

THE EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS.

Condensed from the London Tablet.—
The Opening of the Congress.

On Monday, May 15th, the Eucharistic Congress opened in Jerusalem. With admirable good taste the first meeting was held at the Church of St. Salvator, which belongs to the Franciscans, faithful guardians for over 600 years of the Holy Places, who have borne the heat of the day and the brunt of the battle. High Mass was celebrated at 6.30 a.m., and at 9 the Congress opened. It was a strange scene. In the middle of the Sanctuary, on his throne, sat the Cardinal Legate, in the magnificent robes of his Order; on his right hand the United Greek Patriarch of Antioch; and on his left Mgr. Doutrelout, the energetic Bishop of Liege, the President of the Standing Committee of the Congress. Behind the Cardinal's chair and on either side, grouped promiscuously together, were gathered some thirty Bishops and some half dozen mitred Abbots, not to speak of representatives of Bishops and Superiors of Religious houses. The quaint and venerable costumes of the Oriental prelates contrasted strangely with the more familiar attire of their Western brethren. Some wore the lofty head-dress and ample veil of the Greek rite. Some were veiled in purple, and others almost veiled with the Cardinal in the brilliancy of scarlet robes.

The proceedings were opened by Cardinal Langenieux. The following is a brief summary of his address:—

"Peace to you." It is thus that Jesus Christ was wont to salute His Apostles, and that they, following His example, saluted the assemblies of the Christians. Whenever He manifests Himself to His followers after His resurrection, He brings them peace. Fear not. It is I. Peace be to you.

This, too, was the great promise of the angels to the world at the very gates of Jerusalem on that first Christmas night. "Glory to God on high and on earth peace to men of good will." I cannot better express the feelings with which I come here to represent the Supreme Pontiff, who devotes the energy of his mind and the tenderness of his heart to bring peace to all in the name of Jesus Christ, not only within the Church, but in the world of to-day, and in the troubled regions of contemporary politics. "Announcing peace with Jesus Christ" (Acts x. 36). If then you ask me, as the ancients of Bethlehem once asked Samuel, in what spirit I come amongst you, "Is thy coming hither peaceable?" (Kings xvi. 4), deputed by him, whom history will style the great pacifier of modern times, I answer you with the prophet, "It is peaceable, I am come to offer sacrifice to the Lord." I come to invite you to give glory to God in the Most Holy Sacrament, and to tell you of the paternal solicitude of Leo XIII. for the venerable Churches of the East, which guard the traditions of the past. Speaking of the Eucharistic Congress the Cardinal went on to say that it was inevitable that sooner or later Catholics would come to Jerusalem, the source of all grace—to the Cenacle—to Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre, to bring their faith of the East, which, in its devotion to the Holy Eucharist had never suffered the least shadow to dim its brightness, and to offer to the Blessed Sacrament the united homage of East and West at the foot of the altar. Leo XIII. had associated himself closely with them, entrusting the duty of presiding at the Congress to a Legate, who, "in Our name, and in Our place shall represent Our person," because of the special importance of the plan where the Congress was being held, and on account of the presence of those illustrious prelates of the East, whom he hailed with due respect. In fine, it was because this occasion offered the Sovereign Pontiff an opportunity of giving once more a solemn pledge of his admiration and sympathy for the Christian communities in the East, the first-born daughters of the Church of God. "Therefore it is that confiding in the designs of the Holy Father and charged to express to you his feelings, as he would have wished to have done himself, I hope that in my words and my actions, there may be something of his tenderness and affection, and I repeat to you, in order that from the first the inmost feelings of my heart may be known to you, what I said the other day to Leo XIII. in my farewell audience. 'I shall go as the Legate from your heart to tell them of the love you bear them.'"

The Cardinal then dwelt upon the many great Saints and doctors produced by the Eastern Churches, its martyrs and the founders of monastic life in Egypt and the Lebanon. He further bore testimony to their noble resistance to the doctrines of the Reformation; how, owing to prayer, the Sacraments and devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the faith had always been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. Well might Leo XIII. exclaim: "How dear to me are the Churches of the East, and their ancient glory, and how glad I should be to see them shine with their former lustre." Such was the tone of the Cardinal's address. He had touched the right chord. His hearers were deeply moved. A spirit of charity breathed over the whole assembly, and all misgivings gave way, as clouds met before the sun. He was followed by Mgr. Doutrelout, and afterwards Mgr. Piavi, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, read a paper on the different Oriental rites in relation to the Dogma of the Real Presence. Telegrams of congratulations were despatched to the Pope and the Sultan, and at 12 o'clock the sitting was suspended.

The public function of Tuesday was in the Greek rite and was held at St. Anne's. St. Anne's is the traditional site where dwelt St. Anne, the Mother of the Blessed Virgin, and consequently it is here that our Lady was born. A meeting of the Congress followed, when several papers descriptive of the Greek rite were read. Amongst others the Greek Patriarch spoke, describing the Mass of the Presanctified, and also how the Greek Church had followed the Latin in the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi. The eloquent United Greek Bishop of Bamoa followed, and an interesting paper was read by Pere Michel of the Peres Blancs (White Fathers), and the day wound up with a solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament in the College and grounds of St. Anne's.

Wednesday morning saw a large gathering at St. Stephen's, the new Dominican house outside the Damascus Gate, established with special view to the study of the Bible. Here Mgr. Rahmanci, Archbishop of Bagdad, celebrated Mass in the Syriac rite, and in the forenoon there was a sitting of the Congress, reserved to the clergy exclusively. In the afternoon a general meeting was held at Notre Dame de France; Mgr. Rahmanci read a very careful and interesting paper on the Syriac rite. His lordship was in early days a pupil of the Dominican Fathers at Mossul (Ancient Niniveh) and then went to Propaganda, where he finished his course. But he still finds time for study, and gratefully acknowledged his thanks to the Librarians of the British Museum, where, in 1884, he had gone to study the versions of St. Ephrem, from which he now made many extracts in his speech.

On Thursday another solemn function took place, this time in the Armenian rite at the Church of Notre Dame du Spasme, which is close to the traditional site of the fourth station, the sad uniting between the Blessed Virgin and Our Lord carrying His cross. During the night of Thursday, the nocturnal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was undertaken by two groups at the Convent of the Ecce Homo by ladies, and in the Grotto of the Agony at Gethsemane by priests and laymen.

On Friday there was solemn Mass in the Slavomi rite at the Ecce Homo, and in the Syro-Chaldeic rite, at the little chapel of the Scourging. At 9 a.m. the Congress held its sixth public meeting at St. Anne's, when papers were read by the Superior of the Dominicans and Pere Federlin, the Superior of the house. Mgr. Geragre, United Greek Bishop of Bawas, speaking impromptu proclaimed his thanks to Leo XIII. for having sent them the Peres Blancs. He touched upon the memory of Cardinal Lavigne, their founder, and wound up by heartily thanking the Fathers themselves, who devote their lives to the education of the clergy for the Greek Church. In the afternoon the way of the cross was made through the streets of Jerusalem as is customary every Friday.

There were bishops in their purple, pilgrims in their long white cloaks, and Franciscans in their brown habits, all mingled in one vast throng as they followed the preacher through the rough winding streets until the end was reached on Calvary and at the Holy Sepulchre. The day closed with the usual procession.

On Saturday the Maronites gathered in great force at the Latin patriarchate

for the High Mass in their own rite. In the afternoon the last sitting of the Congress took place, and the Cardinal gave his closing discourse. It was the eve of Pentecost, and he reminded them how "when the days of the Pentecost were accomplished they were all together in one place," ready to receive the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And as at the first Pentecost, so now there were "Parthians and Medes, and Elamites and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphilia, Egypt, Cretes, and Arabians." Yes, and here again were the "strangers of Rome," those desert pilgrims from the west, who came from Rome, from the Vatican, where the Pope had so lovingly blessed them. "And Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice," and the voice of the Pope converted 3,000 men, and then the sacred text told them how "they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayer." And how "there were added in that day 3000 souls." Yes, there were the members of the Eucharistic Congress, pilgrim strangers, inhabitants of the country, about 3000 in numbers, to whom the truth is made known, who feel themselves penetrated with love for the Christian Church of the East. Might they persevere in the doctrine of the Apostles, might they persevere in the breaking of bread, not only the source of all grace, but the "symbol of unity and charity" (*Cer. Tri. Siss. XIII*). Let them persevere likewise "in prayers." Let them pray for the unity of the Church, borrowing the form of prayer in use in the Eastern Liturgies. "Let us pray for the peace of the whole world, for the welfare and union of God's holy churches." Thus closed the last session of the Congress. In the evening the usual procession of the Blessed Sacrament took place at the Dominican Fathers', and as it was Saturday—the Jewish Sabbath—large crowds of Jews came and looked over the low walls of the garden, and followed the procession with interest. There were also many Mahomedans amongst the onlookers, but all were quiet and respectful.

The net result of the Congress have been most encouraging. There has been a manifestation of sympathy between the East and West that fairly astounded the Schismatics. The Eastern Churches, poor in the wealth of this world, and often consisting of small and isolated communities, without facilities for education for either clergy or laity, have been, as it were, cut off from the life of the Church, too often a prey to the attacks of the schismatics and the rapacity of Turkish officials. Now they had met in conference with their brethren of the West, and had been accorded the place of honour. Each day had witnessed the solemn functions of their respective rites, and at each session they had unfolded the meaning of their ceremonies, and described the beauty of their liturgies, before vast crowds of pilgrims, who came to listen and learn, and went away delighted and edified. Then, too, the Westerns learned, many of them for the first time, of the rich fruit which the labours of the Christian Brothers had borne in Egypt and Syria, and of the truly giant work of the Jesuits Fathers in Alexan-

dria and Beyrout, in educating the people and bringing up the future ministers of religion. They heard how these Fathers had in Beyrout a college with some 550 students, a complete course of theology and even of medicine, a printing press which does its work in 14 or 15 languages, and how here the future priests of the Eastern Church are growing up side by side with their fellow Catholics from Europe, taught by the best professors that the Society can command, and trained by their most fervent religious. Truly a marvellous result, that owing to the persecution of religion in France a new and flourishing Church should rise in Asia Minor.

The revival, then, of religion in the East lies in the education of the clergy. The schismatics are steeped in ignorance, but the people have plenty of faith. Ignorance must give way before a carefully trained and well-instructed clergy, to whom the schismatics must, sooner or later, yield. If the Congress of Jerusalem did no other work but to accentuate these facts, it would have done good work. But it has done more. It has demonstrated the ardent devotion and unswerving fidelity of the East to the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the dogma of the Real Presence from the time of the Apostles to the present day; its hearty and loyal submission to the Holy See and the perfect union of East and West in the bosom of the Universal Church.

Eternal Vigilance

Is the price of health. But with all our precautions there are enemies always lurking about our systems, only waiting a favorable opportunity to assert themselves. Impurities in the blood may be hidden for years or even for generations and suddenly break forth, undermining health and hastening death. For all diseases arising from impure blood Hood's Sarsaparilla is the unequalled and unapproached remedy. It is King of them all, for it conquers disease.

The death of Mgr. Hefeles, which was announced a few days ago, deprives the ranks of German Catholic historians of a most learned and zealous labourer in historical fields. His two great works, *Cardinal Ximenes*, and especially his *History of the General Council of the Church*, were regarded as first authorities upon their respective subjects. Mgr. Hefeles was born in Wurtemberg in 1809, and was ordained priest at the age of 24, after a very brilliant course of studies. From the date of his ordination he passed the greater part of his life in the vocation of Professor at the University of Tubingen. He was received in Doctorate in 1840. Before his elevation to the Episcopal chair in 1869, he published a *History of the Introduction of Christianity into Wurtemberg*, an Edition of Writings from the Fathers, the *Breviloquium* of S. Bonaventure, a translation of some 80 sermons of S. Chrysostom, two volumes of ecclesiastical history, and a multitude of more ephemeral articles. His *History of the Council* extended to nine volumes, and is notable not only for the extraordinary learning of the writer—we speak absolutely without partizan spirit—but, even chiefly for the rare impartiality of discussion by which he was able to view his subject. Catholic writers are so often prone, most unreasonably, to colour their historical views, quite unconsciously, at the expense of truth, that Hefeles' example was of an almost incredible value to writers of more timid disposition who followed in his wake. It was after the death of Mgr. de Lipp that he was chosen for the Bishopric of Rottenburg, and the year following he journeyed to Rome, where, as is well known, he was a vehement opposer of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, and indeed at first joined the ranks of those recalcitrant German bishops who placed themselves under the dominion of Dr. Dollinger. Ultimately, however, in 1871, he made a full submission, "sincerely subordinating my personal sentiment to the highest ecclesiastical authority." His submission was received with very bad grace by his former party, but from that time till the day of his death he has remained in steadfast submission to the Holy See.—*London Tablet*, June 17.

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