

# The SALESIAN BULLETIN

ORGAN OF THE ASSOCIATION  
OF SALESIAN CO-OPERATORS

VOLUME XV.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1923

NUMBER 6.

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## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS.

Very Rev. Fr. Rinaldi, Superior General of the Salesians, extends his most hearty Christmas greetings and best wishes to all Co-operators and to all readers of this little journal throughout the world. That this is no mere formal greeting these dear friends of the Salesians know quite well; their letters and communications with the Salesian General throughout the year bear ample testimony to the strong charitable bond which binds them to the Congregation, and to the real personal regard they have for its spiritual chief. He, on his part, is consoled in his anxieties, and encouraged in his undertakings when he sees the great interest which so many good souls take in the activities of the Congregation founded by Don Bosco, and when he sees them rallying to the support of its good works. He takes the occasion of the coming of the King of Peace to tell them how deeply he appreciates their beneficence, their prayers and their friendship. It will be his special privilege to present their petitions to the Babe of Bethlehem during the Midnight Mass in Our Lady's Basilica, and his earnest prayer will be that they may be blest with peace and concord in their families, and that their children, following ever in the footsteps of the Boy Jesus, may be a joy and a consolation to them for all the sunshine they have helped to bring into the lives of the young by furthering the works of our Pius Society.

## Solemn Celebration of the Fifteenth Centenary of the Death of St. Columban.

(The following article written by a pilgrim to Bobbio was unavoidably held over from our last issue. We hope the account of the celebrations may still be of interest to our readers, especially to those in distant countries who may not have had the opportunity of reading the newspaper accounts).

To the south of Piacenza, about midway between there and Genoa as the crow flies, lies the little town of Bobbio. A sleepy little place nestling in the seclusion of an Apennine valley to which the railway has never penetrated, its very seclusion, whilst preserving for it its atmosphere of hallowed antiquity, has caused it to be but little known in our day, to be deprived of the fame and historical reputation which is its birthright. For Bobbio, though long deserted by its monks and pillaged of its treasures, was at one time a seat of learning, a home of culture, a literary workshop and a religious centre whose influence extended not only through Northern and Central Italy but even through the whole of Christian Europe. There it was that the great Irish saint and scholar, Columban, or Columbano as he is known in Italy, acting on a charter granted to him and to his monks by King Agilulph completed a magnificent basilica, erected a spacious monastery and with his spiritual sons laboured for years in the cause of religion, of culture and of civilisation. There he lived and there he died in the year A. D. 615, and it was precisely to commemorate the saint's nativity in Heaven that a glorious festival, reminiscent of the departed glory of the little town, was celebrated on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of September by the townspeople and by their guests, hundreds of Irish and Italian pilgrims.

### *The Thirteenth Centenary.*

Owing to the war the 13th centenary celebrations could not fittingly take place in 1915, but the hard-working and enthusiastic Bishop of Bobbio was determined that the event should nevertheless be observed at the first convenient moment, and it is largely due to his efforts that this year the memory of St. Columban has been honoured in a way altogether splendid and

magnificent. The Holy Father, ever the patron of learning and of that missionary apostolate of which Columban is a shining example, was pleased to inaugurate the 13th centenary and appointed H. E. Cardinal Ehrle, S. J. as legate to Bobbio.

The Cardinal Legate was received at the old city gate about 7 o'clock on the evening of September 1st by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities and conducted in solemn procession to the Basilica of St. Columban. A body-guard of carabinieri surrounded His Eminence's car and Fascisti soldiers lined the route to the Basilica. His Eminence gave Benediction and afterwards all repaired to the crypt of the church which contains the tomb of St. Columban and his two successors, besides the relics of many of his companions. Around this historic shrine the distinguished company gathered, and whilst the students from the Irish College, Rome, sang their *Dán Columáin Naomha*, or hymn to St. Columban in the language of the Gael, many hearts beat faster at the significance of the scene and their thoughts went back along the centuries to the time when Columban and his Irish companions must have raised their voices to God in prayer and in song on that very spot and in their mother tongue.

### *Sunday the 2nd of September.*

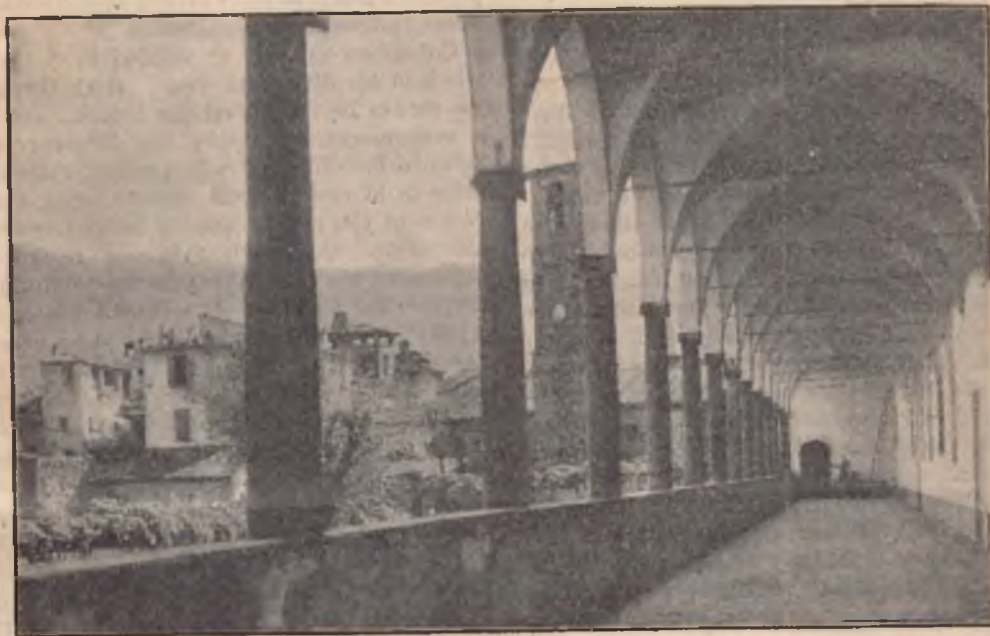
The morning of Sunday dawned bright and clear and augured well for the success of the day's events. The Papal Legate was to sing Pontifical High Mass at 10.30 and the hour of the function had been telegraphed to the President of the Irish Free State who was staying at Genoa. The piazza in front of the Bishop's palace was besieged with townspeople and with Irish and Italian pilgrims, and the corridor of the palace was thronged with ecclesiastics all eagerly awaiting the arrival of the man to whose lot it had fallen to guide the Irish nation through one of the most trying periods of its history. President Cosgrave arrived punctually to time amidst a scene of great enthusiasm and had to respond continually to repeated cries of "Viva il Presidente!" "Viva Irlanda!". A quiet looking gentleman with blond curling hair, much younger looking than we had expected to find him, he was accom-

panied by Mr Eoin MacNeil Minister of Education and Marquis MacSwiney.

The procession then started off for the Basilica for Mass and such a gathering of distinguished ecclesiastics and lay people had never been witnessed by Bobbio since the days of its greatness. Besides His Eminence, Cardinal Ehrle, there were the Archbishops of Dublin, Tuam and Fermo; the Bishops of Bobbio; Cork, Down and Connor, Bergamo, Piacenza and Tivoli; the Abbot General of the Olivetani, Abbot Rossi

memory of the Saint the Bishop of Bobbio should be given the title, pro. tem of "Abbot of St. Columban's."

The special feature of Monday's services was the solemn and imposing procession which took place after Pontifical Vespers when the relics of St. Columban, reposing in a beautiful reliquary, were borne through the town by Irish priests and students, accompanied by all the sodalities of Bobbio and of the neighbouring parishes for miles around. After the procession



St. Columban's Monastery; now a Normal School.

of Cimini and the Abbot of St. Peters, Modena; Mgr. Ryan of Thurles, Mgr. Curran, Vice Rector of the Irish College, Rome, Very Rev. Dr Cronin M. A. representing the National University, representatives of the Irish Carmelites, Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians, Vincentians and Salesians, about forty secular priests who had come with the pilgrimage parties and the students from Rome, Genoa and Bobbio seminary, Sir John and Lady O'Connell etc. President Cosgrave walked between Mr MacNeil and Marquis MacSwiney, whilst the Mayor of Bobbio and his colleagues were just behind.

After the Gospel the Cardinal Legate preached an eloquent discourse descriptive of the life of St Columban and of his times. The letter of His Holiness inaugurating the thirteenth centenary and instituting the special indulgences for the occasion was read after the Mass and it was also intimated that to perpetuate the

the Archbishop of Tuam addressed himself in touching terms to the pilgrims. Their greatest desire, he said, and their greatest need at the present moment was an era of peace, peace in Ireland and peace in Europe. Their great St. Columban when driven from France, his adopted country, had written a long and instructive letter to the spiritual children whom he was forced to leave, and the burden of that letter was peace—peace and fraternal charity amongst the brethren. Let them kneel around the shrine of their great countryman and implore his intercession so that an age of tranquillity might speedily ensue for Ireland and for Europe.

Each evening of the celebrations saw the streets artistically illuminated; bands and orchestras contributed to the musical entertainment of the visitors and firework displays were given on a magnificent scale reminding

one at times of the scenes and noises of the war. The Irish pilgrims were immensely grateful to the townspeople for the hospitality shown them and for the trouble they had taken to make the celebrations a success, and indeed it had come as a surprise to many to find the tomb of the great Irish saint of the seventh century so well preserved and his memory still green in the minds of the people of that little village hidden away amongst the towering peaks of the Apennines.

### **St. Columban, Missionary, Monk and Scholar.**

St. Columban, born of royal parents in West Leinster about the year 543, pursued his early studies and his studies for the priesthood under two learned and saintly men, St. Sinell and St. Comgall. Like Abraham of old, at the end of his course he received an unmistakable call to leave his native land and to labour for the cross and the kingdom of Christ in lands across the sea. With twelve companions and amongst them St. Attalus, St. Cummian and St. Gallus, he set out for Gaul, passing first through England and Scotland, and in the year 574 we find the little band preaching Christianity by word and by example in Burgundy. King Sigisbert of Austrasia was one of the first to be converted and by his help the Saint was soon able to found a monastery at Annegray in the wilderness of the Vosges Mountains and others at Luxeuil and Fontaines.

The rule of St. Columban had much in common with that of St. Benedict. The monks were to dress in a woollen habit, pure white without dye, with a cowl and scapulars falling to the knees. Idleness was to be unknown amongst them and between the canonical hours they were to be engaged in copying manuscripts, in teaching or in agricultural labour. Obedience was given first place in the whole system and the question "What are the limits of obedience?" was answered "Even unto death, for unto death Christ obeyed the Father for us."

When these monasteries were in a flourishing condition and shedding the blessings of religion and education all round in those districts in which some of the people were more ferocious than the wolves of the forest, St. Columban, in answer to a call from the Bishop of Milan, set out for that city which was then a stronghold of Arianism. The saint provoked the heretics to public and private disputations and by his words and writings reduced them to silence. King Agilulph himself to whom Columban had demonstrated the malice of Arianism wished

to retain such a brilliant and saintly scholar in his kingdom and offered to give him facilities for dwelling in any part he cared to choose. Columban chose the solitudes of Bobbio, a little village amongst the Apennines where there was a half-ruined basilica dedicated to St. Peter. The king immediately by royal charter constituted him "*and his fatherhood possessors of the Basilica of Blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, which is situated at a place called Bobbio, with permission in the name of God to live there and possess it and four miles around in every direction either cultivated or uncultivated.*"

Columban arrived at Bobbio in A. D. 598 when in his fifty-sixth year. With the aid of his monks he completed the Basilica and built a magnificent monastery, the different operations of building and transporting material in those wild and difficult regions being the occasion of the performance of many miracles by the saint. One such event is recorded in sculpture work on the present tomb in the crypt of the basilica. It seems that once when a heavy log was being transported by means of two oxen, a ferocious bear rushed out from the forest and killed one of them. The terrified driver called upon Columban who, hastening to the scene, made the Sign of the Cross and commanded the bear to submit to be yoked in place of the dead ox. The bear immediately obeyed and remained a beast of burden until its death.

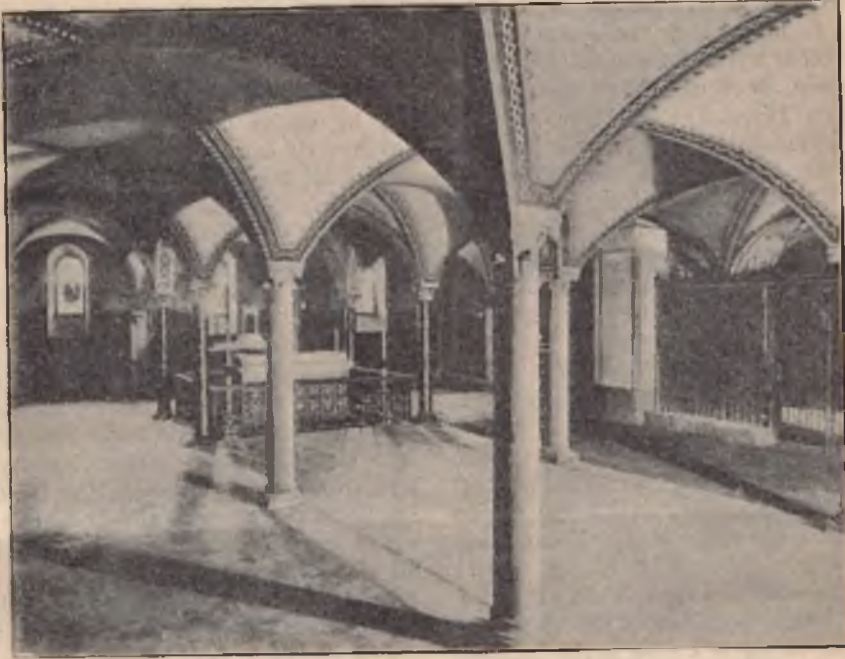
Two years after his arrival at Bobbio St. Columban set out for Rome to obtain the approbation and benediction of the Pope for his work. It is said that the bells of Rome rang out spontaneously as he approached the city and Pope St. Gregory, filled with the Holy Spirit, told those around him that a saint was approaching. According to a charter of the ninth year of this pontificate, His Holiness bestowed upon Columban one of the six *hydriae* (1) filled with the relics of saints which is preserved at Bobbio until the present day and which was taken this year to Genoa on the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress.

After his return from Rome the Saint again engaged in a busy apostolate. Some historians assert that he returned again to France where he had many trials and many adventures, being ordered into exile by the king and being at one time forcibly placed on a ship bound for Ireland. Columban however was never again to see his native land. The ship was blown back on the coasts of France and soon afterwards we find

(1) The *hydriae* are the water-vessels used at the marriage-feast of Cana.

him for the second time in Italy and at Milan. It is from here he is said to have sent his famous letter of counsel to Pope Boniface IV urging him to convoke a general synod for the settlement of existing heresies. From Milan he went to Pavia and from thence to his beloved Bobbio. His declining years were spent in solitude and silence in the caves around Bobbio which are associated with his name to the present day. At seventy-six years of age,

owe to those great scholars of the cloister of other days. How many centuries of intellectual progress would have been lost to us had not the records and written experiences of the men of the early centuries been preserved and copied in those great literary workshops—the Catholic monasteries, before the printing-press was known. And the Holy Scriptures themselves—to whom, under God, do we owe their preservation but to the monks of old who were the faithful



St. Columban's Tomb in the Crypt of the Basilica.

as is seen from a beautiful letter full of poetry and feeling which he wrote to his friend Fedolius about this time, the Saint felt that he was about to pass to his reward. He retired to the Oratory of San Michele and died there on the 21st November, 615.

The above is but the barest outline of the earthly pilgrimage of this great Irish saint, missionary, monk and scholar. It is impossible to give even an idea of the extent and influence of his apostolate in the space at our command. The library at Bobbio alone was one of the wonders of Europe and though now despoiled of its treasures it must be admitted as the source from which the now famous Ambrosian Library at Milan, the Vatican Library and those of Turin and Naples besides many others in France and Germany have drawn some of their rarest manuscripts.

In our days of cheap printing and popular education we sometimes forget how much we

guardians and publishers of the Word of God in those earlier days?

As a scholar and religious founder, St. Columban won fame in his day but his work as a Missionary, as one who left kith and kin to combat heretics and to convert sinners, is a glorious record full of inspiration and encouragement for our apostles in the mission-fields of to-day. The Fathers of the Maynooth Mission to China in choosing St. Columban for their patron have placed their Missions under a strong protector, and we too would do well to invoke the intercession of this great Irish Saint on behalf of our own missionary undertakings throughout the world.

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Your charity, blessed by the grace of God, has dried up many a fountain of tears, and saved a great number of souls.

Ven. Don Bosco.

## A CHRISTMAS STORY FOR OUR BOYS.

**The Ghost of Fr. Shannon.**

By. A. B.

In the great colleges and public schools of our country all sorts of curious friendships spring up and are fostered amongst the inmates who happen to be passing the springtime of their lives in these institutions. And none more interesting could be found than that which existed between James Dunlop, Edward Fane and Patrick Flynn, three boys still in the lower line of one of our North of England seminaries. As may be inferred from their names, each of the three came from a different part of the British Isles and perhaps it was that very fact which attracted them to one another. At any rate they were inseparable; they ate together, they played, they studied together and they got into and (when possible) out of mischief together. Fane was the studious youth of the trio and he had always the last word in the resolution of knotty problems. Dunlop, who was known to his intimates as "Cheesy", (1) was the best centre-forward in his line, whilst in point of games the witty Paddy Flynn made a good second.

We find them now on a cold Sunday morning in December, just a week before the Christmas holidays, sitting on top of a desk in the common study-hall and rather disconsolately swinging their legs backwards and forwards and talking of the coming break. With the approach of the holidays work has become irksome to them and even games have begun to lose their wonted attraction.

"I say, Cheesy", Flynn is saying "it's rather rotten your having to stay here during the vac. Why on earth do you allow your old man to go globe-trotting at this time of the year?"

"Begorra!" supplements Flynn, "it's the bad education you're after giving him. Doesn't he know that home sweet home's the place of a Christmas time? Where on earth could he get the makings of a good Christmas dinner in them out-the-way foreign places?"

"It's on account of his health—" Dunlop begins to explain, when a pert, fair-headed youngster comes rushing into the room waving a letter above his head.

"Letter for you, Cheesy!" he shouts. "Here take it quick, I can smell the gorgonzola ousing

through!" and he dashes off again just in time to avoid a kick.

"From my uncle" remarks Dunlop, and his face brightens up as he peruses the scrawling lines. "This is topping!" he shouts, banging the table. "I shan't have to remain here after all: he wants me to spend Christmas at his presbytery and extends a hearty welcome to any of my friends who might like to accompany me. I'm sorry now you two chaps have arranged to go home. Won't it be ripping, I shall be able to see the ghost!"

"Ghost!" exclaimed the other two, interested at once. "What ghost?"

"Oh! there is a jolly ghost at my uncle's place; didn't I ever tell you the story? Everybody there knows of poor Fr. Shannon who was found dead in bed and who appears in the little church there at 12 o'clock every Christmas Eve to say the Masses for the Dead which he forgot whilst he was alive. That's why they never have midnight Mass there. I was told all about it by the housekeeper but I've never been there for Christmas yet. This time I mean to see him for myself. Won't it be exciting in the dark church!"

"Awfully!" observed Fane rather indifferently. "Mind you don't catch cold!"

"But it might be right, you know," put in Flynn the Irishman, whose imagination had been excited. "I've often heard of such things in the ould country; that's how such priests have to do their purgatory. But has no one ever ventured to speak to the old man, Cheesy?"

"Not as far as I know" said Dunlop, "but he has often been seen. Not so old either; they say his hair is a sort of auburn and that he walks slowly into the sanctuary without any server or anything, and lights the candles and puts the cruets on the altar all by himself."

"It must be true if they could notice all them details" said Flynn who was now quite worked up. "Bejabers! I'd like to wish the old man a Happy Christmas! I say, Cheesy, did you say that your uncle wanted me there to look after you? I could spend Christmas with you and go home immediately after for the other two weeks of the vac."

"Bravo! Paddy, I'll be delighted to have you, and I wish Fane would come too; we could lay

(1) "Dunlop Cheese" is famous in Scotland.

the ghost between us and perhaps we could help him in some way."

"I think you're a pair of simple asses" said Fane politely, "but I'll come if it's only to laugh at you on Christmas morning. But mind, you won't catch me hanging around a dark, cold church all night."

And so it was all arranged and the three chums passed the intervening days with a most joyful anticipation of being all together for Christmas, whilst Flynn and Dunlop spoke so frequently and so confidently about the ghost and how they would tackle it, that even the colder nature of the English boy was effected, and he at length promised to join them in their midnight vigil, and this the more readily as Dunlop had said to him tauntingly "Not funky, Neddy, are you?"

The last day of the term arrived and with much handshaking and more noise they said goodbye to their masters and to their fellow-seminarists, and with a sense of unwonted freedom they passed under the arched gateway of the ancient scholastic building, and were soon speeding northwards in the express train popularly known as the "Flying Scotsman."

"Look here! you chaps" said Dunlop in the train. "We must keep this ghost stunt of ours a secret. The housekeeper told me my uncle never speaks of the matter, and almost snubs those who try to pump him. Besides we don't want a crowd in the church."

"I think you're right for once, Cheesy" said Flynn. "And besides if there was the least sign of a congregation some of your Scotch friends would want to be taking round the plate."

"That's one against you, Cheesy" said Fane. "But, I say! Do you think I should take my torch? I could be reading a "blood" while you two duffers are beating up the ghost. And perhaps my air-pistol would come in handy in case any rats got prowling about."

"Oh! you great chump!" said Flynn witheringly. "You cold-blooded Saxon! Who ever heard of anyone going ghost-hunting with a torch? As for potting rats in church—I'm surprised at your irreverence!" and his look of saintly indignation provoked the other two to laughter. But there was no chance of pursuing the subject further just then, for several other passengers got into their compartment and they had to content themselves with making mysterious signs to one another, and with turning over in their minds all sorts of possible and impossible schemes for their coming adventure.

Canon Mackenzie's little church, with the

presbytery close beside it, was in a small border town, more in Scotland than in England, just alongside the sea on the East Coast. It was in a picturesque but wild locality being situated on top of a cliff that ran down sheer into the sea. Other and higher cliffs to the North and to the South protected it somewhat from the winds coming from those directions, but the sea breezes whistled and howled through the gorge in a way truly alarming for those who were not natives of the place. The good Canon's congregation consisted for the most part of fisher folks, and as may be imagined these simple toilers of the deep had woven many a weird tale around their little ivy-covered church on top of the cliff with its statue of Our Lady, Star of the Sea, and its lamp burning continually high up in the tower.

Amongst these good people Dunlop had spent several Summer vacations. He had often gone out rowing and swimming with the youngsters of the place, and he had even been with the men on a nocturnal fishing expedition, so that they were all his friends and he had never tired of listening to their stories of storms and wrecks, extraordinary catches and extraordinary disappointments all happening after certain well-authenticated warnings such as sea-faring people are accustomed to give credence to. The Canon's housekeeper, old Mrs Mearns, had nearly spoiled him (Dunlop) with kindness. She was the widow of a fisherman drowned at sea, and she had all the superstitious nature of her kind. Her convincing and dramatic way of telling a story had made a great impression upon the boy's mind, and the one she told of Mr. Shannon, the priest who had died there more years ago than anyone cared to remember, had made him eager to verify the strange happenings at Christmas-time for himself. So it was with a sense of keen anticipation that he jolted along from the station in the little buggy-car with his two companions towards his uncle's house on this 23rd of December in the face of a keen east wind which was threatening to cover the uneven streets with a carpet of Christmas white within a very few hours.

The jovial Canon, pleased at the thought of having so many young people with him for Christmas, was waiting at the door to bid them welcome, and Mrs Mearns was making vigorous prods at the glowing coals in the kitchen fire declaring to herself over and over again that "thae laddies must be perishing on a night like this!" A good supper, a roaring fire, the Canon's cheery conversation and the gossip of several parishioners who dropped in during

the course of the evening served to put them all at their ease and to make them feel thoroughly at home even on the first night of their stay. During the evening's proceedings Flynn found occasion to whisper to Dunlop "I say Cheesy, what have your compatriots done with their kilts? They all seem to be wearing modern trousers. Perhaps they put those on in honour of our coming?"

"You simpleton! They don't wear the kilt here every day: in the Highlands some of the crofters and shepherds do, but even there the custom is dying out."

"Is it really, what a pity! I shan't believe in them Walter Scott stories any more!"

The Canon retired to bed early for, as he declared, he was getting old and he had to take care of himself. The boys remained up some time longer and Mrs Mearns talking all the time, set them to work hanging up holly and mistletoe along the corridor and in the parlour and dining-room.

During their devotions on the following morning they were not so intent but that they managed to take in the structural details of the little church. They noticed that the only way of getting into the building other than through the great gothic doors of the main entrance was by the sacristy door which led straight on to the sanctuary. The other door of the sacristy gave on to the corridor which the boys had helped to adorn the night before, and there was a great probability that as it was inside the house no one ever took the trouble to lock it at night. At anyrate they would have to risk its being locked for they had no idea where the keys were kept and they feared to arouse suspicion by making enquiries.

Dunlop, of course, had to look up old acquaintances during the morning, and the other two after their introduction were soon attracted to the homely fisher folk. On the way home to dinner Flynn remarked to his companions "Isn't it with the quare brogue entoirely these Lowlanders do be spaking? It's a pity they would want to be murtherring the English language so!"

"Now then, Paddy," said Fane, "people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones, you know."

"What!" retorted the Irish lad. "Do you mane to insinuate that my command of the English tongue is faulty, or to be compared to the quare mixture of our new friends here? But you are no judge in the matter anyway; sure, the best English is spoken in Dublin, and as my great grandfather came from that same fair city, I'm the only rale authority in this

party," and the air of finality with which Flynn uttered this, his musical brogue, and his oratorical gestures set the others laughing heartily as they ploughed their way through the snow towards the house for dinner. Their afternoon was spent skating on the little lake at no great distance from the house. Dunlop was an expert on the ice and Fane had also had a good deal of practice. The Irish lad had never before worn skates and his remarks of surprise as he sat down breathlessly on the ice several times were truly amusing and the others had all they could do to retain their own equilibrium in the midst of their spasms of laughter.

He soon made progress however, good athlete as he was, and before long he was doing little stretches by himself. "Sure, I'm getting along foine!" he once observed, and then by way of emphasis, he sat down violently on the ice. "But that was only a little slip, a sort of a *lapsus pedum*" he said as he rose up gingerly. "What are you two asses howling about? Look here, Neddy, I'll race you to the other side if you'll give me a ten yards start." "Done!" said Fane, and they got into position at once. Dunlop gave the word and off they started in fine style. Flynn exerted himself to the utmost, took several great strides to right and left and then let himself go straight for the bank with both feet. The distance was short and almost immediately he saw that he was careering directly towards a great yawning hole in the ice just alongside the shore of the lake.

"Oh! turn me! Come and turn me, somebody, ouch!" he shouted, but there was no time, and the last exclamation was uttered as he plunged with a great splash into the water. Luckily, it was only about three feet deep and being near the bank his companions soon had him out and were rushing with him up the lane towards the house where a big fire and a change of clothing soon made them forget all but the humorous side of the incident.

What with music and singing and all sorts of games, they spent a very happy evening and were really sorry when the time came to retire. Their plans had been perfected during the course of the day: it had been decided that they would meet in the corridor at half past eleven and if the sacristy door were open, proceed at once to the body of the church and there await events. If this door were locked they had determined on trying to make a noiseless exit from the house and on keeping a watch on the windows of the church to see if any light appeared within: this would afford them at least some measure of satisfaction after all their planning and hopes of the previous days.



The boys waited in their respective rooms as the hands of the clock travelled with irritating slowness round to 11.30. During their mirth-making of the evening they had given but little attention to the condition of the elements outside, but now as the household became gradually silent the wind outside seemed to increase in violence and whistled and shrieked past the presbytery in a way that was truly eerie and nerve trying. They shivered as they

corner." Trembling and very much afraid they huddled close together at the end of the corridor, just beyond the door. Sure enough the awful figure swept along the corridor towards them, grasped the handle of the sacristy-door, pushed it forward about two inches, shut it again immediately, and then what was unmistakably the voice of Fane remarked: "Well, the door's unlocked anyway; but where are those two sleep-heads?"



Rallang, a Hamlet in the Prefecture Apostolic of Assam.

listened to it, and Fane, the practical, murmured to himself "It's going to be frightfully cold waiting about down there, I'm hanged if I don't take a blanket with me!" and so saying he stripped one of the white woolen blankets from the bed and made quite a good cloak of it. Dunlop had been the first to arrive in the corridor, and Flynn, excited up to fever pitch joined him almost immediately. He was about to remark on the tardiness of Fane when an ominous creak attracted the attention of both to the top of the long flight of steps and their hearts nearly stopped beating as, by the aid of the moonlight streaming through the staircase window they beheld a figure draped in flowing white gliding noiselessly down towards them. "Holy St. Patrick!" breathed Flynn in the ear of his companion "It's the ghost himself, he'll make for the sacristy and he's bound to see us; crouch down here in the

"Here we are!" they whispered hoarsely pouncing upon him, both at once. "What do you mean by larking about in this get-up? You'd frighten the life out of any dacent ghost!" Fane gave a jump at the unexpected onslaught, and would probably have shrieked aloud if his head had not been immediately enveloped in the folds of the blanket, and he had all he could do to prevent himself from being smothered. "The ideal!" Flynn murmured indigantly, "It's bad enough when people nod in church through sheer weight of nature, but when they start bringing their bed-clothes with them—it's past believing! After all the training we've had from old Spikes too!"

"Look here!" said Dunlop, when they had sorted themselves out, "we'll waken the whole house; let's get into the church immediately or we'll be too late."

They followed him through the sacristy into

the dark, cold church, and took up a position behind the large harmonium standing amongst the benches on the right. What a night it was outside! How uncanny and mournful the howling of the wind seemed to the boys as they trembled with cold and nervous expectation in the dark building. Flynn endured it as long as he could in silence then, his former opinions somewhat modified by their new situation, he murmured as sweetly as his chattering teeth would allow him. "Give us a corner of your blanket, Neddy, old chap!" "Not a fringle!" said Fane curtly; but all the same, five minutes afterwards the three boys were huddling together under the folds of the warm covering. After what seemed a very long time they were in danger of going to sleep, when above the howling of the wind they heard what appeared to be the tinkling of a bell. The three of them strained their eyes towards the sanctuary, but all was dark and gloomy as before.

"What on earth could that have been?" asked Fane. "But it must be long past 12 o'clock. I say, Cheesy, if your ghost doesn't turn up in ten minutes I'm going to clear off to bed."

"All right!" said the Scotch boy, yawning sleepily, and very soon they were all three dozing again. After some time, whether long or short they could not tell, the banging of the door leading to the sanctuary brought them to their feet with a jerk, and as they peered through the darkness, a black mass seemed to move through the opening in the altar-rails and deposit itself on the step in front. Then as they continued to strain their eyes through the gloom a second figure carrying a lighted taper issued from the sacristy, ascended the altar-steps and commenced to light the candles, and by their aid they could see it was a vested priest. The effect of all this upon the watchers can be better imagined than described; their blood seemed to freeze in their veins, they broke into a cold sweat.

"Oh! hold me up, Cheesy, it's wake I feel!" sobbed Flynn. "And will you look at the hair of him; its quite red!"

"But the vestments are white" said Dunlop "so he cannot be saying a dead Mass."

"Let's clear off out of it" suggested Fane "It's none of our business."

"Clear off! Pass through the sanctuary! My legs wouldn't carry me half way" said Dunlop.

"I'll tell you what" said Flynn, "we'd better begin and say the Rosary for the Dead; sure, there's no harm in that, and we'll be doing good to some poor soul." It was characteristic of the Irish lad that he should have recourse to

prayer, and especially to the Rosary, in an extremity: the three boys commenced to pray with all their hearts, and there is no doubt that they assisted at those two Masses said in succession by the figure at the altar with more faith and devotion than they had ever experienced during the whole course of their lives. But they wondered why he said two Masses; why not *one*, why not *three*? They wondered why he should be wearing white vestments instead of black if he were saying Masses for the Dead. And they wondered finally, who the black figure answering the Mass from the altar-rails could be. Strange thoughts passed through their minds—perhaps he had finished his Purgatory and was now saying Masses in thanksgiving! Perhaps the figure at the rails was the last soul he had released from Purgatory! What a weird experience was theirs in that dark church with the wind blowing a gale outside, and the sea dashing itself in fury against the cliffs under the church! But their earnest prayers helped to calm their excited nerves and they even drew a certain amount of pleasure from their spiritual communion with the celebrant at the altar.

The last *Hail Marys* having been said, the ghostly minister retired the way he had come and the boys felt rather than saw that the black figure at the altar-rails rose and followed him into the sacristy. But their curiosity was entirely satisfied and their nerves had been tried almost beyond endurance: they wouldn't have followed those two figures immediately for the world! "Let's wait here" said Fane through teeth chattering with cold and fear. "No more ghost-hunting for me, I'll know how to restrain my curiosity for the future and confine my inquisitiveness to things of the natural order."

A long time afterwards they made their way cautiously to the sacristy door and pushing it gently open they saw that all was dark within. They literally bolted through the room, through the corridor and upstairs, and it was with a sigh of the greatest relief that each one procured a light in his bed-room and chased away the shadows of the night. Once in bed, however, our adventurers slept soundly, for they were tired out both mentally and physically, and they did not waken until Mrs Mea ns banging vigorously on their bed-room doors threatened to have them all excommunicated if they did not rise immediately and go to Mass "on a Christmas morning".

Their morning devotions were rather hurried; their one idea was to get outside to talk and to assure themselves of the reality of the night's adventure. And talk they did. They guessed,

and commented, and supposed, and wondered, all in the wildest manner possible until suddenly it dawned on them that they were a long distance from the house and that they ought to be getting back for breakfast. So back they went as quickly as possible shouting all sorts of apologies for being late to Mrs Mearns on their way to the dining-room. But these were suddenly cut short as on entering the room they noticed that a stranger was already there and having breakfast. This gentleman was evidently a priest but the most striking feature in his appearance was his carefully parted auburn hair. "Come in, boys! Come in!" he said cheerily. "This is Fr. Wilson, a friend of the Canon's" said Mrs Mearns bustling in behind them, "and I'm surprised that you boys are so late for everything this holy morning" "Time enough! Time enough!" said Fr. Wilson. "In fact I've only just got up myself; I came in very late last night, or rather, very early this morning, and said my Masses immediately so I've been able to indulge myself a little longer. But won't you sit down and let Mrs Mearns attend to you?"

"But—but we didn't know you were expected," stammered Dunlop as they sat down."

"Neither did Mrs Mearns," said the new guest, "the Canon forgot to mention the fact; he is becoming a little forgetful. He wanted me to come and say Midnight Mass for the Sisters at Causeway, two miles off. I have been in Italy and started from Southampton only yesterday morning. My train was about an hour late in reaching here last night so I went straight to the convent from the station to be in time. However I could only say one Mass there owing to the Sisters' arrangements but I determined that once here, if I could beg, borrow or impress a server into my service I would say my two remaining Christmas Masses and get to bed for I was nearly dead-beat. When Mrs Mearns saw me in my weary condition she insisted on my having something to eat or drink. I told her I wanted to say my Masses and would say them immediately but for the difficulty of finding a server. She offered at once to come and answer for me so I availed myself of her goodness, said my Masses, had some light refreshment afterwards and went straight off to bed. But what's the matter with you boys, you are extraordinarily quiet?"

"We are think-thinking of poor Mrs Mearns in the cold dark church, sir" stammered Flynn.

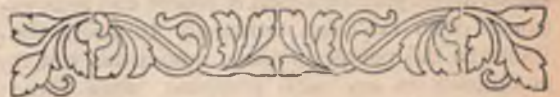
"It was certainly rather selfish of me to impose on her," said the priest, "but she assured me that she had lain awake all night and that she wouldn't sleep even if she went to bed."

The boys had been looking at each other in a sickly sort of a way all during these explanations. In fact the ghastly truth had begun to dawn upon them from their very first glance at the stranger. Dunlop groaned aloud in anticipation of certain abuse from the other two. "What's the matter with your friend?" asked Fr. Wilson. "Is he ill?"

"Yes, he's ill, father," said Flynn looking at the sufferer with a hard light in his eyes, "but we know how to cure him, don't we, Neddy?" and they both approached the crestfallen Cheesy and began to thump him cruelly on the back and to pinch him slyly and vindictively on other vulnerable parts so that his cries of pain quite alarmed good Mrs Mearns who threatened to cure him with all sorts of remedies from castor oil to mustard plasters.

And they further abused him when opportunity offered, but when the time came for dinner, Dunlop's illness had mysteriously disappeared and the guest was surprised at his astounding voracity.

The boys departed on the following day for their respective homes. They parted the best of friends and each had to admit that, ghost or no ghost, they had had a real adventure and some real Christmas thrills.



## Christmas Thoughts.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| I.   | III.  |
| Christmas morn,<br>A Saviour born.<br>Mother's joy<br>Anointed Boy.<br>Wond'rous Fair<br>The Christ-child there!                           | Sing we too<br>The honour due<br>To this Child<br>And Mother mild,<br>Suffering cold<br>And pain untold.      |
| II.  | IV.   |
| Men neglect,<br>Dumb beasts protect.<br>Joseph 'tends<br>To make amends.<br>Angels sing<br>Their Little King.                              | Mystic Love<br>From Heaven above<br>Comes to share<br>Our earthly care,<br>Appreciate<br>His change of state. |
| v.   |   |
| Love for love we must return;<br>Every Christian heart must burn<br>With gratitude and Christmas joy<br>For Mary's King, her New-born Boy. |   |

## NEWS FROM THE MISSIONS.

### The Prefecture Apostolic of Assam.

By *Rt. Rev. Mgr. Mathias S. C.*

Assam did not receive any of the blessings of Christianity until much later than the other parts of India. Whilst the South of India can boast of having benefited by the zeal of St. Thomas the Apostle, who was martyred there by fanatical pagan priests, and whilst it claims as a special patron the great Jesuit Missionary, St. Francis Xavier, the North, and particularly the region of which we intend to speak, has seen the Catholic Missionary fix his tent permanently in its wide plains and amongst its lofty mountains only during the last fifty years.

Unfortunately, Protestantism had been propagated in these regions half a century before and the insidious tree will only be uprooted with great difficulty. In reality there had been earlier attempts on the part of ardent and zealous priests who laboured untiringly to bring the Faith to the people of these mountains, but it is difficult to say with precision when these first attempts were made. When the great Catholic movement was developing in Lower Bengal prior to 1678 it seems that its effects were felt even in Assam. In the work of a certain writer named McCash written in 1837 it is stated that in Assam "there are about sixty Portuguese, descendants of Portuguese soldiers who were at one time in the service of the Nawab of Dacca. They are Roman Catholics and every family possesses some rudely-made image or other, generally of the Blessed Virgin, carved in wood and stuck in the ground after the Hindoo custom. They do not pay any more attention to Sunday than the other natives do, their food and dress are the same, and they sometimes intermarry with the Mussulman families. Some are employed as couriers, others as shepherds."

One of these native Christian villages was discovered at Bondas Hill, a place near Badapur along the River Barac in the Valley of Sylket. It is the one remaining vestige of ancient Christianity in Assam. It is said that they were given that locality to dwell in about the beginning of the eighteenth century by a Mussulman Nawab who came from Meerut accompanied by Mus-

sulmans and native Christians. Where the Nawab had enrolled these soldiers, history does not say but they settled down at Bondas Hill and constructed a fort there. After the war of Birmania (1820-28) the Nawab, as a reward for his loyalty, received a grant of land at Baniagany, and the returns from this permitted the Catholics of Bondas Hill to live in idleness. Disputes broke out amongst the members of the little community, their fields were gradually sold to inhabitants of neighbouring villages, and the majority of them (wrote Allen in 1905) earn their living by hard daily toil.

According to an account written in the same year by Fr. Marcellino, a Missionary of the Congregation of the Divine Saviour at Badapur the Nawab marched into Assam at the head of six hundred Mussulman soldiers and four or five hundred Catholics. This Father affirms that he could find no document to prove that these Christians had been visited before 1850. We know however that the remnants of these Christian families at Bondas Hill were visited in 1844 by a Fr. Trycenon who penetrated to the north-west of Assam amongst the native tribes in the valley of the Bramaputra and found the Nagas very favourably inclined to Catholicism. This we learn from a letter of his written on the 4th Sept. at the foot of the Nagas Hills.

From 1870 Fr. Fourinod of the diocese of Dacca was able to remain at Bondas Hill for three years and eventually other priests from the same diocese came to reside here for short periods of time. Further on, when I have treated of the introduction of Catholicism amongst the inhabitants of the valley of the Bramaputra, I shall be able to say something of the foundation of a residence with permanent Missionaries in this region.

Fortunately there is still living at Shillong an excellent Catholic family of the name of Delanogerede who came to Assam in 1848 and then settled at Gauhati, and who remember the first Missionaries that came to the valley of the Bramaputra. In February, 1850, Assam had been joined to the Vicariate of Tibet; the first Missionaries, Frs. Robin, Krick and Bernard tried to go by way of Bhutan. They went along the Bramaputra and got as far as De-

wangiri, but difficulties of every kind prevented their further progress and Fr. Bernard, himself worn out and emaciated had to support his half-dead superior back to Gauhati.

In the meantime Fr. Krick had gone to Di-brugarh to try to obtain a passage through the Mishmis to Tibet but the chief would not grant him permission to go through. A lieutenant made a sketch of the confab and sent it to France; in this picture the chief of the Mishmis is seen tranquilly and indifferently smoking his pipe whilst the Missionary is energetically trying to convince him, and to overcome his obstinacy.

In a very interesting letter written from Saikwock on Dec. 1st 1851 Fr. Krick tells of his journey from Gauhati to Tezpar. There he found Catholics who were most desirous of seeing a priest. They had lost much of their religion through living amongst Protestants. A Catholic European doctor was living amongst them and the Missionary was able to baptise this gentleman's wife who had been a Protestant. The priest stopped there for a month and a half instructing and catechising the people and then he again sought the Bramaputra and followed it northwards. At a certain point the boatmen deserted him but he was hospitably received by the sacerdotal tribe named Hadia Deoris. These provided him with two fresh boatmen; one was a dwarf and the other was blind of an eye but with their help and the guidance of Providence he arrived at Saikwock and became the guest of a certain Captain Smith.

"On the 19th of Nov.," so he wrote "a Captain Wath who had come to Saikwock to arrange with his colleague for an expedition to Dihong to protect the gold diggers there proposed that I should accompany him, and he promised to put me in touch with the savage tribe called Abors. We set out with an escort of 200 soldiers with nine transport elephants and after five or six days we fell in with 700 Abors, all armed with the bow and arrow and a spear of enormous length. After treating with them in a most friendly manner regarding their affairs, Capt. Wath besought them to receive me and to conduct me to Tibet.

'We would not dare' they said 'we are afraid something might happen to our guest.'

During the interview the savage dress of our native friends and at the same time their entirely European cast of features had struck me as strange, and observing them more closely I saw that each one bore an extraordinary tattoo-mark. This was a cross neatly designed and painted in dark blue colour on their faces. The greater number had these crosses tattooed on

the forehead; some had them on the nose, and others had one of double lines stretching from the top of the forehead to the point of the nose. The savages could not tell me the origin of this symbol; all they knew was that one who wore it was protected in this life and rapt immediately to Heaven after his death, and that the Supreme Being divided His happiness with those marked with the Cross! I made them understand that I was a priest, a master of prayer, and that I had come to tell them of the mysterious power of this Cross. I took my own crucifix from my neck kissed the figure of Our Lord, and each one of the savages kissed it in turn after me."

However, Fr. Krick could arrange nothing definite with them, they would not even provide the necessary carriers, and so his plan had to be abandoned and he had to content himself with visiting the Kamptis and returned afterwards to Gauhati. That Sign of the Cross which he had found amongst the savages seemed to say that their ancestors had been evangelised perhaps in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. History tells us that St. Giacinto of Poland and Blessed Oderic of Friuli had penetrated beyond the Hymalayas and evangelised Tibet, gaining daily victories over barbarism and infidelity, and the famous legend of Tsong-Kaba seems to point to even an earlier attempt at evangelisation in those regions.

In 1853, the dauntless Missionary wanted to make another attempt to reach the interior of Tibet but he was not allowed. In the following year, however, in company with Fr. Bourry he set out on a third expedition and was determined that this time nothing would turn him from his purpose and he would attempt the passage at all costs.

According to the Delanougerede family the Missionaries had taken many gifts with them to distribute to the tribal chiefs. One of these savages, whose greed had been aroused at the sight of the Missionaries baggage, determined to murder and rob them. Fr. Krick was one morning reciting his Breviary when the assassin stole up quietly behind him and, when the Missionary bent down to pluck a flower growing in the path, cut off his head at one fell stroke. Fr. Bourry who had been ill that morning was lying in bed in his tent when he was suddenly aroused by the entrance of this savage chief and some of his friends. The priest was a strong man, and when he understood the intentions of his visitors he strove by every means in his power to defend himself but was overcome by numbers. His head was cut off and his body hacked to pieces. His servant managed to

escape and carry the news to Gauhati. A military expedition which was sent against these natives by the English Government avenged the cruel death of the first martyrs of Assam.

Fr. Bernard visited Now-gong where he erected a little chapel and from this place set out for Darjeeling hoping to effect an entrance into Tibet for there. The English Government had granted a piece of land to the Missionaries, the same on which the Mission Station stands to-day. Fr. Robin thought of calling the Trappists to that part but sickness prevented him from materialising his plan and the land returned to the Government.

After this no Missionary was seen in Assam till 1860 when one day a Hindoo Babu came to inform the Delanougerede family that a Catholic priest had sought lodgings at the bungalow. This was Fr. Mercier from Dacca. He had done the whole journey on foot and during the course of it had been robbed of his boots and stockings. Only one who knows the great distance he had to travel, the difficulties he had to overcome and the excessive heat he had to contend with, can have a just idea of the gigantic task which the good Father had set himself. He had travelled over a thousand kilometres, over mountains and through valleys, under a scorching sun and with no conveniences, it was altogether a strange undertaking and, for any but the highest motives, an imprudent one. During his stay he was fitted out with a new pair of boots, and he afterwards returned in the same manner and by the same way as he had come.

Other priests came from Dacca for short intervals but had always to return on account of sickness or for some other reason. Fr. James De Broy arrived in 1872 and he was the first Missionary to be stationed definitely in Assam. He was an Italian by birth and belonged to the Missionaries of Calogero of Milan. His sojourn amongst the people of Assam lasted until the arrival of the Fathers of the Divine Saviour in 1890. During this time—nearly eighteen years—the zealous priest travelled from centre to centre along the valley, and being of a bright and cheerful disposition he was well loved and long remembered by the people of these regions. He left Assam to enter the Jesuit noviciate but his remaining years on earth were few: he was stricken with apoplexy whilst saying Mass and died at Barrackpore in 1898.

Fr. De Broy had been sent by the Bishop of Krishnagar under whose jurisdiction the Assam Mission was at that time. The Mission first belonged to the Prefecture Apostolic of Bengal; it was annexed to the Vicariate of Tibet in 1850,

but was finally restored to Bengal so that the Bishop of Krishnagar had to send Missionaries here until the Prefecture Apostolic was erected.

*(To be continued).*

### A Veteran Missionary of Patagonia.

*"Very Rev. and Dear Fr. Rinaldi,*

It is a long time now since I took up my pen to write to Turin, but please allow me to send you my most sincere felicitations and greetings. It is one of the oldest Missionaries in Patagonia who feels thus impelled to recommend the state of his Mission to the worthy successor of our Ven. Founder who saw it so often in those wonderful dreams of his and who was so anxious for its success during his lifetime.

I left Turin with the expedition of 1878 and after a stay of some two years at Buenos Aires contracted a serious illness. The new Provincial, Fr. James Costamagna, came to visit me and seeing my weak condition he whispered in my ear. "If you are cured, will you promise to go to the Mission in Patagonia?" "Certainly," I said.

That promise, made from the bottom of my heart in those moments of pain, has been fulfilled. When I was quite cured and had regained my usual strength, I set out southwards for the territory around the Rio Negro, thus beginning that series of missionary excursions which have been as our daily food for the last forty years. I remained in the Rio Negro region for four years and then at the invitation of Mgr. Cagliero, then Bishop of Magida I passed over to the Santa Cruz territory. I was afterwards called to Puntarenas by Mgr. Fagnano who sent me to start the Mission of Rio Grange where I was saved only by a protecting Providence from the numerous perils attendant upon the undertaking, and not least amongst them the hostile shafts of the Indians who were by no means friendly disposed towards us. Ten years afterwards I returned definitely to the Santa Cruz Mission.

When we first arrived there the Indians were sole possessors of the immense prairie lands through which they roved at will, and the civilised families in that region were few and scattered. Three such families lived at Port Deseado, one only at St. Julian and four in Santa Cruz the capital of the territory, namely, the families of the Governor, the Harbour-Master, the Commissioner and that of a merchant in the town. Even at Rio Gallegos there were no more than three or four.

The population was increased in 1887 by the influx of many emigrants who took up residence near the Port or set up farms in the interior. In those districts which till then had been the theatre of fierce and savage encounters civilisation began to take root, riches were acquired, commerce and agricultural industry began to change the aspect of the country. Various centres were set up; Justices of the Peace and police officials were appointed, business clubs and theatres soon appeared.

love of God and of souls, our great faith in the words and in the name of Don Bosco urged us to undertake the most difficult duties cheerfully, and the illuminated wisdom of Mgr. Cagliari and Mgr. Fagnano guided us through most trying times.

A new circumstance has now arisen to make further claims on our priestly ministrations. Owing to what looks like inexorable destiny the native tribe *Thehuelches* is gradually but surely disappearing and will soon be entirely



The Latest Batch of Missionaries to set out from the Oratory (See p. 184).

The Salesian Mission flourished contemporaneously with the civil progress. It began in a small, rudimentary way but, developing little by little, it eventually became an integral part of the Indian and civilised life around. During the course of thirty years the immense plain has been dotted with small chapels and residences which are as so many centres and meeting-places for the people of the plain. Under the direction of our architect, Fr. John Bernabè, a church and college were built at Rio Gallegos and another for the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in 1902. The same sort of work was undertaken at Santa Cruz and St. Julian under Fr. Zanchetta but had to be given up for lack of personnel.

The work of giving moral and religious support to this civil development has been carried on with constancy and success even at the cost of many sacrifices and continuous labour. The

extinct. The place of these natives is being gradually filled by a cosmopolitan class of people who fight amongst themselves over the division of the land and, blinded by greed for gold, they sometimes descend to the perpetration of the most shameful crimes and so vice is spread throughout the country. And the number of immigrants into these parts will be increased as the years go by for the Government intends to encourage local industry in every way and to that end new railroads are being built throughout Patagonia, penetrating as far as the great lake Nahuel Huapi. It will therefore be necessary to provide for this great inrush of people so that they may not lose the faith.

To assist these scattered peoples I myself made a tour of close on 3,000 kilometres in 1921, visiting Lake Buenos Aires at the foot of the Cordilleras, the little hamlet of Nacimiento, Pilgrim's Colony, Lake Puezaredon and many

farm houses scattered here and there I administered twenty-five Baptisms and as many Confirmations, blessed several marriages and settled some family feuds. I could have done much more had I been able to touch more centres, but the field was too large for one Missionary. There are still many natives awaiting the advent of the Missionary to be made Christians and to have their children baptised.

Dear father, the work that still awaits your Sons from one part of Patagonia to the other is immense and whilst we here are growing old the population is uncreasing and calling for more spiritual assistance. We are very much in need of more personnel: when shall we have the happiness of welcoming some new confrères to labour with us in this part of the Lord's vineyard? We ourselves are now able to do little more than pray that God may assist us and remember us in the work we have undertaken for His Holy Name and for His greater glory. But as a fitting celebration of the golden jubilee of the Salesian Missions we shall endeavour to re-animate our worn-out forces so as to increase that circle of shining souls who stand around our Ven. Founder and his first Missionaries who have almost all preceded us to the celestial kingdom.

May I ask your prayers, dear Father, for the success of our further efforts and especially for

Your devoted Son in Jesus-Christ,

FR. JOSEPH BEAUVOIR, S. C.

June 24th 1923.

### Hopeful Signs for the Church in China.

By Fr. G. Pasotti, S. C.

I left Sui Pien in company with the catechist. The bandits were absolute masters of the situation in the whole province and well I knew the dangers that lay before us. But there are some moments in life in which the voice of duty and one's confidence in God are such as to flood one's soul with a sense of security and a compelling force for the fulfilment of one's mission. However, thanks to Providence, we were able to reach our destination without falling into the hands of these outlaws, and that night the Christians of the place were able to join with us in a prayer of thanksgiving at the feet of Our Lady Help of Christians.

A feeling of terror reigned in the town; there was a continual dread that the bandits would attack it, and voluntary sentinels, ready to fight or at least to give the alarm in case of assault, kept a look-out on the surrounding heights.

Given the Christians could not trust themselves to sleep in the houses but sought safety during the night in improvised huts amongst the mountains. But they display a wonderful patience in the midst of their many perils, and their devotion to Don Bosco's Madonna is extraordinary. It must also be said that Our Lady protects them in no uncertain way.

The only son of a good Christian doctor well-known and esteemed in the city fell grievously ill. A frightful swelling of throat and face, his inability to swallow any sort of medicine and the coldness of his limbs were all signs of a fast approaching calamity. "In my anguish at the thought of losing him," said his father to me; "And in the knowledge that all human remedies had failed, I turned imploringly to Heaven whence my only help could come. I knelt before a statue of the Madonna recited the Rosary and made a vow to have two Masses celebrated, and to have the favour published if my son were spared. Next morning he was completely cured."

And it is surely the Madonna who leads some of these erring Christians, who have become entirely forgetful of their religious duties, back to the feet of the confessor where with burning tears they repent of their sins and find once again the sure path to Heaven.

One morning I was saying Mass in a sort of fortress in which some Christians when pursued by the bandits had sought refuge. It was the first time that the One, True God had come to dwell in that building and His throne was now raised over the ruins of broken idols. He entered in a moment of fear and of sorrow but He certainly heard the prayers of those poor neophytes who, with the priest, besought Him for faith and salvation. There were still some doll-like figures plastered on the doors to guard the house against evil spirits. "Mother" I said turning to the lady of the house "those things are bad." She looked around for some instrument to dislodge them but finding none she had recourse to her nails—they are not too particular about cutting them in China—and very soon the superstitious objects were disfigured beyond recognition.

On the day on which I left Sui Pien all the Christians and catechumens came to hear Mass, and to receive a medal and the blessing of Mary Help of Christians. Some catechumens accompanied me on the boat for Lin Kong Hen and amongst were three little boys. They were leaving home and going to a safe place so as not to be kidnapped by the bandits. When I saw them again about a fortnight after they were still wearing their medals of Our Lady



without any sign of fear or human respect. Such little ones are our hope for the future.

Hai-Tai is situated in the eastern part of the Jeng-Tak district on one side of the Canton Shiu Chow railway. The work which has been done there by grace and goodwill is consoling. Some time ago nearly all the inhabitants of the valley asked to be baptised Christians and their enthusiasm was no passing affair. Morning and evening prayer has become an established custom amongst them; all know their catechism quite well and especially the chapters on Baptism. When they have the Missionary amongst them they ask him to question them or they catechise one another. Amongst the more diligent are some white-haired notables who give good example to the younger ones, and answer their catechism like children. Some of these act as instructors to the children and help the more illiterate amongst the adults.

Some time ago the mother of two good catechumens fell seriously ill, and as the Missionary was not then in the place one of the best Christians was called to her cottage and there he instructed and baptised her. A few days afterwards the old woman breathed her last, and this is what the Christians of the place did: they gathered round the remains of their dead friend and recited the whole Rosary and on the following day more than a hundred formed up in procession and accompanied the bier to the place of burial, praying all the way for the repose of the soul of the deceased. The affair was so solemn and imposing that the pagans themselves wondered, and were constrained to confess that the accusation generally levelled against the Christians of not honouring the dead was quite false.

On the feast-days, what must be most pleasing to Our Lord and to Our Lady are the silvery voices of the little children raised in harmony to honour them. One of these choristers, Ten-A-heu by name, a youngster of ten, follows me everywhere when I go visiting the district, and he has a great knack of ferretting out superstitious objects hidden away, the last relics of the old paganism. He drags them into the light and takes great pleasure in smashing them to pieces.

He appeared for the service early one Sunday morning when I was about five kilometres from his home. It was cold and raining but his face, I saw, was burning hot. "Why have you come so far, A-heu?" I asked him. "I have come to pray, Father," he replied. "But you are feverish" I exclaimed "Oh! that is nothing" he answered off-handedly, and knelt down in the front rank to recite the Rosary; but the catechist soon saw that it was too much

for him and lifting him up he carried him off to bed in the house of a good family near-by.

Besides A-heu, there are other little ones of five and six who can already recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary, and the bigger ones prevail upon their fathers to have night prayers in common, they themselves being the leaders.

## Where a little Money goes a long Way.

Generally speaking, people are surprised at the facility with which money slips through their fingers: "It goes no distance at all!" they declare. But if the good thought sometimes entered their heads to help the Salesian Missions how different would be their cry! Even the smallest amount they could afford to give would go a long way—it would go sometimes as far as China, sometimes as far as India, sometimes to the extreme south of South America. But after all distance geographically would be a very small consideration to most people, and indeed our own thoughts were not running in the geographical plane: what we meant to show you was how a little money could be made to go a long way in doing good, and if you will patiently read through the subjoined list perhaps you will be surprised at what a lot can be done with a little when there are no large salaries to be paid and when zealous souls are seeking only the means of subsistence in order to do good.

1. A pupil can be maintained and educated in the Salesian Oratory, Turin for about £ 1 a year and the pensions in our schools are every where extremely moderate.

2. A native master or catechist can be maintained in one of our Foreign Missions for about £ 18 a year.

3. A youth can be maintained in the Cardinal Cagliero Institute for Foreign Missions for about £ 15 a year.

4. A poor native boy could be maintained for a year in one of our Orphanages in India or China for five or six pounds.

In Assam a new church or a little school can be erected at an expense of from £ 5 to £ 8.

"Give and it shall be given to you" prosperity and peace in your families, good results in your spiritual and temporal affairs, a hundred-fold in this life and an eternal reward in the next.

# SALESIAN NOTES AND NEWS.

**Cowley, Oxford.** The optimistic letter received from our Oxford correspondent makes good reading and augurs

well for the future of the Salesian Congregation in the British Isles. "A great holocaust," he says, "was offered to Our Lord in September of this year in the little Salesian chapel overlooking the University. The *victims* were the year's novices who were consecrating themselves to God in Religion. Victims? Yes! Twenty of them! Quite as much victims as were any of the whole-burnt offerings of the Old Law. Twenty young men gave their all to Our Lord—like the Apostles they left everything and followed their Master whithersoever He led. How great must be the blessing of Mary Help of Christians on the English Province of nowadays is evidenced by the great harvest of vocations. Young men are simply *rolling in* and the difficulty lies not in finding them but in putting them up and training them when found. Year after year since the war ended the Noviciate has been full, and, more wonderful still, comparatively small numbers of the candidates who presented themselves have had to be refused. The large house which we had acquired at Oxford has become altogether too small as a combined Study-House and Noviciate. Another building in the vicinity has had to be adapted to accommodate the Novices. St. Joseph is the Patron of this new house and this kindly saint has been asked to find helpers for the new work; perhaps you have heard of St. Joseph's Fund?

Yes, that consecration ceremony when those ardent youths bound themselves to God and to the Church by the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience was a touching scene, and as the Provincial went on with the simple ceremony many eyes were filled with tears and many heads bowed in deep meditation at the silent majesty of it all".

God grant that such scenes may be yearly repeated; they will have their echo in the good that will accrue to the people of these islands when these black-robed labourers in ever increasing numbers will be able to scatter their good seed broadcast throughout the land.

Cowley's Magazine  
"The Help of Christians".

Any increase in the output of Catholic journalism must be welcomed by all really zealous Catholics; and this is why all our Co-operators must hail with joy the advent of the new Oxford-blue magazine which the Cowley Salesians are publishing in honour of the Salesian Madonna. Issued first in Our Lady's month, its progress and popularity would hardly be credited, but the people from all parts of the country who came to the Birmingham Exhibition saw for themselves the remarkable reception the Missionary number got there. Everywhere one looked that blue magazine could be seen; people carried it off as a souvenir of the Exhibition, it was sought for on account of the Salesian Indulgence which it explained and for the splendid articles it contained descriptive of the heroes and heroines of the Salesian world, and most of all for the fact that it was yet another publication that had been born to sing forth the praises of the Mother of God.



**Chertsey, Surrey.** There was a slight delay in the opening of the first term

of the scholastic year owing to the fact that a newly erected portion of the school was in the hands of the "British Workman" whose proverbial thoroughness would not allow of its being handed over in any but a perfect condition. But the result was worth waiting for; seven beautiful class-rooms capable, when occasion requires, of being converted into a spacious theatre, have been erected and add to the already numerous modern conveniences of Highfield School.

The opening ceremony was performed on the 20th September by Father Provincial and on the occasion of a toast which he proposed in honour of the Rector of the school, Very Rev. Fr. Macey, he congratulated this revered Salesian on the wonderful transformation that had been wrought in this School founded by him four years previously. Chertsey, he said, was the second house that owed its existence entirely to the efforts of Fr. Macey,

and since he seemed to know the secret of bringing these undertakings to a grand success, he recommended him to think of opening yet another house, somewhere by the sea, so that it might be used as a health resort for sick and infirm Salesians.

Brilliant examination results were obtained by this school at the end of last scholastic year. In some grades all the boys presented for the Oxford Local and College of Preceptor's examinations succeeded in satisfying the examiners, whilst six were accorded honours and many others obtained distinctions. Such success speaks eloquently enough and reflects great credit on Fr. Muldoon S. C. the able Prefect of Studies and his hard-working staff. The staff has been slightly increased for the present year and another fruitful scholastic period is expected. The boys of this new schools are already much attached to their Alma Mater which, besides being excellently staffed and fitted with every modern accommodation, has been rendered beautiful as well.



**New Rochelle, New York.** Great things were achieved on Commencement Day at New Rochelle, the Salesian Noviciate House and College in New York. The program included a Latin Comedy entitled "Saccus Malorum" or A Bag of Apples; a patriotic operetta entitled "Old Glory" and selections by the clever school orchestra helped to while away the time between the acts.

But not the least important event was the speech addressed to the boys by a prominent lawyer of New Rochelle, Mr. R. L. Fallon LL. B. His words had a decided educational value and it would be worth while quoting them in full did space permit, but we must limit ourselves to the following extract.

"My dear young men, this date is an important one in your life's history, and from many points the most important. You have reached that stage where, to a great extent, the future of your lives, your success or failure, depends entirely upon yourselves. Thus far, kind, thoughtful, loving parents, and zealous and indulgent teachers, have helped to shape and mould your characters and to steer you aright on life's pathway. To-day a large part of that responsibility in shifted to your own shoulders. Through the tender years of your lives these teachers have guided you, pointing out to you the difference between right and wrong, taking you as mere children, with spotless souls and minds not yet awakened to

the possibilities of the world, they have helped you keep those souls spotless while at the same time they have equipped your minds with knowledge sufficient for you to choose the path you will follow. As children you needed to be guided and helped along, but now as you approach young manhood you are able to think somewhat for yourselves. And it is for you to ask yourselves, 'Whither are we going?' Is the work of the past few years, the most tender in your lives, to be wasted upon a life of carelessness and indifference? Is the life so well begun, the mind so well trained, the character so beautifully moulded by these good Fathers, to become a useless part of the world's turmoil? Or are you going to make proper use of your equipment and become an independent rung upon the ladder of life's success? Are you going to stop here and wander out into the mobs of the world, or are you going to continue along the path pointed out for you and make a success of yourself?

After all, what is education, and why is it necessary? Well, to answer the last question first, if you have any doubt concerning its necessity, go down to any of the free evening-schools in our large cities and see the hundreds, yes, thousands of men and women, many of them gray-haired, trying to grasp an education that was deprived them when they were your age. They have tried to buck the world, and late in life have realized they were without proper equipment to compete with their fellowmen. On all sides we see it is the man with the education who is advancing in his business, profession or trade, and we should let the experiences of these men and women in night-schools be a lesson to us and grasp our opportunities while we are young. And now, what is education, and why is it necessary to attend school? Facts are facts, and why cannot we grasp them as we go along through life? It is true, facts are facts, and if we can pick them up and shape them together we can easily educate ourselves. But why do we go to a baker for bread, or to a shoe-store for shoes? The fields are covered with wheat and shoe leather may be seen on the backs of hundreds of cows in the meadows. But who would suggest going out into the fields to gather flour for the breakfast rolls just as we are to sit down to the table in the morning, and who would suggest killing a cow every time we need a pair of shoes? The material is there but we prefer to let those who know how gather the necessities for us and we then get them from these merchants. Just so with education. Our schools of learning have gathered the flour and shoe

leather for us. They make up the rolls and shoes of knowledge and hand them out to us. A man would be pretty hungry who would attempt to get his breakfast every morning out of the wheatfield, and a man who thinks he is going to educate himself by gathering all this information alone is also going to be pretty hungry mentally....

You have been blessed as few others are with an excellent Catholic education. You have a fair grasp on the principles of your religion. Be true to them. The poor souls who have never known the true Faith are to be pitied, but you who have been brought up in it should be forever grateful to Almighty God for that blessing.

.....But unless you practice your religion your education amounts to nothing. Education without religion is like an ocean liner without an engine, beautiful to gaze upon, but helpless to get anywhere.

The man working in the streets, true to his religious beliefs, is after all a better educated man than the college graduate with six or seven degrees to his name but with no religion in his soul. Almighty God is the fountain of knowledge and without belief in Him and what He teaches it would be hypocrisy to believe in what He creates. Practice your religion openly, be true to the principles taught you here, be a credit to your Alma Mater, and grasp every opportunity possible to advance your education.

I congratulate you upon your graduation. I congratulate your good teachers and your parents and friends who rejoice with you on this occasion. And I want to appeal to the parents to see to it that their boys continue their education. Do not let them be too anxious to go to work to earn a little money. It may appeal to them now, but they will regret it later on. You are to be commended for whatever sacrifices you have made for them thus far, and I urge you to let nothing stand in the way of a good education."



**Burwash, Sussex.** His Lordship the Bishop of Southwark made his canonical visitation of St. Joseph's, Burwash, on Tuesday Aug. 21st... Charabanc parties arrived from Cowley early in the day and helped to swell the numbers which attended to greet His Lordship on this occasion. Two of the former Rectors of Burwash—the Very Rev. E. Tozzi, S. C. J. P. of Cape Town and the Very Rev. J. Simonetti S. C. Ph. D. of Cowley, Oxford—also enhanced the gathering on that day.

His Lordship expressed his pleasure at witnessing the wonderful progress which the Salesian Preparatory School at Burwash had made during the past two years, under the guidance of its Rector—the Very Rev. T. Tierney, S. C. Two years previously the School was in its infancy and there were but four pupils to greet His Lordship on that former occasion. Now, however, he was most agreeably surprised to find the rapid development that had taken place in the meantime.

The number of pupils has increased to such an extent that it is necessary to write in good time before each term in order to secure places. The results, too, of the recent examinations of the boys were very gratifying as a first effort, and promise well for the future.



**Transfiguration Church, New York.** In the newly-built school of the Transfiguration, in answer to an appeal from its pastor, the Rev. Father Voghera, there has recently been founded the Chinatown Catholic Mission Committee. The director of the mission is the Rev. Father Caralt, Missionary Apostolic from China, who has taken charge of this mission to the pagan Chinese of New York City.

To pray for the conversion of Chinatown to our faith was proposed as the first object of this committee. Then, occasionally, the members best fitted for such work will be allowed to do personal and active missionary propaganda among these Chinese pagans, opening the way for the missionary by the kindly teaching of English as the language with which they make their living. The motto of the committee will be this: "Let the Star of our Christian Civilization appear also in Chinatown".

At least once a month, on a Sunday afternoon, all the members of the committee will go to Chinatown for missionary service. At these meetings the program will be as follows: 2,30, address to members by director telling of progress of work; 2,45, Chinese admitted, English song service; 3, classes in English in different rooms of school, 4, recreation; 4,30, lantern slides and lecture in English and Chinese; 5,30, Chinese dismissed, gathering of committee for prayer and discussion.

The lantern slides which will be used will be selected from impressive religious and biblical scenes, and the talk will connect these with Christian teaching.

The meeting of committee members at the close of the afternoon will be for the purpose

of giving thanks to God for all the graces and blessings bestowed on them and on their catechumens and future converts. This meeting will also give an opportunity to the different members to narrate their individual experiences in their apostolic work of the day.

One of the first things for which the committee will be called upon will be to act as hosts and hostesses of a tea-party that Father Voghera plans to give to the Chinese of his parish. Some members of the committee will be urged to prepare songs and music for an entertainment.

Many men and women well fitted for helping on this committee have already offered their services, and it is hoped that others will follow their example. Although the present committee is doing such good work, it is realised that much more can be accomplished when there is a larger corps of workers. All, therefore, who can in any way help in this work of converting pagans right in our own city are again urged to send in their names to Father Caralt, 29 Mott street, or to call there at the school on Sunday afternoon at 2.30 o'clock. Those who can teach the classes in English, catechism or singing or those who can give their services in a secretarial capacity are needed as well as those who can give time to pray for the success of the efforts of the actual workers.



**Nazareth.** The Sons of Don Bosco have been zealously working for the youth of Nazareth right from 1896. The orphanage under their care has been a home and a blessing for numerous little derelicts thrown helplessly into the whirlpool of life. Near the orphanage a magnificent temple dedicated to *Gesu Adolescente* has been erected as the result of offerings from every part of the world, but more especially from France. The erection and consecration of this grand church in the Holy Land is the crowning triumph of a series of efforts which have been faithfully carried on for the last twenty years by the zealous priest and lover of youth, Very Rev. Canon Caron of Versailles. "It is the finest church in Galilee!" the people of Nazareth declare proudly, and indeed, as though to make up for the black ingratitude shown to their Divine Fellow Citizen in those days of nearly two thousand years ago, the townspeople have taken a noble share in the construction of this monument in honour of Our Lord's Boyhood.

The church is situated on one of the dominating heights twenty minutes walk from the

town and commands a view of the country for fifty miles around; an unspeakably fine panorama; one of the finest in Palestine. The consecration ceremony was performed on the morning of the 6th September by His Lordship, Bishop Baudrillart, and for the occasion a large concourse of pilgrims had arrived from France. From early morning a picturesque



During the Consecration  
of the New Salesian Church at Nazareth.

assembly of Nazarenes and pilgrims had gathered in the vicinity to await the hour of opening. Four hours the consecration ceremony lasted accompanied as it was with all the solemnity and majesty of the long pontifical rite. Three choirs of singers sang the office of the consecration, special pieces being rendered by the pilgrim's choir under Rev. Fr. Laglaye.

At the reunion afterwards there were present—Mgr. Haggear, Archbishop of the Greek Catholics in Galilee; M. Rais, French Consul at Jerusalem; the English Governor of Naz-

areth, the Franciscan guardians; the clergy of all rites in the town, etc.

The Superior General of the Salesians was represented by Fr. Munerati, Procurator General of the Congregation. Fr. Munerati had been commissioned by the Pope to carry to the consecrating bishop the faculty of bestowing the Apostolic Benediction upon all the faithful present, and he was also the bearer of a papal brief nominating Canon Caron as Domestic Prelate to His Holiness. This last favour for the zealous Canon was quite unexpected, but that only added to the heartiness of the outburst of approval with which the announcement was received. Fr. Munerati, speaking on behalf of the Superior General, expressed to the assembly the joy which the Salesians experienced in having confided to their care the magnificent temple dedicated to Our Lord's Boyhood. It was almost, he said, a providential mandate given to the Congregation, already dedicated to the care of youth, to spread devotion throughout the world to our Youthful Saviour.

The faithful again assembled in the church as the new bells rang out in the evening air. Mgr. Caron ascended the pulpit and in a brief address recounted the history of the origin and construction of the church. Bishop Baudrillart succeeded, and after having paid deserved tributes to the new Monsignor, to Mr. L. Gautier, the skilled architect and to the Salesians who had collaborated in the construction of the church and who will be its custodians, His Lordship went on to say: "Three lessons may be drawn from the boyhood and youth of Our Lord, and all three opportune. The young men of to-day—though, as I know their position, I do not wish to be too hard on them—are beset by three evils: they want to be free from all restraint; they abhor slow training and preparation; and they are running frantically after money. The Young Man of Nazareth, by the docility he displayed towards his parents, by his thirty years silent and calm preparation, and by his assiduous cultivation of poverty, condemns all these three tendencies of our after-the-war youth. Let us accept these lessons; they will transform our lives and render us beneficent to our fellow-man....

Two ways are open to our young men as they stand before the Youthful Christ—they must choose one. Let them be like that young man of the little village just some few kilometres from here—Naim. "Young man, I say to thee—arise!" said Our Lord to him, and He repeats the self-same words to the youth of our day. Let them arise and recover

their contact with the life of grace; let them arise and undertake the great and glorious mission which their Master wishes to confide to them...."

After the sermon a procession was formed and a scroll born by four Nazarenes and containing the names of thousands and thousands of young people who had consecrated their youth to God was placed at the feet of Gesù Adolescente. Behind the Nazarenes walked twenty-four boys, twelve from the East and twelve from the West. They stood around the Bishop and with great solemnity recited aloud the form of consecration.

And so commences the history of this new Salesian church in the Holy Land. Our Catholic youths, and especially those educated by the Sons of Don Bosco must turn to it in spirit, and when in their struggle through life they feel the need of a divine ideal, they must think of the Youthful Jesus, the incomparable example of humility, obedience and labour, who is honoured there, and they must recognise in Him a brother whose heart is ever beating with love and with sympathy for them in their trials and temptations.

During future pilgrimages to the Holy Land this grand temple will be the special meeting-place for the young people's sodalities, and it is hoped that devotion to Gesù Adolescente will become ever more wide-spread throughout the East and throughout the West.



**The Oratory**, Sunday the 21st. October was **Turin**, a memorable day at the Oratory of our Lady Help of Christians.

In the morning before Solemn High Mass the Superior General clothed twenty-three young aspirants with the ecclesiastical dress and all of these youths were destined to begin their Salesian noviciate in distant parts of the world; some in Palestine, and some in the new noviciates of Assam and China.

The devotion of the Forty Hours Adoration was inaugurated after the Mass and during the day there was a continual stream of worshippers entering the church to salute their Eucharistic Lord. And this devotion rendered all the more solemn another touching function which took place on the evening of the same day. More than fifty Missionary Priests, Clerics and Lay-brothers, and as many Missionary Sisters of Our Lady Help of Christians were there, in and around the sanctuary, taking their last farewell of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother before setting out on their long jour-

neys to the mission-fields of Assam, China, Chile, Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay and Palestine. Some of them were bearded Priests who had already been labouring in other parts of the spiritual vineyard; many were mere boys but newly clothed in the uniform of the Church, but it was good to look at the heroic band of men and women who were such shining examples of unselfishness and self-abnegation, and to imagine how many thousands of pagans and savages would perhaps owe their salvation to the self denial and the zeal of those hundred Missionaries.

This ceremony has been repeated many many times in Our Lady's Basilica, but it never fails to move the hearts of the people who flock to wish the departing members of the Church's Foreign Legion god-speed. His Eminence, Cardinal Cagliero, himself the pioneer Salesian Missionary, was able to be present on this occasion to address the departing Missionaries and to bestow upon each of them the Missionary's crucifix. His parting address was eloquent in its simplicity and his words will be stored up in the hearts of those children of Don Bosco as they pursue their hidden toil in the obscure and forgotten parts of the earth.



**Warrenstown** The second Salesian Foundation in Ireland was officially inaugurated on the feast of St. Raphael, Oct. 24th., under the auspices of His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Gaughran, Bishop of Meath, who extended a hearty welcome to the Salesians in the name of the clergy and laity of the diocese. Very Rev. Fr. Mc. Court, S. C., Rector of Copewood College, said the Mass at 10.30, in the presence of the Bishop, and His Lordship afterwards gave Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The chapel and school were blessed by Very Rev. Fr. O'Farrell P.P. as Bishop's delegate, the procession consisting of the members of the Community and the first Students of Warrenstown. Many distinguished guests were present at the reception which was afterwards held and amongst them, besides His Lordship, the Bishop, there were Very Rev. Canon O'Grady P.P., the Right Hon. the Earl of Fingall, General Hammon, the Rev. clergy from the neighbouring parishes and representatives from other Salesian houses.

Very Rev. Fr. O'Grady is Rector of the new agricultural college and it is a happy augury that the institution should commence its career under the care of this zealous Son of Don Bosco

who laboured so long and fruitfully for the Church and for the Congregation in the Mission-fields of South America, particularly in the Falkland Islands, and who will long be remembered in Malta, as the beloved Rector of St. Patrick's. Warrenstown House, as we have said, is an agricultural college and a more suitable situation for this sort of institute it would be difficult to find. More than 500 acres of the most fertile soil are at the disposal of the school authorities and the students ought to be more than comfortable in the magnificent mansion which the Salesians have acquired. From every point of view success seems assured for the new undertaking, but as in all beginnings certain difficulties are bound to be met with, we would ask our readers and Co operators in the district to rally to the support of the new college, particularly by advertising it and securing new pupils for it, so that the register may soon be full, and so that even during the first year of its existence the Salesian Agricultural College at Warrenstown may prove useful both to the country and to the youth of Ireland.

We wish the Rector and his staff every success and the boys every happiness in their new Alma Mater.

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## LIKENESS.

I have a little child—a son  
And I imagine he  
Is something like the little boy  
Christ used to be

He waits on me so lovingly  
With earnest eyes and sweet;  
So willing and so eager are  
His hands and feet.

I think the Little Lord was glad  
To serve His Mother so,  
And down the streets of Nazareth  
On errands go.

And when my son has grown a man  
Of strength and courtesy,  
O Jesus may he then as now  
Resemble Thee!

ANNE B. PAYNE.



# DEVOTION TO OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS.

## Origin of a Famous Shrine.

The story of the foundation of this pilgrimage chapel, which has become a refuge for the afflicted, is full of rare interest, and contains a striking example of aid obtained through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin.

In November, 1836, John Batt, a native of Alsace, sailed from Havre, France, for America with his wife and eight children. In a few days a terrible storm arose and the sailing vessel, *Marie*, was in danger of destruction. The sails and masts were torn off, the rigging blown away and other parts of the ship wrecked. The pious and God-fearing man, who was seeking a home in the new world with his family, always had deep love and veneration for the Mother of God. In his hour of extreme peril he called on Mary, Help of Christians and Star of the Sea, invoking her aid and protection. He solemnly promised if the Blessed Virgin would save him and his family in their great danger he would, on arrival in America, erect a shrine in her honour.

His prayers were answered. The storm subsided and although experienced seamen said the vessel could not last until they reached land, they managed to reach the Irish coast, where, after a few weeks, they sailed again and arrived at New York on the feast of the Purification, February 2, 1837. Mr. Batt began to fulfill his promise as soon thereafter as his means allowed. He had taken his family to what is now the suburbs of Buffalo and in 1851 donated three acres of land to the Right Rev. John Timon, D. D., Bishop of that diocese, and erected a small brick shrine chapel.

In the course of time the little shrine of Our Lady became a great place of pilgrimage and many who have received aid from the Blessed Virgin there have presented votive offerings which partially line the shrine chapel.

The Rev. Francis X. Scherer has been in charge of the shrine since 1893 and pilgrimages to it have increased from year to year. These take place principally on the feast days of Our Lady, which are observed with great solemnity, with multitudes seeking help and relief from all kinds of sickness and distress.

The shrine is situated in the town of Cheektowaga, two miles east of Pine Hill, a suburb of Buffalo.

## Graces and Favours. (1)

ARDRA, July, 1923. — My husband and children join with me in their heartfelt desire to publish their gratitude to Our dear Lady Help of Christians for helping us in our great distress. Through her intercession my husband was enabled to secure work on the railway.

A CHILD of Mary.

TRINIDAD, B. W. I. — Please accept enclosed offering as a thanksgiving to Our Lady Help of Christians for a favour received after making the Novena. During a recent court-case it seemed that I was going to lose but by constant prayer and the Novena to Our Lady the judgment was given completely in my favour. Please publish this in the *Bulletin*.

A. W.

COWLEY, OXFORD. — A. C. wishes to publish her thanks and gratitude to Mary, Help of Christians and Don Bosco for a favour received.

*Per J. S.*

BELFAST, IRELAND. — Enclosed is a small offering for Holy Mass in thanksgiving for a favour received through Our Lady Help of Christians after promise of publication. I am praying for another favour and I hereby promise an offering in aid of the Salesian works if my prayers are successful.

*One who confides in Our Lady H. o. C.*

ENGLAND. — Will you please publish the following account in order to encourage others to have recourse to Our Lady. A poor woman was dangerously ill, the doctors gave no hopes of her recovery, I started a Novena to Our Lady Help of Christians asking for her cure and promising to publish the favour. The

(1) For these accounts no higher authority is claimed than that attached to authentic human testimony.



poor woman got better and I return my best thanks to Our Lady.

A. POOR SINNER.

KUALA LUMPUR, INDIA. — I am herewith sending an alms to your Society in thanksgiving for help received through our Lady Help of Christians. She helped me to get my promotion and she also saved our baby when it was seriously ill and the doctors had given up hope. I shall be glad if you will kindly publish these favours in our *Bulletin*.

D. M. MAGIMAY.

OXFORD, ENGLAND. — Having successfully passed some important examinations after invoking the aid of Mary Help of Christians we would deem it a favour if you could find a little space to publish the reception of this assistance from Our Blessed Lady which we acknowledge with sentiments of profound gratitude,

*Three Students.*

LIMERICK, IRELAND. — Enclosed you will find my mite for a Mass in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians for a temporal favour received. I return you my most sincere thanks for sending me the *Bulletin* so regularly as it is very useful to one like myself living alone.

*A Co-operator.*

LONDON. — I wish to return my most sincere thanks to Mary Help of Christians and to Don Bosco for help in passing my exam. My success was unlooked-for.

M. M.

KILKENNY, IRELAND. — Please accept enclosed offering for a Mass for the Poor Souls in honour of Mary Help of Christians, St. Joseph and St. Anthony for a favour which I received through their intercession

M. L.

DUBLIN. — Please publish my heartfelt thanks to Our Lady Help of Christians for favour received.

*Anonymous.*

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA. — Some weeks ago a friend of mine was dying of *Pernicious Anæmia*; the Doctors gave us absolutely no hope of his life all agreeing he had only a few weeks to live. I started a Novena to Our Lady H. of C. promising to publish my favours if granted. After the third day the patient's condition started to improve and now, thanks to Our Lady, he is well again.

W. RODGERS.

## Favour Attributed to Dominic Savio.

Will you please publish in the *Salesian Bulletin* the following great favour I obtained through praying to Dominic Savio. I had been ill for a long time and I had invoked this saintly pupil of Don Bosco to intercede for my recovery. I made a Novena preparatory to 9th. of March the day of his death and precisely on that day I was told by the Doctor who called in a specialist to confirm his diagnosis that I had a tumour and that an immediate operation was necessary to save my life as I had reached the final stage. I went to a nursing home, had the operation and was so very ill after it that the Doctor said I would not live a day. But I had previously placed the whole matter in the hands of Dominic Savio with the firm conviction that he would not fail me and I had also promised to publish the favour when granted for the glory of God and this humble Servant, and to pray during my lifetime for the conversion of England (so dear to Dominic's heart). When I awoke out of the anæsthetic the pain was killing; the nurse applied the relic of Dominic Savio and in a few hours time all pain had passed away and to the astonishment of all I had a marvellous and unexpected recovery, due solely, I am sure, to Dominic's powerful intercession with God. I should like all to turn to him in their hour of need and they will find a true friend and powerful advocate.

*A Salesian Co-operator.*

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## Genius.

*The whole difference between a man of genius and other men \*\*\* is that the first remains a child seeing with the large eyes of children, in perpetual wonder, not conscious of much knowledge—conscious rather of infinite ignorance, and yet infinite power: a fountain of eternal admiration, delight and creative force within him meeting the ocean of visible and governable things around him. Ruskin, "Stones of Venice".*

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*Donations for the propagation of Salesian works, and offerings in connection with "Graces and Favours" received may be sent to.*

Very Rev. Don PHILIP RINALDI,  
32 Via Cottolengo,  
TURIN (Italy)

# THE LIFE OF THE VENERABLE DON BOSCO

By G. B. LEMOYNE of the Salesian Society.

(Continued).

In fact he lost no time in opening a Catholic elementary school near the Oratory of St. Aloysius. He rented a small piece of land and built his tiny school upon it, and then, not having certificated masters in the house, he went in search of exemplary teachers in the city, procuring their annual stipend himself as well as providing the necessary prizes for the encouragement of the pupils. The zealous and pious priest, Dr Leonard Murialdo with his offerings and his industry was the principal benefactor of this undertaking.

As soon as these schools were opened quite a good number of poor children of Catholic families deserted the Protestant schools in order to attend those of their own religion, and were thus saved from becoming victims of heresy.

The year 1857 was marked by another splendid undertaking. "Don Bosco" wrote Mgr. Manacorda, "in his thoughts, in his words, in his affections and in his actions ever betrayed the true humility of his heart; he was all humility; but as soon as one whispered in his ear the magic words "Roman Pontiff" his countenance lit up with unwonted fire, he became a new being, his words were vested with a new warmth." Yes, this was quite true, and, as has been said already, the fact that the glorious achievements of the Roman Pontiffs were often lost sight of and unknown was as a thorn ever stabbing at his heart. It was his wish that the people should have a knowledge of even the earliest Popes and in order to obtain notes on these he passed many hours both in public and in private libraries and so he was enabled to compile fourteen booklets for the Catholic Readings Society which were held in great esteem by many learned ecclesiastics, amongst them His Eminence Cardinal Tripepi. In the preceding year our Ven. Founder had published his *Life of St. Peter, Apostle*, and also that of *St. Paul*, and in this year, 1857, continuing his *Lives of the Popes*, he completed more than five sections of a large work.

Another memorable event took place also about this time. On the 6th of June, 1857, Rev. Felix Reviglio was ordained Priest, and he was the first pupil of the Oratory to attain to this high dignity. Mgr. Fransoni, on Don Bosco's recommendation, had given the young candidate his ecclesiastical patrimony, and on

the following day, Holy Trinity Sunday, Fr. Reviglio celebrated his first Mass in the church of St. Francis de Sales and was assisted by Don Bosco. Suitable festivities to commemorate the event were afterwards indulged in, but that same evening the young priest said good-bye to his benefactor and friend and for high and reasonable motives gave himself to the exercise of the Sacred Ministry in the archdiocese.

Don Bosco was forced more and more to the conclusion that he would have to work more publicly in order to found a Congregation which would inherit his spirit and carry on his apostolate. Already for many years he had now and again given conferences on the subject to his clerics and to those zealous youths who aided him in his work, and Don Rua has left us a note of one of these talks which was given at the beginning of 1854.

"On the evening of the 26th. Jan. 1854" he writes "We met together in Don Bosco's room; four of us, Rocchietti, Artiglia, Cagliero and Rua besides Don Bosco himself, and it was proposed to us that, with the Help of God and St. Francis of Sales, after making trial of the life of practical charity towards our neighbour we should make a solemn promise, to be afterwards substituted by a vow to God, if it were found possible and convenient. From that evening the name "Salesian" was bestowed on those who agreed to follow out this proposal".

Archbishop Fransoni had said many a time to Don Bosco "How are you going to continue your work? You are mortal like other men and if you do not look ahead and make provision your Oratories will die with you. It would be well to consider how they will carry on who survive you, and therefore you ought to settle on a successor who will take your place when the time comes".

And Don Cafasso had also remarked "For the continuance of your good works a Society is indispensable" whilst Dr. Borel himself urged him on to the great undertaking. But the idea soon got noised abroad, and some church dignitaries, good and benevolent though they were, attempted to dissuade our Ven. Founder from the actualisation of such a project, reminding him of the unsuitability of the times, the penury of his subjects and

the persecution which was at that time being levelled against the Religions Orders. And Don Bosco himself was by no means blind to the difficulties that would have to be overcome in trying to raise up a new Congregation amidst the ruins of so many old ones uprooted by revolutionary hands. But Divine Wisdom, *ludens coram eo omni tempore, ludens in orbe terrarum*, made use of Urban Ratazzi himself in order to help Don Bosco to overcome his hesitation. "I sincerely wish", said Ratazzi to him one day "that you, Don Bosco, may live for many more years in the prosecution of your good work for poor boys at the Oratory; but you are mortal like every one else and if you were suddenly taken away what would become of your work? Haven't you already thought of such a contingency? If you have, what is your plan for coping with such an event?" And he continued—"For my part, I should advise you to select some in whom you have more confidence from amongst your clerics and lay-helpers and form them into a Society under fixed rules; imbue them with your spirit; instruct them in your educational system so that they may not only help in your work now, but be fully prepared for continuing it after your death."

And when Don Bosco objected by reminding him of the first suppression of religious corporations which had already taken place in Sardegnia, the Minister replied: "I know of the law of suppression and I am well aware too of the purpose for which it has been passed. This will present no difficulties for you provided you institute a Society according to the exigencies of the times and conformable to the existing legislation". "And what sort of Society would it be?" asked Don Bosco. "A Society" said Ratazzi, "Which would not show the religious characteristic of the *manu mortua* but the *manu viva* instead. A Society in which every member would preserve his civil rights, be subject to the laws of the state, pay taxes and so on. In a word before the Government the new Society would be nothing else but an Association of free citizens, united and living together for the purpose of doing good".

"And can Your Excellency assure me that the Government will permit the institution of such a Society and allow it to subsist?"

"No constitutional and regular Government would hinder the foundation or development of such a Society, just as it does not impede, but rather promotes the establishment of Commercial, Industrial, Mutual Aid and other Societies. Every association of free citizens

is allowed to function provided only the purpose of such a union and its activities are not contrary to the laws nor to the institutions of the State. Don't worry; make up your mind; and rest assured that you will have the whole-hearted support of the King and of the Government, for it is here a question of a work eminently humanitarian".

But if this design of founding a new Society to perpetuate the work of the Oratories was the Will of God, was desired by holy men, was longed for by every honest soul and suggested by one of the most celebrated Ministers of State, it was not at all to the liking of his satanic majesty that such a Society of men should take a large and important share in the affairs of humanity, and we here recount a few facts in proof of this for there are many people, even some who do not believe the Gospel, who admit the possibility of such happenings even though they cannot be proved in every single instance.

"We observed" asserts one of the most affectionate followers of Don Bosco, "that every time he was thinking of undertaking some new important work for the glory of God he seemed to suffer from grave diabolical onslaughts. One morning I asked him how he had slept during the night and he replied. 'Not very well, for I was molested by a horrid monster who came to my bed and attempted to suffocate me'. This sort of thing did not happen only once, and Don Bosco stated quite clearly that these were molestations of the evil one".

The night on which he finished writing the first rules of the Salesian Society — a draft which was only accomplished after many prayers and painstaking study — whilst he was writing the concluding phrase — "Ad majorem Dei gloriam" — to the greater glory of God — the evil one appeared to him; the table began to move; the inkstand was overthrown; the ink spread all over the manuscript which then rose spinning in the air as though impelled by a whirlwind and fell again in scattered pages to the ground with such an awful noise as to strike terror to the heart, and there it rested, so dirty and so spoiled as to be no more legible so that for Don Bosco it meant commencing all over again. The details of this awful event he himself confided to one of his friends. It was evidently very distasteful to the author of evil that a new Society should be instituted whose only aim would be the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

But before undertaking this important work again Don Bosco resolved to go to Rome and

he started on his journey on the 18th Feb. 1858 after having made his will as all prudent persons were then accustomed to do before setting out on a long journey "and so as to leave" he said "no confusion in the affairs of the Oratory should the Lord wish to call me to eternity, giving me as food to the fishes of the Mediterranean;" and on leaving the Oratory he was moved by the emotion of a father who has to tear himself away from his sons, whilst many of his children were no less affected at the thought of never seeing him again. The cleric, Michael Rua went with him as secretary but with the best of good wishes, with mind and heart the pupils of the Oratory bore him company on his long journey to the Eternal City.

At Genoa they stopped until the evening of the nineteenth. On leaving, Don Bosco was accompanied by the little artisans of Fr. Montebruno with whom he had stopped and these youngsters, knowing of his charitable work for others just such as they were, insisted on accompanying him right to the harbour where several of them jumped nimbly into a boat and pulled him out to the steamer.

(To be continued).



*Of your charity pray for the repose of the souls of the following Co-operators lately-deceased:*

Rt. Rev. Mgr. Barret, Galway, Ireland.  
 Rt. Rev. Mgr. Rossi, Tarscien, Malta.  
 Prof. James Richeri, Turin, Italy.  
 Mr Geo Gardon, Trinidad, B. W. I.  
 Miss M. Regan, Belfast, Ireland.  
 Mrs B. Gonsalves, Cochin, India.  
 Mr John Mulligan, New York, U. S. A.

*And the following who died at Various times:*

Thomas Kilmartin.  
 Annie Kilmartin.  
 Catherine Kilmartin.  
 Mary Kilmartin.  
 Annie Kilmartin.  
 Thomas Kilmartin.  
 John Alban Kilmartin.

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