

those Catholic little ones making profession of their faith. The starting point was at the Westminster Bridge end of the Embankment, and from here to past Hungerford Bridge, as well as in the adjoining thoroughfares, the different contingents were massed to the number of fully 20,000.

At the head of the procession was a banner of the Guild of Ransom bearing the motto, 'Jesus, Convert England,' by the side of which walked the founder of the Guild and the Chief Marshal of the procession, Father Philip Fletcher.

Banners of the Sacred Heart, the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, St. Patrick, and other saints, and bearing scriptural and other mottoes, were borne in large numbers, and at intervals there were over a dozen bands. A large proportion of the girls wore white and had veils over their heads, while the boys in most cases wore sashes of various colors. These, with the multi-colored banners, went to make up a scene of great picturesqueness. What perhaps touched one most of all was the evident pains which had been taken by the parents that the children should look as neat as possible, and this was particularly noticeable in the case of those from the poorer districts, for, though many of the young processionists bore the sign of poverty in their dress, all were trim and neat.

When the head of the procession reached the Cathedral, about half-past 3, an immense crowd had gathered in the vicinity, and received the children with cheers and the waving of hats and handkerchiefs. It took nearly an hour for the juvenile processionists to pass along Ambrosden avenue and file into the Cathedral, and as they entered the building they sang 'God bless our Pope,' which was heartily joined in by most of the crowd outside. When as many as accommodation could be found for in the great Cathedral were seated, numbering, it is estimated, between six and seven thousand, the spectacle presented was highly impressive. The scene in the immense nave was one of great beauty, the white veillings, yellow and white sashes, and chaplets of roses worn by the little girls, and the red sashes, roses, and emblems worn by the boys, combined with innumerable banners and bannerettes, giving forth a blaze of brilliant color. Beyond those in charge of the children, including many priests and nuns, no adults were allowed at the service at the Cathedral.

The occasional sermon was preached by Cardinal Logue, who, later on, addressed two other gatherings of children, numbering several thousand more, in large halls adjacent to the Cathedral.

Benediction was given by the Cardinal Legate, and in the Sanctuary were Cardinal Ferrari, Archbishop of Milan; the Archbishop of Westminster, and many Bishops and other dignitaries. The hymns were sung by the children, and at the close of the service a procession, formed by his Eminence the Cardinal Legate, with his attendants, Cardinal Ferrari, Archbishops and Bishops, Abbots, and other prelates, and as they went down the processional way in the centre of the nave his Eminence Cardinal Vannutelli gave his blessing to the children. Soon after the children filed out of the Cathedral in perfect order and proceeded homewards, all apparently very happy for enjoying the great privilege of taking a leading part in so memorable a celebration.

#### MASS MEETING IN THE ALBERT HALL.

On Thursday morning it was announced that the Home Secretary and the Commissioner of Police had given their sanction to the procession of the Blessed Sacrament, which, from an early stage, had been a prominent feature in the arrangements for the Eucharistic Congress. On the same morning the Archbishop of Westminster received a private communication to the effect that the Prime Minister desired the abandonment of the public procession. What followed was summarised by the Archbishop of Westminster.

The Albert Hall was the scene of another striking manifestation of the strength of the Catholic Church in London, when the immense building was packed to its last inch by a magnificent meeting of the Catholic men of the metropolis. It holds, when filled as it was on Saturday night, close on 11,000, but had it been several times larger it would not have contained all who desired to be present, the result being that many thousands had to be content with waiting outside, and cheering the Papal Legate and other leading dignitaries as they arrived and departed. Not only was the meeting large, but it was enthusiastic almost beyond description, and it is doubtful if in all its history the famous building ever resounded to such cheering as was heard within it on that occasion. The reception accorded to Cardinal Vannutelli was almost frantic in its fervor, and repeatedly during the evening the vast audience broke into loud and sustained outbursts of cheers.

The chair was taken by the Cardinal Legate, who was accompanied on the platform by Cardinals Logue, Mercier, and Ferrari, and a large number of Bishops. When the cheering which greeted his arrival had subsided, Cardinal Vannutelli requested Archbishop Bourne to conduct the proceedings on his behalf.

#### Speech of the Archbishop of Westminster.

The Archbishop, who was most warmly greeted, said: Before we proceed with the business of the evening I have an announcement to make which will be a source of pain and surprise to you all. On Thursday last I received private intimation from the Prime Minister deprecating the procession to be held on Sunday. (Loud and angry cries of 'Shame.') I must ask you (he continued), please, to listen to my statement without interruption—and advocating its abandonment. I replied at once that I could not act upon a private intimation of this kind, and Mr. Asquith answered that his communication was purely confidential and must not be published. I insisted that, if any change were needed at this late hour, he must take the responsibility of making me a public request to that effect. I quote my message to him sent last night: 'Prime Minister, Slains Castle, Port Errol, Aberdeenshire,—Having considered your communication, I have decided to abandon ceremonial, of which you question legality, provided that you authorise me to state publicly that I do so at your request. You must recognise the extreme urgency and delicacy of the position in which you have placed me.—Archbishop, Westminster.' This morning he replied as follows: 'Archbishop, Archbishop's House, Westminster, London,—Your telegram received last night too late to answer. Since your Grace refers matter to our judgment, I have to say that his Majesty's Government are of opinion that it would be better in the interests of order and good feeling that the proposed ceremonial, the legality of which is open to question, should not take place. They much regret the inconvenience and disappointment which its abandonment may cause.—Asquith.' I at once made answer: 'Prime Minister, Slains Castle, Port Errol,—Have received your telegram. All elements of ecclesiastical ceremonial shall in deference to your wish as Prime Minister be eliminated from procession. Cardinals and Bishops will walk in full Court dress of their respective ranks. Expect Government to ensure all comfort and courtesy to our honored guests. Must, of course, explain fully and publicly the reason for the change of arrangements.—Archbishop Westminster.' I have, therefore (continued the Archbishop), the duty of asking their Eminences and their Lordships to proceed to the Cathedral to-morrow afternoon, not directly, but by the route marked out for the procession, dressed in cassock, rochet, and mantelletta or other garment of their proper rank. The ceremonial procession will take place within the Cathedral walls, and Benediction will be given to the multitudes who cannot enter from the balcony of the Cathedral. I trust that I shall in this way satisfy to some extent the legitimate desire of thousands of our people to have some part in the Congress, and at the same time avoid any action, the legality of which might be called into question, even by the most captious and capricious. I ask our people to accept the arrangement with the loyalty and respect which are due both to their ecclesiastical superiors and to the civil authorities, and to refrain from any action which might be wanting in dignity or self-restraint. As a loyal Englishman, still more as a Catholic striving in all things to be obedient to our faith, I feel it my duty to conform myself to the publicly expressed wishes of the Constitutional authorities, but I am not prepared to submit to the bigoted dictation of the Protestant Alliance or any similar society. (Great cheering.) I trust that when all the circumstances are known you will approve of the action I have taken. I ought in justice to say that up to this very moment I have complete assurance from the police that no danger was to be apprehended from even the ceremonial aspects of the contemplated procession, and I desire to place on record my appreciation of the courtesy and consideration shown to us throughout by the authorities and metropolitan police. (Cheers.) Also, so far as I am aware, no protest of any kind has been received from any person living on the line of route chosen for the procession. I have only one or two words to add. I want all the other arrangements of the procession to go on as before. I want our people to go to do honor to the representative of the Holy See, to receive his blessing, God's grace in their hearts, and that of the other Prelates who honor us by their presence in our midst, and although it is not permitted to us to carry with us our Divine Master, I hope and trust that those present, by the sentiments of their hearts, and by the fervor of their singing, will make not only the Cathedral, but the whole of Westminster, one great sanctuary of the most Blessed Sacrament.