

The Salesian Bulletin

ORGAN OF THE ASSOCIATION OF
= SALESIAN CO-OPERATORS =

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The Salesian Co-operators.

The **Salesian Bulletin** is the organ of a Pious Association known as the Salesian Co-operators. The origin and scope of this Association, so rich in blessings and privileges from the Holy See, is given in a few words by the Venerable Don Bosco himself:

Hardly had the Salesian Oratories been begun in 1841, than several pious and zealous persons, both priests and lay-people came forward to help in this work, which found such abundant scope among the youthful classes. These co-workers or Co-operators were from the very beginning the support of the pious Works which Divine Providence placed before us. Holy Church has blessed the Association with a generous hand; those therefore who are desirous to exercise their charity for the salvation of souls, besides the great reward proclaimed by St. Augustine: *If thou hast saved a soul, thou hast predestined thy own*, will also obtain a treasure of spiritual favours through these many indulgences.

Some idea of the work carried on by and through the Co-operators can be obtained by glancing through the following pages. The rules and conditions are simple and are summarised on the next cover; a complete booklet may be had by sending a card to the Superior General of the Salesian Works and Missions:

The Very Rev. P. ALBERA,

Salesian Oratory.

Turin.

ITALY.

THE SALESIAN BULLETIN

:: Organ of the Association of Salesian Co-operators ::

==== Via Cottolengo 32, Turin, Italy. ====

The Ideals of the Co-operators.

Not only do the Co-operators come forward with their help in the manner explained in our previous issue, but they form an Association of a religious character, which claims all the privileges of Third Orders. The members therefore are supposed by the fact of their enrolment to be exemplary Catholics, not only in those active forms of religious work which we associate with organisations founded for charitable endeavour, but in the attainment of their own spiritual advancement.

It is obvious that without this ideal on the part of the Salesian Co-operators, the Association would not rise above the level of any Union or Society of men, united for the achievement of some common purpose; the exercise of charity would, or should indeed, be the main object and the bond of union, but there the endeavour would cease, and the Association would tend to lower its ideals.

That Don Bosco intended the Co-operators to be, above everything else, exemplary Catholics is evident from the

very fact that he thought at first of incorporating them into his Society. In his first view they were to approach much more towards the character of the Salesians themselves. Any person whatever—he says—although living in the world, may belong to our Society, but he, the Co-operator, will not make vows; he will nevertheless strive to put in practice that part of the Rule which is compatible with his age and condition. When this paragraph was taken out of the Constitutions by the advice of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, the Servant of God made a rearrangement of his plan, particularly as in the previous form it did not seem to contemplate the enrolment of women among the Co-operators, although from the first they had been among his zealous assistants. The fact remains, however, that Don Bosco always considered a high standard of Catholic piety as already existing in those who were to be enrolled as Co-operators, but in its final shape the prominence was given to active charity in the cause of the young.

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The Congress devoted part of its deliberations to this aspect of the Co-operator's programme, and their attitude showed that there was never any doubt as to the understood necessity of a good standard of Catholic practice in those who lead the van among the faithful. Reading, however, the Co-operator's book of directions it will be seen that special practices of devotion were not aimed at. It speaks of such marks as modesty and reserve in dress and speech, of temperance and simplicity in their household, the exact fulfilment of the duties of one's state, the careful observance of the Sunday and Feast-days by themselves and by all who may be subject to them.

They are urged to make a Retreat every year of some days. This pious practice is finding more and more favour among good Catholics, and has already been established as a regular custom for those Co-operators who are attached to the Province of Turin and the neighbouring towns. Don Bosco used to direct these Retreats himself, and in fact he was both an organiser of this movement, and a constant promoter of it, particularly among the young. A Retreat for Co-operators is now held every year in the memorial church beside his tomb at Valsalice, Turin.

More particularly however they are recommended to take up the practice of making the monthly exercise of a Happy Death. This was always a great point with Don Bosco. It consisted in selecting some particular day, a Sunday by preference, which could be devoted

to a consideration of the month past, to the making of a monthly Confession, and to receiving Holy Communion with special fervour, as though it were an actual preparation for death. Suitable resolutions were also to be made for the coming month and thus the exercise of a Happy Death constituted a day's retreat or a day of consideration, which would undoubtedly be of great spiritual profit if seriously performed. This exercise is conducted in the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians at Turin every First Friday, a special conference being given to the Co-operators on a topic suited to the occasion. It should also be pointed out that a Plenary Indulgence is attached to the faithful performance of this monthly exercise.

The Sovereign Pontiff Pius IX also desired the members to say every day an Our Father, a Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father, for the intentions of the Holy Father, and the invocation St. Francis of Sales, pray for us; this is necessary to gain the Indulgences which are granted to the Association. Priests and those who recite the Office are dispensed from these prayers.

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Beyond the above recommendations no particular spiritual exercises are enjoined upon the Co-operators. The works of active charity in which they take part, or which they strive to promote, take the place of the special prayers and exercises which were attached to the Third Orders formerly sanctioned and promoted by the Church. But the spirit of piety and fervour is to be cultivated as a source from which

will come that ardent and practical charity which is the characteristic of the Co-operator; it is the means by which the Associates become participators in the spiritual exercises of the two Societies of the Salesians and of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians; and it is the spirit which sustains outward good works in a flourishing and progressive state.

On the other hand, it would be inconceivable from Don Bosco's point of view that any except good Catholics should be associated in the promotion of the works which he inaugurated, or which had Our Lady Help of Christians as their inspirer and Patroness. He ever made it of primary importance that a high example of Catholic piety should be the leading characteristic of the members of the Association of Co-operators. Frequent Confession and Communion were his teaching not only to the young, but to all, particularly to those who were in any way engaged in the good works for the promotion of the interests of the young. And as a matter of fact many of his Co-operators were examples of the highest Catholic standards, models of that integrity which denotes real holiness, and of great purity of life; many of them, too, were his close friends, and were in contact with the wonders that he performed almost daily; and what they were assisted to be by the force of circumstances became the ideal for the Salesian Co-operators in general.

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Again, the members of the Association are promoters of the devotion to

Our Lady Help of Christians, and this premises that they are themselves among the clients of Our Lady. In very many instances the Co-operators have been the pioneers of this devotion, so that it has preceded any definite form of Salesian Work. This has been notably the case with those members who are priests, for they have naturally unique opportunities of inculcating it upon their hearers. One of the readiest means at hand for the Co-operators to use is the celebration of the Festivities of Our Lady, and the promotion of the keeping the 24th of each month in Her honour. Great things have also been done by making known the wonderful favours she has obtained and still obtains through the practice of this devotion. Our Lady Help of Christians has become as much a Patroness and Protectress to the Co-operators as to the Salesians themselves, and perhaps most of her favours are granted on their behalf. In this devotion therefore they have a constant source of spiritual advantages and a special aid in all that concerns their religious welfare.

Reverting for a moment to our article in the previous issue, which dealt particularly with the active apostolate of the Co-operators, it will now be clear that it is by the union of the two that the complete view is obtained of the Associate, including both his active charity and his own advancement towards a high ideal of Catholic practice. In achieving this ideal the Co-operators will exert that influence for good which Don Bosco especially intended by their institution.

The Introduction of the Cause of Beatification

of the Servant of God, Father Andrea Beltrami
of the Salesian Society.



In the month of July last, at one of the sittings of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, the Cardinals dealt with the introduction of the Cause of Beatification of the Servant of God, Father Andrea Beltrami, of the Salesian Congregation. Their Eminences voted in favour of the Introduction, and this decision was approved by the Holy Father on the following day, July 28th. It is but thirteen years that the Cause of the Ven. Don Bosco was introduced, and six since that of Dominic Savio, and now another member of Don Bosco's sons, by the fame of his sanctity and the splendour of his

virtues, has been brought under the supreme authority of the Church.

Until recently this step bestowed upon the Servants of God the titles of *Venerable*, but since the new procedure established by His Holiness Pius X., this title is not given until it has been declared that the virtue of the persons concerned reached the heroic degree. This means that if miracles have already been obtained through his or her intercession, the Servants of God are saluted as *Venerable* in close anticipation of their Beatification. We give here the Decree sent from Rome concerning the introduction of the above Cause:

DECREE

concerning the Beatification and Canonisation of the Servant of God Andrew Beltrami Priest of the Salesian Society.

Towards the close of the XIXth century, the Salesian Society, founded by the Ven. Don Bosco to cope with the new demands and special needs of the time, spread rapidly into many parts of the world. As a loving mother the sons and pupils she reared and educated, these she offered, and still offers to Our Lord and to the Church, for the glory of God and the salvation of others. Among these she now points with great consolation to Andrea Beltrami, whom as a boy she educated in one of her colleges, as a youth she received into her Society, and whom as a priest she received as a perfect and greatly esteemed collaborator.

The Servant of God was born in the pleasantly situated district of Omegna, in the dio-

cese of Novara, of pious and esteemed parents, Anthony and Catherine Beltrami, June 24th 1870, and was baptized on the following day in the parish church. At the baptismal font he was given the name of Andrew. His excellent mother at once offered to Jesus and Mary this the first-born of her numerous offspring, and as he grew in years she sought to educate him in piety and in the ways of a good Christian life; and he from his childhood, though vivacious in temperament, gave proofs of piety and obedience; he was seen to distribute alms in charity to the poor, and was considered worthy to be admitted to Holy Communion at the age of ten, which was then quite exceptional.

Having shown both intelligence and care in his elementary studies, he was received in the College of St. Philip at Lanzo, on 24th Oct. 1883, to continue his education and to increase in piety under the Directors and Masters of the Salesian Society. In the beginning, as he was unaccustomed to school discipline, he was somewhat reluctant in complying with it, but as soon as the Director had given him fatherly counsel, he followed it at once. He was very soon considered worthy to be admitted to the Sodalties of St. Aloysius and of the Blessed Sacrament, and as he was easily among the very first of his class, he seemed called to the priesthood. The beginning of his vocation is attributed to a discourse given by the illustrious Salesian Missionary, afterwards raised to the dignity of the Episcopate and of the sacred purple, Cardinal Cagliero, who spoke to the students about the apostolate of spreading the light of the Gospel and of the Catholic Faith among the uncivilised nations. Reflecting upon this in his mind and heart, Andrew sought to know more clearly the Divine Will concerning his choice of a state of life, making a Retreat for this purpose, consulting learned and pious men, and the Ven. Don Bosco himself, to whom he made a general confession. Reassured by the counsel received, and enlightened by the grace of God he knew and cherished his vocation; and when his college course was completed, having passed his holidays at home, he entered the Salesian Novitiate on September 29th 1886. He received the habit on November 4th. A faithful observer of the Rule which was given him by the Superior with the salutary counsel: *Do this and thou shalt live*, he was called by his companions: *The Rule personified*. According to the testimony of the Master of Novices, he excelled among his companions, and was faithful to the grace of God and to holy inspirations. Thus on November 2nd 1887, with humility and joy he made his perpetual profession in

the presence of our Founder the Ven. Don Bosco, repeating several times both before and after: *As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so doth my soul yearn for Thee, O God*; and again: *How beautiful are thy tents, O Lord of Hosts; my soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord*.

Then in the place where he had made his profession, he applied himself with diligence to the study of philosophy, and with not less care to the practice of virtue, taking as his model the Patron of youthful students, St. Aloysius Gonzaga. While yet a student he was also a master, being selected to teach philosophy to a class below; and in 1889 he passed with special honours his final texts previous to a university course. By the desire of his Superiors he then attended the Royal University of Turin, and while following his course he founded the Catholic University Circle, styled the *Cesare Balbo Circle*. Then while he taught literature to the clerics, he followed his own courses in preparation for the priesthood, and was secretary to the Salesian Father, Prince Czartoryski. His health was impaired by these many labours, and being seriously ill in 1891, by the command of his superiors, acting under the advice of medical men, he was obliged to undergo treatment for his health, and to go to other places which were thought more suitable. A little later, his strength being much exhausted, and there being little hope of his recovery, his Superiors proposed to obtain for him the happiness of being promoted to the priesthood, so that by offering the Holy Sacrifice and the spotless Victim, the Holy Will of God might be the better accomplished in him, through the bodily infirmities and by the greater sanctification of his soul.

Therefore, having completed the necessary study and received the various preliminary Orders, on January 8th 1893, with great joy and consolation, the Servant of God was raised to the Priesthood, in the private chapel of the Founder of the Society, Don Giovanni Bosco, by him from whom he had received the earliest ideas of his vocation, Mgr. Cagliero, then raised to the Episcopate. As a priest though weak in body, but vigorous in mind and heart, he passed much time in prayer and meditation, and saying Mass with the greatest devotion, he was continually in intimate union with God. His special gift of faith and the ardour of his charity drew him particularly to the Most Holy Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin, Help of Christians, to the Guardian Angels and his Patron Saints. Not being able to exercise the functions of preaching and of administering the Sacraments, he sought to promote the glory

of God and the salvation of souls, through the writing of edifying books. Although afflicted with a disease which he bore most patiently for seven years, he wrote several lives of Saints, those of St. Margaret Mary (entitled *the Spouse of the Sacred Heart*); of St. Francis of Assisi (*A Seraphim on earth*); of St. Stanislaus Kostka (*the Client of Mary*); of Julius and Juliana (*two brilliant stars of the fourth century*); of St. Joan of Arc (*The Maid of Orleans*); of St. John Baptist de la Salle (*The Founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*); of Liduina (*The model of the sick*). He published also works of a literary, moral and ascetic character, such as Thomas More (*a drama*), Napoleon 1st., the Dawn of the Stars (being the youth of several illustrious persons); Pearls and Diamonds (Christian heroes); Willing and Doing (a simple way to practice virtue); Maxims of Don Bosco (a selection from his writings). In addition to numerous letters, there were also submitted among the writings of the Servant of God various literary studies in an unfinished state.

However, towards the end of December 1897, his illness took a serious turn for the worse, and feeling that his end was drawing near he received the Last Sacraments, but was able to celebrate Mass on December 29th. On the following day, the 30th, suffering considerably from his illness, and seized by a sudden heart attack, he rendered his soul to God at Valsalice near Turin, at the age of twenty-seven years. His sorrowing confrères were all of one opinion: "This Aloysius of ours, though his years were few, had lived a full life."

The obsequies for the dead were carried out in the Church, and then the remains of the Servant of God were taken, at the earnest request of his relations, to his native place, although the deceased had desired to be buried beside the other members of the Society who had passed away. After the customary services, the remains were placed in the family grave where they lie.

In the meantime, the fame of sanctity which had been attached to the Servant of God during life, became after death more openly and widely spread, and thus gave rise to the beginning of

the Process of investigation, both at Turin and at Novara. When these were concluded and forwarded to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and duly considered; and when, too, the writings of the Servant of God had been examined in accordance with the prescribed Canons, and no obstacle now intervened, at the request of the Very Reverend Father D. Munerati, Procurator General of the Pious Salesian Society, who made known the expressed desires and petitions of the Bishops and other illustrious personages, both ecclesiastical and lay, and especially of the above-named Society, and of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians,—His Eminence, Cardinal Vincent Vannutelli, Bishop of Ostia and Palestrina, Dean of the Sacred College and *Relator* of the Cause, at the customary meeting of the Congregation of Rites held at the Vatican on the day stated below, proposed the question: "*Ought the Commission to be appointed for the introduction of the Cause in the case which has been laid before you?*"

The Eminent and Right Rev. Fathers, nominated as the guardians of the Sacred Rites, after the declaration of the Cardinal *Relator*, and after hearing the statement of the Very Rev. Mgr. Angelo Mariani, the General Promoter of the Faith, having weighed every point decided to reply: "In the affirmative, namely that the Commission for the introduction should be signed, if it pleased the Holy Father to agree." This was on July 27th 1920.

When this was reported to His Holiness Pope Benedict XV. by the undersigned Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, in ratification of the rescript of the Congregation, He signed the Commission for the Introduction of the Cause of the Servant of God Andrew Beltrami, Priest of the Pious Salesian Society, on the 28th day of the same month.

A. Cardinal Vico,

*Bishop of Porto and St. Rufina,
Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.*

ALEXANDER VERDE,
Secretary.

There is no cessation in a child's love; it must be provided with good things so that it will not have time to be attracted by evil things, or learn to love self.

The Ven. Don Bosco.

The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians

(Founded by the Ven. Don Bosco).

During the month of October the Nuns of Our Lady Help of Christians are to open their first House in Ireland. Very naturally this is regarded as an important and promising venture, and has been some considerable time in contemplation. It is not unconnected with the opening of their first House in Ireland by the Salesians themselves; and if the prosperity that has attended the undertaking at Pallaskenry may be interpreted as a promising sign, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians may look forward to their future work in Limerick with assured hope.

The Institute of the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians may need some introduction to our Readers; the opening of their new sphere of activities should not be unaccompanied by some statement as to their origin and fruitful labours. The work of the Ven. Don Bosco on behalf of boys, and in the interests of Religion generally, had had an almost phenomenal success. It was welcomed by ecclesiastical and lay authorities as supplying a need which had become ever more and more insistent; yet without a clear call from God, and the equipment of a combination of special gifts and graces, not even Don Bosco himself could have attempted it, much less made it the striking success that it so rapidly became.

Between 1850 and 1870 the Oratory at Turin had developed into the famous rendezvous for boys of all ages and conditions. Sundays and Holidays were the occasions of great religious gatherings and if there were any particular

festival it had special celebrations both in the Church and outside. It was in the evening of one such occasion, when Don Bosco, standing a little apart and contemplating the happy bands of youths here and there in his Oratory play-ground that one of his chief co-workers

put the query to him, as to whether he had never thought of promoting some such work on behalf of girls. Don Bosco was not at all surprised by the query and its implied suggestion. He replied that such a work would come in its due time. It must be remembered that his own Apostolate on behalf of boys had been distinctly revealed to him in vision on several occasions, but it seemed to have no connection whatever with any such schemes on behalf of girls; and it is held by his immediate associates that he was instructed by similar directions from heaven before putting his hand to the formation of the new Institute, that would

realise his ideals through his methods, in the midst of the youthful world of the other sex.

It was in 1870 that he put the idea before the Superior Chapter of his Society, but the history of the movement takes us back some few years earlier. At a little place called Mornese in the diocese of Acqui, on the north of Italy, a pious priest had formed an association for the young women of his district, and had placed it under the invocation of the Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Lady. In the year 1862 the priest felt inspired to ask for admission into the Salesian Society and the



Mother Maria Mazzarello
(First Mother General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians).

Ven. Don Bosco readily agreed, but desired him to remain for the time at Mornese to attend to the spiritual direction of his Association for young women—for even at that time he seemed to have formed the plan of selecting from among them the members of his new Institute.

It was in 1863 that he gave a clear assurance that the formation of an Order of Nuns would be undertaken. He was consulted by a young lady who desired to enter religious life, and for a reply he spoke of the new Institute as of something that was certain to be realised before many years elapsed. Three years later occurred the incident referred to above, in which Don Bosco clearly stated that the Nuns would undertake the work on behalf of girls, and after having

June 14th 1874 Don Bosco arranged for the formal election of the first Mother General, the Servant of God Sister Mary Mazzarello, and for the nomination of the first general chapter. This first Mother General of the Sisters was born at Mornese in 1837. As a girl she was especially distinguished for her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, which moved her to walk a long distance every morning, in order to assist at Holy Mass and to receive Holy Communion. She was the leading spirit among the girls who formed the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception, and thus was one of the first chosen to be of the fifteen who received the habit from Don Bosco in 1872. She was elected Superior General in 1874 and re-elected in 1880. The



The Mother-House of the Nuns at Nizza Monferrato.

considered the matter with his Chapter in 1870, he went to Rome in 1871, and His Holiness Pope Pius IX discussed with him the main lines of the proposed Foundation. On August 5th 1872 the Ven. Servant of God had the consolation of giving the religious habit, which was blessed by the Bishop of Acqui, to the first fifteen aspirants, chosen from among the members of the Association of the Immaculate Conception, thus forming the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. *It was to be, he said, a lasting monument of gratitude for the numerous and wonderful favours obtained by Mary Help of Christians.*

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Don Bosco appointed to the direction of the new Institute one of the members of his Superior Chapter, among them having been His Eminence Cardinal Cagliero, and His Grace Archbishop Marengo, at present the Apostolic Nuncio to the Republics of Central America. On

spirit of zeal and a love of humility were admirably combined in her character and she had also a strength of will and an exquisite charity which rendered her particularly loved by all. Strict with herself, she was a model of maternal goodness towards her religious and towards the girls who came under their care. After having governed her Institute with admirable wisdom she died in the odour of sanctity at the Mother House of Nizza Monferrato on May 14th, 1881. Many graces and favours have been attributed to her intercession and the Diocesan Process for the introduction of her Cause has already been completed.

The rapid development of the new Institute soon made it necessary to move from the restricted premises at Mornese. Don Bosco then acquired the site at Nizza Monferrato, where the Mother House has now grown into a fine collegiate and religious institute and has formed many hundreds of vocations for the Congregation.

In May of this year the Past-Pupils of the Nuns held at Turin their second International Congress. A finely edited and very interesting report of the proceedings has been published and part of the introduction is devoted to the Institute itself. Among other things it says: "The Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians, now spread far and wide, cultivate every field of educative charity, according to the spirit of Don Bosco. Every sort of good work that brings them into contact with girls and young women is readily undertaken by them, and their methods are characterised by an admirable zeal and charity. Don Bosco left to his Sons, the Salesians, as a sort of guiding motto the phrase: *Labour and Prayer*; this too is the programme of the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians.

And their field of labour is a wide one; it might also be described as an all-embracing one. Their system allows of great adaptability, so that according to places and circumstances we find them directing colleges, and normal schools for the teaching and other professions, while in others they are minding and training the little orphans of the war. They have been, particularly successful in taking charge of business girls, especially by their work at the Sunday and Evening Oratories. In some cases they have even been called in to take entire charge of the female staff in big factories. The School, pure and simple, whether primary or Secondary has been one of their most successful departments.

In Missionary work also they have rendered invaluable service; for as soon as the Salesians had done the pioneer work and got their native settlements into some sort of shape, they at once sought the assistance of the Nuns, to take charge of the Indian women and girls. All this points to a manifold vocation, so that every

kind of talent can be used to good purpose in the vineyard of this apostolate.

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No more striking or more convincing testimony to the efficacy of their methods and results could be desired than the great gathering of the Second International Congress of Past-Pupils, held last May at Turin. It was conducted on parallel lines with that of the Past Students of the Salesians. It was completely successful, in the simple acceptance of the meaning of those terms. Their official report is an excellent production, well-planned and well-produced. Its opening pages contain valuable messages from His Eminence Cardinal Cagliero, who so long directed the Nuns and with his customary distinction; from Our Superior General Don Albera, and from the Mother General of the Sisters, Mother Catherine Daghero. The words of the last-named, as coming direct from the Mother to her spiritual children have a claim on our pages, apart



Mother Catharine Daghero
(Actual Mother General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians).

from their own intrinsic wisdom:

"In our times," she says, "when individual efforts do not go very far, but when associated endeavour seems as powerful as a well-equipped army, I hasten with pleasure to notify my heartiest co-operation in your Second International Congress, and I am sure the Catholic Cause will be a great gainer thereby.

The occasion chosen could not have been more propitious. The solemnity of the Feast of Mary Help of Christians, which sheds its lustre on the Inauguration of the Monument to the Venerable Don Bosco—this double event will produce a most suitable atmosphere. These great celebrations, while they form an eloquent public homage from the whole world to our Venerable Founder, will also be

a pledge of further benedictions upon your work; they will serve to consolidate the action of the Past Pupils in the different sections, and to render their efforts more effective and better adapted to the actual needs.

Under a wisely-directed Organisation, your strength will be increased a hundredfold in the manifestation of exemplary Christian virtues, always and everywhere, without any shadow of human respect. The shining example of our Venerable Father should be always before you, to remind you of his maxims, which are

of the Past Students Federation, and showed that this organisation has made great progress since its formal reconstruction in 1911. Affiliated centres now number two hundred and fifty-five, and the Past-Pupils sixty-six thousand four hundred and eighty seven.

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The vast organisation of the Nuns is in constant need of new members, not only to replace those who are called to their great reward, but to cope with the new demand



Past-Pupils of the Nuns at Turin.

summarised in a great Faith and Charity, in the spirit of labour and sacrifice for the salvation of souls.

With these sentiments I offer you the heartiest wishes of the members of the Superior Chapter of the Sisters, who will follow with affectionate interest, and will pray for the success of your approaching Congress."

The Congress was indeed successful. Its gatherings were enthusiastic meetings of crowded audiences, presided over by capable organisers and addressed by first rate speakers. The opening address by the lady-president was eminently practical and suggestive; the sectional gatherings revealed a surprising amount of work accomplished by the various committees

made upon them every year. Co-operators are asked to direct any likely Postulants towards this Congregation, and to facilitate the obtaining of suitable information we give here the two principal addresses in the chief English-speaking countries, viz: The Sister Superior, Eastworth House, Eastworth Rd., Chertsey, Surrey, and the Sister Superior, 41 Ward St., Paterson, U. S. A. Inquiries will be welcomed.

I wish to be not only a Co-operator, but at the head of the Co-operators.

His Holiness Pope Leo XIII.

SALESIAN NOTES AND NEWS.

Home Notes.

The Schools.

Since our last issue, the holiday season for the Schools has come to an end. Great numbers of boys in all directions had been pleased at the receipt of the news, that the lists of successful examination candidates included their own names and those of scores of their companions. This was particularly important for those that were leaving School, as the obtaining of a good place in these publicly recognised examinations, such as the Oxford Locals and the London Matriculation, is a considerable asset in any boy's recommendations.

It must however be remembered that there are other very important considerations in the school-life of the young. Their religious and moral character is awakening and developing, and care and training must be bestowed upon that concomitantly with the mind's growth and equipment. The Ven. Don Bosco made religious influences the foundations of his character formation; with him it was essential. And who can doubt the wisdom of his teaching, in the face of his unprecedented success? For surely the spiritual needs of the soul must be satisfied with the spiritual food adapted to it, and the strength derivable from the Sacraments is most necessary for the weak—viz: the young. The Salesian Schools all over the world endeavour to follow as closely as possible their Founder's methods, which combine charity with zeal and the strengthening of the spiritual with the development of the intellectual life.

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The Scholastic Terms which opened at Battersea, Farnborough, Chertsey and East Hill, Wandsworth were all of good promise. In almost every case the Schools were full and found it difficult to cope with the demands for places, and in fact had to refuse several applications. In others there may still be accommodation for a few new pupils concerning which the respective Directors will be pleased to afford particulars.

Extensions on a considerable scale have been begun at the new Salesian School at Chertsey (Highfields), where, in the course of some

months, a new wing will be added to the existing buildings, thus increasing the accommodation and enabling the school to cope with the demands for places, and adding to its general efficiency.

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The Nuns.

We may here make an opportune reference to the Convent of the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians. Their work which is also centred in Chertsey is making quiet, but solid progress. The Convent includes the Novitiate for this Province, as well as a Boarding and Day School for Secondary Education. Up to the present the Sisters have also taken charge of little boys, but it has been found that the development of the girls' departments will cause the relinquishing of the work for little boys. These latter may possibly be taken over by the Salesians themselves in some preparatory School yet to be established, and which is under consideration. Applications for places for very young boys are constantly made to us, and have generally to be refused; this new proposal may be able to arrange for the little boys, who at a certain age could be transferred to Salesian Schools. But in regard to this point no definite pronouncement is possible for the moment.

The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians will be very pleased to hear of or from young Catholic girls or young women who feel themselves called to the Religious life. Their address is given in the special article on the Nuns in this issue, and in view of the prospects of the rapid extension of their work, they are hoping to receive many recruits to their fruitful apostolate among the young. They have every confidence that their Patroness, the Help of Christians, will inspire many to place themselves under her maternal mantle.

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Wandsworth's endeavours.

The Oratory of St. Mary Magdalene, the Salesian Church at Wandsworth, has long been the object of constant endeavours to pay off the debt upon the Church. The various ways and means for raising money have been resorted to,

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not without a large measure of success. Fr. O'Connor S. C. and his faithful co-workers have indeed every reason to congratulate themselves on the distinctly gratifying results that have attended their efforts, but they have no intention of being satisfied until the two thousand pounds has been cleared off. And even then we doubt if they will rest upon their oars or be content with their laurels, for there are signs already that the Church is not by any means too large for the growing congregation and one seems to feel that its enlargement is only a matter of time.

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Pallaskenry-Limerick.

During the vacation Fr. Provincial paid a visit to the new Agricultural College at Limerick. Its brief existence, he found, had been a very intensive one; the School already opened, the agricultural instruction organised, the land under cultivation. The number of boys promises to rise to a hundred in this new term, and considering that the School was only inaugurated during the Summer, its progress is evidently rapid. Fr. Provincial was indeed surprised that so much could have been realised in so short a time. His impressions were that the School has a great future, that the people of the neighbourhood and of other parts of Ireland are firm supporters of the undertaking, and that our First Foundation in the Emerald Isle was evidently made under happy auspices and with the special blessing of the Ven. Don Bosco, and of its Patroness, Our Lady Help of Christians. May the protection of Mary Help of Christians speedily restore peace and prosperity.

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News from elsewhere.

Cape Town.

Not long back, the Salesian Institute in Cape Town had the privilege of a friendly visit from the Minister of Public Instruction, the Hon. F. S. Malan, who was accompanied by several distinguished public men. The Education Minister has always shown himself much interested in technical training. He has insisted upon the necessity of producing highly skilled workmen, capable of executing the highest classes of work and of holding their own against foreign competition. The Salesian Institute of Arts and Trades has seconded his views, and as it is devoted to the training of practical workmen and imparting besides a general education,

he has always encouraged it both officially and unofficially.

At his visit, the guests inspected the various departments and sections of work, noting with particular interest the processes towards the production of the finished article, and the theoretical instruction which accompanies the practical exercises. After listening to the band, the Minister for Education addressed the boys and congratulated them on the achievements of the past year, urging them to make the greatest possible use of their present opportunities. He spoke first in English and then in Dutch, and on finding that the large majority understood and spoke both languages, he pointed out the necessity of being acquainted with both tongues, if a position of importance was desired when they left school. Nor did he lose the opportunity of recommending the boys to remember their duties to God, the Giver of all good, and of respect towards the constituted authority which is the representative of God.

Before departing, he assured the Superiors of the Institute of his pleasure and satisfaction at the progress of the work, and hoped to pay them another visit before long.

In a report to Don Albera, we read that two of the Salesians from the Belgian Congo travelled right down to Cape Town, a matter of five thousand miles, to be ordained priests. Their accounts of their missionary experiences served to arouse apostolic enthusiasm in many young hearts, and suggestions were not lacking that the missionary work of the Salesians may be one day extended to the Basuto and other tribes who are still in ignorance of the true Faith. The visit of the Basuto chiefs to Cape Town served to bring this idea into prominence and to awaken hope that it may be realised at no very distant date.

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Another Inauguration.

The city of Novara has emulated Turin by having an inauguration of its own. The large space in front of the Salesian College is now adorned with a bust of the Ven. Don Bosco, upon a pedestal, as a commemoration of the centenary of his birth. The occasion of the unveiling was quite an historic one, for seldom had there been such unison and eagerness to honour a priest and benefactor. All the Authorities of the city were present, both to mark the particular importance of the event and to welcome to their city the Successor of Don Bosco, who came to preside at the ceremony. The unveiling was the signal for a great outburst of applause; the band played Pagella's

hymn to Don Bosco which was sung by the hundreds of juvenile voices, as well as by the deeper notes of all the past students and the great gathering of friends and Co-operators. Commendatore Marchisio gave a discourse and then the Council formally presented the monument to the Superior Chapter of the Salesians through the medium of their official spokesman and orator. The Very Rev. Don Albera then thanked the assembly in the name of the Salesians and in the name of Don Bosco himself, who had been honoured that day as a citizen and as a benefactor of the young.

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The Holy Father's generous gift.

The difficult times through which Italy is passing make particularly noteworthy the generous gift of ten thousand lire, sent by the Sovereign Pontiff to the new Salesian Church in course of construction at Florence. In a previous issue we referred to this fine building which has been so long begun, but which has seemed to find insuperable difficulties to its completion. A movement has recently been set on foot with the object of arousing the general interest in this new church in the historic city, whose growing suburbs are in need of churches and of the spiritual administration of which they are the centre. His Eminence Cardinal Gasparri accompanied the gift with the following sympathetic and encouraging document:

Fr. Torquato Tassi, of the Salesian Society, who is in charge of the Parish of the Holy Family at Florence, has sent a petition to the Supreme Pontiff to implore some assistance in favour of the new parochial church, which although begun as far back as 1903 is still uncompleted and is in urgent need of monetary help; the great necessity for a church in the district, as well as the danger to the already existing buildings, if abandoned, have prompted this petition.

The Sovereign Pontiff could not but give a favourable reception to this request, which interpreted the confident desires and expectations of a whole quarter of Florence, and He therefore wishes to become one of the promoters of the erection of this fine parochial church, by sending an offering of ten thousand lire.

Although this amount will not go very far, in face of the large sums required, still, in view of the difficult times, it will be a reassurance of the interest and benevolence of the Holy Father towards this new church in the city of Florence. While I send you notice of this gift

from His Holiness, He also imparts His special blessing to all who will co-operate in this good work by their generous offerings.

Your devoted servant,
Card. P. GASPARRI.

The Committee who are now engaged upon schemes for raising funds hope that the Holy Father's great example will find many to emulate it, so that the new Church may be rapidly brought to completion. There must be many to whom the very name of Florence will be an incentive to join in this pious work. Our Superior General will be pleased to devote to that purpose any sums sent to him by our Readers.

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The leaders in "Sport".

In reference to our Schools and Institutes abroad, the word *sport* must be taken in a *continental*, rather than in a British sense. The word abroad is commonly used to mean what we should include under the heading of Drill or Physical Exercises, a meaning which to us would be a very restricted one, if not misleading. However, once that difference is explained, it may be safely stated that the Salesian Schools and Colleges hold a leading position wherever they exist abroad. In all forms of physical drill and gymnastic exercises their clubs and squadrons have reached a high standard of excellence. Their public displays are a sight that would delight the eye of any drill enthusiast, and on this account it has been suggested that if ever a Patron is chosen for juvenile sports, it will inevitably be Don Bosco. Games and exercises of every description formed one of the corner-stones of his system for his Sunday Oratories.

The Courtyard of the Oratory at Turin was recently the arena for a grand contest by clubs and circles from many parts of Italy. Keenly contested exhibitions were given, judged by prominent men in the world of physical education, and by officers of the army. There were prizes on the final day, followed by a fine general display to musical accompaniment, and a grand march passed before the Monument of Don Bosco. The Apostle of Youth seemed to smile his acceptance of this honour paid him by the battalions of boys, all of whom owed much to his genius for organisation, and for perceiving the precise methods of satisfying the demands of the youthful temperament.



NEWS FROM THE MISSIONS.

Ecuador and the Jivaro Indians.

The road to the forest.

The interior of Ecuador, in the district of Mendez, has long been the field of labour for our Missionaries, but many difficulties have impeded its development. There are villages established here and there among the Andes and by means of these the Salesians have gradually come into touch with the Jivaro Indians, and have placed some Jivaro boys in Christian homes. A fourth part of the road from Pante to Mendez has now been completed. The chief difficulty was to bridge over the gaps between ridges which had to be crossed, and in some places the workmen were in danger from the vicinity of the tiger or the wild-boar. Cataracts and rocky passes were also in the way, but with the successful bridging of the Rio Negro a great obstacle has been removed, and communication with the interior will be both safer and more expeditious.

Journeying in this neighbourhood recently with another missionary we had crossed rivers and passes on our way to a village called *Macao*. The heat was intense, in spite of the elevation of several thousand feet, and our only consolation was the thought that the village was at no great distance, for among the tribes there is no hope of hospitality. At one spot, indeed, we witnessed a sight that was anything but encouraging. On the bank of a river called the *Zungus* there was an Indian hut, and its owner was engaged in drying a human head over a slow fire. Our inquiries elicited a gruesome story.

In the region of *Makunca* a party of Indians attacked the hut of some natives of another tribe; the whole family was slaughtered with the exception of a girl of fourteen who managed to escape into the forest. Wandering about for some time she met an Indian who promised to protect her and he brought her with him here to the bank of the *Zungus*. There she lived for some time, resigned to her fate, when one day the Indian seized her and killed her with his knife and took her head to his house to make what the Jivaros call a *Tzanza*, which is a religious ceremony in which a human head is

used. These sanguinary customs are still so much in vogue among the tribes that one foresees great obstacles to their civilization and conversion.

Our chief hope is in the influence that can be exerted from the villages that are being established in the vicinity. Though seldom visited by a priest they contain many good Catholic settlers, who welcome the occasional journeys of the missionary, and it is they who, by taking Jivaro boys to live with them, have given the Missionary some initial help towards influencing the dwellers of the forests. The soil is extremely fertile and tropical fruits abound in these regions, so that with the opening up of roads there is a possibility of great developments. On the occasion of our visit we stayed nearly a month, so as to give all the neighbouring settlers an opportunity of coming to the Missions, and of providing against their next long wait for the coming of the priest. During that time we administered sixty Baptisms and Confirmations; on a future visit we hope to get into closer contact with the Indians, for whose conversion we are preparing.

CHINA.

An adopted boy.

An interesting account of the reception of a Chinese boy at our Orphanage at Macao is given by the Salesian Missionary there. The story begins with a good lady living at Macerata in Italy. She had lost her favourite nephew in the war and during her great sorrow at this bereavement, she thought of the many poor little Chinese boys abandoned through the inhumanity or ignorance of their parents. She was thus inspired to send a generous offering to our Mission, begging us to rescue one of these unfortunate boys and give him the name of Basil after her favourite nephew.

It was not at all difficult to satisfy the pious lady's wishes, for strange to say the boy came of his own accord. A knock came to the door of the Orphanage at Macao and on opening it the Missionary saw a poor lad standing there.

On inquiring what he wanted, the boy replied that he had heard that this was the place for homeless boys and so he had come there. When the details of his case were investigated, it turned out that the father intended to sell the boy and his little sister, so the mother put them on board a vessel at Canton and told the girl to go to the Sisters, and the boy to find out the Missionaries who took charge of the boys; so there he was.

He was received and he soon settled down to the life of the other Chinese boys in the School. His mother came some time after and confirmed his account. Her tale was an extremely sad one, and the Missionaries arranged for her to go to the Sisters while her case was being seen to. She readily agreed to the boy being instructed and baptized, and when he was prepared he was given the name of Basil according to the desire of the benefactress. The boy was told about his god-mother in far away Europe, and he asked the Missionary to write and tell her that when he was grown up he would buy her a pair of silk-embroidered slippers such as ladies wear. He meant those suited to the tiny feet of Chinese ladies!

He is now baptized and a fervent Christian boy. May his story urge other readers to become god-parents to the many Chinese boys who are waiting to be rescued from misery and ignorance.

The Quantung Mission.

As a preliminary to beginning work in the district of Quantung, the Missionaries paid a visit to the Salesian Mission at *Sia-Kei*, which has been in working order for some time. The description of the visit is both interesting and enlightening. "As soon as we landed," says Fr. Garelli, "we found seven palanquins ready waiting for us. We entered them, forming a long line, headed by a good Chinese Christian who is the President of a Catholic movement called the *Christian Association*. One can picture the scene: each palanquin is borne on two poles some yards in length, and there were eight of them one behind the other; it was a regular procession through the narrow streets of *Sia-Kei*.

The Chinese people had to stop and take a good look at our European faces and beards. They had certainly never seen such a lot of Missionaries together, and as the palanquin procession was a new experience for us, between two lines of an admiring crowd, we had no small difficulty in maintaining the requisite gravity. Arriving at the Mission we were welcomed by the Christians with every sign of

joy, including the letting off of bombs, which reminded some of us of the battlefields of Europe. On the following day there was a solemn religious function, and we took part in the baptism of six new Christians, four adults and two children, and in this way we experienced by anticipation the joy of the Missionary, on admitting these converted Pagans into the Fold of Christ, and could also understand a part of the joy of the new Christians themselves, released from the numerous demons by whom the Chinese are bound, especially when they made their First Communion a few minutes after their Baptism.

The *Christian Association*, to which we alluded above, is practically a Catholic Club, and it invited us to a supper in honour of the occasion. And it was a real Chinese Supper; no bread but plenty of rice, no knives or forks, but the two chop-sticks. We could make very little headway in the manipulation of these, and there was a very strong temptation to use one's fingers. The soup was made of fishes' heads, and tortoise also figured on the menu. One must come to China to learn what an omnivorous sort of animal man really is.

The Chinese do not cultivate the grape, so there was no wine at table. They drink a liquor extracted from rice, but it was certainly not pleasant to our tastes. We had to swallow a little at the toast which was given at the end of the meal; the good-feeling of the Chinese made up for whatever was not over-appetising in the courses of the supper, and this was a great encouragement for us who were about to embark upon what was to us an unchartered sea.

To the new Mission.

Soon afterwards we were *en route* for our own destination. We made a part of the journey by train. We entered one of the third class carriages, very long compartments without any separation, there being a long double seat extending from end to end. It was filled with Chinese men, for the women, at least in the third class, travel in separate carriages. The route lay along the bank of a river, whose waters reflected villages, or verdant fields or shady bamboo shrubberies. As we approached our own territory, we saw three Chinese robbers being taken off in chains by armed soldiers. They saluted Fr. Versiglia as though they were old friends of his, but to us their position seemed symbolical of the slavery of Satan in which they are still fast-bound. The country now seemed stranger to us than ever, with its different ideas and customs, but our knowledge

of what had already been accomplished by our confrères encouraged us to look forward to the future.

In the evening we reached *Sin Kuan*, our first missionary residence, and the future centre of the whole of our Mission. At the present moment there are but few Christians and a very poor Chapel. However, the Mission is dedicated to Our Lady Help of Christians, so we shall expect her to find us the means to raise a Shrine worthy of her name and of the devotion under that title. After making the acquaintance of this part we went on to a place called *Loe-cion*, where we were to remain some months in order to become more familiar with the language. We travelled by boat up the *River of Pearls*. A long cord, attached to the mast of the boat was pulled by two Chinamen, who advanced with slow and measured steps along the bank of the river, whilst the boatman, with a long bamboo pole reaching to the bottom of the river, pushed with all his strength. Fair progress was thus made. At points where the navigation is difficult, the men accompany their efforts with loud shrieks and cries, apparently believing that their strength is thereby increased. Their weird noises are however somewhat disconcerting for the passengers.

We spent no less than three days in the boat, but they passed by pleasantly enough. Mostly we were dragged though the placid waters of the stream; sometimes we ascended the banks on foot and found a restorative and a diversion in eating the sugar-cane; sometimes the stream was too shallow for the boat, and while this was being dragged along we waded in the muddy water. A curious and amusing sight was to watch the Chinese ducks fishing for their owners, and it struck us as being an excellent plan for deriving profit from hunger. These ducks seemed to have rather longer necks than the ordinary species. A number of them were placed alongside the boat, and every now and again were seen to plunge their necks into the water, bringing up the fish in their beaks. They were prevented from swallowing them by the pulling of a cord tied round their necks.

The journey gave us an unexpected consolation, which we took as an augury of the success of our mission. On the vessel, though only a small rowing boat, there was a small wooden altar in the form of a niche, with several small idols, and offerings of food and drink. All Chinese boats have some such provision for the daily superstitious practices of the family. The whole thing was naturally an eyesore for us, and we could only beg God to enlighten these poor souls. We ourselves could only speak

a few words of Chinese, but as it happened a good Chinese missionary priest was travelling with us, and he got into touch with the boatman and his wife and family. Grace made his instructions most fruitful, for the boatman decided to destroy his idols, and later on was baptized. We managed to teach the family the Sign of the Cross, in spite of our ignorance of the language, and it was a great entertainment for the Chinese boys to take the idols and offerings and all the symbols of paganism and cast them overboard. In their enthusiasm they even threw away the little wooden niche which we had thought might have been put to a better use. All was buried beneath the water of the *River of Pearls*, in which that family found the most precious pearl of the Faith.

Among our few articles of luggage we had brought a picture of the Sacred Heart. This replaced the idols, and each of the catechumens was invested with a medal of Our Lady Help of Christians. Our mission had begun on board the Chinese boat.

Our destination.

On the evening of the third day we reached *Loh-Cion* and were soon at our residence of *Pé-Scion*. It is a convenient construction in the open country, free from disturbance and most suitable for the study of the language. Fr. Olive had secured the services of a Christian Chinese doctor, but our beginnings were conducted under difficulties. We, of course spoke Italian. Fr. Olive our interpreter was French, our teacher was Chinese, and the dictionary was in English. To add to our troubles, Fr. Olive was soon called away to his mission, and we were left without an interpreter, and incidentally without a cook, for the cook was his attendant, and went away with him. We had engaged a Chinese servant but he had fallen ill, and until he recovered we had to shift for ourselves. However, a boy turned up. He was none other than the nephew of our teacher, but he didn't mind at all undertaking the duties of a cook and general servant, and under his supervision the household prospered and we were able to attend to our lessons.

Christmas was now approaching and the district of *Kon-Kei* had been promised a missionary by that time. The inhabitants applied to Fr. Olive and he told them that they could have a priest by going to *Pé-Scion* to get him. They lost no time in acting upon this advice and on Dec. 18th two Christians arrived to take the missionary to *Kon-Kei*, where, they said, the Christians must have a priest for Christmas

to hear Confessions and give Communion. We looked at one another in apprehension. We had only been two months in China, and it seemed rash to risk oneself alone, without an in-

terpreter, to begin the work of the ministry. And yet, on the other hand, the Christian colony could not be left without Mass on Christmas day, and the messengers did not intend to go back without a priest. The eldest, therefore, had to resign himself, and as such, I at once set out with the men. We had to stop for the night at *Ton-Shion* with the last of the French missionary Fathers, who is waiting till we are ready to take over the mission, before going to his new work. It took us all the next day to walk to the colony of *Jiu-sà*, our first destination. The missionary establishment was very primitive. It contained three rooms, one for the Chapel, which was still awaiting equipment; another divided into two parts for the missionary's accommodation, and a third used as a school-room.

for I was not at home with the Chinese tongue, and in spite of my efforts I knew not what to reply to some of their questions.—“He does not understand!”—I heard one say, and it sounded to me like a thunder-clap, for it implied that they could not go to Confession if I did not understand their language. However, I managed to say that if they spoke slowly I should understand quite well, and if I did not I should ask them questions which would be quite sufficient for their confessions. As it was, it turned out better than I had anticipated, and all were able to go to Confession. They approached the Sacraments with great devotion

and said all their prayers aloud in unison; yet they had seldom had a priest to instruct them, for missionaries are few. The sixty-four Christians belonging to the mission are the fruit of a small number of passing visits, but the zeal of the missionary had made up for much else. There is ample scope for

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as many as feel themselves drawn to this work of saving souls.

The second Mission.

This, however, was only the first part of my labours. After Mass I took some food and



Chinese Children
rescued by the Missionaries.



we resumed our journey. Our way was along a narrow path-way between the waters: the water of the rice-fields and the rain from heaven to cool our apostolic ardour. I had secured a water-proof and do not know what I should have done without it, but the Chinese is simple in his methods. His shoes and stockings are taken off, his trousers rolled up, and his wide-brimmed hat serves as an umbrella. He can thus defy the weather. We had a fatiguing march of two hours, sometimes hindered by small caravans of carriers, and in endeavouring to pass them, narrowly escaped falling into the meed of the rice-fields.

After much weary plodding along, I was saluted by two Chinese boys, who evidently concluded from my beard that I was a Missionary, and from this friendly greeting I gathered that we were not far away from the next missionary station. It bore the simple name of *Ton-Tan* and we reached it in half an hour. We stopped for refreshment and to interview the few Christians, for whom we promised a Mass on the following Sunday; our real destination still awaited us.

I was still accompanied by the two messengers and we set off for our walk of several hours, the rain coming down heavily all the while. It did not prevent me from noticing that we passed through some picturesque valleys, divided by low hills. From time to time we passed through small shelters, which resembled the entrances to mediaeval castles, the road passing under the archway; here we refreshed ourselves with hot tea, which is always to be had at a small cost. About five in the evening we at last reached *Kon-Kei*. I was received by the heads of the little Mission as one long desired, but better than any compliment to one who had walked seven hours in the rain, was the basin of warm water for my feet. After my ablutions I had forgotten that long and wearisome journey. Then the greetings began. One after another all the Christians came and all enquired after their former priest, and I satisfied them by promising that he would return as soon as possible. Then a dozen boys arrived on the scene, and whether they were asking permission for something or announcing their intention to do me a great honour, I didn't understand; but they began a regular pandemonium of noise, which in the intention of the players, was a musical band. Two large metal plates, two iron discs of different tones, a trumpet made of a thick bamboo cane and some other native instruments collected by these lively children, and the concert began. After nearly deafening the missionary, they went round the little Christian village, summon-

ing all to evening prayers at which the missionary also assisted.

I went there, but did not think it necessary to take an overcoat, for I did not expect to find a little Church with four walls and without any covering to the fourteen long windows. The cold damp air penetrated on every side and I soon felt thoroughly frozen, and the prayers went on for a good half-hour, said aloud by all the people. Their faith made up for all the deficiencies in the Chapel, and I was particularly struck with the singing of the Litany by one of the boys. Next day we set about the decoration of the Altar and Chapel, and in the midst of it I was called away to see an old woman who was dangerously ill. She was in a miserable cabin and was lying on a Chinese bed, which consists of three pieces of wood covered with a mat of bamboo leaves. She sat up and made her Confession and was anointed. The son who had come to call me assisted all the while and was able to respond to all the prayers. This I thought extraordinary, considering how seldom one finds this knowledge even in Europe; and thus my first impressions of the mission were a mixture of hope and consolation: consolation at so much real faith and devotion, hope that we may soon be able to improve the lot of these young neophytes to the Christian faith.

INDULGENCES

which may be gained by the Co-operators.

The Association of Salesian Co-operators is endowed with many spiritual privileges, and plenary indulgences have been granted on many days throughout the year.

Approaching dates are:

1. On the 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays of Advent, indulgences of ten years and ten quarantines.
2. On the 3rd Sunday, an indulgence of fifteen years and fifteen quarantines.
3. On the Ember days of Advent an indulgence of ten years and fifteen quarantines.
4. On Christmas Eve an indulgence of fifteen years and fifteen quarantines.
5. On Christmas day, by approaching the Sacraments a plenary indulgence.

DEVOTION TO OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS.

The 24th of the month.

It is a part of our religious or spiritual instinct to attach greater importance to certain times and places; fixed days or seasons of special prayer and observance have long been established by the Church, and in that She carried on the tradition of the older Dispensation. Certain associations begin to hover about a given day, and these sentiments attract and influence the mind and heart, leading them to comply with what gradually becomes a dominant factor or consideration.

This process was evidently at work in establishing the 24th day of each month as a day of special importance and practice in connection with the Devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians. And one has only to come into contact with the celebration of the Feast of May 24th, as kept at the Sanctuary at Turin, to agree that it is one of those occurrences whose memory the faithful do not willingly let die. Such scenes of devotion create those impressions and associations which take up a permanent position in the heart of the people and gradually form those traditional practices which are religion in being and action.

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When the Ven. Don Bosco's personal Apostolate was over, there was no sign of any diminution either in the devotion of the people to Our Lady Help of Christians or in the favours She had so lavishly bestowed. In fact he himself now seemed to be in a more influential position to obtain the graces which he had taught the faithful to ask for so confidently, and one consequence was that the Feast of May 24th assumed an importance and solemnity ever greater and more striking. Thousands now took part where hundreds had come before. Instead of local enthusiasm, it attracted a universal interest. The novena in preparation, and then the whole month preceding assumed the proportion of some renowned festival, whose history had its roots deep in the past. Hence arose that consensus of the devout clients of Our Lady Help of Christians that such great festivities should be commemorated one day in every month, when the 24th day brought

its reminiscences of the Festival's great triumph. The day itself was suggestive of some celebration out of the ordinary, such as attending at Mass and approaching the Sacraments, and the Salesians were not slow to second the pious sentiments of the people, by arranging a service in the Sanctuary and encouraging the practice of some particular devotion on the 24th of each month. And not only that. This particular day became almost at once the occasion of special prayers, the beginning or conclusion of triduum and Novenas, and by degrees has firmly established itself as a subsidiary but permanent festival day to be devoted to Our Lady Help of Christians.

Our Co operators far and wide have taken up the practice and thus it is becoming a day when the whole Association will combine in some special act of devotion and in prayers to the Queen of Heaven on behalf of their private and general intentions.

Graces and Favours. (1)

Extraordinary protection.

CO. DUBLIN.—The following account sent us by a Dominican Father who was a Military Chaplain will be a source of interest and encouragement to many. Before going abroad to the campaign in North Russia the Dominican Father, at the suggestion of one of the Salesians, had placed himself under the special protection of Our Lady Help of Christians. The remainder is given in his own words: "During the entire campaign I trusted in that dedication and prayed to Our Blessed Lady with all my heart. I believe that on several occasions She saved my life. On Feb. 7th 1919, I found myself in a position of very great danger. While endeavouring to reach a certain aid post, I was under very heavy rifle fire and was obliged to lie flat in the snow for about half an hour, whilst countless bullets passed overhead and close to me. The temperature was so far below zero that all the machine guns and not a few of the rifles on our side were rendered useless.

(1) In regard to these accounts no higher authority is claimed than that usually attaching to authentic human testimony.

Yet, not only was I not wounded in the firing, but I suffered no ill effects from lying so long in the snow, in the extreme cold, which was quite sufficient to have caused serious frostbite.

A few weeks later on March 31st, a party of five, consisting of two American soldiers, two friendly Russians and myself walked into a Bolshevik ambush and were fired on with a machine-gun at a point-blank range of about fifty yards. Of my companions, three were at once killed, whilst the fourth and myself were taken prisoners. My captors drew my attention to several marks on the leathern jerkin I was wearing where, though unnoticed by myself in the excitement, portions of the material had been clipped away by bullets. After a three days' journey on foot through the snow, we arrived at the enemy Headquarters, Our Lady evidently still guarding me, for to my great surprise and delight, the Bolshevik general in charge turned out to be a Catholic, and by his influence with the Soviet Government at Moscow, he obtained my release, so that after a few days captivity I was enabled to return safe and sound under a flag of truce to the British lines.

I have therefore to thank Our Blessed Lady Help of Christians for at least two remarkable escapes from death and for a speedy deliverance from a captivity that would have involved very great hardships, and would have been of indefinite duration... You are at liberty to make whatever use you may please of the details set forth in this letter."

1920.

R. J. R.

TANGANIKA TERRITORY.—Two important requests which I had recommended to the intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians have been granted, and in accordance with my promise I beg to enclose an offering for a Mass in thanksgiving and to ask for the publication of the favours. I am still looking forward with confidence to the granting of another much desired favour.

August 1920.

V. C.

KENDAL.—I had recommended a special favour to Our Lady Help of Christians and promised publication of the same. I now desire to have two Masses offered in thanksgiving and to fulfil my promise of publishing the favour.

E. R.

CANPORE (India).—A little boy of nine caught Influenza while away at School, and the illness rapidly developed into pneumonia,

after which a series of complications set in, ending in brain fever. The doctors had given up all hope of a recovery, and the boy had almost from the first lost his power of speech. In these anxious circumstances we had recourse to the intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians and, to the surprise of the doctors, who declared the recovery to be a miracle, the boy regained his health and strength and power of speech. According to our promise, I beg to have the favour published in the *Bulletin*.

M. S.

Thanksgivings have also been received from L. M. (Dublin) in grateful thanksgiving for her very many favours granted:

J. N. (Ballagherren) for great relief in illness;

A client of Our Lady for success in an important examination;

D. H. (Co. Kilkenny) in thanksgiving for a great favour.

M. A. R. (Demarara) for special grace received after prayers and a promise of publication.

* * *

The Ven. Don Bosco obtained innumerable extraordinary favours for the faithful through the intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians. He always urged his clients to lay their petitions before Her with all confidence and fervour, and he advised the following Novena:

1) To recite every day for nine days three Our Fathers, three Hail Marys and three times the Glory be to the Father, to Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, adding each time the prayer: *Blessed and praised every moment be the Most Holy and Most Divine Sacrament.*

2) Three times the Hail Holy Queen to Our Lady Help of Christians, with the ejaculation, *Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.*

3) To approach the Holy Sacraments.

4) To make an offering, if one is able, to the Salesian Works, which is under the immediate patronage of Our Lady Help of Christians.

One should, however, bear in mind his counsel in regard to all this: "Have great Faith in the Most Holy Sacrament and in Mary Help of Christians, and you may be certain that Our Lady will not deny you the complete fulfilment of your prayer, if it be for the glory of God and for the good of your soul. If not, She will obtain some other favour, perhaps more important for you."

It has long been a custom to promise to publish the favour to the greater honour of Our Blessed Lady, but this is naturally left to the option of the person concerned.

THE LIFE OF THE VENERABLE DON BOSCO

By G. B. LEMOYNE of the Salesian Society.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The anger and revenge of the Protestants.

Don Bosco's *Catholic Readings* had been scattered broadcast among the people. Religious excitement was running high, and in such an atmosphere the public eagerly read these manifestoes, which were powerful weapons against the enemy. Counter attacks were made by the Waldenses, but they proved to be but feeble attempts in comparison with Don Bosco's trenchant and telling style. The authors soon perceived that their only hope was to make the Servant of God desist from his writing, and with that intention the leaders betook themselves to the Oratory to open a discussion; their method, however, consisted in shouting rather than argument, and when beaten on one point they at once shifted to another, coming to no definite conclusion.

At the end of one of their discussions, a disputant remarked that if their chief Minister had come, he would certainly have demolished all Don Bosco's arguments with the greatest ease. Don Bosco urged him to bring their chief Minister for the next meeting, as he looked forward with pleasure to making his acquaintance. And on the next occasion this important personage accompanied his lieutenants. Don Bosco was introduced and after the customary compliments the discussion began. It lasted from eleven in the morning till six in the evening, and ranged over every department of ecclesiastical and theological controversy. The leader of the Waldenses found his position untenable, but unwilling to admit defeat, he objected to the Latin text of the Scriptures, alleging that the Greek text varied from the Latin and should therefore be used. This was his undoing. He knew no Greek, and he was still more unfortunate in taking the book from Don Bosco upside down. In that position he began to turn the pages as though searching for a text, but naturally failed to do so. Don

Bosco then noticed that the book was upside down and he came nearer and said:

— Excuse me, you cannot find the text you want, as you have the book the wrong way round. Turn it thus.

The confusion of the Minister may be imagined; he threw down the book on the table and thus concluded the discussion.

Yet other Ministers still tried to persuade Don Bosco to desist from writing, but to no effect. One of his cleverest things in this connection was a sketch he wrote for the stage, in which he introduces a sectarian and a lawyer, the latter of whom easily shows up the weakness of the heretic's position. The play was given several times and published.

Their next move was one of bribery. Two of the Ministers came to Don Bosco and urged him to give up the writing of religious matter and to turn his undoubtedly great gifts to scholastic subjects. In that case they would help his Oratory financially and offered four thousand francs as an initial gift. Don Bosco refused the offer, saying that his life was consecrated to the service of the Church and to the salvation of souls, and that he was determined to do his duty to the end.

The visitors then had recourse to threats. They said that his methods were an insult to them, and they would not guarantee him against revenge; but Don Bosco was not to be intimidated.

— I see, he replied, that you have quite a mistaken notion of the Catholic priest, otherwise you would not think of descending to such threats. You should know, therefore, that the priests of the Catholic Church are devoted to the service of God, and if danger awaits them in the fulfilment of their office, they are ready to risk even death itself, and would count it as their highest glory. Your threats I can only treat with contempt.

There might have even been some act of violence on that occasion, had not Don Bosco had at the door two of his most trustworthy

assistants. He called to one of them and told him to show the gentlemen out. As they left they assured Don Bosco that a more favourable opportunity would come, and these words proved to be the beginning of a long series of attempts against the life of the Servant of God; attempts which were carried out by fraud and violence, and from which he escaped only through the special and miraculous protection of Divine Providence.

One evening while Don Bosco was teaching in his Night School, two ruffianly men came in and asked him to go at once to hear the confession of a dying man. For such an errand he was always ready, but owing to the lateness of the hour he took with him a few of his eldest boys, in case of any emergency.

— You need not bring anyone with you— said the two men—we shall take you to the house and accompany you back; besides the sick man may not care to be disturbed by the presence of strangers.

— The boys will not trouble you in the least, replied Don Bosco; they like a little walk in the evening and they will remain outside while I am attending to the dying person.

When they arrived at the house, they desired Don Bosco to wait in a room while they prepare the invalid for his coming. Don Bosco entered and found half a dozen men at table, evidently at the end of their meal, which was being concluded by a course of chestnuts. The men greeted the priest and one of them asked him to join them at table. Don Bosco assured them that he had had his supper and refused even a glass of wine.

— Oh, its excellent wine, one said; and you must drink to our health. Don Bosco saw there was some trick, and suspected poison, so taking the proffered glass he raised it to their health and then put it down on the table refusing to drink.

— You shall not insult us in that way, said another; it is very good wine. The others also joined in the demand that he should drink.

As Don Bosco still refused, the men rose and declared they would make him drink by force, and seized him by the shoulders and arms. He saw that he could not hope to overcome a party of men so he had recourse to strategy.

— If it is absolutely necessary that should drink, he said, you had better leave me alone, or the wine will be spilt.

The men retired a little, and Don Bosco seized a suitable moment to reach the door which, fortunately was not locked. He opened it and called in the young men who had accompanied him, at the sight of whom the men were somewhat taken aback. Their boldness lessened appreciably, and the leader said:

— If you do not wish to drink, leave the wine alone.

— But where is the sick man? asked Don Bosco.

In order to give some colour to their pretence, one of the men took him to an adjoining room, and there Don Bosco saw on the bed one of the very men who had come to the Oratory for him. He put some questions to him, but the impostor could not maintain his seriousness and declared that he would go to Confession some other time. Don Bosco then departed with his guard, thanking God for having protected him from harm.

On the following day some of his boys made investigations, and discovered that the ruffians had all been paid to force Don Bosco to drink the wine which had been prepared beforehand. They were, in fact, hired assassins. Don Bosco often referred to this incident, and pointed out the house to many of those who accompanied him on his journeys.

Another evening as he was walking with some of his boys in the play-ground a man rushed up, waving a butcher's knife and calling for Don Bosco. The boys ran in all directions and the man pursued one of the clerics mistaking him for Don Bosco. Perceiving his error he turned and made for the house, where the Servant of God had already got out of harm's way. The would-be assassin remained at the door for a long time and was eventually removed by two policemen, who, though at once summoned by Mamma Margaret, did not come till some hours had passed. The police added indiscretion to their neglect, for on the following day when the man was examined, the head of the police sent a messenger to Don Bosco to ask if he would forgive the outrage. The Servant of God replied that as a Christian and a Priest he pardoned the injury he had received, but as a citizen and the head of an Institute he demanded the protection guaranteed by the law. However, the man was set at liberty, and on the same evening was again in the neighbour hood of the Oratory, evidently with the same evil intent. Later on he made another

attempt to attack Don Bosco, but the vicinity of other persons prevented him from carrying it out.

A friend of the Oratory made it his business to enquire into the cause of these persistent attacks, and he learnt from the man himself that he was a paid agent in the hands of the sectaries. As the public authorities could not be induced to act, this man was paid a sum of money and he ceased to trouble the Oratory.

But the attacks continued from other quarters. One night a man came to the Oratory and asked Don Bosco to accompany him to a sick person who was in need of a priest. Remembering the circumstances of his previous experience, he took four of his boys with him, two of them being particularly strong. When Don Bosco went into the room he saw a woman in bed; her difficult breathing, skilfully put on, led him to think that this was a real sick-call and he asked the four men who were seated near to move away, so that he might assist the person with her confession.

The woman, however, instead of making her Confession, began to argue with one of the men, and the five people were soon exchanging insults and oaths. They were all standing up, and all of a sudden the light was put out. Blows with sticks came from all quarters in Don Bosco's direction, and he, realising that he was again caught in a trap, seized a chair and defended himself with it as best he could. He made for the door, but it had been locked. The noise, however, alarmed the boys who were waiting outside, and their united strength pushed in the door and Don Bosco sprang out from the midst of the confusion of sticks and chairs and furniture and infuriated men, and escaped safely down stairs. His left hand had received such a blow that his thumb-nail was torn away and the thumb itself was so bruised as to retain the mark for more than thirty years.

On the way back to the Oratory he bade the boys not to speak of the affair to anyone, adding: "They are unfortunate enemies of Religion and we must pray for them that they may repent."

It was not therefore a matter of doubt or suspicion that these attacks and other evil attempts were the work of the sectaries, who had failed to cope with Don Bosco's skilful measures against their propaganda. On another occasion

two apparently respectable men went to Don Bosco's room for an interview, but they were not unobserved by one of the elder boys. The men began to discuss the *Catholic Readings*, and sought to dissuade Don Bosco from continuing their publication. He refused to give any such promise. One of them then drew out a couple of pistols from his pocket, but such a threat left Don Bosco quite unmoved. In the meantime, the young man outside had heard enough to know that trouble was brewing and had hastily called a companion, but before doing so he gave a heavy knock on the door which apparently frightened the visitors inside, for as the two young men were about to enter, they came out followed by Don Bosco, who bade them good-day, as though nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

In spite of these attacks Don Bosco never lost his unalterable serenity, nay, he rejoiced in braving these dangers and insults in the cause of God. He never carried any instrument of defence with him, but relied upon his own prodigious strength as a safeguard. If he was out at night some of the bigger boys usually went to meet him on his way back from the town. Sometimes he was warned by friends or by anonymous letters against impending dangers; frequently he was accompanied by persons from the town as far as the Oratory, and on some special occasions he was protected by an armed soldiers, whom he had obtained from the guard at the Royal Palace.

* * *

His chief safe-guard, however, was undoubtedly the protection of Divine Providence, vouchsafed in extraordinary ways.

One night in 1852 Don Bosco was returning home, quite alone and in a deserted neighbourhood. He had a foreboding of some danger ahead, when suddenly he saw walking close to him a large-sized dog, somewhat like a wolf, with a fairly long head and straight ears. At first he was somewhat afraid of it, but seeing that it made no threatening signs, but was even inclined to be playful, he was soon on the best of terms with it. The dog accompanied him as far as the Oratory and then turned and went away. This happened on many occasions. Whenever Don Bosco was late or without a companion, *Grigio* (The Grey) would make his appearance as soon as the lonely part of the

road was reached. Many of the boys who came to meet Don Bosco found him accompanied by his trusty guard.

"Another evening," says Don Bosco himself, "I was coming home when it was somewhat late, and a friend walked part of the way with me. He was about to leave me to go in his own direction, and we had reached the worst part of my journey, when behold *Grigio*, my guardian appeared on the scene. Seeing the great dog, the man was surprised and afraid, and did not like to leave me. I assured him that the dog and I were good friends, and he need have no fear, but he insisted upon accompanying me. In fact he threw two large stones at the dog, hitting it both times, but it took not the slightest notice. The man declared that it was an uncanny animal and was so much afraid that he dared not turn back. When we reached the Oratory I had to send two boys to accompany him some distance, for he feared to encounter the dog which in the meantime had disappeared."

On another occasion, instead of accompanying Don Bosco to his house, it prevented him from going out. He had forgotten some important matter in the course of the day, and was anxious to go and settle it. The hour was late and Mamma Margaret sought to dissuade him from going, but bidding her have no fear, he took his hat and called a couple of boys to go with him. At the door he found *Grigio* stretched out in front of it. The door-keeper, not knowing the dog, had previously tried to drive it away, but it refused to go and seemed to be awaiting somebody.

"Oh, here is *Grigio*," said Don Bosco. "So much the better; there will be one more in the party. Come, get up and set off with us." But instead of obeying, *Grigio* gave a deep growl, and refused to move. Twice Don Bosco sought to go out, and both times the dog refused to let him pass. One of the boys touched him with his foot and he barked so loudly as to frighten them. Don Bosco then sought to pass between him and the door-post, but the dog sprang up to prevent him. Then Mamma Margaret said: "If you will not listen to me, at least heed the dog," and Don Bosco thought it best to take his mother's advice. A quarter of an hour had not passed when a neighbour came to warn him that three or four suspicious individuals were waiting about, evidently on

the look-out for an opportunity of doing him some harm.

One night he was coming home, and at the outskirts of the city he noticed that a man was following him at a rapid pace. Don Bosco hurried forward, but perceived that a group of roughs were waiting for him to approach. Seeing that he was entrapped he decided to deal with the man who was now almost upon him and was preparing to strike with a cudgel. By coming to a sudden stop before the man expected it, he was able to give him a blow in the stomach with his elbow, and it was done with such force that the man fell backwards crying out with pain. This feat would have delivered Don Bosco from danger, had not the other roughs now come to the attack. But just as they were about to use their sticks *Grigio* appeared on the scene, at the opportune moment, and he sprang upon the men so savagely that they besought Don Bosco to keep him back, while they got off as best they could. The dog then accompanied him to the Oratory, and this time went with him into the play-ground and even to the kitchen, where it allowed Mamma Margaret to stroke it, though not very willingly.

Another night an individual was waiting for him behind a tree, and when Don Bosco came up, he fired two shots at him almost point-blank. The shots missed, and then the assassin sprang upon him as though to accomplish his task in some other way. But again *Grigio* was upon him, forced the ruffian to abandon his attempt and to beat a speedy retreat.

One evening the dog provided the boys with some entertainment. Don Bosco was at supper with some of his clerics, and Mamma Margaret was also present, when the dog came into the playground. Some of the boys tried to drive it away, but others recognised it and began to stroke it, to pull its ears and to play with it as youngsters do. They took it to the Refectory, where again it caused some alarm at first; but Don Bosco said:

—My *Grigio* never harms anyone, let it come and don't be afraid.

The dog glanced round the table and went joyfully to Don Bosco's side. After caressing it a little, he offered it something to eat and then to drink, but it refused even to sniff at the things offered. It rested its head on the table and looked at Don Bosco as though to

salute him; then it turned away and went out into the night. It was remembered that although Don Bosco had been out somewhat late, he had been driven home in the carriage of the Marquis Fassati and thus the dog's services were not required; but he seems to have come upon the scene to make sure that his protégé was safe. Cardinal Cagliero relates: "I saw the dog one winter's night. It came into the playground, and then into the room where Don Bosco had his supper. It went up to him with signs of joy and Don Bosco said: 'O Grigio, you didn't arrive in time to accompany me. I have already reached home.' He then offered the dog some bread, but it refused to eat. 'I suppose you would like some meat, but you see Don Bosco hasn't any. If you don't want to eat, you can run away.' The dog lowered its head in a mortified manner and began to go towards the door, but Don Bosco called it back and we all caressed it for some time, when it went off again about its business. Many others saw it on several occasions."

A third time Don Bosco's life was saved by the opportune appearance of the dog. It was towards the end of November 1854, and the night was dark and misty. As he went along he noticed two men a little distance in front, who seemed to be awaiting his coming. They regulated their pace by his and crossed the road when he did. Don Bosco was hesitating as to whether he ought to take refuge in some neighbouring house, when they suddenly turned and accosted him and one of them threw a cloak over his head. He sought to free himself from this, but was held the tighter by the men who tried to gag him so as to prevent his calling for aid. As he turned his thoughts to heaven to ask for assistance a loud barking announced the presence of *Grigio*. His bark was like the infuriated howl of some wild animal, and he sprang upon one of the men and then at the other, causing them to relinquish their attack immediately. One tried to run away, but the dog sprang at him again and threw him down in the mud. Having accomplished this he stood still, snarling all the while and watching the two men, who were constrained to beg Don Bosco to preserve them from its attacks, and to call it while they got away. Don Bosco

agreed to do so if they would leave him in peace. This they at once promised, and he called to *Grigio* who at once obeyed and came to his side.

When the men had gone, Don Bosco continued his way, but the adventure had so affected him that he called at the Cottolengo Institute, where he was able to see to his clothes and have some refreshment. He was accompanied to the Oratory by a faithful escort from the Institute, but the dog also followed and did not leave him till he ascended the stairs to his room.

It was evident that Divine Providence made use of the dog to protect the Servant of God in those early years of the Oratory, when the surrounding neighbourhood was undeveloped and uninhabited. "Sometimes," says Don Bosco, "I thought of inquiring into its origin, or if it belonged to anyone but then considered it wiser to be satisfied with its services as a trusty friend. In many a danger it proved a real God-send." It should be added that *Grigio* appeared at Don Bosco's side on other occasions when he was away from Turin.



The prayers of the Associates are asked for the following lately deceased members:

- Thomas McCabe, Dublin.
- Margaret Smyth, Andersontown.
- John Jordan, Philadelphia.
- J. J. Dolan, Philadelphia.



A CLOSING MESSAGE.

The Very Rev. Don Albera,—our Superior General and the Head of the Co-operators—desires to send to all the members of the Association his heartiest greetings and best wishes for the Season of Christmas-tide.

The year just passing away has been of great importance to the Co-operators, particularly on account of the Congress held at Turin in May last, at which so many nations were represented, and on account of the great impetus that was given to their work by the enthusiastic scenes at the inauguration of the Monument of the Ven. Don Bosco. At that time Don Albera had the opportunity of addressing Representatives of the Co-operators from many parts, but by means of this periodical he is able to reach even a wider and more numerous public.

And on this occasion he makes a special appeal for all our good works which are being undertaken or are already in being in practically all parts of the world. On them depend immense numbers of children who have been adopted by the Salesians, for apart from Schools and Colleges, the Society has a vast number of Institutes which are devoted exclusively to charitable works, and which depend entirely upon the Society for their well-being.

The Coming of the Divine Child makes an irresistible appeal to all. His helplessness as a babe speaks of the helplessness of these children, who make a similar appeal.

On Christmas Night in the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians our Superior General offers the Holy Sacrifice for the intentions of all the Co-operators, as an act of gratitude for their great generosity. His best wishes to them are offered first to the Divine Child in the Holy Mass, and thus they will be sure of an efficacy far and above mere human wishes. They will contain an expression of gratitude from Our Lord Himself for all that you have done for these little ones in His Name.