

## The Holy Father's Letter.

One of the Cathedral Chaplains then proceeded to the pulpit and amidst impressive silence, read the following letter from the Holy Father:—

To Our Venerable Brother,

Vincent Vannutelli, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Bishop of Palestrina,

PIUS X., POPE,

Venerable Brother, Health and Apostolic Benediction.

Among the important Catholic Congresses which it is customary to hold yearly in honor of the Most Blessed Eucharist, that which, as you are aware, has been called to assemble in London next September, seems likely to be most noteworthy by reason of the number and dignity of those who will attend it, and because of the splendor and solemnity of its Ceremonies. And, indeed, we learn that, owing chiefly to the efforts of Our Venerable Brethren Francis, Archbishop of Westminster, who with the utmost solicitude has directed the preparatory arrangements, and Thomas, Bishop of Namur, President of the Permanent Committee for the Organisation of Eucharistic Councils, devout minds are displaying a remarkable interest in this meeting; that men of learning of every class will assemble from all parts; and that impressive religious Celebrations will take place publicly in the heart of the great Metropolis.

That this is most pleasing to Us will readily be understood by all who realise how necessary it is that the Divine Eucharist should be loved, worshipped, and partaken of more and more among the Christian People. It is indeed from the Eucharist, as from its source, that the spirit of the supernatural Life is diffused over the whole Body of the Church. Here we have a bond whereby the members of the same Body are closely brought together. In this august Sacrament our Sweet Saviour is really present; and truly living, although mystically hidden from us, will dwell in our midst until the end of time. Here, then, especially, is the flame of Divine Charity enkindled within us; here lies the foundation of our hope. And whereas we regard this Sacrament as a centre of our Faith, one and the same for all, so likewise the order of Its Consecration one and the same for the whole Catholic Priesthood, though so many different rites denotes our unity of discipline and of Government.

Again we venerate the Eucharist, not only as the greatest of the Sacraments, but, as that which is truly the chief act of Divine worship and essential to Religion: namely, a sacrifice. For it is indeed the sacrifice of the New Testament, proper to the Church of Christ, foreshadowed by the offerings of the Fathers of the Old Law, notably by that of the High Priest Melchisedech, and clearly promised in the prophecy of Malachias. In the Eucharist that self-same sacrifice offered once upon the Cross is renewed, in a bloodless manner and uninterruptedly, throughout the world. Wherever members of the Fold of Christ stand before the altar, and, after the manner of their forefathers in the New Dispensation as in the Old, tender to God Almighty the homage which is His due, there this sacrifice is offered; a tribute of Thanksgiving and Praise, of Atonement and Propitiation. We cannot imagine anything better calculated than this to inflame devout souls with the desire that it may be held in ever greater honor throughout Christendom.

It was properly decided to hold this Congress in the Capital of that Empire rightly famed for the liberty it extends to its citizens, and to whose authority and laws so many millions of Catholics render faithful and dutiful obedience. As on other occasions, We not only give Our approval to this design, but We gladly take part in it. Wherefore, in order that you may represent Us at the Eucharistic Congress of Westminster, by these letters We name you Our Legate. The Divine Author of the Church, Whose glory alone is sought, will be in your midst in the abundance of His grace. Meanwhile, as a pledge of His gifts, as a token of Our special goodwill, We lovingly impart to you, Venerable Brother, and to all and each one of those who will be present at the Congress, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at Saint Peter's, on the 28th day of August, the Feast of Saint Augustine, Doctor of the Church, in the year 1908, of Our Pontificate the sixth.

## Cardinal Vannutelli's Address.

His Eminence then mounted the pulpit and read his address. Speaking in Latin, he expressed his sense of the honor done him by the Sovereign Pontiff. He had the greatest pleasure in representing his Holiness at so distinguished a meeting, and in opening the thirteenth Eucharistic Congress in that Cathedral, which was a memorial of the late Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and of the generosity of the faithful. He derived much

joy and comfort from the words of the Holy Father: 'The Divine Author of the Church, whose glory alone is sought, will be present with the abundance of His grace.' The Congress opened under the most propitious circumstances. It was held in a most hospitable country, once greatly favored by God, and said by a famous Pope to be a land of angels rather than Angles. Painful dissensions had, it was true, sprung up at a later period, but these had been softened since. For the first time for many centuries England had opened its doors to a Papal Legate, and to numerous Cardinals, Bishops, and priests from foreign parts. They must give thanks for the admirable dispensations of His Providence which had there brought them together. His thanks went out, too, to the great nation whose hospitality they were enjoying. He desired to offer the expression of his respect to the wise ruler of its destinies, and his acknowledgments to those in authority. Would that his presence on that occasion might help to bring about that true Christian peace which it desired above all things.

Although those present had come from so many parts of the world, and in such numbers that their meeting might truly be said to be a congress of nations rather than an international congress, yet there reigned among them *cor unum et anima una*. In matters of faith, as in matters of discipline, they were entirely at one. They venerated Our Saviour Jesus Christ as the Author and invisible Head of the Church, and precisely for this reason they acknowledged the successor of Peter as His visible Vicar on earth. Their union would be strengthened by the goodwill which the Holy Father had shown them. Of this special goodwill the presence of a Legate was in itself a signal mark; again the Holy Father had declared in his letter that it was pleasing to him that the Congress should be held in London. This was, not only on account of the good results which the Pope trusted would follow, but also because it afforded him the opportunity of expressing his special regard and benevolence towards the noble British race. Was it not this great affection of the Pope for his children of England which induced him lately to raise their dioceses to the status enjoyed by those of Catholic countries?

The Congress opened then in circumstances so propitious as to justify the belief that its results would not be less important than those of the earlier meetings. He wished it might be given to them to revive that Eucharistic age which was so characteristic of the Island of Saints, and to unite all in one Faith, in that Faith, namely, that was once the most precious treasure of the Bishops, Kings, Princes, and people of England. And what was more likely to bring about this common agreement than the divine Eucharist which is, in the words of Augustine, the Sacrament of Piety, the sign of unity, the bond of charity?

Let them enter on their work therefore with confidence that God would bless it. Let them follow in the footsteps of their forefathers, whose labors and whose blood had sanctified these lands. It was easy to imagine how those saints of old must long for the revival in their beloved country of the Faith in the Eucharist held by East and West. In their day, before entering on any matter of grave moment, the heads of the Universities, the Judges of the land, would hear Mass to implore guidance from above. Magnificent temples were built and endowed in honor of this august Sacrament. And solemn processions of the Blessed Sacrament were held in the streets, as may be found described by Lanfranc. Let them, therefore, members of that Congress, endeavor in so far as they might to forge the link which would unite the celebrations of the present day with those of the past. Meanwhile, as a pledge of the fruit of their labors and of the blessings which he so earnestly prayed might descend on their beloved country and the whole Empire, he imparted, in the name of the Holy Father, to all who were taking part in that Congress, the Apostolic Benediction.

Then came a most touching scene. His Eminence at the close of his address intoned the beautiful prayer of the Church, and whilst the massed thousands knelt in the church, imparted to them the Papal Benediction. It seemed as if a Catholic people were kneeling at the feet of the Pope, our common Father.

## Archbishop Bourne's Words of Welcome.

Afterwards the Archbishop read the following address of welcome to the Papal Legate.

My Lord Cardinal,—In my own name as Archbishop of this Metropolitan See, in the name of my brethren the Bishops of this province, and of all the clergy and of the faithful laity of England; speaking, too, if they will allow me to give utterance to the thoughts which are in their minds, on behalf of those who are our brethren in race and blood, and the use of a common tongue, and who are so nobly represented here tonight; acting also as the spokesman of that still larger company who are united with us by a bond transcending and effacing