

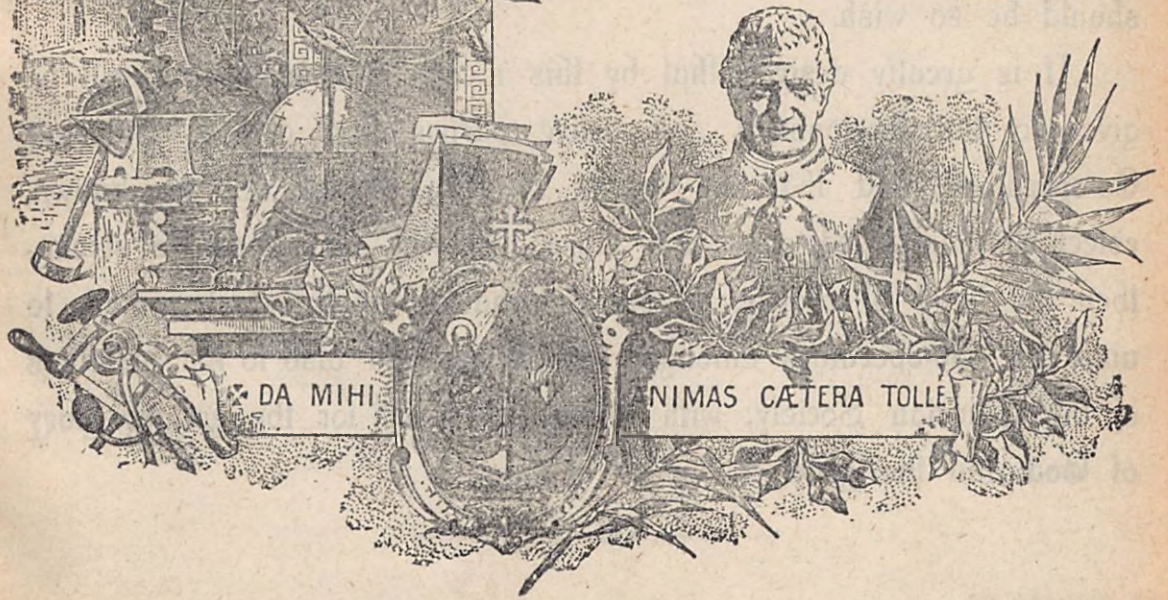
# Salesian Bulletin

N. 2 - April - June - 1918

♣ Vol. X. ♣

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

*L. 22 0021112*




✠ DA MIHI

NIMAS CÆTERA TOLLE

---

## Important Notice to Readers.

---

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.

## CONTENTS.

The life of the Venerable Don Bosco . . . . .	21	Salesian Notes and News . . . . .	31
The Jubilee of the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians . . . . .	22	Devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians . . . . .	34
To the Co-operators of the United States . . . . .	24	Graces and Favours . . . . .	35
News from the Missions . . . . .	27	Thanksgivings to the Ven. Don Bosco . . . . .	35
		The Life of the Ven. Don Bosco: Part I. Chapter XI . . . . .	37
		Obituary . . . . .	42

## The life of the Venerable Don Bosco

From many quarters there is a question often put to us: "Have you a good life of your Founder, Don Bosco?" That enquiry can now be unhesitatingly answered in the affirmative. The first copies of a new life in English have just been received from the Publishers as these manuscripts are being prepared, and by the time this issue is in the hands of our Readers, it is hoped that copies will be available for the first demands. The book is priced at two shillings and six-pence; postage, three-pence.

The book is one that carries its own recommendations. It admittedly answers a widely felt need; it presents an interesting topic in a interesting way; it brings one into contact with those elements of the supernatural, which are present to a varying degree in the lives of all the great Servants of God; in this one they are present to an extraordinary degree.

Orders should be sent either to the Salesian Press, Battersea, S. W. or to the Salesian Oratory, Turin, Italy.

## The Jubilee of the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians.



ANY references have been made in our recent issues to an approaching event of special importance. In normal times it would undoubtedly have given opportunity for rejoicing and festive celebrations on a grand scale; and not without reason. There have been several events of note in connection with the history of the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians, perhaps the greatest being the solemn coronation of the farfamed picture, by authority of a special brief issued by His Holiness Leo XIII. The assembly at that time was beyond all previous records, and one reason for it was the fact that a General Congress of Salesian Co-operators was held in connection with the event, thus drawing immense crowds to the Sanctuary.

But in all these celebrations there has always been an element which is not present in the great assemblies of an ordinary character; and that is the supernatural element. During the lifetime of Don Bosco the Sanctuary was the scene of numberless favours received, sometimes obtained by his assistance in prayer, sometimes by the private intercession of devout people. Perhaps there would be a little gathering in the Sacristy, where the Venerable Servant of God, by the recitation of an *Ave Maria*, would obtain some astounding favour through his simple appeal to the intercession of the Help of Christians. The memory of such occurrences was not likely to fade away very easily. In fact, the church, or Sanctuary as it was always popularly called, became regularly associated with the miraculous, and to it the faithful began to turn as to an infallible source of heavenly protection or assistance.

Nor have the people found their confidence to be misplaced. At no time since the death of Don Bosco, thirty years ago, has there been a cessation of these wonders, and thanksgiving to Our Lady under the title Help of Christians still arrive daily. We can connect this phenomenon with Don Bosco's own words. He predicted that Our Lady would be as much a patroness and protectress to his Society and to his Co-operators when he was gone from amongst us, as she was at any time during his life. She had been the chief factor in establishing his work, as the chronicles of its development show. Would she then leave it when it might be most in need of aid? And would her bounty grow less when demands were being made upon it from a much larger family? It was precisely to form that family, even though it should assume world-wide proportions, that her wonder-working power was manifested in the first instance, and that the favours of heaven tell in abundance on those who co-operated with her in that task whether directly or indirectly.

But we must not be led too far away from the Sanctuary which has become identified with this continuous stream of graces. Time has not cast the spell of oblivion over the remembrance of what has occurred in the comparatively brief period of the Sanctuary's history, and that for the very good reason that the wonders of the first decade were repeated in the second and third up to the present, when the fifth is just approaching its close; for June 9th of this year, 1918, will bring the fiftieth anniversary of the consecration of the Sanctuary, which, seen often in vision by Don Bosco, was by him at the ap-

pointed time erected, was paid for (according to history and to Don Bosco's own words) by Our Lady herself, through the thank-offerings for her favours, and which by its succession of wonderful events and immense influence on Catholic devotion and progress, has deserved to be placed by the Sovereign Pontiff among the great Basilicas of the Church. Its glory has progressed from strength to strength, adding dignity to dignity, and its jubilee this year, though shorn of some of its external celebration, will be kept with a solemnity and religious display concerning its history, its merit, its majesty.

The gloom of the war, which does not appear to be on the verge of lifting as we write, will but add a more serious tone to the celebration of the event. In any case it would be the occasion for innumerable supplications before the throne of Mother of God; and in this case, they will doubtless be directed towards obtaining from the Help of Christians that powerful aid in time of great need, which she has so often bestowed in times past. But since all the members of the world-wide Association of Co-operators have a privileged position in this regard, they should certainly all combine in that occasion, and about that time, to intercede for protection of the Help of Christians, and her powerful intercession on behalf of the distressed nations. During this prolonged combat she has obtained numberless favours in answer to private devotions; why should she not obtain on behalf of whole nations the much desired gift of peace? Perhaps a national movement in that direction would be necessary; yet the prayers of so many thousands cannot go without response, and therefore the first duty of our Readers and Co-operators, on the occasion of the Sanctuary's Jubilee should be to join in fervent prayer to Our Lady Help of Christians, that she would

deign to signalise the event by the return of tranquil times, in which her celebrations may be worthily performed.

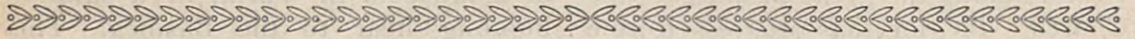
\*  
\* \*

It may be useful to point out again that one of the events in connection with the Jubilee will be the opening of a Museum in Turin, in a suitable building near to the Basilica. This Museum will contain everything that can be brought together concerning devotion—showing its wonderful growth during those fifty years, its spreading into every land, and even among savage tribes, the fine churches dedicated under that name, records of favours and wonders, and of events which have had a particular national importance, and many other records of interest and instruction. The members of the Salesian Society and their Co-operators have been working in collaboration for some time past to bring together representative matter, and other proposals have also been put into execution. One of the recent propositions will be of interest to lady Associates, for it is made by a distinguished lady-Co-operator of Turin. She has suggested that for the Jubilee of the Sanctuary the Tabernacle of the High Altar should be lined with rich material covered with gold and precious stones, these latter to be presented by the Co-operators. For this idea she puts forward three arguments: first that it would be a most suitable present to Our Lady Help of Christians, in providing a more worthy dwelling for her Divine Son; secondly that other distinguished churches have their tabernacles so adorned, and thirdly that there could be no better or more noble service for any jewels that may be treasured family possessions, and which though greatly prized are seldom used. The lady herself opens the subscription by presenting two jewels of special value, received

as gifts from the Sovereign Pontiff Leo XIII, and Pius IX, and also other jewels which have been precious heir-looms.

Our Superior General, Don Albera, has readily approved this scheme, and desires all the articles which may be forthcoming in response, to be sent to

himself at the Oratory, Turin. On the occasion of the Jubilee he wishes to see all the members of the great Salesian Family united in supplication to the Help of Christians, to obtain the many favours both spiritual and temporal, of which the Work of Don Bosco now stands in special need.



## To the Co-operators of the United States.

The dislocation of labour, or its redistribution, has had a profound effect on many trades and many objects of production; but the production of printed matter has been one of the most widely affected. Hence it is that our issue for January and February of this year 1918 has not yet reached us from our headquarters in Turin, and no hazard can be made as to when this issue will reach our Readers in all parts of the world. At any rate they will not be surprised if our news is scarcely up-to-date, to say the least of it, but that consideration could by no means warrant our omitting it altogether.

\*  
\* \*

The Salesian Fathers and their very zealous Co-operators in the United States have good reason to regard the celebrations held in January last as worthy of lasting record. Considering that war conditions are everywhere making their presence felt, it was something of a record to bring to completion so extensive a work, in so comparatively short a period. But great efforts were made by both clergy and people, and it must have been with particular satisfaction that they assisted at what was the realisation of their hopes and the fruition of their labours.

New York now possesses a Church worthy of the name under which the sacred building is dedicated, that of Our Lady Help of Christians. It was befitting that the church which has for its patron our great Benefactress should be in the greatest city of the States, and in connection with the work which had been one of the first undertaken by the Salesians in America. The work of that important centre had long been handicapped by the absence of a suitable church, and though there was temporary accommodation for the large numbers of Catholics in the district, it was long evident that the erection of a new and correspondingly spacious building was only a matter of time, for the demand had become ever more insistent.

Hence, some two years ago, the plans for the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians were drawn up, and by the active co-operation of the people, guided by a very capable committee the means were found for putting the scheme into operation without delay.

\*  
\* \*

From a periodical conducted by the Salesian Fathers, the following information concerning the opening of the new Church is available: "In the ab-

sence of His Excellency, the Most Rev. Mgr. J. Bonzano, the Apostolic Delegate, who was too ill to travel, the blessing and dedication of the new edifice were performed by His Lordship Mgr. Hayes. As soon as the Church was thus opened for divine worship, there was Solemn High Mass, sung by the Right Rev. Mgr. Lavelle, V. G. Large numbers of the clergy from the neighbourhood, and a crowded congregation from various parts of New York assisted at this memorable function. A distinguished orator delivered the opening discourse, which dealt with the continued triumph of the Church, in spite of many obstacles and untoward circumstances; and he referred later, in a manner most suitable to the occasion, to the generosity and ready self-sacrifice of the people, who in large numbers had proved themselves most devoted and capable Co-operators, and who were now witnessing what their united labours had made possible.

In the evening, the Very Rev. Fr. Sasia, of the Society of Jesus, was the celebrant at the Solemn Vespers, and Fr. Simeoni S. C., who had come from California to be present at the opening ceremonies, gave the sermon. In eloquent terms he skilfully set forth various phases of Don Bosco's work, particularly those which dealt most closely with the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Communion, a devotion which he desired that his sons should foster in the hearts of the people, wherever their apostolate should call them to labour for the salvation of souls.

\* \* \*

The new Church is a large edifice, built with a central nave and two aisles. Its design is mainly of the Roman classic style, and its imposing proportions give it all the appearance of a grand cathedral. At either end of the

façade is a tower eighty feet high. The central nave formed by elaborate corinthian columns, decorated arches, corinthian cornices and vaulted ceiling. In the aisles are side-chapels and confessionals.

The Sanctuary is a spacious one, with a fine marble screen. Above this there will be a painting, representing Our Lady Help of Christians, which will reproduce the famous picture in the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians in Turin. There are two galleries beside the organ gallery, and the accommodation is thus over a thousand. The Very Rev. Fr. Barni is the new Rector. Later 'on in the month a gathering was held consisting of the congregations from other Salesian Churches that of the Transfiguration, of the Immaculate Conception and of the Holy Rosary in New York, from the Church of St. Anthony, Paterson. The well-known Belmont Choir rendered the music and the Very Rev. Dr. Burke gave the discourse. The Very Rev. Fr. Sasia S. J. afterwards gave a lecture in the Hall, and the Belmont Choir gave musical selections.

\* \* \*

An important gathering was that held at the Don Bosco Institute in Philadelphia, when the Salesians were celebrating the Feast of their Patron, St. Francis of Sales. The chief guest was His Lordship, the Right Rev. Bishop McCort of Philadelphia who presided at the afternoon reception. He addressed the large gathering of boys with paternal solicitude. Among other things he said: "I bring you greetings and good wishes from His Grace Archbishop of our city, and in taking his place here today I have the opportunity long desired of witnessing the progress you are making in the Catholic works connected with the In-

stitute. The object of the Don Bosco Institute, so dear to our hearts, is to preserve in your young souls the holy Faith of your birth, and to show you how to become upright and useful American citizens. You will preserve your faith intact, if you carry out the instructions here received from the Fathers in charge. We feel that the city of Philadelphia has been signally blessed by their coming into our diocese.

Many of the great men you see about you today, wielding much power, and accomplishing remarkable things, were one day just as you are. By lives of integrity and close observance of the laws of God they have risen and no one can oppose their flight. It will be the same with you one day, if now you aspire to high things, and strive to improve yourselves continually. This great country offers you every inducement. After our Faith we should cherish our American citizenship. The way to be a good and true citizen is to be a good Catholic. The better Catholic you are, the better you will fulfil your duties as citizens. Now you are in the making; go up to the mountains of God, strive after all things praiseworthy. Follow out your religious instructions and you will become good sons of this great country, and ultimately you will gain the perfect citizenship of the Kingdom of God. I earnestly hope that you will always remain united under the banner of Don Bosco. Attend the Reunions, and as time goes on it is to be hoped that your assemblies will be made up of citizens in the highest walks of life."

This speech of His Lordship Bishop McCort was received with great enthusiasm, particularly as it gave an impulse to the boys to join more heartily even than before in the various branches of the Institute, which is designed to

cope with the after-school needs and religious instruction of youth.

The Director of the Institute, Fr. Cattori, had arranged a grand entertainment for the evening, the items of which, including a very enjoyable play, were provided by the members of the club.

\*  
\* \*

The news of the disastrous fire which destroyed the Salesian College at Hawthorne has long before this reached our Co-operators in all parts of the world, and all sympathy is extended to the young Institute which gave so much promise of excellent work among the youths of the New York State, and in the direction of securing and training religious vocations, and vocations to the priesthood. It seems a pity that so much should be laid in ruins in the course of a few hours. But no lives were lost, and no injuries were sustained; for this everyone concerned will be grateful, considering the risk incurred during a rapid fire, by a School full of boys and students. The boys were soon despatched to their homes, to await notice of a new place to gather together in for temporary accommodation; the clerics were more fortunate, since the College at Ramsey provided places for them where their studies can be carried on without any serious break. The Directors of the Institute at Hawthorne are straining every effort to secure the reconstruction of their School, and to maintain in the interval temporary premises, so as to prevent the studies and careers of the boys from serious drawbacks. We are confident that the schemes they put before their Co-operators will receive willing and generous support, so that their aims may be speedily fulfilled.



# News from the Missions.

## Patagonia, the Pampas and Tierra del Fuego.

(The Salesian Missions described by a Jesuit Father).

The Prefecture of Southern Patagonia resembles in many ways the Vicariate of Northern Patagonia. Large numbers of colonists dwell in the vast territory, over which there is also a scattered population of Indians. By 1911 the Salesian Society had permanent stations in seven places, in which twenty priests and twenty-five lay-brothers were endeavouring to cope with the spiritual needs of the vast area. They were ably assisted by the Nuns of Our Lady Help of Christians who at that time had six Houses, with about thirty-five sisters. Wherever the regular spiritual administration can be maintained, one notices a great zeal for religion, and abundant evidence of its practice; but the difficulty is found with the scattered population who easily fall into tepidity, as is perhaps only natural. Catholic life is very flourishing in Punta Arenas, which was chosen with remarkable foresight by Mgr. Fagnano, the first Salesian Prefect Apostolic of the district, as the central point of the missionary campaign. For instance in the year 1910 there were 40,000 Communions. The Salesian Institute of the city includes a College with about 200 boys, a School of Arts and Trades which is held in high repute, and the control of parochial organisations. The work is conducted by eight priests, fifteen lay-brothers and twenty-four nuns.

The Indians living on the mainland are of the race of the *Tehuelches*, and they can only be visited by the Missionaries from time to time. A good proportion of these are now baptised, but they are still closely attached to their superstitions, and are prone to adopt whatever vicious practices there may be among the European immigrants. The various tribes occupying the Fuegian Archipelago are now much better provided for. During their earlier journeys, the Missionaries had abundant opportunities of learning the unfortunate condition of the Indians, whose lot became rapidly worse with the coming of the colonists. The imported diseases carried off great numbers of the Natives, who had no knowledge of the methods of preventing infection, or of curing the diseases when contracted. The

deeply hated strangers took possession of the best grazing meadows, which had up to then been the hunting-grounds of the *Onas* Indians, and it was perhaps a very natural revenge, if they carried off the cattle belonging to the colonists, to provide themselves with food. In return, the whites thought themselves justified in practising every sort of cruelty against the natives. They hunted them down and shot them in large numbers, men, women and children without distinction. A reward was offered for the head of a native. Thus a sort of warfare was waged, but the odds were heavily against the Indians who had but bows and arrows as their weapons, and who would certainly have been exterminated, except for the timely intervention of the missionaries.

Don Fagnano planned to gather the Natives together in settlements according to their tribes. He began with the *Alacalufi*, who dwelt mostly in the western part of Tierra del Fuego. He hesitated long about the site for their future home, and at last decided upon the uninhabited island of *Dawson*. This appeared especially suitable, for it had fine woods and fields, adapted both for hunting and for pastoral pursuits. After prolonged negotiations, the Chilian Government granted the whole Island to the Salesians for twenty years. In February 1889 Don Fagnano landed there with some assistants, and on the shores of the fine opening known as Harris Bay, they began to erect wooden huts for the settlement. Before the first week was over, seventeen Indians had arrived, but notwithstanding all the invitations and persuasions, and the obvious advantages of the permanent dwellings, they would not occupy the huts, but erected their seal-skin tents near the shore. Only after the lapse of several months could they be induced to live in the huts, from which the doors and windows had first to be removed, to satisfy their suspicions. Even then they merely regarded them as substitutes for tents, for they lit their fire in the centre of the room and covered the walls with straw and skins.

They were not asked to do any work, and were given plenty of food, yet they long remained taciturn and suspicious. On one occasion, when only a few of the staff were left at home, they

were attacked by the Indians, who wounded a priest and a lay-brother, and then fled to the sea-shore. However, this seemed to have been the Baptism of blood, for from that day the Mission of St. Raphael began to prosper. Indians from other parts came to see the huts and gradually became accustomed to their use. *Onas* came from various islands of the Archipelago and the Chilean Government sent others, whose presence was found to be the cause of disturbance with the whites. Thus it was soon necessary to build more huts and to extend the village which now had a small church and school.

In 1898 the population was four hundred, so it was decided to form another settlement a few miles away. It was dedicated to the Good Shepherd, and occupied what was really a magnificent site, on the shores of a small lake, surrounded by meadows and woods. In their most flourishing period, the Indian population was about 500, while during a space of twenty years about 1200 natives had found a refuge there.

Another settlement was established by Mgr. Fagnano for the *Onas* in Tierra del Fuego. It was opened in 1893, and its name of *Candelara* shows it to have some connection with the Feast of the Purification or Candlemas Day. The method of procedure was similar to that at Dawson Island, and two hundred Indians had already been housed, when on Dec. 12th 1896, a fire broke out, which destroyed in a few hours all that had been accomplished by the incredible labours of the Missionaries and the Nuns. The material loss was estimated at £16000. But the enterprising Prefect Apostolic was soon on the spot with more funds, infusing fresh courage into the hearts of the Missionaries, and laying new foundations in a more favourable situation. Later on the Salesians had two smaller stations, one near Lake Fagnano, the other at Cape Ines. Before 1908 there had arrived at Candelara some eight hundred *Onas*.

\*  
\* \* \*

The Reductions (or villages) of the Salesian Missionaries completely attained their object; they were a safe refuge for the Indians, who were so cruelly persecuted. The natives lived in wonderful harmony with the Missionaries and the Nuns. Clothing, tools, food were found for them. Every day each family had to be provided with a large portion of meat, for this had always been their chief sustenance, and they were allotted vegetables, rice and bread in proportion. The

Indians endeavoured to do their share by assisting in the labour necessary in such a large undertaking. It was not easy to provide suitable work for them, for many had too feeble a constitution for fatiguing labour, and the cold climate was not congenial to agriculture. The majority of the men were employed in tending the cattle, which for the reason given above, were kept in considerable numbers. The more robust were employed at Dawson, in felling and cutting timber. The women did all kinds of domestic work under the direction of the Nuns, as well as the weaving of wool for the garments required by the whole settlement. The boys and girls went to the schools, which were at once established, and a fair degree of intelligence was found among them.

\*  
\* \* \*

From all quarters the Salesians received generous praise for their beneficent work. The President of Chili paid a visit to Dawson Island, and expressed the thanks of the Republic to the Salesian Society. A famous Norwegian explorer wrote: "Amid the constant progress of civilisation, the only places where it is still found possible to keep the Indians without forcing them to a life which would be quite unnatural to them, are the Salesian Missions of Dawson Island and near the Rio Grande. After having visited these places, I and other explorers are of opinion that the work of the Salesian Missionaries is among the most beneficent work accomplished."

But the work had its highest reward in the truly Christian lives of the Indians, who became most exemplary in their practice of the Christian virtues. Unfortunately, not all the solicitude of the missionaries and expert medical advice could arrest the decline that had set in among the tribes, and which was accelerated by their displacement by the whites. Yet it seems that the light of the true Faith was to shine upon their end. A recent traveller thus gives his impression of this circumstance. One who visits the cemetery of St. Raphael on the hill side, and thinks of the Indians there laid to rest, is seized by a quiet melancholy, and an unspeakable compassion. But on hearing examples of their truly Christian and edifying deaths, one admires the ways of Divine Providence, who caused the purifying light of our Holy Faith to shine on these unfortunate creatures, by means of the Sons of the Venerable Don Bosco.

**CHINA**  
**NATIVE CO-OPERATORS**

A Salesian Missionary's diary of incidents on the Chinese Mission is full of interesting information. It was some time after the normal establishment of their work, that it became at all possible to enrol Co-operators and to give them any form of definite plan of campaign. The Missionary at last decided to make the effort during the month of May, and therefore invited the Christians to the special devotions to be held in the boy's chapel every evening. The attendance at first was disappointing, but by degrees the boys had to yield their places to the people, who came in rapidly increasing numbers to learn and practise the devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians. As the month was now drawing to its close it was decided to hold a special ceremony, at which the Association of Salesian Co-operators should be outlined, and an opportunity for enrolment given to those who wished to join. The Association of Our Lady Help of Christians was also to be begun.

Accordingly on the Feast of the Help of Christians, May 24th, Mgr. de Costa Nunes gave the first Salesian Conference in China with a zealous affection in keeping with his intimate knowledge of the work of Don Bosco. The Chinese Christians declared themselves surprised: "Truly we had no idea of the work of Don Bosco, or of its importance; we shall join with all our heart in a work which has been and is so favoured by Our Lady, and by which so much good can so easily be done to ourselves and to our neighbour." Straightway, in their definite fashion, they desired to be enrolled, and their enthusiasm still lasts.

The Festival itself had been made more impressive by the Baptism of six of our pupils, who also made their First Communion on that day. Several of these new Christians have passed through uncommon experiences. One particularly bright boy was given to me by his father, under the following circumstances.

While I was at a certain missionary House a poor girl came to enquire for the priest, and on meeting me she urged me to come to her home, where her father, a pagan, was dying. I gave her what consolation I could, and as we went along I learnt that she had been brought up as a Christian by the Nuns at Macao, but hearing that her father was dying they had sent the girl home to tend him. She had been praying very hard for his conversion, but to her grief he had remained obstinate, though she somehow felt that her confidence in Our Lady was increasing.

It took us some time to reach the girl's village. When we arrived at the cottage the girl went at once to her father. As soon as the sick man heard that a Catholic priest had come, he became very angry, and broke forth into insults against our religion, against me, and against his daughter for bringing me. I heard all that passed, for there was only a wooden partition between us. Presently the poor girl came out and said: "I am sorry, Father, for having brought you all this way to no purpose, for he will not see you." However I assured her that now that I had come I would venture in to see the invalid, in spite of insults or anger. The man, who could hear all that passed, wrapped himself up in his blankets and hid his face. I greeted him as pleasantly as I could, but there was no response. I asked how he was, and began to remove the blanket. Then he answered:

"It does not matter to you how I am."

"It matters a great deal, for I have come on purpose to do you good."

"How can you do me any good, for I am dying and it is too late."

"It is for that reason I have come. I shall offer you the means of being for ever happy in another life."

I then began to give him some simple ideas on the life after death, but he soon interrupted me saying:

"It is useless to waste your breath, I am deaf."

"Very well," I replied, turning away, "I shall speak to the wall."

And I continued thus to speak of the judgments of God, and the chief truths of the Faith.

After a short time he again broke in, but not so angrily. "It is useless to take any more trouble, I am very poor, and have nothing to give you. I had this daughter, but being unable to maintain her I had to let her go to the Nuns, who made her a Christian. I have also a boy of ten years, who is obliged to tend the cows in the fields near by: if you really mean to do something, take charge of my son, but as for me there is nothing now to be done."

"I shall willingly take charge of your boy. I will maintain him, and have him educated and taught a trade. Will that satisfy you?"

"Yes I am satisfied on that point."

"Therefore, let us come back to yourself."

"It is useless, for I am near my end." However, he let me prepare a little soup for him and he gave me to understand that he was grateful and would no longer oppose my wishes.

I therefore began to give him some simple instruction, and after a time he said:

"Now I understand that one who comes here from a distant land, and desires no reward, and is only anxious to do me good, can have no interest in deceiving me. I am therefore prepared to receive your instruction, but not now as I am too weary."

With a silent offering of thanksgiving to God, I yielded to his wishes, and recommended him to think earnestly over what I had said.

Going out, I gave a medal of Our Lady Help of Christians to his daughter, so that she might place it round her father's neck. I also told her to continue to instruct him and showed her how to baptize, in case he should seem to be near death, before my return.

Next day I came back again, but was met on the way by the girl who was in sorrow for the death of her father, and yet consoled by the fact that he had died a Christian. It appeared that soon after my departure he had asked his daughter to speak about the Christian religion and had asked to be baptized. The daughter wished to await my coming, but seeing that he grew worse, she asked his assent, made him say the Act of Contrition and then baptised him. During the few hours that he lived he seemed quite transformed and awaited his end with great tranquillity. I arranged to have a solemn funeral, particularly because I desired to impress the village, which as a whole was strongly pagan.

Having completed all these arrangements, I returned to Macao with the boy, who has responded very fully to our care. In a few months he had learnt the whole Catechism and was most anxious to be baptised, the ceremony being carried out on the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians as related above.

\*  
\*\*

Among the six little converts, two others have an interesting story. They were boys of good family, which was at one time wealthy, but was impoverished by the Russian-Japanese war. Misfortunes came fast upon one another, so that the father was constrained to ask us to receive two of his boys. This we very willingly did, and although the boys were quite aware of their former social position, they took diligently to a trade, mixed quite freely with the other scholars, obeyed every rule and joined in the usual exercises of piety; they asked to be allowed to learn the Catechism and were amongst the most atten-

tive at the instructions. They wished to be baptised at once, but it was thought more prudent to make them wait.

The holidays proved the great time of trial, for they were going to their home, which was strictly pagan. The boys had their minds made up and their plans prepared. Whenever they saw preparations for idolotrous rites or sacrifices they disappeared from the house, and although it was binding on all the household to be present, the rite had to be performed, without them. On their return they were severely reprov'd, but at the time of the next sacrifice they again fled, with the same result. But this expedient could not be expected to serve too many times. The day was coming when the whole family without exception must worship their ancestors, under grave penalties, and the father called the two disobedient boys and had them shut up. They were summoned at the proper time to make their prostrations, but they refused. A chorus of angry threats arose; it was to no purpose. The father threatened all sorts of punishments, and reproached the boys with ingratitude and with contempt for their ancestors. The boys replied that they had no such intention; they honoured their father and prayed for his prosperity, but this latter depended on the Will of the true God, Who would be offended by idolatry. Both boys, particularly the younger, declared they could not change their minds.

This scene was described to me by the father himself a good while after, when I had at last obtained from him a legal document securing his consent to the boys' change of religion. Even then we did not at once baptise the boys, so as to prove the constancy of their desires and of their resolutions, I pointed out that it might mean the parting from their family, and abandonment by all their friends. They were ready to accept everything and were absolutely confident in the protection of Our Lady Help of Christians. Their piety and fervour before receiving Baptism, and in preparation for their First Communion, has not been surpassed by anyone that we can recollect, whether Christian or pagan. They are now among our most fervent daily Communicants.

The missionary concludes by pointing out the urgent necessity of providing for the young children, who are either abandoned or in distress, and who, when properly cared for and instructed make excellent Christians and well-trained citizens.



# Salesian Notes and News.

## INCREASING DIFFICULTIES

The world at large is quite aware of the enormous difficulties that at present beset the printing and publishing firms. There is lack of material, and the numbers of men available are rapidly diminishing, only just those being left who can provide for the absolute minimum of necessity in printed matter. In a case like ours, the Directors at Turin who print, publish and despatch the *Bulletin*, though the matter is written in London, are confronted with difficulties which must appear well-nigh insuperable. The staffs of their many printing departments have been ruthlessly depleted for the needs of the army; the materials have become scarce, and have increased in price, greatly beyond the rise in prices associated with everything else in time of war. On the other hand their need for the despatch of the *Bulletin* has also become more insistent, for upon it depends largely the regular assistance rendered by the Co-operators towards the upkeep of so many works of charity.

Therefore, it must not surprise the members of the Association, if lengthy intervals intervene, between the appearance of the various issues, nor if the names of the months on the title-page do not correspond with the month in which it is delivered at their homes. The above considerations will account for that; apart from the irregularities which the postal administration finds it impossible to obviate, and the restrictions imposed upon matter sent from abroad.

It is hoped that Readers will not allow their generosity to show signs of weakening, if they do not receive the regular reminders to which they have been accustomed; on the contrary they must realise that now, more than ever before, their material co-operation is of the first importance; that many good works still depend for their sustenance upon the Salesian Co-operators, and that it is in times of special need that special efforts are required.



## EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE

In the latter part of last year, our Superior General received definite information from the Central States of America, concerning the havoc wrought by the earthquake at St. Tecla and San Salvador. Four of our Houses were more or less destroyed, two Schools belonging to the Salesians and two to the Nuns of Our Lady Help of Christians. The escapes from death were in many cases very marvellous. One of the girls of the school had gone to bed early as she was not well, but very soon after she had gone to the dormitory the first shock occurred. This caused all the girls as well as the nuns to rush out into the play-ground, and no one gave a thought to the girl in the dormitory. The shock of the earthquake upset the doors and their frame-work, and the door of this particular room was fixed so lightly that it could not be pushed open. The electric light was also affected and set alight a good part of the ceiling. The girl was almost frantic, but she was collected enough to pray for help, when a second shock came, and this loosened the door from the door-posts and she was able to escape unhurt.

Another incident concerned one of the nuns. She was convalescent after an illness, and was just able to get up for a few hours every day, returning to the Infirmary in the evening. On this particular day she happened to have asked the Superior if she might remain up a little longer, and the request was granted. It proved to be providential, for the first room to collapse was the infirmary, and if the nun had gone to bed she would certainly have been killed. As it was, she was able to escape with the others when the first shock came, but some who did not know that, ran to the infirmary to find her. They found her bed covered with the fallen debris, and feared that she was killed, but on further investigation perceived that she had escaped just in time.

There were many similar incidents of hair-

breadth escapes, and when all was once more quiet and apparently safe, public thanks were rendered to Our Lady Help of Christians for her evident protection under such dangerous circumstances.

#### AGRICULTURAL SUCCESSSES

The Venerable Don Bosco was an ardent supporter of all agricultural reforms and improvements, for he rightly judged that the intelligent cultivation of the soil was of primary importance to every nation, particularly to one like his own, which possessed a country of remarkable fertility, and exceptional agricultural wealth. Some of his earlier publications were on topics connected with this important industry, and he had established several agricultural schools, for the scientific training of the young, and of those who should adopt this branch of instruction in the teaching profession.

The Salesian Institute at Rome, successful in so many branches of the Arts and Trades, has a highly efficient department dealing with agriculture, which was recently inspected by the Government. The Minister in charge of the Board of Agriculture made an exhaustive inspection of each section of the work, both practical and theoretical. In the latter department he was not in favour of too elaborate a programme, when it was a question of dealing only with the average pupil from the country districts, and approved the idea of attaching an agricultural department to existing schools, rather than of equipping entirely separate undertakings. The great practical advantages of agriculture were more likely to be brought home in this way to the student at large, and the Institute as a whole would gain in many directions. He insisted too that it was important to give agricultural training, without making it a condition that a certain standard of other knowledge should be reached, for in many cases this standard had been placed too high, and had resulted in a shortage of pupils and in retarding their training, just when the country needed practical agricultural knowledge, besides tending to close the agricultural schools to the very ones for whom they were supposed to be designed.

The Minister had words of sincere admiration and encouragement for the Institute, and promised to do his utmost to secure the assistance of the Government in making it accessible to larger numbers, and to increase the scope of its instruction.

#### PREVISIONS

Among the many unedited papers concerning the Venerable Don Bosco, documents are continually bringing to light the mysterious ways of Providence in his regard. Anyone who has read about Don Bosco, must have been struck by his wonderful previsions of future events, a gift which was bestowed upon him in a very large measure, and far beyond what we are accustomed to associate even with the most favoured of the Servants of God. The following narrative of a worthy Canon is full of those extraordinary incidents which were strewn about the daily path of Don Bosco's life. The two chief previsions herein described relate to the foundation of the Nuns of Our Lady Help of Christians, and to the beatification of Canon Cottolengo. The narrative is given in the words of the old priest, who made the communication to Fr. Lemoigne, the biographer of Don Bosco.

In the Autumn of 1866, I was about eight years old and was living at Chieri with my parents, who were great friends of Don Bosco. One day we were surprised at his sudden arrival at our house with some of his boys, who were going with him to Becchi for the Feast of the Rosary. He was on friendly terms with my parents and with my brother and sister, but I, being so young, was not yet able to enjoy the privilege of his acquaintance. But on this occasion he looked at me, in that comprehending manner he had, and after inquiring about my studies, he said :

— When you have reached the fourth class you will come with me to the Oratory. There you can continue your studies and we shall see what God wishes you to do.

My sister and I remembered his words quite distinctly. She asked him on that occasion whether he was not going to open Schools for girls, to make, as she expressed it, a regiment of Sisters. Don Bosco smiled and said :

— Yes, in its proper time, but not for you!

He was right. In 1868, my sister, on the advice of her parents and her spiritual director, was married, although previously she had seemed to have no inclination to enter that state.

In the following year it was the time appointed for me to go to the Oratory, and when I set out, my mother commissioned me to ask Don Bosco if the beatification of Canon Cottolengo would soon be declared. It must be remarked the Founder of the Little House of Divine Providence had recently died, and my mother who

was very well known to him, had always regarded him as a saint. I did not know at the time that the message was of any particular importance; my chief anxiety was that I should not forget the big word *beatification*.

However, when I arrived at the Oratory I managed to deliver the message, and Don Bosco replied:

"Yes, yes, they will beatify him, but your mother will not live to see it, nor shall I; but you will."

These few words contain more than one prediction. I told my mother the answer, and then it left my mind completely for many years, in fact until the year 1892, when it came back to me in a most singular manner. It was strange that I did not remember the prophetic words neither when my mother died in 1870, nor when Don Bosco died in 1888.

However in January 1892 I went to Giaveno to preach for the Quarantore, and while there was attacked by a fever, which threatened to carry me off. After a few days illness the doctor recommended the Last Sacraments, and the parish priest was preparing to administer them. He had made some pious exhortations, and asked me if I was ready. I replied:

— Yes, willingly; then scarcely knowing what I said, I added—but have they beatified Canon Cottolengo yet?

At this unexpected and incomprehensible reply, the parish priest concluded that I was beginning to wander in my mind, and it only served to make him hurry to conclude the sacred rites. Just after I had received Communion I went off to sleep, and awoke after some hours to find the fever gone, and my recovery assured. The prediction of Don Bosco was verified. Everyone was astonished, particularly my sister who had arrived from Chieri.

During my convalescence, the parish priest asked me what I meant by the strange reference to Canon Cottolengo, and as he asked the question a cloud seemed to pass away from my mind, and the prediction of Don Bosco came

back to me. — "Your mother will not live to see the Beatification, nor shall I, but you will." We both understood then that my remark in the crisis of the fever, was equivalent to a reminder that I should not die. In fact I was completely cured, and as soon as possible I went to Turin to testify to the above facts to the late lamented Don Lemoyne, the official biographer of Don Bosco, for some inward voice continually urged me to make the facts known.

#### A STREET NAMED MARIA AUSILIATRICE

The municipal authorities of Seville unanimously adopted a resolution, passed by the Association of Our Lady Help of Christians, that the name of a certain street should be changed to that of *Maria Ausiliatrice*. This is a new act of homage presented by the city which is already dedicated to the Mother of God, and a new means of drawing down the protection of the Help of Christians, for this act will bring her maternal goodness constantly before the minds of the people.

The title is already a popular one in Seville, on account of the number of favours that have been obtained, and therefore, besides being inscribed upon the stone of the walls, it will be imprinted upon the hearts of the people, particularly as large numbers are constantly passing through the thoroughfare, which is in a busy industrial quarter. The inauguration ceremony was done in state, and was a fine act of public faith; and it may be regarded also as an act of public thanksgiving and reparation, for in 1892, when the Sons of Don Bosco first went to Seville, they were stoned by the street urchins in that very neighbourhood. It was the devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians, who changed all that, and very soon those same youngsters were in attendance at the Festive Oratory, and every May 24th, the Statue of Our Lady passes through all the streets of the district, to bring a blessing upon the city. Seville has honoured itself by this new act of homage to Our Lady Help of Christians.





## 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. PIOUS 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 Son. BENEDICT P.P. XV.

There can surely be no need to remind our Co-operators that the great occasion for intercession to Our Lady Help of Christians is again at hand. During the month of May there will be continual supplication before her altar in the Basilica at Turin, and the intentions of the Co-operators are daily recommended to her, for her special and privileged consideration. All should therefore endeavour to join in this combined intercession, particularly for the pressing needs of the nations, and for the welfare of our own works, many of which have suffered considerably, as will be easily understood. For these in particular our Superior General asks for the prayers of all our Co-operators, and they need not be reminded that past experience has shown that the month of May, and the Novena before the Feast on the 24th, are propitious times to intercede with the Mother of God.

\*  
\*\*

It may be well to call the attention of our Readers to the custom of sending in brief thanksgivings, or longer descriptions if desired, for publication. This has now become a general custom in connection with many devotions, and was encouraged by the Ven. Don Bosco in regard to favours received through the intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians. The main reason is a very natural one; for it is a form of grateful return for the benefit bestowed, which is surely worthy of acknowledgments; moreover, experience and association have gone to show that this readiness to acknowledge the favour has been an acceptable disposition of heart, making the petitioner more likely to receive the desired benefit. At the same time it is entirely a matter for the individual. With regard to favours published in our columns, there is usually a note prefixed, to the effect that they carry the weight of creditable human

testimony, and are not claimed to be in any way sanctioned by higher authority. If this is not always expressed it is understood.

### THE NOVENA

*suggested by the Ven. Don Bosco is as follows:*

(1) To recite for nine days the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary* and *Glory be to the Father* three times in honour of the Most Blessed Sacrament, adding each time *Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us*, or *Blessed and praised every moment be the Most Holy and Most Divine Sacrament*; and also three times the *Hail Holy Queen*, with the invocation *Mary Help of Christians, pray for us*.

(2) To approach the Sacraments at least once during the Novena.

(3) To make a promise of a thank-offering, if one is in a position to do so. It is suggested that this may take the form of an offering for a Mass in thanksgiving. In accordance with the recommendation of the Ven. Don Bosco a promise to publish the favour in Our Lady's honour should also be made.

\*  
\*\*

The Co-operators are invited to join with the Salesians in making the 24th of every month a day of special devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians.





## Graces and Favours. <sup>(1)</sup>

CEYLON. — I beg to return public thanks for a temporal favour received after prayers to Our Lady Help of Christians, and a promise of publication.

A. T. D.

BELFAST. — I am sending an offering for a Mass in thanksgiving for a favour received. A promise had been made that, if in answer to our prayers a certain dangerous operation was successful, a thank-offering would be sent, and publication of the favour made.

E. O. H.

---



---

## Thanksgivings to the Ven. Don Bosco.

*In accounts concerning Don Bosco, we again declare that we present them in the manner allowed by the pontifical briefs regarding such narratives, and do not claim for any fact a higher authority than that of authentic human testimony, and subject always to the judgment of the Church to whom perfect obedience is due.*

Towards the end of last year, a fever, consequent upon some internal malady, threatened to have fatal results. I was reduced to extreme weakness, as a result of this combined attack, and was also in a very low state mentally and morally, and subject to much depression. This continued for some time, when one evening a friend said that she was going to make a visit to the tomb of Don Bosco to obtain my cure, and invited me to accompany her in spirit and to pray for that result. Hope seemed to return to me quite suddenly, and I joined with all possible fervour in the prayers which were offered to the Venerable Don Bosco, that he might obtain my cure from Our Lady Help of Christians. Quite miraculously my physical and moral health seemed to be re-established, and everyone who attended upon me, or came to visit me was of that opinion. While referring again today to those events my sister declared: "Yes, indeed, your sudden restoration was truly wonderful; one must surely believe that without supernatural

aid you would not be in this good state of health today."

Thus I beg to render public thanks with all my heart to the Ven. Bosco, and enclose a small sum towards the spread of those good works which he established. I hope before long to go in person to his tomb to thank him for his powerful intercession.

Dec. 1917.

M. G.

\*  
\*

Attached to the second Artillery Regiment, I had been stationed for several months on the Macedonian front, where I contracted some unknown disease, which, while defying all the skill of the doctors' art, had gradually reduced me to a state of extreme weakness and prostration. When the medical men were almost despairing of discovering the cause of my illness, I began a Novena to the Ven. Don Bosco, promising to publish the favour and an offering towards the promotion of his beatification, if I should obtain my cure. I was not long waiting for this. The Novena was scarcely finished when the doctors discovered my disease, and declared that an operation was indispensable and urgent, and yet they had small hopes of my receiving any benefit from it. It was a last resort. But contrary to their expectations, the operation was entirely successful and had the best results. Within a few days I was out of danger, and am now in perfect health.

Confident that Don Bosco will protect me in the dangers that have yet to be endured, I desire to fulfil my promise by sending the offering, and making known the favour for the glory of God and the honour of this faithful servant.

Oct. 1917.

M. B.

\*  
\*

When I was dangerously ill with typhoid fever, the doctors feared fatal complications, which, they said, might very easily supervene. I therefore turned to Don Bosco and besought him to intercede with Our Lady Help of Christians to protect me against these dangers, and I had a relic of him always with me. Thanks to this protection, all danger was safely warded off. The fever took its ordinary course and I was almost convalescent when a relapse occurred. Again I had recourse to the Ven. Don Bosco, promising to publish the favour, if granted, in

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

the *Bulletin*. The fever presently departed and my cure was complete.

Oct. 1917.

D. G. A.

\*  
\*\*

I cannot do less than make a public acknowledgement of my sentiments of lively gratitude towards the Venerable Don Bosco. My only son had been seriously wounded, and after a long period of recovery had returned to the front. For a considerable time we had no news of him, and to four telegrams of enquiry we could get no answer. Just at that time my copy of the *Bulletin* reached me, and I began to turn over the pages in a distracted sort of way, when my eye rested upon the page which referred to the intercession of the faithful to Don Bosco. Their example moved me to make a fervent prayer to him that we might have good news of my son. Very soon afterwards we received word that he was safe and well, and I could not help reminding those around me of the prayer that had been made to Don Bosco. This publication of our thanks is made in testimony of our gratitude and our reliance upon his assistance.

August 1917.

M. dei B. C.

\*  
\*\*

Some time ago I was in very bad health, and had neuralgia pains in one arm so badly, that I could get no repose either by day or night. In fact I was soon reduced to so weak a condition that I could not even walk. However, I had to pass several months in this helpless condition, beseeching God in the meantime to send me some relief, when one day a friend suggested that I should have recourse to Don Bosco. A picture and a relic were obtained, and these were placed upon the arm, and a Novena of prayers was commenced.

I noticed some improvement almost at once, but it did not continue so several novenas were added to the first. The improvement seemed to be so slow in coming, that in a moment of weariness and want of confidence, I resolved to turn to some other Servant of God, and took off from my arm the picture and reliquary.

I had no sooner done so, than my pains began all over again as bad as ever, whence I concluded that my action was displeasing to the *Venerable*, so I at once replaced the pious objects upon the arm. At their contact the pain in-

stantly disappeared, so that I could be in no doubt at all that my relief was due to the intercession of Don Bosco, from whom I confidently await a total restoration to health. In the meantime I am able to devote myself to my duties almost as well as though nothing had happened. I beg to publish the favour, in attestation of my gratitude.

August 1917.

Sister M.

\*  
\*\*

Last year my wife was taken ill with a serious form of meningitis, and was at once removed to a hospital under the charge of some nursing Sisters. It happened that at the same time I was in another hospital for an operation, and it was not till a month later that I was able to go to the nursing home. I was not allowed to see the patient, but was informed that she had been twice at death's door, and that her condition was still desperate. The doctor told me the facts of the case without any reservation, and in the presence of myself and the Superioress of the Nuns said: "*Only a miracle can save her.*"

I had never been able to reconcile myself to the loss of this devoted companion, whose existence was so necessary to the welfare of our little children, so I said to myself: "If a miracle is required, we shall have a miracle!" and my thoughts at once turned to Don Bosco. From one of the Salesian Fathers I got a relic of the Servant of God, and sent it to the Sister in charge so that it might be put on the patient's pillow. A Novena was at once begun. At its close there was a slight improvement noticeable, and from that time the malady yielded to treatment. Shortly afterwards the doctor met me again and said: "I can't make out what has happened inside that brain, the change is a mystery to me; but from now I am hopeful of a cure."

The improvement continued and resulted in a complete cure. My wife has been restored to her rejoicing family. As she left the hospital, she was accompanied by the doctor, the Superioress and several of the nuns, who could scarcely believe their eyes, and who spoke of the occurrence as quite extraordinary. Full of gratitude to Don Bosco we send this account for publication for the greater glory of God, and for the increase of the people's confidence in the intercession of the Servant of God.

Rome, July 1917.

P. G.

# The Life of the Venerable Don Bosco

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

## CHAPTER XII (*Continued*).

Don Cafasso put his case directly to Don Borel: "I want you to find a place in your Institute and a stipend for a worthy priest." This demand very naturally struck the chaplain as being somewhat extraordinary, and when Don Cafasso went on to point out that the priest under consideration would be an excellent assistant in hearing Confessions and in preaching, Don Borel declared that there was not enough work for two priests.

Don Cafasso meant to gain his point. He replied:

— Grant me the favour of receiving him here; I shall pay the stipend myself.

— But what will this priest do, if he stays here?

— He will be at liberty to do whatever he thinks best.

Don Cafasso smiled at his own boldness, and then added:

— At St. Francis' there is a young priest, Don Bosco, who had begun a Festive Oratory for boys. He finished his higher studies last year, and during the scholastic year just completed he has been an assistant, and one of the Confessors in the public church. It is now time for him to go, so that some one else may take up a course of studies in the Institute. If we allow him to be appointed to some church we shall lose his services; his field of action would be altogether too restricted and he would not be able to carry on the work to which God has called him. Perhaps you can suggest some duty which would keep him in the town. It is absolutely necessary that something should be found. Gifted as he is with energy and zeal, he will accomplish much for the young. He is destined by Providence to become the Apostle of Turin!

Don Borel now changed his manner. He was already friendly with Don Bosco and readily

agreed to find some appointment for him. It happened that the Marchioness Barolo had asked Don Borel, some weeks before, to find a chaplain for a hospital that she was having built. He therefore went to her and proposed Don Bosco as the chaplain. The lady at once approved, but pointed out that the hospital would not be ready for a few months. Don Borel replied:

— We must secure that young priest at once, otherwise he will be sent elsewhere and we shall lose him; he is of the sort we cannot afford to go anywhere else.

The Marchioness accordingly agreed to his immediate appointment. She fixed the stipend, and Don Borel gave him temporary quarters in his *Rifugio*.

While these negotiations were being carried on, Don Cafasso again broached the subject with Don Bosco. He called him and asked to what field of labour he felt particularly drawn. Don Bosco replied that he was prepared to accept whatever was selected for him. His spiritual Director then referred to the proposals that had been made, but Don Bosco replied that his only preference was for the work among the boys. Don Cafasso then told him to go to his native place at Becchi for his vacation, and that in the meantime something would be decided upon.

Not even his journey to Becchi was without one of those incidents, which seem to have been characteristic of Don Bosco's work in the ministry. He had set out on foot with another young priest who was going in the same direction. Soon they caught up with a waggoner who was urging on his horses with a large medley of blasphemous expressions. The companion upbraided the man, who replied in wrathful terms, so that high words began to pass between them. After listening for a little while, Don Bosco decided that it was time for him to intervene, and his considerate speech, breathing charity and zeal for souls, so won over the intractable

carter, that he presently repented and went to Confession in a wayside field.

Don Bosco's first stay was at Canelli, where he had promised to give a Mission. When this was done, he went to Castelnuovo and preached for the Novena before the feast of the Holy Rosary. In both places his preaching was abundantly effective, and his method then displayed its permanent constituents, simplicity, lucidity, attractiveness. At the end of his holiday he went back to St. Francis', expecting to receive his definite appointment; but Don Cafasso still made no sign, and the Servant of God thought it proper not to question him. After a few days, Don Cafasso called him aside and asked why he had made no inquiries about his future work. He answered that he desired to recognise the will of God in his decision, and that it was very important that nothing of his own doing should have any part in it; he was prepared to go immediately wherever he was sent. Don Cafasso then said:

— Very well, put your things together and go to the *Rifugio*. You will be the chaplain to St. Philomena's hospital, and you can assist Don Borel in the spiritual care of the children at his Institute: while you are there, God will make known to you what you ought to undertake on behalf of poor children. It was in the room assigned to him at the *Rifugio*, that Don Bosco, having obtained permission from the Marchioness Barolo, gathered his youthful band together on Sundays and Festivals.

In his Memoirs Don Bosco writes: "On the second Sunday of October of that year (1844) I had to announce to the boys that the Oratory would be transferred to Valdocco. But my uncertainty as to the place, the means, and the personnel to carry it on, gave me cause for serious thoughts. It was not with a light heart that I went to bed on the Saturday before the opening, but during that night I had a new dream, which seemed like the concluding part of the one I had had as a boy at Becchi. It may be well for me to give it in detail.

I found myself in the midst of a mixed herd of wolves, goats, sheep, rams and dogs, while birds flew all around. The uproar they made between them would have sufficed to frighten

the bravest heart. I at once thought of taking flight, when there appeared a lady, dressed in comely fashion, after the style of a shepherdess. She made a sign to me, intimating that I was to follow and tend that herd of animals, while she went on before. We wandered about to various sites; we made three halts; at each of the three many of the animals changed their form and became gentle lambs, whose number thus went on ever increasing. After going a long way we found ourselves in a field, where the animals fed and played together, without any sign of disposition to attack each other.

Overcome with weariness, I desired to rest by the side of the road which ran along the meadow, but the shepherdess invited me to continue the journey. After an apparently short interval I found myself in a playground with porticoes all round it. At one end there stood a church. At the same time I perceived that four-fifths of the animals had now become lambs, and their number was very great. I saw also that several other young shepherds were on the scene, helping to take care of the flock, and as they themselves increased in number, they divided up, and some went elsewhere to gather together other strange animals and to guide them into the sheep-fold.

It then appeared to me time to say Mass, so I desired to go away, but the lady told me to stay at my post till midday. Looking about, I saw a garden in which all sorts of vegetables were growing. 'Look again', said the lady, and I saw a magnificent church. Voices and the sound of musical instruments seemed to invite me to sing Mass. Inside the church I saw a white scroll on which was written: *Hic domus mea, inde gloria mea*. Here is my house, hence shall my glory go forth.' I wanted to ask the shepherdess where I was, and what was meant by the journey, the house, the church and this other church. As though anticipating my question she answered: 'You will understand what it all means, when you see all these things in reality before your eyes, which now you behold in vision.' I then seemed to be awake and I replied: 'I see everything clearly with my own eyes; I know where I am going and what I am doing.' Just at that moment the bell

of St' Francis' rang for the *Angelus* and I awoke'.

This dream occupied the whole of the night and it contained many other details. At the time, I had only a slight perception of its significance, and as I was not inclined to be over-confident in myself; I did not give it much importance; but as things developed I understood it better, and while at the *Rifugio*, especially later on, I received much guidance from it and from a subsequent dream."

Don Bosco accordingly announced to his boys that their meeting-place was to be changed. They did not take too kindly to the proposal, but when he enlarged upon its advantages, they were overjoyed, and awaited the coming Sunday with that impatience which juvenile expectation inspires. On the third Sunday of October 1844, just after midday, boys began to find their way to Valdocco, in search of Don Bosco and the new Oratory; it soon became a regular invasion. At the shouts of the boys, the inhabitants of the quarter were in a state of consternation, fearing that they had come with some evil intent; and as neither the name nor the work of Don Bosco was known in that neighbourhood, they were only the more mystified to hear the boys inquiring for him. The boys began to think that they were being made the subject of a joke, and were not in a humour to deal gently with the people; things were beginning to assume an uneasy appearance, when Don Bosco himself, hearing the noise, arrived on the scene. He was greeted with shouts of welcome on all sides, and the boys followed him without any further trouble, while the people looked on in wonder.

To the many inquiries as to the whereabouts of the new Oratory, Don Bosco replied that the real Oratory was not yet finished, but that they should come and see his rooms and the Institute where he was living. There was soon not a free square inch of space, but Don Bosco managed to entertain the boys quite well, and some instruction and the singing of hymns took place, just as at the previous Oratory. On the following Sunday, however, there was such an influx of boys from the new neighbourhood that there was simply no room for them. They over-

flowed upon the landing, stairs, corridors and wherever they could stand. Don Borel volunteered to instruct some, while Don Bosco took the others and managed things generally. His room was soon in a perfect muddle, but his only injunction was that nothing should be broken.

It will be obvious to all that this was scarcely an ideal place for an Oratory. Every Sunday Don Bosco took the boys to hear Mass in one or other of the churches of the city, generally to the *Consolata*, while for Benediction they mostly went to St. Barbara's School, which was under the charge of the Christian Brothers, and where Don Bosco often went to hear the boys' confessions and to give instructions. It was Don Borel who first decided that they could go on no longer under those cramped conditions, so Don Bosco went to the Archbishop, Mgr. Frasoni, and put the whole matter before him.

The Archbishop asked if these boys could not be accommodated in the parishes to which they belonged. Don Bosco replied:

— Some of them are strangers and are in Turin only for a time, so that they have no idea to what parish they belong; some are ill-clad, speak only a dialect and can scarcely be understood; others again are big lads who could not be put into classes with young children. Those that do belong to the parishes of the city would hardly ever enter a church on account of many adverse circumstances.

— Very well, — answered the benevolent Pastor — Go and do whatever you think best. I grant you all the faculties that may be necessary for your work, and I give my blessing to all concerned in it. From what you say it is apparent that some suitable premises should be found. Put the matter before the Marchioness Barolo, to whom I will write on the subject; perhaps she could manage to provide some accommodation near the *Rifugio* itself.

The Servant of God had an interview with the lady, and as the Hospital was not to be opened for some months, she allowed him to use two of its rooms for a chapel. This, therefore, was the site chosen by Divine Providence for the first church of the Oratory. On December 6th Don Bosco received ecclesiastical authority

to bless the building and to say Mass in it, and to use it for other church functions. Its adornments and vestments were of the simplest. The opening was reserved for the day which has since become both memorable and dearly cherished in the annals of the Society — Dec. 8th, and, considering the part so unmistakably fulfilled by Our Lady in the establishment and guidance of the work, no one can doubt the significance of that date. Don Bosco dedicated the chapel to St. Francis of Sales, another name destined to be identified with his work. The opening ceremony was followed by Holy Mass, attended by goodly numbers of his young and devoted admirers, who were convinced that they had at last reached permanent Oratory.

A few circumstances of that morning should not be lost to posterity. The chapel was as poor as it could well be; the weather was abnormally bad, but it could not prevent the boys from keeping their appointment at Valdocco, though they had to come from all quarters of the town. There was a very heavy fall of snow in the morning, and it lay as thick as on a mountain ridge; a big brazier had to be brought into the new chapel. But what the boys most remembered were the tears that Don Bosco could not keep back while he was saying Mass; the Apostle of the Young was overcome by a consoling gladness, too full to be restrained.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### The choice of a Patron for his work — The search for a permanent habitation.

According to the views of Don Borel, an assiduous colleague, and of the Venerable Don Cafasso, his spiritual guide, Don Bosco had decided to place his incipient work under the patronage of St. Francis of Sales, even before he left the Theological House of St. Francis of Assisi. Several motives strengthened one another to lead him to such a decision. The Marchioness Barolo, who was mentioned in a preceding chapter, as the foundress of the Institute to which Don Bosco was temporarily attached, conceived the idea of a congregation of priests, to assist Don Bosco in his work

and to carry it on in his absence; this congregation was to have St. Francis of Sales as its Patron, and a suitable picture of the Saint had already been painted. Again the work on behalf of boys which Don Bosco had begun called for infinite patience, and a high degree of meekness and charity; these were the characteristics of St. Francis of Sales. Moreover, just at that time, the activities of Protestant sects were being vigourously pursued in the northern parts of Italy, and Don Bosco desired to obtain the assistance and intercession of the Bishop of Geneva, who had during his life secured great glory to God and benefit to the Church by his triumphant campaign against the heretics.

In the meantime the Sunday instructions and recreation attracted many boys from the new neighbourhood. The little church, which then became known as the Oratory, with which name it seems to have been invested by popular acclaim, was soon overcrowded to an impossible extent. There was not much more space outside, where the boys played under the superintendance of Don Bosco and Don Borel, but great promises were put before the boys, in regard to the coming enjoyments at the Oratory which was one day to be theirs. Patience was necessary.

It was towards the end of that year, 1844, that Don Bosco initiated his evening classes, and he made them such a success that they were soon adopted in other parts of the country, Thus giving one more instance of the priest being the friend and benefactor of the people. On the Sunday afternoons and evenings, many of the older boys received lessons from Don Bosco and Don Borel, who turned their own rooms into class-rooms for that purpose. Don Bosco's own manner of life at this time shows signs of that unceasing labour which ever characterised him. As an assistant priest at the *Rifugio* he had duties to fulfil there under the direction of Don Borel; he preached regularly in the city, and still had a confessional in the Church of St. Francis of Assisi; in fact he went to the Clergy Institute every day, to consult his friend and guide Don Cafasso, who

secured him a room there so that he might pursue his studies without disturbance, and and prepare for the press those little works which he was now issuing for the defence and spread of religion. At his studies and writing Don Bosco thus managed to spend several hours a day, usually from four in the afternoon till nine. But at whatever time he went there, he never omitted calling on Don Cafasso, and thus these two Servants of God became each intimately acquainted with the other's extraordinary gifts of soul and mind. During this period Don Bosco published two small books, the life of his friend at the Seminary, Luigi Comollo, and a small devotional work on the Dolours of Our Lady. The title of this latter shows the aim he had in view; it ran: *The crown of the seven dolours of Our Lady, with seven brief considerations on the same, presented in the form of the Way of the Cross*. He had also in hand a third entitled: *Devotion to the Guardian Angel*, and he continued his publication of the abridged *History of the Church* and a compendium of the the Old Testament.

He was much occupied in the Confessional, particularly as he had sought out the foreign soldiers, who were then in Turin in considerable numbers, and who also took him to visit their compatriots in the hospitals of the town. For over twenty years he visited the prisons and brought about numerous and wonderful conversions. Don Cafasso has described his zealous labours in this apostolate. He would sometimes get the well-disposed men, whom he had already made good Christians, to talk to those of their companions whose evil lives he desired to correct, and thus he prepared the way for a more effective operation. Another ruse of his was to hold a dialogue in the chapel between himself and one of these confederates, who would put forward, after having been coached by Don Bosco, the objections commonly met with among that class of men against religion and its minister, against the Sacraments and the Church in general. Thus when Don Bosco began his instruction, there would suddenly be heard the voice of this objector, who, amid the curiosity and astonishment of the other prisoners, would put to the priest

just the questions they desired to hear discussed, and would draw their own conclusions. Question and answer were framed with a rare combination of astuteness and interest, incidents both facetious and ridiculous were brought in, so that Don Bosco was able to lead on from smiles and good humour to the solid truths of the Christian Religion, which were always connected with the illustrations. The result was that men, who had lived without God or religion for years, were brought to see things in their true light, and became sincere converts.

But it was not only by such means that he obtained the grace of conversion for so many. He added much prayer and penance in an extreme degree. His suffering were usually a secret, but often enough before going to the prisons and on his return he would remark that he had pain in the head or face, which apparently were beyond the ordinary acuteness and were sometimes of long duration. While these pains were being endured, or some important affair had to be attended to, which could not be settled without attention and care, the pains would mysteriously cease, and return when the business was over. To one who was much with him he acknowledged that these sufferings were sent to in him in answer to his prayers, to obtain the conversion of one who was more than usually obstinate. To one of his priests he explained it by saying: "How can I give these poor men a penance, if I do not do any myself."

Hence it is not a matter of surprise, if the intervention of Our Lady was occasionally evident in the conversion of these hardened sinners, in support of the zealous labours of Don Bosco and of Don Cafasso and Don Borel who frequently helped in this apostolate. One particular conversion is described by him who was the chief actor in it. As a boy he ran away from home, and after a period of precarious living he joined the army. In this he rose to the rank of sergeant, but grew more and more vicious, and hated the very name of religion. He happened to be one day in the Sanctuary of the *Madonna del Laghetto*, when a paralysed girl was miraculously restored to health. He could not deny the mira-

cle which had taken place under his very eyes, but it made him more furious than ever, to witness the power of God, whose existence he openly declared to be a fable. As the regiment was newly quartered in that neighbourhood, many soldiers had gone to visit the famous Sanctuary of the Madonna, and some forty had been witnesses of the miraculous cure. It was therefore a general topic at the barracks. The sergeant was annoyed by this and called the men fools and ignoramases, and when one ventured to object he had him punished. But shortly afterwards he was himself condemned to ten years imprisonment for a serious crime. His anger at his strict confinement knew no bounds, and he would give way to fits of cursing and blaspheming; and noticing one day on the wall a picture of Our Lady of Dolours he was seized with a sort of demoniacal fury, and attempted to set it alight; but some invisible hand seemed to catch hold of him and hold him back. Completely amazed, he turned round, and seeing no one near, he was constrained to believe that some supernatural force had prevented him from destroying the picture. The experience brought him to his senses and he was overcome with sorrow and confusion for his misdeeds. He sent for the priest and confessed his sins. His conversion was remarkable, for the contrast between his former life and his subsequent behavior would remind one of the difference between Saul before the incident on the way to Damascus and Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles. He sought to expiate his old obstinacy by an exact obedience to the rules of the prison, to repair the scandal by good example and by urging others of his obstinate companions to make their peace with God.

When his sentence was complete, he came out of prison and led a most upright life. He was ever grateful to Don Bosco for the instruction and counsel received from him before and during his conversion, and was a frequent visitor at the Oratory. By this and similar conversions the charity and penances of Don Bosco were amply rewarded.

But the servant of God was by no means oblivious of the fact that his position at the Hospital was not a permanent one. Whenever his tenure of office expired, it would no longer be possible to have the boys there on Sundays, so he had already begun to look about for a suitable meeting place, as he considered it injurious to his work, if he should have to disperse the boys even for a short interval. And besides, the Marchioness was getting tired of having so many boys around her premises, and was liable to break out into remonstrances if even a flower were touched.

One morning Don Bosco went out absorbed in these considerations, and presently found himself before the Church of St. Peter in Chains. On a precious occasion he had assembled some of his boys there during Lent, for the instructions before their First Communion, and he had probably only required the permission of the clergy in charge, and the acquiescence of the Chaplain, for there was a cemetery attached. Those in charge of the classes had found it a very suitable place for their instructions, and it was intended to keep up the practice. But they had reckoned too soon. The Chapel and grounds were the property of the commune, and, from the records of the deliberations of the Councillors, it appears that a resolution was passed by them to forbid the use of the place for such purposes, and to obtain the authority of the higher officers of the town to prevent any such future gatherings. However, this resolution seems never to have been forwarded, probably because the instructions had not been continued after Easter.

*(To be continued).*



The prayers of the Associates are asked for the repose of the soul of the following deceased member:

Sister Dorothy Culshaw.