

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

CENTENARY OF THE FOUNDER

The arrival in Paris of Cardinal Vannutelli, the Papal Legate, was the first act of the centenary fetes in honor of Frederic Ozanam, the founder of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, that were held from April 25 to April 28 (writes the special correspondent of the *Universe*). To the Catholics, who are accustomed to associate the idea of a Papal Legate with a certain exterior pomp, there was something almost incongruous in this quiet arrival of the Pope's representative, but those who look below the surface remembered that if the separation of the Church and State has robbed the Church in France of the adjuncts of official pomp on certain occasions, it has, on the other hand, only increased her moral influence over the masses.

Lost in the busy crowd that moved to and fro in the station of 'Paris-Lyon-Mediterranee,' Cardinal Amette, plainly dressed in black, was waiting for the train. Close to him stood a few laymen, who represented different Catholic associations, and M. Frederic Laporte, the husband of Ozanam's only daughter, now dead, accompanied by his children and grandchildren. Tall and straight, in spite of his age, the Cardinal Legate stepped quickly from his carriage, and was met by Cardinal Amette, who, with some trouble, so dense was the crowd, presented the group of Catholics present; then the two left the railway station together.

On Friday evening the celebrations commenced by a gathering of the members of the French and foreign conferences of St. Vincent de Paul at the Catholic University of Paris. Over one thousand Brothers assembled, and after a speech from the Vicomte d'Hendecourt, vice-president of the Society, and another from the Rector of the University, Mgr. Baudrillart, the French members and their visitors from England, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Germany, and America, happily fraternised.

The Church of 'Les Carmes,' founded just three centuries ago, was sanctified during the Revolution of 1789 by the imprisonment of over one hundred faithful priests, among them three bishops, who, after several weeks of captivity, were brutally murdered in the convent garden on September 2, 1792. In this venerable sanctuary Cardinal Lucon, Archbishop of Rheims, sang High Mass on Saturday morning, in presence of Cardinal Vannutelli and Cardinal Amette, of the Archbishop of Sens, and the Bishops of le Mans and Aire. Cardinal Lucon preached during Mass, and pointed out the difference between Christian charity such as was practised by Ozanam and mere philanthropy, which, however generous, lacks the divine spark of supernatural love. In the crypt under the chapel is Ozanam's grave, upon which the sculptor Geoffroy has lately erected a monument, which the three Cardinals went down to bless.

This underground sanctuary is a fitting resting-place for one whose dominant thought during his comparatively short life—Ozanam was only forty when he died in 1853—was the service of God and the Church. It is a reliquary where the gathered together the bones of many of the priests who, on September 2, 1792, laid down their lives rather than take a schismatical oath. Few spots in Paris are more venerable, and Ozanam, to whom the glory of the Catholic Church was so dear, could not have dreamt of a worthier resting-place than among the martyred dead.

On Saturday evening another and more important gathering took place. The meeting of the members of the French and foreign conferences on Friday evening at the Institut Catholique was a family gathering of Ozanam's disciples, the Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul, whereas at the "Palais des Fetes," in the Rue des Ours, the leaders of the Catholic party gave the Papal Legate a public welcome.

On the platform, where Cardinal Vannutelli had the place of honor, were the Cardinals of Paris and of Rennes, the Archbishop of Sens, the Bishops of

Amiens, Clermont, Troyes, Meaux, Aire, Ozanam's son-in-law, grandsons, and nephew, and behind them many Catholic notabilities. Literary men like the Marquis de Vogue were there, with M. Rene Bazin, the Academician, and M. Georges Goyau, the historian; young leaders like M. Pierre Gertier, the president of 'La Jeunesse Catholique,' and more elderly men, like Colonel Keller, who heads the Committee de "defense religieuse," besides many others too numerous to name—men who at the present moment are slowly but steadily enlarging the sphere of influence of Catholicism and fighting the good fight in the teeth of the evil forces that are working to dechristianise the country.

In a powerful voice M. Lauzac de Laborie, one of the most eminent French historians of the day, who is the general secretary of the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul, read the pontifical letter appointing Cardinal Vannutelli as Papal Legate on the occasion of Ozanam's centenary. Then followed a speech, delivered in excellent French by Cardinal Vannutelli, whose sympathetic expressions of goodwill towards the French people called forth enthusiastic applause. M. Calot, President-General of the Society from Belgium and Italy, spoke next, and a felicitous speech from Cardinal Amette brought the meeting to a close. He was particularly happy in his expressions when he spoke of the debt of gratitude that the Archbishops of Paris owe to the man who persuaded Mgr. de Guelen to found the Conferences of Notre Dame, and who suggested to another Archbishop, Mgr. Affre, that in 1848 he should act as peacemaker between the Government and the insurgents—a generous impulse that was followed by a martyr's death.

On Sunday morning Cardinal Vannutelli said Mass at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at Montmartre, and the same afternoon the orator of the Lenten stations of Notre Dame, Father Janvier, preached the panegyric of Ozanam in the cathedral whose history is so closely bound up with the destinies of France. From an early hour the great Church, where, during centuries past, Royal and Imperial weddings and christenings have been celebrated, where Henry VI. was crowned King of France, and where, some years later, the process undertaken to vindicate Joan of Arc was successfully carried through, was filled to overflowing. Priests and nuns, delegates from the provinces, men and women of every social rank and position, filled up all corners of the big basilica, and on the *place* outside gathered the multitude of those who were not fortunate enough to force an entrance. Owing to Pere Janvier's powerful voice and distinct enunciation, his discourse was heard all through the Cathedral; he took for his theme the apostleship that Ozanam exercised by his speech and example, by his historical writings and teaching, by the foundation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and of the Conferences of Notre Dame.

Sunday was by no means a day of rest for the hard-worked but invariably gracious Papal envoy; his day began by the ceremony at Montmartre, it continued at Notre Dame, and ended by a banquet at the Palais d'Orsay, where he was the guest of the Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul. Throughout the endless ceremonies and receptions his Italian courtesy never flagged, and his smiling countenance betrayed no signs of fatigue.

On Monday an early Mass, celebrated by the Archbishop of Paris at St. Etienne du Mont, brought the Ozanam celebrations to a close. The picturesque church, that stands in the heart of learned Paris, is where, in 1833, three or four obscure students, of whom Ozanam, a boy of twenty, was the leader, founded the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, an institution that now extends to the ends of the earth.

Let politicians rave and rant,
And say there's no such thing as cant;
I don't believe it, sir—do you?
They're all a money-hunting crew.
But what I do believe for sure
Is that Woods' Great Peppermint Cure
Will build you up and make you strong,
Secure from colds your whole life long.

Leslie McMinn

MONUMENTAL SCULPTOR, 70 RANGITIKEI STREET (Opp. Holbein & Kirks).
PALMERSTON NORTH. Cemetery work executed any part of District.