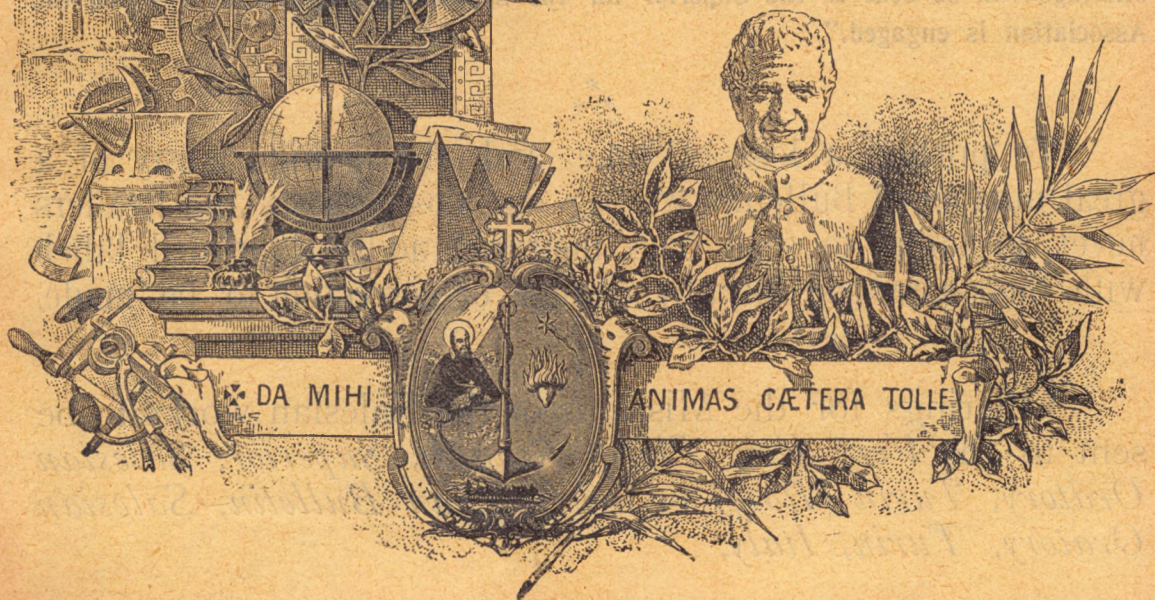


No. 18-19 -- JUNE-JULY -- 1910

♣ Vol. VI. ♣

*Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem:
in die mala liberabit eum Dominus. [Ps. XL. 1]*

Leo S. O. X. III.



Important Notice to our dear Co-operators and Readers.

We beg to express our deep gratitude towards so many zealous Co-operators and Readers who, aware of the amount required for the printing and the postage of the "Bulletin" and desirous to help us in our work, send us annually their offering which for us is a real Providence. We thank them most heartily for their charity and we pray to our Lord to reward them with His choicest blessings.

Other kind Co-operators and Readers not having the means to help us in the same way, write to us excusing themselves not being able to send their mite and even requesting us to withdraw their Bulletin, although they read it with great interest, and this to save us postage expenses. We admire the noble sentiments of these Co-operators and Readers, but we shall not suspend the sending of the Bulletin on such grounds; of course every one must do one's best, if you can not help us now you may do so later on and you can at least let us have the charity of your prayers for the welfare of the association.

We beg to mention here an article of the Rules of the Pious Association (Chapter VI. Art. 3):

"For the Co-operators there is no sum fixed as the prescribed amount of their contribution, but they are supposed and expected to make, either monthly or yearly, an offering of such an alms as the charity of their heart may suggest. These offerings will be sent to the Superior for the support of the works in which the Association is engaged."

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To prevent a loss of time and the going astray of a great number of Bulletins we beg our Co-operators and Readers never to forget to send back their old address (printed label) with their new one for any change or correction to be made.

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* *

Offerings for the Missions or the Salesian works to be sent to the *Very Rev. Philip Rinaldi, Superior, Salesian Oratory, Turin (Italy)* or the *Salesian Bulletin, Salesian Oratory, Turin, Italy.*

The Salesian Bulletin

Organ of the Association of Salesian Co-operators

Via Cottolengo 32, Turin, Italy.

NUMBER SPECIAL

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The members of the Chapter of the Salesian Society beg to thank the ecclesiastic, civil and military Authorities, the Institutes and Associations, all the Co-operators and friends for their sympathy with the Salesian Congregation and their profound esteem towards the Rector Major **Don Michael Rua**, while assisting at the funeral services held at our different houses for the repose of his soul; they also thank all those who being far away from our houses sent their kind condolences.

Turin, Via Cottolengo, 32.

The Prefect General

Father **PHILIP RINALDI**.



The Death of Don Rua.

THE celebration of his Jubilee Mass would have taken place on June 24th. One and all, we had looked forward with eagerness to that day as the crowning reward of his zeal and piety, as well as for an occasion of expressing our gratitude for fifty years of constant labour on our behalf, by word, by work and by example. It seemed to us only the proper thing that he should celebrate that day, and we were imploring it with faith, in the certainty that that occasion would have brought an hour of the purest joy to him who had sacrificed his life for the triumph of the ideals and the spirit of Don Bosco. So profound indeed was this sense of filial gratitude, and so eager the desire to see rewarded even on earth a life thus consumed by sublime sacrifices, that up to the very last, we were confident of being heard.

True it is that Almighty God heard our prayers, not according to our desires, but in a far more wonderful

way. We were imploring for Don Rua a reward and a triumph!...

And he had the holy consolation of seeing around his lowly bed, in sorrowful anxiety, all his sons and well-wishers; the news of his illness, instantly flashed abroad, kept the world attentive for two months, and attracted to his room Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops and Princes, Generals, business men and workers, all urged by the same devoted admiration. For one who never sought, but rather avoided anything like his own praise in order to increase that of Don Bosco, consecrating to it a masterful temperament, talents of a high order, an iron will, untiring zeal and a combination of remarkable energy and force, it ought to be no light comfort to see with what affection he was regarded "who was not so much Don Rua, as the Successor of Don Bosco."

But Don Rua as well had his exaltation. If, as he lay dying, the crowd, in spite of its reverent affection, had to stop on the threshold of his room, for to comparatively few was it granted to enter; now, when he is dead, he receives such homage as no one would have dared to foretell for his so much desired Jubilee. His name, in benediction and sorrow was echoed in municipal assemblies, and traversed the whole earth; before his revered remains there passed during two days an immense multitude composed of persons of all ranks; more than a hundred thousand from various parts formed the cortege on the day of his funeral; and the press of all parties and persuasions gave splendid testimony to the great continuator of the Work of Don Bosco.

In such circumstances our own word must be added. For our friends such a manifestation is most encouraging. An institution, like the Salesian Society, which has a Don Bosco for its Founder and a Don Rua for its continuator, has the mark of Divine Providence upon it; it cannot be a human work, but one put into being and carried on by God.

To others we would make a declaration. In the hour of our deepest affliction you have covered with glory the names of Don Bosco and Don Rua, because, having considered without bias the work of their hands, you have wondered at their overwhelming charity. Do but make a deeper study of those works, and of their ideals, examine the good they are designed to accomplish, and you too, will become our friends and benefactors,

And now a last word to You, the Father that we have lost! Mindful of the perfect example of charity, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and following faithfully the directions of Don Bosco, you had no other desire than to do good to all. They are your own words, pronounced twenty-two years ago:— Obtain for us the satisfaction of doing good to our fellow-man, especially to the children who are poorest and most abandoned; to do good to our neighbour makes us, more than anything else does, like to Almighty God, who, diffusing goodness by his very nature, does good to all, even to those who know him not, and love him not, even to his enemies; — and now the world is in wonder at the marvellous fruits of your charity. By that love, with which we pray and shall always pray around your tomb that your eternal recompense may be great, obtain that a like charity may burn within our hearts, and may be enkindled in the hearts of those who have offered such a spontaneous and splendid homage to your memory!



THE ILLNESS.

To the Salesians, to the Co-operators and to all who followed the progress of the illness with increasing anxiety, changing into profound sorrow for the irreparable loss, these few pages are offered.

It was an excellent thing (observed the Marquis Crispolti) that a good number had an opportunity of seeing the dying man, and that either by word or through the Press, there was a minute chronicle of his last days; because all the value of his great labour has had a touching and powerful confirmation in the description of his fatal illness. And thus Don Rua was no less an apostle within his four walls than he was when he was Don Bosco's right hand, and afterwards his successor.

His last Mass—The announcement to the Salesian Houses—The news in the Press—Her Royal Highness Princess Letitia and His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop—A slight improvement.

Feb. 14th.

Yesterday Don Rua was visited by Doctor Battistini, who found that he had greatly changed since his visit of a week ago. The distinguished physician was considerably alarmed at the extreme weakness of the heart, and begged us to persuade Don Rua to abstain from saying Mass for four or five days, and to remain in complete repose.

Don Rua listened to the advice of the doctor; he smiled and replied that he should much like to say Mass in the little chapel of Don Bosco, which adjoined his room; it was the last Mass he celebrated! Evidently he wished to take leave of the Altar of God, which he had ascended with such devotion for fifty years, and in his heart he must have regarded that as his *Jubilee Mass*.

Feb. 15th.

This morning at five o'clock, he desired to have his cassock put on out of reverence to the Blessed Sacrament, because Fr. Francesia was about to say Mass in the adjacent chapel, and from that day gave him Holy Communion. He followed each part of the Mass with an air of rapture, and after the Mass made his meditation.

To-day he got up about midday, but after taking a little nourishment he had to lay down again. He could do absolutely no more! He called his trusted Balestra to him and said:

Take the correspondence which is on the table and carry it to Fr. Rinaldi. Tell him that he must answer it, because I can do no more.

Feb. 16th.

Doctors Battistini and Clerico held a consultation this evening and found the conditions extremely serious. The Prefect of the Congregation, Fr. Rinaldi immediately sent out a circular to all the Salesian Houses asking for prayers.

The whole house was in consternation, but not Don Rua. As he could not have a little reading during his supper, on account of the visitors, he asked that some paragraphs of the *Bulletin* might be read to him.

Feb. 17th.

To-day commenced the month in preparation for the feast of St. Joseph, and a novena to Our Lady Help of Christians for the restoration of Don Rua to health. May our prayers be heard before the throne of God!

Feb. 18th.

A restless night was passed, but there is a slight improvement: the functions of the heart are somewhat more regular. Don Rua is besides suffering from bronchitis which now seems to be gradually leaving him.

The papers, in the most deferential terms, commence to report and comment upon the illness. The news creates a very sorrowful impression on the city and elsewhere. Letters and telegrams arrive in great numbers requesting information most anxiously.

Her Royal Highness, Princess Letitia, Duchess of Aosta and honorary President of the Turin Ladies Committee asks news personally and expresses her earnest desires for an improvement.

His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop came to visit Don Rua. As soon as he saw the Archbishop enter, he took off his biretta and humbly thanked His Eminence. The Cardinal gave him his blessing and spoke in the most affectionate terms.

When he heard that there was at the Oratory the President of the Catholic Italian University Federation, Sig. Casoli, Don Rua expressed the desire to see him. He gave him his blessing and assured him of his prayers for the work of the Federation.

Only a few others were allowed to see him, at the direction of the doctors. Among those were the Marquis Crispolti. "I was allowed in," he says, "just after the daily visit of the medical men. He was propped up by pillows, because his difficulty in breathing prevented him from lying down. I had been told that I should find him exhausted; but I did not get that impression. We were so used to see his emaciated look that there seemed no great difference from his ordinary state. His hand however, usually so thin was somewhat swollen, but his hand-shake was firm, as was also his voice. To my very hopeful expressions he replied that he was most grateful, but he had no illusions. I knelt for his blessing which he gave me most affectionately and with joyous aspect.

The impression at Rome—The Holy Father's concern.—The Osservatore Romano.

Feb. 19th.

"The function of the heart shows a slight improvement: there is some diminution of the tendency for the blood to stagnate: the diuresis is somewhat increased."

A letter arrived from Rome from the acting Procurator, Fr. Munerati. "I have communicated the distressing news," he says, "to Mgr. Bressan, who said he would inform the Pope immediately. I then went on to His Eminence Cardinal Rampolla, who was very much grieved at the news. He has asked me to write to the Superiors conveying his condolences and asking for a daily report.

His Eminence Card. Vives was quite moved by the news. He took me immediately into his private chapel and we prayed to Our Lady Help of Christians and Don Bosco. I have also communicated the news to His Eminence the Card. Secretary of State, to the Cardinal Vicar, and to His Eminence Cardinal Gennari. All alike are most grieved and express their earnest desires for his recovery. All these circumstances go to show once more in what veneration our beloved Superior is held."

The Prefect General of the Congregation received the following:

"Very Rev. Sir. — The Holy Father has learnt with the utmost concern the news of the illness of the Superior General, Don Rua, and while he is most desirous to hear of an improvement he imparts with every affectionate regard the apostolic benediction. Hoping to receive some reassuring news of your venerated Superior, I am your very devoted servant. — G. Bressan."

The Superior of the *Little House of Divine Providence* sent Fr. Sanguinetti to ask for news

and to assure us that the whole house (which contains about 7,000 persons) is praying for his recovery.

Feb. 20th.

"As yesterday's symptoms are still evident the conditions remain practically stationary."

Demands for information continue to pour in incessantly from all quarters and the Press is enabling us to satisfy them. The *Osservatore Romano* published a most sympathetic article, from which we take the following:

May God, who is Master of all, make the date far distant; we cannot think of the Salesian Society without its Superior General, without Don Rua, who more than any one else approaches the great Founder and Father, who drew most largely of his spirit, and conveyed it to us pure and life-giving. The long intimacy between Don Rua and the Founder, his power of mind and heart to grasp and to retain the secrets of that great soul clearly point him out as the successor and continuer of the wonderful works of charity and social improvement initiated by Don Bosco in the district of Valdocco, and since spread to all parts of the world. At this moment, the distant Houses in Ecuador or Tierra del Fuego do not know that their Father and Superior hovers between life and death; but they know too well how little vitality remains in that body, broken with the weight of an immense burden, and worn out by the labours of a world-wide organisation. All know that Don Rua for the last ten or fifteen years has lived more of a heavenly life than an earthly one. May the Divine Mercy listen favourably to the prayers and supplications of so many children, who are under Salesian care, and preserve to us the Successor of Don Bosco.

Feb. 21st.

"Some hours of repose were obtained during the night. The general conditions are unchanged, but the pulse is slightly stronger."

We many now allow ourselves more confidence!

Among the visitors was Commendatore Rinaudo with whom Don Rua spoke quite familiarly. He afterwards remarked to Fr. Albera: *I was much comforted by that visit, especially at hearing the Commendatore speak so well of Don Bosco.*

Feb. 22nd.

"The slight improvement in the general condition is maintained: the diuresis is increased: the condition of the heart is fair; there is complete mental lucidity."

Doctor Battistini defined the illness as *Senile miocarditis*.

The Bishop of Aosta—The Triduum to the Holy Martyrs—The old-pupils of Lombardy—The Bishop of Asti—Mgr. Castrale—
“Thus the Saints die.”

Feb. 23rd.

“The conditions show hardly any variation but are not re-assuring.”



Piazza Maria Ausiliatrice — Waiting for the funeral.

Don Rua was very pleased to receive a visit from Mgr. Tasso, Bishop of Aosta, a former alumnus of the Oratory. He was informed, that through the initiative of a former pupil, a triduum was about to be commenced to the Holy Martyrs of Turin, to obtain his cure. Don Rua received the news with joy and sent his thanks to the promoter. However, being desired to express his own feelings about the end of his illness, he evaded the question by saying:

— *May the will of God be done!*

In the evening he seemed a little more relieved. Before commencing his prayers he recited aloud and with special fervour a hymn in honour of Our Lady, one of those taught by Don Bosco to

his first boys, and which used to be sung by one of Don Rua's companions, the cleric Secondo Pettiva: *O Mary when I thee behold.*

Fr. Francesia took the opportunity of asking him to pray with the others present to obtain his cure; he smiled as though agreeing to it.

The Holy Father, who had obtained frequent information from Fr. Munerati, our acting Procurator, was greatly pleased by the news of the slight improvement, and while expressing the hope of continued progress he again sent a special blessing.

To Fr. Rigoli, Provost of Somma Lombardo, and President of the past-students Association in Lombardy, who had come to offer the good wishes of the past-pupils, Don Rua said:

I congratulate the past-pupils of the Association

for I see that they are doing good, and that their numbers are increasing; their Association is destined to do much good to its members, to their families and to society. I bless them with all my heart.

The Superioress General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Sister Catherine Daghero, was received together with other religious. Don Rua was pleased to hear of the prosperity of their undertakings and sent his blessing to each one of the members.

Feb. 24th.

Conditions unchanged. — The improvement that had set in seems to make no progress, and

this is a cause for apprehension lest a relapse should follow.

A visit was paid to Don Rua by Mgr. Spandre, Prince-Bishop of Asti. This much esteemed former pupil of the Oratory knelt for a blessing, with tears in his eyes, and unable to say anything for emotion. He was conscious of Don Rua's precarious condition and was anxious not to cause further effort.

In the afternoon the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Turin, Mgr. Castrale, accompanied by Fr. Franco and Count Olivieri di Vernier, came to see Don Rua. They were at the Oratory for the thirteenth general assembly of the Piedmontese Agricultural Federation, which was held in the theatre hall. Others also asked for an audience. Among them were Commendatore Rezzara from Bergamo, Count Caisotti of Chiusano, Professor Blotto, Sig. Sella, Cavaliere Macciotta, Fr. Suppo and Fr. Caroglio the Provost of Altavilla. Don Rua received the party saying: *I congratulate you on the zeal you have shown in promoting the agricultural advancement: it is an important factor in the work of saving souls.*

Having received his blessing the distinguished party came out. All were much moved and could hardly restrain their tears. "Thus the saints die," exclaimed Commendatore Rezzara.

A day of sadness—A welcome visit—A letter from Cardinal Rampolla—The Bishop of Massa Carrara—Her Royal Highness the Princess Gonzaga—Cardinal Mercier—The Archbishop of Smyrna—The kindly thoughtfulness of the Archbishop of Vercelli.

Feb. 25th.

A sleepless night: the heart is getting gradually weaker.

This is a day of anxiety. Calling to mind the anniversary of his brother's death (Feb. 25th 1853) Don Rua dwelt upon the circumstance for some time.

— *To-day I thought that I should die; he said to Fr. Francesia:*

I thought my brother Louis was coming to take me

— *But you are no longer Louis' brother: you are ours! and we have no mind to let you leave us. Do you remember, it was on the day after the commemoration Don Bosco made for your brother, on March 3rd 1853, that I came to the Oratory, and we have been brothers ever since.*

— *Yes, it is true—And he added:—I beg you not to give an alarm in the house! And in the meantime, may the will of God be done!*

He was able to receive several visitors. The first was the very welcome one from Professor, the Rev. Brother Chiozza, the Principal of St Joseph's School, with one of the students to represent all the boys at the Christian Brother's School, where Don Rua had passed his early years and had made his First-Communion. Calling to mind his old superiors with great affection, he told them that their visit was one of the most welcome, and thanked them heartily. The two visitors expressed the most fervent wishes that he would celebrate his Jubilee Mass, adding that it would be a day of rejoicing for the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Don Rua smiled and added:

—However we must reckon with our Master!

From Rome there came the following, directed to Don Rua himself: —Very Rev. Father.— I have heard of your illness with the utmost grief, and have not ceased to beg Almighty God to restore you to health. I have asked Fr. Munerati to keep me informed of every detail, and today I have heard with great joy that there is an improvement. I earnestly pray that God may restore you completely, so that you may continue for many years to guide the Sons of Don Bosco in the path of good works. Accept my assurance of profound esteem and sympathy with which I remain most affectionately in Christ. — Mariano Card. Rampolla.

Mgr. Varady telegraphed from Budapest the sympathy, and earnest desire for better news, of the Salesian Co-operators who were gathered at the Conference. The message was particularly acceptable as nothing is more earnestly desired by Don Rua than the expansion of the work and ideals of Don Bosco.

The triduum mentioned above was preached by Fr. Piano. Cardinals, bishops and other eminent persons continue to come daily to ask for information. The Municipality of Turin sends every day for news.

Mgr. Marengo (of the Salesian Society) Bishop of Massa Carrara arrived on the 25th.

Feb. 26th.

The conditions remain unchanged.

After having celebrated Holy Mass, Mgr. Marengo visited Don Rua and stayed a long while in conversation with him.

There were admitted Her Royal Highness Princess Gonzaga from Milan, Signor Capello with Countess Amalia, Very Rev. Canon Anfossi and Don Rua's nephew, Professor Joseph Rua from Rome.

Fr. Gemelli and the Provincial of the Minorites came to pay their respects.

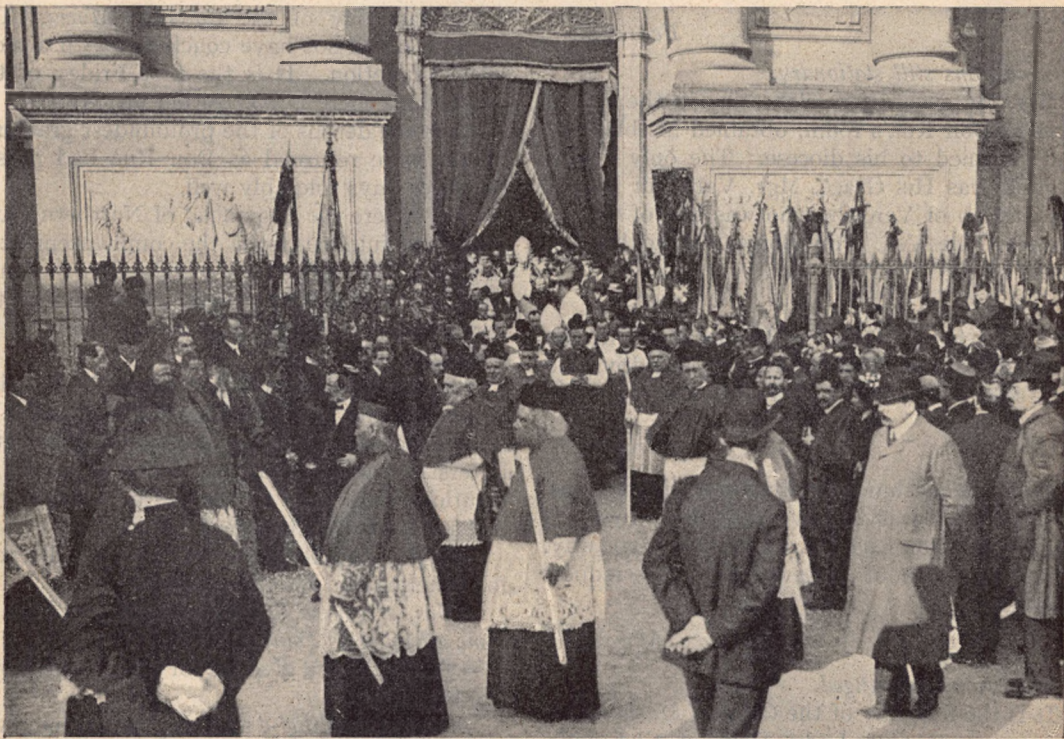
The Mayor of Turin, Sig. Rossi, member of the

Senate, and Sig. Cattaneo came to add their names to the visitors' list.

At half-past seven His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines and Primate of Belgium, together with his Auxiliary, Mgr. Wactes came to the Oratory. His Eminence was the bearer of a special blessing from the Holy Father. We shall not forget the great kindness of this distinguished Prelate, who after visiting Monte Cassino, the home of the Benedictine Order, wishes also to go to the Mother House of the Salesians to console Don Rua by

— Before all I must fulfil the Holy Father's desire. When I went to take leave of the Pope, and said that I should stop at Turin to visit the Superior General of the Salesians, he said: Very good, take my blessing to Don Rua, and express my most ardent desires for his recovery.

And he gave the blessing, all kneeling down. Going then to the bed he took Don Rua's hand and kissed it. The others then left, while the Cardinal remained alone for a short time in converse with Don Rua. Then, asking him to pray for his native land, he went in to the adjoining



The funeral — The Bishops coming out of the Sanctuary.

his visit and to ask, in the name of the Belgian Government for Salesians for the Congo.

Feb. 27th.

Don Rua slept almost all through the night; the difficulty in breathing has almost ceased.

He was visited by Cardinal Mercier and the Archbishop of Smyrna. The strain however compelled the doctors to forbid any more visits. An exception was made for Dr. Vignolo Lutati.

Cardinal Mercier, having celebrated Mass in the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians, went up to Don Rua's room, accompanied by his Auxiliary. He had hardly seen the Cardinal when he stretched out his arms towards him; but the Cardinal said:

chapel to pray for a few minutes. He then came out, greatly moved.

When Dr. Vignolo Lutati went in. Don Rua said:

—*Oh my dear Doctor, how pleased I am to see you!*

The doctor answered:

—I come as a friend to see you, but on condition that you do not speak.

And Don Rua with that delicate gratitude which he invariably showed to benefactors limited himself to replying:

—*See, my dear Doctor, as soon as I was able to take a little wine, they have brought some Barolo, sent to me by the Vignolo firm.*

Last night Fr. Cerruti reached the Oratory in

great anxiety. He was already at Naples on his way to Catania to preside at the first meeting of the Diocesan Directors of the Co-operators; but receiving news of Don Rua's dangerous condition, he returned immediately. Don Rua was glad to see him back and questioned him about his mission.

After supper prayers were said in the Sanctuary, and the Director announced that the solemn triduum of the *Corte di Maria*, fixed for the 2nd 3rd and 4th of the next month, would be offered for Don Rua's restoration to health.

Feb. 28th.

Conditions still stationary.

Mgr. Marengo after celebrating in the chapel next to Don Rua's room, obtained his blessing, and returned to his diocese. The only visitor allowed was His Grace, Mgr. Valfre di Bonzo, Archbishop of Vercelli, who was one of the visitors to the Ven. Don Bosco, during his last illness in 1888.

The "Corte di Maria"—His interest in the missionaries—The Bishops of Mondovì and Casale—The death of Fr. Lazzerio.

March 1st.

Messages continue to arrive from all directions. Fr. Francesia was to have gone away to give a retreat, but Don Rua desired him not to go away. It was not without misgiving that this request was heard.

March 2nd.

Conditions unchanged.

It is the first day of the *Corte di Maria* in the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians. There is every sign of a great feast in honour of the Mother of God. Will the desired favour be obtained. Don Rua joins with us in our prayers. To the Director he said this morning :

—*You are making the Corte di Maria for me : but I have commenced before you. As midnight struck I was awake and I said to Our Lady : "This is the day for your Corte, I unite myself to all the children of the Oratory in rendering you homage."*

Today he got up for a little while to have the bed arranged. It is only since Nov. 28th of last year, and then at the command of the doctor, that he has had a bed in his room. Until then, during so many years of toil, he took his few hours rest on a sort of couch which was converted into a bed at night-time.

He wished to walk across the room, but had not the strength for it. To see so much will-power and so frail a form was truly touching.

March 3rd.

The second day of the *Corte di Maria*! Prayers are renewed with great fervour. Even the inmates of the reformatory school join in the prayers for a miraculous restoration to health.

The Directors of the Co-operators in Sicily gathered together in conference at Catania send their good wishes and express their desire for his cure. Don Rua sends his thanks and his blessing.

March 4th.

The last day of the *Corte di Maria*. The triduum could not have concluded with a more solemn function. It is the first Friday of the month and there is Exposition all day.

From the depths of the profoundest gratitude thanks were returned as Don Rua had passed the three days tolerably well.

Fr. Pagliere the Provincial of Northern Patagonia had fulfilled, from the commencement of this year, the duties of a secretary in the ante-chamber to Don Rua's room. He thus had the opportunity of frequent conversation with his Superior.

Don Rua had long talks with him on America, Argentine and the Missions of Patagonia. He mentioned with what joy he always receives the letters of the Missionaries, many of whom he mentions from time to time with particular interest. Noticing this Fr. Pagliere said:

—Signor Don Rua, you have a special regard for America and the Missionaries.

—*Yes, of course, I try to regard them with the same affection as Don Bosco did.*

—Then will you give me for all of them a special blessing.

—*Oh, most willingly!* and his paternal hand was raised more than once during his illness to bless the Missionaries.

March 5th.

Several being admitted to see him he was most kind and thoughtful, and on leaving they could not restrain their tears.

March 6th.

To day, Sunday, there were special prayers in the Festive Oratories. The girls' Oratory had a general Communion this morning. Heaven continues to reward these prayers, for this evening, the doctors report definite improvement. *Deo gratias!*

March 7th.

The improvement continues.

There came to visit him Mgr. Ressa, Bishop of Mondovì, and Mgr. Lodovico dei Marchesi Ga-

votti, Bishop of Casale, of whom he begged a blessing.

At half past six this evening there died at Mathi, Turin, Fr. Joseph Lazzero, one of the favourite pupils of Don Bosco. It will be sad news for Don Rua, and it cannot be kept long from him, as he is constantly asking about him.

March 8th.

The death of our confrère Fr. Lazzero was announced to him.

He was deeply afflicted, asked for particulars, and thanked his attendants for their thoughtfulness in not telling him on the previous night. Then he said:

—*Dear Fr. Lazzero! his suffering is over, his long purgatory is come to an end.*

And he commenced to pray.

March 9th.

He passed a sleepless night, and from time to time he called to mind the figure of Fr. Lazzero.

—*Fr. Lazzero is calling me!* he said several times. *Fr. Lazzero is waiting for me!*

This made us very sad! We enter now on a period of gradual decline.

His Eminence Card. Maffi—A touching scene—He seems a little better—He fixes an horarium—The Bishop of Ivrea—The Feast of St. Joseph.

March 10th.

Notwithstanding the restless nights the condition of the patient remains fair; but in reality he is now in a period of gradual decline. The doctors do not keep us in ignorance; yet we live in hopes.....

This evening His Eminence Cardinal Maffi arrived at Turin, staying with Cardinal Richelmy. He has come to give a course of spiritual exercises to the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. It should be explained that the Supreme Council of the Conferences had begged Don Rua to urge their request to His Eminence: and Don Rua did so. The Cardinal, who had said that if Don Rua would take over the parish of Marina di Pisa, he would never refuse him a favour, said on receiving the intimation.

—I cannot say no to Don Rua: I must go to Turin!

And he came. On arriving at the station he asked for news immediately, for this illustrious Prince of the Church has never concealed his veneration for the Successor of Don Bosco.

March 11th.

The improvement notified a few days ago is maintained, but it is quite stationary.

At 9 o'clock, His Eminence Card. Maffi, accompanied by his Secretary Mgr. Calandra came to see Don Rua. In the waiting room he met Dr. Battistini and Dr. Clerico, from whom His Eminence learned that there was a slight improvement. Then he entered the sick chamber. It was a remarkable and touching scene. The Cardinal comforted Don Rua with the most touching expressions of sympathy and hopefulness. He spoke of the work of the Salesians in Pisa, and afterwards Don Rua asked his blessing. He gave it, and then knelt for the blessing of the dying man.

March 12th.

Card. Maffi came to say Mass at the Altar of Our Lady Help of Christians. Moved at the sight of so many boys going to Communion, he afterwards gave a short address. He congratulated them on the profit they had made of their training, and calling to their minds the Gospel text, he recommended them to be the *salt* and *light* in the midst of their companions, and afterwards in their surroundings in the world.

The invalid does not get worse, but he gets no better. We are still hoping.

March 13th.

The promoter of the triduum to the Holy Martyrs of Turin organised a service of thanksgiving for the improvement. Fr. Francesia gave the Benediction.

March 14th.

Hopes are a little higher. The night was peaceful and he appears somewhat relieved.

He himself is under no delusion: he has an inventory made of his room, specifying the contents of every drawer and shelf with a wonderful exactness; precise as he always was, so was he to the end.

March 15th.

It is now a month that he has been in bed; and seeing that the conditions are remaining stationary he occupies himself only with the thought of passing the time well. He called the lay-brother Balestra and said to him:

—Take a piece of paper and write on it:

A time-table (pro tempore).

5. a. m. *Calling-time.*

5.30 *Mass. Communion and Thanksgiving.*

6.15. *Meditation.*

6.45. *Rest.*

8 till 9. *The doctors' visit, breakfast and audiences.*

9 (*Medicine*), *visitors from outside if possible (and repose).*

12 *Dinner and a little conversation.*

2 *p. m. rest.*

3-30 *prayers and reading.*

4 (*Medicine*).

6. *rest and some conversation.*

8. *Supper, prayers and preparations for the night.*

NB. — *He recommends the observance of this to the faithful lay-brother Balestra.*

March 16th.

Considering the attention with which the details of the illness are followed, it was soon known that he had imposed a time-table on himself, and that the lay-brother, who was accustomed to the remarkable regularity of the invalid, would see to its observance.

It is already known in fact, that at five precisely, Balestra is listening at the half-open door of Don Rua's room, in which there watches a confrère as an assistant to the infirmarian. And as soon as the lay-brother notices that Don Rua moves, or coughs, he says *Benedicamus Domino!* Don Rua answers with promptitude: *Deo gratias!* It is his own wish; and he at once prepares to hear Mass. The bed-clothes are covered with a white cloth, and as soon as the little bell gives notice that Mass is commencing, he makes the sign of the cross and answers the priest with the server: then he opens his small missal and follows the parts of the Holy Sacrifice as the priest proceeds.

As soon as Fr. Francesia heard of the strictness with which he was keeping to the time-table and it was maintained right through the illness, he remonstrated gently with Don Rua. The latter did not utter a word in reply. But it could be noticed by his expression, that he was sorry to be urged to give up a resolution which he felt able to keep.

March 17th.

Mgr. Filippello Bishop of Ivrea came to visit him; and Father Roberto who preached the Lent so ably at the Metropolitan church was also admitted. Don Rua received the pious and learned religious with the cordiality that the Capuchin Fathers inspire. He congratulates him on the good his preaching had done in the town and said that, had he been able, he would have gone to hear him; he also desired him to stay and dine with the Superior Chapter. Father Roberto, who was supposed to be taking a day's rest, utilised it in visiting the Oratory, and on leaving expressed his admiration for all that he had seen, adding:

—I am profoundly struck by all that I have seen, what affected me most was my visit to Don Rua: he must be a saint.

To the Provincial, Fr. Barberis, who said that the central Province was offering continual prayers for his recovery, he expressed his gratitude and sent his blessing to all. He spoke of several houses in particular, and especially of the Professional Schools at San Benigno, where some boys were making a half hour of adoration after night prayers to implore his restoration to health.

March 18th.

The vigil of St. Joseph. — With visible comfort he spoke of several Salesians and Benefactors who bore that name; Fr. Lazzero was among them. To the trusty Balestra he said:

—*Tomorrow is your feast-day too*, as the attendant tried to raise him on the pillow; and as he was alone just then, and could not quite manage to lift him, he said:—*Try again, some day, I shall do you that service and try to draw you up to Paradise.*

His dearest thought was for the Holy Father, since he knew that the Pope was taking so intimate a part in all that concerned him; he arranged for the Prefect General, Fr. Rinaldi, to telegraph on the following day to Rome, conveying the sincerest good wishes of the Salesian Society and those of its invalid Superior.

March 19th.

The Feast of St. Joseph! A Solemn Function was held in the Sanctuary; the general prayer was for Don Rua.

The conditions remain still unchanged.

Thoughtfulness—To the Co-operators—An American paper—The Holy Viaticum—Remembrances—A hopeful sign.

March 20th.

Palm Sunday. Accustomed for so many years to see Don Rua perform the ceremony of the day in the Sanctuary of Our Lady, his absence was painfully noticeable. Mindful, however of the pious custom, he sent palms to several benefactors, telling Fr. Rinaldi to give them the message from him, that *they were to conquer all the difficulties of life so that they might receive the Palm in Paradise.*

March 21st.

Perhaps we are deceiving ourselves; but it is certain that he still gives reason for hope.

Being asked for a word to the Co-operators, as the April *Bulletin* was being printed, he thought awhile and then replied!

—*Tell the Co-operators that I thank them! I know that they are praying for me, and I pray for*

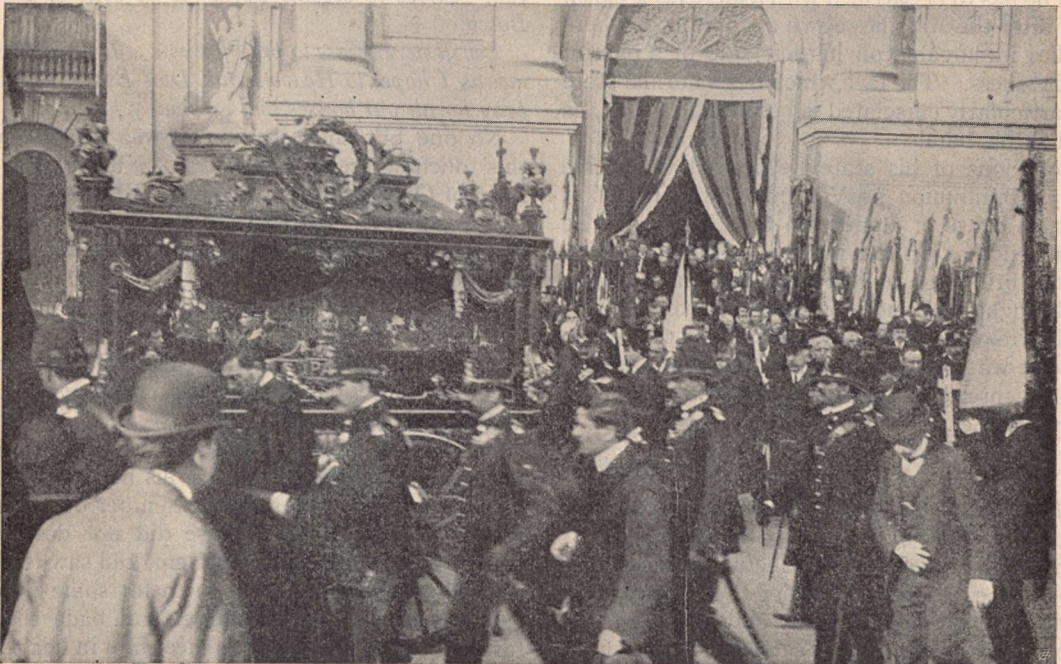
all of them, and their families. As to my health I am in the hands of God; if it pleases God to cure me, I now declare that I desire to consecrate the life which He will give me, to the care of the young as I have always striven to do, and to all those works in which the Salesians and their Co-operators are engaged. And if it shall please God to call me to Himself.....

Here he was interrupted, and some one said:—Oh no! Don Rua, you have to celebrate your Jubilee Mass! But he only smiled and taking up his last words said:

..... if it shall please God to take me to himself, I

The *Momento* published an article taken from the *Patria degli Italiani*, the well-known paper of Buenos Ayres; although a liberal paper, it offers a splendid tribute to the Successor of Don Bosco.

The papers of the town, it says, in its issue of Feb. 23rd, illustrating the article with a photo of Don Rua, have published telegrams from Rome with the news of the grave conditions of the Superior General of the Salesians, and they point to a well-founded apprehension of his imminent death. The news must be of first importance since all grades of the Press are dwelling upon it; and it gives an opportunity of dwelling upon the



The funeral — The hearse.

promise to pray likewise for all, even from the other world.

Then there arrived the reply to the telegram sent to the Holy Father: "*To Don Rinaldi, Prefect General of the Salesians, Turin.—The Holy Father, pleased with your filial homage, thanks you most heartily, and blesses your venerated Superior General, Don Rua, and all the Salesians.—R. Card. Merry del Val.*"

March 22nd.

Then is there no more hope? The improvement seems to have gone and the venerated invalid is in the same conditions as a month ago, aggravated by the exhaustion produced by a month of suffering. The doctors tell us with sorrow:

—We have turned back again!

character of the man and his work. In the columns of a paper such as *La Patria degli Italiani*, which strives to weigh the merit of those who love their native land and benefit humanity, it would be well to summarise the work of Don Rua during the twenty two years of his direction. It will be a tribute of affection and justice.....

The article concludes thus:

"This year which was to crown him with joy in the celebration of his Jubilee Mass, this year will perhaps be transformed into one of grief, and the coming festivities of June 24th may perhaps be cut off by sad news. At the side of the altar will there perchance open a grave? We hope not; but, however, while the world is in dread for the precarious existence of Don Rua, while even the House of Savoy is deeply interested in the sad tidings, it is only just to render the ho-

mage of reverent gratitude to him, who with the mind and heart of an apostle who loved his native land, raised up the lowly, and instituted far-reaching schemes to aid the emigrant from his native country. Gratitude knows no party.

March 23rd.

The decline is more accentuated. It is painful to see the invalid. In the first days of his illness he could put on his cassock, although remaining lying down, or seated and rested or supported at the sides; afterwards he made use of a black shawl, so that he might be up to receive Holy Communion and visitors, now he has to be satisfied with a large neck-cloth, and after the Mass lies down again in bed, where he lies immovable on his left side in a painful helplessness. The face which in its normal state is particularly emaciated is becoming swollen, as well as his hands.

Conscious of his state he desired to receive Holy Communion as Viaticum but without it being a cause of anxiety to the House, and he arranged that on the morrow, a day on which all the priests go to Holy Communion, it might be brought to him from the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians. Although the arrangement was made with this paternal thoughtfulness, it spread throughout the House and struck all with grief.

March 24th.

Holy Thursday.—At 6.15 a. m. before the commencement of the sacred functions in the Church, the Prefect Fr. Rinaldi, accompanied by all the confrères, bearing lighted candles, went in procession to Don Rua's room to give him the Viaticum. In its extreme simplicity the ceremony could not have been more solemn. The celebrant had hardly pronounced with sobbing voice the *Misereatur* and *Indulgentiam*, when Don Rua made a sign that he wished to speak. All turned their eyes towards him in great expectation, while Don Rua, raising himself somewhat, gave in a clear voice the following recommendations, which will be long remembered:

—*Under these circumstances I feel it a duty to say a few words to you.*

The first is one of gratitude for the prayers you have offered, and are offering for me. My heart felt thanks. May God reward you for those as well which you will offer for me.

Another word I wish to add, because I do not know if I shall have another occasion of speaking to you altogether; and I must ask you to tell those who are absent. I shall always pray to God for you: I hope that He will grant the request which I

make to Him for all of you and especially for those who are at the Oratory or shall be in the future. I desire most earnestly that we should all become and remain worthy sons of Don Bosco! Don Bosco, on his death bed made an appointment with us all to meet him in Paradise. And that is the remembrance I would leave to you. Don Bosco wished to have all his sons with him: to secure this I recommend three things: A great love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament.—A lively devotion to Mary Most Holy, and great respect, obedience and devotion to the Pastors of the Church, particularly the Supreme Pontiff! This is the souvenir that I leave you. Strive to become worthy to be sons of Don Bosco.

I shall never cease to pray for you. If God takes, me, as I hope, to Heaven with Don Bosco, I shall pray for all our houses and especially for this.

No one but the community was present at this touching scene, except a few Nuns of Mary Help of Christians, and Professor Bettazzi, who had asked it as a supreme favour, and wrote in the Register: "*happy to have assisted at the Viaticum of a Saint.*"

March 25th.

Yesterday after receiving the Viaticum he appeared more at ease; the night was peaceful, and hope has returned.

He himself however has no illusions. The affectionate interest shown by his nephews who visit him daily, makes him remember other relations outside Turin. These did not dare to disturb him; but he sent for them, and saw them all separately, spoke with them for some time, gave them some good counsel and bade them farewell telling them also to meet him in heaven.

March 26th.

Holy Saturday.—Fr. Gusmano, as soon as the ceremonies were over went in to wish him Easter Joys, adding that all had desired to see him up for that day. He replied:

—*Quite so, and I also expected to be already up.*

Sister Eulalie Bosco, grand-niece of the Venerable Don Bosco and Provincial of the Piedmont Houses of the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians, was admitted to see him. She was accompanied by her secretary, and they desired him to give them a word to bear in his name to the Mother General and to all the Sisters.

—*Tell the Mother General, he said, that I hope this Easter will be one of true peace and consolation and fervour for the Superiors for the Sisters and the Novices. That is my wish for Easter 1910. If God should extend my life I shall come to Nizza and renew my good wishes.*

An anxious hour—Extreme Unction—General Samminiatielli—His gratitude to the doctors—Towards the end.

March 27th.

The day passed fairly well, although that improvement was not clear which we had dared to hope for. Moreover this evening all were cast into a state of alarm. About half past nine the invalid showed signs of the phenomenon of *embolie punctiforme*,

March 28th.

Don Rua is somewhat disturbed by the occurrence of yesterday evening.

—*I frightened you all!* he said in the morning to the assistant Balestra; and the circumstance was explained to him.

Doctor Battistini, and Doctor Clerico who comes night and morning to see him, found that all trace of the attack of *embolie* had disappeared. While they were explaining the cause of it to Fr. Rinaldi, Balestra came in and said:



The last part of the procession in Corso Regina Margherita.

By degrees the power of speech disappeared and consciousness was lost. In a moment the Superiors were round the bed, and Dr. Battistini was telephoned for. He came at once in his motor-car, and comforted us by saying that the attack was a passing one and would pass without leaving any trace.

In fact Don Rua regained consciousness and was surprised to see around him Fr. Rinaldi, Fr. Albera, Fr. Cerruti, Fr. Bertello, Fr. Piscetta, all the Superiors.

However under some pretence that they had come to say good night they managed to take their leave without alarming him.

—And would it not be possible for Don Rua to get up a little today.

—Today it would be impossible, said Dr. Battistini, we shall see tomorrow.

Who would believe it? This apparently ingenuous request had been suggested by Don Rua himself, who very likely wished to drive away the anxiety caused by his dangerous turn on the night before.

However the Doctors allowed him just a little meat, to see if it might give him some strength which seemed to be diminishing. But there could not possibly be any further delusion. For this reason about half past six Fr. Rinaldi, hav-

ing previously arranged with the other Superiors, went to Don Rua and said:

—Signor Don Rua; we have now tried every remedy, and with no improvement; would you like to receive Extreme Unction? It might also be beneficial to your health.

—*Most willingly, most willingly*, he replied, and pointing to a book-shelf he added: *Get me down the ritual!* He then wished to read over all the rubrics concerning the administration of the Sacrament, and soon after it was administered to him by Fr. Albera, the Spiritual Director, only the members of the Superior Chapter being present. It was not known to any one else in the House: even the assistants and infirmarian were not present, so as not to make his sons and benefactors sad before the time.

When the ceremony was over he called Don Rinaldi and thanked him heartily for his pious suggestion.

March 29th.

We do not know what to think about the illness. Our Superior's words at one time give us hope, at another they almost make us despair of a cure: but the effects of prayers are evident. No one can assign any human reason for his frequent rallies, which are scientifically and physically impossible. This evening the members of the Superior Chapter were present in conference around his bed.

March 30th.

He was visited today by General, Count Samminiatielli Zabarella, commanding the Military Division of Livorno. The invalid conversed with his distinguished visitor with remarkable alacrity, so much so that on coming out, the Count expressed his conviction that he would recover.

However, our revered Superior has now for some little time, even during the day had periods of semi-unconsciousness; it is true that his nights have been sleepless, or nearly so, but the doctors do not regard it with any alarm.

The invalid suffers from swellings on the legs, which have been very sore for some time, and have been greatly aggravated by his long period of being in bed. But there is never a complaint. If any one suggests: You are in pain Signor Don Rua?—the ordinary reply is: *No!*—very rarely: —*Just a little.*

His thoughts are directed continually towards the glory of God and the salvation of souls. He says to Fr. Albera:

—*Ever since I used to go to the school of the Christian Brothers at Porta Palatina, I have read with great interest the annals of the Propagation of the*

Faith. Even in the midst of my work I found time to see them, and I hope I have done my best to co-operate in this work. After my death I trust that my sons will continue to be zealous in it.

It gave him great pleasure to learn, that at one of our Houses in the Missions, there is a monthly gathering of the neighbouring priests, to make the exercises of a good death according to the method of Don Bosco.

—*What great good*, he observed, *is effected by everything that Don Bosco has established.*

Full of gratitude, notwithstanding the recommendations of the doctors that he should not tire himself, he immediately receives any who may wish to see him. It was told him that a very old sister at the Refuge was most desirous to receive his blessing.

—*Yes, yes, I must see her*, he exclaimed; *I wish to thank this Sister and the Refuge, for they have done great service to me.* Afterwards he said:

—*It is the duty of charity, and one cannot do otherwise.*

—But you suffer greatly, and become tired by so many visits.

March 31st.

The month passed away in great anxiety. The doctors, who were already convinced of general exhaustion, and a marked weakness of the heart, came to visit him again this evening, and told us sorrowfully that the end must be near: science has no resource left!

The dying man, taking no notice of his illness, took the hand of Dr. Battistini between his own, and affectionately pressed it saying:

—*I thank you for all you have done for me. If God takes me to heaven I shall always pray for you and for your family!*

The doctor kissed the hand and came away showing great emotion. To Fr. Angelo Bologna, who went in every day to see him, he said:

—*Fr. Bologna is come to see me, but I shall soon say farewell!*

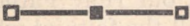
—To Fr. Lemoyne, who had come back after the death of Fr. Lazzerio at Mathi, and who used to go in every evening to talk with him awhile he said.

—*I must leave you, dear Fr. Lemoyne, I must leave you.*

—The Superior Chapter of Our Society determined on a triduum of prayers in the Sanctuary of Our Lady Help of Christians.



TOWARDS THE END.



The solemn triduum—Gradually weaker—
A day of pious counsels—The last Circular to the Salesian Houses—To the Co-operators—Holy peace.

April 1st

It is the First Friday of the Month and from morning till night the Most Holy Sacrament is

and even the organic exhaustion — by itself — may be the cause of death, in a few weeks."

Don Rua himself, to those approaching him today, seemed under no misapprehension as to his approaching departure and gave pious counsels bidding farewell *until we meet in Paradise!*...

It is impossible to repeat all these saintly admonitions:

To the Director Fr. Marchisio he said:

—*"You will tell the boys that Our Lady has given them a great grace in bringing them into her own house. Tell them to make themselves ever more*



The funeral — Behind the hearse.

exposed in the Sanctuary. The members of the Chapter have reserved to themselves the functions of this triduum and together with their confrères and the pupils take their turns in adoration before the Most Holy Sacrament.

Doctor Battistini issues a disquieting Bulletin.

"The state of the patient, already causing great anxiety from a disturbance of the heart's action owing to senile miocarditis, has become worse from the ever-increasing exhaustion. From the actual conditions there is but little hope of any improvement, rather one must anticipate the sad termination as not far off. Actually there is no immediate danger, but it may soon show itself;

worthy of it by study, work, good example and piety. To those who are here and to those who will come after them ever recommend the frequentation of the Sacraments and devotion to Mary Help of Christians."

To Fr. Barberis, who is preparing a new edition of the Life of Fr. Andrew Beltrami.

— *"We have always been friends; I desire that we should be such for all eternity... Take courage, recommend yourself also to Don Bosco and to Fr. Beltrami. Each day of my illness I have commended myself and continue to commend myself also to Don Bosco and to Fr. Beltrami!"*

With Fr. Rinaldi he conversed very quietly for more than half an hour, intrusting him with

many special recommendations for the Salesians for the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and for the Cooperators.

To the Salesians he repeated the solemn admonitions given on the 24th March.

— *"To our confrères repeat what I said the day I received Viaticum and remind them that our happiness will consist in faithfully maintaining the traditions of Don Bosco and carefully avoiding all search after novelties."*

To the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians:

— *"You will tell them that they are very dear to Mary Help of Christians; may they ever deserve this special love of our dear Mother!..."*

For the Cooperators he expressed in touching terms his profound gratitude:

— *"When I die, you need not write a letter to the Cooperators, as was done for Don Bosco. Nevertheless I wish you to say that I am filled with gratitude for the help they have given to our works. If Don Bosco could say, that without them he would have done nothing, how much less could I, poor creature, have done! I am bound therefore to remember them most particularly. I pray for them, for their families and friends, that the Lord may reward them in this life and in the next!"*

To Fr. Minguzzi he spoke with great affection:

— *"I bless you and all your labours; go on with great courage; remember me to the Association of Former Pupils and say that I bless them all."*

To the pious mother of a Salesian, who died in the odour of Sanctity, Signora Caterina Beltrami of Omegna who asked his blessing, having given it, he added:

— *"Do you now obtain dear Fr. Beltrami's blessing for me and a continuance of his protections!"*

April 2nd

In the Sanctuary, second day of the Triduum. The devotions and pious practices usually performed at the *'Corte di Maria'*.

Doctor Battistini confirmed yesterday's Bulletin, adding: The symptoms are worse. Fr. Rinaldi despatched a circular to all the Salesian Houses announcing the imminent danger.

Don Rua received a visit from Fr. Eugenio Reffo who brought him the good wishes and told him of the prayers said for him by the Pious Society of St. Joseph. He thanked him cordially and enquired after his brother, Professor Henry, a clever painter.

— *"Oh! he is working hard."*

— *"That is well!"* responded Don Rua.

Calling to mind the special plenary indulgence to be gained at the point of death, granted

to Don Bosco in 1858 by our Holy Father Pius IX. for all those who were then at the Oratory, he rejoiced that our Holy Father Pius X. had extended it to all the faithful who profess their willingness to accept from God whatever kind of death it may please Him to send them and concluded:

— *"Help me, that I may gain it! At that moment suggest to me some ejaculatory prayers, and even when I am unconscious give me absolution from time to time."*

— *"But in suggesting many prayers, shall we not weary you and disturb your union with God?"*

— *"No on the contrary, you will do me a kindness."*

He asked of Fr. Albera:

— *"When I am dead, where will you put me?"*

Was this a sign of his wish to rest beside Don Bosco, which was also the wish of his sons?

Fr Albera, much moved, replied:

— *"Oh! Don Rua, we are not thinking of such things! we hope you will recover and yet be able to do much good!"*

The invalid in his extreme delicacy would not insist; but, as if to efface the painful impression caused by his words, turned his request into a joke, saying:

— *"Do you know, I made that request so that on the day of judgment I need not be seeking my poor bones in one place whilst they are in another, and have to wander about to find them!"*

A proposal of the Catholic Artisans—The last day of the triduum—"The end is at hand"—The "Father" of the *Piccola Casa*—A sad Bulletin—"Vocations, vocations!"—The last advice—He asks for the prayers for the dying—Sad hours.

April 3rd.

The last day of the triduum!

The Committee "Pro Processione Maria Auxiliatrice" and the Society of the Catholic Artisans of Turin, with the permission of the Ecclesiastical Authorities, had arranged for today at 3.30 p. m. a pious pilgrimage to the tomb of Don Bosco at Valsalice, "in order to obtain from the Divine Goodness the cure of the Reverend Don Michael Rua, a true benefactor and father of poor boys, as was formerly the Venerable Don John Bosco."

To the notices affixed at the Church doors was added:

"In case of bad weather it will be postponed to Sunday, the 10th, at the same hour;" and, in fact the snow and rain lasting several days prevented the affectionate manifestation.

In the Sanctuary at two o'clock, in the presence of the whole community the Blessed Sacrament was solemnly exposed, the boys of the Festive Oratory, the girls of the Oratory of St. Angela praying in turn before the altar; and the boarders were present at the Vespers sung *coram Sanctissimo* by Fr. Francis Cerruti, Fr. Francesia gave a touching discourse. Many there had tears in their eyes. The preacher himself in conclusion turning to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Help of Christians to implore once more a *Miracle* or Christian resignation to the Will of God, said, weeping:

why did you not pray with us?" — he replied: — "*I prayed with you, but not like you! You desired the fulfilment of your wishes, I wished that the Will of God should be done!*"

Professor Joseph Rua came again from Rome to visit his beloved uncle. His nephews, living in Turin, came several times a day, to pay him visits.

April 4th.

— *This is the end!* he himself repeated many times these two days. *This is the end!*

The day is very sad. The arrival of Mgr.



The funeral: Via Cottolengo — The procession re-entering the Church.

"O Jesus give us our Father, our friend, our Benefactor!... Such a grace, O Holy Virgin, would be the brightest jewel in your crown!..."

After supper he said to Fr. Gusmano:

— "*I feared I should not see you again.*"

— "Why?"

— "*Because I thought I was going to Paradise.*"

And a little later he asked:

— "*So we shall not keep the Jubilee?*"

And when they would hold out hopes and exhort him to pray for that end:

— "*Oh this is not a case for saying with St. Martin: Si adhuc!—There are so many Captains who can take my place!*"

To Fr. Francesia who said to him: — "But

Morganti is expected; the patient awaits for him anxiously; he wishes to see him once more and in him to thank, one may say, all the Salesian Cooperators; several times he speaks with admiration and gratitude of His Lordship, of the zeal manifested by him in Milan, of his gratitude to Don Bosco and the work of the Salesians! His Lordship telegraphs he will postpone his coming for a few days; Fr. Albera replies that he must make no delay, if he wishes to arrive in time!

With signs of great joy he receives the visit of Canon Ferrero, the "Father" of the "Piccola Casa della Divina Provvidenza."

— "*Unde hoc mihi!... unde hoc mihi!..... I*

thank you so much for the charity you have always shown to us and which, I am sure, you will continue for the future."

The Adorers of the B. Sacrament, who live in Strict enclosure in the "Piccola Casa" pray all night for Don Rua. And all the other prayers in the "Piccola Casa" are offered by the "Father" for him.

Towards 4.30 he was again visited by Dr Battistini. It is feared he will not pass the night: but as soon as the doctor leaves, he wishes to make his usual spiritual reading. The infirmarian Bosisio, who day and night nurses him with the greatest care, accedes to his request.

To the newspapers, clamouring for news, the following Bulletin is sent: *"After an interval of abatement of the illness, but such as to give no hopes of a permanent improvement, for some days the trouble occasioned by weakness of the heart has considerably increased. To this is added a state of increasing exhaustion, on which account a fatal termination must soon be expected."*

And yet the end did not seem so near! Towards 5.30 speaking with Fr. Cerruti of the need and the importance of having many and good vocations, but also and above all of preserving them, the latter proposed his idea of an ejaculation to the Heart of Jesus to be recited by all the Salesians and for which spiritual favours should be sought from the Holy Father. He listened with manifest attention and asked him to bring the ejaculation written out:

— *"Oh! yes, vocations, vocations" he repeated: "God has given them to us; let us keep them!"*

To Fr. Rinaldi then with great affection he gave his last recommendations:

— *"I beg of you to continue all the works for the young which I have started; they ought to produce great fruit!"*

Once more the Superioress General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, with several Sisters, were allowed to see him and he conversed with them for a few moments. After giving them his blessing he had still a last recommendation for the Superioress.

The sisters having gone out, he asks that Fr. Francesia be summoned. He arrives in haste and Don Rua says:

— *"Take the Ritual!... and read the prayers for the departing soul."*

— *"But, dear Don Rua!..."*

— *"Yes, yes, read the Prayers for the Agonizing."*

The alarm and consternation are general. The Superiors, assembled in conference, interrupt the sitting and hasten, trembling, to the room, when kneeling at the foot of the bed,

they answer the Litany. Don Rua, calm and almost smiling, also joins in the responses.

And yet he was suffering much.

"If in order to die" he said to Fr. Albera, "one must suffer more, what shall I do?"

— *"Deus, qui dat nivem sicut lanam, will give to you also the strength needed: put your trust in His mercy."*

The weary hours go on. At 9.30 in the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians and a little later in the neighbouring Church of the Oratory of St. Angela the service for the Agonizing is performed amidst the tears of those present.

Still his mental clearness is wonderful.

Before night prayers, the students from the portico beneath the invalid's room intone the song: *"Presso l'augusto avello"* which ends thus: *Don Bosco I come to thee!* The echo of these last notes ascends solemnly and sadly: Don Rua opens his eyes and with a sweet smile, repeats them eagerly:

— *"Yes, Don Bosco... I also come to thee!... Don Bosco, I come to thee!..."*

Owing to the death of his father-in-law, Doctor Clerico who had tended Don Rua affectionately every day, was to his great regret suddenly called away. It was impossible to conceal this from the invalid who was much distressed and in a weak voice begged Dr. Battistini to thank him for his filial attention. Dr. Clerico was replaced by Dr. Forni who remained all night by the invalid.

The confrères filled the neighbouring rooms. At ten o'clock Dr. Battistini returns: unless complications supervene, Don Rua will live till three o'clock in the morning. The Superiors and his nephews surround the bed. Towards midnight he regains a little strength: he thanks the doctors and wishes them to lie down to rest. All are astonished at his powers of resistance and his clearness of mind and retire.

He receives Holy Communion for the last time—Solemn blessing—Touching farewell—He recovers a little vitality—Prince Gonzaga—An ejaculation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus—Impressive calm—A fresh blessing from the Holy Father—The Archbishop of Ravenna.

April 5th.

About two o'clock the celebration of Holy Mass begins in the adjacent Chapel. Eight priests succeed each other without interruption at the altar and all add the Collect *pro infirmo morti proximo*.

The dying man, Fr. Rinaldi at his side, hears the second Mass, celebrated by Fr. Francesia. Most wonderful! Don Rua follows with the greatest attention each portion of the Holy Sacrifice and *infra Missam* receives Holy Communion to the joy of all present.

The mass ended, Fr. Rinaldi begs him to bless all the Salesians present and absent and their pupils, all the Cooperators and all Salesian undertakings. The dying man consents, and solemnly in a loud voice pronounces the formula of blessing used by Don Bosco, making a large sign of the cross with a failing gesture but spacious and resolute, concluding:

— „.....*pax et copiosa benedictio Dei Omnipotentis, Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, descendat super vos et super omnes Salesianos et alumnos, et cooperatores, et maneat semper, semper!*”

All present, their eyes filled with tears of emotion, respond: *Amen!*

He becomes drowsy. It seems as if exhaustion was resuming its fatal course. Towards 4.30 at the ringing of the Angelus in the Sanctuary we fear he will breathe his last. All are on their knees with grief in their hearts. By his side on the right are Fr. Albera and the Infirmarian, on the left Fr. Rinaldi and Fr. Francesia; around are Fr. Gusmano with many confrères. And then all at once he turns to Fr. Rinaldi kneeling beside him, and whilst with his left hand he clasps him paternally round the neck, he places his trembling right hand on his head, remaining in that attitude some time, in a low voice murmuring a few words with such affectionate anxiety as to strike all present. Then in a little while he seems to regain some strength and wishes all to go to rest, for he himself would also rest.

This malady appears to us mysterious. At day-break Don Rua seems to be reviving. Towards eight o'clock he wishes all present to say morning prayers and he also says them clearly and distinctly and afterwards:

— “Now” he says in a clear voice, “in order to do all things well, let all resume their own occupations, resigned in all things to the Will of God!”

Fr. Cerruti comes in to see him and finds him perfectly clear in mind and fairly strong. He kisses his hand and congratulates him on the

improvement in his condition, he thanks him most affectionately for the precious advice given the day before and adds that he will make a special *Memento* for him in the Mass he is about to celebrate.

Prince Emmanuel Gonzaga with his daughter and Signora Eugenia Ravizza of Milan are shortly after admitted to see him. Towards 10 o'clock the invalid himself asks to make his meditation. He is told that his condition being so grave he must not tire himself; in this also he resigns himself to the Will of God. Yielding however to his regretful looks, the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* is said, he desires that at least the subject of the meditation and some resolutions should be read to him, with which he



A group of the female associations.

occupies himself about ten minutes with great recollection. Whilst life lasts, he will not omit any duty!

Fr. Cerruti returns and says to him.

— “I have brought you, type-written, the ejaculatory to the Heart of Jesus of which I spoke yesterday.”

This is the ejaculation:

“*Cor Jesu Sacratissimum, ut bonos et dignos operarios Piae Salesianorum Societati mittere et in ea conservare digneris, te rogamus, audi nos.*”

Fr. Cerruti read it to him in the presence of Fr. Albera and Fr. Francesia, and he repeated it attentively, word for word, and would have it placed under his pillow, laying special stress himself on “*in ea conservare.*”

To Fr. Marchisio, who begged his blessing

for the spiritual Exercises which the Students were making since the previous Sunday, he said:

— "*I bless most willingly the Spiritual Exercises of the students, as I bless also the artisans who will begin them next Sunday. Tell them all to make them in such a way as to give joy to their Guardian Angels!*"

To Fr. Rinaldi he said many times:

— "*Tell me, how am I?*"

— "*Very ill, Don Rua.*"

— "*My state is then very serious?*"

— "*Indeed, there is no more hope.*"

— "*But has all been done that it is possible to do?*"

— "*It seems to me Don Rua, that we have neglected nothing, neither doctors, nor medicines, nor prayers.*"

— "*Then you can do no more?*"

— "*There is always the hope of a miracle. Will you pray with us?*"

— "*Willingly*"

And after having prayed, he added:

— "*And now what must I do?*"

— "*Wait for the Lord to hear our prayers.*"

Another time he said:

— "*Then when shall I die?*"

— "*Perhaps this evening, the doctors say, perhaps in a few hours, but we shall give you timely notice.*"

— "*Very good! now let me remain quiet; do not bring any one else to see me; I will receive only Mgr. Morganti whom I am expecting, and meanwhile I will dispose myself for the accomplishment of the Will of God.*"

Another time he concluded:

— "*Well, I will now see if I can go to Paradise in my sleep.*"

Last evening by means of the Procurator General, the Holy Father was informed of the rapid aggravation of Don Rua's symptoms; at once he sent a special blessing:

"*Don Rinaldi, Salesian Institute, Turin. — Holy Father most heartily imparts Venerated Don Rua the Apostolic Benediction with Plenary Indulgence. — Bressan.*"

A grateful answer was sent:

"Mgr Bressan Vatican, Rome. — Don Rua, still in danger of death, receives with profound emotion the Benediction sent, humbly thanking and reasserting in the name of Salesian Society veneration for the Apostolic See. — Rinaldi."

At 12.30 the Archbishop of Ravenna arrived at last and trembling ascends to the poor little room. As soon as he appears, Don Rua withdraws his arms from the coverlet and stretching them out, embraces affectionately this his dear son, saying:

— "*Now I am satisfied, now I am satisfied, now I am satisfied!*"

Mgr. Morganti asks Don Rua to bless him and he acquiesces at once. His voice is scarcely audible and almost choked with sobs: but scarcely had he repeated the formula:

— "*And now give me yours!*" he said briskly and in his turn humbly received the desired blessing.

In the afternoon again the weakness increases and the pupils of the eyes are dilated.

Towards evening he scarcely recognizes those who approach him and at night loses his sight completely. The Bulletin of this morning says: "*The pulse is very weak, almost imperceptible, consciousness somewhat clouded. The other symptoms remain much the same:*" that of this evening at 5.50 says: "*Since this morning a slight improvement in the pulse is to be noted. However the mind is at times obscured and the grave symptoms remain as before.*"

Fr. Francesia and Fr. Albera alternately suggest frequent ejaculations and read to him the liturgical prayers for those in their agony.

Towards eight o'clock the gravity of the symptoms increases, announcing that the end is near and at ten o'clock the agony begins, "*perfectly calm, without great suffering and quite conscious.*" Mgr. Morganti approaches and Don Rua says to him:

— "*If you will give me your blessing, I shall be pleased to receive it.*"

It is a most affecting scene.

— "*Go to bed,*" he murmurs, trying to turn his eyes on him. The prayers for the dying are resumed and the patient endeavours to accompany them with slight movements of the head and the hands. At 11 o'clock he raises once more a wasted, trembling arm, and, supported by those around, at Fr. Rinaldi's request, he gives a last blessing to all, present and far away. The words are halting, his countenance brightened by the smile of a father who feels himself in the midst of his family and who desires to leave to all a thought of gratitude.

The doctors leave the bedside, Dr. Clerico alone remaining. Medical science can do nothing more, against the irresistible approach of death. But the will of Don Rua is not yet vanquished.



— HIS DEATH. —

A message from Alassio—Tender recollections—The last ejaculations—From slumber to a state of coma—All the boys admitted to kiss his hand—Asleep in the Lord.

April 6th.

Soon after midnight he awoke from his lethargy. The Provost of Alassio, Canon Bartholomeo Podestá, arriving at that moment with the Director Fuchelli, profited of the opportunity to offer the good wishes and prayers of that College and of the whole city of Alassio. The dying man opened his glassy eyes and smiled sweetly, thanking them.

Towards half past one Fr. Francesia rouses him again and says in his ear:

— “We are here praying Our Lord to open Paradise to you!”

Don Rua listens with great attention:

— “And you will salute Don Bosco for us will you not?”

At the name of Don Bosco the face of the dying man grew bright and his smile was sweeter

— You will do us a very great favour (continues familiarly Fr. Francesia); and then will you not also salute for us Domenico Savio? and also Don Alasonatti... Don Rufino... Don Provera... Don Bonetti... Don Sala... Mgr. Lascagna... Don Belmonte... Don Durando... Don Rocca... Don Lazzeri...

At each name a flicker of life passed over the waxen countenance of the dying man, who seemed transfigured and being unable otherwise to express the joy of that moment raised his right hand and at each name brought his clenched fist down on the coverlet with energy in sign of affirmation.

A little later Fr. Francesia said:

— “Domine ad adjuvandum me festina...”

— “Yes, *festina, festina!*”

Asked to say the words: *Moriatur anima mea morte sanctorum:*

— “*Iustorum, iustorum!*” he repeated with emphasis.

Every ejaculation roused him from his recollection, and was repeated piously by him.

The last which he emphasized was one he had learnt from Don Bosco in the years of his boyhood during the early days of the Oratory.

Sweet Heart of Mary, help me to save my soul.

— Yes, to save one's soul... take notice that is all!... that is all!... to save one's soul!...

These were his last words. Until the morning dawned he heard the pious ejaculations suggested, for at the sound of them one saw him attentive and keep in his breath, but he spoke no more! At two o'clock again the celebration of Holy Mass began in the adjoining chapel; but the dying man could not receive Holy Communion again. At the sound of the Angelus he opened his eyes once more, gazing around with a smile as if he would manifest his great affection and paternal gratitude to his sons and benefactors...

Soon after his breathing grew more difficult and weaker, though the pulse which had been scarcely perceptible, began again to beat more clearly and the body regained some warmth. These appeared to be signs of life but in reality they were forerunners of death.

Slowly he became drowsy and lapsed into a state of coma; this was stated in the last Bulletin of the doctors published at 8.15 destroying any illusion on our part. Then followed a touching scene never to be forgotten.

The clerics and the boys, who had never been able to approach Don Rua during his long illness were admitted to kiss his hand once more. In a long file they passed one by one near the bed of the dying Father lying there insensible.... How heart-rending was that sight! After the boys, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians wished also to pass through from the Church where they had been praying to God to alleviate the last sufferings of their good Father. The Superior General came first. The news of the impending catastrophe spread rapidly and all the persons who were in the Church sorrowfully followed the Sisters. The sad procession lasted more than an hour and a few minutes after it was over, at 9.37 without a sigh and almost without those present perceiving it, the great soul of the first Successor of Don Bosco passed to the bosom of God!

Dr. Battistini bent down to make sure, and then, after making known to us by signs more than by speech that Don Rua had expired he bent down again and kissed the forehead of the corpse.

All knelt down and, answering the Priest who first salutes the corpse calling upon the Angels of God to meet the soul who has left it, they burst into tears.

A little later the great bell of the Sanctuary and then that of the Parish Church of St. Joachim announced the sad news to the neighbourhood.

News of the death—Universal lamentation—Lying in state—Extraordinary concourse of all classes—The Government's condolence.

News of the death was sent to the Holy Father, the Cardinal Archbishop, the Mayor and the Prefect of the city, to Queen Margherita, their Royal Highnesses Princess Laetitia, Prince Thomas, Duke of Genoa and to the Princess Clotilde; to His Excellency the Minister Luzzatti, the Hon. P. Boselli, to his Eminence Cardinal Merry del Val and to several other Cardinals, to various authorities, to our Procurator General and to all the Salesian Provincials; and this announcement was immediately followed by a world wide response of lamentation.

Without delay pious hands arranged the body; vested, in cassock, cotta and stole—the cotta, a gift to the deceased with the express wish it should be used at his funeral;—the Crucifix and Rosary in his folded hands; it was removed in the afternoon to that Church of St. Francis of Sales where fifty years before Don Rua had celebrated his First Mass; and, placed on a lowly bier covered with a simple funeral pall, it was exposed to the view of thousands of visitors. At the same time a splendid commemoration of the deceased was made in the Palace of the Municipal Council.

April 7th.

Today, from an early hour of the morning, the touching pilgrimage recommenced; and throughout the whole day, in the Piazza Maria Ausiliatrice there was a succession of private and public

conveyances and smart motor cars; whilst the stream of people went on without interruption... In the chapel the scenes were most impressive. All wished to touch the remains with rosaries, medals, books, pictures, handkerchiefs; and for this end many ladies handed to the clerics and priests employed in this pious office their rings, many gentlemen their watches and the students of the University the book of their signatures. The concourse increased prodigiously in the



The Lying in State.

afternoon and was still greater in the evening when the workmen had left their employment. For today alone sixty thousand persons were counted passing before the remains.

At 4 p. m. the Commendatore Vittorelli, Prefect of the city visited the Oratory, being charged by the Hon. Theobald Calissano, Under Secretary at the Ministry of the Interior, to present to the Prefect general of the Salesian Society, Don Philip Rinaldi, the condolences of the Mi-

nister on the death of Don Rua, and his admiration for the good done by the Salesians in the help rendered to Italians in foreign countries and the diffusion of the Italian language. The Prefect who was received by Don Rinaldi and the Communal Councillors the Sig. Xavier Fino and Professor Piero Gribaudo desired to add his personal condolences to those of the Government.



THE FUNERAL.

Requiem Mass—Her Royal Highness Princess Laetitia—Pontifical Mass of Mgr. Marenco.

April 8th.

The early trains brought a very large number of strangers to the city. On the Milan to Turin line the guard seeing several compartments full of priests, exclaimed:

—“Oh! I know well why their Reverences are going to Turin! Yesterday, even the workmen of Turin, before going to their work and at mid-day and in the evening went to visit the remains of “Don Rua!” and he burst into tears. He was a former pupil.

Even this morning up till 8 o'clock there was a touching struggle to enter; but the church had finally to be closed for the deposition of death at which the Superiors and a few other persons, including Dr. Bestente of the Municipality, were present. The mortal remains of the Successor of Don Bosco were piously inclosed in a double coffin, inside which at the foot was placed, in a glass tube bearing the seal of the Salesian Society, the following document.

In the name of God. Amen.

The undermentioned attest that in this coffin are contained the mortal remains of the Priest Don Michael Rua, the first Successor of the Venerable John Bosco.

He was born in Turin June 9th 1837, his parents being John and Jane Mary Ferrero and he died of *senile miocarditis* at the Oratory of St. Francis of Sales April 6th 1910, at 9.37 a. m. a few minutes after the boys of the house had been allowed to kiss his hand for the last time, in the 7th year of the pontificate of Pope Pius X and the 10th of the Reign of Victor Emmanuel III of Savoy, the Archdiocese of Turin being governed by Cardinal Richelmy.

History will relate his admirable and heroic virtues, especially his ardent zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls and the general lamentation throughout the civilized world occasioned by his death.

The corpse placed on a De Maria couch was vested in a cassock, cotta and stole. In the coffin, with this parchment are placed three medals of Mary Help of Christians and several coins of the Kingdom of Italy.

Rest in peace, blessed remains, near those of Him who chose you to share in his undertaking; and as your name will ever remain united with



The visits at the Oratory during the Lying in State.

that of Don Bosco, may your spirit also rejoice with his eternally. Amen.

Turin, April 8th 1910.

Signatures: Don Pilippo Rinaldi, Giov. Marenco, Bishop of Massa-Carrara, Fr. Paolo Albera - Fr. Francesco Cerruti - Fr. Giuseppe Bertello - Fr. Luigi Piscetta - Fr. Giov. Battista Lemoyne - Fr. Secondo Marchisio - Doctor Pietro Clerico, medical attendant, and many others.

When the coffin was closed it was removed to the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians across the courtyard of St. Francis, and placed on a simple catafalque under the dome; there were six wax candles, several tapers, but no flowers, with the exception of the magnificent bronze wreath of palm and laurel, sent by the Milanese Salesian Association of Co-operators.

Around the bier assembled shortly the members of the Superior Chapter, the acting Pro-

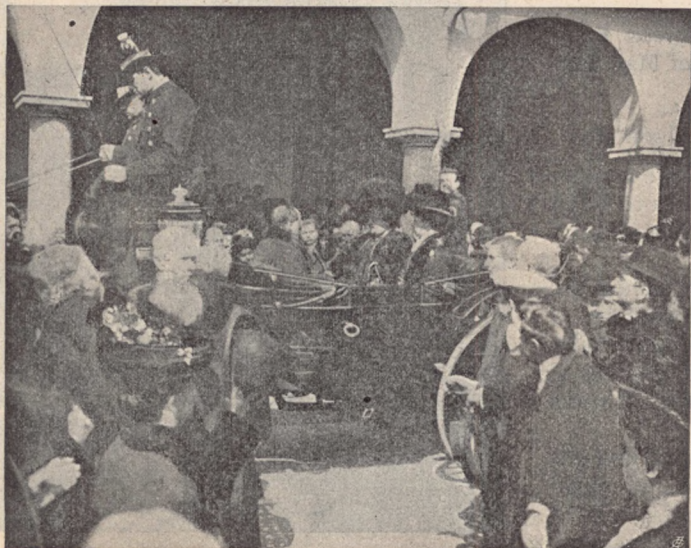
curator General Fr. Munerati, the nephew and relatives, the Senator Antonio Manno with the Committee for the celebration of the Sacerdotal Jubilee of the deceased, the Clergy secular and regular, many Provincials and Rectors of Salesian Houses in Italy and abroad, the Superior Chapter of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and many former pupils.

The Sanctuary draped in morning presented an imposing aspect. Before 10 o'clock, Don Rinaldi, Fr. Albera, Fr. Minguzzi, Baron Manno, Signor Brazioli, Marchioness Crispolti, and Countess Amalia Capello received her Royal Highness Princess Laetitia, followed by her suite and conducted her to a prie-dieu placed amongst the

had the post of honour at each side of the High Altar.

The ceremony over, the appearance not only of the Sanctuary but of the court yards and the square was that of a great festival. Never had there been probably such a concourse of people, not even on the day of the Pontifical Coronation of Mary Help of Christians! The strangers, who had assembled to pay their last respects to Don Rua, were there in vast numbers. Deserving of special mention were the representatives from Mirabello, where he was for two years Rector of the first College of Don Bosco; from Castelnuovo d'Asti of which the deceased was an honorary citizen; all the members from the colleges of Castelnuovo and the Salesian House of Chieri; numerous bands from the Colleges of Lanzo, S. Benigno Canavese, Cuornè, Novara, Sondrio, Maroggia, Milan, Varazze, Borgo S. Martino; from the Oratory and Cooperators of Lugano; of the former pupils of Milan, San Pier d'Arena, Bologna, Alassio, etc., etc.

It would be impossible to name all the deputations.



The Princess leaving the Sanctuary.

Lady Patronesses of the Salesian Works, near the Sanctuary on the Gospel side. On the opposite side were the representatives of the Cardinal Archbishop and of the higher civic authorities and of other Archbishops and Bishops and many Municipalities. Never before were seen such a noble gathering and such deep recollection!

The Pontifical Mass was celebrated by the Salesian Bishop of Massa-Carrara Mgr. G. Marengo, assisted by Mgr. Pasquale Morganti, Archbishop of Ravenna and Mgr. Scapardini, Bishop of Nusco. The *Schola Cantorum* rendered the various pieces of music and the gregorian chant. In the chapels of the transept behind the representatives of the Salesian Colleges there was a forest of the banners of Catholic Associations.

The banners of the Artisans and of the students of the Oratory of Valdocco veiled in crape

the whole of Turin which assembled to bid farewell to an illustrious and most worthy citizen, to the great philanthropist, to the father, the friend, the apostle of youth."

The *Stampa* also in its evening edition of the 8th April, said: "To form an exact idea of the funeral honours rendered today to Don Michael Rua, it would be necessary to search a long way back in the records of imposing funeral obsequies and recall to mind the great and spontaneous demonstrations of affection, which the populace have given, on rare occasions, to a few illustrious personages, for whom the varying sentiments of the multitude have been moved by feelings of gratitude. The solemn ceremony of today was a splendid apotheosis of love and goodness."

"The account of Don Rua's funeral"—says the *Momento* of April 9th—"in its grandeur needs no comment. Round the bier of the

The funeral procession—Enormous crowds—Five Bishops—A plebiscite of blessings.

"Such a magnificent demonstration,"—writes the correspondent of the *Unione* of Milan—"so immense and so touching as that given by Turin to Don Rua, was surely never hitherto seen in any other city of Italy; it was

humble priest were to be seen the official representations of the highest civil authorities, but behind the line of soldiers keeping back the crowds in the church, in the Square, in the streets, there was an overwhelming flood of people such as has not been seen for years. And the most touching note of the function was precisely in the thousands and thousands of persons bringing their tribute of remembrance, of gratitude, of affection, of admiration, of veneration. To succeed Don Bosco was no easy task, to have still retained, intensified, after the lapse of a quarter

honour; in this profession of faith, public, solemn, stirring and grand, in the general sorrow, the fervour of the prayers. The Annals of Turin have been ennobled by a glorious page, and the piety, charity and grandeur which accompanied that spectacle will have its echo down the course of ages.

At three o'clock a dense crowd thronged the Piazza of Our Lady Help of Christians, and in the churchyard of the Oratory there were gathered the representatives of local and provincial authorities; of scholastic, judicial, civil and mili-



Valsalice, Turin — The last benediction of the coffin.

of a century all the sympathy irresistibly excited by the name of Don Bosco, could be the victory only of a person both humble and great like his master. Yesterday, the spontaneous impetus of Turin toward Don Rua was the most noble, the most eloquent the most touching demonstration that could be imagined. The bells tolling for his funeral rang out his hymn of triumph."

The *Italia Reale* said: Turin witnessed a stupendous spectacle yesterday, in the grand manifestation of mourning for the loss sustained by the Salesians; in the unanimous offering of gratitude to the Benefactor of the people, to the Institution which he represented, and to him whose very tomb will be a source of still greater

tary; of Archbishops and Bishops, of Chapters, Municipalities, Colleges Seminaries, Confraternities and Commercial Houses; correspondents of papers; religious institutes and schools, associations with a thousand banners; the Salesian Institutes of Valsalice, St. John's and Martinetto, etc., etc. The Mayor of Turin suspended the session of the Council and sent Commendatore Rinaudo to represent him.

At four o'clock the procession commenced, and slowly made its way through the city to Valsalice, amid a densely packed crowd. After the girls schools and Institutes came the boys, then the inmates of religious Institutes, then the clergy in long double rows, to the number of five hundred, the Canons of the Capitular Chapter

preceding their Lordships. Mgr. Marengo, Mgr. Castrale, then the Cardinal Archbishop's Representative, Mgr. Spandre, Mgr. dei Conti Valfre di Bonzo, Archbishop of Vercelli, and Mgr. Morganti Archbishop of Ravenna.

The body was placed on a modest hearse, and was surrounded by twelve of the chief of the city guards, and gentlemen from the Ducal Houses of Aosta and Genoa and other noble families. The eight ribbons from the pall were borne by on the right by Senator Baron Manno, who represented the Committee which had been appointed for the Jubilee commemorations; by Commendatore Taglietti, President of the Court of Appeal, Signor Scala representing the Salesian Co-operators, and Signor Gaggino representing the past students; on the left were Commendatore Bacchialoni Procurator General of the Court of Appeal, Signor Scamoni, representing the Prefect of the city, Commendatore Rinaudo representing the Mayor, and Fr. Munerati our acting Procurator-General to the Holy See.

Behind the hearse followed the members of the Superior Chapter, Fr. Rinaldi, Fr. Albera, Fr. Cerruti, Fr. Bertello, Fr. Piscetta, Fr. Lemoyne; then Fr. Francesia, Fr. Barberis, Fr. Marchisio, and many Provincials and Superiors; his nephews and other relations; then Major General Lequio representing General Barbieri, commanding the first army corps, and the military division of Turin; next the Committee who had been directing the preparations for the Jubilee; Consuls and Councillors from the Provinces then representatives of factories and firms to the number of several thousands.

Cinematographs worked in all directions and the whole made a remarkable and memorable scene.

The cortège wound long for an hour and a quarter guided by the members of the Don Bosco Club. There was no sign of any hitch, no unbecoming remark, but all respectful silence, many in tears, signing themselves, or babies throwing a kiss at the instance of their mothers according to custom.

The body was taken into the Sanctuary where the Archbishop gave the last absolutions. The crowd still flocked in until 8 o'clock when the coffin was again taken into the chapel.



THE BURIAL.

From Valdocco to Valsalice—The last rites and last salutation.

April 9th.

At two o'clock the community at the Oratory recited the office of the dead in the chapel. At



The last rites at Valsalice.

4.15 after being blessed by the Superior the coffin was borne out and placed in the carriage to be taken to Valsalice. Fr. Rinaldi and Fr. Albera accompanied it. Other Superiors followed in carriages behind. The boys formed long lines and gave their last farewell. The carriages came slowly out of the Oratory, away from the scene of his labours, that he might be laid beside Don Bosco. Many along the course uncovered, and a great number had gathered in the precincts of the Salesian College at Valsalice.

At the entrance of the Seminary there waited the Superiors and students, the boys of the Festive Oratory, Cavaliere Anfossi, Baron Oreglia, the Countess Amelia Capello and many Co-operators.

tors, a group of Nuns of Mary Help of Christians with the Superioress General and the Provincials of Turin, Rome, Nizza Monferrato and others.

The coffin was borne in deep silence on the shoulders of eight priests and placed in the first gallery, where Fr. Rinaldi assisted by the Provincial Fr. Barberis, and the Superior Fr. Varvello gave the benediction. Thence it was taken into the Church of St. Francis of Sales where the last prayers were intoned by the choir. Then the coffin was taken down near to the tomb of Don Bosco. In the wall to the right, the place of burial had been prepared, and at the end of the prayers the mortal remains were laid to rest while tears flowed silently. The Director of the Oratory, though overcome with grief, said:

"In the name of your sons of the Oratory, and those who are spread throughout the world, I place upon your coffin, O Venerated Father, the last salutation of our love. Here upon your tomb we pledge ourselves to remain faithful to the grand lessons left to us by you and by Don Bosco, and which are comprised in the motto: *Prayer and work*. This is the flower that your sons lay on the tomb of their Father."

The workmen then completed their task. The people came silently away after paying an act of homage to the tomb of Don Bosco the last resting place of him who desired to *give a half*, as he said, to his incomparable Successor.

On the next day (April 10th) was to be held the Pilgrimage to the Tomb of Don Bosco; and it was indeed a continual coming to and fro of the Turinese people to the beloved chapel, now made doubly dear as containing the mortal remains of Don Bosco and of his Successor Don Rua.



The Letters of Condolence.

Innumerable were the messages which immediately poured in upon the Oratory. Among them we should record those from the Holy Father Pope Pius X, Her Majesty the Queen Mother, Her Royal Highness Princess Maria Laetitia, Their Royal Highnesses the Duke of Genoa and Princess Clotilde, The Honourable the President of the Council of the Ministry, The Honourable the Secretary of the Interior, Their Eminences Cardinals Merry del Val, Rampolla, Agliardi, Bacilieri, Boschi, Capecehatro, Cavallari, Cassetta, Coullié, De Lai, Ferrari,

Ferrata, Gasparri, Gennari, Gruska, Lorenzelli, Lualdi, Mercier, Nava, Prisco, Respighi, Richelmy, Vives y Tutó; more than three hundred Archbishops and Bishops; The Royal Commissioner for emigration, the President of the National Association for Catholic Missionaries; many Senators, Deputies, and Prefects in various parts of the kingdom; several ambassadors; the Municipalities of Turin, Naples, Nizza Monferrato, Mirabello, Borgo S. Martino, Castelnuovo d'Asti, Alassio, Alvito, S. Benigno Canavese, Varazze, Sondrio, etc.

Telegrams, letters and cards from individuals of all ranks reached several thousands.

While thanking all most sincerely we would ask pardon if all could not be answered, or be specified here through want of space.

From His Holiness the Pope.

The Holy Father, Pope Pius X. deeply grieved at the sad news of the death of the venerated Don Rua, Superior General of the Salesians of Don Bosco, has offered Mass for the soul of the departed; He associates himself with the great sorrow of the entire Salesian Family, which while thus losing so worthy a chief, acquires another protector in heaven; at the same time, in these sad circumstances His Holiness wishes to comfort the Society by a special Apostolic blessing.

To this I add my own personal and deepest sympathy

Card. Merry del Val.

Her Majesty Queen Margherita.

The Palace, Turin, April 6th, 1910.

I have communicated to the Queen Mother the sad tidings of the death of Don Michael Rua, which you have announced to me in the name of the Superiors of the Society.

Her Majesty, whose admiration and esteem for the lamented priest was well-known, was much moved by the sorrowful news, which deprives the Order of a mind, made eminent by its goodness, and of a soul which faith had made indefatigable in the exercise of the most enlightened works of humanity and charity.

At the direction, therefore, of Her Majesty, I express to you, and thus to all the Superiors, her sincerest condolence, and beg to remain, Dear Rev. Father,

Marchesa di Villamarina
Maid of honour to Her Majesty.

Their Royal Highnesses, The Princesses Clotilde and Laetitia.

Her Royal Highness, the Princess Clotilde sent her Chaplain, Canon Brusa, and Her Royal Highness the Princess Laetitia a gentleman in

waiting Commendatore Bonvicino, to express their heartfelt condolence for the loss of the Successor of Don Bosco.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Genoa.

Turin, April 6th 1910.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Genoa, who has followed all the stages of the long illness of the lamented Don Rua, and has learnt of his death with deep sorrow, charges me to convey to you and to all your co-operators the expression of his sincere condolence for the loss of your beloved Master, the worthy Successor, and continuator of the pious work of Don Bosco, which has won such goodwill and esteem throughout the world.

Asking you to accept also my personal condolence, I remain.

R. Mengoni-Ferretti,
First-Adjutant.

His Eminence Card. Richelmy (Turin).

Chiavari, April 6th.

The sad news reached me here. *Fiat!* May Our Lord crown his faithful servant, and console the bereaved children. Although at a distance I unite in spirit with the universal tribute of esteem and affection,

Augustine Richelmy.

His Eminence Card. Rampolla.

Very Rev. Sir,

Yesterday I learnt from Father Munerati the news of the death of the venerated Don Michael Rua. It grieved me deeply and I immediately sent my sincere condolence to the Superiors. In the evening I received your telegram with the sad announcement.

Although I feel the utmost confidence that Don Rua, on account of his great works and long apostolate, following in the footsteps of Don Bosco, will speedily receive the recompense of eternal joy, nevertheless I have not omitted to offer suffrages for the repose of his soul, and to continue to do so. The death of Don Rua is undoubtedly an immense loss to the Salesians, who venerated in him a beloved father, the faithful companion of Don Bosco and his worthy Successor.

However we must bow before the inscrutable designs of Providence, who will certainly protect the Sons of Don Bosco in this hour of desolation, and guide them in the choice of a Successor, so that a new Superior General may continue the work of Don Bosco and Don Rua, and emulate their noble example. To this end I shall unite my prayers to yours.

Assuring you of my particular esteem and

good-will. I beg to subscribe myself, Yours very affectionately in Christ

M. Card. Rampolla.

Rome, April 7th 1910.

His Eminence Card. Ferrata.

I have followed most anxiously the course of the long and painful illness of Don Rua, hoping to the end that God would spare to his worthy Institute and to the Church so dear and precious a life. But now I learn the sad tidings of his decease, and with profound sorrow I desire to join in the mourning and prayers of his sons, and of all who knew the great virtue and eminent achievements of the venerated departed. It is a universal testimony of grief that all Catholics and all impartial men are rendering to an eminent man, the worthy successor of Don Bosco, who at the cost of immense labour and sacrifice has undertaken and brought to completion great and manifold works for the Church and for Society, preserving always that trust in God, that humility, that serenity of mind which we admire in the Saints.

While begging God to console your Society, and to grant it a new Superior with the eminent qualities of the Predecessors, I remain with every assurance of affectionate esteem

Your devoted Servant
D. Card. Ferrata.

Rome, April 8th 1910.

His Eminence Card. Respighi.

Verg Rev. Father.

I am with you in heart and soul on this sorrowful occasion. This morning I offered my Mass for our dear Don Rua. I look back with great pleasure to the visits he used to make to me when he came to Rome, and particularly the occasion of the opening of the Church of Maria Liberatrice, at which Don Rua insisted on being present although at grave inconvenience. It is a great thing to be in the company of holy persons and a real consolation to converse with them. It is my belief that God sent him his long illness for his Purgatory here on earth that He might purify him for Heaven. From that abode of joy he will pray for the Congregation by the side of Don Bosco, so that it may receive another worthy Superior General.

With profound respect I am

Yours devotedly and affectionately
Pietro Respighi, Card. Vicar.

Rome, April 7th 1910.

The Prefect of Rome.

To the Pious Salesian Society - Turin.

Deeply grieved by the death of the venerated

and beloved Don Rua I send my sincerest condolence. — *Annaratore*.

The City of Turin.

In to-day's Session, after the splendid encomium pronounced by the Councillors, Professor Commendatore Rinaudo, and Marchese Corsi, on the Very Rev. Don Rua, I have been charged to convey to the Superiors of the Salesian works our condolence in this irreparable loss.

Moreover in the name of the municipality, as interpreting the sentiments of the whole city, which has witnessed with admiration the growth of the splendid work directed by its noble fellow-citizen, it is my duty to express to the whole Salesian Family its sentiments of profound grief and sympathy.

With our respectful esteem

The Mayor: *Teofilo Rossi*.

Turin, April 6th 1910.

The Municipality of Naples.

On April 9th the Mayor of Turin kindly forwarded to Fr. Rinaldi the following:

Turin, April 9th 1910.

I hasten to communicate to you the following telegram sent to me by the Mayor of Naples:

— In yesterday's session the Communal Council desired to associate itself with the sorrow of your noble city, on the death of the Very Rev. Don Rua, who has developed a work eminently educative and beneficial to Society. Do me the favour of communicating this: The Mayor, *Del Carretto*.

Your devoted servant

Teofilo Rossi.

To the Very Rev. Don Rinaldi.

His Former Teachers.

Turin, April 1st 1910.

Very Rev. D. Rinaldi,

Prefect General of the Salesians.

To you who received the dying words of that great and beautiful soul, to you who represents the immense Salesian Family is sent the expression of the grief and sorrow of the Brothers of the Christians Schools, who are proud to have guided the early steps of him who was destined to be the educator, the comfort, the guide of millions of souls.

From the lowly benches of our school he went full of ardour to enrol himself under the banner of Don Bosco, and in the school of such a master he learnt the way of sacrifice and sanctity. With the Gospel in hand he went about doing good..... till the Angel of God stopped him and said: "Soldier of Christ, lay down the heavy armour from your shoulders, for it has weighed upon

them for three quarters of a century; go up to our heavenly home to receive the crown of glory due to your labour: Don Bosco stretches out his hands to you." Don Rua smiled and..... left us in tears.

We weep over and kiss the bier, but we are comforted at the thought that it may soon become an altar.

Brother Leandro,

Visitor of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

To these letters of condolence, which are but the summary of an immense number, we may be allowed to add one from a holy Religious, whose voice once resounded throughout the Peninsula.

Marina di Pisa.

During the anxiety of the illness, in the sorrow of the agony, in the terrible moment of death, I was at one with you in heart and grief, in prayer and hope; and now I send my deepest sympathy, intimately realising what has been lost to you, and to the poor, but comforted in the thought, that united with your holy Founder, he will efficaciously protect and assist his pious work.

Fra Agostino da Montefeltro.



THE COMMEMORATION

IN THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF TURIN

Turin, April 6th 1910.

The Mayor, Senator Rossi, opened the sitting at 4 o'clock. Seventy-one Councillors were present. A few were absent, some of whom sent letters.

The Mayor (amid deep silence). — As an exception to our rule, that no questions or motions should be raised till the completion of our 1910 accounts, I believe I shall be allowed to call upon two of our colleagues, Councillors Rinaudo and Corsi, who amid the sorrow which has fallen upon our whole city, have requested permission to address the members before resuming the orders for the day. Councillor Rinaudo.

Rinaudo. (Amid profound silence and rapt attention of the House).

Gentlemen,

This morning there passed away one, who incarnated not only a man, but a great idea, and a great mission, the education of the people. Allow me to recall it to you, moved as I am not only by admiration, but also by deep sentiments of grateful friendship for Don Rua.

It was as a child, some fifty-two years ago, that

I first knew Don Rua, then just over twenty; to me, as to thousands of others he was a master and guide; to me, and I recall it with emotion, he was more than that, he was an affectionate friend and brother, even when the paths of life separated us. And from his bed of death, with a smile that already seemed to be from beyond the grave, he spoke to me words of friendship and kindness.

Gentlemen, Don Rua was in all things that saintly ideal, which humanity strives after in the course of its chequered career. Of a deeply religious faith, clear as crystal, unyielding as the diamond, but not given to mystic contemplation, he was the working saint of the modern era. From 1845, when about the age of eight years, he first came under the paternal interest of Don Bosco, until the day when his exhausted frame was nailed to the bed of death, he had not one day of rest: sixty-five years of assiduous and fruitful labour.

And then what a labour it was! It was the holy work of Don Rua, the worthy Successor of Don Bosco, to prepare the young generations for life, educating them to a sense of duty, of the claims of work, and of the need of sacrifice. And he consecrated this task by a high religious faith; but who, even though an unbeliever would not extol the faith which created such greatness of soul (applause).

His was the life of the active ascetic, which seemed to flow out clearly from the source of some interior lamp, burning with faith and energy of will; benevolent, meek and homely of aspect; firm but gentle of speech; of almost maternal indulgence. No one ever saw him angry amid the bitterness of persecution, he preserved his serenity of countenance, which bespoke charity peace and pardon.

He governed more than three hundred educational Institutes, not including the Nuns of Mary Help of Christians, now under their own distinct direction. There are a hundred schools in Italy, sixty-eight in other European Countries, a hundred and twenty-five in America from Puntarenas to New York and San Francisco, and ten in Egypt and Palestine. They include more than 200,000 children, and, during Don Rua's office more than a million have been fitted for life, and will now turn with regret and sorrow to the city where Don Rua lies dead. (great applause).

Turin should be proud of being the birth-place of so great a Successor of Don Bosco. Turin, in consideration of his mission, ought to be devoted to the memory of her son, who has had such a noble mission to the young generations of all classes and all climes.

In this conviction, and filled with the sense of profound sorrow for our loss, I believe this Municipal Council will make itself the interpreter of the citizens of Turin, and particularly of the masses, by expressing to the Superior Chapter of the Salesians the deep regret and condolences of the city for the sad loss of Don Michael Rua, our great fellow-citizen (applause and exclamations of assent).

Sig. Corsi.—The expressions, so happily inspired, which Sig. Rinaudo has just uttered, so well reflect the sentiments of the great majority, that we may make our own the great manifestation of sorrow displayed by the city this occasion. But the sorrow which has come to many of us is a personal grief, and our admiration for the man and his work will not permit us to keep silence on the day of his departure.

He was the companion and faithful interpreter and the wise continuer of the Work of the Ven. Don Bosco, of that complex of institutions which has spread throughout the world, by the most humble means, by those inspirations and those examples of charity which ennobles man, which bind the classes together, and diffuse among them the concord which gives birth to the peace of nations. I would particularly point to his work in the founding of forty-three centres for emigrants, by which he has fulfilled a national service, and extended our influence beyond the seas.

Thus the citizens of Turin see in Don Rua the personification, the living miracle of an Institution, which arising from nothing, without subsidy from the Government, nourished only by the zeal and charity of Co-operators, largely from this city, develops and maintains throughout the civilised world and propagates the principles of true liberty, of social union, of justice, of love which are the essence of the Gospel and the tradition of our land. The admiration of our citizens for the first Successor of Don Bosco is a filial admiration of which the Municipal Council should constitute itself the interpreter (applause).

The Mayor.—This morning I have received a letter from the Director of the *Salesian Bulletin*, in which, in the name of the Superiors, he communicates to me the sad news of Don Rua's death, and also expresses gratitude for the city's participation in the sorrow of the Salesians.

Not having then obtained the official authorisation of the Council, I replied personally as follows by telegram:

"The death of the venerated Don Rua, Superior of the Salesians, a model of religious virtue one to whom society was indebted, is indeed a universal sorrow, but particularly for Turin where he developed the great work which will

cause him to be always numbered among its most worthy citizens.

I who had the privilege of knowing him, who was a great admirer of him, beg you to accept and present to the Superiors my heartiest condolences for this so great loss.

Senator Teofilo Rossi,
Mayor of Turin.

Having heard the splendid encomiums of Councillors Rinaudo and Corsi, I associate myself most heartily with their sentiments. The Council will authorise me today to interpret to the Salesian Society the city's profound sorrow for the loss that has been sustained, both by Turin and by Society at large.



The verdict of the Press



Innumerable references were made in the periodicals rendering homage to the memory of Don Rua. Some only can be quoted, including those which do not profess to be guided by our principles.

THE UNIVERSAL GRIEF.

The dominant note of the Turinese news is provided by the death of Don Michael Rua, Superior General of the Salesians. The deceased was very well known in our city, and enjoyed great esteem even beyond the clerical world for his simple and humble gentleness of character and kindness of soul.

(Il Secolo di Milan, April 7th).

Don Rua had completed almost fifty years of sacerdotal life, and, whether as a young or old man, they were guided by solid faith, rectitude of spirit a gentle and wide charity.

All the papers of Turin have published special editions dealing with the life and work of the eminent deceased; thus losing all enmity and conflict of opinions in a profound and respectful homage of esteem and reverence.

(Il Giornale d'Italia, Rome, April 7th).

The death of Don Rua is a universal loss. This is what is echoed to us by the millions who will follow his bier, by the press of all colours, and repeated in all the manifestations of grief which are now directed towards the Mother-House of the Salesians. Nor need we waste words in showing, in the face of the testimonies that abound in the papers, that the praise bestowed is well merited by the grandeur of the man who has gone from us. The people for whom we write, have known Don Rua a long time, as the humble apostle of charity of every kind, from whom benefits have gone forth to every quarter as they did from Don Bosco in his life-time.

We would rather note that this tomb also surrounded as it is by universal lamentation, is the tomb of a priest, and that this would-wide gratitude goes out to a man who lived our religious faith in its perfection; another happy vindication of the black robe against which the sects are infuriated; a splendid triumph of that faith to which so many apostles of a so called charity, rich in verbiage but barren of results, would deny any degree of social or humanitarian virtue.

(La Vita del Popolo di Como, April 9th).

THE MAN.

He has passed away! We have seen the gentle face already quite emaciated in life, resting on the pillow of death; and those eyes, so expressive and serene as he fixed them on the speaker, are closed in their last sleep. He sleeps the sleep of the just, smiling as was his wont; he seems now almost to be letting some word of kindness pass from his lips, and those who approach the bed still discern his constant look of prudent simplicity which never left his countenance during life.

He bore on his countenance an unmistakable asceticism. His agile person was singularly active, for it was nothing but bone and nerve. But with all this outward austerity he never assumed the position of his authority. One would have recourse to him with absolute confidence, without the least diffidence on account of his exalted position, or the infinitude of cares that lay upon him, or the weight of business that he had to deal with. There was never seen upon his countenance any annoyance or irritability. He could summon from the past-so prodigious was his memory—all the circumstances of many years ago, and he made it perfectly clear that he was to all a friend and a brother, and all left him in true christian sentiments.

Should he enter the church, or join in prayer, or speak of sacred things he was at once all devotion. His piety might have been that of a hermit.

In this combination Don Bosco saw the material on which his masterhand could work; and he followed him closely to direct him in the paths that lead to the ideals of virtue... He had been in fact for many years the soul of the House, and knew and reproduced Don Bosco's idea most exactly. It is not vsurprising that when Don Vosco died, all the immense sympathy that surrounded his character should have centred in Don Rua. And those who knew what a weight of business lay upon him, were in wonder at the sight of so frail a form bearing such a constant strain.....

(*Il Momento*, Turin, April 6th).

His was a grand soul hidden by a lowly exterior, an ascetic and energetic spirit, a great paternal heart with immense influence. He was an apostle, an educator and a great Italian.

Courteous, kind, cultured, of high attainments but modest withal, he passed his life in doing good to others. He was a simple, poor, Turinese priest who has left traces all over the world of his work, his ministry his apostolate. The great priests, the great ministers of Jesus Christ ought to accomplish their mission here on earth in the way that Don Rua did: labouring prudently, humbly and ardently and placing charity at the summit of their works.

And because his charity was renowned, Turin, his native country, and all the world bow respectfully before his couch and future generations will bless his memory.

(*La Lega Liberale d'Alessandria*, April 9th).

In the ecclesiastical world and among Catholics everywhere the progress of Don Rua's maulady was followed with apprehension, as for a month there hung in the balance the life of the Successor to the great Institution founded by Don Bosco... A true interpreter of the Founder's spirit he did not limit himself to the reestablishment of schools in all parts, but adopted efficacious means for the benefit of emigrants in all the great ports of the world, and took a first place in the civilisation of the lands of Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego and the interior of Ecuador, Brazil, etc.

Don Rua had the wonderful power of immediately gaining the sympathy of his visitors who were struck by his perspicacity in affairs and his gentle manner. He leaves an immense following of admirers and grateful children.

(*La Tribuna*, Rome, 7th April).

The *Stampa* commenced a long article on *his life and work* with these words:

These remarks were not written to form part of a description after death; they were arranged in preparation for the approaching sacerdotal Jubilee of Don Rua, which would have been a most suitable occasion for a commemorative narration. To speak of him in those circumstances would not only have been part of the office of a chronicler, but a high moral duty, beyond all question of prejudice or party spirit. But laying aside the priest, Don Rua remains the man who continued and completed one of the most beneficent works of our time. If his name is not widely known, on account of his modesty and humility, it nevertheless merits to be repeated and illustrated as that of one of the most zealous of benefactors.

(*La Stampa* of Turin, April 6th).

HIS WORK.

To Don Michael Rua, as previously to Don Bosco, the entire world, officially or not, offers a spontaneous tribute of admiration and sorrow. But yesterday the remains of the great though humble priest were borne between the surging ranks of thousands of people of those who are intimately acquainted with the difficulties that beset the growth of the work of Don Bosco, who who have seen it spread far and wide, carrying on its vast programme of social regeneration from the poor children of the streets to the savage of Patagonia or to the lepers among whom more than one Salesian has yielded up his life.

The Salesians, although stricken with grief at this irreparable loss, cannot but be comforted at the world-wide manifestation of sympathy which it has aroused, and at the elogium pronounced on all sides with not even one discordant note.

The Salesian Congregation is not an Institute living apart by itself. It lives fully in the present age. Today the masses of the people make themselves felt whether in good or evil. It is useless to deny the phenomenon, and not only futile but dangerous to try to repress them or to steer them through the highways of justice. See then arising, by the intuition of a saint the Salesian Congregation, to direct its efforts particularly on the education of the masses, realising a movement eminently and in the best sense democratic, where the classical studies, professional and technical training of the artisan are taken in hand.....

It is for this reason that those who, like the present writer, have had the good fortune to be taught at their schools, preserve for them a grateful remembrance and filial devotion which

nothing can efface, even though one's lot be afterwards cast in non-catholic centres; and it is for this reason that the Government and the highest authorities of the State, men of all parties are sharing in the sorrow for the death of the venerated Superior General.

To the remains of Don Rua, co-worker and Successor of Don Bosco there is therefore rendered the homage which is rendered to the heroes of charity and to the benefactors of the people, and this without prejudice to party, for he knew none, and did good for its own sake and for no other end. And this standard comprehens and summarises all others.

(*La Perseveranza* of Milan, April 9th).

During three months there had raged a strike in one of the well-known factories of the city; the masters were determined not to accede to the demands of the representatives of the workers, who numbered more than a thousand, nor to discuss terms with them. Several hostile demonstrations and tumults had occurred, both around the factory which was in a kind of siege, and at the houses of the so-called *kriumiri*. Several families were in a state of famine. Prefect, Mayor, Quaestor and other authorities had offered conciliation in vain.

Don Rua one day invited to his humble room the owners and the worker's representatives, and what could not be effected by the endeavour, the threats and persuasion of authorities was accomplished by the words of the priest. The problem was satisfactorily solved and all the workers resumed in peace....

..... Modest and retired in his humility, it was sufficient for him and his highest reward to feel and know that he was acting the part of a good citizen and good priest, and if he rejoiced it was at being able to do some good both for religion and for his country.

(*Il Corriere della Sera*, Milan, April 7th).

THE SUCCESSOR OF DON BOSCO.

At the age of seventy-three years there died some days ago in Turin, Don Michael Rua, Superior General of the Salesians, one of the most admirable figures in the Catholic world. Assistant first, and then Successor of Don Bosco he gave quite an impulse to the patriotic work of the Salesians; a work which has the noblest ideals before it; education and spiritual assistance among civilized peoples; missions and colonisation among savage peoples; guidance and instruction for emigrants abroad. Don Rua has thus been instrumental in assisting thousands of the young at home and abroad. The conquest of Patagonia to civilisation as well as

the assistance of the lepers, and the introduction of agriculture and organised work among the Indians of Matto Grosso are all the outcome of Salesian activity. Before theremains of Don Rua, an up-to-date St. Francis of Sales, there passed a hundred thousand persons, including authorities of all shades and parties.

(*La Domenica del Corriere*, 17-24 April).

Don Rul knew how to follow in the footsteps of a great master. For more than twenty-two years he was the beloved and venerated Superior of that great Institution which Don Bosco named: *The Pious Salesian Society*, and during all that time he knew how to direct it towards a continual fuller development.

For this reason his death is causing profound and world-wide sorrow. In fact it is not so much the ascetic, or the perfect man that has gone with Don Rua, but the head of a vast and important Society, which is our pride, and which has carried out its educative work in all countries. Men may pass away, but Institutions remain, and so the Salesian Society will continue with others to carry on the works of charity which are proper to its scope and genius.

(*La Gazzetta di Torino*, April 6).

The whole life of this great man, whose privilege and glory it was to be the Successor of the Master, was engraved upon christian gentleness and apostolic fortitude. He who had been thought worthy to succeed the immortal founder of the Congregation, is now most worthy, when laying down his burden, to have his name inscribed beside that of his Master. The history of the Salesians is pregnant with the aroma of this active virtue, which not only carries abroad the doctrine of the Cross, but spreads around the great benefits of that doctrine, and as our Redeemer Himself, goes about doing good to all. The death of Don Rua is a public calamity, but he was of the number of those who, though dead, still live, according to the magnificent eulogium of Holy Writ; and the world will continue to benefit by his labours in the works of his sons and followers, to whom we now associate ourselves in the cry: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

(*L'Osservatore Romano*, April 7th).

THE SAINT (1).

In reading the life of Don Rua—before whose remains thousands of persons have offered their

(1) The title is not ours; moreover we must point out, that for this, and for other similar expressions occurring in these pages, only human authority, is responsible, and all subjection is paid to the decrees of the Church on this point.

act of homage—one experiences that intimate and almost infinite sense of what can be accomplished by the greatness of some men, who seem to pass through this life as though they were different from all those who breathe the same air and walk the same land. That is to say, that in this world, around us and in our midst, there are still heroes; not those associated with the flashing of steel, the ardour of battle, or the fascination of conquest, but appearing in the simplicity of human form, combining the Franciscan and the Soldier, who arise with the consciousness of a mission, who complete it, and arrive at the end of their course enveloped in the same simplicity in which they made their beginning.

How poor and despicable appear our every-day strifes, before the opening and development of a life which, like that of Don Rua, has not a stain upon it, is not darkened by the slightest shadow. Moreover this man and devoted priest had the simple faith of a Francis, with the fervour of an apostle, so that he could pass amid the strife, down from the heights of his own conscience, which had to be as unyielding as marble, to the lowliest and most uncertain, wavering characters in order to revive and re-invigorate them by the animating power of his own virtue and fascination.

What then becomes of our wretched tragedies of passion, our frequent moral relapses, our continual rivalries and contentions, our anxiety for the morrow, the search for immediate happiness, the impulses of hatred, the travesties of our faith, in short all that life adores today and loathes tomorrow, in the presence of the figure of that man, who performed his every act in the peace of God, who leaves behind an indelible impression on which is stamped a tenacity of will, and which strikes one with the power of a conqueror.

The scepticism of our day cannot stand in the presence of such figures as this of Don Rua: most of us are sceptics in some form or other, for we nearly always derive our philosophy from the uniformity of our own actions, and from those by whom we are surrounded; and we believe that to get strength which is after all only our weakness, and often enough we would rather be seen performing some ridiculous act or say something, than at an act of religious faith or the works of charity..... What a refreshing experience to look beyond so much that is miserable and sordid, both morally and materially, and to contemplate the attractive figure of those who have the gifts of true men, who are an influence to thousands, who guide and illumine innumerable souls with a light that reveals the truth

and shines along their path with fulness and solemnity.

Much more is this so, when such a life is expressed in outward acts, in which heroism is clothed with simplicity and humility. It is undeniable that Don Rua was a dominating influence; but he dominated souls which are more than empires; the people will call him Saint, and that is only human, since the contrast between his life and ours has transformed him into that ideal.

(*Il Secolo XIX*, Genoa April 9th).

At the close of these pages, which we lay with filial respect on the tomb of our Superior as a last act of homage, we should add the following lines by Mgr. Carlo Salotti, Advocate of the Cause of Don Bosco before the Holy See:

Certain men ought not to disappear from our earth: their life is an apostolate, their example a school, their conduct an eloquent teacher of virtue, labour and sacrifice.

Studying the spirit of Don Bosco in the preparation of the Process, and calling to mind the apostolate of Don Rua, who lived by his side for thirty-six years, who obtained direct from him his guidance and comfort, and modelled all his actions both public and private upon his master's, I perceive a perfect consonance of idea and of purpose in the two apostles, and in this is founded all the greatness and the future welfare of the Salesian Society.

One of the principal witnesses from Turin was Don Rua himself: but for witnesses to Don Rua's sanctity there are hundreds and thousands of sons, of confrères, of grateful children, who in all parts of the world will rather honour a saint than mourn for a father.

And if, one day, Providence should so dispose that the Cause of Don Bosco should be succeeded by that of Don Rua, the innumerable witnesses to be called before the tribunal at Turin would have to confess that one was worthy of the other, and perhaps it would be no high task to determine to which the palm should be given for the exercise of those eminent christian virtues in which both were heroic. "



PERMISSU SUPERIORUM

Gerent, GIUSEPPE GAMBINO — Turin, 1910

A. I. S. for the diffusion of the 'Good Press'
176. Corso Regina Margherita.



History of the Ven. Don Bosco's

EARLY APOSTOLATE.

The notice of readers is called to a volume recently issued by the Salesian Press, Battersea, S. W. Although the *Bulletin* has now been circulated for some sixteen years and has recorded the main events which have marked the development of Don Bosco's work, there had been no really authoritative book in English, which dealt in any complete way with the rise and growth of this work on behalf of the young. The present volume while supplying this need goes a good deal further, revealing many of the wonderful occurrences in the life of the Servant of God and filling gaps which were unavoidable in previous lives.

A recent issue of the *Month* says: A large and handsomely bound volume comes to us from the Salesian Press, Battersea: viz: **The History of Don Bosco's Early Apostolate**. The life of the Venerable Founder is already familiar to Catholic Readers in this country, but here we have an account written by a friend and disciple, who himself lived with the holy man, and witnessed much of what he relates. The story of the first twenty-five years of Don Bosco's apostolate is told in much detail, but it will be read with absorbing interest. The Archbishop of Westminster points out in the Preface the chief lessons of the career of the Ven. Servant of God.

The book is bound in Red Cloth, lettered back and front in gilt, with a Photo of the Ven. Don Bosco as a frontispiece.

Orders may be directed to the Manager. Salesian Press, Battersea, S. W.

Single copies, cloth covers, Four Shillings.

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SALESIAN SCHOOLS

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