carelessly on to the hand-cart, were taking it to the mortuary... I turned to them and said authoritatively: — “Let me see it...”

—“It is already dead,” they replied; “do you propose to raise the dead to life?”

I paid no attention to their rudeness and followed them to the mortuary which was encumbered with corpses thrown together on the floor. Disregarding the sad spectacle, I went close to the little boy and fear mingling with hope, I placed my hand on his forehead; it was still warm; I took his hand and felt a slight tremor; I put my hand on his heart... and it was still beating!... *Deo gratias!* it is not too late. I baptized him and had scarcely concluded the words when a slight convulsive movement showed that he was dying. The poor mother was moaning and crying in her despair, the guardians looked at her with a mocking smile but her little boy had already passed to a happier world.

I said I had observed a certain hostility amongst the servants of the lazaretto and I

was not mistaken; reflecting on the matter I soon found an easy way of making friends, by giving them some money.

The same evening I returned to the lazaretto and one of the servants — as if to show his good will — took me to a compartment where a sick man was lying in the ceremonial costume of a mandarin. Stretched out on two boards he had the ceremonial boots on his feet: he was clothed in a long and ancient garment, with several superstitious ornaments on his breast and his fine mandarin’s hat on his head; but the boots and the hat were made of paper.

I looked at him attentively. The skin of his face resembled smoked parchment and he was so emaciated that he looked like a dead man. The mouth and eyes were closed and the hands stretched out at his side like a corpse and such I would have judged him to be, but for a slight rising and falling of the breast, showing that he still breathed.

Seeing this figure, I could hardly forbear a smile and I asked the servant; — “Who is this you have brought me to see?”

—“Ask him.”

—“Eh.. Master, what are you doing here?..”

—“I am preparing myself to be received into the other world” — he replied in a feeble voice without disturbing himself in the least.

—“And who will receive you?”

—“The king of the abyss.”

—“Would it not be better if I were to get you received by the King of Heaven?”

—“I do not know the way...”

—“I will teach you!...”

He did not say yes or no, but put himself in an attitude as if he were saying: “Let us hear what it is.”

I gave him some instruction, speaking briefly of the existence of God, the Creator of all things and the duty of adoring Him, of the reward He has in store for the good and the punishments He inflicts on the wicked, of the Incarnation, Passion and Death of Christ; of the first means by which the merits of the Redemption are applied to our souls, that is to say. Baptism etc. etc. and finally I asked him: — “What do you think



of this doctrine?... Will you embrace it, do you wish to be baptized?"

—"Very good."

—"Then take off that hat and the other superstitious objects" — and immediately I stretched forth my hand to take off this hat...

I should not have done this; suddenly he sat up, crying out like wounded tiger: — "No! I will never present myself in the other world without the marks of my rank..."

—"I tried to soothe him, but it was no use."

—"I will go to the king of the abyss!" — He cried, and unfortunately I could get nothing more from him.

The plague was now decreasing and having to go to another mission for some days, I got Fr. Olive, lately arrived from a distance, and other confrères, to replace me in my daily visits to the lazaretto; their zeal was rewarded by fresh conquests.

On my return, I resumed my visits; and now the greater number of cases were those of children. With these, when humanly speaking there is no hope of life, and the parents do not consent to their Baptism, one awaits a moment when no one is at hand and what is necessary is quietly done; in this way we procured the salvation of about thirty.

There were still some adults with less grave symptoms at the lazaretto, and as there was a hope of recovery, they showed themselves less well disposed towards our holy Religion.

There was a middle aged woman whose husband was always at her side. Several times I had sought to induce her to become a Christian; the husband was willing; but she was wavering and said: — "A little later we will see about it". — But the malady, having been stationary for some days, giving hopes of recovery, suddenly grew worse and in a moment she became unconscious. Going to her again, I called her, the husband himself shook her, but she gave no sign of comprehension, but only moaned from time to time... What was to be done? As she had not decidedly refused to become a Christian, I baptized her conditionally... The poor creature remained in a comatose state for three days and then died.

At last the cases became fewer: and one day, when there was nothing to be done at the lazaretto, I hired a boat, crossed the strait and went as far as Macao. At the Seminary and elsewhere some good friends, seeing me somewhat fatigued, tried to persuade me to stop overnight: — "No," I replied, "I must return to the lazaretto; who knows that I may not find to night what I sought in vain this morning."

So I went back, and found a young woman

of twenty just arrived, apparently nearly exhausted. Her mother and two brothers had accompanied her.

—"Are you suffering any pain," I asked.

—"I cannot tell you how much."

—"Do you wish to go to Heaven? There you will be happy; your sufferings will be over."

—"I have already been travelling two days" she replied in a hopeless voice, "to get here; now I am too tired, I cannot move, I do not feel able to go a step further."

—"It is not a question of walking; believe in God and He will have care of you and take you to heaven without fatigue."

Her large eyes, in which shone a certain sincerity turned towards her mother and from her to her brothers, as if asking what she was to do. These replied with one accord: — "We have no money... how will you be able to adore God?"

—"The God of the Christians is not like your idols who cannot be honoured without money... Neither do I want money: what we Missionaries desire is to do good to souls."

—"Is it possible that you are willing to pray without receiving any money?" Said one of the brothers. "Then you are not like our bonzes!"

—"Well!" said the mother at last, "as what you do is not for money, but through charity, I trust you, O stranger, I believe your words and I beg of you to do for my daughter what you can to make her happy."

The sick daughter listened with great pleasure to the good news that I should instruct her, and she finally consented explicitly to be baptized and I gave her Holy Baptism. I taught her some ejaculations and went away satisfied, thanking God.

The next day I did not see her: — "Where is she?" — I enquired of the attendant. He pointed to the hill opposite, that is to say to the place of burial. — "When did she die?"

—"Last evening, not an hour after you left."

We continued to spend some more days at the lazaretto, then adding up the figures we found that we had been able to baptize as many as ninety-four. But not all of them died of the plague.

A month had elapsed since the lazaretto was closed when a well dressed youth came to the house and enquired:

—"Is the Father here?" — They came to call me; I went to the young man who made a reverence and said:—"Father, do you remember me?" "No, I do not... Who are you?" — "My name is *Fok Cheong*. I live at Macao..." — "And how should I know you?" — "Do you not remember that I was baptized at the lazaretto of *Wan Chai* and given the name of



John?"... I looked in the register of baptisms at that time. — "Oh! you are right and here is the Father who baptized you." — At that moment Fr. Bernardini came in, and the young man said:

"The good God you taught me to know, saved me of the plague and now I come to thank you and to beg of you to teach me how to thank God for this two-fold favour!"

We gave him a catechism and a letter of commendation to a good priest in Macao, so that he might complete his instruction... and now he is a good Christian.

Another recovered from the terrible plague, but he returned to his own country and we heard no more of him.

Before concluding I must say something in praise of our Chinese catechist *Wong Icium*, who was so great a help to us not only in explaining the catechism, but also because, having been a long time infirmarian in an English Hospital, he was able to tell us when the danger of death was imminent, whether it was better to administer Baptism at once, or defer it, and he rarely made a mistake. He also treated the sick with accurate knowledge, arranged their clothing, their blankets, gave them their food with a solicitude almost maternal. Being questioned as to whether he had no fear of catching the plague: — "Why should I be afraid," he replied, "are we not in the hands of God? I gladly accompany you in this work of mercy, for the more we succeed in baptizing, the greater number of protectors shall we have in Heaven to pray for us." When we had succeeded in baptizing a good number, he returned to the house satisfied and his comment was always the same: "Today three... four... five... protectors!" and speaking thus he raised his face and his inseparable pipe (no longer of opium) to heaven." Would that we had many catechists of the same kind!

Notwithstanding the additional work occasioned by the plague, our other duties were not neglected and several families were converted and received into the Church. How much more might be done if our numbers were greater... The Chinese in country-places are usually more simple and thus better disposed to accept the truths of faith, but being almost all labourers and poor, they have not time to learn the Catechism. It is therefore necessary to go to their houses, and this must be done in the evening which is their only leisure time.

On this account almost every village should have a permanent male and female catechist, to go in turn every evening to the different families. The difficulty is to provide the means. The

catechists could be found, but they would have to be well paid, that is to say their entire maintenance must be provided. We should have an institute for educating and training male catechists and a similar one for training women, at the same time gathering sufficient funds to pay them adequately. In this manner we should arrive at the solution of the problem.

Here Very Reverend Father, is a short account of a portion of the work your distant sons are doing with the grace of God. Bear us ever in mind in your prayers and make ready for us additional brethren, full of zeal and energy, who may come to these villages and countries in quest of souls.

Bless us and believe me

Yours devotedly in *Corde Jesu*

LOUIS VERSIGLIA.

*Salesian Missionary.*

## Providential escape

### from a band of pirates.

*Letter from Fr. G. Pedrazzini to Don Albera)*

Macao, April 23, 1913.

*Very Reverend Father,*

Having safely escaped from the hands of a band of pirates, I fulfil the promise made to publish my thanksgiving.

I was returning from the mission of *Seak-Kei* in one of the ordinary Chinese junks towed by a small steamer, when in a narrow bend of the river a continuous discharge of fire-arms warned us that we had fallen in with a band of pirates. The foggy weather favoured their plans and the position they had chosen was impregnable.

Our steam-tug had indeed some soldiers, but taken by surprise, after a feeble combat lasting five minutes, seeing that further resistance was useless they cut the tow-rope and fled towards Macao. The junk being crammed with passengers and valuable merchandize, with no means of defence, became an easy prey to the robbers.

A shower of bullets from above was by degrees directed lower, to force the passengers into the hold.

I will not waste your time, in describing the universal panic amongst the passengers. From the main deck they crawled to the lower deck and from there, ever pursued by the hail of



bullets from the shore, they threw themselves on the sacks of rice which filled the hold. The firing did not cease. The large lamp suspended in the hold was smashed to pieces and shots whistled across the ship above our heads.

Finally a trumpet sounded. The shooting ceased and after a moment of agonizing dread a horde of brigands invaded the ship and appeared at the top of the narrow staircase with their guns levelled at us. A voice announced that we must all come forth and give up our money and valuables under pain of death. All hurried up and in the confusion caused by delivering up money and goods I came out unobserved and got into a small storeroom where I hid myself between two chests. The people, despoiled of all they possessed, also crowded in to this hiding-place.

I would willingly have given up my watch and the little money I had, but as a European I might have aroused a feeling of race hatred — in those tigers, so I thought it best to conceal myself as well as I could. The pirates, not satisfied with their booty, began with shouts and threats to pass in review the more wealthy passengers treating them with great brutality.

A poor old man, having forgotten to give up his watch, got such a blow on his head with the butt end of a gun that he fell prostrate at my side; in falling he clutched at a bag which a neighbour was trying to conceal, the bag toppled over and the money it contained was scattered at my feet. Two miscreants, in a second, fell upon the individual with the money, lifted him on to the chest and a shot was fired.

Instinctively we closed our eyes, filled with terror. The ball had passed through the arm of the individual who fell like a rag into the corner. And there was I, plainly to be seen, almost isolated, with a bag of silver money upset at my feet... I covered my face with my hand and prayed fervently to Our Lady promising to publish the favour! The answer to my prayer was prompt and generous, as the favour a mother gives to her children! I raised my eyes and saw three real pirates before me: in the middle, the chief with a Browning revolver in one hand and a trumpet in the other, at each side a comrade armed to the teeth, one of them with a gun just discharged. — "Venerable European!" said the chief, "do not be afraid, there is no cause for fear!" — And taking two steps up the stairs he cried to the gang: "Ho, there! here is a European, woe to any one who kills him!" — And coming forward he took a chair and like the master of the house who

would do honour to his guest he made me sit down; then he resumed his murderous look and passed into an adjoining cabin.

From my lofty seat I surveyed that scene of desolation. Those poor people, despoiled of their goods, lay on the ground trembling. The wealthy, besides being robbed, had been wounded and ill treated, and the brigands, insatiable and ferocious, still went in and out amongst them. Among the others there was a pirate who had not heard the captain's orders, and seeing me so quiet he pointed his gun at my breast... but two others at once snatched the gun from his hand, ordering him to leave me alone. Finally, after an hour of agony the trumpet sounded; and the pirates, discharging once more their fire-arms amongst the sacks to make sure no one was concealed there, withdrew. The voice of the captain gave some orders and those fifty brigands, fully armed, disappeared in the fog, laden with booty, leaving no trace behind them.

After a quarter of an hour our spirits revived, we attended to the wounded and came forth from our hiding places; after an hour's wearisome waiting a steam launch with soldiers appeared and towed us to Macao. This is the second time that I have escaped from being shot, and I now relate this according to my promise to publish the favour received; for, each time, my escape seemed quite miraculous. The change of front on the part of the captain in the adventure I have just related, was entirely unexpected and inexplicable.

Our work is opening amidst the brightest hopes! Since our coming five new chapels have been opened, tiny grains of mustard seed which we hope will soon grow into lofty trees, covering with their life-giving branches our fertile province of *Heung-Shan*.

I profit of this opportunity to recommend to our good Co-operators, both men and women, our little Chapel which will shortly be erected at *Seak-Kei*. Church ornaments, sacred vestments and even medicines and materials for our pharmacy would be most welcome under existing circumstances.

With the greatest respect, I remain

Your devoted son *in J. C.*

JOHN PEDRAZZINI,

*Salesian Missionary.*





## BRAZIL.

### *Interesting news from the Bororos' Colonies.*

Colony of S. Joseph at Sangrodouro.

*Very Reverend Don Albera,*

**T**hrough the mercy of God I have some consoling news to send.

I have had the pleasure of paying a visit to our Colony of the S. Heart and to that of the Immaculate Conception in company with the indefatigable Fr. Malan. On the Feast of the Epiphany, eleven years since the foundation of the Colony of the S. Heart, I experienced the greatest consolation celebrating the Community Mass in that Colony in the spacious chapel recently opened. What were my feelings on seeing it almost filled with the children of the forest, praying to the Almighty for their Missionaries and their benefactors! I recalled the early days when we had to say Mass in a poor tent, on an altar of bamboo, which during the day had to serve me for a table and, in addition, the constant risk of being murdered, of which after ten years the Indians candidly inform us.

My own emotion and that of the others increased when the Provincial Fr. Malan administered Holy Baptism and blessed the marriages of nine families, raising thus to twenty-four the number of Bororos Christian families in the Colony of the S. Heart.

And if I was delighted to take part in the harvest, the fruit of so many sacrifices and labours of the early years, my satisfaction was no less in this Colony of S. Joseph, which is not yet four years old. Here also Fr. Malan had the consolation of baptizing and blessing the marriage of two caciques, Anacletus and Gino, so that with two others already here, there are now four Christian families.

For them we have begun a real village. Four houses have been built of bricks, roofed with tiles, better than our own dwelling which is still partly thatched. This sight has had a great influence on the others, so that fully eleven families have asked me to prepare them for Holy Baptism and for the Sacrament of Matrimony before another visit of Fr. Malan.

It is most consoling to see the confidence they have in the Missionaries, for they are beginning to realize that all are labouring for their benefit. They observe that we keep our promises, they see that the extensive plantations which are being made are intended to provide them with food, and they are satisfied. In fact, by God's help, the land gives us enough to live upon, but does not lessen our work, it rather increases it.

I recommend the mission to the prayers of our esteemed Cooperators, that we may obtain the graces necessary to save many souls and thus secure an everlasting reward.

Meanwhile accept our cordial greetings and bless us all, but especially

Your most affectionate son in *Jesus and Mary*.

FR. JOHN BALZOLA.

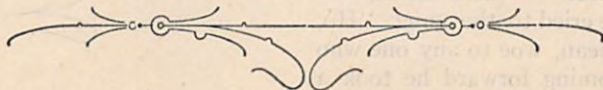


## Book Notices.

Some excellent publications have recently been issued by the Irish Catholic Truth Society among their penny series:

1. *Mater Dolorosa* — Short meditations for every day of the month — particularly suitable for May and September.
2. *The Interests of Jesus*. A reprint of the first Chapter of Fr. Faber's well-known work. *All for Jesus*.
3. *The family, the State and the School*. By Rev. P. Yorke. D.D. of San Francisco.
4. *Tidings of the Resurrection*. In Gaelic.
5. *Short Histories of Dublin Parishes*. By His Lordship the Bishop of Canea.
6. *The Return of the Red Hand*. A story by M. J. O'Mullane. B. A.
7. *The House of Julianstown* (or) *A Flight for the Faith*. A story by Rev. M. Ronan.

24 Upper O'Connell St. Dublin.







## DEVOTION to Our Lady Help of Christians

We are persuaded, that no aid but that of Heaven can avail us in the sorrowful vicissitudes of our day, and that especially through the intercession of Her who in every age has proved Herself the Help of Christians.

PIUS PP. X.

### THE SOLEMNITY of Our Lady Help of Christians at the Basilica.

**C**ertain circumstances there are when magnificent celebrations seem to be the natural and inevitable accompaniment. A combination of influences, the impulse of traditions, a touch of the miraculous, and the indefinable power of a name are not easily dismissed with the mere ringing of bells; but elaborate preparations must culminate in a festival, whose commemoration has the notes of enthusiasm and triumph.

These conditions have long existed in regard to the solemnity of Our Lady Help of Christians at her Sanctuary in Valdocco, Turin; and, accordingly, a month's preparation is deemed only suitable for the character of the festival. But it must not be supposed that external celebrations are held at a higher value than their place demands, spiritual preparation is deemed essential; and the better to secure this, the people are exhorted by daily instructions on the great truths that underlie all the festivals of the Church, and on the necessity of worthy dispositions if the object of the celebration is to be obtained.

Two Salesian priests were deputed for this purpose; one dealing with the christian ideal and the methods of attaining it; the other following the lines of the Venerable Don Bosco, whose practice is regarded as inspired. His work on the month of May and its proper celebration deals with the great doctrines of the

Church in their bearing on the devotion to the Mother of God.

The appropriateness of the themes and the zeal of the preachers were best proved by the large numbers of the faithful who followed right through the month, and were constant as the Christians of old, *in the doctrines of the Apostles and in the communication of the breaking of bread* for every day it was necessary to have two or even three priests giving Holy Communion at the same time.

When the Novena began the concourse was yet greater, and the evening sermon and devotions were given to a multitude stretching out into the street and square. From the feast of *Corpus Christi*, which is still a day of obligation throughout Piedmont, until the after feast of the 24th, the devotion of the faithful was extraordinary, and beyond description. On the 23rd was given the Conference to the Salesian Co-operators. Fr. Trione, the Secretary to the Association, and a well known speaker and organiser, spoke on the topic most suitable to the day, the favours of Our Lady Help of Christians; he passed in review the wonders of which they were in some manner witnesses, since they saw the evidence of them before their eyes in the Basilica in which they were assembled; and also those which Our Lady still works every day in places where this devotion has spread from its home in that Sanctuary.

His words were confirmed by our Superior-General, the Very Rev. Don Albera, who said that nothing could be more appropriate, and more beyond doubt than the descriptions of the



speaker, for he was himself a witness of their realisation in lands both far and near: in the two Americas which he had traversed some years previously, and several European countries which he had recently visited; and he could confirm what had been said in regard to her patronage of the Basilica, by her extending that patronage to the other works of the Salesians and their Co-operators in every land.

The first Vespers were sung and Benediction given by His Lordship the Bishop of Susa; afterwards the church and piazza were illuminated, and this year a new departure was carried out in the illumination of the neighbourhood of the Basilica, a work initiated by the clubs of the parish attached to it.

The Basilica remained open all night. At the sound of the midnight bells the *Magnificat* was sung by the congregation and then the Rosary was recited. From an early hour Holy Mass was said, the Successor of Don Bosco ascending the steps of the Altar of Our Lady Help of Christians at six o'clock. He was followed an hour later by His Eminence Cardinal Richelmy, Pontifical High Mass being at ten. The crowds were unprecedented, and more than eight thousand Communion were administered. There were pilgrims from many parts of Italy, particularly from the North.

The evening procession was again a great manifestation of faith and devotion, in which the whole city of Turin seemed to take part, and there was no more imposing sight than when His Eminence gave the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament from the steps of the entrance, and an innumerable multitude bowed in adoration. Don Bosco's teaching — devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament and to the Mother of God — seemed to have again their realisation.

On the following day the *Te Deum* was sung, and the Benediction given by Fr. Ricaldone, of the Superior Chapter of the Society, who had just returned from his visit to England and the United States.

## INDULGENCES

which may be gained by the Co-operators.

The following plenary indulgences may be gained by all the Co-operators who, having confessed and communicated, shall make a visit to a Church, or Public Chapel, or in the case of communities a private chapel, and pray for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff.

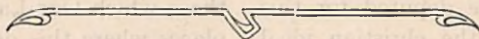
### Every month.

1. On any one particular day at the choice of the Associate.
2. On the day when members shall make the exercise for a happy death.
3. Whenever the Co-operators shall say five times the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary* and *Glory be to the Father* for the welfare of Christendom, and once the same prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father, they may gain the Indulgences of the Stations in Rome, of the Portiuncula, of Jerusalem and of St. James of Compostella; these indulgences, moreover, are all applicable to the Holy Souls in Purgatory, and can be gained by the Co-operators as often as the prayers are said.

### From July 15th to August 15th.

1. July 16th Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.
2. August 6th The Transfiguration.
3. August 15th The Assumption of Our Blessed Lady.

It must be borne in mind that the present Holy Father has re-enjoined the daily recital of the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and *Glory be to the Father* for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, and also the invocation *St. Francis of Sales, pray for us*. These prayers are the only ones enjoined on the Salesian Co-operators at the time of their enrolment in the Third Order.





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