



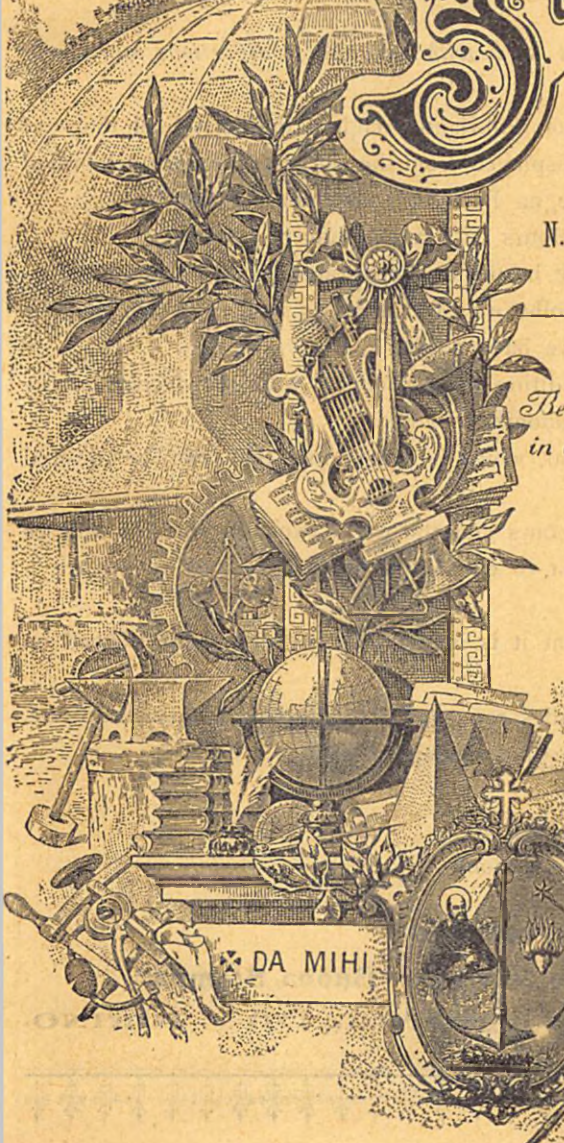
Salesian Bulletin

N. 8^{bis} - November and December - 1915

♣ Vol. IX. ♣

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

L. G. O. X. 1112



✠ DA MIHI

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The Salesian Bulletin

Organ of the Association of Salesian Co-operators

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A message of greeting.

THE VERY REV. DON ALBERA once more extends to all Readers his warmest greetings for the Christmas Season and the New Year. By that simple message he desires to express quite a heart-ful of grateful feelings, conveying his thanks for whatever you have been able to do, whether by prayer or alms deeds, in assisting him to carry on the work of our Holy Founder, the Ven. Don Bosco, and his immediate predecessor, the Very Rev. Don Rua. Their mighty works remain, and are ever extending their sphere of good work on behalf of the young, and of the great missionary enterprises in many parts of the world.

He particularly desires all to remember that the Christmas season is inseparably united with an overflowing spirit of charity, by which the graces of the Holy Child are poured out upon those who are generous to his little representatives in the persons of the young who may be in need of our aid.

Reflections on the Centenary.

The preceding number in this broken series was issued as a souvenir of the Centenary. Hundreds, or more probably thousands of Co-operators in all parts of the world, and especially in Italy, had watched the various developments of the Society founded by the Ven. Don Bosco, and had awaited this turning point to witness a fitting manifestation, which should be a summary and a crowning ceremony to such striking accomplishments. This had been a natural expectation. The years were gradually mounting up; each added its quota to the work of one vast apostolate; the branching out from the sturdy root went on apace, until it became difficult or well nigh impossible to visualise in a single glance the extensions, pushing ever onward and onward.

But the Centenary of Don Bosco's birth was to be a halting place. That event at least was to be signalled by a general homage from the constituents to the source of their life and activity. It would be a revelation, even to the members of the Society, of the extraordinary vitality possessed by their organisation, and a convincing proof that though the means were human, the vivifying spirit was from on high; and that if with the instruments it had already found for its use so much had been accomplished, it would find a wider and more complete expression according as the members adapted themselves to that spirit, and to the efforts it demanded.

This celebration, however, was expected to be realised in normal times. Don Bosco had been an Apostle of peace, for he stood for the development

of the peaceful arts and crafts among the people, and had spent his whole life with its superabounding energy in the work of christian education, which is peaceful in character, and instils the principles which will secure peace. Rude then was the shock, when it became apparent that the centenary year of Don Bosco's birth, 1915, would go down amid the warring of nations, and that in the very home of his work, the stern demands of a state of war would make the idea of commemorations, such as had been planned and anticipated, simply unthinkable. Postponement but not abandonment was the natural attitude assumed by the organisers of the various commemorative departments, and thus with much disappointment, so many hopes and expectations had to be temporarily laid aside. It may be that in the rejoicings over a securely won peace, these celebrations will be fittingly held; or perhaps their abandonment now means waiting for another suitable event to evoke the accompanying enthusiasm, for only a combination of favourable conditions can make such a scheme successful.



It is, however gratifying to be able to report, that though shorn of the greatest part of its grandeur the occasion was by no means neglected. The celebrations were local instead of universal, and were celebrated at Turin and about the scenes of Don Bosco's life, with somewhat of the quiet resignation which proximity to the seat of war inspires. Two places were chosen for the official ceremonies, each of which places had special prerogatives.

They were the Salesian Missionary College and House of Studies at Valsalice on the outskirts of Turin, and the hamlet of Becchi, some little distance from Castelnuovo. The latter place will be easily recognised by our readers as the birth-place of the Venerable Servant of God, and therefore most intimately connected with the

The Very Rev. Don Albera said mass at the tomb; and he, the second Successor of the Founder, was surrounded by many long standing and staunch Co-operators, who had known Don Bosco in the midst of his labours and in the wonders that had accompanied them. In the evening a commemorative gathering was held at



During
the
Commemoration



At Valsalice.

centenary of his birth; the former may not be so familiar, yet in some respects it is of greater importance still, for it is within the college that the Sanctuary is built where lie the mortal remains of our Founder; and there, together with body of the Very Rev. Don Rua, his first Successor, it is a source of inspiration and fortitude to countless young apostles, who are destined to carry on the work which these chosen servants of God have begun.

the same place, and the discourse was delivered by the President of the Past Pupils of Rome, as representing the vast and world-wide concourse of the pupils of the great master. The discourse, which we hope to publish at some future time was not unworthy of an occasion at once inspiring and historic.

The incidents at *Becchi* took place on August 16th, the chief being the laying of the foundation-stone of a

new Sanctuary in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians, to be erected opposite the birth-place of her devoted servant. In the church of the neighbouring town, Castelnuovo, a stone was unveiled, recording the fact that within the Church the Ven. John Bosco was baptised, received his first Communion, and was clothed with the clerical habit.

The official record of the ceremony is both interesting and instructive. After mentioning the various august personages in whose time the events occurred it goes on to say: The Church is dedicated to the glory of God and to the most tender mother of Our Lord under the title, *Help of Christians*, in memory of the Centenary Year of the feast of her who was the inspirer and heavenly Patroness of the Salesian Works; and also of the Centenary of the birth of the Venerable Founder of them, the Servant of God Don Bosco, which, occurred in the lowly dwelling still standing opposite to this building.

Other motives also have inspired the erection of this Sanctuary, which Don Bosco himself desired to erect for the spiritual welfare of his native place. One is an ardent desire to offer to Almighty God and to Our Lady a public pledge of filial gratitude for the special and continued favours received by our venerable Founder, beginning with the appearance of the Mother of God to him at nine years of age, and indicating the apostolate to which he had been predestined; another is the desire to obtain and preserve the blessing of the Help of Christians for the entire Salesian Family and all its undertakings; and also to obtain the speedy elevation of the Ven. Don Bosco to the honours of the altars of the Church.

The present times are of exceptional difficulty, but in spite of that, the double centenary appeared too impor-

tant to be passed over. Accordingly, in addition to all other intentions, whether of ourselves or our Co-operators, there is especially associated a fervent prayer that through the intercession of her who has proved herself at all times the Help of Christians, this terrible scourge may be removed from the earth, and that there may descend upon it a new era of peace and justice.



These two commemorations were celebrated amid great concourses of the faithful. It was soon abundantly clear that at Valsalice there would be nothing like room for the vast numbers that were gathering together. An altar was therefore erected under the portico near the tomb, and thus the majority of the people were enabled to assist at the Mass; as was befitting, the children of the Festive Oratories were well represented, and the music was provided by the juvenile choir and band. Holy Communion was given by the Celebrant and by two other priests, to more than 1500 persons. Don Bosco must have rejoiced to see his favourite practice of frequent Communion so well illustrated, and so appropriately also, near to his very tomb. Don Albera afterwards gave a brief exhortation in keeping with the sentiments that were then in every heart.

During the day people visited the tomb, but towards evening, all available space was filled in anticipation of the commemorative gathering. These anticipations were not disappointed, for the assembly was one that could hardly have been surpassed in normal times. It was presided over by Don Albera, who had around him many eminent Co-operators, both ecclesiastical and lay, while a large proportion of the College of Cardinals sent their

messages by telegram. His Holiness sent one through the Cardinal Secretary of State, Cardinal Gasparri, and gave his blessing to all those taking part in the celebrations. The speaker was the well-known orator, the Cavaliere Poesio, chief secretary to Minister of the Treasury, and President

lowly hamlet of Becchi. Yet the country-side provided a host of reflexions. The very road he had so often traversed as a boy, the little village church he had frequented, the poor farm-dwelling, all has a message of their own. Down the surrounding hills long lines of people are wending



At Becchi di Castelnuovo d'Asti

During the Solemn Mass
near the House of Don Bosco.

of the Past-pupils of Rome. He was followed by Signor Fino who represented the mayor of Turin.

Changing from town to country at once transported the minds of the people to the humble beginnings of the mighty fabric, whose vast proportions had just been so well illustrated by the Turin gathering. Among the busy lives of the people was worked out the apostolate whose origin lay hidden in the obscurity of the

their way to the little hamlet, a mere cluster of houses; their parents had probably come there of old to see the young Apostle do his entertaining tricks, and listen to his extempore preaching, which they found so effective. They now kneel down to pray in the little room where his visions occurred, and no one can prevent them...

There are many relatives of the servant of God still in the district, and

they tried to provide hospitality with a generosity, that may have been inherited from mother Margaret herself, whose charity was characteristic. By the time that all the places of interest had been visited, the hour for the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone had arrived, and the church will be a permanent act of homage and gratitude to Her, who there revealed the nature of, and as it were inaugurated the work carried out by the boy of Becchi.

In the afternoon the mayor of Castelnuovo held a reception in the Salesian Oratory of the town, and to this he had invited all those who took part in the morning celebration. His invitation met with an eager response, and the great occasion was commemorated in a manner well calculated to satisfy the enthusiastic expectations.

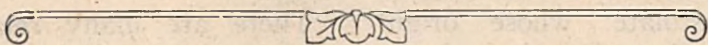


These two events had to do duty for all the proposed celebrations. They revealed the inner spirit of the occasion, and that is doubtless more important than the outward trappings; and if they were only signs of what the reality would have been in peaceful times, the organisers had ample reason to be satisfied. But where the loss was chiefly felt was in the after results, for it had been expected, with very good reason, that the proposed celebrations would have been instrumental in arousing wide-spread co-operation in the works, which were to be brought into prominence. The unveiling of the monument alone would have appealed to the masses of the people, for, on the bases of the central group are depicted the several departments of

charitable and educational work inaugurated by the subject of the monument; while the exhibition would have shown in tangible form the results of previous co-operation and suggested the possible outcome of more ample means.

These expected results may only be postponed till the occasion referred to above again presents itself; but in the meantime, there are needs, at once urgent in their demand and far-reaching in their scope. In normal times large sums of money have to be found to support such a vast network of charitable undertakings; in times of war, retrenchment is inevitable; but, even with retrenchment, there are needs which are always pressing, and although new outlets for generosity are continually presenting themselves, the old ones do not thereby cease to exist. In spite, therefore, of the exceptional difficulties which have everywhere arisen, the works which have been undertaken and cannot be abandoned continue to make their demand, and their appeal must find a response from Co-operators.

In times of stress generous souls are moved to greater generosity. The appeal from the neighbour seems to make a more direct call, and even those who in normal times are not amenable to such influences, find their dispositions gradually modified by the change of atmosphere. Let not therefore an economising spirit draw back the hand of generous charity, but when needs are growing, let support be correspondingly more constant and more self-sacrificing; it will thus be nobler in its nature and richer in its reward.



CO-OPERATORS

THEIR HISTORY AND AIMS.



In the early part of the year our Superior General pointed out two things to be practised in this year of the Centenary. Both were very appropriate, for they dealt directly with the two events which were the objects of the celebrations. In connection with the centenary of the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians all were urged to practise and diffuse this devotion as it was taught by Don Bosco; while the lesson of Don Bosco's own centenary was: to be more thoroughly imbued with his spirit, and to diffuse it among all classes of society.

This latter end can only be gained if the knowledge of Don Bosco's life and methods and ideals is properly grasped; if not, the name of a Salesian Co-operator will be an empty title, and great possibilities for good will be wasted.

The Salesian Co-operators go back to the very earliest days of Don Bosco's Apostolate. All those who took some share in his early work, who assisted him either personally or materially or with their protection, were the first Co-operators. Don Bosco himself says: "The work of the Oratory was scarcely begun in 1841, when several pious and zealous men, both ecclesiastical and lay, came forward to cultivate the crops that soon appeared so abundant, among the young generations. These co-workers or Co-operators were always the support of the good works which Divine Providence directed us to undertake".

How they were the support of his work is told by Don Albera himself in the letter above referred to. "The regulations for the pious Association, written by Don Bosco clearly say that the Co-operators have four different methods open to them. Some give their personal aid according to the opportunities of their state and their locality; some send their alms so that the various works may be supported and developed; some engage to find other Co-operators who may be able to assist us in various ways, while others, finally, assist by their prayers and good works, so as to obtain the blessing of God upon the work of Don Bosco.

The Co-operators may therefore be classed under these four heads, but none can consider themselves to be true Co-operators unless they try to follow Don Bosco's example and lead, to

live according to the ideals he has brought into prominence, and to diffuse his spirit in the hearts of others.

In order to develop this and render it more practical, it should be noticed that as Divine Providence inspired many to follow directly in Don Bosco's steps, by joining him as his sons in religion, so also it inspired others in larger numbers, according as the needs arose, to assist in the development of the work. Don Bosco fully understood the part reserved for these his benefactors in the designs of Providence; he therefore set himself not only to the task which he personally was called upon to fulfil, but also to guide and assist as far as possible those who were sent by Divine Providence to co-operate with him. Thus he set about increasing their number and finding some organisation for them. So persuaded was he that the Salesian Work could not subsist without them, that he thought at first of incorporating them straightway into his society. In one of the first sketches of the statutes for them he wrote: Any person whatever, although living in the world, in their own house and amongst their family, may belong to our Society, but he (the Co-operator) will not make vows; but he will strive to put in practice that part of the rule (of the Society) which is compatible with his age and condition.

When this paragraph was taken out of his Constitutions by the advice of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, the Servant of God rearranged his plan. In 1874, just after the final approval of the Society's Constitutions, he drew up a tentative scheme of a vast organisation of his Co-operators which he called at first *A Christian Association*, then an *Association for good works*, and finally: *Salesian Co-operators, or a practical means of fostering a good christian spirit and forming good citizens*. Under this head he published a small book of rules for the Co-operators and this was approved by His Holiness Pius IX and put before the Co-operators.

Three fundamental points.

A complete idea of the Co-operator would therefore require an acquaintance with this

compilation of rules and regulations, but a fairly comprehensive view can be gathered from the following points.

1st. *By this Association of Co-operators, Don Bosco intended to raise up in the world a new and active power for good.*

It has always been recognised, he says, that union is necessary in order to accomplish good and to combat evil. Thus did the first Christians, and so also do men of the world in order to secure the success of their designs. Should the children of light be less prudent than others? On the contrary, in these times of difficulty, all christians ought to unite to promote the spirit of prayer and of charity, by every means which our holy religion provides; and thus it will be possible to remove or lessen the evils which are multiplied day by day.

2nd *Don Bosco entrusted to the Co-operators the same work as he did to the Salesians themselves.*

"This Society," he says, "being definitively approved by the Church will serve as a secure and stable bond for the uniting of the Co-operators. It has, as its primary object, to labour for the benefit of the young, upon whom is founded the future of society. But,," he adds with characteristic humility, "we do not mean that this is the sole method for promoting this end; there are many others, and we earnestly recommend their use according to places and circumstances. We are only putting one before you, and it is that known under the name of Salesian Co-operators..."

3rd *The Co-operators should live according to the ideals of the Salesian Society.*

"The fundamental scope of the Association is that the members should aim firstly at their own spiritual welfare, by carrying out a form of life, which is built upon a common rule. There are a great many who feel called to a more perfect life or to the life of religion, whose circumstances absolutely preclude the possibility of carrying out such a step. These can form their rule of life according to the plan of the Co-operators, and for this reason the Supreme Pontiff considered this Association to be on the same footing as the ancient Third Orders, with this difference: that whereas those proposed to themselves christian perfection by exercises of piety, this has for its principal end *the active life in the exercise of charity towards the neighbour*, and especially towards the young who may be in danger of spiritual ruin.

In further explanations Don Bosco says: "This title of Salesian Co-operators implies that such members desire to take part in charitable works, not in a general and haphazard fashion, but in particular, and in accordance with the spirit of the Congregation of St. Francis

of Sales. A Co-operator may be able to do a certain amount of good by himself, but it will be necessarily limited, and will probably cease with him. But, united with others he will find support, counsel and courage, and by a small amount of energy may be able to accomplish a great deal, for even weak forces become strong when they are bound in the ties of unity."

One part of this work is to promote the christian training of the young by co-operating in



Don Albera blessing the first stone of the Votive Sanctuary.

the catechism classes, the preparation for the sacraments, and the general work of the Sunday Oratories; to protect the young workers by placing them where religion will be safeguarded; to promote those endeavours which strive to assist the young in their more difficult years between youth and maturity.

Don Bosco insists upon calling his plan a *practical method*, so as to exclude the idea of a mere confraternity or an association for merely scientific or literary purposes, or even devoting its efforts to propaganda by newspaper work; but it is to be a simple union of co-operators in the doing of good to others, ready not with promises but with deeds, and prepared to sacrifice time and means and the enjoyments of

leisure in order to do good. It is quite set apart from all political life or ends. It only asks for means to assist the training of the young and through them to benefit society as a whole.

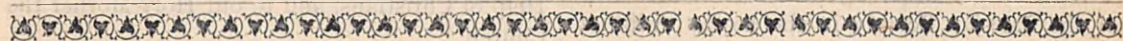
A summary.

We are now in a position to state more concisely in what the work of the Co-operators consists. It is not only to form the natural support of the Salesian Work, but should be an active apostolate on the same lines as that of the Salesians themselves — an extension or diffusion of the Society in the world at large. There is usually some confusion of ideas between the Benefactors of Don Bosco's work and the well-wishers of it on the one hand, and the Salesian Co-operators strictly so-called, on the other. Both these classes have an admiration and regard for Don Bosco and assist his work; but the humblest of the Co-operators, although he may not be able to give largely

towards the good works of the Society, will strive, after the manner of the Salesians themselves, to spread the charity of Don Bosco in his own circle, or wherever he has the opportunity, because this is his ideal and endeavour. Considered in this light it will be seen that the first object of Don Bosco was the perfection of souls and the glory of God, and the Co-operators become a further proof of the heroic zeal which burned in the heart of the Venerable Founder.

The Archbishop of Bologna, speaking recently in the church where the first Congress of Co-operators was held, developed this view of the Association, and said: "If the Co-operators carry out the entire programme of Don Bosco, I shall be pleased to number them not only among the true Salesian Co-operators, but among my own co-operators in the work of the diocese which has been confided to my care."

And that is what Don Bosco wished them to be.



A concourse of consoling messages

To counteract in some degree the natural regret for the postponement or abandonment of the befitting celebrations, our Superior General was the recipient of a very large number of messages of congratulation. Their number and sources were alike remarkable, and they form a combined testimony from authoritative voices, to the wonderful influence of the name and the work of the Venerable Servant of God.

Readers can here see for themselves the opinions of those, who by their position and opportunities are most capable of knowing, and whose names carry with them the highest weight and authority.

From the Holy Father

Don Albera sent a message to His Holiness expressing the homage of the whole Salesian Family, as the key-note of the centenary celebrations. In reply to this the *Holy Father* sent the following telegram.

Rome, August 15th.

To the Very Rev. Don Albera
Superior General of the Salesians.

Deeply moved by this thoughtful message from the whole Salesian Family, and sent by them when gathered around the tomb of their great Founder, the Holy Father joyfully congratulates them on the happy thought of commemorating the virtues of Don Bosco, by a votive church dedicated to Our Lady Help of Christians (1). That this act of homage to the Vicar of Christ may redound to the honour of the name of their Apostle and master, and confirm his religious institution, the Holy Father affectionately imparts to you and all your co-operators the Apostolic Benediction.

Cardinal GASPARRI.

(1) The Holy Father here refers to the Church at Becchi, Don Bosco's birth-place, the foundation-stone of which was laid on August 16th. It is to be dedicated to Our Lady Help of Christians, and will commemorate her constant patronage of Don Bosco from his childhood to his death, and of his work in the years subsequent to that event.

In connection with this it should be added that on August 16th the Holy Father received in audience Father Francesia of our Society, who had gone to Rome to deliver a course of sermons. The Sovereign Pontiff declared that in giving special audience to the oldest of the sons of Don Bosco, he intended to render his own homage to the Salesian Society, on the occasion of the Centenary of their Founder's birth. He then went on to speak with admiration of the saintly young pupil of the Oratory, Dominic Savio, whom Fr. Francesia had among his scholars, and whose life His Holiness had before him on his table (1).

From His Eminence Cardinal Gasparri

*Secretary of State to His Holiness
and Protector of Our Society.*

Very Rev. Father,

With all my heart I join in the celebrations of the Salesian Society in the happy event of this Centenary. Turin had two shining lights in the past century, Canon Cottolengo and Don Bosco, both of them saints, though they arrived at sanctity by far different paths. How can anyone not admire the beneficence of Divine Providence in the work of Don Bosco, so appropriate and indeed so necessary to our times. It prepared in a most wonderful manner the young lad for all that he was afterwards to do, and John corresponded perfectly with these designs; and so there arose the Salesian Congregations of men and women whose varied apostolate has called them into every part of the world. May the spirit of the Venerable Founder rest upon those Congregations and draw many souls to them, so that their work on behalf of the young may continue its beneficent influence. I send my blessing to the Society and to all its Co-operators, and remain with every sentiment of esteem

Yours very devotedly
Peter, Cardinal GASPARRI
Protector of the Society.

From His Eminence Cardinal Ferrari

Archbishop of Milan.

On the day after the Assumption in the year 1815, it might have been said at Murialdo:

(1) A life of this saintly boy, whose *cause* has already been introduced, may be had from The Salesian Press,

"A man has been born into the world." Fortunate child! Your birth will come to its full perfection, and your happy parents will not have to fear lest you become a child of wrath...

The humble Murialdo of 1815 should rejoice that it is now no longer the hidden country village. In 1915 it has become the centre of attention. Your name shall resound to the ends of the earth, for in your midst there arose, and from you there went forth the man, who, in bearing witness to Jesus Christ by whom he lived, spread abroad the great treasures of true worth, of which Heaven had made him the dispenser...

From the faith that conquers the world, from a hope which will never be confounded, from a charity stronger than death he drew the secret of his immense activity, which he bequeathed as an inheritance to his sons; just as he left to them the three priceless gifts of devotion to the most Holy Sacrament, to the Help of Christians, and to our Holy Mother the Church...

As the generations pass, Religion points to her famous sons such as was the Ven. Don Bosco, and for this we should bow down before her as the true daughter of Heaven, who alone is capable of procuring true prosperity and peace to the nations of the earth.

ANDREW, Card. FERRARI
Archbishop of Milan.

His Eminence also sent the following telegram.

Milan Aug, 14th. — I desire to share most intimately in the Centenary festivities in honour of your Founder, the distinguished benefactor, and ornament of the Church and of his country.

Messages were also received from Their Eminences Cardinals Nava, Archbishop of Catania (Sicily), Cardinal Boschi, Archbishop of Ferrara, Cardinal Prisco, Archbishop of Naples, Cardinal Lualdi, Archbishop of Palermo, Cardinal Maffi, Archbishop of Pisa.

This is also a fitting place to give the message published in Turin from the Cardinal Archbishop of the city, His Eminence *Cardinal Richelmy*:

Vocaberis quaesita vitas et non derelicta

Surrey Lane, Battersea, S. W. Price: one shilling and sixpence.

(Is.62): *Thou shalt be called a city sought after and not forsaken.* This magnificent eulogium, which the Church takes from the prophet for her sacred Liturgy, and sings to the honour of Turin, designating it thus the object of divine and human joy, comes naturally to the mind of one who reads the Church's annals of the nineteenth century.

Canon Joseph Cottolengo, the priest Joseph Cafasso, and *Don Bosco* — the triple glory of the Subalpine Church in these latter years — were not born within the walls of the city; but Divine Providence very wonderfully brought them to live amongst us, and henceforth their names will ever remain inseparable from that of this metropolis.

Is it lawful to try to raise a little the veils that hide the secrets of the Most High from this earth? It is consoling and inspiring to think of devotion and ardent love which these three incomparable priests displayed towards the Holy Eucharist. It was evidently most appropriate that from the city dedicated to the Holy Sacrament there should radiate abroad the brightness of the eucharistic virtues of our three Venerable Servants of God.

Others may describe the wisdom and marvellous labours of *Don Bosco*; others may relate the wonders wrought by him, which lay scattered thickly as it were about the path of his earthly pilgrimage; there are numbers beyond counting to praise the Salesian Society, which in a few years has filled the earth with its name and the works of its zeal. To me it is most consoling to contemplate in the Venerable Founder the devoted Apostle of the Most Holy Eucharist. As a boy, as a young cleric, as a priest, as a spiritual guide to an innumerable flock he foresaw the desires expressed by Pius X; and to him as to the Venerable Cottolengo and Cafasso, Turin and Piedmont owe particular gratitude, because the evil sown by Jansenism was uprooted, and the most salutary practice of frequent Communion was implanted and fostered.

God grant that in the abundance of the wonders and treasures of the Most Holy Sacrament the people of Turin, the Salesian Congregation and its Co-operators may always be worthy of their Founder and Master.

AUGUSTINE, Cardinal RICHELMY.



His Grace the Archbishop of Vercelli says that the proposal of the Salesian Congregation to commemorate the centenary is in accordance with both piety and duty; with piety because to honour the Venerable *Don Bosco* is to honour God in His saints, who in the exercise of heroic virtues, and by the constant sacrifice of themselves, were raised above ordinary men and were masters of sanctity.

And it is in accordance with duty, because so many and so great were the works accomplished by the Servant of God, and those who have come under their influence and been benefited by them are so numerous, that they have felt in some degree bound to offer this act of homage and expression of gratitude. "And you, *Don Albera*," he continues, "should rejoice at this glowing tribute from all classes of society, for it is a spontaneous act of true affection and profound esteem for him, who moved by the charity of Jesus Christ, was able in turn to exercise it on behalf of others.

May God grant that the Church may soon rejoice in the enrolling of another saint, in the person of *Don Bosco*, of happy memory.

The Archbishop of Genoa says "I have seen the fruits of his work, at once so vast, so manifold and so well suited to the age, and one must be therefore convinced that he was a soul raised up by God for the welfare of society, and of the young in particular.

How then can anyone refrain from thanking God, and exulting in this centenary. I unite my voice to those composing the great chorus of praise and jubilation on this memorable occasion.

Among the most prominent of the Archbishops who are Co-operators in *Don Bosco's* work, is His Grace *Mgr. Morganti, Archbishop of Ravenna*, a former pupil of our Venerable Founder. In the month of July he sent the following to *Don Albera*:

The Creator and Sovereign of the world, while he leaves the reproduction of lower beings to the mechanical and fixed laws of nature, reserves to Himself, as He did in the case of Adam, the formation of the soul of every human being: *Qui fingit singillatim corda eorum*, so as to implant in them, according to St. Augustine, the special endowments corresponding to their vocation. So in the year 1815, He formed the heart of the future *Don Bosco*, giving him as a skilful artificer, the capacity and

inclination to devote himself to the needy in all times and places. A fact well worthy of remembrance, which at the distance of a century gratitude justly recalls to mind, for his deeds are a long series of benefits, like a fertilising stream, or the dew sent to refresh and restore all classes of humanity.

In that very year, the wise and prudent of the world, seated in the stately halls of the Palace at Vienna, thought they had reestablished peace in Europe, broken by the Napoleonic storms; but the present conflagration which has brought much greater disturbances shows the futility of that attempt; while the designs of God initiated in and confided to the soul of Don Bosco, within the walls of that lowly house at Becchi, have attained a surprising development, precisely because: *Digitus Dei est hic! it was the work of God.*

A holy and appropriate thought therefore is the centenary Commemoration of the year in which *fuit homo missus a Deo cui nomen erat Joannes*, in which, as in John the Baptist, Don Bosco appeared *ad dandam scientiam salutis plebi ejus*, to bring back Jesus Christ into Society, whence He had been driven by the suicidal doctrines of sectarian teachers, with all their fatal consequences.

With the fortunate Society, which perpetuates his work, all the social orders unite in celebrating the first Centenary of his birth; but particularly the ranks of the people who found in him what a deceitful democracy only promises; for while by that the masses are degraded, by him they are led upwards to God.

May the great heart of Don Bosco now pleading (as the Church presages) before the throne of God, obtain the removal of this scourge of war, and send back to a shipwrecked world the dove with the olive branch, the mystical sign of a much desired peace.

PASQUALE MORGANTI

Archbishop of Ravenna and Bishop of Cervia,
Former pupil of Don Bosco.

When the date arrived in August the distinguished Prelate wrote again to the Oratory:

Laudemus virum gloriosum.

Multi in nativitate ejus gaudebunt. Many shall rejoice in his nativity. A century ago this could not be said around the lowly house at Becchi, but it is accomplished now in the enthusiastic festivities throughout the world

for the first centenary of the birth of Don Bosco. Today after a century of wonders, history is astonished at the work he accomplished, and no other explanation can be found except the one that was given in the time of the Precursor, that *Manus Domini erat cum illo. The hand of the Lord was upon him.*

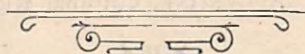
If at that time only the neighbours and relations heard the news and congratulated the happy and humble parents — *audierunt vicini et cognati eius et congratulabantur* — now it is the whole world that rejoices with his great family, and even in uncouth idioms of the most remote lands. The father of the Baptist, hearing the wonders foretold, that should be accomplished in his son asked doubtfully of the Archangel Gabriel. *Unde hoc?* How shall this be? And again today one who contemplates the work of Don Bosco, struck with wondering admiration asks: Whence is this?

In fact Don Bosco, like the Baptist before him, roused himself to combat the modern error — *ad dandam scientiam salutis plebi ejus*, to give knowledge of salvation to his people and by his faith and charity he led back many to God, *multos convertit ad Dominum Deum...*

Such prodigies often brought to Don Bosco the veneration even of the enemies of the Church and they now had all to repeat with greater admiration. *Laudemus Virum gloriosum et Parentem nostrum in generatione sua! In memoria aeterna erit justus!*

The other Bishops of Italian Sees who were also pupils of Don Bosco and wrote to Don Albera on this occasion, were: Mgr. Spandre, Bishop of Asti; Mgr. Gamberoni, Bishop of Chiavari; Mgr. Pizzorno, Bishop of Crema; Mgr. Marengo, Bishop of Massa-Carrara; and Mgr. Gamba, Bishop of Novara.

Letters were received from many other distinguished members of the Hierarchy and clergy, and from large numbers of Co-operators and friends. As was remarked in the introductory note, these testimonies all point to the fact, that had the actual celebrations been possible, they would have been successful beyond all expectation; and perhaps it is an advantage to have on record such splendid tributes to the unbounded admiration and esteem for the Venerable Servant of God.





Salesian Notes and News.

THE PRESENT ISSUE

This number of the *Bulletin* is doing duty for the months of November and December. As explained in the last issue many difficulties have arisen during the present disturbances, which rendered the publication somewhat intermittent and precarious, but in the coming year it is hoped that a regular publication, at least every two months, will be possible. A certain number of our Readers have written to lament the absence of their monthly visitor, but as explained previously, the outbreak of war meant the severing of communications between whole sections of Co-operators and the Oratory at Turin, from which the *Bulletin* is despatched. Therefore no number was issued in the belligerent states for some time; but with the resumption of fairly normal postage between the chief countries, this difficulty was lessened, but still accounts for the late appearance of matter posted abroad.

A far graver obstacle was the inability of large numbers of Co-operators to continue their support. Some lands have been devastated, and all that could be spared by the generous and the well-to-do has been very naturally allotted to the relief of their suffering compatriots. It will probably be a long time before the once flourishing bodies of Co-operators are again able to devote their energies and means to their former objects of zeal and charity; and yet new demands are being made upon the Salesian Houses in many places, where the fatherless children have to be provided for. It is hoped that the resumption of the *Bulletin* will help to relieve this state of things.

OUR SUPERIOR GENERAL'S WISH.

It is very natural, in these circumstances, that the Very Rev. Don Albera should desire to express to all our Readers the necessity he is under of appealing more earnestly to their generosity. On

the one hand the demands of the time are more urgent, on the other the resources are much more limited, and from some quarters quite impossible. How important, therefore, that those whose circumstances are not so much straitened by the war, or who may not have actually felt the effects of it, should maintain their offerings with their accustomed regularity and generosity, or, if possible, should give for those who cannot.

It is also very desirable that readers should endeavour to extend the circle of subscribers and co-operators. This may often be done by bringing the *Bulletin* to the notice of others, or mentioning these opportunities to those who may be more favourably situated in regard to co-operation. The written word sometimes has an unsuspected influence and works in its own secret fashion. It falls under the notice of varied characters and dispositions. It has a mission to fulfil, and has the advantage over the spoken word in having a far wider audience, and in speaking to them without restraint and in direct fashion. By spreading knowledge of the many necessities to be answered, and good causes to be furthered, any reader will secure an incalculable advantage, for it may be safely stated that a larger proportion of Co-operators have been found through reading about the work and life of Don Bosco, or about the Missions and the wonderful protection of Our Lady Help of Christians, than by any other means.



A SALESIAN CARDINAL.

The Roman Correspondent of the *Tablet* tells us the following about one of the candidates for the College of Cardinals. It says in its issue of Nov. 6th: "Meanwhile, semi-officially, the *Osservatore Romano* has told us something — that Mgr. Cagliero, Apostolic Delegate to the Central States of America, is making preparations to leave San José da Costarica for Rome

to receive the purple at the Consistory, and the Vatican Organ add that he is expected to be in Rome on December 2nd, a contradiction in dates, which does not however shake your correspondent's faith in the correctness of the November date, Mgr. Cagliero was one of Don Bosco's earliest pupils, and, in 1875 at thirty-seven years old, one of the first volunteers to cross the Atlantic, Patagonia and the Argentine were the scene of his first work there, which was followed by a spell in Italy from 1877 to 1884, when Leo XIII created him Titular Bishop of Magida and Vicar-Apostolic of Patagonia. Since that time Italy has only seen him on an occasional visit. His present position, Apostolic Delegate to Costarica, Honduras, and Nicaragua, was given him by Pius X. in 1908. The appointment of one so noted for missionary zeal to a semi-diplomatic post caused a little surprise, but Pius X's wonderful sagacity in picking men was once again illustrated. Perhaps Mgr. Cagliero's finest work of late has been the recognition of the Catholic Church, in every possible way where the Constitution permits it, and in many ways where it is possible to amend the Constitution in the Republic of Nicaragua. The appointment has been universally welcomed in Italy, where no one can help, or wants to help, recognising the good for religion, that the Salesians have been doing for years, whether it be in educating young Italians, their greatest work, or caring for earthquake victims and any other sufferers.

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When the Consistory is held, and the creation of Cardinals is an actual fact, Mgr. Cagliero will receive special recognition in the columns of the *Bulletin* — and that, not only on account of his connexion with our Society, of which he has long been one of the chief members, but because the *Bulletin*, in its early years, was indebted to the intrepid missionary for many of its earliest missionary letters. Mgr. Cagliero led the vanguard of that great body of Salesian missionaries to South America, and this he did not only in name, or by the exhortation of his word, but by his intrepid and indefatigable labours in the then unknown wilds and forests of the far south. His letters on the journeys he made, and descriptions of exciting and perilous meetings with the savages were eagerly awaited by Don Bosco, and were the inspiration of many a young missionary. He has

now reaped the reward of a long life of devoted and successful labour in many fields of the Church's vineyard, but doubtless the prospect of this latest promotion is agreeable not on account of any personal aggrandizement, but because of the honour reflected upon the society with which he has been connected from his boyhood.



LONDON. No individual or institution can possibly be unaffected by the conditions created by the war; but we are fortunate in being able to state that they have had no very appreciable effect upon the numbers of boys at the Salesian Schools, although there has been a check to the constant yearly increase which had marked the past series of some ten years. Whether the continuation of the war will bring a further depreciation is still an open question, but for the present there is no cause to anticipate it.

The scholastic year ending in July 1915 proved to be a very successful one at Battersea; in fact in the way of honours and distinctions at the examinations it may claim to have surpassed its predecessors, for honours were obtained at the Oxford Local examinations in each of the Preliminary, Junior and Senior departments. The distribution of certificates was postponed from July to the occasion of the Rector's Feastday, St. Charles, Nov. 4th, and on that day there was a large muster of the recipients of awards for success in one or other of the year's examinations, including the College of Preceptors, the Oxford Locals and the examinations in music conducted by the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and Royal College of Music.

The holiday kept in honour of the Rector's Day, Nov. 4th, has long had honourable mention in our annals, although of late years matters more or less purely scholastic have found their suitable place of record in the pages of the *School Magazine*. Judging however from the company gathered together to celebrate this event, it could hardly be adequately described as of merely local importance, for one noted representative in goodly number from the Houses at Farnborough, Wandsworth, Burwash and Chertsey. Two of the priests who are on active service managed to come back for that day, and their Khaki was very welcome among the black of so many cassocks.

The solemn High Mass was celebrated by Father McCarthy (Godalming), attended by Fr. Sutherland (Farnborough) as Deacon and Fr. McCourt (Battersea) as Sub-deacon. Fr. Rector gave the Benediction immediately

revolving in his mind former doings of days gone by, for no day is more firmly established in their memory, or recollected with so much pleasure, as this annual holiday given by the Rector in honour of his patron St. Charles.



The Salesian Cardinal.

afterwards. In the evening there was a grand operatic performance by the boys.

In his address to the School on the previous evening, the Very Rev. Father Macey referred to the large numbers of the old boys who had joined the army, some of whom had already gone to the front, or were back from it, recovering from wounds. Doubtless while he was speaking, many a past student was actually

On the following Sunday, a certain number of the past students, some of them stationed with their regiments in or near London came to the school for the match between the Past and Present. We hope that all these young soldiers will be able to visit us again a year hence with the war well won, and their honours thick upon them.



PIUS X ON DON RUA AND DOMINIC SAVIO. Mgr. Salotti who has just published a new life of Dominic Savio, gives us the benefit of an interview he had with His Holiness Pius X on July 20th 1914. The Monsignore says he was far from imagining that within a month the Holy Father would have passed away, almost tragically, from the world, a victim to the horrors of a war, whose outbreak he was powerless to prevent.

The Monsignore was in audience with the Pope on affairs connected with the Sacred Congregation of Rites, for he was the Under Promotor of the Faith, and the conversation turned upon the Cure of Ars and Joan of Arc; thence to Contardo Ferrini the illustrious professor of Roman Law, who made his professorship distinguished not only by his learning, but by his eminent piety and his championship of the Faith. The Venerable Don Cafasso, Don Bosco's confessor and Director, was then spoken of, as well as Don Bosco himself.

After some discussion of the hidden virtues of the servant of God, which, amid the grandeur of his exterior labours and achievements, run the risk of being overlooked, Pius X said with a smile.

"And what about Don Rua? Where have you left him? In him I seem to see all that combination of virtues, both complete and solid, which is proper to the saints. What are the Salesians waiting for? Why do they not promote the cause of his beatification? He is certainly one of those great but humble Servants of God, of whom the Church will account. I am sure of that."

Encouraged by this opinion so freely expressed, I asked Pius X. what he thought of Dominic Savio, the saintly pupil of the Ven. Don Bosco: *"What do I think of him? He is the perfect model for the youth of our times; a boy who carried his baptismal innocence with him to the tomb, and who during his life did not show a single defect, is certainly a saint: What more can be demanded of him?"*

To this I replied, that when I was fulfilling my office of defending his cause when it was introduced, some one had objected that Savio was too young to be raised to the honour of the altars.

The Pontiff replied: *"It is only one reason the more," for it is so difficult for a young man to practice virtue in a perfect degree; and yet Savio succeeded in it. The life written by Don Bosco,*

and which I have read, gave me the idea of an exemplary boy, who deserved to be pointed out as the model of perfection (1).

I then said that I had been recently at the Salesian Institute at Castro Pretorio (Rome) for the distribution of prizes, and that I had taken the opportunity of speaking to the boys about Dominic Savio. To this the Holy Father replied:

"Even the utmost that you could do is little. Push on the Cause by all the means in your power. The Salesians should not be led by the method that other religious Congregations have pursued, namely of putting aside all thought of the beatification of their members, till that of the Founder has been completed. The work and character of Don Bosco is vast and complex, and may require long examination. But I should not think that so much is required for the short and simple life of Savio: therefore lose no time; his Cause should be put forward with diligence."

I then said that I was compiling a new life of Dominic Savio, which would include all that Don Bosco had said, and new facts since come to light.

"If you get it done quickly, bring me a copy and I will read it with great pleasure," said the Pontiff, and giving me his blessing the audience ended.

Thirty days had scarcely gone and the Holy Father had passed away. When I went to see his body, lying in state, his last words came back to me: *If you get it done quickly, bring me a copy and I will read it with great pleasure.*

But now the life of Dominic Savio is completed I shall go down into the crypt of St. Peter's and place a copy for a brief space upon the tomb of Pius X, so that he may give his blessing to the little work, which he so greatly encouraged during his life.

Then I shall go to the Vatican to present a copy to his worthy Successor Pope Benedict XV, who in accepting the dedication of the work shows a special interest in the life of the saintly youth. As a child, the Holy Father had read the life with his brothers at home in the presence of his mother, who out of her great piety, intended to form the souls of her sons upon the example of Don Bosco's pupil.

(1) This life, written by Don Bosco has been translated and issued under the care of the Editor of the *Bulletin*, it may be purchased from the Salesian Press, Surrey Lane, Battersea, for eighteen pence a copy.

News from the Missions.

MATTO GROSSO (Brazil)

An epidemic amongst the Indians.

(Letter from Don John Balzola).

Colony of St Joseph (Sangradouro).

Very Rev. Don Albera,

In my last letter I gave you the consoling news of the arrival of 88 Indians sent us by Divine Providence and I spoke of my anxiety on account of the impossibility of at once setting them on the way of civilization.

The poor Indians arrived in a lamentable condition, and after two months they were attacked by a kind of influenza, and this was succeeded by measles which though not of dangerous character, was very infectious and in fact almost all caught it, including even the adults. You can imagine our critical position. But besides this a good number of them as soon as the epidemic broke out, made up their minds to visit their relations and friends in the Colony of the S. Heart and of the Immaculate Conception, and heedless of the danger of falling sick on the way, which, as I pointed out to them would be much worse, they insisted upon departing. As it turned out, after going about twenty miles, they were forced to stop owing to a violent attack of the epidemic, whilst we were quite unable to go to their help, being occupied all day in attending the sick in the Colony. These we continually warned against bathing whilst they had fever, and supplied with suitable food and some medicine to relieve them. On the 1st of December whilst I was visiting the huts, distributing remedies, an Indian came up to me and almost in tears begged me to go and visit his daughter, and an infant probably already dead.

I hastened and saw that the newly-born child was still breathing: I ran to the river and with

the cup I used for distributing medicines, I poured water on the tiny child and baptized it. It was none too soon, for within a quarter of an hour it had gone to its heavenly home. On the same spot where it was born, the old nurse mother-in-law of the sick girl, had already dug the little grave.

Less happy was old Sylvia, grandmother of the boy Thiago, who accompanied Fr. Malan to Italy on his last visit. She was old and robust, but suffered from asthma, and contracting measles during the epidemic she died suddenly during the night without any one being aware of it. I had counted on baptizing her *in articulo mortis* as is our custom with all the adults; but death forestalled me! I was much grieved and could not refrain from thinking: One soul just comes to life and is saved, the other attains old age and dies without the privilege of Holy Baptism.

The following day, December 6th as soon as this death became known, all were so much afraid of dying that they resolved to abandon the *aldeia* and retire into the neighbouring forest until the epidemic should cease. It was impossible to prevent them, and with the exception of about fifteen, they departed.

When commencing the Novena of the Immaculate Conception, I exhorted the Mission staff as usual, to celebrate it with great fervour as we always expect particular favours from Our Lady during that Novena.

This year, it seemed to us, the contrary happened except indeed by way of crosses and contradictions, after which doubtless, we shall reap our reward.

It seemed as if everything was going wrong, even the rains were so late that we feared the crops would perish; when, on the 10th it began to rain, and so abundantly that after twenty days the crops were safe, and promised a more abundant harvest than in former years.

But if the rain was beneficial to our fields, it aggravated the condition of the poor Bororos, sick and deprived of all assistance in the woods. I went to see them and found them in a pitiable condition. Some begged at once for medicine,

others for something to eat, all were suffering in many ways. I managed to give them all some help but I was saddened by the impossibility of assuaging their sufferings. All had made for themselves a little shelter of palm leaves at the foot of a large tree; but if this answered in the fine weather, it was almost useless in the rain which came in on every side. It is not difficult to imagine the pitiable sight, the abject misery. Just when I was visiting them it rained heavily and I saw how much they were suffering! I profited of the occasion to reprove them for their imprudence in leaving their good huts, where they could get more help than in the forest. They agreed with me, and said as soon as they were a little better they would come back.

Amongst others I saw a young woman about twenty-three years of age, and her young husband both dangerously ill. I gave them some medicine and nourishment, and left them with great regret, intensified by seeing their little girl about two years old crying with hunger.

Before leaving, I went again to the sick woman, and felt that she ought to be baptised; but I decided to put it off till the following day, and on the morrow I received news that the poor creature had died in the night. I rode off at once to see if it was true. When I arrived I found her not only dead but already buried a few paces from the place where I left her. My greatest grief was that she had died without Baptism. On the other hand it is not advisable to be too easy in baptizing adults, who may continue for a long while to live as savages.

This time I found them all disheartened. Many were seriously ill. A few days later another little girl died, but she had already received solemn Baptism. Seeing this they resolved to return to the Colony, they sent to ask me to bring a horse to carry the widower who was very ill, and someone to assist an old woman who could not walk. I did as they wished. A few miles away I found several families resting, having no strength to proceed.

A little further on we found the husband referred to above who, leaning on two sticks, walked slowly and could scarcely speak. We put him on a little mule, and knowing he could ride, we let him go on alone whilst we went to the camp for the old woman. The poor thing had remained alone with a niece about twelve years old, waiting for us to fetch her. When she was told that we had brought a mule to take her home, she cried out in terror: "I shall fall off!"

We encouraged her, saying the animal was

quiet and that we would help her. She then consented. We gathered up her belongings which were carried by the girl and the boy, and I took some of the things with me. Then I wrapped the poor woman in a blanket and placed her on the mule, almost like the good Samaritan in the Gospel. Happily she soon settled herself on it, without much fear. When however, we reached a torrent, fortunately dry, but very deep, I had to perform the office of the good Shepherd; taking her off the mule, which could not go down with her, I put her on my back, telling her to hold on to my head with her bony hands; then descending cautiously helping myself with hands and feet I reached the other bank in safety... Hardly had she set foot in her poor hut than she collapsed on the floor through weariness. We took the widower into our own house, so as to be able to nurse him better, because he seemed at the last gasp; and indeed a few days later, the Indian, who had care of him, came to me saying: — "Father, Pius is dying!" — I went to see him and found him very low, so I baptized him and commended him to God. Now it seems that the grace of Baptism will cure him; let us hope so. His little girl and another child-relation are under the care of the Sisters. At present the worst stage of the epidemic is over, and all are convalescent. May the change of seasons bring us some consolation.

Asking for your blessing

I am

Your devoted son in Corde Iesu

JOHN BALZOLA.

Salesian Missionary.

CHINA.

Prodigies of Christian Charity.

The Chinese girls rescued and baptised.

Our zealous Missionary Fr. Louis Versiglia, Superior of the Salesian Mission in China, sends us the following account.

To generous souls, whose heart is touched by the misfortunes of poor Chinese girls.

The *Salesian Bulletin* published a brief appeal to our benefactors for the rescue of some Chinese girls, inhumanly sold by their own parents for evil purposes.

The account was most touching of two of these poor victims who came to the Missionary, ready for anything, if only they might be delivered from the evil place.

are now in the same Institute, where they are giving complete satisfaction to their religious teachers. They too have been baptized. Of these also I send a photograph.

These four children thank God with their whole heart for their happy lot and beg of Him abundant blessings for those generous souls who were the instruments of their present happiness.

I also unite with them in proclaiming my gratitude to those good souls who had compassion on and efficaciously assisted those in trouble, helping the Missionaries to extend their work to those in distress.

There are, indeed, many other poor victims



1. Maria Hung Monachesi
2. Gertrude A Cheong Hardy
3. Rosa Lò Hardy
4. Santina Tàl-Chui Ferrante.

Four young Chinese girls rescued from danger and baptized.

A few days after the despatch of that number of the *Bulletin*, I received from the Mayor of Orvault (Loire Inférieure) by telegram the amount required for the rescue of the two girls. The matter was seen to at once, but it was by no means easy; yet in the end we were successful. The two girls, whose photographs I send you have been placed in the Institute of the good Canossian Sisters, where they receive an education suited to their condition and have been already baptized.

The negotiations regarding these two girls were not yet concluded when I received a second remittance afterwards a third, one from a charitable Canon of Macerata, the other from a civil engineer of Turin. Each sent the amount necessary for the rescue of a girl, so that a similar benefit was extended to two more unhappy companions of the first two girls. These also

awaiting their hour of deliverance, and we shall not fail to rescue them when we have the means to do so.

(China) Henny Shan, March 27, 1914.

LOUIS VERSIGLIA
Superior of the Salesian Mission.



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 this will be obtained especially through the intercession of Her who in every age has proved Herself the Help of Christians. PIVS P.P. X.

May the Blessed Virgin deign to help us.... and may she take under her maternal protection the Church and all the Souls redeemed by the Precious Blood of her divine Sem. BENEDICT P.P. XV.

The Very Rev. Don Albera, our Superior General, and who, by his position, is the head of the Association of Co-operators, urges all the members to take up some act of devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians on the 24th of every month. We have often, in fact, brought this practice to the notice of our Readers. It grew out of the unwillingness to let the glories of the 24th of May drop away into oblivion; this brought on a devotional service in the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians on June 24th, as a sort of echo of the feast, but instead of its being a farewell service it proved to be the beginning of a new series held on the 24th of each month, and devoted to the honours of our Patroness and the interests of the Association.

It was only natural that since the outbreak of the war, these special prayers and devotions should be offered for the intentions of those suffering from the conflict, for the restoration of peace, and for the Holy Father's intentions, and as they have proved especially efficacious in times past, it is hoped to find in them a source of consolation and support; and to obtain that speedy restoration to peace which is the desire of the Holy Father, on behalf of his immense flock.

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Innumerable have been the heavenly interventions of Our Lady Help of Christians on behalf of those who have practised this devotion, and it is no wonder that it is in a state of continual growth, and ever reaping larger harvests. There were many signs of this at the last celebration of the Feastday at Turin, for even after the great assemblies that characterised the celebration had dispersed, new ones began to arrive, for there were several pilgrimages organised to visit the Sanctuary during the Octave;

these were led by the Diocesan Directors and in some instances by the Bishops of the Dioceses. These acts of pilgrimage are not new in connection with the festival, but in such large numbers, and in definite diocesan organisation they are a new departure, and show that the devotion is permeating whole bodies of the faithful, and exerting a marked religious influence upon them.

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Many are the favours and graces constantly being obtained from the inexhaustible goodness and superabundant treasures of the Mother of God. For these it is customary to make a definite offering, either as an alms for a Mass in thanksgiving, or as a donation to one of the many good works, which are under the patronage of the Help of Christians. But this does not mean that all gratitude should forthwith cease, and that the obligation of some return is adequately fulfilled; for these graces no merely temporal gift could be adequate, and Don Albera is therefore quite in the right when he makes these past favours a claim for further returns of marks of gratitude.

Graces and Favours. ⁽¹⁾

Lancashire ⁽²⁾—Last August my daughter showed symptoms of suffering from spinal Tuberculosis, and in a few months there was no doubt that she was severely attacked by it, so much so that by the end of April of this

⁽¹⁾ In these accounts no claim is made to any authority, beyond that given to authentic human testimony.

⁽²⁾ Some of these favours should have been published much earlier, but the temporary suspension of our publication made it impossible.

year the doctor had little hope of saving her life. We knew not where to turn till we were advised to make a Novena to Our Lady Help of Christians, and implore the intercession of her Servant Don Bosco.

The Novena, in which many joined, was begun on May 14th; we promised publication of the favour, and a thank-offering towards the renovation of the Basilica at Turin. On May 24th, the day of the feast, my daughter said she felt cured. The doctor came to examine her, and pronounced her quite well and sound, though he could not vouch for the permanency of the cure. However my daughter is still quite well and strong, feeling no pain or weakness whatever, so that we are confident of the cure being permanent.

With grateful hearts we wish to fulfil the promise made, and hope that our favour will induce others to have recourse to Our Lady Help of Christians.

July, 1914.

Mrs. H.

Oxford.— I am enclosing a thank-offering for a Mass in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians and ask you to publish my thanksgiving. I had suffered a great deal in my legs for a long time, and now, after a Novena to Our Lady, the doctor declares that they are quite cured.

July, 1914.

T. W.

Chicago.— As I was in need of a great favour I had recourse to Our Lady Help of Christians, and promised to send a thank-offering towards the restoration of the Basilica in Turin. I now fulfil my promise and ask for publication of my thanksgiving.

July, 1914.

Mrs. A. G.

Ashton (Lancashire).— After a Novena to Our Lady Help of Christians I have received a great favour I ardently desired. I enclose an offering for a Mass in thanksgiving and would ask you to publish the favour.

June, 1914.

H. F.

The three following favours are from New York.

Our little child had contracted a dangerous affection of the eyes, which according to medical advice, might permanently injure the sight.

We then had recourse with confidence to Our Lady Help of Christians; and offering was made and we promised publication of the favour if the child should be cured. Immediately after the promise was made, the eyes began to improve and were soon completely cured. With gratitude to Our Lady Help of Christians we now fulfil the promise of publication, and enclose a thank-offering.

June, 1914.

J. T. P.

One of the boys of our College had been in bed for four weeks, suffering from acute rheumatism; it caused him intense pain, and prevented him almost entirely from moving. As the Novena in preparation for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception approached, we renewed our prayers to Our Lady, to obtain the boy's cure, and when the Novena began, the boy received Holy Communion every day. However there was no sign of improvement, right up to the very feast, but the favour had been reserved for that day.

After a night of great agony, the boy suddenly felt that all pain had ceased; life and movement had returned to his limbs, he got up without assistance, and went down to the chapel to offer his thanksgiving. His unexpected appearance made a great impression upon all, and added immensely to the fervour of the celebration of the Feast day.

Rev. H. G.

I had recommended an intention to the intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians, making a Novena and a promise of publication. My prayers were answered, and I now beg to fulfil the promise made.

M. E. W.

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Publication of thanksgiving is also desired by K. L., Co. Kilkenny for great favour received; Anon. Ireland, with thank-offering for restoration of the Basilica.

M H.; Ireland.

Publication is also requested of a great favour obtained after prayers to the Ven. Don Bosco, and the application of his relic to a sick person. (C. D. Bangalore).



The Life of the Venerable Don Bosco

By G. B. LEMOYNE, of the Salesian Society.

A large circle of Readers will welcome this additional item in the pages of the *Bulletin*. Requests are continually being made for an authentic life of the Servant of God, for the works on the subject already issued have been admittedly of a summary character, or have dealt with certain phases only of the Apostolate of the Servant of God.

For many years now a *standard* life of Don Bosco has been in course of preparation, and eight volumes of it have already been published. but this was never intended to be the work which would serve as a volume for the world at large to read; its very bulk precluded it; but upon that standard life, the author himself has drawn to compile a work, reduced in compass from ten or twelve to two volumes, and thus bringing it within convenient proportions. It is this work which the Superiors of the Society have decided to publish serially in the *Salesian Bulletin*.

If it should seem that some phases of the Life are dealt with in too detailed a fashion, it must be remembered that a Translator has many limitations, and is not always at liberty to delete parts which may appear on the surface to be trivial; moreover what is commonplace and therefore of little worth to an analyses of character, is of interest to those who prefer a more complete narrative, and may serve to bring out the personal element in a clearer light; while each is able to view the separate parts though varying grades of importance. However, where so many have declared themselves eager for information, we need not fear to be too liberal of detail.

PART I.

From his birth to the Priesthood.

CHAPTER I.

Family circumstances.

THE French Revolution threatened to play the havoc of the whirlwind with the Catholic Church. The gaze of man, appalled at the sight, could perceive not one ray of hope; but the all-seeing eye of God looked with complacency on many a chosen soul, hidden away from the world, and knew those who were to be instrumental in the triumph He was to gain over impiety. Among these were many good christian mothers, who by cultivating the germ of holiness in the hearts of their children, would prepare them for the great things in store.

Margaret Occhiena was surely one of these chosen souls, towards whom God looked. Her birth place was Capriglio, a beautiful upland spot, surrounded by verdant hills about six miles from the town of Chieri in Piedmont. She was baptized on the day of her birth April 1st 1788. Her parents were Melchior Occhiena and Domenica Bossone; they were ordinary country folk in poor circumstances, but they were fortified by the great gift of the Fear of God. They had five children, and the good example and instructions of the parents were so efficacious that, even during the impetuous years of youth, their children were guided in all their doings by the will of God.

This family did not escape its share in the general sufferings of the time; but confidence in God and the comforting promise shown by the children helped to sustain the household. Margaret was a special consolation, for under her mother's wise training she developed a character marked by admirable virtue and fortitude.

While yet a child she had developed the habit of dividing time between prayer and work; she had a rare combination of a firm will and

extraordinary good sense, and her whole conduct was based upon the commandments of God. This made her upright in conscience, prompt in action, frank in speech and free from all hesitation and fear.

He was upright and hardworking, high-minded and with plenty of good sense, but in the conditions of those difficult times, it was no wonder that he found it a hard struggle to maintain his little family: His whole fortune



The New Votive Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Becchi.

Some five or six miles from her native village is Castelnuovo d'Asti, sheltered among gentle hills, made verdant by luxuriant vineyards. This fertile region includes several prosperous districts, and one of the clusters of farm homesteads is called Becchi. Here lived Francesco Bosco, a pious country man, born on Feb. 4th 1784.

consisted of a few fields near his small farm; but as these did not provide enough for the needs of his household, he had the tillage of some adjoining land. Besides his wife and little son Anthony, he also provided for his mother who was now aged and infirm; but while the boy was still very young his wife

fell ill, and after receiving the last Sacraments she died on the last-day of Feb. 1811.

This loss greatly increased Francesco's difficulties. He could not attend to his work, and also look after his mother and his little son. It was very natural therefore that his thoughts should turn towards a second marriage and knowing that Margaret Occhiena possessed in a high degree all the qualities of a good wife, he was attracted towards her. She was now twenty-four, but had never had any inclination towards the married life. Her ways had been cast among the homely and retired, and she had never displayed any liking for the various innocent amusements that are usually indulged in by the young. And yet God had destined her for the state of matrimony. The Book of Ecclesiasticus says: "A good wife is a good portion, she shall be given in the portion of them that fear God to a man for his good deeds. Rich or poor, if his heart is good, his countenance shall be cheerful at all times. A virtuous woman rejoiceth her husband, and shall fulfil the years of his life in peace (1).

Francesco therefore sought Margaret in marriage, but she urged against it the difficulty of leaving her parents; her father, however, declared that he was robust enough to manage without her assistance, and proclaimed himself in favour of the marriage (2). Besides, there were other children who could take Margaret's place at home. Everything therefore combined to facilitate the acceptance of the offer, and in a spirit of obedience she consented to become the wife of Francesco Bosco. The marriage took place on June 6th 1812.

In her new home at Becchi Margaret at once devoted herself with loving care to the needs of her mother-in-law and of her little step-son Anthony. The old woman hid many sterling qualities under her somewhat severe exterior, and in the practice of good works was a model to many. She soon divined the exceptional gifts of her daughter-in-law, and thanked God for sending such a treasure to her home. The marriage was blessed by heaven, and on April 8th 1813 there were rejoicings in the humble family at the birth of a little son, on whom was bestowed the name of Joseph.

Some two years later, August 16th 1815, Margaret's second son was born. He was baptised on the following day and called John

(1) Ecclesiasticus XXVI. 3-4, 2.

(2) Her father seems to have inherited the gift of vigorous health; he lived to the age of ninety-nine years, eight months; his brother died in his ninetieth year.

Melchior. It was thought that now at least when the great Napoleonic wars were over, that an era of peace had arisen for Europe; but it was not destined to last, at any rate in Italy. Secret Societies were at work, threatening throne and altar; their boldness culminated in spasmodic revolutions, but nothing could disturb the peace of the happy household at Becchi; Margaret was a lover of order and silence and given to thrifty ways, while her husband was devoted to the work of his farm and the support of his family. The parent's one object was to preserve the souls of the little ones sent them by God, and in achieving this end the christian example of the household was such, that it is still a tradition in the neighbourhood, after the lapse of a century.

But these peaceful years were to be abruptly terminated. Francesco came home one evening complaining of a chill, and a fever ensued. It developed into bronchitis and although every care was bestowed upon him, it was soon evident that he would not recover. After receiving the consolations of Religion, he exhorted his sorrowing wife to have confidence in God, and recommended the children, especially the youngest child, John, to her care. He died on May 11th, 1817, in his thirty-fourth year.

John often spoke of this event to the boys at the Oratory. "I was not yet two years old, when my father died, so I do not remember what he was like or quite what happened on that occasion; but it is the first fact of my life of which I have any recollection. When all were going out of the room where the body lay, I wanted to stay behind. My mother called to me to come away, but I replied: 'If father is not coming, neither shall I.' My mother said: 'Poor boy, you have no father now.' Then I began to cry and my mother took me out of the room. I probably cried, because my mother was in tears, for at that age I certainly could not have understood grief or loss: yet those words: 'You have no father,' remained as a part of my lasting recollection. I remember nothing further till I was four years of age."

Strangely enough, the future Apostle of the young, who was to be a father to so many of the fatherless, was himself deprived thus early of a father's care; but the parental office was admirably discharged by Margaret, who, on account of the wisdom and devotion displayed in bringing up her boys, was called by those who knew her: "The Queen of Christian mothers."

(To be continued).

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