

of the Ascension, with every manifestation of joy, the Thirteenthundredth anniversary of the coming of St. Augustine, by whose prayers and labours the people of this country were "delivered from the servitude of moral and intellectual darkness, and brought 'into the liberty of the glory of the children of God' (Rom. viii., 21)." A somewhat similar invitation is now extended to the whole Catholic world by the Holy Father, through the world-wide medium of the Apostleship of Prayer. We are encouraged by the Sovereign Pontiff to observe this centenary, not so much as a season of rejoicing, as one of prayer for the conversion of a nation, once so Catholic, but which lapsed from the Faith. The month of May has been chosen as most appropriate for, England bore, when in communion with the Holy See, the glorious title of "Mary's Dowry." It must be observed, however, that it was on the feast of Pentecost, in the year 597, that King Ethelbert professed himself a Christian, and received the sacrament of Baptism; and that on the following Christmas ten thousand of his subjects followed the example of their sovereign. The feast of Pentecost in 597 fell on June 2nd, so that, in this year 1897, the real anniversary should be held on the first Wednesday of that month. But as our co-religionists in England, out of devotion to the Mother of God, expressed the desire that the general intention for the conversion of the Fatherland be assigned to the month of May, the better to prepare for the anniversary in the month of the Sacred Heart, the Holy Father graciously acceded to their wish.

At the period of the coming of St. Augustine,* though the Scotio-Briton missionaries had already spread over all the corners of Caledonia, and though Columba and his disciples had carried the light of the Gospel into the northern districts of Britain where it had never penetrated, the Christian faith and the Catholic Church had languished and

* In what follows the historical portion is taken mainly from De Montalembert's *Monks of the West*.