

If these lines ever meet the eyes of her to whom he spoke on the Santa Fe train, may her heart melt at the remembrance of the zeal of this dying Apostle of Christ, and may her ransomed soul add to the burning glories that crown the works of this noble missionary of the Faith, whose heart-cry was ever the conversion of America.—Rev. R. W. Alexander in the *Missionary*.

THE MOTOR-CHAPEL IN ENGLAND

RESULT OF A BRIEF MISSION

Throughout the English-speaking world there is one idea, one aspiration common to all Catholics irrespective of parentage or nationality (says Mr. J. P. Holland in an exchange). As every Catholic tongue voices in unison the words of the 'Our Father' or 'Hail Mary,' so every Catholic pulse will beat the quicker at the mere mention of the conversion of England.

At last, thank God! there seems a hope that the day of deliverance may not be beyond calculable distance. A rift has appeared in the dark cloud and a faint glimmer of hope may even be the harbinger of dawn.

The Campaign.

It is nearly two years since Father Herbert Vaughan, nephew of the late Cardinal, informed me that through the generosity of a pious American, he was about to organise a novel campaign for the spread of the faith in England. I may mention that Father Vaughan is the head of the Catholic Missionary Society, an organisation of priests whose object is the conversion of England. His plan of campaign, he briefly explained, was to build a motor chapel, otherwise a large motor van with the interior fitted out as a chapel, with altar, etc. With this travelling house of God he proposed to visit a number of small towns where no Catholic church existed and where Mass had not been said since the Reformation. He further proposed to hire the town hall or other public hall in the place and hold a series of evidence lectures every night for a week on the general topic of 'Know Popery.' He would secure some well-known preacher to deliver these lectures, and at the close of every lecture the audience would be invited to drop questions into a 'Question Box' placed near the door of the meeting hall, such questions referring to any points of the lecture which may have seemed to them to require explanation. This explanation would be given before the lecture the next evening.

As I have had considerable experience in motoring over England, I readily accepted the commission to act as pathfinder in the way of looking up routes, arranging with hotels, hiring halls, and looking after printing and posting the bills and placards. This was indeed a labor of love, besides being most interesting, as affording an opportunity to compare the attitude of the people in these places before and after a visit from the motor chapel. Of that I will, however, speak later.

During the summer of 1911, the motor-chapel visited in all some six small towns in East Anglia. These were Haverhill, Royston, March, Swaffham, East Dereham, and Wymondham. At each of these places a week's stay was made, with lectures every night and two or three Masses in the motor-chapel every morning. The lecturers at the various stoppages in the order as they appeared were the Rev. Father Bernard Vaughan, S.J., Rev. Arthur Allechin, Rev. George Nicholson, C.S.S.R., Rev. Dr. Arondzen, Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson, and the Rev. Vassall Phillips, C.S.S.R. It will thus be seen that Father Vaughan's promise to secure the very best preachers he could get, was fully carried out. In addition to these, there were always at least two and occasionally three of the Fathers of the Catholic Missionary Society, Father Vaughan, Father Norgate accompanying the motor-chapel throughout. It is also a matter of record that in addition to the clerical speakers and the Fathers of the Missionary Society, there were two or three Catholic laymen who occupied seats on the platform each evening, and took their share in answering questions from the Question Box. I should also mention the fact that a number of

pious ladies from the Catholic Women's League rendered immense assistance in the way of distributing handbills, making house-to-house calls, and leading the singing at the evening meetings.

The Opposition.

Such in brief was the programme of attack on the stronghold of Protestantism. But our friends the enemy were not slow to take notice of our aggressiveness and to prepare means of defence. This consisted of two sets of itinerant preachers, one organised by the Protestant Alliance and the other by the Wycliffe Preachers, otherwise the followers of John Kensit. Both sections were fully equipped with the very latest in the way of scurrilous attacks on everything Catholic up to the very latest uncontradicted newspaper yarn invented by the enemies of God's Church in Portugal or France. The method of these was simplicity itself. As the hour of our meetings approached, one of them would mount a soap box platform within twenty or thirty yards of the entrance to the hall where our meeting was to be held. Pretty soon he would have a decent sized crowd around, whom he would regale with all kinds of blasphemous stories of what Catholics believe and practise. Then, as his hearers were growing interested, he would suddenly descend from his perch and announce his intention of attending our meeting, at the same time inviting as many as liked to follow him to see him 'put the Romanist idolators to flight.' In the meantime another leather-lunged spouter would mount the soap box and endeavor by force of clamor to out-distance the speaker of the evening's meeting or at least to so interrupt that his lecture would lose in lucidity.

Inside the hall, the Protestant Alliance howler would make a great pretence of decorous attention, standing up with the rest when the hymn was being sung and sometimes even joining in. Then as the several questions were being answered he would take copious notes, evidently intended to convince those who saw him, and he generally took good care that he occupied a prominent position, that he was above all things fair-minded and only wanted to jot down the actual sayings of the benighted Romanists in order to confute them from his soap box pulpit afterwards. And as a last ruse, ostentatiously to prove his fairmindedness, he would interject a *viva voce* question on some minor point during the course of the lecture in order to bring about an open discussion. Of course he would be promptly called down and told that he must put his question into the box, where it would receive attention. But the suppression served his turn perhaps better than an open controversy would have done. It enabled him to look around the hall and mutely appeal to his supporters to bear witness how these Papists suppressed liberty of speech and were afraid of open discussion.

Spiked His Guns.

After the second or third night, however, Dr. Vaughan spiked the guns of this particular fanatic by explaining to the audience that he came here every night for the sole purpose of creating a disturbance, that he had been told already several times that questions would only be answered through the Question Box, and that his efforts to provoke open discussion were merely a ruse to disturb the meeting. After that we had no more of these scenes.

Speaking generally, I think it only fair to say that our reception everywhere was fairly courteous. True there were one or two places where the opposition managed to array the mob against us, and strange to say the two worst offenders in this respect were the two places which had most reason to feel flattered at our visit, since they were honored by the presence of our two star preachers, Father Bernard Vaughan and Monsignor Benson. Yet Haverhill and East Dereham did everything but stone us as we left the hall each night. In both places the town authorities were on the side of the opposition, and ostentatiously so. The police hardly made a pretence of keeping order, and it took us all our time to prevent the hall being 'rushed' every night, while the task of maintaining order indoors was by no means a sinecure.