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Current Topics

AT HOME AND ABROAD

THE thirteenth centenary of the landing of St. Augustine in England was celebrated by the Catholics of England by a remarkable and altogether unique demonstration. The celebration commenced on Sunday, September 12. The Benedictine Monastery on the West Cliff at Ramsgate overlooks the traditional scene of the Saint's disembarkation and this was made the centre of preliminary proceedings. Pontifical High Mass was celebrated, the Bishop of Southwark officiating, and a sermon on the life of St. Augustine was preached by the Abbot of the monastery. Cardinal Vaughan and a number of bishops journeyed to Ramsgate to take part in the celebration, amongst the visitors being his Lordship the Right Rev. Dr. Grimes, Bishop of Christchurch. The annual conference of the Catholic Truth Society was, by special arrangement, made to form a part of the Ramsgate celebration. The conference was presided over by Cardinal Vaughan, and a number of most interesting papers were read, including "The mission of St. Augustine," by the Right Rev. Monsignor Canon Moy's, D.D.; "Catholic literature since the Reformation," by the Rev. William Barry, D.D.; "Catholic education since the Reformation," by the Right Rev. Monsignor Ward; and "St. Augustine and the conversion of England," by Cardinal Vaughan. The conference was opened on Monday, and in addition to a very large number of clergy, the following distinguished members of the laity were also present:—Lady Mary Howard, Lady Margaret Howard, Lady Herbert of Lea, Mr. Britten, K.S.G., the Duke of Norfolk, the Dowager-Duchess of Newcastle, and the Countess Denbigh. On Tuesday the great feature of the celebration, the Mass in the tent, took place at Ebbsfleet. Ebbsfleet is about three miles from Ramsgate, on the shore of Pegwell Bay, and this was deemed the most fitting place in which to commemorate the arrival of St. Augustine thirteen centuries ago. A huge tent, flying the flags of England, Scotland, Ireland, the United States, and France, with the Papal flag over the altar end, was erected in one of the fields. The tent was filled with a dense crowd, and large numbers had to be content with standing room outside the enclosure. The procession was a very beautiful and striking one. It was headed, says a contemporary, by a chaplain carrying the cross of the regular clergy, and attended by two acolytes. Then came a great body of monks, representatives of the English branch of their respective Orders, Fathers of the Institute of Charity, Marist Fathers, Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate, Passionist Fathers of St. Paul of the Cross, Redemptorist Fathers, C.S.S.R., Fathers of the Society of Jesus, Servite Fathers, Carmelite Fathers, Fathers of the Order of St. Francis Capuchin, Fathers of the Order of St. Dominic, with their majestic white robes and dark cloak. The regular clergy in the robes of their different Orders formed a striking part of the procession. Following them came a chaplain carrying the cross of the Benedictines, and with him two acolytes. They headed a great train of Monks of the Order of St. Benedict, bearing in their midst a banner recalling the "Vexillum" which was borne by the brethren in 597 when advancing to meet King Ethelbert of Kent. Priors of the Order and heads of Benedictine monasteries in England, with the Very Rev. Prior of Monte Cassino, representing the Right Rev. Arch-abbot of the Order of St. Benedict, and two Fathers representing the rev. canons regular of the Lateran formed the rear of the procession of the religious Orders of priests. Next came a chaplain with the cross of the secular clergy, and with him also two acolytes, and then representatives of the Cathedral Chapters of England, a band who coming after the black-robed Benedictines, struck the eye with the vivid contrast of their blue and purple mozetas. Two only of these canons were in black cappas, being Benedictines from the Newport Chapter. After the prelates came a sub-deacon carrying the archiepiscopal cross the

sub-deacon of the Mass, Canon O'Halloran, Greenwich; the deacon, Canon Kearns, of Chelsea; the assistant priest, Canon Cahill, of Portsmouth; and then came his Eminence Cardinal Vaughan, Archbishop of Westminster. He wore his jewelled mitre and was magnificently robed. The London *Tablet* gives the following description of the appearance of the procession:—"A little behind the Cardinal and his attendants followed another group, composed of clergy in black cassocks, and in their midst his Eminence the Cardinal-Bishop of Autun, in all the splendour of the red *cappa magna*, the brightest patch of colour in all the long line. Slowly the procession of seventy black monks, dignitaries and a double line of mitred heads, wound round the enclosure past the crowds who stood outside in reverent attention. The *Miserere* was soon finished, and then the monks took up the celebrated antiphon *Deprecamur*, which was chosen by St. Augustine for his procession on the same spot thirteen hundred years ago. The musical setting was taken from a twelfth century Mass, and there is every reason to believe that it is substantially the same chant sung by St. Augustine's monks at their memorable landing in England. It is chiefly cast in the form of the Second Mode, and its plaintive drawn-out phrases are admirably adapted to the sense of the words, which are an adaptation from the Book of Daniel and were in use liturgically in the ancient Celtic Church. They are given as follows by Venerable Bede (Ecclesiastical History, Bk. i., c. 25):—*Deprecamur te, Domine, in omni misericordia tua, ut auferatur furor tuus et irascatur a civitate ista, et de domo sancta tua, quoniam peccavimus, Alleluia.* 'We beseech Thee, O Lord, in all Thy mercy that Thy fury and Thine anger may be taken away from this city and from Thy holy house, because we have sinned. Alleluia.' Then the Litany of the Saints was sung, the concluding versicles and prayers of which were chanted at the foot of the altar." High Mass was then celebrated in the tent. The singing was unaccompanied, and the chant was rendered throughout by a well-trained choir of monks. The Right Rev. Dr. Hadley, Bishop of Newport, preached an earnest and eloquent sermon, concluding with the following peroration:—"O country of our birth—England that we love—generous land that drawest thy sons together by cords and sympathies so many and so strong—would that Christ might give thee back that which Augustine brought! By all thy saints, by all thy martyrs, by that fragrant incense of the Mass that has hallowed thee through the centuries, by Mary, Mother of God, by St. Peter, by thy first Apostle, may God pardon our sins, answer our prayers, and lead thee by gentle might to perfect faith and Catholic unity." On Wednesday the pilgrims made their way to the "Protestant" Cathedral at Canterbury where they were received with every attention and very courteously shown over the building. The proceedings closed on Thursday when visits were made to various places in the district connected with St. Augustine's work in England. Altogether the celebration was a great success and it can hardly fail to have a lasting educational effect on a large section of the English people. It furnishes an interesting object lesson in true continuity, in striking contrast to the spurious continuity of the Anglican Church.

LEO XIII
AND
WORKING MEN.

THERE can be no doubt that Leo XIII. has fairly earned the honourable title of the "Workmen's Pope." He has always shown the warmest interest in the welfare of the toiling masses, and his great encyclical on the condition of Labour constitutes a splendid charter of the mutual rights and duties of Capital and Labour. It is characterised throughout by a spirit of warm sympathy with the workers. Where, for example, could be found a clearer vindication of the demand for 'a living wage' and of the principle of trade unionism than is contained in the following passage:—"We now approach a subject of very great importance, and one on which, if extremes are to be avoided, right ideas are absolutely necessary. Wages, we are told, are fixed by free consent; and therefore the employer, when he pays what was agreed upon, has done his part and is not called upon for anything further. . . . This mode of reasoning is by no means convincing to a fair-minded man, for there are important considerations