

elect of the new diocese of Mindando, in the Philippines. He was accompanied on the platform by General O'Donnell, Duke of Tetuan, a grandee of Spain, and Don Martos O'Neill. The Bishop read a paper on the Irish College, and speeches were afterwards made by Father Coleman, O.P., and Father O'Bryne, P.P.

General Communion of Children.

The most striking feature of Wednesday was the General Communion of the children, which took place in the Retiro Park. It was emphatically the children's day. The cultivated beauty of the site needed little in the way of decoration beyond the erection of the numerous altars necessary for the function. Around these were ranged some 25,000 children. It was a moving spectacle, and it was rendered all the more moving by the silence which reigned over all. Thus there was nothing to distract the little ones from the great act in which they were taking part. But great as was the concourse of children in the Retiro Park, there were other smaller gatherings in the churches, where Masses were simultaneously said on their behalf and where the altar rails were crowded time after time by long lines of children. In the Cathedral the Archbishop of Grenada delivered a thrilling address to the young communicants; there was a similar ceremony at San Millan and at Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, where none of the children were over eight years of age. In the private chapel of the Countess of Asalto the Papal Legate administered First Communion to two little girls and afterwards communicated the Countess in her own room, where she was confined to a bed of sickness.

It may here be mentioned that there was also a General Communion of women during the Congress organised by the women of Madrid in order to set an example of devotion and obedience to the directions of the Holy Father.

The Closing Meeting.

The *crescendo* of enthusiasm reached its height at the last of the mass meetings of the Congress, which was held on Wednesday at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. For the throne prepared in the choir of the church, San Francisco el Grande, showed that against all expectation, the King, who was at La Granja, was to attend. In the nave the representatives of the four military orders were drawn up. After the Papal Legate had taken his place in the chair, the Armenian Patriarch offered to the Congress the welcome of the East in a striking speech delivered in French.

Then was read a personal telegram from the Pope to Cardinal Aguirre, in which his Holiness said:

'I beg your Eminence to invite in my name the Congressists assembled at Madrid to offer to Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament a special and fervent prayer as an act of reparation for the unfortunate Portuguese nation, which has deserved so well of the Catholic Church, and is so dear to me. I pray God to sustain and console the worthy and beloved Portuguese Bishops and their clergy and people, who are to-day persecuted and wounded in their belief and rights, and that heaven may not permit the Portuguese people to be despoiled of their ancient faith and their holy and glorious traditions.—Pius X. Pope.'

The principal speaker at the meeting was Monsignor Calpena, of the Chapel Royal, who said that all were there united in a kingdom which had charity for its standard and brotherhood for its weapon. Christ had achieved the unity which paganism had failed to compass, and he then proceeded to sketch the glories of the religious and national history of Spain, protesting finally that the country had no hostility against the Church or the religious Orders, but was, as ever, the land of faith and of the Eucharist. He sat down amidst a wonderful scene of enthusiasm.

Dr. Weber, Professor of Theology at Cassel, who was the next speaker, dealt with the practice of daily Communion. He was followed by Père Vaudon, who described the life and work of Mlle. Tamisia, and considered the origin and future of the Eucharistic Congress.

Then, suddenly about seven o'clock the strains of the Royal March were heard and the whole assembly

rose to welcome the King and Queen as they walked up the nave accompanied by the Cardinal Legate and the Nuncio-Apostolic, who had gone to the great doors to receive them. Their Majesties having taken their places, the Abbé Thellier de Poncheville pointed out that France and Spain were sister nations and explained the benefits to peace to be derived from international congresses. He was followed by the Bishop of Plotsk, who spoke in Latin.

The King's Speech.

At length the King rose amid the hushed expectation of the great gathering, and in a clear voice which penetrated every part of the building read a speech which contained a right royal profession of faith. Addressing the Cardinal Legate, his Majesty said:—

'Most Eminent Lord,—At the beginning of the labors of this Congress, I appointed the Infante Don Carlos as my representative and commissioned him to communicate to you the feelings which filled my heart and that of the Queen on this solemn occasion. To-day, at the close of the Congress, we come in person to tell you of the great joy with which we have followed its labors, and how our believing hearts have been gladdened by seeing the multitudes of people who have gathered together, differing in their history, language, and customs, but all united like one flock in the burning crucible of love of the Eucharist—the sublime food of faith and love. And now, gentlemen, who have travelled to us from afar, we come to say that, as we welcomed you on your arrival and expressed our hope that your visit would be a pleasant one, so now we bid you farewell and thank you for your attendance in such numbers. In doing so we pray you, on returning home to your respective countries, not to forget our beloved Spain, to speak of her and describe her to your fellow-countrymen as she is and as you have seen her—a land of faith, of affability and hospitality—and not grim and dark as her enemies pretend. Our last word is to you, my Lord, the representative of the Roman Pontiff, the Universal Pastor of Catholic people. Tell his Holiness, the Queen and I hope and pray that he may live many years to be the tireless apostle of love for Christ in the Eucharist. Tell him, too, that in thus offering the witness of our filial and reverent affection, we beg the Apostolic Benediction for ourselves, for our family, for Spain, and for all the peoples who are here represented.'

This speech was the signal for a fresh outburst of enthusiasm from the whole assembly. The Cardinal Legate said a few words of thanks to the King and to all concerned in the Congress, and imparted the Apostolic Benediction as the Pope had directed. Then, for the last time was sung the Congress hymn. The meeting broke up and the Royal party, the Cardinal Legate, and the Bishops drove away amid repeated and resounding cheers.

The Great Procession.

The work of the Congress was now at an end, but there was still its crowning function to be performed—the public procession of the Blessed Sacrament, which is a feature of these International Congresses. And a worthy crown it was to what had gone before. Thursday was a perfect day. The sun shone down from a cloudless sky, and the streets had decked themselves in the richest holiday attire. Wherever the eye rested there was a wealth of color and a mass of spectators and worshippers who were representatives of all Spain, and included the representatives of Catholics from many parts of the world. At two o'clock in the afternoon the streets along the route were lined with soldiers, behind whom the people massed themselves, whilst the windows were crowded. The procession was organised in the Retiro Park, and its point of departure was from the neighboring Church of San Gerónimo el Real, which stands close by the Picture Gallery. At half-past three the long line began to move upon its way.

First came a body of drummers in uniform, then the royal squires, the members of the Catholic Young Men's Society with their banners; the huntsmen of the royal houses in their picturesque liveries. These were followed by a long line of workmen, amongst whom the Valencians were especially notable with their banner