

CATHOLICS AND THE WEMBLEY EXHIBITION

The Tablet 24th May 1924

SIR has been a matter of some concern to many Catholics both at home and abroad that the Church in no way finds a place in the Imperial Exhibition at Wembley. That Wembley stands as a symbol of Imperial might and world-wide power, and a monument of human greatness and achievement, is evident to all. In fact, as the Secretary for the Colonies recently stated, it is the Empire in miniature. Can we as Catholics and at the same time members of the British Empire rest content that the Exhibition be a mere symbol of material greatness and no more? Daily we pray and give alms that England and the Commonwealth of Nations that form her Empire may be brought within the unity of the Faith ; various good works flourish for this end. In this amassing of resources and vast display concentrated in one place for a brief period of time, and standing for that which we would gain to God, can we rest content that it should stand apart froth our spiritual interests? It would be false to say that the British Empire is a soulless and godless organization. In times past the Catholic Church nurtured England to religion and civilization, and she is to-day in the vanguard of the social, educational, and religious upbringing of countless souls among peoples that now contribute to her Imperial greatness, there being 15,000,000 Catholics in the Empire. This Exhibition is surely incomplete without the Catholic Church. The Association for the Propagation of the Faith being an international as well as an official organization of the Church, has for its object her world-wide interests and apostolate. On account of its status and extensive connections, its close contact with various parts of the British Empire, the Association has consented, at the request of His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop, to undertake some project for representing Catholic interests at Wembley. Time and opportunity do not allow for any adequate exhibition, but it seems that the Church could not be more fittingly represented than by having a small oratory, dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, the apostles of Rome and patrons of the Empire's Metropolis, to enshrine Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, that He may reside in the midst of these peoples, who through their material greatness may also further the spiritual interests of His kingdom, and that we too may renew our prayers and sacrifice at this Imperial stronghold for the return of England and the Empire to the unity of the Faith.

In addition to the oratory, it is proposed to erect a small court with some adjacent offices for supplying information, literature, and so forth, that the "city set on a hill" may be seen and known by many.

In order to carry out these plans, for the arrangements of which we are greatly indebted to the Administrative Board of the Exhibition for the courtesy and consideration they have so generously extended to us, we appeal to all Catholics far and wide to come to our aid so as to enable us to discharge the commission entrusted to us by His Eminence, that the Church of God may fittingly take her place in this vast enterprise. We appeal to Catholics at home and abroad, in the Mother Country and the Colonies, to aid us in this undertaking.

Donations should be forwarded to Mr. Guy Ellis, Hon. Treasurer, A.P.F. Offices and Headquarters, 59, Eccleston Square, S.W.I. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to Mr. Guy Ellis, and crossed "Westminster Bank, Ltd., Victoria Street, S.W., a/c Association for the Propagation of the Faith."

Yours, 8:c , FRANCIS E. Ross, General Director.

GUY ELLIS, Hon. Treasurer.

On behalf of English Council Association for the Propagation of the Faith.

THE WEMBLEY EXHIBITION ORATORY

The Tablet 28th June 1924

DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING.

The Catholic Oratory which has been erected at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley is to be blessed and opened by the Cardinal Archbishop next Monday forenoon (*June 30th*), when Mass will be celebrated by the Right Rev. Mgr. Dunn, Prefect Apostolic of Borneo, followed by an address from His Eminence, and Benediction. Afterwards, at a private luncheon at the Lucullus Royal Enclosure, at the invitation of Adele Countess Cadogan, Lady Sykes and Mrs. Passmore, the following guests will meet His Eminence : Sir Travers Clarke, Chief Administrator of the Exhibition ; Sir Laurence Weaver, of the United Kingdom Exhibits ;

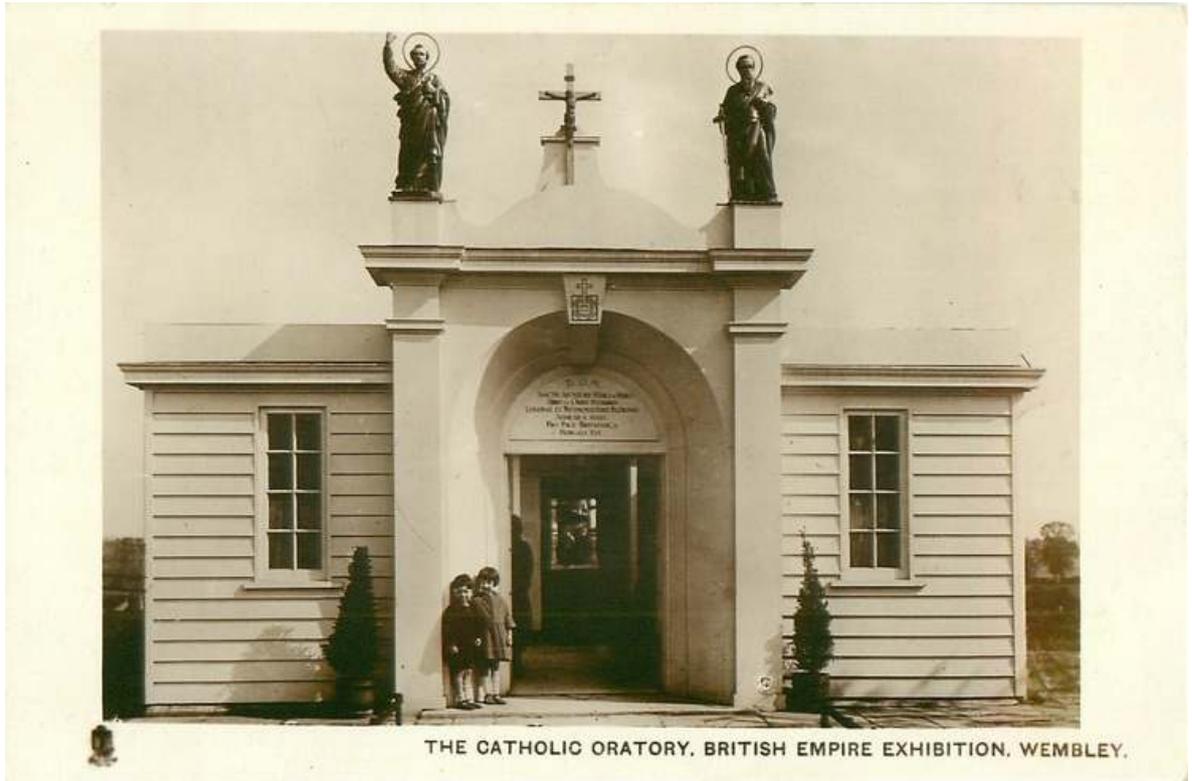
- the Catholic Commissioners of the Dominion and Colonial Sections; and members of the Council of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith.

The oratory, which is situated by the railway cutting between the South African and Ceylon Pavilions, and opposite the Malta section, has been designed by Mr. A. S. G. Butler, A.R.I.B.A. The design, of a total length of seventy feet, by twenty-five feet wide, comprises an oratory chapel, an atrium or court, and two rooms for offices, the whole being in the old Franciscan style of the Californian missions, The altar-piece is by Mr. William Lacy, of Hounslow, and Messrs. Humphries have erected the building. The dedication, to SS. Peter and Paul, is indicated by statues of those Apostles and also in the following inscription :—

D.O.M.

In Honorem Sanctorum Petri et Pauli Urbis et Orbis Apostolorum Londinii et Westmonsterii Patronis Aedicula Haec Pro Pace Britannica Dedicataest.

The furnishing of the oratory 'throughout has been undertaken by Messrs. Burns Oates & Washbourne, Whilst the Association for Perpetual Adoration and Work for Poor Churches is supplying the altar linen and vestments. A book room is being established under the management of the A.P.F., assisted by the Catholic Truth Society ; and a priest will be in constant attendance in the inquiry bureau during the period of the Exhibition, to give information, conduct devotions, and hear confessions. In the atrium will be a display of maps, charts, diagrams, &c., under the management of Father Edward King, S.J., illustrative of the extent and work of the Catholic Church both in the Empire and throughout the world.



THE CATHOLIC ORATORY, BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION, WEMBLEY.



INTERIOR - CATHOLIC ORATORY, BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION, WEMBLEY.

10th October 1924 - Requiem Mass for Ed T Agius

THE WEMBLEY EXHIBITION ORATORY: CLOSING SERVICE

The Tablet 7th November 1925

—The Right Rev. Bishop Biermans, Superior-General of St. Joseph's Foreign Missionary Society, celebrated the closing Mass at the little Oratory of SS. Peter and Paul in the grounds of the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley. It had been hoped that a sermon would have been preached by Cardinal Bourne ; but His Eminence was unable to attend, and the preacher was Father Edward King, S.J., who from the first has been actively associated with the work of the Wembley oratory. In the course of his address he referred to the influence of that little building, in which the Real Presence had been brought into the midst of a vast pleasure ground thronged with British subjects from all parts of the Empire. To non-Catholics the oratory had been a means of revealing something of the Catholic religion, about which they had been eager to learn. Father King concluded by thanking, on behalf of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, all who had assisted towards the success of the oratory's work.

Among other clergy present at the service were the Very Revv. Canon Myers, President of St. Edmund's College ; E. N. Farmer, Procurator-Consultor of St. Joseph's College, Mill Hill, who acted as assistant priest ; Herbert Vaughan, D.D. ; Revv. Fathers Sebastian Mills, O.S.M. ; V. Hornyold, S.J. ; and Basil Gudgeon. Music was rendered by members of the choir of Westminster Cathedral.