

## THE EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

### STRIKING AND IMPRESSIVE SCENES

From the London *Tablet* to hand we are able to supplement the necessarily brief account of the proceedings of the Eucharistic Congress at Madrid, which appeared in our last issue:—

The first general meeting was held on Monday morning, June 26, in the Church of San Francisco. The attendance was everything that could be desired, and the singing of the 'Veni Creator' formed a striking opening to the proceedings. The Cardinal Legate presided. Monsignor Bruchesi, Archbishop of Montreal, who delivered the first address, had an enthusiastic reception. He sketched the features of last year's Congress at Montreal, and stated that it had left behind many desirable and gratifying results. He paid a warm tribute to the Pope, who by his two decrees on Frequent Communion and the Communion of children had replaced the Christian life on its proper foundation—the Eucharist. Children were the future; put Christ in their hearts, and Christ would guard them. His Grace also paid a high encomium to British liberality, and expressed the hope that one day England would return to the Catholic faith.

The Archbishop of Potosi, who was the next speaker, dealt with the question of admitting to Holy Communion children of seven and eight years of age.

Monsignor Enrique Almaraz, the eloquent Archbishop of Seville, followed with a telling discourse on the duties of parents and teachers in regard to the children. The difficulties of the present day made recourse to the Eucharist more than ever necessary to the Church and her children. Parents should accompany their children and teachers their scholars to the altar rails, to strengthen them by example as well as precept. We lacked men because of ignorance of divine things and because of lack of character. The Eucharist was enlightenment to the mind and a strengthening food. The Archbishop concluded by calling upon the press, which was nowadays such a power in the land, to aid in the good work by acting as the true pedagogue of the world.

The last address dealt with the Eucharistic miracles which had taken place at Lourdes. Before the meeting closed Cardinal Aguirre read the reply that had been received through the Cardinal Secretary of State to the telegram of loyalty sent by him on behalf of the Congress. The Pope congratulated the Legate on the reception that had been accorded to him by the Royal Family, the public authorities, and the people. He lovingly imparted the Apostolic Benediction, and granted a plenary indulgence to the children who were to take part in the General Communion.

The afternoon was devoted to sectional meetings, and among these the French Section was remarkable for the liveliness of its discussions and the thronged attendance of French, Swiss, Belgians, and Canadians which greatly exceeded the accommodation of the room placed at their disposal.

In the evening there was a literary, artistic, and musical gathering at the Theatre Royal in connection with various Eucharistic works. There was singing and orchestral music, the little dancers of Seville gave an exhibition of their curious local dance before the Eucharist, and colored reproductions of pictures by the great masters were shown upon the screen by lantern.

#### The Holy Father's Message.

From the first it was apparent that the success of the Congress was assured, but as the days passed the spirit of the gathering became more and more widely intensified. The second general meeting was held on Tuesday, and when the Pope's telegram in reply to the loyal message of Cardinal Aguirre was again read, there was a striking outburst of enthusiasm. The text of the Holy Father's message, which was sent through the Cardinal Secretary of State, was as follows: 'The Holy Father, Pius X., has heard with the most lively pleasure of the solemn opening of the Eucharistic Con-

gress attended by the Infante Don Carlos, representing his Majesty, numerous prelates and delegates of the public authorities, the army, the nobility, the academies, and the military orders. Touched by the noble homage of your filial sentiments, he sends with all the warmth of his heart, to your Eminence and to all who surround you so worthily, the Apostolic Benediction. He hopes and prays that the labors of the Congress, inspired by love of the Blessed Sacrament, may turn to the spiritual profit of all who attend it, and that the present Eucharistic solemnities may redound to the glory and prosperity of the Church, and be fruitful in

Special Divine Protection for Catholic Spain.'

The rising of the Bishop of Beja, who was one of the principal speakers at this meeting, was the signal for a great outburst of sympathy, which was partly personal to his Lordship's distinguished services and his position as a persecuted Bishop, and partly directed to the much-tried Church of Portugal, of which he is so illustrious a representative. After having asked how it was possible for him, the victim of a Masonic Government, to appear before such an assembly, he proceeded, in an eloquent address, to pass in retrospect what Portugal had done in happier days for the glory of God. In words trembling with patriotic feeling he deplored the persecution by which religion was oppressed, but expressed his confidence that the country would be redeemed by the Eucharist. His concluding word was addressed to the journalists and to the readers of newspapers: let the evil and gutter press be confronted and opposed by a good press; and truth would prevail. The Congressists received a warm welcome from the Bishop of Lugo. Another of the speakers was Señor A. Pidal, President of the Academy, who gave an eloquent exposition of the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas on the Eucharist. His peroration was a *tour de force* in which all the glories of Spain were offered to the God of the Eucharist, and it was received with

#### Repeated and Enthusiastic Plaudits.

It would, of course, be almost impossible to give any idea of the work performed at the sectional meetings; but the earnestness and vivacity of the women's gatherings must not pass without a word of mention. They were conducted under the direction of the International Council of the Federation of Catholic Women's Leagues, which was holding its second annual gathering. Last year's meeting was held at Brussels, and during the twelve months that have intervened the Federation has seen a most promising development by the affiliation of a number of new leagues. To the leagues of Germany, England, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Spain, France, Lorraine, Portugal, Switzerland, and Uruguay, some seven or eight others have now been added—Canada, Hungary, Poland, Luxembourg, and the Argentine, besides a Society of Catholic Women in New York, and the Catholic Women's League of Boston. Altogether the Federation represents an army of some 2,000,000 Catholic women. The second sitting of the Committee was presided over by Monsignor Kreuzwald, who represented the Cardinal-Archbishop of Cologne, and by Monsignor Odelin, who represented Monsignor Amette, Archbishop of Paris.

It may be added that during the Congress the Count Vay de Vasa, Abbot of St. Martin's, who is well known in England for his work among emigrants, brought forward an important proposition for the organisation of services on board ocean-going steamers. He pointed out that there are over half a million Italian emigrants and over 300,000 Austrians and Hungarians, nearly all Catholics, travelling yearly for America, and during their long journey there was no religious consolation. It is only by chance that sometimes a priest is on board, and very often he has no permission to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice. It was most important, therefore, that all nations should take proper measures that moral help for emigrants and the divine service on board the steamers should be organised.

The Irish Section of the Congress, which was held in the hall of the Circulo de los Luises, was presided over by Dr. O'Doherty, till lately President of the Irish College at Salamanca, and now Bishop-