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= SALESIAN CO-OPERATORS =

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Summary.

The Annual Address from the Very Rev. Don Albera to the Salesian Co-operators.

The Salesian House of Studies at Cowley, Oxford.

Salesian Notes and News. — Delays. — Scholastic Items.

The Nuns of Our Lady Help of Christians in Ireland.

Foundation-Stone at New Rochelle. — The Salesian

Victory Church at Leghorn. — A Musical Centre. —

The Viennese Children.

News from the Missions. — China: A Baptismal Festivity

in the Mission of Tai Wong-Po. — Ecuador: A Cata-

strophe in the Cordilleras. — Brazil: A Missionary

Excursion along the upper Waters of the Rio Negro.

Plenary Indulgences.

Devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians. — Graces and

Favours.

Life of the Ven. Don Bosco. — Chapter XXIV: The chol-

era of 1854. Various Important Incidents.

Obituary.



The Salesian Co-operators.

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

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

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

The Very Rev. P. ALBERA,

Salesian Oratory.

Turin.

ITALY.

THE SALESIAN BULLETIN

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

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

The Annual address from the Very Rev. Don Albera to the Salesian Co-operators.

My dear Co-operators,

When I look back to the day, when as a child of thirteen, I was received by Don Bosco with so much charity at the Oratory, I am filled with emotion, and I seem to realise quite distinctly the almost innumerable graces which were reserved to me by God, under the guidance of our most loving father. And, indeed, how many there are who can assert the same thing—that they owe all they are to the Venerable Don Bosco! Our education, our training, our very vocation—we owe all to the fatherly solicitude of that Man of God, who bore towards his spiritual sons a holy and indefatigable affection. It is for this reason that the remembrance of him is dearer to us than that of all others, and united with that remembrance is our admiration for his extraordinary sanctity, and for the greatness of his Mission, which no one could possibly doubt to be heaven-sent. With every year that passes, his gentle and fatherly aspect, instead of losing somewhat of its charming radiance, which makes it so revered, appears ever more luminous, and renders yet more vivid within us the conviction of his heroic virtues; while his Work, ever

being consolidated and extended through the support of the generous and noble-minded, makes us repeat ever more confidently: *The Finger of God is here.* The Work of Don Bosco was clearly willed by God and he continues to assist it with constant benedictions.

These considerations seemed to strike me more forcibly than ever at the close of last year, as I thought of the great celebrations for the inauguration of the Monument to Don Bosco. Whoever had the good fortune to be present at the International Congresses which preceded the inauguration will never forget the zealous enthusiasm of the Co-operators, both ladies and gentlemen, nor the practical expression of gratitude from the Past Students, nor the wonderful success which marked the Congress of the Past Students of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

The Unveiling of the Monument to the Ven. Don Bosco.

The Salesian Co-operators, appreciating the utility and urgency of Don Bosco's religious and social work, which covers, I may say, the whole programme included in the Catholic sphere of action, have studied his aim and methods, and

adopting his ideal of a Christian restoration, have especially made their own his Apostolate among the young. To this end, they desired to have clearly marked out and strengthened the lines of their own organisation, and the adoption of practical regulations which would aid them in establishing centres of Salesian work, wherever there was a nucleus of Co-operators.

Not less imposing and profitable was the achievement secured by the Congresses of the Past Pupils of both sexes. Each of these Associations, and the various societies and activities which they include under the direction of their former educators, with an enthusiasm beyond anything that I had imagined, expressed their constant gratitude and attachment; and, looking back to the fountain-head, from which this abundance of benefits had flown they resolved that another monument, much more significant than that which was about to be inaugurated, would be erected to Don Bosco, by the re-establishment in the bosom of the families and of Society at large, those beneficent fruits of the Christian life, which the Venerable Servant of God had produced in their hearts, while they were under the influence of his beneficent guidance.

We should follow in Don Bosco's footsteps.

In fact between the Co-operators and Past Pupils of both the Salesians and the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians, there was a sort of emulation to study the mentality and sentiments of Don Bosco, in order to draw from them the right ideal to be aimed at, and the best means for reaping the richest harvest of results. All were convinced that nothing would be more welcome to the Servant of God, than to reawaken

his love towards our neighbour and particularly for the young, that same love that taught him to seize every occasion and make use of every means in order to do good to others.

In this great fusion of generous propositions, well could the crowds of Co-operators and Past Pupils and friends and students applaud with such enthusiasm, as the covering-veil fell away from the Monument. At that moment I was moved to tears, and the great cause of my emotion was not so much the grand spectacle then seen in the Piazza of Mary Help of Christians, where the presence of all the Civil Authorities, presided over by the Representative of the Pope, of their Majesties the King and Queen, of the Prime Minister, and of other Governments, was united with the youthful joyousness of five thousand young voices raising the hymn of gratitude and praise to their Benefactor and Father—but it was the intimate joy which filled my heart to overflowing at seeing his beneficent Mission so widely admired: and, more especially, the thought that from this memorable day, all the Co-operators and Pupils would be united in spreading it both by word and deed.

Hence my desire to express my most hearty thanks to all who combined in this great tribute to the Ven. Don Bosco: and I pray that God, through the intercession of the Heavenly Patroness of the Salesian Works, that this good resolution to imitate the ardent charity of the Venerable Servant of God, may be a lasting one in the hearts of his Sons and Co-operators, more lasting even than the Monument in bronze and granite, erected in front of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians.

But in order that this desire may be fulfilled and be productive of great fruit, I wish to add here one recommendation.

Committees for promoting Salesian work.

We are all agreed that in order to set up and extend the Apostolate of Don Bosco in towns and country districts, it is necessary to form among the Co-operators special Committees in conformity with the resolutions passed at the eighth General Congress. The more numerous these Committees, and the more enlightened and generous the zeal of those who compose them, the more copious and beneficial will be their fruits. The formation of these Committees is accordingly a matter of first importance, on behalf of which I invoke the aid of the Co-operators and of the Past Pupils. They ought resolutely to make a beginning with this. The Association of Co-operators rightly expects to find among the Past Pupils new members for its organisation, and members both enterprising and capable, on account of the education they have had, and their opportunities of knowing and fostering the desires of their Father and Benefactor. And very naturally the Associations of Past Pupils of both sexes, while carrying out the programmes decided upon by their particular branches, in connection with respective Institutes and Oratories, cannot have a better ideal to aim at, than that proposed to the Co-operators by Don Bosco himself.

It should, therefore, be one of the cares of the Directors of our Houses to enrol as many of our Past Pupils in the Association of Co-operators while the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians will do the same in their own sphere. Thus it would be possible, by means of local Directors and assistants, to set up many effective Committees of Co-operators. How consoling indeed it would be, if in connection with our

great celebrations of last year, there should be established and brought to a flourishing prosperity some Salesian undertakings, entirely through the zeal and initiative of the Co-operators themselves.

A glance at 1920.

In accordance with our custom, I shall now give you, my dear Co-operators, some account of what our Society has been able to accomplish through the mercy and goodness of God, and the effective assistance of your generous charity.

First of all, I ought to state that we have been able to keep in progress all the undertakings previously begun. Considering for a moment, the enormous development which Divine Providence has seen fit to give to the work of Don Bosco, its homes and Schools and Colleges, its Sunday Oratories, its far-flung Missionary centres, and the many undertakings on behalf of the people in general, and with only a vague idea of the enormous sums of money required to keep these vast organizations going from day to day, one may well be surprised; and if it is partly the result of his charity towards these undertakings, he may rejoice that Divine Providence has inspired him to share in these eminently good works. In truth, who can estimate the accumulation of merits in the sight of God, obtained by these generous souls, in view of the immense good which is thereby accomplished among such large numbers of all classes, through the numbers of vocations to the religious or the ecclesiastical state, and the new members gained for the Church and for Civilisation? Daily experience constantly proves to us that Mary Help of Christians pours out with a sovereign munificence, all sorts of graces upon

the Benefactors of the works of Don Bosco, in this present life, while there can be no doubt the She holds in reserve for them a much greater reward in the next.

Works accomplished by the Salesians.

During 1920 the Salesians have been able to undertake the following new works. In Italy there are two, which should be especially mentioned, one being the Parish confided to us in the city of Rimini, and dedicated to Our Lady Help of Christians; the other being the Secondary Boarding School at Trapani, which has already a hundred boys.

Outside of Italy there have been made several important foundations. At Haifa in Palestine a School has been established, which we hope will be able to do much good work for that district after the ravages of the war. At Budapest, the Capital of Hungary, we have taken over the direction of a Boarding School, under the patronage of St. Aloysius; it is not as yet very commodious, but it is situated in a neighbourhood, which will give opportunities for the opening of several Festives Oratories and other works on behalf of the young, which are a pressing necessity under the existing circumstances.

In Germany, too, we have made two foundations. At Burghausen there has been opened a Boarding School for young students intended for the ecclesiastical state, and at Ensdorf, we have opened a House of training for our own staff, since there are so many demands for Salesian Institutes in Germany, Austria and Hungary.

Another foundation of special importance, and destined mainly for the formation of our future personnel has been made at Cowley, Oxford. It was

necessary to make great sacrifices in order to secure its establishment, but it is increasingly necessary that our clerics and priests in England should be able to attend the University courses, so as to obtain the requisite qualifications demanded in the educational world.

Of not less interest is the new foundation opened in the city of Salto in Uruguay, where in addition to the organization of a vast parish, and a large Sunday Oratory for the children, there will also be before long a fine building for professional schools.

Many of our Missionary centres had during the past year considerable development through the sending out of new missionaries. The number of Salesians and nuns of Mary Help of Christians who set out for different parts exceeded fifty, and they have gone principally to Patagonia, Central Brazil and China. The largest contingent had the happiness of receiving the parting blessing from the first leader of the Salesian Missionaries, His Eminence Cardinal Cagliero, now Bishop of Frascati, whom may God long preserve as a guide and honour to our Pious Society.

Besides these additions to the existing staffs, and notwithstanding the serious losses of some of our valiant missionaries through death, among whom special mention should be made of Mgr. Giordano, the Prefect Apostolic of Rio Negro, our missions have been considerably extended and have made new foundations.

As our readers may know, the Vicariate Apostolic of Mendez in Ecuador has long been administered by our revered confrère Mgr. Costamagna, one of the first of our Bishops. Advanced years and the burden of long missionary toils have compelled him to yield this charge to younger hands, and the Holy Father has entrusted it to another

of our experienced missionaries, Mgr. Comin, who has already opened a new residence at El Pan, with a parish and an Oratory for the children.

The mission of Kuan Tung in China has now been erected into a Vicariate Apostolic, and entrusted to the indefatigable Mgr. Versiglia, titular Bishop of Caristo. Two other vast fields of missionary labour were confided to the Salesians in 1920. At the earnest entreaties of the Bishop of Asuncion and of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda we are undertaking the evangelisation of the Gran Ciaco in Paraguay an immense region in which the Salesians have already established themselves at Fuerte Olimpo, some 600 miles from the Capital.

At the repeated request of the same Congregation we have undertaken another difficult mission at Angola in West Africa.

You will therefore see, my dear Co-operators, that in spite of the anxious times through which we have been passing, and the scarcity of vocations during the War, the Work of Don Bosco, through the protection of Mary Help of Christians, and the assistance of its Venerable Founder, has continued its expanding course; we have indeed been asked to undertake many other foundations, but it has been impossible to create the staff necessary to comply with these requests.

The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

The lament that I have just made in the preceding remarks applies equally to our Nuns; they have received requests to undertake new works in various directions, but in most cases the want of personnel constrained them to decline the offer or delay its fulfillment; nevertheless, their work has had con-

siderable development, both in Italy and abroad and has been visibly blessed by Heaven.

In the province of Piedmont they have extended a department in which reasoned experience would seem to show that they excel. Within the past few years they have opened several large boarding houses for working girls, and the good results obtained, together with an almost imperative demand, made the nuns decide to open three establishments in busy centres.

At Novara, in a building formerly used for working girls, they have, through the generosity of a Co-operator, opened a school for about a hundred children, who were rendered homeless by the last earthquake which devastated several parts of Tuscany. At Voltri, in the region of Serrara, they have established a school and Festive Oratory for the benefit of the children of the sailors. The Sisters have also extended their work in the interests of all classes of girls in many other parts; these include new works at Livorno, near the existing Salesian Institute, in the suburbs of Tortona, at Zeagli in the province of Genoa, and in connection with their former work at Rome. In the last-mentioned city they have also opened a new training school and Sunday Oratory for girls.

In the suburbs of Turin itself they have enlarged the three boarding-schools in which they have care of a large number of children left orphans by the War.

The foundations made by them outside of Italy include the following: A large evening school at Alicante in Spain; it is chiefly for the benefit of girls who are at work during the day, and also provides a home for those who are seeking work, or are passing from town to town. An institute almost

identical in scope has been opened in a suburb of Madrid, through the initiative and generosity of a lady Co-operator. At Liège in Belgium they have opened new schools and a Festive Oratory. At Limerick in Ireland their new work is already flourishing. It is chiefly devoted to evening classes and clubs for girls, and has already assumed proportions necessitating a strengthening of the personnel.

The vast number of their works in South America has caused them to open a new house for the training of their own postulants in the province of Brazil. In fact, the immense amount of good accomplished by the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians seems to be limited only by their capacity to produce new personnel.

Proposals for 1921.

I add a few words by way of drawing your attention to the work towards which, with common accord, we should turn our greatest effort in the coming year; that which is of most urgent importance, after what I have already had the pleasure of informing you, is of such a nature as almost to outline and recommend itself.

In the first place, my dear Co-operators, help us to prepare new religious and sacerdotal vocations.

As I have just said, if the Salesians and the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians had not been in such great need of personnel, the new works to which they could have dedicated themselves would have been very much more numerous. The demands for new foundations come to us almost daily, and one of my greatest pains is to have to reply negatively to the moving instances, that are made to us, either from centres which are in the greatest need of immediate help, for the saving of

poor children, or from eminent personages to whom we would wish, and indeed ought never to say no. Yet, with all our good-will not to turn away from work, I confess freely that it is impossible to do more.

How provide for this grave need? By the multiplication of vocations.

What numbers of good boys and girls there are who would be happy to give their lives to works of charity and zeal in the religious and sacerdotal state, if only they were sufficiently encouraged and supported! This divine culture depends chiefly on all who are zealous for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. "Let us remember," Don Bosco used to say, "that we present the Church with a great treasure when we procure a vocation. Whether it is for the dioceses, the Missions or a religious institute, it is always a great treasure that is given to the Church of Jesus Christ." You will do a good work of the highest importance then, my dear Co-operators, if in the coming year and in all the years to come, you exert every effort in the way of counsel and moral and material support, in sending new vocations to the Salesians and to the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians. Before God, I insist that there is no greater or better alms that you can give us.

In the second place, help us to bring to completion the works already begun.

In these days when labour and material of every kind cost so much, any talk of new buildings might seem absurd or even foolhardy to those who do not know how our affairs are managed; but it will certainly not seem so to you. You know that it is not we who attempt these enterprises—for which we could not pay a farthing—but that it is Divine Providence that inspires them, wills them and is solicitous that they be brought to a successful completion.

It seems to me, then, that it is a duty that we should seriously set about giving a helping hand towards the completion of the numerous churches that are in the course of construction, as also to the enlargements that are being carried out in various Salesian Houses.

During the past year, I had the consolation of assisting at the solemn consecration of the Church of St. Augustine at Milan; the ceremony was carried out by His Eminence, Cardinal Ferrari, to whom the Salesian Society will owe undying gratitude. There have been other churches completed also, amongst which it gives me pleasure to recall that of San Gonzale at Cuyaba, and that veritable jewel of architecture, the Church of Mary Help of Christians which is annexed to the house at Bernal, near Buenos Ayres; this was constructed after the design of our own architect, the Very Rev. Father E. Vespignani. But there are many other churches, all of a monumental character, which claim the succour of our charity before they can be completed. Amongst these I bring before your notice the Sanctuary of the Holy Family at Florence, the Church of the Sacred Heart at Casalmonferato, the Sanctuary of the Infant Jesus at Nazareth, the Church of the Sacred Heart on Mt. Tibi Dabo at Barcellona, the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Nichteroy, the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Montevideo, the parochial church at Patagones on the banks of the Rio Negro in Patagonia, the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Lima in Peru, the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians in Guayaquil in Ecuador, the parish church of St. Rock at Barranquilla in Colombia, the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians in Mexico, and yet others which I ought to recall but which I

leave for the *Bulletin* to speak of in future numbers. All these works, colossal as they are, and therefore very expensive in these times, claim the most generous support of the friends of Salesian activity.

And as I said previously, there are also other things which are in need of your charity. In all parts enlargements are being carried on, or would be carried on for the purpose of taking increasing numbers of children, and bringing them up in the holy fear of God. Here in Turin, for example, we have a building in course of construction at the Mother House; there is another being raised at the Oratory of St. Paul, and yet another in the Oratory at *Monterosa* which will give this Oratory a proper and definite standing. The expenses are already enormous, and yet, in order to cope with the needs of the surrounding people, and to comply with the desires of His Eminence Cardinal Richelmy, always so paternally benevolent towards the work of the Venerable Don Bosco, we must soon put our hand to the new Church to be dedicated to the Child Jesus and the Holy Family near the Festive Oratory of St. Paul, which we have already opened. As yet, however, I cannot bring myself to fix the day for the laying of the foundation-stone for fear that the undertaking should be brought to a standstill through lack of means.

You see then, my dear Co-operators, how necessary it is that the flame of zeal which already burns within your hearts, should shine forth ever brighter, on behalf of those works to which you have already given so much generous assistance.

Let me give you then my last recommendation: Summon up all your charity and all your zeal, and redouble your past efforts. Seek every means

to make known the work of Don Bosco, and by interesting others you will be spreading the Association of Co-operators, through whose efforts so much has been done in the past, and to whom the undertakings referred to above look for their realization.

Strive also to assist the movements which are being promoted to counteract the evil influences which the war has left in its train. Among the people in general, whether in the towns

I must bring my letter to a close. With all confidence, I assure you of a great reward from Almighty God, a reward which is far beyond what we ourselves could ever hope to give. Every day prayers are offered in all parts of the world, by the thousands of children under our care, for the special intentions of our Co-operators, and they will always have a generous participation in the good works which are undertaken by the Salesians and



The Salesian House of Studies at Cowley, Oxford

or in the country, the Church desires to increase the Faith which has grown lax, to strengthen Christian sentiment and to further the practice of religion. Without this spiritual restoration, humanity, will not be able to throw off the restlessness and instability which has come over it, and indeed there will be no better way of contributing to this desired improvement, than by a generous and efficacious co-operation in the Christian training of the young.

Conclusion.

With this thought, which is the most ardent desire of the sons of Don Bosco,

the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. Their special needs are prayed for particularly every day in the Sanctuary at Turin.

Lastly, I recommend all our works to your most fervent prayers, and beg to remain, my dear Co-operators,

Your most obedient servant,

PAUL ALBERA.



The Salesian House of Studies

at COWLEY, OXFORD.

In his important annual statement to the Co-operators, which appears as the introductory article to this number, the Very Rev. Fr. Albera refers to one event, which will be of special interest to all our readers, and of vital consequence to the Salesians themselves. Our Superior announces that a House has been opened within the precincts of the historic University city of Oxford, and that its main purpose will be the formation of our youthful members, who, in course of time, will be able to avail themselves of all the advantages of the scholastic courses, and of the intellectual training for which Oxford provides unique facilities.

For quite a number of years the Novitiate for our young members was at Burwash in Sussex. It was a quiet, reserved spot, amid the picturesque country and familiar hills and valleys of the Sussex woodlands: it had many advantages, but after some years its accommodation became inadequate, and general progress made it desirable that a House of Studies should be opened as soon as possible to cope with new requirements.

For a considerable time, however, the project remained in the realm of pious wishes, but Our Lady Help of Christians at last put the opportunity in our way. It so happened that the Franciscan Fathers were thinking of removing from their College at Cowley, Oxford, and their intention was communicated to a Salesian Father, who was following a course of studies at Oxford at that opportune moment. Without delay he made known to the Provincial and Chapter of our Province, that this special opportunity had presented itself, and the project was in due course sanctioned by the Superior General. Negotiations were set on foot, and when these were brought to a happy conclusion, the College of the Franciscan Fathers was handed over as a House of Studies to the Sons of another St. Francis. In fact, the Novitiate was at once transferred to Cowley, so that at the present moment, there is a combined Home for both Novices and Students in the suburb of Oxford.

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To know Oxford, even with the briefest acquaintance, is to love it. How many of her

gifted sons, through her long and varied story, have expressed their appreciation of the potent yet subtle charm which the city seems to exhale, and which must surely influence all who live for a time within its circle. But apart from its external beauty, and the old-world grandeur of the many groups of College buildings, the city has a unique interest for us. To Catholics, Oxford is now inseparable from the resurrection of Catholicism, which will be associated with the Oxford movement. The names of that brilliant group of Oxford men, with that of Cardinal Newman at their head, are now enshrined in the pages of Catholic triumphs, and the fruits of their struggle and victory are still being gathered, not only in Oxford, but up and down the land. Possibly our readers are familiar to some extent, with the epoch-making history of those times. They may remember that Newman spent some time immediately before his conversion at the village of Littlemore, just out of Oxford, and like Cowley, within sight of the tower of Christchurch. There, he with some of his closest friends and associates in the movement, passed some time engaged in the exercises of an ascetic life, in considering their position, in writing, and in parochial work: there also Newman built the existing Anglican Church, a small marble slab on one of the walls testifying to the fact that his sister laid the foundation-stone.

Now all this has a special meaning for us. Before coming to Cowley, we were aware that our new work would include some parochial duties, among the not very numerous Catholics of the district: and when that district was shown to us, we found that the village of Littlemore, the home of Newman for some considerable time, and containing the house in which he was received into the Catholic Church by Father Dominic, was entrusted to our charge, together with other villages in this part of Oxfordshire. This seemed to be an excellent omen, for anyone with a spark of religious sentiment must feel that one is here within some hallowed precincts, where the beginning of that series of famous conversions had taken place, and where there must ever hover the shadow of a greatly revered name. And yet there is no memorial to the Cardinal in Littlemore, and even the rambling house attached

to the cottages used by him and his colleagues, has long been in Protestant hands.

Quite recently there was a change of owner and the house was for sale during several weeks. We hastened to bring the news of this to the knowledge of some who might have an interest in obtaining this small property for some Catholic purpose, or perhaps even as the site and beginning of a Chapel and a centre of Catholic activity. Surely if the village of Littlemore is to have, even in the remote future, a small Catholic Church suited to its needs, there could not possibly be a spot more promising and more inspiring than the scene of the memorable conversion of Cardinal Newman, famous alike in the history of Anglicanism, and in the story of the renaissance of Catholicism in England.

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We may be allowed to develop this matter somewhat further, for if any section of workers should desire to promote the conversion of others, the religious orders are expected to be among them. In the early pages of Wilfred Ward's "Life of Cardinal Newman," there is an amount of interesting matter connected with Littlemore, and with the period of Newman's life referred to above. Father Dominic's description of the village, written in 1845 would now need some modification, for in common with all districts, it has been greatly improved within the last half-century. It is not a place of particular beauty, but is not much behind the average village as far as rural scenery is concerned. It was rather on account of its unimportance that Fr. Dominic compared it to a Bethlehem, "from which the great mysteries of our redemption were accomplished." Fr. Dominic lays stress upon the singleness of purpose which animated Newman and his followers. "A Capuchin Monastery," he says, "would appear a great palace when compared to Littlemore. Now in this house, I may say barn, the best geniuses of the Anglican Church have retired and lived together for about six years — persons of birth, learning and piety, who possessed, or at least might have possessed the richest livings and fellowships which the Church of England can bestow on her followers." He then goes on to say that they did this because they considered that the Gospel was better than worldly wisdom, because they looked upon the salvation of their souls as something far above the possession of rich livings, and heaven much superior to earth. The man that is not stirred up by these examples is inexorable in his blindness." The good Passionist Father has more in this strain, but enough has been

said to emphasize the distinction of the quiet village as the scene of a religious event, whose importance to the Catholic Faith in England can scarcely be exaggerated.

We said above that we regarded the fact of Littlemore being in the centre of our mission as an excellent omen, and the reason of this will be seen in the following. Many of our readers are familiar, to some extent, with the name of the saintly Dominic Savio, who was one of the early pupils of our Venerable Founder, and whose Cause is now being considered by the Church, with a view to his canonization. We must quote something from his biography, bearing upon this subject.

"It was in these spiritual elevations of soul," says the author of his life, "that he sometimes had visions, which he usually guarded as a jealous secret. We have certain knowledge of the one such vision, which he made known in confidence to Don Bosco, on account of the importance which it seemed to have for the interests of the Church. Dominic Savio often spoke of the Supreme Pontiff, and expressed an earnest desire to see him before his death, often declaring that he had something of real importance to tell him. One day Don Bosco asked the boy what this important thing was, that he desired so much to communicate to the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

The boy answered: "If I had the opportunity of speaking to the Pope, I should tell him that in the midst of the tribulations which await him, he should not cease to give particular solicitude to England: God is preparing a great triumph for Catholicism in that country."

— And what reason have you for making that statement?

— I will tell you the reason, but I should not like to reveal it to others, for it might not be taken seriously. But if you go to Rome tell Pius the Ninth about it. One morning whilst I was making my thanksgiving after Communion, a very strong distraction seemed to take possession of me, and I saw a vast plain full of people, surrounded by a dense fog. They were walking about, but like men who, uncertain of their way, do not know where to turn next.

"This country," said a voice near me, "is England," and whilst I was on the point of asking other questions, I saw the Supreme Pontiff, Pius the Ninth, just as I had seen him in one of his portraits. He was dressed in magnificent vestments, and came forward towards the crowd of people bearing a shining torch in his hand. As he approached nearer and nearer, the brightness of the torch dispersed

the darkness and mist, and the people seemed to be now in the light of noon-day. "This torch," said the voice near me, 'is the Catholic Faith, which is to enlighten the English people.'

The writer of the life continues: "One year after the death of this saintly youth, on the 21st. March 1858, Don Bosco was in Rome, and had his second interview with Pius IX. During it he related the story of the vision concerning England. The Supreme Pontiff listened with great interest, and replied: "This confirms me in my resolution to do all I can for England, to which country my solicitude has been devoted. This information, if it be no more, is the counsel of a pious soul."

The words of Dominic Savio were doubly prophetic. When he referred to the tribulations of the Pope he foresaw, without doubt, the sorrows which were in store for Pius IX. after the exile at Gaeta. And when he spoke of great things being prepared for Catholicism, through the instrumentality of the Sovereign Pontiff, it must have been connected with the numerous conversions from Protestantism, of the liberty recently granted to Catholic worship, and the establishment of the Catholic Bishops in the new Sees. The author then adds: "In those precious moments after Communion, illumined by prophetic vision, he may have seen and saluted from afar the great and consoling days of September 1908, when, towards the close of the London Eucharistic Congress, 20,000 children, arranged along the Thames Embankment, moved forward to the Cathedral in a long triumphal procession, and the Cardinal Legate of the Pope, walked in the imposing demonstration of Faith, to the sound of hymns of triumph of the Most Holy Sacrament."

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Without desiring to labour the point over-much, we may be pardoned if the discovery that this historic ground had been confided to us, seemed in some definite manner connected with the dream or vision of Dominic Savio. It seemed to hint that we should not have to labour upon unfruitful soil: that there was at least something out of the ordinary in the fact, that when we had at last been enabled to come within the precincts of the University city, we found ourselves so close to the place where these important conversions had been accomplished, whereas we might have found ourselves in quite other directions: and not only were we near to his memorable spot, but it was actually in the district confided to our spiritual care. Surely anyone would attach

some significance to such an accumulation of promising circumstances.

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But there is another point to which we desire to draw the particular attention of our Co-operators. The many developments both intellectual and religious which the future may make possible, cannot be accomplished without considerable outlay. The number of our young clerics seems to be permanently on the increase: the field of Salesian activities is opening in all directions, and in this work our readers have an important share and may help in doing immense good. Already we find our accommodation inadequate, and possibilities limited by lack of means. There will surely be some among our wide circle of readers and Co-operators who will desire to assist us in so many good works, and in preparing the way for the accomplishment of untold and unlimited possibilities in the future. The Superior of the Salesian House, Cowley, Oxford, will be pleased to let any of our readers know in what way they can assist in these developments, and thus co-operate indeed in the beneficent mission of the Venerable Don Bosco. We are hoping, nay are confident, that Our Lady Help of Christians, through whose aid we have come thus far, will inspire some of her clients to act for her as the patrons and patronesses of these new works, which Don Bosco has called upon his Sons to do. The Very Rev. Don Albera, in his address, urges the importance of many good works, on behalf of which he solicits the interest of the Co-operators; but we are sure that these latter will agree, that none calls more readily or more insistently for a response, than the establishment and development of our work at Oxford, upon which such great expectations are reasonably and confidently founded.

There can be no doubt, wrote the immortal Leo XIII, that whoever, by personal or material aid promotes the undertakings of the Salesians and their Co-operators, is deserving well of religion and civil society

SALESIAN NOTES AND NEWS.

Delays. No one regrets more than the editor himself the serious interval which has elapsed since our last number. It may as well be stated straightway that the main cause lies in the fact that he has been transferred to pastures new, and there his manifold occupations left insufficient time for editorial duties. His various activities have now been readjusted, and it is not too hazardous to make the statement that the Co-operators will in future be able to give a regular welcome to their periodical. We regret chiefly that it has caused serious delay in the publication of the Annual Letter of our Superior General: but as it is the first thing to be read in this number, we hope that its effect will be none the less considerable.

As usual the Successor of the Venerable Don Bosco shows us that there is much to be done. Our Readers and Co-operators may possibly be inclined to overlook the world-wide nature of the work in which they are such an important factor: this rapid survey of the extensive field will at once make evident that its unlimited range demands unlimited means, and unlimited efforts. Our Superior General has undertaken many new works, several of them being for the benefit of the poor children in the Provinces made desolate by the ravages of war. The cry from stricken Austria, for instance, has gone forth throughout Europe and America: and here we have opened several houses and schools where large numbers of the young generations will be suitably cared for and educated. Missionary undertakings are being multiplied, particularly in China, where our Missionaries have met with unexpected success. Other needs, hopes and desires are brought to the consideration of Readers, and as they make a ready appeal of their own, there is no reason for us to dwell further on their importance.

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Scholastic items. Successful and busy terms have been passed at our various Salesian Schools. As becomes the home of quiet industry, no exceptional excitement has been

allowed to interfere with the normal progress of the many departments of intellectual effort. Some breaks are of course essential, and the variations of routine are expected by young folk. At Battersea, one of the chief events was the visit of the Bishop of Southwark, for the ordination of two of the young Salesians clerics, who had been on the staff of the School. The ordination took place in the Church of the Sacred Heart, whose fine proportions and ample Sanctuary provide a dignified setting for so impressive a ceremony. The students were given places in the Church, so that they might have the opportunity of witnessing the sacred service, and also that they might have some food for reflexion, in regard to that great choice of a state in life, which is of the first importance in early student life. His Lordship afterwards stayed some time with the Community and boys, who celebrated the event with the customary honours. The School Sports and the various examinations are the important events at the time of writing.

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It suffices to glance through the pages of the *Farnborough School Chronicle* to know that plenty of life and vigour characterises the progress of the terms. The number before us has as its frontispiece the photo taken at the Salesian House of Studies at Oxford, on the occasion of the visit of the Farnborough First Eleven to play the Students. Their visit to the University town gave them not only another victory to their credit, but a day of interest and enjoyment, and implanted in them the desire of reaching not only high places in their studies, but of continuing them some day at the University itself. Now that we have a House in the suburbs of Oxford, it is not at all an impossible idea that some of our boys may have a chance in the future of proceeding to a degree at the University. It is a pleasure also to learn that enlargements have already been completed, and that further improvements are in contemplation: more progress and higher efficiency will be the result. The school cinema has been used for two lantern lectures, given by the masters, one on the Holy Land and one

on Lourdes. The Sports cups, shields and medals were distributed by His Lordship the Right Rev. Felix Couturier, O. P., O. B. E. M. C.

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A fine building is having the finishing touches put to it at the Salesian School, *Chertsey on Thames*. It will be in readiness for the new term in September, when it is calculated to provide all the accommodation required by the increasing numbers. Though not yet two years in existence, the School has attracted nearly a hundred boys, and therefore it may be taken, that it is assisting to provide for that growing need for secondary Catholic Schools, whether day or boarding, which is being manifested more and more in recent years. The School is moreover within easy reach of town, in picturesque and ample grounds of its own, and has abundant playing fields within a stone's throw. It has; therefore, all the elements for a successful School, and demands for places will probably go on increasing. The Very Rev. C. B. Macey, Principal, will be pleased to provide information.

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An entirely new venture is being tried by the Salesians this year. They have opened a new School for little boys at *Burwash*, in Sussex, having adapted for that purpose the building which was previously occupied as the Novitiate. Considering that our Schools are so often being asked to take little boys, there should be reasonable ground for anticipating that this new School will find plenty of applicants. It has been specially equipped and furnished and everything has been done with a view of providing a complete School life for youngsters between the ages of seven and ten or eleven. The country around has all the attraction associated with the Sussex Downs, and the Station is reached direct from Charing Cross, arrangements being easily made for the trains to be met by a conveyance. Applications should be made to the Very Rev. Fr. Tierney, Salesian School, Burwash, Sussex.

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While on the subject of Schools, we are reminded that there has been no opportunity to refer to a couple of changes of staff, which have been made since we last addressed the public. Many references have been made from time to time in these columns to the work of Fr. O'Grady, who for the long space of seventeen years had successfully guided the for-

tunes of the Salesian work in the Island of Malta. He had in fact been the pioneer there and the creator of the flourishing School and Sunday Oratories, which he conducted with such success. The Maltese people of all classes were devoted to the Venerable Don Bosco; they had long desired to have his Sons in their island, and gave them a sincere welcome when the way was prepared for their coming. This does not mean, however, that there were no difficulties to be overcome, but with the help of Co-operators and friends the School and Church and Festive Oratories and Clubs were brought into being, and a great deal of good work was accomplished. The public Press of the Island was most favourable and did much to enlist and promote general sympathy and help. In directing and combining the various interests concerned, Fr. O'Grady proved to be eminently successful, and it was not at all surprising that he had to agree to a farewell gathering in his honour, at which there was unanimous testimony to his beneficent achievements, and to the lasting good which had been done under his direction. He could have had no better augury for the beginning of his new work in Ireland, than this great and hearty combination of good wishes and farewells, from those who had co-operated in his labours and shared in his success. We hope that it may soon be possible to give our Readers the good news that Fr. O'Grady has been able to begin the second Salesian work in Ireland, and he has the best wishes of all in his new field of labours.

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The other change to which reference was made, was concerned with the appointment of Fr. O'Grady's successor, who came from the Salesian School, Farnborough, where he had been engaged for many years with the parochial work of a large district. The *Aldershot Gazette* had a glowing description of the assembly which met together to wish Fr. Giltinan farewell. Among other very appreciative remarks, it said: "In the whole history of Farnborough there has seldom been witnessed such an enthusiastic assembly, as that which packed the Town Hall to pay tribute to the work of a Parish Priest on his departure for another field of labour, and Fr. Giltinan, who was the recipient of the honour was deeply touched. The wonderful appreciation of his work and sincere regret at his departure were not confined to his co-religionists, but it was the testimony or members of other Christian Churches which doubly enhanced its value.

The presentation of a silver chalice was made

the occasion of a delightful social evening, to which several well-known and accomplished artists contributed. Brevet Colonel T. H. Hartigan, C. M. G., D. S. O. presided at the ceremony, and was supported on the platform by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and members of the Council. Several speeches were made, all of which bore cordial testimony to the esteem and affection universally felt for the guest of the evening. Fr. Giltinan's reply was admirably suited to the occasion, which, as the Chairman said, constituted a proud and memorable moment in his career. In taking on his new duties in Malta, he does so with the heartiest good wishes of a host of friends.

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The Nuns of Our Lady Help of Christians in Ireland.

A brief announcement in our last issue reported the encouraging news that the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians had embarked upon their first foundation in Ireland. The new work has had a very prosperous opening and we are pleased to be able to give the following particulars concerning it.

The Sisters left for Ireland on the 21st of October last. On their arrival in Dublin they were met by Fr. Sutherland, who had come from our Agricultural College at Pallaskeenry to make them welcome, and before reaching Limerick the nuns had been presented to His Lordship the Bishop who received them with paternal goodness and immense kindness. They were also presented to His Lordship the Bishop of Cork, who likewise promised them every assistance in his power.

The Nuns were soon installed at St. Ita's House, Thomas St., Limerick, and immediately found a great deal of work awaiting them. About two hundred girls already attend their Evening School, where, besides other classes, domestic economy and general household duties will be a characteristic feature of their work. Thus their main object will be training and continuation Schools, and the one they are now conducting is already under the Irish Board of Education, so that its work will be recognised as satisfying the received educational standards. To meet further demands, two other Sisters were sent over on Nov. 9th, and the Nuns now occupy two Houses, the second one being Richmond House, Limerick.

Another promising sign is the fact that four Postulants have already been received, so that in every way the opening in Ireland has proved equal and even superior to all expectations. The Sisters will welcome help of every kind,

especially perhaps in the shape of more Postulants, and in pecuniary aid, for a multitude of difficulties beset new ventures of this sort.

Since penning the above the Sisters have continued their work under somewhat restricted conditions, owing to the unhappy circumstances which have developed in that part of Ireland. It became impossible for girls and young women to be in attendance at evening schools when military orders required them to be in their homes at an early hour. But as soon as conditions are easier, we do not doubt that the work of the Sisters will be reopened, and will find many more ready and eager to attend. They have already begun to find vocations, and their Patroness seems to be drawing many young people under her mantle as She has already done in other lands.

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Foundation- Stone at New Rochelle.

It is some little time since we had occasion to put before our Readers an account of Salesian affairs in the United States. Despite many difficulties, there is evidence of continued progress in the large and far-extended Province which has Houses both East and West; and it is a sign of hearty co-operation on the part of American Catholics, that it was possible during the latter part of 1920 to lay the Foundation-stone of a large Salesian Institute in New Rochelle. The local paper contained a complete account of the proceedings, devoting its front page to an illustration of the proposed building and a description of the proceedings; from that description the following interesting details are taken.

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The Cornerstone was blessed by the Right Rev. Mgr. Lavelle, of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City; the address was given by the Right Rev. John Chidwick, while a prominent citizen, Mr. J. Agar, was the general president of the proceedings. "With ceremonies of an impressive nature" says our contemporary, "the cornerstone of the new Salesian Institute at 148 Main St. was blessed and laid in the presence of a large assembly on Sunday afternoon.

Very early the fine grounds of the School began to show signs of unusual activity. Many New Rochelle people were congregating there and large out-of-town delegations arrived to witness the ceremony. There was a fine preliminary concert by two Salesian Bands from Port Chester and Paterson.

Soon after 3 o'clock, the procession to the new building began, and upon arrival, the clergy and guests took their seats on the platform and listened to other musical items both vocal and instrumental. The president, Mr. J. Agar, then made his speech which was a very stirring address and made a great effect. He dealt with the growing restlessness of the times, of the questioning of all authority, and how the very government and the Church itself were being challenged. He then spoke of the need of mental training and of thorough education, and said that the Catholic Church had been doing its part to answer these demands of the times. One proof of this was the ceremony just about to be performed, and he congratulated the Salesians on the erection of the new building, which would perpetually realise their dreams of great social and educational works.

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The cornerstone was then blessed by Mgr. Lavelle, who represented His Grace the Archbishop of New York. The ceremony was soon performed and then the Right Rev. J. Chidwick, D. D. gave the discourse of the occasion.

He prefaced his address by a passing reference to the war and the peace, which had brought the responsibilities of a period of reconstruction. It was gratifying to turn away from the dark clouds which had passed over us to this bright ray, and to contemplate the beginnings of the new structure.

The United States, he said, owed a great debt to the Catholic Church, a debt almost too great to be paid. The Church had put forth a world-wide influence. It took in the people of every land and brought them together into a spirit of brotherhood. But for this, America might long since have been ablaze with the fire of revolution. The Catholic Church had been a saviour, in Americanising those who came here from so many lands, and by standing between them and those who might lead them astray, and by saving them from betrayers.

The Catholic Schools had at times been looked upon with an attitude of suspicion, but how could any Christian man question them, when, with the education of the mind, they sought to teach the relationship of man to God? No man could consider himself educated until he knew his relationship to God. The father of America had expressed that thought in an utterance on religion. Washington had said that liberty depended on morality and morality depended on religion. The Catholic Institutions and Schools had helped the country to do

what it could not do itself in full, in giving education of the soul, with the education of the mind.

Such was the purpose of this School. It would send forth men who would be fitted to fill high places in the world—not men endowed with an ordinary idea of citizenship, but men who would believe that the country is subject to God, and that both entail duties upon us. The Catholic Church had had a great part in instilling the patriotic spirit of which America had given a fine example in the late war.

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After the address, the opportunity was given for the large audience to contribute its donation and the response was a very generous one. The previous speeches had had a good effect and all were prepared to take their share in a work of so much promise. Mgr. Lavelle then rose in order to bring the proceedings to a fitting conclusion. He said New Rochelle was newly blessed in the acquisition of this Institute, where boys would be trained in the great essential matters of life and religion. He referred to the work of the Ven. Don Bosco and his Sons and said there was dire need of a continuance of his work in the world today. He gave an instance of grave insubordination in one of the New York State schools, and showed how it was condoned by the parents against the Principal of the School. There was too much of that spirit today, and many children were inoculated at home with the distrust and rebellion which sought to set aside the wisdom of the ages. He urged all to bear in mind the grave words which had been spoken by Mr. Agar, and Dr. Chidwick, and then New Rochelle would find itself blessed by the great work growing up in its midst.

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Our Co-operators in the United States will already have heard of this endeavour on the part of the Salesians in New Rochelle; but the above account will serve the purpose of a useful reminder. The extensive scale on which the plans are drawn, will necessarily entail vast sums for the building, and to raise these the Salesians look to the generosity of their many Co-operators. There can be no question as to the need of such an educational Institute, nor as to the good it will do among the large number of Catholic boys and young men in the New Rochelle district. In order to hasten the accomplishment of this, the structure of the new building must be rapidly pushed forward, and

the Fathers in charge will welcome co-operation from every side.

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The Salesian Previous issues have called the **Victory Church** attention of Readers to this **at Leghorn.** important undertaking, set on foot by our confrères at the busy sea-port of Leghorn. The Salesians there are situated in the midst of a very populous and busy quarter; their present Schools have long been a centre of education and religion for many hundreds of boys, who flocked there both on Sunday and week-days, during the day and during the evening. The rapid growth of the district has created new demands and new needs, and to meet these; an endeavour is being made to erect a new set of buildings which shall include all that the Schools and Festive Oratories require and a large parochial Church as well.

It is to this latter item that we have previously called our Readers' attention, and it has a special interest for us, in as much as the port of Leghorn is greatly used by English speaking seamen, who hitherto have had no provision whatever for their spiritual needs while staying at the port. In fact, the cosmopolitan nature of the trade at Leghorn has made the question of supplying the seamen with some provision for their religious duties, one that calls for early solution. The Salesians have turned their attention to this pressing need. The erection of the new Church, the great allied victory in which the various marines played so vital a part, and the development of Leghorn as a place of call for the navies of the world—all these suggested the setting aside of chapels in the new Church for the use of the English, Irish, American, French and Belgian sailors.

The idea is a good omen and we hope to see it proved that it is a practical one. Committees have been at work for some time, promoting the general scheme, and the individual sections. The British interests are in the capable hands of Madam M. Caumichael, and the American section is under the presidency of Madam C. Grace. Our Superior General at Turin will also be pleased to forward any subscriptions that may be sent to him for this particular purpose.

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A musical The Ven. Don Bosco made the **centre.** Oratory at Turin a centre for sacred music, as well as for excellent instrumental music. The movement for the reformation of Church music and the cultivation of Gregorian chant had not then been begun by

the Holy See, but the various decrees since emanating from Rome in this regard, have found willing and capable executors at the Oratory. The formation of Committees in many parts to deal with the cultivation of sacred music was another step onwards; their Congresses followed as a natural development, and more than one of these has been held under the auspices and direction of the Salesians in Turin. The most recent one was held there on the four days from the 12th to the 16th of Sept. last. The reports and discussions showed that a vast reformation and improvement in church music has been effected, since His Holiness Pius X issued his *motu proprio*, not only in Italy but in many other countries, and the pioneers of the movement hope to effect a world-wide progress towards the attainment of the Pope's ideals.

The report of the Congress, yet to be published will make suggestions for the guidance of all who are affected by the directions of the Holy See in this regard.

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The Viennese The cry of the Austrian children **Children.** has gone forth into every part of the world. They were the victims of events over which they had no control, and of which they were perhaps the first to feel the dire effects. Their lot during the latter stages of the war was even worse than now, and it was during that period that our Superior General found a home for a hundred or more of the little boys who were made homeless by the war. They were provided for in every way, and doubtless this kindly act on the part of Don Albera, supported by the generosity of some Co-operators, was the means of saving the lives of many of them, who had been on the verge of starvation. The boys repaid this care by their good conduct, and by their great progress in school work; so much so that they were able to sing a Mass in the Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians, before their departure for their own country. They have recently found a home on Austrian soil, but they will still be in need of financial aid, as distress is so prevalent, and the Very Rev. Don Albera will welcome any donation towards this very charitable work.

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Many interesting items of news from all quarters are unavoidably held over till our next issue, which it is hoped to publish without any serious delay.

NEWS FROM THE MISSIONS.

CHINA

A Baptismal festivity in the Mission of Tai Wong-Po.

Writing from his newly erected mission one of our Fathers gives the following description of the rejoicings over the baptism of some new Chinese Christians. "Out of the many who being instructed, a happy band of fifteen catechumens had been chosen for the sacred ceremony of Christian Baptism. These fortunate candidates had all given convincing proofs of their earnestness and of their adherence to the true Faith. Three especially had made particular sacrifices. The first had made his living by keeping a shop full of idols and other superstitious objects. As a preparation for Christianity, he had not hesitated to renounce his trade, burn all his stock and embark upon a fresh business. I went to pay him a visit in his new surroundings and greatly admired his strong faith. In the place of Buddha and his many attendants and a whole family of devils, there were now arranged upon the shelves of his little shop various objects for domestic use, such as baskets and mats and other things in straw and bamboo, in the manipulation of which the Chinese have ever been skilled.

I was quite impressed by the air of resignation which characterized the owner of the shop, and admired the generous impulse which had produced the transformation. Whilst I was contemplating this scene, which had so much upset my previous ideas of the Chinese mind, a door on the side opened, and there came forward the young wife and her four bright little boys all of whom knelt down to receive my blessing. The father stood apart, enjoying the scene, and sipping his cup of Chinese tea. He was quite satisfied with the change he had made, although it had entailed a considerable loss of money: he felt amply rewarded by having received Baptism, and having been able to join the great Society of the Catholic Church. I gave them a very hearty blessing especially for the new business, which was the outcome of the renunciation involved in the rejection of Paganism.

The little visit to these new Christians had put me in such a joyful mood that I did not mind where I was going, with the result that I lost my way among the labyrinth of back streets and lanes, and should certainly have been lost, had I not been extricated by a sharp little urchin, who for a small consideration acted as guide to the neighbourhood of the Mission House.

The second of these special cases was an incorrigible opium smoker. As a sign of his earnestness and of his real change of heart he broke his pipe, made a resolution to give up smoking and faithfully kept his promise: no slight sacrifice for one, who had been long accustomed to the seductive craving experienced by the inveterate smoker.

A third had been prepared for Baptism and desired much to be baptised: but unfortunately he was a bigamist, and so his request had to be denied. This is in fact one of the chief obstacles to the reception of Chinese converts. But finally this man overcame the difficulty. He saved up a sum of money, explained the case to his second wife, and sent her away with sufficient to support herself. His generous sacrifice has already had its reward: for this morning he was himself baptised, his wife is being instructed, and the woman whom he had sent away for conscientious reasons is now among the number of the Catechumens.

I must now proceed with my description of the feast. The great preparation began on the evening before. The would-be Christians had all been prepared for their first Confession, and the men went on the eve of the great day, while the women were left to the morning of the day itself. No one was missing. When the Confessions had been heard, I proceeded with the ceremony. The men were assembled in a big semicircle and attended by their god-fathers: they were all baptised in the midst of an admiring crowd, and the very atmosphere seemed to assume an unwonted solemnity. With scarcely any interval the baptism of the women was proceeded with, and it would be impossible to describe the consoling and encouraging effect which the whole ceremony produced. It is on such occasions, as this, that

in spite of many wearisome days, the missionary feels himself well rewarded for all the fatigues of his apostolate: our former perils from pirates, from the waves, from epidemics, the exertion entailed by apostolic expeditions in the great heat, the ill-cooked rice and other insipid food, restless nights on hard and dirty beds—all these vanished from the memory, and are as nothing compared with this overflowing supernatural joy.

The Baptism was now over. At a sound from the bell all kneel down, the newly-baptized in the front row, the previous Christian converts next, and then the catechumens. Our temporary chapel cannot hold the congregation, which overflows into the entrance and then into the kitchen and other rooms of the presbytery. By this time, I am bathed in perspiration on account of the heat and excitement, and I contemplate, not without some secret satisfaction, the growing flock, now far too numerous for its sheepfold. But the enlargement of the chapel, since it is not very solidly built will be an easy problem. The Rosary is now begun, and while these Chinese voices are sending forth their aspirations to the Queen of Heaven, I proceed to vest for Mass. This has to be done on the altar-steps, as the sacristy has been invaded by the crowd. I am attended by two quaint-looking, alert little Chinese boys, who serve the Mass with faultless ceremonial and correct responses in their pleasant native accent. After the Mass one of the important members of the flock, who is considered to be a professional singer, intones the Litany of Our Lady. The Litany, already poetic and harmonious in itself, is something sublime when sung by Peter Ho in the Chinese idiom. This brings the ceremony to a close. The multitude pour out into the gardens around the church and a hubbub of voices is the sign that reciprocal congratulations are in progress. God-mothers and godfathers have to greet their respective god-children and the younger generations begin to let off rockets and fireworks; the girls in their picturesque garments hide their faces behind their feathered fans.

But there is to be no peace for the missionary. Some mysterious signs written on a piece of cardboard, which is gravely presented to me by the catechist, turns out to be a programme of the day's proceedings. At twelve o'clock, dinner; at two, Benediction; at three a round of visits to the houses of the Christians; at seven, supper, followed by fireworks and illuminations are given by the Christians themselves. Amid much excitement this order of the day is affixed to the door of the church, and its

contents are announced to the crowd who signify their satisfaction by prolonged clapping of hands."

Thus far, our good missionary. How the above programme was carried out in quaint eastern fashion will doubtless be the subject of some future communication.

EQUADOR

A Catastrophe in the Cordilleras.

In the forests of Ecuador there are still numerous bands belonging to various Indian tribes, and the evangelization of these unfortunate people has long been one of the chief desires of our missionaries in those parts. Under the guidance of their chief, Mgr. Costamagna, they had penetrated the forests in various directions. Their undertaking is now practically complete but it involved great sacrifices and even loss of life.

The most serious incident was that which occurred in the Cordillera Mountains, near a settlement called *Pan*. On a certain July morning, a strong wind, bringing intermittent showers, was blowing over the mountain range but it did not seem to hinder the gangs of men who, to the number of about seventy, were engaged upon the making of this new road towards the forest. They were all in cheerful mood and quite unsuspecting of any impending catastrophe.

But a little before midday an underground rumbling was perceived and the noise of it was immediately followed by what seemed to be an earthquake shock: then the whole slope on which the men were standing began to move towards the abyss. The greater number of the men saved themselves by flight, but some who had not realized the gravity of the situation and had delayed a few moments to collect their tools were carried away by the landslip, which increased in speed as it went deeper down the valley. The avalanche was accompanied by terrifying noises like a hundred claps of thunder, which reverberated through the surrounding valleys, while in the midst of the moving mass of earth, stones and trees, were seen the unfortunate men with their hands stretched out to Heaven. The piercing cries which at first reached their companions were soon hushed in the depths of the abyss, where eight of the men were buried alive, although their condition was at first unknown.

The work of rescue began without delay. The band of survivors were joined by the inhabitants of the nearest settlement and they

succeeded in rescuing some of the victims. Of these one died soon after from his injuries; but eight remained buried and their remains could not be found. One of our missionaries was that day returning from Mendez and came upon the scene of the disaster when the attempted rescue was in progress. Wives, children, relations and friends, all in grief and terror, would not leave the scene of death, still hoping that under the great heaps of earth their lost ones might still be alive. Parties of them remained in the neighbourhood for several days, and to them every sound that came up through the valleys seemed to be a moan coming from the dense mass covering their unfortunate relatives.

The news of the terrible accident spread very rapidly and caused such a great sensation that the catastrophe was made an occasion for public mourning in the whole district; but no one, says the Missionary, was more deeply grieved than Mgr. Costamagna. It was he who had planned the great work of the new road to Mendez: it was therefore natural that, the sad accident should cause him sorrow and dismay. He set out at once for the scene of the disaster in order to do what he could to console the grief-stricken people. He celebrated a Solemn Requiem for the souls of the victims, and sought by every means which religion and charity could suggest to bring courage to those whom no earthly consolation could comfort. He decided to celebrate the Requiem on the side of the very Mountain where the disaster had taken place, and the actual scene was indeed a very remarkable one. From far and wide the country people and the mountaineers came in all directions: the altar was set upon a small plateau, and the Mass was accompanied by the sobs of the bereaved people. On the previous evening Confession had been heard for several hours, so that large numbers received Holy Communion from the hands of the Prelate. When the Mass was over and a short interval had elapsed, His Lordship and two of the chief officials distributed the money that had been collected for the relatives of the deceased; then all proceeded to the margin of a small lake, where a large Cross was erected to commemorate the disaster, and which His Lordship desired to be called the *Lake of Tears*.

Soon afterwards the gathering broke up, and departed in various directions. The people bore away with them the memory of a sad but consoling sight. The Bishop could not restore the victims that had been lost, but his paternal goodness had served to assuage their sorrow

and to lighten so heavy a burden. After a few days the survivors of the catastrophe were again at work upon the making of the new road, which has since brought the dark forests into touch with civilization.

BRAZIL

A Missionary Excursion along the upper Waters of the Rio Negro.

Returning after a long excursion into missionary lands, one of our Fathers sends the following account of his work: "It will be a great pleasure," he says, "if I were able to repeat with some truth Caesar's great line "*Veni Vidi, Vici*," (I came, I saw, I conquered!) But, unfortunately, if I am to keep to the exact truth, I can only say: "I came," I did indeed see something, but only a small part of the great harvest field and as to the third statement, it may perhaps be said by our distant successors, when the kingdom of God has been extended over these immense territories, through the zeal and perseverance of many years.

It must be remembered that our apostolate embraces two quite distinct classes of persons: the civilized and the savages. The civilized or partly civilized, occupy in general the central line of our Prefecture. The dwellings and settlements do not extend far from the banks of the Rio Negro and its neighbourhood. The savages on the other hand, live far away from the centre along the tributaries of the main river, or lead a nomadic life in the forests. I had previously come into contact with the settled population, and my main intention now was to pay them a brief visit, and then to hurry on to find the savages along the upper reaches of the tributaries. For this expedition, I had chosen the most favourable season for meeting the inhabitants at their occasional visits to the centres; and I seem to have timed it providentially for I was able to celebrate Mass almost every day, either in some poor temporary chapel, in the houses of settlers, on the open plains, on board, on the banks of the river or in the huts of the Indians. I also found many opportunities for preaching the Word of God, either in the morning or at night, for the missionary seems never able to forget the command given to the first great Missionaries: "Go ye and teach." The children were not neglected, and everywhere there was a readiness to listen to the truths of our Holy Faith, and a welcome awaiting the Minister of God.

The opening stage of my expedition was

made in a canoe. The crew consisted of five Indians who by means of strenuous rowing, and sometimes dragging the canoe with ropes over the cataracts made considerable headway against the current and landed me towards evening at the ranch of a Portuguese settler, a good friend to the Missionaries. The night was wet, so we had to delay our departure on the following morning. Still going up the stream, we passed a small settlement near the junction of a considerable tributary of the river. The persistent rain made our voyage anything but pleasant, and we made a brief halt at a small settlement, which was practically deserted by its inhabitants, who had gone some miles down the Rio Negro to collect rubber. While going up the river, I had planned to stop only at night for the necessary rest, and during the day at brief intervals for food: and in doing so, I gave notice to all we saw that on my return, there would be meetings at convenient places. However, I had to spend one day on the bank, for the five Indians were now nearly worn out by their constant rowing, and I had to find seven others to supply their places. We, therefore, halted near the ranch of a friendly settler, and I was able to baptise four little children from the neighbouring cottages. All being once more in readiness we again launched the canoe and pulled up-stream. In spite of cataracts our progress was rapid, and after a few days we reached the settlement of a Venezuelan, a friend of ours who lent us a larger canoe, in which we were able to complete our journey more conveniently and quickly.

My first stop was being made at a place called Marabitana, a large settlement visited by traders and the home of a very mixed population. The festival of St. Joseph was about to be celebrated here, and the coming of the Missionary had also been announced. It was my intention to make use of the gathering of the people to give them a brief Mission, in order to get them to approach the Sacraments, so long neglected through the practical impossibility of meeting the Minister of God. I was hospitably received by one of the chief settlers, through whom notice was given throughout the countryside of the times of the services. The missionary's day is a pretty full one. There was Mass at seven o'clock, with sermon; instructions during the morning; at three, administration of Baptism, Confirmation and Matrimony. In the evening instruction for the boys and girls, and at eight o'clock, Rosary, sermon and confessions. Devotion and fervour were enhanced by some short processions through the scattered district.

As I have already said that it was a time of public festivity, readers will not be surprised to learn that these good folk living on the edge of civilization, interspersed their religious exercises with dances and games which were not too reserved in their character. They were accompanied by singing and by the noises produced from many discordant drums, and here and there a well-worn gramophone. This was all natural enough, but it was rather deplorable to notice that the ardour of the dancers made necessary frequent draughts of an alcoholic beverage called *cachassa*, which is extracted from the sugar-cane. Ignorance is the principal source of this mixture of the sacred and the profane. It is regrettable that as yet we cannot spare a priest to reside permanently in these growing centres. Only the regular practice of religion, and the influence of good-education will eventually banish these last remnants of a dying superstition.

* * *

At the conclusion of the mission, I had only one visit further north to pay, and it took me to the borders of Brazil and Colombia where the government officials are always on the best of terms with the missionary, and give him not only hospitality but much useful information. On my return journey I had desired to visit every dwelling along the river, where I had any hope of finding a living soul, and this resolution I carried out. About many of the houses there reigned a silence as of the grave, and I was informed that they were all closed up, their inhabitants being away collecting rubber in the plantations. In some, however, I found whole families awaiting the missionary, and it was seldom that he did not have the opportunity of administering the sacraments and giving instruction. Where there were growing farmsteads I stayed a little longer, and when my canoe left the shore, there would invariably be a gathering of spectators to bid me farewell and to express their gratitude. Thus I gradually came back to the vicinity of Marabitana which I beheld one day in the distance at sunrise.

We landed in order to pay it another visit, but a strange transformation had come over it. The scene of previous animation and festivity was now merely a scattered, deserted village and silence reigned supreme. The loud notes of the bells, which my Indian boatman rang, floated joyously over the waters, but awoke no responsive echo. They were wafted over the surrounding country and penetrated the forests, but brought forth not a single soul.

The explanation was simple: the people lived scattered about over the plains or along the banks of the river or in the islands, and they assemble only at stated times in the year for trading and festivities; then they disperse again and the village is silent. On my journey up the river, I had called at the hut of a poor Indian woman, who had a child only a few days old. Both were in a very precarious state of health, and now on my return, I made inquiries, and found them both at death's door. Little can be done in these remote places for such complaints as theirs. Further on I baptised an Indian woman and her little girl, leaving them for instruction to the mistress of the farm, who promised to teach them their religion, before the return of the father who was away in Venezuela, and I arranged to bless their marriage on my next visit.

I called at several other stations in these remote parts, going through much the same procedure at each, so that taking them all together, the journey was not without spiritual profit. At one place where the number of Indians, both savage and civilised, was considerable, I was able to assist at a display of wild-bird shooting: the native arrows are exceedingly effective weapons, and the dexterity of the Indians was surprising; scarcely one bird escaped. Near the mouth of a large tributary, and close to some magnificent forest scenery, there is a growing settlement called *Bella Vista*, which is well deserving of such a title. More important still, the land for miles around is under the cultivation of a good Christian proprietor, who is ready to place all his resources at our disposal, for the establishment of a Mission which could serve all the ranches round about. On this occasion he gathered in the settlers from far and wide, sending out messengers in all directions to inform everyone of the arrival of a priest; he was thus the instrument of much good work among the people and a true type of what a Salesian Co-operator can be, and of the untold spiritual good he can effect.

Another good friend was of great service in the next part of my expedition, for, being the fortunate possessor of a steam launch, and of a following boat named the "Kaiser!" he called out the crew, which was composed of both Civilised and Indians, he took us down the stream, past several plantations and settlements, and his presence was an important factor in the success which crowned our efforts in these parts.

We had now reached the territory of the *Tucano* Indians. These Savages are recognised by the Government as the proprietors of im-

mense districts, and inhabitants are almost unknown, because hitherto the white population has penetrated the territory only by the river, and as passengers rather than explorers. We had arrived at the mouth of their principal tributary, the *Tiguc*, but we were as yet only before the gates of the kingdom of the Tucanos, who live at a distance of many days journey from the mouth of the river. All night our steam launch pursued its course. The route lay through an immense forest, which nowhere showed signs of the labour of man interfering with Nature's handiwork. All around deep silence reigned. The screams of parrots, or the echoes of an occasional shot at some animal only served to make the quiet more weird. In these very parts more than one traveller had fallen a victim to the swift arrows of the Natives, and a party of Government workers had been surprised and assassinated not far away. These facts made the voyage more interesting but more dangerous, for during the night there would be little time or chance of encountering the Natives on an equal footing, if they should catch us in an ambush.

After travelling all day we reached towards evening a native hut, from which there came forth four Indians, showing a remarkable lack of clothing. However, our leader addressed them in their dialect, and eventually persuaded one of them to accompany us on board, to be our guide up the stream. That same evening we reached a spot where were fixed the headquarters of the tribe, and on landing we saw for the first time a real Indian house called a *Maloca*. There was only one native in charge, all the others having gone on a fishing expedition, so we decided to push forward to some other settlement. At several places we encountered groups of Tucanos, and they gradually got over their embarrassment, and chatted in a friendly manner. There were a good many children, who could soon be prepared for Baptism if a Missionary can be sent to them. I celebrated Mass in one of the largest Malocas, surrounded by the dusky natives, who looked on with reverential curiosity. Thus a blessing was drawn down upon the forest-home of these tribes, among whom we hope to establish a mission in the not far distant future. Continuing our course, we encountered a large canoe full of Indians, and when I offered a medal to the nearest person they all rushed towards us to get one. Thus we saw a large number of these natives, before we reached the end of the navigable part of the stream. It is three quarters of a mile wide at its entrance into the Rio Negro, and

narrows to two hundred yards here, where it is too shallow for navigation.

* * *

Perhaps I ought to give my readers some more precise information concerning this interesting tribe of the Tucanos. Well, the men have no clothing and the women are usually not much better off in that regard. I must confess that at my first meeting with them I experienced, although unwillingly, a feeling of repugnance, as if I saw in these poor creatures a degradation of my own manhood: but this was soon replaced by a feeling of profound compassion. I felt at the same time a powerful, irresistible desire to traverse the most civilised countries, in order to beg from rich and poor, from high and low, means to relieve the extreme indigence, and clothe the physical and moral nudity of these unfortunate people.

During the Masses that I celebrated in these parts, I could not help wondering when the Saviour of men would deign to make Himself known to these benighted Indians, and at the words in the *Salve Regina* "Poor, banished children of Eve," methought there could scarcely be any people more abandoned and miserable, and further from their true country. Their language is a dialect of the general Native language, and this circumstance will prove a further difficulty for the future Missionary, as the native tongue itself is already a serious problem.

The Tucano type of Indian is up to a good standard. He is of average stature, of a light bronze colour, with a round head, covered with dark short hair. He is well proportioned and as he stands perfectly motionless, one would take him for a fine bronze statue. With a timid look, but quick in action, he soon becomes attached to one who shows him friendship, but if distrusted he will easily become suspicious. He believes in nourishing hatred and is terribly revengeful against anyone who maltreats him. He usually has a cord round his neck with small stones on it, and then he is completely dressed; on more solemn occasions, he paints his body with stains of many colours. To mention such subjects as literature or business would be waste of time for they would convey no meaning to him. He fishes with a net and a hook and is a bold hunter, and if allowed to use a rifle soon becomes an expert shot. His home is the large hut, called a Maloca, which serves him as a dormitory, kitchen and refectory, both morning and night. The Maloca is in succession a place for domestic work, a room for assembly in wet weather

and a ball-room for the great feasts. It is the place where the Tucano lives, dies, and is buried. For the Tucano, the Maloca is the world. It is spacious in size and proportionately high. It resembles a railway station with two large entrances, nearly always open, and several small doors at the sides which are opened only when required. The hut is made of wood and palms and straw.

For future guidance I wanted to make a study of the Tucano, following him throughout his daily occupations. In order to begin my observations at an early hour, I was allowed to spend the night in the Maloca in a corner near the door. At ten o'clock all were in their partitions, divided like large cells, each in his own hammock, and I was in mine. Soon all was quiet, but the darkness was relieved by the light of a fire which I learnt afterwards is kept burning by one of the older women charged with that duty. Towards four o'clock, some disturbance told me that the hour for rising had come. Within a few minutes there were to be seen different groups of persons wending their way towards the river, where the morning ablutions are performed. On their return, the breakfast was prepared around separate hearths, then brought to the centre, where it was set before the men first, and then shared among the women.

After breakfast nearly everybody went out: the men to their fishing and hunting, or to prepare fresh ground, the women to various sorts of field labour, but returning in time for the cooking of the next meal. The babies have also to be looked after. They are taken everywhere by the mothers, who carry them on their shoulders. The food of these tribes consists mainly of the products of the chase and of fishing, and of grain and fruit. They have learnt to make a few kinds of beverage, most of them being quite pleasant to the taste, and generally harmless.

During my stay I found the opportunity to gather some of the children together and to teach them to make the sign of the Cross: some of their elders also learnt it. As a reward, I gave them what may seem a strange combination: namely, a sacred picture and a cigar; while admiring the picture they were at loss to know where to put it for safety: but the cigar found a ready welcome between their lips, for they are great smokers. On the following day, I said Mass in the middle of one of their small islands in the broad stream: it was said on a height, surrounded by magnificent forest scenery, and was witnessed by a great number of natives. They all seemed impressed, and

I am sure that the holy sacrifice had a wondrous effect.

I was especially desirous of learning something of the religious idea of these tribes, but I found the utmost difficulty in doing so. This was partly due to my imperfect knowledge of their language, and also to the reticence maintained by them as to their religion. It seemed to me fairly certain that they are not idolaters in the strict sense. They have a vague belief in a good spirit, who is supposed to have transplanted their race hither from beyond the seas, and to him they pay veneration: they have also a bad spirit as have the *Bororos*, and a propitiatory festival is held in his honour. Notice is given of this by messengers and by the sounding of trumpets which give out a loud, lugubrious sound, not at all musical but rather like the roaring of wild beasts. These trumpets are usually carried by strangely dressed men, who must never be seen by the women, under the severest penalties: hence at the first distant sound of this trumpet, the women hide away, until these messengers of the gods have departed. The preliminary ceremonies include the offering of fruits and other gifts, and by the strange ceremony of flagellation. Dances of all kinds follow, and these are made the more excited by indulging freely in strong drink. The men and women dance separately, and scarcely ever perform these rites in common. The whole scene with its many revolting aspects is another reason for the speedy conversion of these Tucanos, for only the influence of Christianity could deal with so many revolting practices. On the following day, I made a short excursion and came upon a group of Indians, who seemed to be preparing for some military manoeuvres: but it turned out to be another festivity. The men were painting themselves all over, and were attaching small shells to their ankles and arms, the movement of which would produce a jingling sound. Bracelets on the arms and necklaces were worn for the same reason, while a sort of helmet completed the costume. The large Maloca was prepared as a hall, with some benches here and there, and arrangements were made for the usual separation of the women from the men. The actors or warriors now came in: they had a knotty stick in the right hand, the left being laid upon the right shoulder of the nearest neighbour. They walked with a measured step, swinging the body now to the right and now to the left, stamping the right foot to jingle the bells. These movements are accompanied continuously by the monotonous singing of a few notes, in a gruff baritone voice,

and the result suggests some mournful dirge rather than any attempt at festival music. The words seemed to relate to some fabulous hunting expedition, chanted in a language understood by them alone. The accompaniment is produced by rough trumpet-like instruments made of bamboo or bone, refreshments are an important item and their effect is soon visible, for the increased liveliness is gradually replaced by drowsiness and sleep.

On the morrow my departure was due. My Mass was said early, attended by large numbers of the natives, all intent upon this new sight, and in postures of attentive curiosity rather than of reverence. Subsequently, amid many salutations I made my farewell, and the steamer set off again down the river. A crowd of boys swam out to a rock in the middle of the stream and waved again and again while the boat was in sight. It made me all the more resolved to return one day with some missionaries to begin the work of their conversion. It seemed to me that Don Bosco and Our Lady Help of Christians both had their protecting mantle over them and would prepare the ways and means for bringing them into the Fold of Christ.

PLENARY INDULGENCES.

The following indulgences may be gained by all the Co-operators, who, having confessed and communicated, shall make a visit to a Church or public chapel and pray for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff.

1.—1st On the day on which they are enrolled as Salesian Co-operators.

2nd. On one day in each month chosen by the individual.

3rd. If there is a day fixed for a Salesian Conference they may gain one on that day also.

4th. On the day they make the monthly exercise for a good death.

5th. On the day on which they make the first consecration of themselves to the Sacred Heart.

6th. As often as they join in the customary retreat of eight days.

DEVOTION TO OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS.

The twenty-fourth of May, in each succeeding year, has now become a day of triumph for Our Lady Help of Christians. "Maria Ausiliatrice," seems to be the watch-word of the day in Turin, and in many other great Catholic centres on the occasion of that festivity. All roads lead to the Oratory of Don Bosco; the endless pilgrimage wends its way from dawn till dawn; thousands of devout clients are bent on paying their homage and offering their petitions. And what a triumph too of devotion! It is by no means a pious holiday, for the great proportion of these people are beginning the celebrations by approaching the Altar for Holy Communion, knowing that Our Lady desires nothing more than that her Divine Son should receive the love and adoration of the faithful, and that her own favours are dispensed most readily to those who come to fulfill this greatest act of devotion.

On the recent celebration of this festival, there occurred very striking scenes of enthusiastic devotion, particularly from the evening of the 23rd., till the evening of the 24th. "The Mother of God," as a theme for the great preachers, is a topic of perpetual interest and advantage to the truly Catholic mind, and the crowds that surge about the pulpit, once occupied by the Venerable Servant of God himself, than whom none could more movingly discourse on this subject, would remind one of the multitudes who surrounded the famous preachers of mediaeval times, whose words were so often sanctioned by signs from heaven. Nor is this latter element absent: for, during this period of devotion, there are always a great number of favours received through the powerful intercession of her, whose festival is evoking so much fervour.

A day of religious experiences is concluded by music and brilliant illuminations. In front of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, there now stands, amid its flowers and ever-greens, the noble monument of the Venerable Don Bosco, in whom the Church and faithful acclaim the Promoter and chosen instrument of this Devotion. On the event which we are describing, the monument is surrounded by a throng of fervent admirers; they are of all ages and conditions, and are led there by the same inexplicable charm, which drew to him

the multitudes, whilst he was here accomplishing the wonderful work which Our Blessed Lady gave him to do. The very strains which discourse sweet music to these throngs are reminiscent of bygone joys and sorrows, of the mysteries inseparable from Don Bosco's work and of the triumph which came to him after years of heroic labour. The very musicians are the successors of that first band, which he organised and taught while the Oratory was in its infancy, and while spectators were wondering what this new movement might mean. Its subsequent development is a matter of history, and is in fact one of the romances of sacred history. While the crowds around the monument enjoy the music, the immense façade of the basilica, and the cupola which surmounts it are illuminated with a thousand lights, whose brilliance shines forth over the great city, over which the shades of darkness gradually fall. Midnight is the signal for a reluctant dispersal: the lights are slowly extinguished, the echoes of the music fade farther away and the festivity draws to a close. But not without many benefits having been obtained, not without many a shower of graces descending upon the faithful, or without great honour having been paid to Our Divine Lord and His Blessed Mother, the Help of Christians.

In other lands a repetition of these scenes on a smaller scale occurs. In fact, wherever the devotion of Mary Help of Christians has been established there rises up the sound of her praises and the prayers of devoted suppliants. May the remembrance of such inspiring scenes be a source of encouragement and consolation. May they draw many others to love this endearing title, and to place themselves under Our Lady's protecting care. *Maria Auxilium Christianorum, Ora pro nobis: Mary Help of Christians, pray for us!*

Graces and Favours. ⁽¹⁾

I am sending you a thank-offering for Masses in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians. Having been suffering from a great deal of

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

mental worry, I made a promise to send a thank-offering and also to publish the favour, if granted. I am pleased to say that I have felt much better and have now every confidence that all will be well. I desire to recommend also other important petitions.

H. C.

Gorey, Co, Wexford.—Some time ago a friend of mine was very dangerously ill, and when I went to visit him, I gave him a medal of Our Lady Help of Christians, and recommended him to make a novena to her. This he did, and now we are sending you a thank-offering for his recovery, and would ask you to publish the favour in the *Salesian Bulletin*. I also desire to have the invalid and his wife enrolled as Co-operators. I would ask for prayers on behalf of some special needs of my own.

M. D.

PRESTON.—Please publish in the *Salesian Bulletin* our thanksgiving for a special favour received, after a Novena to Mary Help of Christians, and the Ven. Don Bosco. We also made a promise of publishing our thanksgiving, and of sending an offering to promote Don Bosco's work. The favour was completely granted.

W. H.

DUBLIN.—In fulfillment of a promise made, I desire to publish my most grateful thanksgiving for many favours received, through a Novena to Our Lady Help of Christians and the Ven. Don Bosco.

S. M.

COCHIN (India).—I am sending the enclosed as a thank-offering for a favour received. A friend of mine had been suffering for a considerable time with a dangerous and very painful disease, and the doctors had attended him for a long time, without effecting any cure. But as soon as we had promised to perform this in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians, a sudden change for the better was noticed and he was soon entirely cured. I also enclose an offering for a Mass in thanksgiving for other favours received, and would ask you to publish the thanksgiving.

M.

WILTON, U. S. A.—I had recommended a very much desired spiritual favour to the powerful intercession of Mary Help of Christians, and after a Novena of prayers it was fully granted. I now desire to have my thanksgiving published according to a promise made.

L. S.

CORK.—I am sending you a thank-offering for the works of the Ven. Don Bosco, after a favour

obtained through the intercession of Mary Help of Christians. As I had promised to have the favour published in her honour, I would now ask you to do so in your next issue.

M. B.

Thanksgivings have also been received from Belfast, from Enniskean (recovery from severe illness), and from Kilmuckridge, Wexford, after prayers to Our Lady Help of Christians and promises of publishing the favour in her honour.

* * *

Thanksgiving to Dominic Savio.

A special intention had been recommended to the intercession of Dominic Savio, the pious pupil of the Ven. Don Bosco. In a short time the favour was obtained, and the thanksgiving is now published in honour of this young servant of God.

* * *

We remind our Readers from time to time of the suggestions made by the Venerable Don Bosco himself in regard to petitions offered to Our Lady Help of Christians. From the first he recommended the practice of making a Novena, which consists of saying certain prayers, or of performing some special pious exercise, for nine consecutive days. He also pointed out the reasonableness of our doing something in honour of Our Lady, if she obtained the favour. As the works which were set on foot by him, in the fulfilment of his vocation, or by his Sons in the continuing of his apostolate, were all under the patronage of Mary Help of Christians, he very naturally suggested that this desire to do something in return for favours received, might suitably be fulfilled by promoting those works.

His recommendations were as follows:

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

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

(3). To make a promise of a thank-offering, if one is in a position to do so. Devotion and honour to Our Lady Help of Christians are also promoted by subsequently publishing the favour, if one so desires.

The Life of the Venerable Don Bosco

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

CHAPTER XXIV.

The cholera of 1854. Various important incidents.

One Sunday of the April of 1845, the boys both of the school and from outside were in the Church and Don Bosco was busy giving them an explanation of a period of church history, when an unknown gentleman entered and having sat down in one of the seats, set himself to listen attentively to what was being said. On the preceding Sunday the Servant of God, had begun to recount the life of Pope Saint Clement; and this morning, with his usual simplicity and clearness, he was telling how this Holy Pontiff had been exiled to the Chersonesus by the Emperor Trajan, out of hatred to the Christian religion.

When he had finished his discourse he began to question the boys, as was his custom. He asked one of them whether he had anything to ask, and what moral could be drawn from it. The boy, contrary to all expectation, came out with a question which was indeed apropos but quite inopportune as to place, and considering the times, even somewhat dangerous.

"If, said the boy, the Emperor Trajan was guilty of injustice in driving St. Clement out of Rome, is not our government also in the wrong in exiling our Archbishop, Mgr. Frasoni?"

Not in the least put out, Don Bosco replied: "This is not the place to say whether our government has done well or ill in exiling our venerated Archbishop; it is a matter which will be spoken of at the proper time. Nevertheless, it is certain that in all ages from the foundation of the Church, the enemies of the Christian Religion have always aimed at the destruction of the leader of the Church—Popes, Bishops and priests; for they believe that if the supporting columns are taken from beneath, the edifice will fall; and that if the Shepherd is struck, the Sheep will be dispersed and thus become an easy prey to rapacious wolves."

With these observations he descended from the pulpit, and went up into his room, where

a little later he was joined by the gentleman who had been sitting at the back of the church. Don Bosco asked with whom he had the honour of conversing; and to his great surprise the gentleman introduced himself as Sig. Rattazzi.

"Are you the great Rattazzi, the prominent member of parliament, once President of the Chamber, and now in the ministry? The gentleman replied that he was none other, and on receiving this assurance, Don Bosco smiled and remarked that perhaps he must now prepare to be handcuffed and taken off to prison." "Nothing of the kind," replied Rattazzi. "Leaving aside whether the boy's question was opportune or not, you on your part met it admirably, and no minister in the world could take the slightest objection to it."

This was the beginning of an important conversation, in which the visitor wished to know the minutest details of the origin, scope, development and actual state of the Oratory. At a certain point Rattazzi asked Don Bosco whether he had at his disposal a small number of police in uniform or disguised, to keep order among so many boys.

"They are not in the least necessary," replied Don Bosco; and as this seemed incredible to the his visitor, he added: "Your Excellency is not unaware that there are two systems of education; one is repressive and the other preventive. The first sets out to educate man by force and by repressing and punishing him when he commits faults or violates its laws; the other seeks to educate him with gentleness, and the law itself is ready to aid him, offering him means at once fitting and more likely to succeed. This is the system that is in fact practised amongst us."

He then continued to speak of the utility and the efficacy of this system, and what profit would be derived if the government were to introduce it in the public schools, and in such places as reformatory schools, etc. The statesman listened to him with interest, and, convinced of the value of the method proposed by the Servant of God, said that as far as he was concerned, he would prefer it to all others

used in the governmental institutions. From that moment he became the friend, admirer and protector of Don Bosco.

But it was now no longer possible that one man should look after all the moral and material wants of a house, that was assuming ever increasing proportions and God sent him a strong support in the person of Father Alasonatti. This worthy priest, born on the 15th. November 1812, had completed his classical studies in the Seminary of Giaveno and his philosophical and theological courses in the Turin Seminary being ever an example of every virtue to his fellow students. He was ordained in 1835 and thenceforward occupied himself indefatigably with the sacred ministry in his own native place of Avigliana until, by the unanimous choice of the people, he was placed at the head of the parish schools. On the occasion of the annual retreats he and Don Bosco had met several times, and the Servant of God had noticed that Fr. Alasonatti would be able to fulfil admirably the difficult and important part he desired to allot to him; and he wrote inviting him to come and share with him his work at the Oratory. Much labour and little rest, much suffering and little comfort, poverty, abnegation, sacrifice such was the programme he outlined for him. For stipend he would give him food and clothing, and promised him in the name of God a crown of glory in Heaven.

When Father Alasonatti received the invitation, he turned his eyes towards heaven as if to ask what were the will of God, gave a glance at the Crucifix, bowed his head and accepted. He reached the Oratory on the 14th. of August with his Breviary under his arm, and was met by Don Bosco who conducted him to a small, poorly furnished room which was to serve him as a kind of office.

From that instant the virtuous priest placed himself under the direction of the Servant of God, begging him repeatedly to command his services without hesitation in all that could be of advantage to the house; and not to spare him in anything when it was question of the Glory of God. He had not long to wait before he found himself overwhelmed with occupations, for he was entrusted with the discipline of the house and all its temperal management.

The following day, 15th of August, the Feast of Our Lady's Assumption, Father Alasonatti inaugurated his priestly ministry in Valdocco by assisting at the bedside of a cholera patient. For two weeks the plague had been raging in Turin. Don Bosco had

announced its coming; as far back as the month of May, he had told the boys clearly that the cholera would reach Turin and would find many victims, adding: "But you may rest tranquil; if you do what I tell you, you will be quite safe." The boys naturally asked what they were to do, and Don Bosco replied: "First of all you must live in God's grace; you should wear a medal of Mary Help of Christians; recite every day an "Our Father," "Hail Mary" and "Glory be to the Father," and the prayer to Saint Aloysious together with the ejaculation: "From all evil, O Lord deliver us."

The plague of the cholera, after ravaging many countries, had at last made its appearance in Liguria and Piedmont. In the early days of its visitation, practically all who caught it succumbed to its fatal effects; over sixty per cent at least fell victims to it. Consternation was widespread. Trade and the usual business of life had to be suspended and large numbers fled away from the infected areas. The general fear was increased by the ignorance of any suitable remedy, and the populace had somehow convinced themselves that the medical men were inoculating the patients with a poison which would hasten death and thus lessen the number of the infected.

On July 25th, when the first cases were reported in Turin, the Municipal Authorities issued instructions, and invited the clergy to cooperate with them in the necessary schemes of alleviation. The secular clergy and the religious orders at once showed their eagerness to be of service, and the public authorities themselves gave a splendid example of practical religion as soon as the outbreak began. They first of all took every precaution, organized the distribution of remedies, and then decided to make public intercession to Our Blessed Lady by a solemn function in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Consolation. This public act was performed by representatives of the Municipal Council, of the clergy and by an immense gathering of the people. It was evident that Our Lady accepted these supplications; for the terrible scourge was less fatal in Turin than in any of the other great cities of Europe and of Italy itself.

But notwithstanding all this, the cases of infection went up to sixty a day. Between August and November there were 2500 cases and 1400 deaths in the city and suburbs. It so happened that the district of Valdocco, in which the Oratory was situated, was particularly unfortunate. Many families were entirely carried away by it. In these circumstances

the Servant of God showed both his fatherly affection and his practical wisdom. He used all the means which prudence suggested, but he sought other and more efficacious remedies. At the beginning of the plague he went into the church, and kneeling before the Altar he offered up his own life, as a shepherd willing to die for his flock; and turning to the Altar of Our Lady, he exclaimed: "Thou art a most loving and most powerful Mother; deign to preserve my children, and if God desires a victim from amongst us, behold me ready to die when and how it shall please His divine Will."

On the evening of the 5th. of August, the Feast of Our Lady of Snow, he gathered his boys around him, and telling them of the appearance of the plague in the city, gave them suitable instructions and urged them to have confidence in Our Blessed Lady. "If," he said, "you remain in the grace of God, I can assure you that none of you will be attacked by the cholera; but if any of you should dare to offend God by grievous sin, from that moment I can guarantee neither his safety nor that of any other in the house." His words had a striking effect. Not only did the boys emulate each other in approaching the sacraments, but their conduct soon became above the slightest reproach. Don Bosco himself displayed heroic self-sacrifice in his endeavours to assist the plague-stricken. His mother, who had on so many previous occasions showed such great solicitude for the life and health of her son, now declared that duty called him to go out into the midst of the danger. Some of the special refuges set up by authorities were confided to his spiritual care; and he found that although these auxiliary hospitals had been set up without much difficulty, it was next to impossible to find nurses and assistants, for these were in great demand not only for public work but also in private houses. Even the most courageous refused to expose their lives to such evident risk.

It was in these circumstances that Don Bosco decided on a new plan. Moved with compassion at the state of abandonment in which he found so many victims, he called his boys together and stated the case to them. He spoke of the high degree of charity which would be necessary in devoting oneself to the service of the cholera-stricken people and reminded them that Our Lord would regard as done to Himself every act of charity towards the sick. He showed too that in all such visitations of the plague there had always been generous Christians who had braved death by staying

at the bedside of those who were attacked. He then told them of straits to which the authorities had been reduced for want of nurses and assistants, and how he and Father Alasonnatti, together with other priests had already offered their services. He finished by expressing his keen desire that some of them also should become fellowworkers in an undertaking so full of mercy. All the youngsters listened respectfully to his appeal, and fourteen of them, showing themselves worthy sons of such a father, gave in their names at once to be forwarded to the Committee of Public Health; and after a few days, thirty others followed their example. No one who considers the terror which dominated the minds of the people, and the natural timidity of youth can help admiring the heroic enthusiasm of these sons of Don Bosco. He wept for joy at the sight of their devotion, and having given them a few instructions so that their work might turn to the advantage both spiritual and temporal of the fever-stricken, he sent them forth on their errand of mercy.

When it became known that the boys of the Oratory had devoted themselves to this noble undertaking, the demand for them became so great that it was no longer possible to keep them to any kind of time-table. Night and day, equally with Don Bosco himself, they were constantly on the move. On some days they scarcely managed to find time to return to the Oratory for their meals, and were forced to take some food in the homes of the cholera-stricken: and thus, although they had at first taken every reasonable precaution, they were soon so much devoted to the care of their patients, that they gave no thought to themselves, leaving their safety entirely in the hands of Divine Providence.

But the Oratory not only provided these willing and skilful volunteers, but furnished considerable quantities of material necessary for effective nursing. The scanty stores usually at the disposition of Don Bosco and his mother were soon depleted, and in fact became entirely exhausted. On a certain day one of the young assistants came to Mamma Margaret to report the case of a poor victim who was lying in a wretched hovel with scarcely anything to cover him. The good woman searched about everywhere, but of all her linen only a tablecloth remained. This she handed to the boy, telling him to do the best he could. A little while after, a second assistant presented himself reporting another case of dire necessity. After a few moments of anxiety Mother Margaret came to a decision. She hastened

over to the chapel and brought away altarcloths and amices and anything else that could be used for the sick. Don Bosco readily acquiesced in her plan, and it involved no sort of profanation, for this refined charity was exercised in honour of the person of Christ through His needy representatives.

The course of the disease led Don Bosco to make endeavours and sacrifices in other directions as well. Through the columns of a paper he appealed to public charity, since the work of the Oratory was now subject to great straits: with so many homes broken up there was a great increase in the number of children unprovided for, and one day he returned to the Oratory with no less than sixteen of these homeless boys. They were soon engaged in school or trade, and they were followed by several others who threw themselves upon the generosity of Don Bosco as into the arms of Divine Providence. Moreover, his efforts reached even farther than Turin for he provided a number of young infirmarians for the town of Pinerolo, which afterward gave him public expression of its highest gratitude.

When the plague had sufficiently abated, it was with more than usual pleasure that Don Bosco conducted a large party of boys to his former home at Becchi, where they might recuperate after the distressing period through which they had passed. While there he was visited by a man who brought his little son with him, and about whose studies he wanted advice. Don Bosco's attention was at once arrested by boy's cheerful face, and by his manner at once joyous and respectful. On asking who he was and whence he came, he discovered that he was Dominic Savio, of whom Father Cagliero, his master, had informed him; and that he had come from Mondonio with his father for the purpose of seeking his counsel.

"Then," writes Don Bosco, "I called Jim aside and we set about discussing the studies he had done and the kind of life he had been leading up to that time. He soon showed complete confidence in me, and I on my part talked to him without reserve. I recognized in this child a soul after Our Lord's own heart, and I was not a little astonished at the sight of the wonderful effects grace had accomplished in him at so tender an age. After a somewhat prolonged conversation and before I called his father, he asked me what I thought about the matter, and did I intend to take him back with me to Turin to study. I told him that I thought he had fine material in him; whereupon he demanded to what good purpose this

material would serve. When I told him that it could be turned into a garment for Our Lord, he replied that since he was good enough material, it was my part to act the tailor, and that I ought to fashion him into a worthy garment.

"But," said I, "I am very much afraid your health is too delicate to bear the strain of study."

"Have no anxiety on that account," he replied, "the same God who has given me strength up till now, will not fail me for the future."

"And when you have completed your classical studies what would you like to do?"

"If God gives me the grace, I desire with all my heart to embrace the ecclesiastical state."

"I signified my pleasure at his good desire, and handing him a book I told him to set about learning a page for the next day so as to find out whether or not he had capacity enough for study. When I had said this, I left him at liberty to run off and amuse himself with the other boys, and began to talk to his father. Not more than eight minutes had gone by before Dominic came up and said that if I wished to hear him he would recite the lesson now. I took the book from him, and, greatly to my surprise, I found that he had not only learned perfectly the page I had given him, but that he had also grasped its meaning. Highly pleased, I encouraged him and told him that since he had anticipated the time of his questioning, I also would anticipate the time of my reply; and I assured him that from that very day I would number him amongst my dear children at Turin, telling him to pray that God would enable us both to fulfil His Holy Will.

"He took my hand and said: 'I hope I shall conduct myself so well that you may never have to regret the kindness you have done me.'"

He had no sooner arrived at the Oratory than he betook himself to my room so as to place himself, as he said, entirely in the hands of his Superiors. On entering, his attention was at once arrested by a card, upon which were written the words St. Francis of Sales used to repeat: "*Da mihi animas; cetera tolle!*" He began to read them attentively, and as I wished that he should understand their meaning, I invited him to try to translate them; with a little help he succeeded in drawing from them their meaning: "Give me souls, O Lord; take all the rest away." He thought a moment and then said: "I understand; on this earth we are not to make money the business of life, but souls; I hope that I too may one day take part in this business."

"The manner of his life was for some time on the usual lines; there was nothing to admire particularly except his scrupulous observance of all the rules of the house. He applied himself with care to his studies and enthusiastically performed every duty that presented itself. To listen to sermons was his great delight; for he had rooted in his mind the idea that the word of God is man's guide along the road to Heaven. Thus every maxim he heard in a sermon was for him a never-to-be-forgotten counsel. Every exhortation to virtue, every catechism lesson, and every sermon filled him with joy; and he was an ever-ready listener, no matter how far the discourse might be prolonged. If he heard anything that he did not quite understand, he at once made a point of getting the explanation. It was from this time that his exemplary manner of life took its beginning, with that continuous progress from virtue to virtue, and that exactitude in the scrupulous performance of his duties, which it would be difficult to surpass.

"When the feast of the Immaculate Conception began to draw near, the Director (Don Bosco himself) would give the boys every evening a few words of encouragement, exhorting each one of them to prepare himself for the feast in a manner worthy of the great Mother of God; but he insisted more especially that each should demand of her the grace which he knew by experience to be most necessary for him. It was the year 1854, and all the Christian world was in a state of spiritual ferment; for at Rome the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was impending. As far as was consistent with our condition, we also were to celebrate the occasion as worthily as possible. Savio was one of those who was all enthusiasm to keep the feast in a holy manner. He wrote out nine acts of virtue, so arranging them that he could perform one of them on each of the nine days

of the novena. He prepared and made his general confession with great peace of mind, and went to Holy Communion in the deepest recollection."

In the evening, according to Don Bosco's advice, he went to the Altar of Our Lady and received the resolutions made at his First Communion, praying that he might die rather than commit a sin.

(To be continued).



The prayers of all Co-operators are asked for the following who have recently died, and for whom the Society has already offered many prayers:

Philip J. Doherty, Rosebank, South Africa.

Besides being a prominent Co-operator, he was also President of the Central Council of the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul in the Cape and the Secretary of the Catholic Federation.

Rev. P. J. Brennan, P. P. Raphoe, Co. Donegal. He was a very holy and zealous man a great admirer of the work of the Ven. Don Bosco, and a constant friend to the Society.

Rev. R. J. Meagher, Mullagh.

Mrs. C. V. McCormack, Bootle.

Mrs. Annie Laven, Elphin.

Miss Hannah Murphy, Middleton.

Mrs. Maher, Ballyburn.

Rose McGahan, Pomeroy.

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