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MESSIS QUIDEM MULTA
OPERARI AUTEM PAUCI

Salesian Bulletin

MARCH & APRIL, 1900

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DA MIHI ANIMAS



D. BOSCO

CÆTERA TOLLE

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIPLOMA OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN CO-OPERATORS.

CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT of the Association.

1. — All who have reached 16 years of age may become CO-OPERATORS if they so desire, and seriously intend to act according to the spirit of the Association.
2. — The Association is humbly commended to the protection and benevolence of the Sovereign Pontiff, and of all Bishops and Priests in their respective dioceses and parishes, on whom it shall depend without reserve in everything relating to our holy religion.
3. — The Superior General of the Salesian Congregation shall also be the Superior of the Association of Co-operators.
4. — The Directors of the several Houses of the Salesian Congregation are authorized to enrol new Members, whose names and addresses they shall immediately forward to the Superior General, so that they may be regularly enrolled in the Register of the Association.
5. — In districts wherein there is no Salesian House, when the number of the Co-operators amounts to at least ten, one of them should be selected as President—preferably an ecclesiastic—who will assume the title of Decurion, and take upon himself the correspondence with the Superior, or with the Director of any of the Salesian Houses.
6. — All Members may freely communicate with the Superior, and lay before him any matter whatever they may deem worthy of consideration.
7. — At least every three months, the Associate will receive a printed Report of the works that have been accomplished; the proposals that have come to hand, bearing on the purposes of the Association; and finally, the new enterprises to be undertaken for the glory of God and the good of our fellow-creatures. In the Annual Report this latter point will be treated more diffusely, so that Members may have a clear general idea of the Works to be accomplished in the ensuing year.

The names of the Associates who have passed to eternity during the year, shall also be forwarded to the Members of the Association, in order that they may be remembered in the prayers of all their brethren.

[The "Salesian Bulletin" has long since taken the place of the printed Report spoken of above.— Ed.]

8. — Every year, on the Feasts of St. Francis of Sales and of Our Lady Help of Christians (January, 29, and May, 24) the Decurions should organize assemblies of all the members in their respective districts, so that the whole Association may unite in spirit and prayer with their brethren of the Salesian Congregation, invoking for one another the continued protection of these our Glorious Patrons, and the grace of perseverance and zeal in the arduous undertaking that our charity and the love of God have imposed upon us in conformity with the spirit of our Congregation.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.

1. — There is no exterior practice prescribed for the Salesian Co-operators. In order, however, that their life may in some points approach to the life of Professed Religious, we recommend to them the following; that is to say, modesty in their apparel; frugality in their meals; simplicity in their furniture; reserve in their speech; and exactness in the duties of their state: they should also be careful to have the repose and sanctification prescribed on all Feasts of Obligation exactly observed by those over whom their authority extends.
2. — They are advised to make a Spiritual Retreat of some days in the course of every year; and, on the last day of every month, or on such other as may suit their convenience better, to make the exercise of a holy Death, going to Confession and Communion, as though it were really to be their last. For the annual Retreat, and also on the day upon which they make the Exercise for a Holy Death, they can gain a Plenary Indulgence.
3. — All the Associates should say one "Pater," and one "Ave," daily, in honour of St. Francis of Sales for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, Priests, and those who recite the Canonical Hours, are dispensed from this Prayer. For them, it will suffice to add their intention to the recitation of the Office.
4. — They are recommended, furthermore, frequently to approach to the Sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist; the Associates being able, every time they do this, to gain a Plenary Indulgence.
5. — All these Indulgences, both Plenary and Partial, can be applied, by way of Suffrage, to the souls in Purgatory, with the exception of that for the hour of death, which is exclusively personal, and can be gained only when the soul is about to enter into eternity.

THE SALESIAN BULLETIN

Whoever shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

(MATT. XVIII, 5)

Of works divine the divinest is to co-operate with God in the saving of souls.

(ST. DENYS.)

A tender love of our fellow-creatures is one of the great and excellent gifts that Divine Goodness grants to man.

(ST. FRANCIS de Sales.)



To your care I commend infancy and youth; zealously attend to their Christian education, place in their hands such books as may teach them to fly from vice and steadily walk in the path of virtue.

(PIUS IX.)

Redouble your energies and talents in the rescue of infancy and youth from the snares of corruption and infidelity, and thus prepare a new generation.

(LEO XIII.)

DA MIHI ANIMAS CÆTERA TOLLE

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ST. FRANCIS OF SALES AND DEVOTION TO ST. JOSEPH.

THERE is something peculiarly touching in devotion to St. Joseph; something that thrills in our inmost souls, and enkindles in our hearts a warmth and tenderness of its own. Dear Saint, we cannot choose but love you; so paternal, so tender, so gentle are you towards your unworthy children; and then, if we have ever invoked your intercession in some special trouble, some great necessity, how speedily and graciously have we been succoured! Sweet Spouse of our Lady, we love you; and we desire that all men should love you and know the kindness of your paternal heart, and the greatness of your glory.

Many Saints have left us eloquent proofs

of their devotion to the Foster-father of our Divine Lord, and among these is our own patron, St. Francis of Sales. As a preparation for the Feast of St. Joseph, the learned Doctor of the Church fasted on bread and water and he invariably kept the day itself by celebrating a solemn pontifical Mass, the music being furnished, at his own request, by the best talent of Annecy. In the evening, he would himself preach a panegyric, in which he dilated lovingly on the perfections of his subject, whom he called the glorious Foster-father of our Saviour, His first adorer after Mary, the Spouse of the Queen of the world, the most accomplished model of Christian steadfastness amid the vicissitudes of life, and pattern of obedience to God and the Church; the type of virginity, humility and constancy. "O God," he wrote, "how good and upright of heart must this Saint have been since to him it was given to possess the Mother and the Child. With the two-

fold treasure he might well excite the envy of the very angels and challenge all heaven to produce proof of riches greater than were his; for, who is there among the angels that can compare with the Queen of Angels, and what does God hold in Him greater than Himself?"

The holy Bishop of Geneva choose St. Joseph as the protector of the whole Institute of the Visitation, and the particular patron of the first Convent of Annecy. He further ordained that the Saint's feast should be kept in all the houses of the order as one of the most solemn of the year.

So well known was this devotion of Francis that, not only at Annecy, but wherever he chanced to be engaged in preaching lenten courses, musicians would make it a point to lend solemnity to his Mass by singing hymns in honour of the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin.

On St. Joseph's Day, 1664, he wrote the following note to Mother de Chantal: "My dearest daughter, here is the litany of the glorious Father of our Life and our Love. I intended to send it to you in my own hand-writing; but, as you know, I am not master of my time. However, I have taken the leisure to revise and correct it, and supply missing accents, in order that our daughter of Châtel may the more easily sing it without error."

On another occasion, in order to console Mother de Chantal, who was tormented with interior troubles, he wrote her these words instinct with his characteristic sweetness: "I beseech this great Saint, who so often sang and rocked to sleep our Saviour, to dispense to you the interior caresses requisite to the furthering of our love towards that same Divine Redeemer, and to obtain for you abundance of inward peace."

Our amiable Saint thus explained the figure of the palm-tree, which the Church in the office, applies to St. Joseph: "Although the glorious St. Joseph contributed in no wise to the birth on earth of the eternal Word, he nevertheless had a large share in that most blessed fruit of his holy spouse; for she was his, and planted close by him, like a glorious palm near her blessed palm-tree. Oh, what a divine union that was between our Lady and St. Joseph! a union which caused this supreme good among all eternal possessions, to wit, our Lord, to belong to St. Joseph, even as He belonged to our Lady, not, indeed, according to nature, but according to grace; which made him to participate in all the gifts of his dear spouse, and to grow

ever in holiness, by means of continual intercourse with our Lady; in such wise that her virtues and perfections were so faithfully reflected upon him, as from a 'spotless mirror exposed to the rays of the Sun of Justice, that it almost seemed as if he were as perfect, or possessed of virtue in as high a degree as the glorious Virgin, our heavenly Mother."

St. Francis of Sales had not a doubt that St. Joseph is body and soul in heaven. "We must not in the least doubt," he says, "that this glorious Saint has great influence near Him by Whom he was so favoured as to be elevated in body and soul to heaven—the more probably as we have no relic of him here below. For, how could He Whom this glorious Saint had the grace and honour of so often bearing in his arms and Who took such delight in his blessed embrace, deny him this favour? O, how many kisses of His blessed mouth—and so tenderly—did He not give him, to compensate him in a manner for his labour! St. Joseph, then, is in heaven body and soul; this is beyond doubt. Oh, how happy shall we be if we can deserve to have a share in his holy intercession! Truly he will be refused nothing either by our Lady or her Divine Son; he will obtain for us, if we trust in him, a holy advancement in all virtues."

In all temptations, then, let us go to St. Joseph; in every necessity let us seek his powerful aid; in every spiritual and temporal ill let us invoke him, but always with a childlike confidence that he will obtain our request. And all the more since he is now the "patron of the universal Church" will he help us at the hour of death, that we may have the happiness, like him, of dying not physically indeed, but spiritually in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

EASTER JOYS.



THE Lenten season is rapidly drawing to a close, and the season of Easter is about to begin. On the threshold of the first, the Church assembles us and sprinkles on our brow the sign of our mortality. Together with this salutary admonition, she instils into our hearts the tremendous guilt of sin, and exhorts us to fasting, penance, and prayer during the forty subsequent days. Then the commemoration of the pathetic mysteries connected with our Lord's Passion and Death



enhance the gloom and sadness of that period. But it is different with Easter-tide. That is a season of rejoicing. Ushered in by the glorious Resurrection of the Man-God, which reminds us that we too shall one day rise again, it is followed by a number of glad feasts which diffuse a holy joy abroad.

It is indeed a joyous season. Nature herself tells us that. The sun shines brightly and sheds its genial warmth around, and the air resounds with the sweet notes of blithe songsters. The very trees and fields point to the glad story of the Resurrection. The once hard, bare branches are clothed with a fresh, new life, and the fields, of late snow-elad and ice-bound, are covered with delicate shoots of green.

To our Divine Lord it was joy beyond compare. On this point Père Grou says: "His life had been one of obscurity, privation, and contradiction; his Passion was the combination of unexampled suffering and ignominy; his death was most agonizing; but in his resurrection a total change of circumstances took place. On the third day from his burial his soul was reunited to his body; he came forth from the tomb alive and immortal, resplendent with brightness, and triumphant in the defeat of death and hell. He was invested with infinite happiness, unlimited power, incapacity ever again to suffer in mind or body, and a blissful security of everlasting felicity, incomparably superior to that of the blessed spirits..... Such then is the result of the sufferings and humiliations endured for the love of God, and in conformity with his will. Our generous Master will not be outdone in liberality, and if He requires great sacrifices of his creatures, it is only to restore to them in eternity more than they have yielded to Him in time."

Resplendent with brightness and triumphant, He comes forth from the tomb! How far we fall short of realizing, with our limited minds, the beauty and glory of that risen Body that is now no longer subject to pain and infirmity, that can pass through closed doors, and that Death is now powerless to harm? Or how inadequate must any idea be that we can form of that enraptured soul freed forever from the shackles of of mental anguish and spiritual desolation, its duty of assisting the Man-God in the work of our redemption accomplished, and its endless reward begun?

And for forty days after His Resurrection he tarried upon earth as though he were loath to leave it. For forty days he chose

to stay with us, as though our company were more attractive to him than heaven itself. Are we not moved by this loving condescension of our dear Lord? and shall we not make up our minds to spend, with answering loyal love, these forty days of Easter in His company? He clearly gives us to understand that this is what He desires of us, and how can we refuse Him anything?

Nay, not only these forty days, but all the days of our life, we must serve our Divine Lord and do His holy will. It costs us so little and makes us so happy. "Life is one long joy," are the beautiful words of Father Faber, "because the will of God is always being done in it, and the glory of God always being got from it. You become identified with the interests of Jesus; you wed them as if they were your own, as indeed they are. His spirit steals into you, and sets up a little throne in your heart, and crowns itself, and then most sweetly proclaims itself king. It gained the crown by a dear conspiracy: you never suspected what divine love was about all the while. But so it is. God's glory becomes dear to you; you get so touchy about our Lord, for He is become the apple of your eye; and you are drawn to save souls, because it is what He is always doing, and so you get an instinct and a taste for it yourself. And so it all goes on; and so you live; yet not you, but Christ lives in you; and so you die. You never suspect you are a saint, or anything approaching one. Your life is hid with Christ in God, and hid from no one more than from yourself. You a saint indeed! Your humility would either laugh, or be frightened at the bare thought. But! oh the depth of the mercies of Jesus! What will be your surprise at His judgment seat, to hear the sweet sentence, to see the bright crown! Why you will almost argue against your own salvation! Our Lord makes the elect do so in the Gospel: 'Lord when saw we Thee hungry, and fed Thee? When saw we Thee thirsty, and gave Thee drink?' They cannot make it out. In all their love for Jesus, they never dreamed it was so great a thing as this."

Sweet Jesus! to be near Thee, Who art our Life and our Resurrection; to commune with Thee; to study Thee; and grow to resemble Thee, on this our heart is set!

THE man who has not learned to say "No" will be a weak, if not a wretched, man as long as he lives.

L'ANNO SANTO, 1900.

THE century, which (as some of us think) has now come to an end, has been remarkable for the number of jubilees and centenaries which have been celebrated in its last thirty years. And perhaps when Protestants hear that we keep the Jubilee of the holy Year in 1900, it may suggest to

betokened some unprecedented event. The Romans asked one another what was about to happen. The Pope himself could not account for the presence of so many pilgrims from afar. It only remained to enquire of the pilgrims themselves why they flocked to the Holy City. A formal enquiry was made by an ecclesiastical court in presence of the Pope, and it was found that a general belief existed in many foreign countries that great indulgences could be gained by visiting Rome at the beginning of a new century. Great



The Resurrection of our Divine Lord.

them some celebration of the kind so much in vogue just now. But the jubilee of the Holy Year, as a religious function, has no relationship even to such ecclesiastical events as the jubilee of the Pope's episcopate or priesthood.

It is one of those popular acts of devotion which owe their origin to the Catholic *plebs*. The first time we hear of it is in the year 1300, during the pontificate of Pope Boniface VIII. Towards the end of the preceding year a most unusual influx of pilgrims from all parts set in towards the Eternal City. Rome had become accustomed in those days of faith to the sight of numerous and well-equipped bands of pilgrims. But the concourse of faithful children who flocked to the seat of the Mother of all the Churches

discrepancy existed as to the nature of the indulgence to be gained. Some held that the same spiritual privileges accrued to pilgrims at this time as to the Crusaders; others expected only a hundred days' indulgence for each visit to a Roman church. All agreed that the current year was a season of exceptional grace. Although Pope Boniface could find no trace of any such concession in the Papal Archives, rather than see so many earnest souls deprived of privileges which they had striven so hard to obtain, he issued a Bull granting a plenary indulgence to all who visited certain churches, performed certain acts of charity and repented of their sins. And thus the Jubilee of the Holy Year was instituted by the Pope at the instigation of the faithful.

The Florentine historian, Giovanni Villani, and Cardinal James Stefaneschi (both of whom were in Rome and performed the Jubilee) assert that there were continually in the Eternal City during this year 200,000 pilgrims from the most remote provinces of the Catholic empire. Some millions must have swarmed over the main roads of Italy. It was little short of a miracle that the country was able to provide food for so many strangers. Only the evidence of these eye-witnesses can convince us of the facts of the case.

Some historians believe that many jubilees were granted before the time of Boniface VIII. If this be so, we have no record of them. But since the year 1300 they have recurred at regular intervals. Clement VI. made the first alteration in this matter by permitting a jubilee every 50 years. A Bull of Urban VI. in 1349 reduced the period to 33 years, and finally Paul II. introduced the custom which has been constant since his decree in the year 1470 up to our days, of holding the jubilee every 25 years. This regularity of recurrence gives every 25th year the title of the Holy Year. And the jubilees which take place at these regular intervals are called golden or jubilees of the Holy Year, to distinguish them from any exceptional ones which the Pope for the time being may think fit to proclaim. At the beginning of a new pontificate, or a time of public distress, the Popes sometimes grant the privileges of a jubilee under the same conditions as during the Holy Year.

Although the Catholic jubilee has no apparent historical connection with that which the 25th chapter of Leviticus describes so minutely we have taken the name from the Jews on account of a certain analogy existing between our rite and theirs. Both are periodical seasons of general remission of debts. The Jewish festival was designed by God as much in the light of a necessary economical measure, as in that of a religious ordinance. Its Christian analogue is purely spiritual, the debts remitted being those which come under the spiritual power of the keys.

If we were asked to describe briefly the nature of a jubilee, we should say that it is simply a plenary indulgence granted in a more solemn way than is usual, and accompanied with other spiritual privileges which are not ordinarily joined to the gaining of a plenary indulgence. Let us in the first place see what these special conditions are

which must be fulfilled before gaining the jubilee indulgence. Special conditions do not abolish ordinary ones: and so confession, communion and prayer for the intentions of the Pope are required at this time as well as at any other.

As a rule the obligation of praying for the Pope, which is enjoined on those who wish to gain a plenary indulgence, may be satisfied by praying in any church. During the Holy Year one has to go to Rome and make fifteen visits to the four great Basilicas, St. John Lateran's, the cathedral of the World, St. Peter's, St. Paul's, outside the City Walls, and St. Mary's, called Major, because it is the most important Church in Rome dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. Persons residing in Rome are obliged to make double the number of visits to these churches. As one would expect, some persons are exempted from this duty. Confessors have the power of commuting the visits to the above churches into visits to others or into other good works, in the case of nuns, whose community has been approved of by the Pope, whether they live under cloister rules or not. The same applies to boarders in Convent schools, cloistered monks, novices in approved convents, those who are prevented by illness from going to Rome during the year, prisoners and all those who have attained their 70th year. It is, however, customary for the Popes to extend the privileges of the jubilee also to those who have been unable to go to Rome during the Holy Year. Benedict XIV. and most of his successors have conceded the indulgence to the faithful throughout the whole world for a period of six months after the Holy Year, granting to the Bishops the faculty of indicating the churches of the diocese which should be visited.

Alms-giving of some sort is usually prescribed in the Jubilee Bull. No rule can be laid down as to the amount to be given, as this depends entirely upon the state of each one's finances and the calls upon one's purse. Nor is it always necessary to give money. Harbours a poor man, feeding or clothing the poor, and any such works of mercy are generally made to come within the term "alms" in this case. Even the loan of money, free of interest, to a person really in need, donations to hospitals, orphanages, widows' funds, or any similar charitable causes are considered by theologians to cover the obligation of alms-giving.

A noteworthy feature of the jubilee is the

suspension of all other indulgences, with the following chief exception:—(1) all such as are applied to the faithful departed, (2) those granted to the dying (3) those granted for reciting the Angelus, (4) by the Bishop at the end of Pontifical High Mass. With these few exceptions and a few others, which need not be mentioned as they do not concern Catholics in South Africa much, the jubilee indulgence is the only one which can be gained. The reason of this suspension is self-evident. It is meant to act as a spur to induce as many Catholics as possible to gain the jubilee in the ordinary form. Our Holy Father has already notified to us the fact that this suspension dates from Christmas, 1899, until Christmas, 1900.

What is the practical use of a jubilee? what end is gained by this institution? Those who take the trouble to understand what the jubilee is, and to make use of it, find that it serves many useful purposes; although of course, the hoary type of ranting Protestant, forgetful of its Biblical precedent, condemns it without enquiry as only one more specimen of the iniquities of the Scarlet Woman. To those who do not scream so loud as to drown our explanations we may point out that a jubilee is for us a season of special grace and serves the more noble aims of a religious revival. Repentance and self-examination are inculcated as the basis of all the spiritual favours granted by the Church at this time. Amongst Catholics it is a matter too trite to be thought worthy of mention, that anyone who hopes to make proper use of the jubilee must, as a first step, make a sincere resolution to lead a Christian life. If we could read the secrets of human hearts and see the radical changes wrought there by God's grace during the Holy Year, if we could be shown the number of feuds healed, restitutions of ill-gotten gain, sinful plans abandoned at the invitation of the Church during this time, we might be able to form a just estimate of the value of this great institution. The full knowledge of these things is reserved for another time.

The Holy Year is also a useful reminder of a great Catholic truth: the utility of indulgences. The Council of Trent in the face of the opposition of the contradictory heresiarchs re-affirmed the Catholic belief that the Church has power to grant indulgences, and that they are of use to the Christian people. The jubilee with its partial suspension of ordinary indulgences concentrates our attention on the one great indulgence avail-

able, and so teaches us to value the more these which are temporarily withdrawn.

But the Roman pilgrimage is a very characteristic feature of the Holy Year. Thousands will be led by devotion to pray at the tombs of the Apostles, and to visit the great city, in which every stone is a record of the history of the long line of St. Peter's successors. No one can go to Rome without conceiving a more complete idea of the Catholic Church in the world, and of the status which sheer worth and ability have won for her Chief Ruler. Every Catholic knows perfectly well what he is to believe of the Church: he knows that the titles of One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, are her singular privilege in their combination. One who journeys to Rome sees, feels, and touches these things with his hands. Thus the life of the Church is quickened, the life blood courses more freely through the veins and arteries when they are more freely connected with the heart, and the whole body, of which we are all members, becomes more conscious of energy and life.—*The Rev. R. Welch, D.D., in the "South African Catholic Magazine."*

THE SALESIANS AT CAPE TOWN.

THE following extracts are taken from a letter, dated Jan. 10th, of one of our confrères at the Cape:—

.... Naturally the war engages the attention of everybody here at present, and is the one topic of conversation. I suppose it is much the same abroad, so I shall not weary you by repeating what you already know. At Capetown, it is true, we are far removed from the seat of war, but the dire effects are being keenly felt even here. In fact the whole country has been thrown into a terrible state. Distress and want are on all sides of us. All the principal towns of the Colony are crowded with refugees, especially Capetown, where, too, loafers, and ruffians of every description have come, attracted here, no doubt, by the consideration of being more easily able to prey on society. A few days ago a respectable young man, a barrister by profession, was found on the mountains near by dying of starvation. And this is only one case in many of a like nature. For ourselves we cannot complain; although we have had to contend with many difficulties during the last few months. God has been good to us, and so far has not let us want for anything.

*

At Christmas, Midnight Mass was celebrated in the Chapel of our Institute for the second time since the foundation. Our Superior, Father Barni, said the Mass, which was served by one of our first Co-operators, Mr. Joseph Kaiser, formerly of Alsace. The Altar and Sanctuary were tastefully draped and decorated by the Brothers. The South African flora was conspicuous in the decorations, and had an enchanting effect on the humble little Chapel.

The choir of St. Mary's Cathedral very kindly lent their services for the occasion, whilst the orchestra of the Institute filled in the intervals with some religious pieces of music.

Among the small congregation was H. I. H. Princess Radziwill of Prussia, who is on a visit to the Cape. She has inspected the workshops of our Institute, and expressed herself greatly pleased with what she saw. She has promised the boys a treat in the near future.

*

During the holidays the Institute was honoured with a visit from the following distinguished personages:—Lord Edmund Talbot, the Duke of Norfolk's brother, the Hon. Mr. Wilmot, M. L. C., and Mrs. Wilmot, and the Hon. Colonel Schermbrucker, M. L. A. They all had words of high praise for the work in which the Salesians are engaged. They were, moreover, pleased to see that our Institute in Capetown is steadily developing and giving excellent results, and they expressed a desire that our work might continue to prosper as there was a great field open to Don Bosco's sons in South Africa.

*

New Year's Eve witnessed the first Concert and Distribution of prizes at the Institute. A highly interesting programme was provided, and every praise must be given to Mrs. Boyd, and Messrs. Callanan, Rigby, Regan, Harper, and Lyne, (who were so good as to give their services on the occasion) for their fine rendering of some of the musical items. Also to Mr. Frank Kennedy, son of Capt. F. Kennedy, R. A. M. C., who entertained the boys with selections on the banjo. The band of the Institute, which seemed to be at its best, supplied some excellent music. At the conclusion of the entertainment, the prizes were distributed by Mrs. Boyd and Mrs. Callanan.



THE INUNDATION IN PATAGONIA AND THE SALESIAN MISSIONS.

The following letter addressed to our venerable Superior-General, Don Rua, is from the pen of Father Vacchina, a Salesian Missionary in Patagonia:—

VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

IN the short note I penned you in the beginning of August, I simply gave you the announcement of the terrible inundation which submerged a great part of Patagonia. But, in my present letter, I shall endeavour to describe the sad happenings that have been fraught with such disastrous consequences to ourselves, and to the native and white population of this country. I repeat that I shall endeavour to describe the sad happenings, for I doubt whether my description,—or for that matter, any description,—can convey to you an exact idea of their awful reality,—it being almost impossible for any but an eye-witness to realise all the horror accompanying such scenes as I shall here relate.

The Regions Inundated—The Rio Negro Valley.

The regions which suffered most from the effects of the inundation were the Valleys of Rio Negro, Rio Colorado, Rio Chubut, and of Rio Neuquen. In all of these are situated many of our Missions, but the most flourishing—alas! no longer so—are to be found in the Rio Negro Valley. This Valley, which takes its name from the river (*Rio Negro* means Black River), is about 500 miles in length, and has a width which varies very much. A range of mountains stretches along the Rio on each side at various distances, in some places reaching almost to the margin; in others, widening out and leaving extensive tracts of low country between them and the river. These lands are rich and fertile, and have been widely cultivated. A distinguished Engineer from Rome, Signor Cipoletti, who

made a survey of the Valley by order of the Argentine Government, a short time ago, called it a future Mesopotamia.

Now, alas! this once beautiful valley is reduced to a veritable wilderness! The floods have strewn with ruins an area of 500 square leagues and put back a hundred years the commercial prospects of this part of the country.

The inundation was such has as never before been witnessed in these parts. It seemed as though the very ocean had burst its bounds, and had emptied itself into the

The Beginning of our Troubles— Joy changed into Sorrow.

"We have been most severely tried during the last few weeks (he writes), the recent floods having all but destroyed Roca and reduced our Mission to a heap of ruins. Roca, as you are aware, is only a few miles east of the confluence of the Neuquen and Limay which together form the Rio Negro, and was the first town to suffer from the effects of the inundation. The overflow of the river on the 31st of May, of which I



View of Viedma during the Floods in Patagonia.

Rio Negro Valley. The first signs of something unusual appeared in the Neuquen territory through which runs the Rio Neuquen, a tributary of the Negro. Without the least warning the waters of the Neuquen suddenly began to rise, and overflowed the country in many places. This happened towards the close of May, and for two months after—two months of dangers, suffering, and loss—the flood spread until the whole of the Rio Negro Valley was submerged.

The little town of Roca was the first visited by the inundation, and suffered the most. In a letter to me, one of our Fathers who was stationed at the once flourishing centre, narrates the events of those anxious days; and I think I cannot do better than transcribe here his impressions.

gave you the announcement by telegraph at the time, caused great damage to our Agricultural Colony. The barns, two steam-mills, and the building set apart for the School of Agronomy were totally wrecked, as was also the lodge of the gardiner and his family, who narrowly escaped being buried under the ruins. The land belonging to the "Colony" was protected on all sides by high earth-banks, but these could not withstand the impetuosity of the flood. In several places they gave way, and the water rushed into the cultivated fields, destroying every sign of vegetable life, and covering the land with a thick stratus of sand which has made of it a waste. But this was only the beginning of our troubles.

"The following day (June 1st) had been set apart for the inauguration of the new railway

between Buenos Ayres and Roca. General Roca, President of the Republic, was to preside at the ceremony, which was to take place here. The occasion was to be observed as a holiday. The townspeople were eagerly looking forward to the eventful day, and had undertaken to decorate the town on a somewhat large scale, being bent on giving their distinguished visitor a cordial welcome. But the overflow of the river on the previous day upset all calculations, and changed the public joy into sorrow. Not only were the streets and squares of the town flooded, but a portion of the line for a distance of 70 miles was submerged, rendering impossible the inauguration. Instead of holiday-making, the people of Roca spent the day actively working at the erection of a dyke all round the town, under the direction of the military and municipal authorities. This hastily formed protection saved Roca from the second flood on July 14th.

Inquieting Rumours—Abandoning the Mission—Roca Flooded.

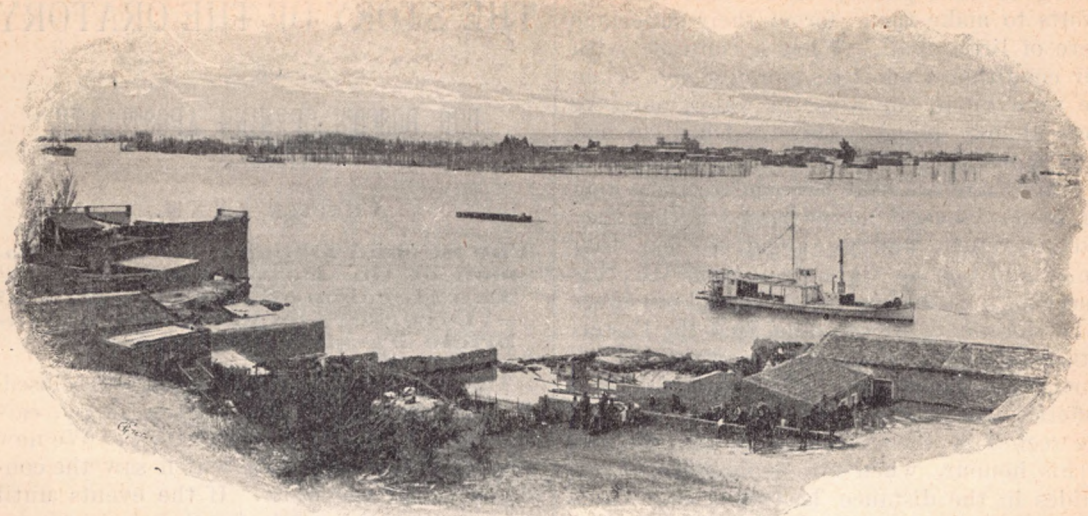
"On the 16th, rumours began to spread that at the Paso de los Indios, a ford several miles above Roca, the river had risen seven yards above the usual level. When the authorities resorted to the telegraph to enquire if there were any foundation in this inquieting news, it was found that communication had been interrupted. This naturally increased our fears, and induced us to join the soldiers in the work of strengthening the dyke. It was observed also that the river, which had subsided after the last overflow, began again to rise. In the afternoon of the 19th, I had a conversation with the head military Engineer, and in answer to my inquiry whether there was any real danger, he told me that the danger was great, in fact, a disaster was both inevitable and imminent. "I fear that there will not remain a stone above a stone of Roca," he said. This remark made my brethren and myself very uneasy, and the upshot of it all was that we decided to leave the town. An hour later our Community and the children under our care, and the Nuns with the inmates of the Convent abandoned their peaceful homes, and directed their course to the Sierra, a chain of hills a little more than a mile to the north of Roca. Two wagons followed with mattresses and a few other things that were hastily put together. It was about three o'clock when the party started; at four, the waters had already broken down the earthen parapet that

encircled the town, and had flooded the streets and houses. Our Superior, Father Stefanelli, who had not yet left Roca, hired a horse, and set out for the hills in order to provide some kind of shelter for our party, leaving a brother-priest and me behind to consume the Blessed Sacrament in the event of the Parish Church being in danger. Meanwhile, the water rose higher and higher, and in a few minutes reached to our knees. We set to work to save what provisions we could, but in view of the uselessness of our efforts, we made our way to the Church, which we found as yet intact. After exposing the Blessed Sacrament, we began reciting the Litany of the Saints and that of our Lady, and the Penitential Psalms; but above the sound of our voices rose the awful noise of the rushing waters, and the cries of the terrified people who were running here and there in search of a place of safety.

"Now, the Church, also, was flooded. My companion and I made our confession to each other, and after a short and fervent prayer, we proceeded to consume the consecrated hosts. Higher and higher rose the water; it must have been at least four feet deep when we finished; still we felt no fear, because God was with us and in Him we had placed all our hopes.

The Destruction of Roca—The Mission in Ruins.

"At about nine o'clock that evening some of the dwellings began to give way. Most of the inhabitants had by this time retired to the hills. From a point above the reach of the flood, we watched the falling buildings until a very late hour, and could hear the dull echo among the distant hills as each building crumbled to the ground. It was a most distressing sight and filled us with grief. We had hoped that the Parish Church would have withstood the action of the flood, but we were deceived. Towards midnight the *campanile* fell with a crash, and early in the morning the Church, too, shared the same fate. Shortly afterwards, a grey cloud of dust ascended from a spot near by almost contemporaneous with a tremendous splash, and we realized that our own College and the Convent of the Nuns had been swallowed up by the voracious flood. It was with a sense of oppression that we gazed on the spot long and intently, and became conscious of the fact that the fruits of 14 years continual work and sacrifices had disappeared in the space of a few hours. *The Lord has given and the*



View of Viedma during Inundation in Patagonia.

Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord! were the words that came to our lips.

"On the 20th, the water reached a height of nine feet, and maintained this level for several days. By the 23rd, all the buildings except five had been razed to the ground. Roca no longer exists; five dilapidated dwellings and a heap of ruins now mark the spot of that once flourishing little town!

Life on the Sierra—A Fortnight of Privation and Suffering.

"For a fortnight we dwelt on the hills in the vicinity, where our party and the inhabitants had taken refuge, enduring great privation and suffering. Even we priests, inured to the rough life of the missionary, suffered very much. We had no tents nor shelter of any kind, but were obliged to pass day and night in the open air, and we were served with a daily ration of 20 kilos. (about 44 lbs.) of fleshmeat which was divided among the 70 members of our little party, composed of priests, nuns, lay-brothers and the children. And this was the only food available during that fortnight! The Nuns must have suffered most of all, but forgetful of their own troubles, they went about comforting and cheering the children, and the people scattered over the hills, and acted in every way the part of ministering angels.

"But as the days wore on, even the only article of food available began to get scarce, and our rations were accordingly reduced. There was no hope of a speedy relief from other quarters, so our Superior, no longer

able to bear the sight of the suffering children, decided that we should go at once to Choele-Choel, the nearest town, 134 miles away. For this purpose, he engaged after much trouble four wagons, which cost him 500 francs apiece. On the 1st of August we set out on our journey; the Nuns and the girl-children in two of the wagons, we and our boys in the other two.

Travelling under Painful Circumstances.

"The journey lasted seven days, and it would be impossible to give an adequate idea of what we went through during that time. As the ordinary road along the valley had been rendered impracticable by the flood, we were obliged to make a circuitous route over a mountainous district, devoid of vegetation and uninhabited. The roads were frequently rugged and steep, causing the wagons to jolt very much and thus rendering the greater part of our travelling most painful. A scarcity of food and the want of water, except that which we found on the way, made our lot still harder to bear. On several occasions, tears filled my eyes to see the poor children gnaw at the bones that remained after a meagre repast, as though they were famished beings, and to hear them moan for a drop of water to cool their parched and swollen lips. We sought to distract their attention by telling them pleasant stories, and to cheer them, although we ourselves felt despondent and depressed; but the poor little things would look wistfully about ever and anon in search of the longed-for water, those looks

telling us more plainly than words that our efforts to make them forget their sufferings were of little avail. What a contrast with our condition a short time previously. Then we were up to our waist in water, now we were almost dying of thirst! Once we had been more than a day without tasting a drop of water, and we sent two muleteers to look for some. Several hours passed by but they did not return, and we began to fear that we should not see them any more. In this emergency we began to recommend ourselves to St. Joseph, calling to mind that the Foster-father of Jesus endured many privations during the flight into Egypt, and no doubt suffered from thirst. We had just finished the recital of the Seven Joys and Sorrows in his honour, when we espied one of our guides in the distance leading a mule with a barrel of water on its back.

"On the 7th of August, just a week after we had left Roca, we arrived at Choele-Choel. We were half dead from hunger and thirst, and aching in every limb. At Choele-Choel we obtained food and drink, and rested awhile to recruit ourselves, so needful after the fearful experiences of the past few days. As soon as we were strong enough to continue our journey, we set out for Bahia Blanca this time by train, and reached our destination without any mishap. The nuns and girl-children are staying at the Convent of their Congregation in this town; whilst we and our boys have found a home for the present with our Fathers at the Colegio de la Piedad. We were overjoyed to find ourselves in the midst of our brethren, who have not ceased to lavish upon us every kindness and attention since our arrival, so as to make us forget the terrible ordeal through which we have passed.

"We were agreeably surprised to meet here our Vicar-Apostolic, Bishop Cagliero, who had arrived only a few hours before us from Buenos Ayres on his way to Viedma. His Lordship has been indeed a Comforting Angel to us, and gives us hope of returning to our missionary field as soon as the floods have ceased. Roca, we feel sure, will be transferred to another site; and to return means that we must begin our work over again. We do not mind this; and we are certain Divine Providence will provide us with the means necessary for rebuilding the Mission." Thus terminates my *confrere's* letter regarding our Mission at Roca.

(To be continued).

THE STORY OF THE ORATORY

OR

DON BOSCO'S OPENING APOSTOLATE.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Second Decade – The Explosion of the Powder Magazine – The Heroism of Sergeant Sacchi – Diverse Occurrences – Gabriele Fassio – Reflections.

The first decade of this history is closed. It comprises the origin and the happy, earliest undertakings of our Oratory. We now enter the second decade which saw the consolidation of the work. If the events until this period were of singular importance, those about to be recounted will not prove of less moment. I therefore hope, in this chapter, not only to mix the agreeable with the edifying, as heretofore, but so to arrange it that it will redound still more to the glory of God, and the satisfaction of my readers.

In 1852, a terrible calamity, like a "bolt from the blue," befell the city of Turin. It needed only a little more and Turin would have been but a heap of ruins and the tomb of its inhabitants. In the centre of the Dora suburb, near the cemetery of S. Pietro-in-vincoli, stood Powder-mills and three powder magazines. At the time, more than two thousand pounds of blasting, and ordinary, powder were stored there. Thus, this suburb, and the entire city, held within its bosom an enemy more formidable than a horde of barbarians intent on pillage and destruction.

It was a quarter to twelve on the 26th of April when, owing to a flaw in one of the machines, a spark was thrown into a laboratory. In less time than it takes to tell it, the two side-sheds were in flames, and fire ran on to a small reservoir where the powder was lying about. It thence spread, first, to a small magazine of powder used for sporting purposes, and passed on to another, where there was blasting powder. In a few moments, both had exploded with a tremendous report, shaking the whole town; bursting open doors; and not leaving a single window shut, or a pane of glass unbroken. The large factory was blown into the air; the surrounding houses fell in ruins; two rows of ancient mulberry-trees were snapped off in the middle, as if they were tender little plants; stones, nails, scraps of iron.

burning timbers, flew through the air, and fell upon roofs; into the streets and squares; like the projectiles of some immense bomb, threatening life and limb. At over four hundred yards' distance, blocks of stone fell, weighing ten and fifteen myriagrams each; and there was one of even twenty myriagrams. Thirty men employed in the Powder-factories and stores were either blown to pieces, or burnt to death, or buried beneath the ruins. In the meantime, a dense cloud of smoke like a funeral pall, spread over Turin, shutting out the sight of the sun, and terrifying everybody. It seemed as if the end of the world had come. Some screamed; some wept; some fled, without caring whither they went. Little by little, the report of the disaster was spread; and many from the centre of the city turned their steps towards the Powder-factory; but when they approached it they were driven back by the lime, flying from the neighbouring streets,—which seemed to foretell further and more serious disasters. A certain number of the bravest pushed their way to the scene of devastation, in company with the soldiers, the city authorities, and King Victor Emmanuel himself. Among this company was our Don Bosco.

At the moment of the first explosion, he happened to be in the hall where the prizes for the lottery (of which I have spoken) were being exhibited. In order to find out what had happened, when the crash came which shook all the buildings, Don Bosco went out into the street. Just then, the second explosion occurred, and a moment later a sack of corn fell from above at his side. It was a narrow escape. The idea soon came into his mind that perhaps the Powder-factory (which was not much more than five hundred yards away from the Oratory,) had caught fire. He went home at once, fearing for his own; but he found the house empty, all the inmates having fled into the neighbouring fields and meadows. Then, without loss of time, or thought of peril, he flew to the ill-fated spot, hoping to render priestly assistance to some unfortunate victim. On the way, he met his mother, who endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. Reaching the place, he could hardly get across the vast ruins. What a heartrending sight! The fragments of corpses; legs, and arms; lay scattered about. Pitiful cries still rose from the smoking masses of masonry. And, most fearful of all! the imminence of a third explosion, which must have made a

charnel of the whole district,—and even beyond it! The two Powder-magazines that had scattered so much ruin and death had contained but a few myriagrams of explosives. At a distance of some yards only, stood another store in which there were over a hundred and forty thousand pounds of powder! If this awful volcano blew up, not only the Dora suburb, but a great part of Turin must crumble to dust;—and the danger was close at hand! Now, who was there to save the city? The Blessed Virgin saved it, through one of Her servants whose name it is but just I should hand down to posterity.

Sergeant Paolo Sacchi of Voghera, head-workman in the factory, escaped from the horrible massacre, as if by miracle. Twice the violence of the explosions flung him upon the ground; and he fell as if dead. He stood up again, nevertheless; and, with scorched face, head, and hands; with ears from which the blood flowed freely, and which buzzed and sang distractingly; in the midst of an indescribable confusion; the slaughter of the workmen; and sobs and cries of desperation, he gave proof of such courage and forethought as is above all praise. When he had overcome the first surprise of the explosions, he perceived that the third Magazine had still to be saved; and that already the fire had caught a cloth which was in it. He did not fly from the danger of immediate death, but rather rushed to meet it. He pulled away that cloth, and stood his ground intrepidly,—calling out for helpers. His heroism inspired some of the townspeople to join him. Some soldiers and firemen then followed; and a band was speedily in working-order. Some extinguished the flames that broke out, here and there. Others carried the eight hundred barrels of powder, then in the magazine, into a place of safety. These tasks, in the existing state of panic, took until four in the afternoon to accomplish. They were, however, carried through successfully. Thus was Turin saved in that day of anguish, by the help of the Mother of God and the heroism of one man, who turned, in the horrid confusion, and sought counsel and comfort of Her. As long as he lived, he might have been seen every Saturday on his knees before the altar of the "Mother of Consolation," accomplishing his vow of thanksgiving for having not only come out alive, but also for having been the means of saving his fellows. This simple and honest man was first honoured

and praised by all ranks of Turinese society ; but before long he had to drink of the bitter cup of ingratitude. According to some, he was guilty of the crime of attributing his own heroism to the Blessed Virgin. Sarcasm, derision, and calumny were launched against him by those to whom the name of God and of His holy Mother are unwelcome. The Government, however, awarded him the golden medal ; the National Guard presented him with a commemorative wreath ; and the Communal Council conferred the Freedom of the City upon him ; called a street after him ; and granted him a life-annuity of twelve hundred francs. Let us hope that some day, a monument will be raised to Sacchi in Turin, which shall be worthy of his courage and piety.

As for Don Bosco, he had the consolation of giving the last absolution to a poor workman who was disinterred from among the ruins with a broken thigh, and a mass of other injuries all over his body. If he were not allowed to help in the manual work, himself, yet was Don Bosco's hat of important service. In the extreme moment of danger, there was urgent need of water to stop the spread of the fire among the cloths which lay upon the powder barrels. But there was no vessel in which to carry water, until Sacchi gave the order to take Don Bosco's hat for the purpose. It answered very well until the arrival of the firemen and their buckets. Not long ago the valiant sergeant recalled this episode, to his, and my, great amusement.

It was, and is, generally thought that the safety of Turin from further disasters was due to the special protection of Heaven. The House of Divine Providence (otherwise called the Cottolengo Institute,) was one of those signally favoured. This House stood with one part not more than a hundred yards from the Powder-magazine. Consequently, the terrible explosion destroyed roofs, walls, and ceilings. Furniture ; wardrobes ; and chests, were turned upside down. Tools and implements of every sort were flung here and there, with fearful uproar. Doors and gateways were forced open. On all hands, posts ; beams ; broken iron ; stones ; bricks ; and fragments of all sorts, fell like rain. Nevertheless, with all this destruction ; with all these murderous missiles ; in spite of so many dangers to human life ; not one out of the thousand and three hundred persons belonging to the Institute was hurt. There were sick ; blind ; cripples ; mad people ; and infants ; and not one among them

all had even a scratch or a bruise. Many seemed to see Death passing under their very eyes ; to see the scythe in his hand upon their very heads ; but none were struck down. Over the bed's head of a sick man, the ceiling gave way, but the great lump fell at his feet. In another place the wall was shaken ; but it remained leaning, as if suspended in mid-air, and gave time for the bed, with its occupant, to be moved away. The roof of the children's nursery was destroyed, and many tiles fell in, but not one upon cot, or cradle. In the Infirmary of the girl-idiots, there were more than twenty beds and, for about three years, it had never once happened that it was not quite full of invalids,—especially at mid-day. That morning, however, as if in anticipation of what was about to happen, every one was up, and in the next room. Presently the explosion occurred, and a long, thick beam was flung through the roof into the middle of the Infirmary. It dragged down with it the greater part of the ceiling,—flattening everything, even the iron bedsteads. But the beds were empty !

The most comforting, yet inexplicable, facts, and those that prove most clearly the undoubted protection of our Blessed Lady, are those that regard her pictures. In all the rooms, the presses ; cupboards ; and even the wainscoting, were torn from the walls, and flung in a heap by the violence of the shock ; but the pictures of the Blessed Virgin still hung in their places. In the Infirmary known as "St. Theresa's," a statue of our Lady stood two yards from the ground under a glass bell. Both fell to the pavement, yet statue and bell remained absolutely intact. In the orphans' long dormitory, the windows looking towards the Powder-factory had been bricked up. When the calamity occurred, every window was broken-in, except two where hung pictures of the Blessed Mother. In a subterranean passage joining two parts of the building, at a height of over three yards, a statue of the Queen of Heaven stood in its own niche. At the instant of the explosion, when the whole of the neighbouring wall was precipitated to the ground, the statue appeared as if it had slowly descended from its place instead of being flung down. In the private Oratory, known as the "Sanctuary,"—a spot formerly very dear to the Venerable Cottolengo,—there were hung against the wall three hundred pictures of different sizes, with glass panes before them. They represent the world's

most celebrated sanctuaries of the Mother of Jesus. The little Oratory with this collection stood facing the Powder-mills and therefore exposed to all the force of the shock,—from which it had, moreover, no shelter. When the tremendous explosion took place, a large, heavy press was thrown down in the room behind the sanctuary (which was protected by its wall); the ceiling partly destroyed, and the door shattered, the iron bar which closed it being twisted like cord. And the pictures? Those in the Sanctuary remained in their places with their glasses perfectly whole. In the Chapel of the Holy Rosary (in the Community Church), there was a statue of our Lady shut in its niche. Six yards away, the great arch supporting the cupola of the Church was split. The organ, which stood at the back of a tribune, was thrown down, and fell a few paces from the statue. The frame with its large crystals which enclosed the niche, was burst open; but the statue remained firm, and only a pendant fell from one ear!

In yet more eloquent language did the most Powerful Virgin show forth her protection on that day;—as will be seen by the following record.

In the entrance-hall of the Cottolengo Institute near the two doors that open on to the road, there stood, as there stands to-day, attached to a thin wooden board, a picture by a master-hand, of Our Lady of Consolation. Then, as now, the picture was protected by a sheet of glass, and encircled by a wreath of flowers, silver hearts, and other ornaments. It was usual for all who passed by the image to say an *Ave Maria*. This hall, on the inner side leading to the courtyard below, faced the Powder-mill; and, between the two nothing intervened to break the shock. Consequently, the explosion of the two magazines, violently burst open even locked doors in the Institute; it scattered in fragments more than ten thousand of the window-panes, and flung them, *pêle-mêle*, along with the blinds and curtains. In the whole of the via Doragrossa, and in other streets nearly half a mile away, not a pane remained whole in any window. A sort of whirlwind of projectiles of all kinds had rioted in that hall! High, heavy presses, which had stood near the picture, were ground to atoms. On the opposite side, the strong walnut door leading into the lane, made fast by an iron chain cable, was smashed in two, and the chain broken. The angle of the wall, also, was shattered, just where

the picture hung against it. And this picture? Wonderful to relate, this alone remained in place, with all its ornaments and its glass, untouched! The beautiful picture of the heavenly Mother seemed to say to all her terrified children: "I am here: I, your Mother. Fear not! I will be your shield and your defence."

Speaking candidly, this network of facts, however carefully studied, cannot be accounted for by natural laws. The Hand of God was here, and the protection of the Divine Mother, who was pleased thus to show that she watches over Turin.

But that which above all, enables us, as it were, to realise the protection of our Lady, in that dread day, is the narrative of Monsignor Luigi Anglesio, who at that time had been ten years Superior of the Cottolengo Institute. I give it in his own words.

"Among all the buildings which made wings on each side of the Powder-mills, the nearest of all to it was our poor cottage, known as "Nazareth." It consisted of a ground-floor and one storey above; and stood hardly eighty yards away. Below, there were twenty idiots. On the upper floor, there were thirty chronic cases, and weak children, of the ages of four to nine years. All the timbers of the roof rested on one pilaster, which rose in the middle of the vast room. Above this column, and above the roof, rose another pillar, formed of terra-cotta, which had once served for a stove. A statue of Mary Immaculate rested on top of this pillar. The statue was over three feet high; hollow inside; composed of plaster of Paris; and round the head, there was a wide crown of twelve stars. One might have thought that it stood sentinel over the Institute, if not to force nature to obedience, at least, regulate the direction and the limits of the disaster. The explosion occurred at such close quarters, that a continuous rain of missiles of every sort, and every varying weight, poured upon and around, little Nazareth. The pilaster bears the marks of the missiles; but the Blessed Virgin's statue moved but an inch upon its pedestal, while remaining erect and uninjured, with the crown safe upon the head! How is it possible, then, to fail to recognise, and give thanks to, our faithful guardian and loving defender, the Blessed Virgin? The roof was battered and in a measure destroyed, above the ceiling. The weight of the *débris* broke the beams, which fell, mixed with the roofing tiles, into the room where all the infants were gathered together. Some

were in their little beds or cots. Others were sitting down, or moving about. It might have been thought that none, or very few, would escape from the ruins. This was the impression of all those, who had felt the shock, and seen its result. They rushed to the help of the Sister Infirmarian, hoping to aid in the rescue of some of the innocent little creatures. But, thanks to the watchful Mother, who looked down upon them from above, not one was forgotten in Her loving care. The more active of the little boys, at the first shock rushed out-of-doors. Those who remained behind, or who were in bed, by some means or another, (no one knows how!) were protected. They were all found uninjured, safe, and sound. One of them had been thrown on the floor with his cot above him; but this somersault provided him with a defence against the falling tiles, and the rubbish which would have covered him. It was a most touching thing, in the midst of the cries and groans, to hear these little creatures calling out: 'Pardon us, pardon us, Holy Mother! We will be good, now; we will be good!'" With these words ends the description given by Monsignor Anglesio.

Now these signal wonders, and above all that of the weak pilaster, appear so strange and outside the common order of nature, that even certain Jews, whose curiosity drew them to the spot, declared that it was a clear case of miracle. The day following the catastrophe, a man who gave much scandal, walked round the ruins, and burst out in blasphemies against God, on account of the disaster. But when he came in front of this fragile statue, and saw it standing firmly above, the light crown around the head, he became dumb. For long, he stared at it, saying, at last: "There must have been some devil at work here. That could not have remained in place by natural means!" We shall not agree with the view of this poor wretch, but instead, be it our's to say: "If he could, the devil would destroy not only the images of the Blessed Virgin, but also Her throne in Heaven. Therefore it is beyond a doubt, that, this fragile statue, in such a spot, and surrounded by ruins, was a visible sign of the invisible presence of our Lady, lovingly watching over her children, and over Turin also—saving the city from total destruction.

Nor did the Blessed Virgin show Her watchful care of Turin only by the facts recounted. In other pious places, exposed to imminent peril, she gave proof of Her Ma-

ternal solicitude. In the Magdalen convent, about four hundred yards from the Powder-mills; in the Hospital of St. Philomena; and in the *Conservatorio*; (all three Institutes founded by the Marchesa Barolo), in which there were fully five hundred, counting sisters, girls, and sick people,—from the beginning to the end, no one was injured. At midnight, in the hospital, they could see the damage wrought by the missiles. In the Magdalen convent, amongst other things, a block of masonry fell, weighing fully ten myriagrams. To this day, a great chest is shown, there, containing stones, pieces of iron, and other things, which fell like hail upon the building, and reached even the rooms and passages. Yet not one of the (over) one hundred persons in the building was even touched by them. And, in the Infirmary, there were two invalid sisters, who for a length of time, had never left their beds. But that morning, they asked leave to get up, and go out to the garden for a little air. The superior, contrary to her custom, granted the permission. Hardly had they gone out, when an enormous beam struck the roof of the Infirmary, and broke through it with such force that it completely flattened the beds of the two sisters, on which it fell. While the "Maddalene," to their deep regret, were about to break their rule as cloistered nuns, and go out in search of a safer dwelling, they saw a white dove fly towards the summit of the roof of their holy haven, and alight there. They looked upon this as a happy prognostic, and they said: "If the dove flies away from there, we also will go forth. But if it stays there, we will remain." The bird stayed there persistently till four o'clock in the afternoon, when a Government messenger came to announce that all danger of further explosions was past.

And in our Oratories, did anything extraordinary happen? A burning timber fell a few steps from Don Bosco's little home,—which, as it was badly built, would have burnt away like tinder, had not the Hand of God prevented the brand from falling on it. The new church was scarcely dry. A short time before, the scaffolding was around it. It might easily have crumbled or have split. But, by the Providence of God, although nearly ready to be consecrated, the church had, as yet, neither doors nor windows. Thus, being open on all sides, it was not so severely shaken, and escaped altogether without damage. The dwellings suffered a good deal. They were fearfully cracked. Needless to say, not a pane

of glass remained. Many of the window-frames fell to pieces, when all were violently burst open, and beaten against the walls. The northern entrance-doors to the chapel,—perhaps because the wood was sodden with the winter's damp, or perhaps because of the rusty iron work,—had remained closed for several months; but the shock not only opened the door, but tore it from its hinges, and flung it into the middle of the chapel. The same thing happened in the case of a ground-floor room called, "the wine cellar." Here, also, the door was torn from the wall; and, for some days, the boys might have gone in freely to drink "Mamma Margaret's" wine;—if only there had been any!

Another matter which had something special and supernatural about it was this:—One of the inmates, Gabriele Fassio, aged about thirteen, a boy of admirable behaviour and edifying piety, was learning to be a locksmith. Don Bosco had a great regard for him, and often pointed him out as a model for the others. The year before the terrible explosion, this boy fell ill, and drew near death. After he had received the last Rites, one day, as if inspired he cried out repeatedly: "Woe to Turin!" Some of his companions who were with him asked: "But why, woe?" "Because a great disaster threatens." "What disaster?" "A fearful earthquake." "When will it come?" "In a year. Oh, woe to Turin on the twenty-sixth of April!" "What ought we to do?" Pray to St. Aloysius Gonzaga to protect the Oratory, and those that live in it."

Soon after, he died an edifying death in the Cottolengo Hospital. Considering his rare holiness, and the accent (which seemed inspired) with which he pronounced the word: "Woe," the boys of the House were profoundly impressed, and they followed his advice. It was then, that, upon their request, a *Pater*, *Ave*, and *Gloria* to St. Aloysius, and the invocation: *Ab omni malo, libera nos, Domine*, were added to the usual morning and evening prayers. They are still said, to this day.

The loss of property caused by the explosion was enormous. Many factories, round about, were so much injured that it was necessary to pull them down, before anything could be done to them. The Government appointed a commission to examine the houses that had suffered the most, and to make over a sum for repairs to the poorest among the owners, when necessary to carry out the restorations. To the Oratory, after visiting

it, the Commission granted three hundred francs;—a proof of the small damage sustained.

I should like to make one observation before closing this chapter. After the two explosions, and the announcement that a third, still more terrible explosion, might be expected, many of the inhabitants of the houses, more or less near, decided to come into the Oratory field, opposite the Church which was being built. Some of these were sick people who with great difficulty managed to stand on their feet. When in the field, they praised the power, justice, and mercy of God. Some begged pardon of their sins. Others promised an amendment of life; and some recommended themselves to the keeping of the Saints in Heaven. All professed confidence in the protection of the Blessed Virgin, and some recalled Her evident pity for Turin of old, while others prayed for her aid under the terrible circumstances of the moment, or recited the Rosary, or made the air ring with Her praises. We may well remember, now, that that field since became the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians. Here still come, —and return again, and again,—the afflicted and the sorrowful of the whole world, asking for comfort and consolation: and their prayers are heard.

(To be continued).

THE HOLY FATHER received our Superior-General, Don Rua, in private audience on February 12th, on which occasion the Pope graciously deigned to bestow His apostolic blessing on all the Salesian Co-operators and Benefactors.

LAST year the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians were called to undertake an important work, which promises great things in a social and moral sense for poor factory girls. This is the management of several Homes, or Boarding-Houses, set up, in several towns of Italy, by philanthropic proprietors of factories, to provide for the comfort of their female employees. It cannot be denied that these Homes supply a pressing want, and are certainly a veritable Providence for many poor girls. And wherever these establishments are under the management of Don Bosco's Nuns, the inmates find themselves at home indeed, with kind sympathetic persons near them, to guide, and watch over them with motherly care,—just what those poor girls, exposed to so many deteriorating influences, stand in need of.



[Owing to the great number of communications we are continually receiving for insertion in this column, we are obliged to limit ourselves to the publication of a few extracts (as the expression, more or less, of the others) and the names of all those who desire to make public thanksgiving to their Celestial Benefactress. All manuscripts, however, are carefully deposited in the archives of the Sanctuary; and, perhaps, we shall one day be able to publish them in a separate volume in honour of our Heavenly Queen.—Ed.]

Thanksgivings.—*A Lover of the Sacred Heart (Belfast)* sends an offering in thanksgiving for favours received through the intercession of our Lady Help of Christians and St. Joseph.

Please have a Mass said in thanksgiving for a favour obtained through our Lady Help of Christians.—*P. C., Dingle (Ireland).*

Please have Masses celebrated for the Souls in Purgatory for a favour received.—*Sr. M. G., Belcourt (U. S. A.).*

K. H., Croom (Ireland) desires a Mass said to thank our Lady Help of Christians for a temporal favour received by her mother.

Enclosed please find small offering for which I beg to have Masses offered in thanksgiving to our Lady for favours obtained from the Divine Heart of Jesus through her kind intercession.—*P. J. G., Huntley (U. S. A.).*

Please find enclosed a small offering which I send as a grateful acknowledgment of two favours received through the intercession of our Lady Help of Christians and St. Joseph. I desire to have two Masses celebrated in their honour. I also ask prayers for obtaining yet another favour.—*I. C. B., Princes Town (Trinidad).*

* *

Health of the Weak.—*H. C. (England)* wishes for a Novena of Masses to be said in honour of our Lady Help of Christians in thanksgiving for the recovery of a dear friend from a dangerous illness.

* *

Our Lady's Medal.—A lady of this district was subject for a long time to nervous attacks, which caused her great suffering. She tried many remedies but they all failed to give her any relief. A relative of hers, who had experienced wonderful effects from a medal of our Lady Help of

Christians—he had been liberated from a very troublesome headache on placing the medal around his neck—thought of sending this medal to the afflicted lady in the hope that it would do her good. And it certainly did. The lady herself afterwards told me that on placing the medal around her neck her nervous attacks ceased at once.—*Rev. S. Ghione, Gerona (Spain).*

* *

From Death's Door.—I take pleasure in fulfilling a debt of love and gratitude towards our Lady by making public a favour I received through her powerful intercession; and I hope thereby to spread devotion to our Lady under the title of "Help of Christians."—In January, my dear mother was taken ill, and not expected to live long. The thought of having to lose her who was so dear to me, filled me with grief; but having confidence in the power of our Lady, I supplicated her to obtain from her Divine Son my mother's recovery. Immediately after my prayer, my mother declared to me that she felt relieved, and now I am pleased to say, she is quite well again. As a token of gratitude, we desire to have a Mass of thanksgiving offered up in honour of our Lady Help of Christians.—*A Salesian Co-operator, Barrancas (South America).*

The following have also sent us accounts of special favours they have received, and desire to render public thanksgiving to their heavenly Benefactress, Mary Help of Christians:—

The V. Rev. Canon A. Cofano, Fasano (Italy); D. Zanolò, Foglizzo; A. Cavatorta-Cotti, Felino; C. Romanelli, Florence; A Salesian Co-operator, Faenza; Francis Pellerino, Garessio; Teresa Castagnola, Lavagna; Robert Bernacchi, London; Peter Ricotti, Frascara; Rev. D. Davini, Lunata; Mary Gondini, Milan; O. Marsangela, Licata; C. G. Foglizzo; Antonietta Fattori, Pavia; S. Bertola, Racconigi; Z. Giani, Oleggio; Margaret Colombara, None; Margaret Cavallo, Minuzzo; Mario Arisi, Moncrivello; E. Allioni, Montalto; A. G. B., Montanaro; B. Olivero, Morello Vercellese; Catherine Cubetto, Pavone; S. Rapisarda, Pedona; Mr. & Mrs. Zennaro-Necca (Pellestrina); Antony Bettaglio, Peveragno; Anne Corvi, Piacenza; Joseph Levrier, Pieve di Teco; Angela Bonanze, Pinerolo; Francis Miglietta, Pozzano Vercellese; G. Navarra, Potenza; Anna Morellini, Provenza.

PETITIONS.

The Members of the Association of Salesian Co-operators are recommended to pray for the following intentions:—

M. O' B., Tullamore (Ireland):—A very special intention.

M. O' D., Atherton (England):—A temporal favour.

Benedictine Sisters, Clyde, Mo. (U. S. A.):—The funds wherewith to build a new Chapel of Per

petual Adoration, the old one having been seriously damaged by lightning.

M. E., Blackrock (Ireland):—For a person whose mind is deranged.

T. M' M., Kilmihil (Ireland):—A spiritual and a temporal favour.

The conversion of a few people.

Funds for the building of a new Church and Presbytery.

Sr. M. M., Belfast (Ireland):—The successful issue of a charitable work, and extrication from many difficulties.

S. G. S., Cincinnati (U. S. A.):—Two intentions we have greatly at heart.

S. M., Belcourt (U. S. A.):—For the success of a School and of a Hospital.

For the conversion of two drunkards.

L. C., Croom (Ireland):—A particular intention.

S. J. B., (India):—The revival of faith among those affected with religious apathy.

The conversion of the natives of India.

A speedy release from the threefold scourge of famine, plague, and war.

J. D., Dublin (Ireland):—The conversion of several relatives who have fallen away from the faith.

Sr. M., Bartestree (England):—The spiritual and temporal welfare of a community.

The recovery of a Sister Novice.

Sr. L. K., Cork (Ireland):—The conversion and provision in life of a near relative whose soul seems in great danger.

T. H., Australia:—The cure of a bodily complaint.

Sr. P. A., Ottawa (Canada):—Prosperity, spiritual and temporal, of a charitable work.

M. S., Dublin:—A very special intention which I have been praying for, for years.

M. O' B., Dublin:—A very special temporal favour.

C. J. O' C., Belvidere (U. S. A.):—Two temporal favours, one for self and the other for a friend.

C. L., Halifax (Canada):—The spiritual and temporal wants of a community.

C. O' G., Hyde (England):—The grace of a happy death.

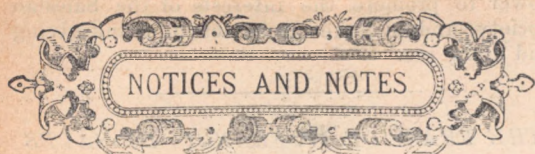
E. M. L., Arenzano (Italy):—I beg your prayers for a Convent where the poor inmates are often hungry; and for another Convent where the want of means is keeping back an undertaking which promises great good to souls—(The poor community must pay £12,000 of debts before they embark on new enterprises.

A Soul in Agony, Cape of Good Hope (South Africa):—Kindly ask, through the *Salesian Bulletin*, the prayers of the Members of the Association of Salesian Co-operators for enlightenment and direction in a very difficult and delicate family matter, which has caused an anxious husband and father (who is also a Salesian Co-operator), intense anguish, suspense and fear for fully four years. Should this urgent request be granted the writer promises to acknowledge it in the *Salesian Bulletin*, to continue to be always a good Co-

operator, to do what reasonably may be in his power to promote the interests of the Salesian Society, and to make special acts of thanksgiving and alms, etc.

THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES AT BATTERSEA.

THE great feast of St. Francis de Sales, (says the *Catholic Times*), was solemnly kept in the Salesian Church of the Sacred Heart West Battersea, London,—St. Francis de Sales being patron of the Salesian Order—on Sunday last [February 4], and the good fathers of the community were not alone congratulated by their own people in this now important Catholic centre, but by priests and people outside of it, who know something of the noble work which they have done, and which they are doing, in the propagation of our holy religion. Although there are few bishops upon whose time there are so many calls, owing to the magnitude of his diocese, as His Lordship of Southwark, the Right Rev. Monsignor Bourne, D. D., did not fail to remember the feast of the Patron of the Salesians, and accordingly His Lordship, accompanied by his secretary, arrived at the church and assisted at the High Mass. As the bishop entered, he was received by the Very Rev. Father Macey (rector) and other fathers; and the orchestra, under the bâton of the Rev. Father Rabagliati, announced his presence by the touching strains of the "Ecce Sacerdos Magnus." The celebrant of the High Mass was the Rev. Father Hawarden; deacon, Rev. Father McCarthy; and sub-deacon, Rev. Brother John. The deacons of the Throne were the Rev. Father Goy and Rev. Brother Osmund. The assistant priest to his Lordship was the Rev. Father Bonavia, while the masters of ceremonies were the Rev. Father Coote and Rev. Brother Joseph. After the first Gospel his Lordship the Right Rev. Dr. Bourne preached the sermon. The music of the Mass was Cherubini's No. 4, and as already intimated, the Rev. Father Rabagliati conducted. There was a very good congregation at the evening service. Harmonised Vespers were sung by the Very Rev. Father Macey, and the Rev. Albert Whereat, D.D., of the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Battersea Park-road, preached the sermon. Dr. Whereat subsequently gave solemn Benediction, attended by the Rev. Father Bonavia and the Rev. Father McCarthy, the masters of ceremonies being Father Macey and Brother Joseph.



Novum Jesu Christi Testamentum. (Salesian Press, Turin, Italy). Price 1s 6d.

The Salesian Fathers have lately brought out an edition of the New Testament in Latin. It is bound in black cloth with red edges, and is of a convenient size for the pocket. The chapters of this Testament are divided into paragraphs, the verses following one another without a break, and each paragraph has a "side-head" descriptive of its subject. This is undoubtedly by far the most reasonable method of dividing the Bible, and such a division certainly makes it more intelligible. Speaking of this work, the *Liverpool Catholic Times* calls it "an elegant and convenient edition"; the *New Era* styles it "a very good and cheap edition"; whilst *Catholic Book Notes* heartily recommends it "on account of its cheapness, and general excellence to all who want a handy Latin Testament." Particulars of the Indulgences granted for reading the Gospels are prefixed to the volume.

Our Lord in the Eucharist. By J. B. (R. & T. Washbourne, 18 Paternoster Row, London). Price 1s.

A short time ago, we recommended to our readers a little work entitled "Our Lady and the Eucharist." To that volume the present is a suitable companion. The selections have been made from that well-known work by Father Faber, "the Blessed Sacrament,"—which breathes such tender love for our Divine Lord,—and are arranged under four heads, namely, Emmanuel, Our Sacramental Jesus, The Life of the Church, and Reparation. The publishers have done their part well, the booklet being printed in clear type and on good paper, and prettily bound. It makes a charming little present. On the other side of the Atlantic, it may be obtained of Messrs. Benziger Bros., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago.

Are Protestants Catholics? is the title of a pamphlet, by the V. Rev. R. O. Kennedy, issued by the Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, Ind., U. S. A. The Rev. Author, in a kindly and thorough manner, treats of the position in which Protestants are regarded by the Church. This brochure should have a wide circulation among Catholics and non-Catholics. The former, who may have friends and relatives outside the pale of the Church, will derive comfort from the perusal of this work.

From the Catholic Truth Society (69 Southwark Bridge Road, London, S. E.) we have received the following interesting publications, which we warmly recommend:—

CARDINAL WISEMAN. Compiled from Mr. Wilfrid Ward's *Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman*. Price 1d.

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MR. S. J. ABBOT AND THE CONVENT ENQUIRY SOCIETY. By James BRITTEN, K. S. G. Price 1d.
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NOTES TO THE READER.

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Communications and offerings may be addressed to our Superior-General:

The Very Rev. **MICHAEL RUA.**

Salesian Oratory,—Turin, Italy.

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This Magazine is sent gratis to Catholics who manifest a desire to become Members of the Association of Salesian Co-operators, and concur in helping our Society in any way whatsoever.

PERMISSU SUPERIORUM.

Gerent, GIUSEPPE GAMBINO.—Salesian Press.—Turin, 1900

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The whole Institution depends for its support upon the Alms of the Charitable.

In connection with the Salesian Congregation is the

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a canonically-erected Society, also founded by Don Bosco to help in maintaining and furthering the Salesian Institutes and Missions.

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The conditions of Membership are very simple:

- (a) *To profess the Catholic Religion, and be, at least, 16 years of age.*
- (b) *Be inscribed on the Register of the Association, kept at the Salesian Oratory, Turin.*
- (c) *Recite daily a Patér and Ave in honour of St. Francis of Sales, for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff; and lead a practical Christian life.*

Persons desiring to become Members of our Association are respectfully solicited to send their name and address to the Very Rev. M. Rua, Salesian Oratory, Turin, Italy, who will attend to their request with great pleasure.

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