



Salesian Bulletin

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Vol. X


*Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem:
in die mala liberabit eum Dominus. (Ps. XLII.)*

Luca 11:22

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

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The New Life of the Ven. Don Bosco

Copies of this work are now available to the public. The first issue is being rapidly bought up, and from all quarters we hear that it fulfils all expectations. It contains much that is unfamiliar and striking even to those who are most conversant with the Lives of the Servants of God.

It is fascinating as biography—says the Universe.

Apply to *The Salesian Press, Surrey Lane, Battersea, London.* — Postal orders should be enclosed; Paper covers $2\frac{1}{9}$; Bound copies $3\frac{1}{9}$.

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

The Very Rev. Don Albera, Superior General of the Congregation, and Director-in-Chief of the Salesian Co-operators, writes:

On June 9th 1868 the majestic Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians was consecrated by Mgr. Ricardi di Netro, Archbishop of Turin; and I remember, as though it were now, the solemn moment when Don Bosco, all radiant with a supernatural joy, and yet with his eyes bathed in tears from the emotion which he could not repress, ascended the steps of the High Altar to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice for the first time, beneath the maternal gaze of his heavenly Patroness. To those amongst us who were somewhat mature in years, it did not escape us that the features of the Venerable Servant of God seemed transfigured, and that at that period he was constantly speaking to us of the Mother of God. We preserve as a precious memory the striking words he uttered regarding the wonders Our Lady would perform in favour of her devout clients; and now we look back with deep consolation as witnesses of the prophecy fulfilled.

It is now fifty years since we were witnesses of that event, so worthy of being handed down to memory; and it is indeed a source of joy to be able to say that the whole of that period has been none other than an uninterrupted series of prodigies worked by the Help of Christians, as Don Bosco had foretold.

Immediately after the consecration of the Sanctuary, vocations to the Sa-

lesian Society were multiplied; there arose as though by magic numbers of Colleges, Festive Oratories, Schools of Arts and Trades, in which great bodies of youthful citizens were shielded from the weany corrupting influences all around them. The difficulties which had beset the approbation of the Society disappeared, and it soon spread beyond seas and mountains. The prediction of Our Lady was fulfilled that from the temple her glory should spread: *Inde gloria mea*. With good reason therefore may it be said that the consecration of the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians made an epoch in the history of the Works of Don Bosco, and that she herself desired to reward her faithful servant for the sacrifices he had borne in the work of erecting a befitting temple to her.

Moreover, at such a time as this, one fact is most pointedly brought home to us; and it is that our work, no matter how far-reaching and complex, owes its origin and development to the protection and guidance of Our Lady; it follows from that, that we look to her august patronage in all our future endeavours, difficulties and trials; and therefore, in order to express our acknowledgment of her supreme position, it has been suggested to us that we should place in her hands on the Jubilee Day a golden sceptre, adorned with precious stones; this act would signify that we solemnly proclaim her our august Queen.

It will be good news to all to know

that this simple but significant function will be performed by him, who is well known as one who was most dear amongst Don Bosco's sons; by him who, as Don Cagliero, by his musical talents and immense organising gifts was *magna pars*—a chief sharer in the feasts of the Consecration, fifty years ago. He will be present at the Jubilee



OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS.

not only to add the magnificence and prestige of the sacred purple, but he will preside at it as the representative of the Vicar of Jesus Christ Himself, His Holiness Pope Benedict XV.

It will be agreed to be most befitting, that this outward ceremony of dedication should be accompanied by the solemn consecration of the Salesian Society to the Queen of Heaven. The

Superior General will read before the High Altar a prayer, in which he will present to her all the Salesians, collectively and individually, the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians, and the pious Association of Co-operators, and all our Institutes, begging her to accept this offering, to regard the Work of Don Bosco as still entirely hers, and to keep it ever worthy of her maternal love and protection. History tells us that in the seventeenth century some twenty-five kingdoms were consecrated to Mary; almost every Order and Congregation has chosen her as a Protectress; with what far greater right then should that be done by our Society, which owes its very foundation and its development, which appears wonderful before the world, to Our Lady, as Don Bosco constantly affirmed.

We have been the more readily disposed to make this act of consecration, by the thought that it would bring greater honour to our Heavenly Mother than any other act of piety. Other acts of devotion could only offer her a part, but by this act we shall place the whole in her hands, with all that it has so far been able to accomplish, all that it has had to bear, and all that it hopes to do in the future. In this solemn act we ask all the Co-operators to join, especially in the offering of our gratitude for so many favours. It is only when we shall be able to kneel at the throne of Our Lady Help of Christians in Heaven, that we shall know what an immense debt of gratitude we have, and shall be able to offer thanks worthy of her acceptance.

PAUL ALBERA.

Two memorable and consoling events.

Eighty-thousand Communions

The Jubilee of the consecration of the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians was the occasion of extraordinary scenes of piety and devotion. Nor was this fervour of the people but a momentary enthusiasm; it was maintained over all the period of the celebrations, which included the month of Our Lady and up till June 9th. During that time more than 80,000 Communions were distributed at the Altar of Our Lady Help of Christians, and when it is remembered that Don Bosco's chief desire was to see the Holy Table frequented by the people at large, since from it they draw the sustenance of a good Christian life, our humble but sincere rejoicing may be imagined.

There was in addition the generous, whole-hearted sympathy and natural rejoicing of our Co-operators in these great festivities. They were not confined to any rank or class: Cardinals and Bishops, Princes and Princesses, their Majesties the Queen and Queen-Mother; and the Sovereign Pontiff as well, who sent an autograph letter to Don Albera. We hope that Our Lady Help of Christians, in whose honour these things were done, will express to them all her *thanks* in her own way, for it could be but most inadequately expressed by us.

But all such events point again and again to one great lesson—they must be new incentives to us to labour still more in the apostolate of Don Bosco, which was in the main an apostolate on behalf of the young, particularly those in need; for the religious education of the youth God raised up Don Bosco and brought his Institute into being.

The Holy Father's autograph.

The letter written by the Holy Father, and the presents he deigned to send to Don Albera were accompanied by the following letter from His Eminence Cardinal Gasparri, the Secretary of State, and the Protector of our Society.

The Vatican. May 14th, 1918.

Very Rev. Father Rector,

It is a great pleasure for me to announce to you that, on the occasion of the approaching

Jubilee festivities, the Supreme Pontiff, by an Autograph Letter, desires to confirm once more the sentiments of paternal benevolence which he cherishes towards you, and towards the whole of Don Bosco's Salesian Congregation.

As a further mark of the Supreme Pontiff's esteem, he desires to accompany the Autograph with a double gift, commemorative of both the events that are approaching; one is a chasuble for your Reverence, and the other a pyx to be used in the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians.

It is a particular pleasure for me to be the sender of these gifts, and I seize the opportunity of expressing to you again my special regard, and beg to remain

Yours devotedly in Christ,
P. Cardinal GASPARRI.

His Eminence Cardinal Cagliero wrote:

"On this spot there will be raised a great Sanctuary in honour of Our Lady, and crowds hungering for the Divine Food will flock to its threshold."

These words I heard Don Bosco pronounce in 1860, and after eight years I was present at the Consecration of the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians. We should join in offering thanks to God. By associating the Jubilee Mass of the Superior General with the Jubilee of the Sanctuary at Turin, He deigns to single out especially the chiefest glory of that Sanctuary, where every day by the attendance and piety of such numbers of the faithful is a feast of Our Lady, and every such feast is a Eucharistic triumph.

Our age hungers and thirsts after happiness, but it does not think of gaining it by approaching nearer to God. May this double event remind all who are educated at the School of Don Bosco—and all the rising generations—that Our Lady Help of Christians is the best of Mothers, because she provides for each of her children the Bread of Life!

Rome, May 8th 1918.

JOHN Cardinal CAGLIERO
(Of the Salesian Society).



DILECTO FILIO
PAULO ALBERA

CONGREGATIONIS SALESIANAE MODERATORI MAXIMO

BENEDICTUS PP. XV

DILECTE FILI
SALUTEM ET APOSTOLICAM BENEDICTIONEM.

Salesiani instituti quotquot sunt participes, adiutores et amici, iis omnibus dies nonus proximi mensis iunii dupliciter faustus accidet, quod abhinc annis quinquaginta et taurinensis aedes Mariae Auxiliatricis sollemni ritu dedicata est, et ipse, dilecte fili, rem divinam primitus fecisti. Etenim cum congregationi vestrae divina Mater, venerabilem Conditorem studiose fovendo, affuit nascenti, tum adolescentem opportuna semper ope prosecuta est, ex quo praesertim suae erga vos benignitatis in eo templo tamquam principem sedem collocavit. Namque ibi optima quaeque inita sunt consilia quae ad perpetuum vestrorum operum incrementum pertinerent; ibi religiose custodiri atque ali consuevit ductus a Francisco Salesio multiplicis caritatis ardor in salutem animarum; inde alii ex aliis lectissimi sodales profecti sunt qui vel iuventutem recte instituerent, vel christianum nomen barbaris inferrent :

eo denique ex fonte et capite perennis quaedam caelestium beneficiorum copia per universam salesianorum familiam defluxit. Itaque iure dixeris omnes sodalitates vestrae fastos Mariae Auxiliatricis religione consecrari. Feliciter vero contingit ut simul marianae huius aedis et tui sacerdotii natalis celebretur. Siquidem non parum, hoc toto spatio, et consilii et studii et operae in societatis istius bonum contulisti: quam quidem vix inchoatam ingressus, auctam nunc mirifice et ubique propagatam sollerter moderaris. Cum igitur omnes tui, communem Patronam venerantes, varias amoris significationes tibi undique daturi sint, huic quasi concentui gratulantium praeire admodum Nobis libet, qui praesentissimo Deiparae auxilio Nos cum tota Ecclesia maxime commendatos volumus, et salesianam sodalitatem merito habemus caram. Eaque ut multos annos te rectore salvo et incolumi utatur, vehementer optamus. Auspicem autem caelestium donorum et paternae benevolentiae Nostrae testem, tibi, dilecte fili, et omnibus qui sodalitatem vestram participant atque adiuvant, apostolicam benedictionem amantissime impertimus.

Datum Romae, apud Sanctum Petrum, die XII mensis maii MCMXVIII, Pontificatus Nostri anno quarto.

BENEDICTUS PP. XV.

TO OUR BELOVED SON
DON PAUL ALBERA
SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SALESIAN SOCIETY
BENEDICT XV. POPE.

HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION.

THE ninth of June next will be a day doubly welcome to all the members of the Salesian Society, and to its Co-operators and friends, for it will bring the celebration of the fiftieth year of the Sanctuary dedicated to the Help of Christians, and of the fiftieth anniversary of your First Mass. In very truth, just as the Mother of God watched over the birth of your Congregation, protecting

its venerable Founder with her maternal love, so she has continued her aid during its growth, and especially from the day when she placed in that Sanctuary the royal seat of her favours on your behalf.

Indeed it is there that the most fruitful propositions for the welfare of your work have been made; within it has been preserved and nourished, according to the Spirit of St. Francis of Sales, the ardour of indefatigable labour for the salvation of souls; from it have gone forth at brief intervals most exemplary members of the Order, whether for the work of educating youth, or to teach the name of Christ to the barbarians; from it again, as from a fountain-head, has flowed a perpetual stream of heavenly graces over all the Salesian Family. It can therefore be justly said that all the events in the development of your Society have been consecrated by the devotion to the Help of Christians.

And the opening of this Sanctuary is, by a happy coincidence, to be celebrated at the same time as that of the beginning of your priesthood. During that long period you have co-operated in all the work of the Society, with conspicuous zeal and prudence; and that Society, to which you gave your name when it was scarcely in formation, you now govern with great wisdom, in the day of its maturity. And as all your followers, when they are presenting homage to their Patroness, will send you also their messages of filial congratulation, We desire to be beforehand with this chorus of felicitation, both because We wish to recommend Ourselves and the whole Church to the powerful aid of the Mother of God, and because of our attachment to the Salesian Congregation. Our earnest wish is that it may yet for many years have you for its Director. As a pledge of Our special benevolence, and as an assurance of heavenly blessings, We send to you with deepest affection, and to all your Sons and Co-operators the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, the 12th of May 1918, the fourth year of Our Pontificate.

BENEDICT PP. XV.

The Golden Jubilee Mass of Don Paul Albera

An exceptional interest has been taken in the Golden Jubilee Mass of the Superior General of Don Bosco's work, for it is an event which lends itself at once to reminiscence, and to a survey of the prodigious development of that apostolate with which he has been so intimately connected.

Something of wistful longing, and of unexpressed disappointment is associated with his two predecessors in this regard, for both the Venerable Don Bosco, and Don Rua of revered memory approached near enough to the time of the golden jubilee of their priesthood to make their followers regard it with every probability of attainment.

The Venerable Don Bosco, conscious of his waning strength, and reading only too plainly the anxious fears of his sons, began to speak openly of his *Jubilee Mass*, but solely with a view to softening the disappointment. In the Spring of 1887 he was called to visit a distinguished benefactress of the Oratory, the Countess Corsi, who was apparently at death's door. "Oh Countess," he said, "You are not keeping your word in regard to that present for my sacerdotal Jubilee. You are failing in your promise, but I too shall fail in mine." He did not reach his Jubilee date by two years.

Don Rua, his first Successor, came much closer to it, for he died on April 6th 1910 and the fiftieth year of his priesthood would have been reached on June 24th of the same year. Indeed preparations had been begun, and practically everyone was sanguine that he would have the happiness of saying his Jubilee Mass; but not so Don Rua himself; he was never under any delusion. He had passed the years of Don Bosco, his beloved master and model, and now he would imitate him in going to his reward without this consolation. The privilege denied to them has been granted to Don Albera, and, singularly enough, the date of the Jubilee of the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians coincided so closely with it that they were regarded as identical for the purpose of celebration, and as Don Albera has been a witness of, and has participated in, all its triumphs and vicissitudes, it was particularly befitting that he should be the presiding officiant in its Jubilee festivities.

Don Bosco and his Successor.

When Paul Albera entered the Oratory at Turin, in October 1858, the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians was still in that vision-

ary form in which it had been presented to the mind of Don Bosco by Our Lady. A month or two before he had met the young lad whom he knew would one day direct his Society. Don Bosco and Don Rua (then a cleric in subdiacon's orders) had gone to a little place called *None* for some religious celebration, and while there the parish priest introduced to them a boy of thirteen years, who desired to begin his studies for the priesthood. Don Bosco saw before him a young lad, delicate in feature and tranquil in demeanour, with eyes both bright and piercing. He spoke to him a few words of welcome, but as he was discussing some matters with the parish priest he turned to the cleric Michael Rua and said: "Take this little friend of mine and question him about his studies." The young cleric had already shown that singular discretion and true religious spirit which characterised him through life. He questioned the boy and found him eminently satisfactory, and at once told Don Bosco that he could accept him at the Oratory without any hesitation.

At the Oratory.

At that time there were several boys at the Oratory who, under the careful and enlightened direction of the Venerable Servant of God, were leading lives of wonderful sanctity. They gave a tone of virtue and happy piety to the place, and Dominic Savio (whose Cause is still going forward) had died just a short time before. The group which had been most closely associated with him was still flourishing, and it now welcomed young Paul Albera to its membership. One of the events which struck deep into his soul was the death of one of the members of this group of exceptionally gifted and pious youths. It occurred only three months after Paul Albera's coming, and Don Bosco had spoken to the boy on his deathbed as though he had a positive assurance of his speedy entrance into Heaven. It was this that urged young Albera to strive even harder than before to hold a high place in the select band to which he had been admitted.

In October 1861, he received the ecclesiastical habit from his former parish priest, and a few months later he was among the twenty-two members of the embryo Society, who were the first to make the religious vows to the Venerable Servant of God. It was quite a simple ceremony, but that seemed to add to its solemnity, and it proved to be casting of a seed of wonderful

fertility. After fifty-six years the Sons of Don Bosco numbers about 5000, and of the twenty-two first members but three are left; they are: Cardinal Cagliero, Don Francesia, who has held some of the highest positions in the Society, and Don Albera its present Superior General. It was in the following year that Don Bosco issued his proposal to build a great Sanctuary in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians.

At the College of Mirabello.

A recently published Life of Don Bosco says: The Schools of Arts and Trades completed Don Bosco's design for the Christian and social training of the young artisan. Existing conditions exposed this class of youth to neglect, to lack of education on sound principles, and to influences which were always a menace.... But Don Bosco came into contact with another class of youths, for whom he lamented that there was no adequate provision — that of the middle and trading classes. He therefore began to consider how he might open Schools for these boys, and to apply in their regard the methods of procedure which had proved so fruitful at the Oratory. The first of these Boarding Schools was at Mirabello, and young Albera went there as one of the teachers. Under the enthusiastic followers of Don Bosco who directed it, the School had a most prosperous career.

By the time he was twenty the cleric Paul Albera had finished his theological studies and had obtained a degree at the University of Turin. It was now for him to return to the centre of Don Bosco's work.

At the Oratory.

The Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians was opened and consecrated in June 1868, and as the Superiors at Mirabello were some of the very first of Don Bosco's followers, he desired that they should all be present at the festivities. It was then that he intimated to Don Albera, who had already been promoted to the diaconate, that it was time for him to prepare for the priesthood, and he was accordingly ordained on August 2nd 1868 by Mgr. Ferri, at Casalmonteferrato. He was assisted by Don Bosco at the Oratory and became a member of the Council which was subsequently the Superior Chapter of the Society.

As the Salesian Society was not yet definitely approved by the Holy See, it is not surprising that in some quarters it was still regarded as

merely an experiment, and in others as part of Don Bosco's *rash* schemes. For this reason too, many subjects considered themselves free to leave when they thought fit, or, if they were priests, the Bishops were only too glad to have them to fill the many vacancies in the ranks of the clergy. In fact some of the Bishops rather resented the loss to their seminaries of so many promising young men who flocked to Don Bosco. This was the case with the Bishop of the diocese from which Don Albera came. He had a high esteem for the young priest, and, desiring to make use of his rare gifts in the work of his diocese, he tried to persuade him that Don Bosco's Society would soon disperse, and that it would be wise to leave before that happened. In the presence of a number of ecclesiastics he pressed this view upon him, but it was to no purpose; no arguments could make the slightest impression upon Don Albera. It was also in connection with these difficulties that Don Bosco spoke the words that have ever since been regarded as prophetic. At meeting of priests, presided over by the Bishop of Casalmonteferrato, inquiries were made as to whether these difficulties had been overcome. Don Bosco replied:

"He has not only overcome those difficulties, but he will overcome many others and will be my second.... He did not complete the sentence. He raised his hand to his forehead, as though considering some far away vision, and then added: Don Albera will be of great assistance to us. The first sentence was naturally regarded as mysterious. An account of this event was put in writing at the time and preserved; it was read out at the gathering which elected Don Albera to be the *Second... Successor of Don Bosco* on Aug. 16th 1910. The prophetic words were uttered in November 1877.

At the College of San Pier d'Arena.

Don Albera was to have wide experience in the management of scholastic affairs, and in the direction of the Salesian Associates. In 1871 Don Bosco sent him to open a new House at Genoa in the suburb of Marassi. There were great financial difficulties attached to it, but by enlisting the interest of many Co-operators, the position of affairs was so much improved that it was found possible in the following year to remove the School to more commodious premises at San Pier d'Arena. There it flourished under the wise direction of its youthful superior; and Don Bosco made it one of the chief centres of a new branch of his work, which should be devoted to the training of adult vocations to the

ecclesiastical state. A tangible proof of Don Albera's great success in the training of vocations while at San Pier d'Arena may be seen in the fact, that for the new Church of Our Lady Help of Christians now being built at Don Bosco's birthplace, a marble altar is being presented by a group of priests who are past students of the above-mentioned College. It may be added that while Superior there, he introduced and fostered the devotion to the Sacred Heart, which has since been developed to such a high degree in all our Schools.

Provincial in France.

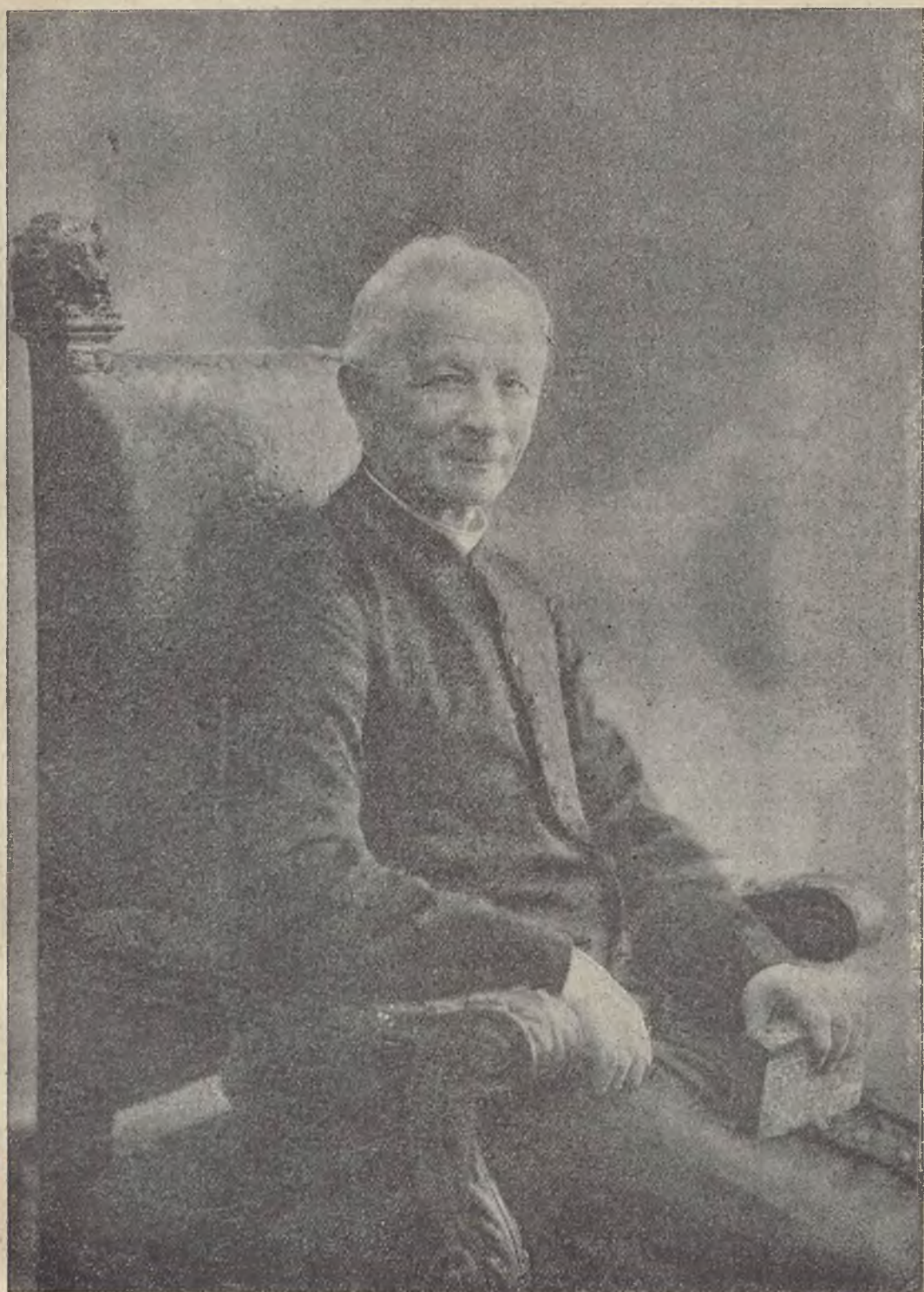
In October 1881 Don Bosco appointed Don Albera to take charge of the Salesian Houses in France. These were perhaps the years in which Our Lady Help of Christians worked the greatest wonders for him, who has been entitled the Apostle of the 19th Century; and Don Albera was to be an eye-witness of many of these prodigies. He accompanied Don Bosco to Paris, where an anticlerical writer expressed the triumph of the Servant of God by saying that he could attribute to himself the words of Caesar—*Veni, vidi, vici*. From 1882 to 1886 Don Bosco made annual visits to Paris, and Don Albera was with him constantly; subsequent to that Don Bosco was too feeble to bear the journey, but he required his representative in France to go to Turin every two months to confer with him, and doubtless to prepare him the better for his future position. Urgent affairs kept him in France towards the end of January, (1888) and he was not able to arrive in time to be at the bedside when Don Bosco died, but he was able to see him before the coffin was closed.

The extraordinary vitality displayed in the Salesian work just after the death of its Founder was so remarkable, that it has always been taken as a certain assurance that it had acquired so powerful an advocate in Heaven. The French Province was quite to the fore in this prosperous era; but this very fact was the cause of its losing its Provincial, for the Superiors at Turin decided that Don Albera should join the Chapter of the Society. He became the Spiritual Director of the Society in which office he was twice subsequently confirmed, and filled it with great profit to the Order for eighteen years. In France and Italy he had had many opportunities of intercourse with learned and zealous Bishops, with Directors of Seminaries and of religious communities, and by his gift of discernment or spiritual insight, which was always prominent among his talents, he had formed a store of religious and sacerdotal culture, which,

with all the earnestness of his zeal he employed for the benefit of the Salesian Work.

During the eighteen years that he held the office of Spiritual Director he visited practically all the Salesian Houses in Europe; he went to Algeria, Tunis, and Palestine; and then in August 1900 he undertook the visitation of the Salesian Houses in America, which occupied him until April 1903. In this great journey he visited the Argentine Republic, Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil, and into the heart of the continent to the centre of Matto Grosso, penetrating into the native Colonies of Bororos; to Patagonia and the lands of Magellan; to Chile, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador; to the settlements of the Jivaros; to Venezuela and Colombia, distributing gifts to the lepers in the Salesian Lazarettos of Agua de Dios and Contratacion; then finally to Mexico and the United States. The hundreds of meetings he had to address, and the innumerable audiences he gave and attended were all marked by the highest tact, and by such prudence and charity as to win the affection and admiration of all whom met him.

On returning from his long journey, he was just in time for the great festivities in Turin, which celebrated the Pontifical coronation of the picture of Our Lady Help of Christians. He gave a brief outline of his great journey across South America to the other side of the Andes, and from the Southern extremities to the north of the Continent. Some of his words were indeed quite inspiring. "Even as a boy I had often heard Don Bosco say that innumerable souls would be saved by means of his sons, whose Institutes would be found everywhere. These words I had taken as the expression of the ardent desire of a great heart, as the manifestation of illimitable zeal. But how his words came back to me when I beheld the realisation of the prophecy, not only in regard to Europe or Africa, but among the distant youthful peoples of the land of Columbus. My conception of Don Bosco and his influence was immensely enlarged. The industry and zeal of the Salesians contributed in great part to this wonderful achievement, but it was the name of Don Bosco that prepared the way, that conquered obstacles, won all hearts, aroused sympathy—and—opened purses, to draw from them the means to found Houses, Schools, Sunday Oratories, Churches, Hospitals, and whatever was required for these foundations which were for the good of souls. Nor was this a passing enthusiasm, nor did time diminish the attraction which the name of Don Bosco exercised on so many hearts; a name still held in veneration and gratitude in America by Prelates, Presidents and Governments and by entire populations.



Don PAUL ALBERA
Superior General of the Salesian Congregation

Superior-General of the Society.

After Don Rua's death, the choice of the new Superior-General fell, as foretold by Don Bosco, on Don Albera. And in speaking of this period, one is necessarily restrained by the fact the relation of many details, interesting to friends, would offend the delicate feelings of the subject of this account. Therefore a brief notice must suffice. His Eminence Cardinal Rampolla, who was then the Protector of the Society, expressed the desire, in his good wishes to the Chapter, that Don Bosco and Don Rua should have a Successor who would wisely preserve their work, while extending its operations. This has been accomplished.

The paternal wishes of His Holiness Pius X. have also been verified. After the election of Don Albera, he sent his congratulations, adding that he besought of God all the graces he might need so that he might be enabled to respond fully to this high calling; for it entailed walking in the footsteps of his great predecessors, Don Bosco and Don Rua, who with admirable zeal and sanctity had given life and increase to the Salesian Society, which had done so much for the glory of God, and for the civil religious and moral betterment of the young, and of Society in general.

In confirmation of this, come the words of the Supreme Pontiff now reigning, who wrote last year to Don Albera as follows: "As has so often been the case with the works of God, the Salesian Society had a lowly origin; but growing rapidly, it soon spread to other countries and to the Americas, and through innumerable sacrifices and many labours has rendered immense services to the Catholic Church. You have recognised the need of the times; and seeing the temper of the age, you have taken up the arms required for its control. For, as the enemies of religion and of humanity gather together in the worst of alliances to conspire together for the destruction of the Church, were it possible, so you are holding frequent Congresses of the Co-operators in order to oppose a counteracting force to these malign influences."

The Golden Jubilee Mass.

The fifty years of the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians have been a half century of wonderful and unnumbered blessings, granted to Ven. Don Bosco, to Don Rua and to Don Albera his two Successors; and through them to the whole Salesian Work and its Co-operators. The best wish, therefore, that we can form on

this occasion, is that such blessings may be multiplied in the future.

The famous Basilica was thronged from dawn, and Masses were said in succession at every altar, while the faithful were receiving Holy Communion almost without cessation. At the High Altar the Masses for the boys of the Oratory were celebrated by the Bishops of Casale and of Novara.

At half-past ten every available space within and around the Basilica was occupied. At that hour Don Albera entered the Sanctuary. He was accompanied by the members of the Superior Chapter, while his assistants at the Mass were the Prefect General and the Spiritual Director of the Society. At the same moment the sound of the Royal March from the band announced the arrival of Her Royal Highness Princess Isabella, Duchess of Genoa, with her daughter the Princess Bona. A few minutes later there arrived the Princess Letitia, Duchess of Aosta. The Duchess of Genoa brought with her a chalice of great value, which she desired to offer in person to Don Albera. These royal personages and their attendants had places near the Sanctuary. Immediately afterwards there entered by the main door the great procession. Led by boy-scouts and a military guard of honour, and accompanied by the clergy came their Lordships, the Auxiliary Bishop of Turin, the Titular Bishop of Tricala, the Salesian Bishop of Sutri, the Auxiliary Bishop of Ferrara, the Bishops of Casale, Saluzzo, Aosta, Asti, Novara, Cuneo, Ivrea, and the Archbishop of Vercelli. Behind them came Cardinal Cagliero (of Salesian Society). There were large numbers of representatives of Religious Orders and religious Institutes, and the Consuls of many States etc. etc. Over the High Altar was the large silver crucifix given by Her Majesty Queen Elena; on the front of the Altar were some precious ornaments given by the Duchess of Genoa.

Don Albera wore the fine chasuble sent to him by the Holy Father Pope Benedict XV. for that occasion. He was assisted pontifically by His Eminence Cardinal Cagliero. The *Momento* says that all the vast congregation seemed to respond in sympathy to the varied emotions that filled the heart of the Celebrant at that unique moment. They seemed to have an intuition of the host of remembrances that must have filled his mind; they thought of the day, fifty years ago, when Don Bosco had ascended those steps to say the first Mass in the Sanctuary, and of the wonderful events that been accomplished within those sacred walls; and how Don Bosco and Don Rua, themselves denied the privileges of a Jubilee Mass, must have assisted unseen at that of Don Albera, their colleague and Successor. At the

end of the Mass, Cardinal Cagliero, himself deeply moved, imparted the Apostolic Benediction, brought from the Holy Father.

The Princess Isabella Czartoriski had presented a golden sceptre as a souvenir of the Jubilee of the Basilica. This was now blessed, and Don Albera gave it to Cardinal Cagliero, who ascended the steps to place it in the hand of the figure of Our Lady Help of Christians. He then addressed the multitude in an eloquent and moving

discourse, touching on the occurrences of the consecration of the Basilica and of the first Mass, on the glories of Our Lady Help of Christians, and on the devotion under that title which had spread into every land. The solemn procession then reformed and the Jubilee Mass was over. No work has celebrated its fiftieth year with greater solemnity, or with truer, more heartfelt sentiments of gratitude and devotion.

To the Salesian Co-operators in the United States.

It is consoling and instructive to note the constant advance made by the Co-operators in the United States, in developing and extending the many Salesian works that are now a prominent feature in their midst. The recent dedication of the new Church to Our Lady Help of Christians in New York has given an impetus to effort in all directions, and it turned out most fortunate that the Church was able to participate in the general celebrations in connection with the Jubilee of its great namesake in Turin.

Two important meetings were held by the New York Co-operators at the time of the Jubilee, one in the Hall of the new House of Studies, and another in the Hall attached to the Church of the Transfiguration in Mott St. To these gatherings His Holiness the Pope sent the Apostolic Blessing, to be bestowed upon all the Salesian Co-operators in America, with the assured hope that they will continue and extend the good work already so well founded. The results of these meetings of Co-operators will be published later.

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At Philadelphia there were great celebrations for the Patronal Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians. At one of the early Masses in the Salesian Church, a large number of first communicants received the Bread of Life from the hands of the Right Rev. Bishop McCort, who subsequently administered to them the Sacrament of Confirmation. An address was presented to the Bishop at a meeting held during the day at the Salesian Institute, and there was an abundant programme of items of welcome and congratulation. In his reply the Bishop laid great stress on the necessity of maintaining throughout life the good maxims and Catholic practices which were instilled into them in the Salesian Institutes. There were plenty of ways of making progress, and of putting fortunes together, but only by the attainment of the religious ideals now laid before them in the Salesian Institute could they obtain that success in life which alone was worth while in the long run.

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There was quite a record meeting at the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, East St., New

York City, one item being the Confirmation, by His Lordship Bishop Russel of Charlestown, of over three hundred children. The Church was also the rallying point for the grand parade of the Catholic Associations which was held on Whit Sunday. Fr. Coppo was one of those who addressed the assembled body of men, who numbered eleven hundred; and Mgr. Ferrante congratulated them on the splendid manifestation of Catholicity, at a time when an outspoken Religion was more than ever necessary.

At Port Chester, Ramsey, and Paterson there were also successful celebrations, all showing the progressive and beneficent work which the Salesians and their Co-operators have set on foot; they are all bent on producing the utmost spiritual and educational advantages to the young generations which are their particular care.

Book Notices.

The Irish Catholic Truth Society has issued the following interesting additions to its Penny Series:

1. St. Joseph, by E. Leahy.
 2. The evil of drunkennes. Addresses.
 3. The Call of Christ, by E. R. O'Byrne.
 4. Mary Queen of Scots. A vindication by J. P. O'Kane (published in two parts).
 5. The Our Father, arranged for use as Communion prayers.
 6. Fireside Talks, by the Rev. J.J. Lyons.
 7. My Favourite, by Tave Woodhall.
 8. The Junior Clerkship, by P. J. O'Connor Duffy.
 9. Back to the fold, by Bride M. O'Mahoney.
 10. Her Recompense, by Clare Leahy.
 11. Mrs. Lomer's Lady-help, by G. V. Christmas.
 12. A thing so noble, by A. D.
 13. Our Lady's Book. Part II.
 14. Mrs. Ernest strikes a Gold Mine, by Rev. R. J. Connel.
 15. The work of two women, by A. D.
- The Irish Catholic Truth Society. 24 Upper O'Connell St., Dublin.**

A Scottish Tribute to Our Lady Help of Christians.

The Devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians has sometimes been spread, and shown itself in abundant and vigorous life with the rapidity of a fire, sent on earth to be enkindled. At other times it has been sown as a seed in quiet, reposed earth, and has gradually strengthened its roots and extended the branches of its sturdy stem, till it buds forth into the welcome and fragrant flowers of the years of its bloom. Of this latter kind has, we think, been the process by which the Devotion has grown in the south of Scotland, where at Paisley, amid a great Catholic population it has now come forth into the fulness of life.

Moreover much of this is due to a zealous member of that Association of Salesian Co-operators, of whom Don Bosco declared that they are in many cases the chief factors and the most powerful influence in the promotion of this Devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians, and in the works which she founded through his instrumentality. Certain it is that as a long-standing Co-operator, the Very Rev. Canon Davids M. R. has been remarkably successful in establishing and promoting this Devotion in his parish, and there are undoubted signs that the Queen of Heaven has rewarded his indefatigable work, with her own Queenly generosity.

The occasion for these remarks lies in an event of importance and significance which must be recorded in these pages. In his fine Church of St. Mary's, Paisley, the Very Rev. Canon has recently erected a beautiful new High Altar in honour of the Help of Christians, and for the dedication of the same great festivities were held. It was in fact a regular Salesian festival, particularly as he had invited one of the Salesian Fathers from London to be the exponent of the meaning and object of the dedication. For that purpose, Fr. Kelly S. C. journeyed northwards, and on the Sunday evening addressed a great concourse of people on the Devotion which was then celebrating its triumph. We are pleased to be able to give the following account by an eye-witness:

"An event of great importance in the history of the Catholic Church in Scotland took place at St. Mary's, Paisley, on Sunday April 21th, when a new High Altar erected in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians was solemnly dedicated by His Grace, the Most Rev. John Maguire D. D. Archbishop of Glasgow.

Solemn High Mass was sung by the reverend Rector, the Very Rev. Canon Davids M. R., and among others present were the Most Rev. Archbishop Mackintosh, Auxiliary to Dr. Maguire, the Very Rev. Canon John Ritchie, the Right Rev. Mgr. Canon Geoge Ritchie, the Very Rev. Canons McNairney and Hughes, Rev. Fathers Murray, Fogarty, White, Oogle, Clarke and Fr. Kelly S. C.

At the Mass, His Grace Archbishop Maguire preached, and referred in eloquent style to the threefold celebration of the day, namely, the Silver Jubilee of the Church, the promotion of the Rector to a place in the Chapter, and the dedication of the First Altar erected in Scotland in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians. The Church was filled with a large and devout Congregation numbering two thousand. At the evening service every seat was taken, and the Rev. W. J. Kelly S. C. (London) expounded the genesis of the devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians, and its relation to the Ven. Don Bosco and his work. His exposition was accompanied with effective and striking illustrations of Our Lady's particular intervention in Don Bosco's work, and made a deep impression upon the throng of listeners.

The fine altar is carved in white marble from the designs of Messrs. Pugin and Pugin, and was executed by Messrs. Vickers of Glasgow. It includes a magnificent reredos surmounted by a colossal statue of Mary Help of Christians, with a pieta and a representation of the stable of Bethlehem on either side of the Altar. Immediately below the statue is a pictorial representation of the devout clients of Our Lady, from every class of Society, and the whole will certainly conduce to the spread of that devotion which has already obtained so prominent a place in the hearts of the Catholics of Paisley."

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We must congratulate the Very Rev. Rector of St. Mary's, Paisley on the happy consummation of his pious wishes to bring about this dedication; it is sure to be an impetus in the spread of this devotion among the Catholics of Scotland, and that alone would be a most consoling return for his zealous and apostolic work.



Salesian Notes and News.

LONDON.

The greater intervals now intervening between our issues makes it next to impossible to add anything in this column, which can be regarded as *News* in the strict sense of the word; but several items have yet to be recorded. *The Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians* was of more than usual importance, on account of the Jubilee being kept in connection with this devotion at the Sanctuary of Turin. That festival, as kept at the Church of the Sacred Heart, never lacks aught of those extra manifestations of fervour and rejoicing which are associated with these celebrations, but for this year they naturally assumed special importance and an additional splendour. The evening service of the Month of May led up to the Festival, which was itself marked out by a general Communion on the part of the faithful, by the special solemnity of the Church services, by the Procession in honour of Our Lady, and the evening discourse in honour of the Help of Christians. But the celebrations were not regarded as complete until there had been the great out-door Procession which was organised a few weeks later. This was quite a remarkable display of devotion and faith on the part of the great numbers of Catholics who joined in it, both from the neighbourhood and from parishes round about. There was an abundant display of banners, borne amid the beautifully robed confraternities, and the voices of so many hundreds rose in strong and melodious tones, to bear far around and above the praises of the Heavenly Queen. One feature which undoubtedly added much to the dignity and completeness of the procession was the participation in it of a fine body of the Salesian School Cadet-Corps, numbering a hundred strong, and under command of their officer, one of the Salesian Fathers. On a future occasion they may possibly be accompanied by their regimental band, which is at present in course of formation.

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The mention of the Cadets-Corps touches upon Scholastic matters, and another year of educational effort remains to be recorded. It has passed a fairly even course, interrupted only by those customary breaks and festivals, which scholastic tradition has long regarded as sacred to rest and recreation. The examinations were held at the end of the Year, and the results so far published have not been behind those of other years in the satisfaction produced, while some have been more successful. A considerable number of Past Students have been able to visit the School, especially while on leave, or during their convalescence. With the average number of two hundred and fifty the School has been considered *full*; the few vacancies occurring at the end of the term are disposed of to the earliest applicants. The Principal, the Very Rev. C. B. Macey, will forward terms on application.

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AN OUTSIDER'S VIEW.

There should be a notice on the front page of this issue, relating to the new Life of our Venerable Founder. On reviewing an early copy a prominent Catholic Journal says: "There could be no more fitting time than the present for re-introducing the Catholic Public to the life and labours of the great religious educationalist, Don Bosco, the Founder of the Salesian Society. On the one hand, we have the question of secular education and its importance in enabling Catholics of the future to hold their own in the world; and on the other, the very marked and growing movement in favour of retreats for boys. The spirit of the Venerable Don Bosco may actually be said to live again in this latter movement, and for this reason the story of his life, retold by the translator of the Marquis Cripolti's memoir will be welcomed. Like that

of the venerable Curé d'Ars, Don Bosco's is a sainted figure of our own time. Intermoven with the story of a great work is the personality of humbly born Italian Priest, whose vocation proclaimed itself in his early boyhood, and whose life-work today, barely thirty years after his death, bears fruit not only in his native land or even only in Europe, but away on the outpost of the mission field. The Salesian Society today, in its trade, art, and other Schools and Colleges caters for something like 200,000 students, to make a rough estimate of the figures given in the Marquis Crispolti's book. This prodigious work for civilisation as well as for religion had its beginnings in the strong personality of a man whose gift of the supernatural made of him a magician. All our latter-day ideas of enlightened educational methods were forestalled in Don Bosco's system, only his enlightenment was that of the man, "who cometh into this world but loveth it not." Our new way with the young criminal was Don Bosco's way in the middle of the last century. Its practical efficacy was admitted by the Italian Government. In 1877, Signor Crispi, then Minister of the Interior, submitted to Don Bosco the new regulations for the reformatory schools of the State. In these the educationist, with a phenomenal record of success to give weight to his words, found a flaw. They gave no place to the Sacraments and to the practice of religion. *The Story of Don Bosco's life is fascination as biography and edifying as hagiology*; but its principal value at the present moment lies in its bearing on the great social and religious questions of the time. Governments of our own day require to have Don Bosco's secret rubbed into them and pending this, let us get on with our retreats for boys." (The Universe. July 19th 1918).

From several points of view the writer of the above shows a just appreciation of Don Bosco's Life and Work, and though we ourselves may not view things from the general standpoint, we should be inclined to think him quite correct in describing the narrative as *fascinating biography*.

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THE BASILICA.

It so happens that in the Chapter of Don Bosco's Life which is due to appear at the end of this issue, there occurs the account of the earliest ideas about the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians. For the benefit of those whose

acquaintance with this periodical does not stretch over a lengthy period, we had better state at the outset, that this famous church has also been called by the favourite name of **Sanctuary**; it seemed to fit it better than the name *church* or *temple*, and long use gave it a welcome sound in the ears of those who were in any way associated with it. But of recent years it has been increasingly known as the **Basilica**, for to that rank it was raised by the late Sovereign Pontiff, Pius X. and probably to the new generations it will be only known by that name, while the passing ones will adhere to the traditional title.

The Basilica, then, has come into this world-wide renown, and been adorned with these distinctions, because it has proved itself to be one of those privileged places, where the power of God and the unbounded generosity of Our Blessed Lady have long been made manifest. It was miraculous in its inception, for the site on which it was to be built and its grand outline and proportions were shown to Don Bosco in vision years before the church was built, and when there seemed to be no circumstances whatever, to the outward view, that would warrant erection of such a Sanctuary.

It was more miraculous still in its foundation and erection, for a very large proportion of the considerable sum, which such a great undertaking entailed, was given to Don Bosco by the recipients of heavenly favours from Our Lady Help of Christians. The Venerable Servant of God had foreseen this. At the commencement of the work he said: *The money will be forthcoming; Our Lady Herself will provide the means for her own Church*. Preaching in the Church when all was brought to completion he said: *I have not heard of one case when recourse was had to her in vain*. In return for their abundant favours the recipients sent thank-offerings for the building of the Church and thus it may be truly said that Our Lady provided everything herself, just as Don Bosco had foretold.

But perhaps the sequel has been even more miraculous, for both during Don Bosco's lifetime, and in the thirty years that have since passed, most wonderful favours have been obtained by clients at her altar, or through recourse to the intercession of the Help of Christians. They have been like a continuous and abundant stream flowing from a perennial source.

Besides these factors, which may unhesitatingly be classed as supernatural, the Sanctuary has

been a centre of great fervour and practical devotion on the part of thousands of the faithful, for it has had the advantage of an abundance of well-conducted liturgical services, and everything that could be demanded in the way of effective eloquence in the pulpit, and of every musical accompaniment. Its novenas, triduums, festivals, months of May and June, Lent and

leges from the Supreme Pontiff, and among them that by which the Sanctuary came to be one of the Basilicas whose very title is the hallmark of their fame.

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This issue of the *Bulletin* contains so much about our Patroness, to whom these columns



THE BASILICA OF OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS.

Advent and other special occasions have been marked by wonderful manifestations of Christian piety—and these have all combined to draw the multitude (as Don Bosco so much desired and indeed set out to do)—to the Eucharistic table of Our Divine Lord. This combination, then of the miraculous element with the wonderful vitality of the religious life of the people, has drawn upon the Sanctuary many singular privi-

leges are dedicated, that it would be idle to add anything here. It is to a great extent through the favours, which she has obtained for her clients, and of which a minute fraction are here reported, that the devotion has been spread, and that the work of the Ven. Don Bosco has achieved so many beneficent undertakings. If we could appeal to her with more faith and deeper trust, our prayers would be more readily granted.



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.

PIUS 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.

Graces and Favours. ⁽¹⁾

LIVERPOOL. — I promised to have some Masses said in thanksgiving to Our Lady Help of Christians and to publish the favour in her honour when I obtained it. I now desire to send my thanksgiving for the favours obtained.

April 1918.

Sister M. M.

WANDSWORTH, LONDON. — After prayers had been offered, and a promise made of publication, I am glad to say that a much desired favour has been granted. I now send a thank-offering and ask to have the fact published in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians.

April 1918.

F. S.

LINCOLNSHIRE. — *A remarkable answer to prayer will be seen in the following brief account.* A tenant of some land in the north of England received notice that his lease was soon to expire, and as the land was to be sold for building purposes, he must prepare to leave it by a certain date. It was a great grief to himself and to his family, for they had become attached to the place, which their industry and good lives had made prosperous. They were non-Catholics, but their daughter-in-law was a practical Catholic and had great confidence in the Mother of God, so she asked them, Protestants though they were, to join with her in a Novena of prayers to Our Lady Help of Christians, and they agreed to do so.

On the eighth day of the Novena, as the old gentleman, sad and depressed, was walking along the country-road, he was overtaken by the agent of the estate. After a brief salutation the agent said: "Would you like to have your lease renewed?" The man was completely astounded, and came to most satisfactory terms with the agent on the spot. *He was the only tenant allowed to remain.* He was convinced that the favour was obtained through the intercession of Our Lady by the prayers of the Novena. Subsequently he and his daughter received the grace of conversion, and died Catholics.

Anon.

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

CINCINNATI. — Through the intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians, I obtained the favour of the restoration of my mother's health. I now send a thank-offering and would ask to have the favour published in accordance with a promise made.

L. H.

LONDON. — A novena had been begun to Our Lady Help of Christians on behalf of a soldier who had been missing for some time, and of whom news was most anxiously desired. On the first day of the Novena the welcome news of his safety was received.

July 1918.

Anon.

HONG-KONG. — Having received favours through the intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians, I beg to fulfill my promise by sending now a thank-offering to Our Lady, and shall be glad if you will kindly have the favour published.

March 1918.

A Chinese Co-operator.

LONDON. — A Novena of prayers was made for a recovery from a very dangerous illness, and publication promised in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians. Before the Novena was concluded the recovery was assured, and I now ask to have the favour published.

July 1918.

Anon.

DUBLIN. — I beg to publish in the *Salesian Bulletin* my most grateful thanks for favours received, and to ask for a much needed favour.

July 1918.

S. M.

IRELAND. — I desire to have published in the *Salesian Bulletin* my thanksgiving for a great favour received after a Novena to Our Lady Help of Christians. I enclose an offering for a Mass in thanksgiving according to a promise made.

May 1918.

M. H.

— I beg to send a thanksgiving for a successful operation after a Novena to Our Lady Help of Christians and promise of publication.

July 1918.

C. M.

The Life of the Venerable Don Bosco

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

CHAPTER XIII (Continued).

But as soon as Don Bosco found himself standing in front of the church, he fell inspired to go to the Chaplain, a certain Don Tesio, to ask his permission to assemble his boys there on Sundays for a short period. Don Tesio had scarcely heard the request than he readily acceded to it. Accordingly on May 25th 1845, Don Bosco took his boys there for their afternoon's instruction and recreation. The place stood apart and was just suitable for such a purpose.

But hopes were again dashed to the ground. The games had scarcely begun when all the joy was turned into bitterness. Don Tesio was absent, and as soon as his housekeeper heard the boys at play she rushed out in a fury, and with her cap all awry and arms akimbo, she poured forth a torrent of abuse such as is only at the command of an enraged woman. And her anger increased when she saw a ball being tossed about by the boys, and one of her hens which was sitting on the nest fly across the yard in a fright, and the egg fall to the ground and smash! She was supported in the attack—and Don Bosco remarks it in his humorous way—by all her forces, for the maid-servant shouted at the boys, the dog barked, the cat mewed, the hens cackled... in fact a European war seemed imminent.

The Servant of God approached the woman to calm and reassure her, observing that the boys had no intention of doing any harm, they were only at play and that any loss would be made good; but all to no purpose; instead of calming her, he was himself the butt of abuse and reproaches. The poor woman, screeching like one possessed, and shaking her fists called out:

— If Don Tesio does not send you off at once I shall take measures myself. And you, Don Bosco, instead of restraining these street urchins, disturbers of the peace, idlers and rascals, you are bringing them up in this fashion.

Next Sunday, do not dare to come here, or you will pay for it.

In order to bring this unedifying scene to a close, Don Bosco gave the word to stop playing, and turning to the woman he said quietly:

— My good woman! you yourself are not sure of being here next Sunday, and do you then make such a noise to tell us that you will absolutely forbid us to come?

He then went into the church with the boys for the service. On the way some of them remarked upon her temper, but Don Bosco excused her by saying she was not very well. Some said that it would not do to come there, if such a scene was to be the result; to which Don Bosco added:

— Don't bother about that, next Sunday the woman will not shout any more.

They went into church and had their ordinary instruction and prayers; then Don Bosco sent them home and most of them thought they would reassemble there on the following Sunday, and find things more tranquil. But they were under a wrong impression; that was the first and last time that they were allowed to meet at St. Peter's.

While Don Bosco was coming away the angry woman continued her grumbling and threats, and the chorus was taken up by some women from the neighbourhood, who had come out at the sound of the housekeeper's cries. A trusty eye-witness says that the Servant of God showed no signs of being perturbed or resentful; he turned and said quietly, and with a sigh of seeming regret:

— Poor thing! She orders us not to come again, and by next Sunday she will be in her grave!

Just then Don Tesio himself arrived home. The housekeeper lost not a moment in describing what had occurred, and in giving her own description of the rabble, revolutionaries and profaners of sacred places. The chaplain was well aware of the irritable temper of his housekeeper, but her story set him against the Oratory. He came out, and saw Don Bosco going away in

the distance with some of the boys, and having overtaken him he said angrily :

— Another Sunday you will not come here to make such a disturbance; I shall take the necessary steps to prevent it; you will not come here another Sunday.

As he went away, Don Bosco exclaimed :

— Poor man, he does not even know whether he will be alive by another Sunday.

The servant then told the Chaplain such a story as to what had happened, that she got him to write to the municipal authorities. According to the description given by the infuriated woman, he wrote off a letter full of resentment, putting everything in its blackest colours, and making charges against the boys for which there was no foundation whatever. It is a pity to have to say it, but that was the last letter which the Chaplain lived to write. "Take this letter to the Town Hall," he said to the woman on the following morning. They were his last words. A few hours later Don Tesio was seized with an attack of apoplexy of which he died two days afterwards, fortified by the Last Sacraments of the Church.

His grave was scarcely closed when another was opened, for, struck down by the same malady the housekeeper died two days later, so that before the week had gone, these two opponents of the Oratory had disappeared from the scene. It is easier to imagine than to describe the fear which struck the hearts of the people of that neighbourhood. "The report of these events — writes the Servant of God — spread abroad, and made a deep impression on the boys and on the people who heard of them." It was impossible not to see the hand of God in what had occurred; and the boys were so intimately persuaded of it that they flocked to Don Bosco in greater numbers and declared they would never leave him.

Don Cafasso sought to make use of the opportunity presented by the sad death of the Chaplain. He wrote at once to a certain Countess who was the wife of one of the mayors of the city, asking her to use her influence to get Don Bosco nominated to the position; he pointed out that he had started a work among the boys of Turin, which would be of great advantage to them, and which could be very conveniently carried on at St. Peter's. But the late Don Tesio's letter had prejudiced the Councillors against the Oratory, and without more ado they had issued

a warrant for the arrest of Don Bosco if he should go there again with his boys.

Thus Don Cafasso's endeavours failed, and by the following Sunday there was an official notice fixed on the doors of the church forbidding any gathering in the precincts. A great number of the boys had not yet heard of any change of place, so they went to St. Peter's only to find it shut, and all entrance barred by the police. They went at once to their old quarters at the Hospital, where they held their usual Sunday gathering.

Don Bosco accepted the refusal from the town council as an intimation from Providence, and trusted that he would soon receive from God the aid denied to him so completely by man.

CHAPTER XIV.

Distressing Vicissitudes.

A period of disturbing anxiety and distress was now in store for the Venerable Servant of God — and yet there was woven into it a series of those mysterious dreams, which while unrolling before his eyes the map of future events, served also to provide a source of courage and consolation.

Seven months of Sunday Oratory work had now been completed at the *Rifugio* or Home, to which reference was made in the preceding chapter. Numbers had naturally risen by leaps and bounds, lessons in a variety of subjects were in full swing, and the spiritual side of Don Bosco's programme, already overcharged, was showing remarkable success. Then the thunderbolt fell. The Marchioness, who, as has been pointed out, was the foundress and patroness of the *Rifugio*, was very well disposed towards the Oratory, but as the time was approaching for the inauguration of her new premises, she declared that the boys must go. The two priests endeavoured to show her that the Oratory could be conducted without any detriment to her new work; they would in fact still be in residence, but the lady was not prepared to accommodate her arrangements to any proposals. The Oratory must therefore depart.

Don Bosco viewed this development with deep anxiety, but he declared to the Marchioness that he was prepared to make every sacrifice rather than abandon the youths who had gathered around him. And at this point he received

assurance from a series of dreams or visions, which are here described in brief; their point and meaning become the more convincing as their fulfilment is gradually accomplished, for every detail has its appropriate bearing on the whole when its setting in the completed picture is observed. It would in fact be both interesting and enlightening to see in parallel columns the visionary forecasting of events, and the subsequent realisation in Don Bosco's developing work.

In a vast plain, then, Don Bosco seemed to see a large number of youths. Their manner was rough, their games were noisy and dangerous, their speech not free from unseemly language; stone-throwing was apparently an indispensable factor in their amusements. He was not attracted by such a sight and turned to go; but as he was departing a noble lady stood by him and directed him to approach the boys and work among them. He tried to do so, but it seemed hopeless. In the distance some individuals seemed to be watching his efforts, and though capable of giving him a helping hand, they made no signs of coming. Don Bosco turned to the Lady, who said: "There in front of you is the place for your work."

There was nothing but an open space before them, and on his pointing out its unsuitability as a centre for the Oratory, the Lady replied: "My Son and His Apostles had not even a yard of ground on which to lie" (1). He therefore again endeavoured to carry on the work, but was soon convinced that some place for housing and instruction was indispensable. The Lady then led Don Bosco a few places northwards and pointed to him to look again. This time he saw a lowly church, and beside it a playground full of boys at play. Again, therefore, he set to work; but soon this place proved too small and he turned to the Lady to know what to do. She pointed to another spot and lo! there was a larger church and a house near by; then she led him a little to the side and said: "This is the spot where the glorious martyrs of Turin suffered their martyrdom, and on these mounds of earth, sanctified by their blood, I desire that God should receive special honour."

(1) It will be fairly evident that the *Lady* who appears in all these so called dreams is at once taken by Don Bosco to be the Blessed Virgin — she, in fact, to whom he fostered devotion under the title of Our Lady Help of Christians.

As she said this, she stepped forward and indicated the exact spot where the martyrdom occurred. He looked about for something with which to mark the position but there was nothing to be had; however, he kept it well in mind, and it is now covered by the chapel dedicated to those martyrs in the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians.

In the meantime Don Bosco found his boys ever increasing in number, and wherever he looked for assistance to the mysterious Lady, she always had new accommodation ready to place before him. And not only churches and schools and workshops did he see in his dream, but also numbers of priests to assist him. They seemed however to be soon weary of such work and went their ways; until, at the direction of the Lady, Don Bosco attached them steadfastly to their vocation by a vow of obedience — so that a religious society was evidently to be part of the Lady's scheme. The Servant of God continues thus: "I saw many other things which it is not yet time to relate, but from that moment I was in perfect security with regard to the Oratory and the Congregation, and as to my dealings with the various public bodies who became concerned with it. The great difficulties were foreseen as well as their remedies. I saw quite clearly the various developments which were to come, and I now go forward in broad daylight. It was after having seen churches, houses, playgrounds, clerics and priests, and the manner in which all should be conducted, that I spoke of it to others, and related the whole future development as though it were an accomplished fact. That was why it seemed fantastic and why I myself was regarded as eccentric."

Don Bosco was further assured by a curious incident. In 1856 he suggested to Canon Gastaldi that he should publish a life of the three martyrs of Turin, above referred to, and that he should make researches in order to discover the exact whereabouts of the martyrdom. The learned Canon agreed. Much investigation was carried out, but in the published volume he gives as his considered judgment that the precise spot of the martyrdom was unknown, but it was established beyond doubt that they had taken refuge outside the city near the river Dora, and that they were discovered and slain near their hiding-place. It was further stated that the stretch of land from the city-walls to the river was called in ancient times *vallis occisorum*—

the valley of the slain—evidently in reference to the martyrs, and that the modern name *Valdocco* was the equivalent. The locality was regarded as being especially blessed by God on account of the many religious and charitable Institutes subsequently founded in the neighbourhood; and it appeared that relying upon the authority of the most ancient maps possessed by the city archives, the Oratory of St. Francis of Sales was situated near the place of the martyrdom, and very likely continued the precise spot within its boundaries. The learned Canon did not know that he was directly corroborating Don Bosco's knowledge, obtained from his mysterious visitant.

But in order to deal with the situation that had now arisen he betook himself to the Archbishop, Mgr. Frasoni, and asked him to give him a recommendation to the Municipality. He intended to ask that body to sanction his use of the Church of St. Martin near the Dora, for the meetings of the boys. The Archbishop readily agreed, and his letter, together with a request to the same effect from Don Borel, obtained the Municipal sanction. Their written permission, however, included several restrictions which left Don Bosco very limited opportunities for conducting such a work as his. However he made all the necessary arrangements, hoping for the best. On Sunday, July 13th Don Borel, as being the priest in charge of the *Rifugio*, gave the parting discourse, and when his exhortations and kind wishes were given, Don Bosco made a sign to the boys, who, according to previous arrangements, were to manage the moving of the necessary furniture to the new Oratory. The Church of St. Martin was near the Mills of the Dora, and so there was a fairly numerous population in the neighbourhood. Their first impressions, judging from their remarks, were scarcely favourable, and when they discovered that what they regarded as merely noisy gatherings were to be regularly held in their vicinity, they at once assumed a hostile demeanour.

Don Bosco soon had his Sunday meetings and services in full swing, but the confined area allotted for games was a source of inconvenience and soon of annoyance, as the number of boys caused them to overflow into the street. Moreover the Church was not large enough to

hold both boys and people, and when his young followers increased to three hundred he was quite convinced that their stay could not be of long duration. He had been taking the lads to the Schools of the Christian Brothers for Benediction in the afternoon, but although the Community were glad to do all in their power, Don Bosco saw that the invasion of their premises by such a crowd of boys gave the Brothers much inconvenience.

About this time occurred the first meeting between the Servant of God and Michael Rua, and as it was not unaccompanied by mysterious references to the future, it is an incident to be noted. In conversation with a companion, Michael Rua heard the name of Don Bosco frequently mentioned. He began to ask questions about him, and received such an enthusiastic description that he asked the boy to take him to the Oratory on the following Sunday. He was at once caught by the charm of the priest, that had so often proved irresistible, and this first acquaintance was developed into a strong attachment by meeting Don Bosco several times at the School of the Christian Brothers which Michael Rua attended.

On one occasion the boy came up to salute the priest and to make some request. After a brief conversation, Don Bosco held out his left hand and placed his right hand upon it, as though to cut it in halves. Then with a smile he told Michael Rua to take a half for himself. The boy was naturally surprised at this strange proceeding and asked what it all meant. A few years later he was able to realise the meaning of it for on the day that he received the clerical habit he recalled the incident, to Don Bosco, and again asked what it could mean.

(To be continued).



The prayers of the Co-operators are asked for the following members lately deceased: Miss Margaret White; Miss A. Stokes; Mrs. Donnelly.

R. I. P.