

possible to say. The House of Commons is after all the creature of events in time of war, and changes come in its temper and in its attitude much more from success or failure in battlefields than from circumstances within its own elements. It may be that a surprise will come some day, and the House of Commons will find itself confronted by a catastrophe in the field which will combine all these different influences and produce a combination that must lead to a change of Government.

## ON THE BATTLE LINE

The Russians are not waiting till the spring to launch their new offensive on the eastern front. Their attacks upon the Austrian positions in Bessarabia continue, and despatches are coming through indicating another important concentration of Russian troops near Tarnopol, in Galicia, for an advance in the direction of Lemberg. The troops thus being used are doubtless a part of the large army assembled at Rani, at Odessa and at other points in southwestern Russia to take part in the invasion of Bulgaria. The refusal of Roumania's consent to the passage of her territory en route checked the Russian move, and the troops originally destined for the Balkans are now being thrown into the valleys of the Danube and the Pruth. The Austrians and Germans are preparing to meet this new menace by withdrawing from Macedonia, leaving the Bulgars and Turks to face the allied army gathering at Saloniki. The Russian armies are now drilling and in process of equipment in Central Russia should be in the field before March, when the winter break-up comes.

The German and Austrian forces on the eastern front will have to be reinforced greatly to meet the Russian advance. From Petrograd statements have been received lately indicating that at least four million well-armed and well-equipped Russians will be available at the front. The highest estimate of the German and Austrian troops now in the trenches between the Gulf of Riga and the Roumanian frontier is 1,800,000 men, and it will require a very great effort and the raking up of all the half-trained Landsturm in the interior of both Germany and Austria to bring this total up to 2,500,000. Great events are due on the eastern front before the advent of spring.

A new development in the campaign of the allies against Turkey is foreshadowed in the landing of French troops at Castelorio, a small island off the southern coast of Asia Minor midway between Cyprus and Rhodes. A London despatch says that Greece, which was in occupation until the French landed and took possession, has been informed by Great Britain that the island is to be used as a base for new operations against the Turkish province of Adalia. The Greeks have protested. It is not at all probable that a serious attempt is to be made to penetrate the interior of Asia Minor from a base at Castelorio. The great and difficult mountain range of the Taurus is immediately to the north, and the railway from Constantinople to Syria lies far back in the interior behind Taurus. There are several points farther east along the coast where the Allies could far more effectively operate were they seeking to cut communication between Constantinople and Egypt. The probability is that the island has been seized for naval rather than military purposes.—Toronto Globe, Dec. 31.

## DAVID FLEMING

HIS OUTSTANDING GENIUS AND PROFOUND LEARNING PLACED HIM IN THE FOREMOST RANKS OF GREAT CHURCHMEN

By Mr. T. P. O'Connor

Father David, that is the name by which we know him and loved him, always called him—was Irish to the very centre of his heart—he once told me that he was partly Welsh as was Thomas Davis. He was born in Killarney, that lovely region of his native land that could never leave his heart. A great traveller—for there was scarcely a country in the world which he had not visited—his heart untravelling always turned to Ireland. The great ecclesiastic, the profound theologian, the great brain that influenced profoundly the policy of the Vatican, a dweller for a great part of his early years in Belgium, a professor in a Belgian College—everything, in short, that stretched a gulf of time and condition between him and Ireland, he remained Irish to the core. Ireland, that was with him in all conditions, in all surroundings, in all the many vicissitudes of a strangely varied life.

He was one of those men whose outstanding genius and profound learning demanded attention, though it innate and inconvertible modesty could have concealed his gifts he would have remained to the end, as he was at the beginning, a humble and obscure monk. But his genius would out in spite of him, as was proven by the fact that while he was still a deacon, in Ghent, he was chosen to be a professor of Philosophy, a boy professor, but a professor to whom at once the eyes of all interested in education turned. It was at that period of his life that he began the life-long friendship with another man of similarly outstanding genius—Cardinal Mercier—the great Bishop,

the great patriot, through whom oppressed and butchered Belgium has spoken to the world. The clear mind, pellucid as a rural stream, penetrating as a corroding acid, frigid as an analytical chemist's when he had to analyse any position, gave him at once that clear grasp of principle and of essentials that made him stand out as sort of chief justiciary on all the complex questions of theology and in after life of international politics.

He was merciless to himself in work and especially in the work of the student. His comrades in the Franciscan College often found him still at his books when the light of morning was streaming into the college, yet at 10 o'clock he was at his desk as a lecturer pouring forth his learning and his wisdom. He overworked his life. He lived on overwork; he died of overwork. He died, too, as will presently be seen of the love of Ireland, of the mortal coil that drew him year after year to the land, and the people he loved so passionately. And yet but little of his life was spent in Ireland, for he spent nearly ten years in Belgium, and his first charge after his professorship in Ghent was in England. The Franciscan Order had for a long gap of years been given over to Belgian priests and was governed from Belgium. The Pope resolved that England should, as in the case of the famous appointment of Cardinal Newman to the Arch-bishopric of Westminster, be autonomous and native, and Father David was chosen to be the first Provincial of the reconstituted Order. To-day the Franciscan establishment in England is a great and powerful Order; it owed its impetus to the genius, the energy, and the devotion of Father David Fleming.

Rome, with its wonderful organization, has the power of tracing out its best officers for its chosen troops, and Rome knew what manner of man this Irish monk was. So to Rome he was summoned, and from that hour forward, with brief interruptions, Rome was Father David's home. It was his glory, and yet it helped to bring him an earlier death. For the climate of Rome never agreed with him; he was frequently ill, nearly always rather debilitated by its climate. This was one of the reasons why there was in him the unconquerable longing for the air of his own land.

But once at Rome he never could be out of it; he was found too precious for general headquarters to be ever allowed back into the ranks of the ordinary soldiery. There was a remarkable example of this when the time came for the election of the General of the Order. For some years Father David had been General in completion of the term of another Franciscan who had died before his term was finished. When the time of the election came, the very night indeed before it was to take place, there was an unofficial scrutiny of the votes. Out of eighty votes sixty were declared for Father David. But the Holy Father intervened. He wanted Father David for work he considered more momentous to the Church. He gave the call to the higher mission, and Father David had to surrender what he did regard as a great honour, namely, the honour, not so much of being the General of the Franciscans—he was not attracted by any of these ambitions—but of being the first Irishman for three centuries to hold that highest of places in a mighty international organization.

The reason for this demand on his services of the Pope was serious, for some of the most difficult questions of policy and of doctrine were then brought before the attention of the Holy See and demanded examination and decision that might well shape the whole future of the Church. It was a time when the growth of the High Church movement in the Anglican Church suggested to many minds in the Anglican establishment that there might be a reunion between them and the ancient See of Rome—an event of the infinite possibilities of which on the whole history of the British Empire and on the world no man could measure. Father David, with the wondrous, logical, pellucid mind, with the unfathomable erudition, gained in the long sleepless nights of two scores of years, was pointed out by universal opinion in the Church to be the man to deal with a proposition as once so complex and so momentous.

Thus he became a member of the Holy Office. As Catholics will know, the Holy Office may be called the inner Cabinet or the oldest and final court of appeal next to the Pope, and is, in popular language the heart and brain of the Catholic Church—and no man could be admitted to that august tribunal except one who stood out among all the hundreds of thousands of ecclesiastics by his pre-eminent intellectual powers and his profound learning. It was Father David whose penetrating and logical mind finally upset the claims of the Anglican Church and made impossible what he regarded as a compromise, inviting and potential as it might be, irreconcilable with the fundamental principles of his Church. In other great controversies going down to the first principles Father David was able to shape and to make irrevocable the judgment of the Church.

But again I must hark back to my main theme that he was above all and before all inspired by the love of Ireland. For he took up at the same time as these portentous struggles of rival doctrines the mission of making the name of Ireland known. He had to face an English faction, powerful in name and in wealth, in the higher ranks of the Church. But he did not

quail, and for years he was the man to whom the Holy Father went to learn the true story of Ireland, to get at the realities of the Irish conflict, to understand the Irish position, above all to understand the motives of the Irish Party who were the leaders and the guardians of that movement. Leo XIII. took to this Irish monk—travelled like himself, learned like himself, broad like himself, like himself diplomatic and in sympathy with the masses and with the daily growing power in every land of democracy. It was from the lips of Father David that the great Pope took his first lessons in Irish history, and when any controversy arose as to any policy of the Irish Party, Father David was there to explain and to defend. Many times such advocacy was necessary, for there was in Rome the constant intrigue of the English Tory faction to misrepresent Irish action and Irish views, especially during such critical moments as when an English Education Bill had to deal with the liberties of the Irish Catholic schools in Ireland. But the steady, not by profession, Father David could realize the motive of the Irish Party could understand their difficulties, could approve of the compromise imposed upon them by unconquerable conditions. If Pope Leo was a devoted friend of the Irish National cause it was mainly to the intelligent and constant comprehension of the Irish movement, of which Father David was the vigilant and persistent spokesman. Pope Leo learned to understand and to love and support the Irish National movement. More than any other man Father David was his counsellor and even his teacher. And he could the better fulfil that important function because of the strong personal affinities that joined them together. Indeed, so sympathetic and so dear was Father David to the Pope that often he was rung up by telephone late in the evening if the Holy Father wished to have a friend and counsellor who understood him and whom he understood in those hours of loneliness and, perhaps, of discouragement, which even a man in the exalted position of a Pope has now and then to traverse. Indeed, so anxious was the Pope for the companionship and the counsel of his Irish friend that he invited him to become a resident within the ample spaces of the Vatican building, but Father David preferred his abbey and his freedom and his Irish comrades.

Among his other remarkable gifts Father David was a great linguist. French, German, Italian and Flemish he spoke fluently. He was a master of the classics; indeed, he could converse in Latin with the same facility as English, almost a necessary gift in the debates in Rome which are still so often conducted in Latin as the international and common language of the priesthood also many different races and tongues. This was one of the reasons—though his infinite tact and prompt power of realisation were the principal why he was chosen for some of the most arduous and most important of the missions which the Pope had to send to the different countries of Europe. There was scarcely a politician of note in any country with whom he was not personally acquainted and his Irish humour, his good nature, his tact, enabled him to be on good personal terms with even men of opinions contrary to his own, such as M. Briand, the present Prime Minister of France. He once was in intimate association with Francis, the Emperor of Austria. He knew the traditions and the monarchies of the Balkans. And some of the Concordats by which the persecution of the Catholic Church were either ended or alleviated, were due to his endeavours, whether of France or Germany, of Austria or Russia. And it was his nostalgia for Ireland, that precipitated his untimely end. He was still in Rome, but he insisted on going to his native land, in the firm hope that he would thereby once more get back his health. He had his mission also in his native land, for he was a vehement adherent of the cause of the Allies, an equally vehement opponent of the pagan militarism of Germany and he wanted to influence wavering minds if such there were among his own people. Then he came to his old home at Forest Gate in London, and there fell ill, he struggled for his life for weeks with characteristic courage, cherry and hopeful, never yielding to the terror of the expectancy of death until within a few moments of his last hour on the morning of the day on which I am writing these lines.

Mr. Dillon and I, two of his oldest and nearest friends, paid a visit to his sick room a couple of weeks before his death, and we both received regular communications as to his health, now hopeful, now despondent. He liked a mild cigar and I asked him if I should send him a box. "No," he said, characteristically, "just a few." The wonderful mind was as clear as ever it was within a few moments of death. The surroundings of a Franciscan monastery are as ascetic as the beautiful soul who founded the Order would have wished—deal tables, unpapered walls, uncarpeted floors. I happened a short time after my visit to go to a camp in England where our Irish soldiers are preparing for their march to the front of battle, and going to the officers' quarters saw something

of the same austere surroundings as those of the Franciscan monastery. And the thought came to me that there was an analogy between the two environments. The men like Father David, like holy men in other religious communities are always going to the front, are always preparing for the trenches; for it is their mission to be always fighting to guide the souls of men in the eternal conflict between the vile and the good in all our natures.

How shall I speak of Father David? As a great Irishman, no, as an Irishman only. That says all.

## IRISHMEN ALL

While the facts recounted in the following letter of a private in the Royal Irish are taking place at the front, we in Canada should be ashamed to keep up the feuds of centuries ago:

"The Ulster Division are supporting us on our right. The other morning I was out by myself and met one of them. He asked me what part of Ireland I belonged to. I said a place called Athlone, in the County of Westmeath. He said he was a Belfastman and a member of the Ulster Volunteers. I said I was a National Volunteer and that the National Volunteers were started in my native town. 'Well,' said he, 'that is all over now. We are Irishmen fighting together and we will forget all these things.' I don't mind if we do, said I, but I'm not particularly interested. We must all do our bit out here, no matter where we come from, North or South, and that is enough for the time. I hear Carson is gone,' said he—'retired from the Cabinet.' I did not know whether he was or not, but said they would probably be able to manage without him. This young Belfastman was very anxious to impress me with the fact that we Irish were all one; that there should be no bad blood between us, and we became quite friendly in the course of a few minutes."—The Toronto Catholic Register.

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

IS A MENACE TO OUR GOVERNMENT

It is always humiliating to answer an objection of this sort, but as it is pressed so persistently, and is used so extensively as a campaign argument against Catholic candidates for office, we shall deign to reply to the same.

When objections alleged against the Church are closely examined we invariably discover that they are only repetitions of charges made against Jesus Christ Himself.

The Jews awaited a Messiah who would sit in well with the worldly spirit, a great temporal prince, who would exalt them above all other nations and secure for them an earthly paradise.

When they found that all His promises referred to the next world, they rejected Him, invented all kinds of wicked charges against Him and crucified Him. They voiced their objections against Christ in almost the identical words employed by the Church's enemies to day. They said: "If we let this man go on, the Romans will come and take away our name and nation." And the anti-Catholic agitators say: "If we let this Church go on, the Romans (Roman Catholics) will take away our Republic."

Though the Church's centre of unity is Rome she never was and never is a single nation which she has converted—and she was the first to bring Christianity to any nation. She always left to all their national independence, their national institutions, laws, customs, etc. All she aims to do is to convert the soul and lead it to God, according to the injunction imposed on her by the Master "Go ye, teach all nations."

A menace to our Republic! Why, God bless you, George Washington declared that we would never have had a Republic were it not for the assistance, in the shape of both money and men, received from Catholic countries.

The despised Irish contributed one-half the soldiery to the American armies during the Revolutionary war. To-day every anti-Catholic is joining hands, consciously or unconsciously, with an organization—Socialism—for the overthrow of our Republic. They, and the ones who are banding together to make religion the principal issue in American politics are the ones who are a menace to our government.

President Wilson referred to this un-American plan when, in a recent speech, he said: "There is another danger that we should guard against. We should rebuke not only manifestations of racial feeling here in America, where there should be none, but also every manifestation of religious and sectarian antagonism. It does not become American men to follow the dictates of his conscience and worship God as he pleases, men should raise the cry of church against church. To do that is to strike at the very spirit and heart of America."

Every Catholic catechism teaches that we are bound in conscience to respect civil authority and to obey the laws of the State. Hence the Church upholds the Republic more than any other institution. Nearly everything the Church is criticized for—her parochial school system, her opposition to divorce and Socialism, etc.—when properly understood, are calculated to preserve this Republic.

Americanism is our national, as Catholicism is our supernatural life. There can be no conflict because their spheres are entirely distinct. The Constitution of the United States declares that its provisions and where conscience begins; and the Catholic Church says that her laws begin only there.

This cry of "The Catholic Church a Menace" was made with greater vehemence than now more than sixty years ago, when the Church was a negligible quantity in the United States.

Then she grew, doubled and trebled her population, yet the cry of "menace" was not emphasized until forty years later. From that time, 1893 to 1910, her membership increased more than 100 per cent, yet the cry of "menace" was not heard until recently, when Socialism brought it up to elicit greater interest in its propaganda, until scheming politicians found it profitable until characterless men throughout the country began to use it on the platform for a silver collection. We possess evidence sufficient to convince any fair-minded jury that the avowed enemies of the Catholic Church are the real enemies of our country.

Misrepresentation of the Catholic Church to-day is also in line with the practices of Christ's own enemies. In Matt. xxii, 21, Christ emphatically orders that tribute be paid to Caesar; yet before Pilate, these people accused Him thus: "We have found this man perverting our nation and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar." (Luke xxiii, 2.)—Our Sunday Visitor.

## THE IRISH MOTHER

(Reprinted by Request)

There's a humble little cottage far away in sweet Tipperary, Where a little Irish mother sits forlorn by the door, And she's thinkin' of the childer while the heart of her is weary, For wid watchin' for a sight of them the eyes of her are sore.

Ah, poor little Irish mother, sure 'tis you that's sad and lonely Since they left you, like the wild geese in the springtime flown away; Though they find you gold in platin, sure 'tis them you're wantin' only, Just a glimpse of them returnin' home across the wintry say.

Ah, poor little Irish mother, far away in sweet Tipperary, 'Tis of you the boys are thinkin' as in foreign lands they roam; An' between their work they're prayin' to the lovin' Son of Mary That He'd send the ship to bear them back to their Tipperary home.

(In "At the Gate of the Temple")

## CHILDREN'S HOLY COMMUNION

FOR RESTORATION OF PEACE APPROVED BY THE HOLY FATHER

Catholic Press Despatch

Rome, Dec. 20, 1915.—Italian Bishops have begun a movement which it is prayerfully hoped, will exert a powerful influence in bringing about a restoration of peace in Europe. They have decided to invite all the children to receive Holy Communion on Christmas Day with the special intention of beseeching our Heavenly Father to put an end to the awful war that is devastating so many lands.

On being informed of this initiative, Pope Benedict expressed his warm approval of it and granted a special blessing to all the children who respond to the invitation of the Bishops. He also gave expression to the hope that all Bishops would join in this holy movement, feeling confident that the unanimous prayers of so many innocent children will be heard by Almighty God and will also be the means of bringing consolation to sorrowing parents bereaved as a result of the war.

## MINISTER'S TRIBUTE TO CONVERT

In striking contrast to the sentiments generally expressed by Protestant persons of all denominations, ministers more especially, when one of their number becomes a Catholic, is the following open letter from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Mackay (Anglican, London) in reference to the Rev. Wilfrid Moor, who lately made his submission to the Church:

"It is with great sorrow that I have to announce that the Rev. Wilfrid Moor has decided not to return to us at the expiration of his three months' leave of absence. Mr. Moor has made this decision at the cost of great pain to himself; and he has written in terms of the deepest affection for All Saints', and of the deepest appreciation of the life in which he has shared for seven years. We who have been his companions are feeling the loss of his presence and of the charm of his society more than we can say. In devotion and in the strictness of his life he has set us all the highest example, while the striking ability of his preaching was felt even by those who least agreed with him. Mr. Moor will shortly take steps to enter the ministry of the Roman Catholic Church."

This letter, it seems to us, remarks the Ave Maria, "is not less creditable to the writer of it than to the subject of it. But the wonder remains that most non-Catholics are as much elated over the acquisition of a weed from the Pope's garden as dejected by the loss of a flower from

## Your Savings

The War has already brought great changes. National leaders in all countries are urging the practice of Thrift. The Prime Minister of Great Britain said recently: "There remains only one course . . . to diminish our expenditure and increase our savings."

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their own; also that they never reflect how different one is from the other.

## WHY HE WANTED HIS SON THERE

Not long ago a minister presented himself at a Catholic university with his son. He said that he had brought the boy there because he was certain that his religious ideas would not be jeopardized.

Time was when most good Protestant folk thought that every Catholic educational institution had as one of its primary aims the "railroading" into the Church of as many unsuspecting non-Catholic youths or maidens as might, through frailty or accident, be enrolled among its students. Now, with the exception of a few bigwigs whose influence is negligible, they have arrived at the truth, which is, that Catholic schools take the lead among those that still refuse to pay tribute to a science unrelated so far as one can discern, to any spiritual concept whatsoever.

True, the Catholic Church is glad to welcome to her fold young men or young women who may have attended her academies or colleges and who, after mature reflection, find themselves in agreement with the doctrine she teaches; but, first and foremost, the Catholic school is anxious to preserve in its Protestant pupils such elements of religious truth as they may hold when they enter its class rooms. Its tendency is most certainly not to undermine anyone's faith. It takes from no man what he has, and it adds richly to the store he already possesses. In a religious sense, that is more than can be said for the vast majority of other schools.—Chicago New World.

## JUST TAKE OUT YOUR PENCIL

About this time a year ago some weird stories were set going about Catholics who were gathering stealthily and at night in the basements of Catholic churches to drill for an insurrection. The Rev. Dr. Washington Gladden gave some good advice to his fellow-Protestants, when he had them take no notice of horrible tales of what Catholics were doing in distant places. "Sit down," he said, "and make out a list of all the Catholic men and women you know, in professional life, in the shops and factories, in the kitchens; put down their names and think them over, and see whether you will be able to convince yourselves that these men and women are capable of doing the kind of things which these tales attribute to them." Which suggests

the thought that every Catholic who lives a life commanding the respect of his Protestant neighbor is helping to diminish anti-Catholic prejudices. A clean, honorable, upright life is the strongest argument as to the work accomplished by the Church.—Sacred Heart Review.

## FATHER FRASER'S CHINESE MISSION

Taichowfu, March 22, 1915.

Dear Readers of CATHOLIC RECORD: Yesterday (Passion Sunday) I laid the corner-stone of the church in Taichowfu. The former church was too small for the crowds who are being converted in the city and neighboring towns. Even with the new addition of forty-eight feet and a gallery it will be too small on the big Feasts. May God be praised Who deigns to open mouths to His praises in the Far East to replace those stilled in death in Europe. And may He shower down His choicest blessings on my benefactors of the CATHOLIC RECORD, who are enabling me to hire catechists, open up new places to the Faith, and to build and enlarge churches and schools. Rest assured, dear Readers, that every cent that comes my way will be immediately put into circulation for the Glory of God.

Your gratefully in Jesus and Mary, J. M. FRASER.

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A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all your readers. I will remember them in my three Masses on Christmas Day. I said Mass on All Souls' Day for my friends of the RECORD who have departed this life. Yours in Jesus and Mary. J. M. FRASER.

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