

along the Isonza force Italy to abandon her attempt to conquer Istria and Dalmatia.

The Allies as well as the Teutons are taking council together. Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Milner have arrived at Rome with their military advisers to participate in an exchange of views on the general situation with the French and Italian Governments. Weather conditions have caused a more complete cessation of operations on a large scale along the Italian front than in the west. With the exception of an advance of 200 yards on the Carso yesterday the Italians have been practically inactive for the past two months.

The remaining Russian troops in the Dobruja, after a bitterly contested battle at a point about ten miles northeast of Braila, in the course of which they inflicted heavy losses on the enemy, were forced to withdraw toward the Danube. Their retreat will enable the enemy to bring his heavy guns to bear on Galatz. The east bank of the river, and will almost inevitably involve either the evacuation of the city or its partial destruction by bombardment. Galatz is north of the mouth of the Sereth, and the Russians may decide to hold the city, even as a ruin, to protect the Sereth lines.—Globe, Jan. 6.

FOKSHANY ALMOST POCKETED

London, Jan. 5.—Slobozia is only four miles from the Sereth south-east of Fokshany. The latter town, for several days the goal of the German efforts in this section, is almost pocketed, the forces of Falkenhayn having advanced far to the north on both sides of it.

The fall of Braila and the complete clearing of Russian troops from the Dobruja, announced by Berlin tonight, places the important town of Galatz, twelve miles north of Braila, in a perilous position that makes its capture inevitable.

T. P. O'CONNOR'S LETTER

PEACE OFFERING TRANSFORMS BRITISH FEELING

THE EVER-INTERESTING LLOYD GEORGE

Special Cable to the CATHOLIC RECORD (Copyright 1916, Central News)

London, Jan. 6.—What does England really think concerning the German peace proposals? The answer in brief is; nothing at all. Little is heard publicly or privately about peace. The sole absorbing preoccupation of everybody is the big Allies' offensive that will be launched in the Spring, especially on the western front. It is only on the ruins of a defeated German militarism on the battlefield that the Entente Allies will place any confidence.

Two feelings run side by side. First, the hatred and distrust of Germany and a disbelief in her professions of humanity which have been deepened daily by news from Belgium and Armenia, and a distrust of her abandonment of the gospel of military aggression which has been deepened again by the boastfulness of the Kaiser and the Chancellor and by the ravings of the Pan-German press. These feelings have reached such a boiling point that no sacrifice will be considered too great to finish once and for all the time, the devilish Prussian military machine.

The second feeling is one of increasing confidence that such a military defeat is now within the power of the Entente Allies. I never saw a more complete transformation of feeling, between the deep dejection caused by Roumania's defeat and the almost exultant self-confidence that has arisen as a result of Germany's whines.

Practically all of this self-confidence comes from the stories of battles on the western front and from the knowledge that our big guns are better and more numerous than those of the enemy and from the palpable and pronounced decrease in German morale. These things all lead to the satisfying belief that we will be enabled to follow up the Somme victories by more powerful and more conclusive attacks.

Lloyd George has not been living much of late at 11 Downing Street, though that was his official residence. It is a big and expensive house to keep up, and even Ministers in these days feel the pressure of gigantic taxation. He has had a little flat in Victoria Street close by. He now goes, of course, to 10 Downing Street—which has been occupied by the majority of Premiers, there have been few exceptions, since it was given as a present to the Government in the eighteenth century.

The two houses are pretty much the same; they are all the grandiose Georgian architecture—very solid and very simple, utterly devoid of the new architectural developments which have been introduced in the last half century. For instance, just opposite to these two houses and a third—No. 12 which is occupied by the Whips—there are the great buildings which belong to the Foreign and the India Offices. These abiding places of high departments are Byzantine in size and in adornment, with turrets and busts on the face and all the grandiose suggestion of the great Empire. This juxtaposition brings into greater relief the simple, comfortable, rofy, old-fashioned character of the official residences of the two highest Ministers of the country. Many people prefer the old system to the new; they think it bessems better

the reserve, the conscious and yet not self-sufficient spirit of a great democratic Empire. Behind both the houses there is a spacious garden, with very little grass, it is true, but with some trees. Here now and then the Premier gives a garden party—of course in the summer time. The gardens, are a welcome oasis in the heart of London. The rooms in both houses are roomy, almost vast; the windows are large, and the furniture has been made modern by successive Premiers—notably by Disraeli, who shared the love of his race for comfort and splendour.

But it is not at Downing Street that the intimates of Lloyd George see most of him. He does see a lot of people there, it is true; but the interviews are of a rather hurried character, for they usually take place at breakfasts at 9.15. Though I am an intimate friend of Lloyd George and am always enlightened enormously by a talk with him, I have struck at the breakfast, unless when I have an American friend who can get an opportunity of doing so except at the breakfast hour. It was at breakfast that Lloyd George first met Mr. McAdoo, the present Secretary of the Treasury of the United States; and there also he made the acquaintance of Colonel John W. Stewart, the famous Canadian contractor. That breakfast was the introduction of Colonel Stewart to the valuable work he is now doing on the front in railway construction. I nearly always refuse the breakfast except in such exceptional circumstances; I retain the old journalist's habits of late nights and late mornings.

It is at Walton Heath, however, that you can get a real glimpse of the man. He occupies there a modest house of but two stories. Walton Heath was chosen partly because it has excellent and bracing air—it stands seven hundred feet above sea level, partly because it has one of the best golf links in England. The house is very comfortable in spring, summer and early autumn, but it is like all houses in Walton Heath—very cold in winter; and I am sure the average American or Canadian would shiver in the absence of the radiator. Lloyd George, however, seems to be quite impervious to cold, and is often quite unconscious that the room in which he is talking or dining is like an ice-chest. Regard for comfort of surroundings in any form is not one of his passions.

He tries as a rule to get down to Walton on Friday evenings; this gives him three days in the country air, and these days make him a new man. He has both the physique and the temperament of the typical Celt; he goes down quickly under over-work, and he has moments of despondence when he gets done up; but he rises with extraordinary rapidity, and the depressed and tired man of Monday is very often the alert youth of Tuesday. In these times his visits have often had to be put off till Saturday—sometimes even till Saturday evening. As a rule he does not see many people on Saturday. If the weather is fine he goes out golfing—his companions being often Sir George Riddell, a great newspaper owner, and Robert Donald, the editor of the Daily Chronicle; at one time Charles Masterman was another invariable companion, but Charles Masterman was then a Cabinet Minister and could afford a house in Walton. The house had to be given up, and Walton Heath knows Masterman no more. Lloyd George does not golf on Sundays; he has too much respect for the traditional love of a quiet Sunday among the Non-conformists of Wales, to whose general view of life he has remained quite faithful.

On Sundays he receives his friends either at lunch or supper—sometimes at tea. He generally takes a little rest between lunch and tea time; often if you are a privileged visitor to the house you have to talk to Mrs. Lloyd George or one of the two daughters, while the master of the household is still finishing his nap. Lloyd George, like so many other great men of action, has the gift of sleeping anywhere or at any time. I have seen him fall asleep almost while he was talking in a railway train; he is a very poor companion when motoring, for he falls asleep within five minutes of the start of the machine. When he is at home all he has to do is to sit on one chair, and stretch his legs on another; and in a few minutes he is started on a sleep of a couple of hours. As a rule, he does not suffer from sleeplessness at night; though he has had his hours—under the stress of a great sorrow or a great anxiety—when he had to read through the black, bleak hours of the night. Now and then he wakes too early and resorts to his state papers, and thus begins a day sometimes at 5 o'clock in the morning.

At Walton Heath you see the absolutely unchanged simplicity of his character and his tastes. He keeps a very modest table; he rarely touches any form of alcohol; and for his friends he usually has either a glass of whiskey or a light cheap wine. His table is just that of a well-paid artisan, with a joint, a homely pudding and a bit of cheese. It is scarcely necessary to say that you find no trace in him at Walton or anywhere else of "side." He is simple, unpretentious, hearty, frank almost to indiscretion. I had a small cottage during the Irish negotiations at an earlier part of the year. Once I rang him up to say that there were with me some of the Irish leaders, and asked him whether we should go up to his house. It

was late in the evening, and his house was about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes away from mine. Not at all, he said, he would come down to us. And at 9 o'clock, with a cigar in his mouth and one of his sons by his side, he walked in. I know statesmen who are so full of themselves that they would regard it as a derogation of their high position to visit instead of being visited. Lloyd George may have some strange experiences in his now omnipotent position; one change he will never undergo; he will never get the swelled head.

CARDINAL MERCIER'S PASTORAL

FULL TEXT—"THE ORDEAL IS OF LONG DURATION"

INTRODUCTION

Yes, the ordeal is long. I hear you from day to day repeat these words, and there is no one, I think, who does not share your feelings.

And when will it end? One day when your Divine Saviour discoursed to His Apostles on the terrible things that would immediately precede the end of the world—wars, pestilences, earthquakes, atmospheric disturbances, His hearers asked Him, When will these disturbances come?

And our Divine Saviour replied: "No one knows, not even the Son of Man." In other words, the Son of God in His mission on earth has not the duty of revealing it to humanity. This means to you, in effect, that you are not to know if the world will last 1,000 years more, 10,000,000 years more; not whether you will die in your youth, or at middle age or in extreme old age. Only one thing is necessary, that you know your own soul and that in the all-powerful hands of the Master of Events you shall be the docile instruments for the sanctification of His Holy Name, for the establishment of His reign, for the accomplishment of His will.

FIRST PART

In order to thoroughly understand the events in their deepest sense, the soul must keep before it the thoughts of eternity. God speaks to us both without and within. He speaks to us without by the marvels of nature and by the lessons of events. He speaks to us within by the delicate but mysterious power of the Holy Ghost.

The voice of nature is generally harmonious, tranquil, like the solemn movement of the sun in space, the murmur of waters, the growth of grain, the slow evolution of the seasons. But nature's voice is sometimes violent and terrible, like that of powder or thunder, the raging of the tempest, the eruptions which shake the earth and hurl lava from the volcanoes.

The world also has its pacific periods, its periods of concentrated work, its economic successes, intellectual, artistic, civilized, but at certain times the passions are unloosed, hatred stifles the voice of love, and death seems to triumph over life.

It is always, however, God who speaks. Each historic period is a page from the divine book of Providence. We write it, but the strong will of the All-Powerful holds the writing instrument. It is for us to write it in letters of gold or charcoal, but the book must be written. In eternity we will again take it up, and there will be found how and in what measure each has collaborated.

While history yet runs its course the book is closed, sealed; the Divine Lamb who shed His Blood for our redemption alone has the power to break the seven seals which guard the secrets. The Old Men of the Apocalypse, bowed down before the Lamb, offer up prayers to the Saints and sing: "Thou who art worthy to take the book and to break its seals, because thou hast been sacrificed and because with thy blood thou hast acquired for the service of God the representatives of all nationalities, without distinction of race, nor geographical nor political classification. Thou hast incorporated us in a spiritual kingdom for the glory of God and hast transformed our life into a sacerdotal office."

The last seal will be broken when this divine Jesus, who designed to stoop to us and to assume our lowly nature, in order that he might sacrifice Himself for us, will return to us in the majesty of His glory seated on the clouds, the cross of the last judgment in His hand, and with His voice more powerful than the thunder, will say to each one of His creatures one of these two words: "Come, thou blessed of My Father, take your place in the celestial kingdom which I have prepared for thee." On the other hand "Go, thou accursed, to the eternal fire created for the devil and for those who have made themselves his slaves."

That will be the last resounding word which will fall from the lips of God the Father, a word which will be decisive, unchanging, which will divide us for eternity to the right or to the left, among the chosen in glory or among the damned in the abyss. But, my very beloved brethren, do you think of this? Do you think sufficiently of this? In the presence of this supreme alternative, what remains? That you die young or old, in bed or on the field of battle, far from or near to your relatives, what does that matter? That your days pass tranquilly in your own loved home, where happiness abounded, where friendship and esteem surround you, or that you have lived in tribulation,

in solitude, in misery, perhaps, or under the weight of defiance, humiliation, oppression; at the very end, what does that matter to you? How will you look upon these minor details of life when you shall review them in eternity.

Whatever happens to you, there is in you something which no person or no thing can touch—that is your soul. And this soul which is yours, of which you are the master, is made to commune with God, and it will commune with God, if you desire it; it will embrace Him and will be embraced by Him, not in the ephemeral course of the life of a man, or of a historical period, but eternally, forever, forever.

GLORIFIED BY SUFFERING

Yes, in spite of these horrors, glorious was the Passion of our Divine Saviour, glorious for Him, for it brought Him His glorious Resurrection, His Ascension, and His dominion over the world. It is glorious for us also, for henceforth if we consent to suffer with Him, with Him also will we be glorified.

"A moment of affliction now," so spoke St. Paul to the Corinthians, "and above, for the recompense, an overflowing wealth of glory forever, on condition that we do not, look solely to things visible, but to things invisible, for that which is visible passeth and that which is invisible is eternal."

Such is, my brethren, in short, the fundamental solution of the essential problems of the life of an individual and of nations, Passion before the Resurrection, death in order to get eternal life, the Cross in order to enter into glory.

Under the old order God spoke to His chosen people by the intermediaries of prophets. Under the new order, says St. Paul, He speaks to us directly by His Son, who after having purified us in His Blood, has taken His place, King Eternal of centuries, at the right hand of God, His Father.

The Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Nahum, Habakuk, and the others had the mission to recall the chosen people and their oppressors, the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and the Chaldeans, and the Babylonians to the Law of Right. They announced to them continually that they would find both in the ruins of their cities and in their own blood both their punishment and the principle of their regeneration. God does not punish except to heal and to save. Humanity guilty has need to die in order to live again. If the grain of wheat did not die in the ground there would be no hope of life or reproduction.

"Follow this indication," the Apostle St. Paul says again, "Depend solely on the Cross for your regeneration in forgiveness and peace for you and for all the sons of the true people of Israel."

If the Belgians take these stern teachings to heart, they will make these two tragic years they have just passed through the foundation of a more vigorous future, a renewal of energy, and a greater confidence in the limitless resources of a Christian nation.

In the secret moment of the Mass, when the priest and the faithful are about to partake of the Body of Christ, what is the prayer that the Church puts on their lips? Once again she recalls to us the beginning and the end of life. "Here," says the Church, "the Heavenly Father, with the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, executes His plan to make the source of life which is to vivify the world flow from the death of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God."

And those holy Popes, Pius IX. and Pius X. do they not request us to say every day after Mass, this touching prayer: "I pray Thee, my beloved Jesus Christ, that Thy death shall be a source of eternal life to me and that Thy Cross shall be forever my glory."

THIRD PART

Take an active part in the sacred sacrifice of the Mass. Worship the works of God; also expiate your sins, thank God and pray.

Come, my brethren, to Mass: revivify your religious life. Come every day if you can, but at least never fail in your Sabbath obligation to the Church. I met recently some young persons, young daughters of the people, who no longer dared to appear at church because they had nothing but sabots to wear on their feet. My children, I understand your humiliation, and I am touched with compassion. But you may be sure that our Divine Saviour is not like the passers-by whose regards make you hang your heads. He made Himself poor of His own free will, so as better to bring you to Him; the more your condition resembles utter nudity the more you resemble Him and the more He loves you.

Oh, my brethren, honor the poor! And you, my dear conferees of the priesthood, accord them the first place in your esteem and in your solicitude. I would like to see them in the first row of the temple of Jesus of Bethlehem and Nazareth. Before Him and before the Church they are greater than you or us, and of higher value. If they accept their condition with good grace and faith, they do more for the salvation of humanity than those whose fortune and success make you envious.

As for you, mesdames, if you should make a showing of your abundance, when your sisters have nothing but sabots and rags you would offend both God, the fatherland, and the dignity of the poor. Come, then, all, all men and all women, and worship at the church. Women in modest dress, do not blush

years are the result of human passions that we should deplore and denounce, but it depends upon us to lift ourselves by reflection and faith to a higher and more serene conception of the general plan of Providence and to apply to our affliction and to the crimes which caused it what the liturgy says of that drama which was at once the blackest of crimes and the most cruel of sorrows. It says: "Lord, in memory of the passion of Christ, our Son, our Lord, and of His Resurrection and His glorious Ascension, we offer to your Sovereign Majesty this sacred victim, this life-giving bread and this cup of immortality."

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to come as you are, even though poor.

Come principally with the intention of the worship, of worshipping God. God is God, that He is the Master to whom you owe obedience, that all He does is well done. Grazier with the priest at the altar, not only to recite prayers more or less similar to his, but to assist him in the celebration of the Mass. You also, priests, you have heard the Apostle St. John say to you in the Apocalypse that the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for all, kings and priests; for the priests of God and the priests of Christ, he says elsewhere. St. Peter expressed himself in the same fashion: "Christ is the living stone on which is built the Church." As for you, you are the living stones erected upon Him, with the effect of forming a spiritual family, a consecrated race, with the mission to offer by Jesus Christ the spiritual host which pleases God.

To the priest who is officially charged with the public ministry in the Church, the Bishop gives this advice: "Understand what you do. Be inspired in your acts by the mystery that you touch with your hands, and then at the altar you should feel the mystery of the death of our Lord. Be sure that in yourselves there remain no vicious instincts or evil desires."

Since you are priests, that is to say those who make the sacrifice, you should be also the victims. "My brethren," writes St. Paul to the Romans, "I beg of you to offer your corporal body by divine mercy as a living host, pure, agreeable to God; that this may be the spiritual form of your worship."

Combine in your sacrifice your personal sufferings and our national sufferings, as well as all the acts of your life. This is not enough; your life itself, sacrifice it in anticipation, by your will, to the honor of God. Death is only a violent breaking off that we must by fate submit to; it is an act to which the Christian soul should associate itself in a positive manner, the return to the Sovereign Master of a gift that He has confided to us for His glory. This rendering up of life is a sacrificial act that the Christian accomplishes in union with the supreme expiation of our Christ Jesus. And when we all, familiarizing ourselves with this noble Christian thought, will make within ourselves the sacrifice of our terrestrial life, together with our sons and our brothers who fall on the field of honour, there will go up from the soil of the Belgian fatherland to the majestic throne of God a magnificent homage, which will descend again upon us in form of benedictions.

Our sacrifice will intercede for us; it will expiate our sins. During these two months consecrated to the Holy Rosary and to the commemoration of the dead, in accord with the sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, give full attention to the Calvary and to the sacred sacrifice of the Mass, asking forgiveness for the living and redemption for the souls of our dear dead.

Give equal recognition to God. Let us bless Him for having watched over our King, the glory of the Belgian nation, our gentle Queen and the royal children; let us thank Him for having given us the patience to bear up without faltering or to murmur under our long and terrible ordeal, for having accorded us the first benediction of our sacred Father, Pope Benedict XV. and for having inspired him to tell us that his warmest paternal affection goes out to Belgium, for having impressed upon foreign nations the extent of our misfortunes. After the war we should erect in their honour a monument of gratitude. Let us make for them today a place of honour in our pious thoughts.

PRAYERS FOR BELGIANS

Finally, as we are not yet at the end of our Calvary, may our celebration of Mass be a continuous prayer for our dear fatherland, for those present and those absent, for our valiant prisoners and those who are interned, our dear refugees. The longer the war lasts the more ardent becomes my compassion for all those energetic men who spent their efforts in our behalf, and who now are tortured with inaction.

Our refugees, "Although England, France, Holland, and Switzerland indeed neglect nothing to lighten their cares, yet exile is nevertheless exile. From time to time one hears bitter words concerning them. I do not say that among them there were not some without faults, faults regretted now by their authors, perhaps sorrowfully, but how many of those that you criticize so lightly become unwilling victims of feeling, of submission, of filial or paternal affection, of devotion to a sick person, or solicitude for a son at the front, of material want. According to the testimony of those who have seen them, our absent ones rival their compatriots of the occupied parts of Belgium in their patience, abnegation and apostolic spirit. We will receive them with open arms when they return and let them not doubt for a moment that they will find here friends and brothers who have never remained faithful to them."

We cannot exclude anyone from our prayers, not even our enemies, but Christian theology teaches us to have different degrees of affection. St. Thomas says to love by preference your neighbors, your compatriots, and those who do you good. Let us pray, then before everything else for our brave soldiers whom we hold so dear because of ties of blood or perhaps because of patriotism and their devotion for us. Let us not neglect

their wives and their mothers, the silent heroines of the great European drama. Pray for our armies which in the west, the east and the center, fight with such violence and tenacity for our common cause. May their guardian angels accompany them into battle and may the guardians keep them in religious chastity until the day of repose. Let me also recommend to you especially our priests, military chaplains and stretcher bearers, may their work be fruitful and may they pass through all dangers without harm and return to us pious and strong.

Suffering has rendered us more compassionate. Formerly, we let the massacres of the poor Armenian people pass with little thought. Mussulman fanaticism has put to death thousands and thousands of these unfortunates during the present war and carried away as slaves their wives and young daughters. Have pity for them, pray for them.

Poland, noble Poland, always faithful to its faith and its vows. Poland which has never undertaken a war of conquest, but has always struggled for its peoples and for European civilization, suffers more than we do: her sons are scattered amongst the battalions of the Russians, the Austrians and the Germans. Her soil has been ravaged by the flux and reflux of armies; America is unable to give her food, pray for her, my brethren, and ask God that at least one of the fortunate results of this horrible war shall be the definite recognition of Polish independence.

Finally, here in the occupied portion of Belgium, let us pray one for another and let us love one another. May our affection be sincere and actively expressed. The history of charity in Belgium during the war will furnish pages which merit a place beside those on which is written the heroism of the soldiers. May there be no spot on our national book of gold. Let us work together, to the best of our ability, for our union and our mutual assistance.

May those in easy circumstances give with largeness to those in need, to the aged, the sick, the weak. Beware of enriching yourselves at the expense of the misery of others—that would be odious.

And until the end let us all be patient and persevering. Be of good cheer. Let your confidence be redoubled; let us cry to God as it is written in the sacred Liturgy, "Oh, God. Come to my aid; Lord, hasten to my succor."

Apply to our patriotic endurance what our Divine Saviour says of our eternal salvation: "He who perseveres until the end will be saved."

Receive, my very dear brethren, all and each one of you, Belgians of the occupied districts and absent compatriots, my special and paternal benediction.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, Archbishop of Malines.

DOES HE MEAN YOU?

"We would resent being called disloyal Catholics. Yet what have the great mass of us done for the general interests of the Church?" says the Western Watchman. "Catholics, for instance, belong to Catholic societies that pass ringing resolutions in praise of the Catholic press, are officers even in these societies, and use the columns of the Catholic press to advertise their doings; nevertheless, they themselves are not so much as subscribers to a single Catholic journal."

Enthusiasm is the genius of sincerity, and truth accomplishes no victories without it.—Bulwer Lytton.

FATHER FRASER'S CHINESE MISSION

Taichowfu, China, Nov. 26, 1916

Dear Readers of CATHOLIC RECORD: That your charity towards my mission is approved by the highest ecclesiastical authorities of Canada let me quote from a letter from His Excellency, The Most Rev. Peregrine F. Stagni, O. S. A., D. D., Apostolic Delegate, Ottawa. "I have been watching with much interest the contributions to the Fund opened on behalf of your missions by the CATHOLIC RECORD. The success has been very gratifying and shows the deep interest which our Catholic people take in the work of the missionary in foreign lands. . . I bless you most cordially and all your labors, as a pledge my earnest wishes for your greatest success in all your undertakings. I entreat you to continue the support of my struggling mission, assuring you a remembrance in my prayers and Masses."

Yours faithfully in Jesus and Mary, J. M. FRASER.

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