

David McDonald: Criticisms and Complaints

In accordance with the custom which had obtained since the time of Alexander Cameron I, Cowie's unquestioned successor was the senior assistant priest in the college, David McDonald. But, to add to the confusion consequent upon Cowie's death, so unexpected and so inopportune (coming as it did just as the major project of rebuilding in Madrid was about to start), McDonald had to spend the first days of his administration ill in bed. Soon after Cowie's funeral, he took bronchitis and an attack of neuralgia but, as the other professor in the college, James Macdonald, suggested, worry and shock were no doubt contributory causes of the misfortune.

David McDonald was a very different type of person from his predecessor—a highlander, a native Gaelic speaker, strong-willed, energetic, versatile, a natural leader; in physical appearance, tall, large-framed, rather gaunt. He was born in Fort William on 16th March 1832, his father dying before he was born. Shortly after his birth, his mother went to live in Glencoe and to teach in a little school which she opened there. At the age of nine, he was sent to the Scots Benedictine monastery at Ratisbon, the youngest of a group of five youthful seminarians taken out there in September 1841 by Fr. Angus Bernard Macdonald O. S. B.

He was in Bavaria for four years and was then transferred to Blairs College, which he entered on 26th January 1846. For his philosophy and theology studies, he was sent to the college of Propaganda Fide in Rome. While in the Eternal City, he was present at two celebrated papal events: the definition of the dogma of our Lady's immaculate conception and the accident at the basilica of St. Agnes on the Via Nomentana when the floor gave way and many, including Pius IX himself, fell to the cellar below.

Ordained a priest on 9th March 1856, David McDonald returned to Scotland and was a curate for a few weeks at St. Andrew's in Glasgow before being appointed to the professorial staff at Blairs

in July of that year. In 1865, he was asked to go to Valladolid, to which he agreed with considerable reluctance: "I reserved free liberty to return when I chose. And you know the difficulty B. Murdoch had to get me to come here."¹ Nor was he any happier once he arrived; "neither the college in town nor the villa are any great shakes... I certainly cannot say I am pleased with my change or that I am at all happy here..."²

During his years as a professor in the college, he was normally kept very busy, teaching humanities and sometimes philosophy until the year 1876 when Cowie, through age and pressure of other work, gave up teaching and McDonald then took over the theology classes.

In his latter years as vice-rector particularly, he became very friendly indeed with the priests of the English College and this enabled him to indulge his love of fresh air and exercise.³ In the diary which he kept from 1874 until 1877, there are many accounts of days spent at the English riverside estate (the "*Ribera*") and of excursions to the country houses of the two colleges, at Boecillo and Viana. For example, on 19th August 1874:

"In the afternoon I got Felipe's mule and with Mr. Walmsley rode out to Viana, the weather being very fine. I provided the eatable for our out. 2 capons and a pound and a half of ham, two pounds of veal cutlets etc. We slept at Viana.

20th. We went on our *cavallerias* to Palancares to meet Mr. Allen. He arrived at 9 o'clock. We had breakfast, ham and eggs and cold capon with wine enough. We then all three rode to Viana. Before dinner we bathed. After dinner we slept..."⁴

The bishops lost little time after Cowie's death in presenting McDonald's name to the king and his royal appointment to the office of rector was dated 23rd June 1879.⁵ He was to hold the post for twenty-five years, a period during which Spain enjoyed internal peace and growing prosperity, at least in comparison with the earlier decades of the century. It was also, therefore, a period of tranquillity for the college as far as its relations with the state were concerned. Tranquillity also seems to have prevailed in the college and in its relations with the Scottish bishops, at least for the first years of McDonald's rectorate. The work of rebuilding part of the Madrid

1. To Bishop Strain, 11th January 1867. (Columba House, unclassified.)

2. To id., 1st October 1865. (Ibid., unclassified.)

3. On at least one earlier occasion he had gone off to Santander instead of Boecillo, to enjoy the sea-bathing. In 1881, having gone to Bilbao to meet a party of new students, he had a wait of some days, "of which I availed myself to have a few plunges in the sea." (To Very Rev. Peter Joseph Grant, Blairs, 9th August 1881. Columba House, unclassified.) And, in 1887, having met ten new boys on their arrival at Corunna from Liverpool, the first thing he did was to take them for a bathe.

4. College archives 59/4: Diary of David McDonald.

The Boecillo country house was frequently called "Palancares".

5. Ibid., 67/10.

property went ahead smoothly and was completed in April, three weeks ahead of schedule.⁶ During the operation, McDonald had some difficulty and worry in meeting the payments due for "the blessed *obra*"⁷ but he had paid the contractor in full two months after the completion of the work; and Dr. Allen's loans were all repaid by July 1882 from rents received.⁸

By May 1880 the new building, consisting of two shops and four floors of houses above, had all been let, at rents which totalled 77,000 *reals* annually (compared with 24,000 before); the rest of the property was producing rents of 120,000 *reals* so that the whole yielded about £2,000 per year.⁹ The rector had hopes of rebuilding the other part of the property also, particularly as his administrator considered that the frequent repairs and replastering that were done on it were a sheer waste of money. He thought of trying to raise the money necessary (about £20,000) in Scotland but was advised that no businessman would be willing to lend such a sum for such a vague and distant project.¹⁰ Another suggestion was that the money required be obtained by selling part of the site,¹¹ but, in the event, nothing came of the whole project. Even so, the Madrid rents proved sufficient to allow the rector, in the years ahead, to maintain twenty or more students at a time and also to carry out extensive repairs in the Valladolid college.

D. Mariano García Manso, who had been a most zealous and devoted administrator for over twenty years, died on 7th February 1887 and the rector appointed his widow, Da. Cristeta Mencia, to the vacant office, a position which she held for the next thirty years.

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McDonald's only assistant until 1886 was the vice-rector, James Macdonald and, to avoid confusion, they were known as Fr. David and Fr. James. Even after the latter left Spain, the rector continued to be known, in Scotland as well as in the college, as Fr. David. His namesake, who had arrived in Valladolid in 1875, seems to have been caught up in the Scholastic revival for, when he returned from a visit to Scotland in 1880, the rector commented:

"Father James arrived all sound and safe but as Thomistic and pugnacious as ever... that little firebrand came back, setting us all

6. *Ibid.*, A/15. The area of the building was slightly reduced as he had to cede a little land for street-widening purposes.

7. McDonald to Alexander Munro, Glasgow, 22nd May 1879. (Glasgow archives, loc. cit.)

8. College archives A/15.

9. McDonald to Alexander Munro, Glasgow, — April 1880 and 9th May 1880. (Glasgow archives, loc. cit.) In 1885 the unit of currency became the peseta, whose value was four *reals*. The exchange at first was about 25 pesetas to £1.

10. Bishop McLachlan to McDonald, 27th May 1887. (Argyll archives.)

11. Mariano García Manso to McDonald, 16th April 1886. (St. Andrews and Edinburgh archives, G 11.)

at loggerheads with questions about the 'Haecceitas' of something, matter and form etc. until we have threatened to silence him by an *argumentum a posteriori*."

But more seriously,

"he is a real treasure to the College for his assiduity and success in teaching and his profound piety."¹²

The subject of this encomium delivered himself of some trenchant criticisms of the college in 1886, after more than ten years on the staff. He himself had taught classics for two years, then philosophy for two, then theology, then classics again and so on, with the inevitable result that the "work was ill done". Moreover he felt a great antipathy towards the theatricals in the college.

"What a deal of time is lost in getting up these plays for Christmas! Sullivan's Operas! The Bishops send out their students to be trained for the Priesthood, and up to the last year they occupy themselves with Sullivan's Operas and Farces... I may say that these Theatricals in the College are an evil, not to say a curse."¹³

A little later he resumed his strictures on aspects of life in the college.

"...Perhaps ... there are some who would think me a bit too Sulpician ... but I do not know that I use too strong language when I say that they are often frivolous and vulgar habits."

The *decano* system was pernicious since the students' formation should be entrusted to a priest and not to a fellow-student. And "could not a rule be made forbidding the students to call each other by any other name than the name they received in baptism or by their surnames? What vulgar names we hear!"¹⁴

Fr. James' criticism of the *decano* system was probably occasioned by the fact that, a few years previously, the community had consisted of two deacons both recent arrivals, and all the others still in classics. Not having much confidence in either of the two older students, the rector had made one of the young boys *decano* and this had caused a fair amount of ill feeling.¹⁵ But Fr. David's views on students' shortcomings and their cure were much more direct than those of his assistant: "English + arithmetic + biology + physiology + geography + innumerable other ologies minus what is most necessary: skelps and cane-ology = nothingology + infinite conceitology."¹⁶

Not that the rector necessarily thought his equation verified in

12. McDonald to Bishop Angus Macdonald, 21st October 1880. (Ibid., G 9.)

13. To Archbishop Smith, 16th April 1886. (Ibid., G 9.)

14. To id., 23rd May 1886. (Ibid., G 9.)

15. McDonald to Bishop Angus Macdonald, 13th April 1882. (Columba House, unclassified.)

16. To Very Rev. Peter Joseph Grant, Blairs, 2nd June 1886. (Ibid., unclassified.)

the students. In a letter of the previous year to Archbishop Eyre, he had commented on their good behaviour and the fact that his relations with them were ruled by mutual confidence; as a result, he seldom needed to impose even a slight punishment.¹⁷ However, the same letter bemoans the fact that, although the boys had normally been four or five years in Blairs, they arrived in Spain knowing practically nothing. He mentions that he was teaching dogmatic theology to the seniors, using Hurter as his textbook, and that each Sunday he gave a talk on ascetic theology.

Due to Fr. James' decision to take extra philosophy classes on Saturday afternoons (the time usually devoted to the preparation of essays and speeches), the weekly Academy did not take place for a year or so after Easter 1879; it was restarted in 1880 but on an extempore basis until the end of 1881, when things were restored to normal and the magazine, *The Academician*, made its reappearance. The latter struggled along for a few more years in an unsatisfactory fashion, lack of interest and the poor standard of articles forming a vicious circle that led to its being wound up, with no. 83, on 15th January 1886.

A mere six weeks, however, sufficed for a phoenix process to take place and, on 1st March, *The Ambrosian* made its appearance. The format was as before—forty or fifty handwritten pages appearing three or four times a year—but the new magazine was no longer so closely associated with the Academy. It continued to reproduce the occasional Academy offering but most of its material was original and the aim was to range over as wide a field as possible, although, inevitably perhaps, history and religion continued to supply most of the topics in prose or in verse. It had the advantage of recording, in each issue, some of the recent events that had taken place in the college. Issues appeared fairly regularly until 1892 and then, after a four years' interval, until June 1901, when there was a break of eight years. Production was resumed in 1909 and lapsed again after some years. Finally, in 1957, after a break of more than thirty years, *The Ambrosian* reappeared; and today it is still produced, now biannually, on 8th December and Pentecost, and not changed greatly in either style or form.

There was another element in college life in those days of last century which is rather hard to appreciate nowadays—the hazards that existed regarding the students' health. From time to time, there were cholera outbreaks in Valladolid, some of them very widespread, but the community escaped each time. Smallpox also made its occasional appearance in the town and one or two cases occurred in the college. But the most serious health problem at this time was the incidence of tuberculosis among the students. It is pathetic to read,

17. 26th July 1885. (Glasgow archives, loc. cit.)

in the correspondence of the time, that so-and-so was complaining of pains in his chest and had a chronic cough, or that such and such a student was spitting blood. In nearly all of these cases, reference to the college register confirms what one surmises—that death was to follow in a few months or years. Some died in the college and some died in Scotland, sent home in the belief or pretence that the rigour of the Spanish climate was all that was wrong. The students were probably fed well and plentifully, if plainly, and they had daily or frequent doses of fresh air and exercise. One is drawn to the conclusion that many of the cases of tuberculosis were due to the infectious nature of the disease, the proximity to each other in which the students lived, the absence of disinfectant measures on bedclothes and so on; but no doubt dampness and the intense cold of unheated rooms during the Valladolid winters did not increase anyone's powers of resistance.

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The feature of Fr. David's rectorate for which he is best remembered is unfortunately his long struggle with the bishops of Scotland. Several subjects were guaranteed to spark off a row—above all, their reluctance to send him professors—and relations degenerated into bitterness, defiance and, at the end, humiliation. Already in 1881, he had expressed his fears to Alexander Munro that not only did Archbishop Eyre plan to send all the Glasgow students to St. Peter's at Partickhill, but also that he hoped to close the college, sell its property and divide the proceeds among the Scottish dioceses as a help to each establishing its own local seminary. And he thought that there would be support for this from Bishop McLachlan of Galloway "whose invectives against Boecillans and the spirit of the *Colegio* are not very soft nor gentle."¹⁸

In 1886, in the annual letter which he wrote to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, he mentioned "the abandoned state of this College and I got an order to insist on the Bishops doing something. I drew their attention to what the Cardinal Prefect wrote me, and the result has been so far good."¹⁹

The previous year he had informed the Archbishop of Glasgow that the hierarchy seemed to have little interest in the college since they had not seen fit to send him another assistant professor, nor did any bishops ever visit Valladolid.²⁰ To the suggestion that the shortage of teachers in the college be solved by sending the senior students to the local seminary for their classes, he gave a flat refusal, not only because the course was longer there, but also because "the health

18. 18th and 27th May 1881. (Ibid.)

19. To Very Rev. Peter Joseph Grant, Blairs, 2nd June 1886. (Columba House, unclassified.)

20. 26th July 1885. (Glasgow archives, loc. cit.)

of the students would be exposed, as they would have to go at least 8 or 10 minutes' walk through the excessive cold and moisture of the winter and the blazing scorching sun (worse than Rome) of the summer and that perhaps three or four times a day." Moreover, the seminary had its long vacation from June to October, an impossible time for the Scots students to be at Boecillo "as, owing to the intense heat, the want of wood and shelter, they could not live there; for even in the beginning of September, when the vacations begin, they have to confine themselves to the house from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. What would it be in June, July and August?" Besides, the local seminarians lacked refinement and some of the externs who went there to attend classes were very undesirable characters indeed.²¹

Although he had been very satisfied with the students in 1885, things had changed somewhat a year later and the rector reported that the spirit in the college, though not vicious, left something to be desired. "I hope I am not misjudging, but it seems to me I remark a greater love for games, amusements, comforts, independence, in a word, a more worldly spirit in boys sent to colleges". He was quite willing to resign, if the bishops desired, but he warned, if he stayed on, "do not be astonished if students have to leave, for I am resolved to have no conceited critics or grumblers in the college."²²

That even in those days the spirit that prevailed in the community was looked on as something to be jealously guarded is evident also from an article in an issue of *The Ambrosian* of 1887.

"What is it that gives San Ambrosio a charm that no other college possesses? ...It is in short, the spirit that has always prevailed amongst us... It may be said to consist in the peace, familiarity and homeliness that is always visible..."

The rector felt that there was a case for some changes in the rules but, instead of making them himself, he asked for a bishop to come and see the situation on the spot. Bishop McLachlan undertook the task of making a visitation of the college, which he carried out from mid-September until near the end of October, 1886. He drew up an amended set of rules which the rest of the bishops sanctioned and which were introduced early in 1888.²³

Although these do not differ greatly from the rules which Bishop Murdoch had composed in 1859, there are many minor changes: for example, spiritual reading was placed before dinner instead of before Mass, which therefore was now at 7 in winter and at 6 in summer; night prayers were fifteen minutes later, at 9.15; lights out were

21. To Archbishop Smith, 10th May 1886. (St. Andrews and Edinburgh archives, G 9.)

22. Id. (Ibid., G 9.)

23. College archives 30/25a: *Rules for Scots' College, Valladolid; by authority of the Archbishops and Bishops of Scotland* (printed, Edinburgh, 1877).

thirty minutes later, at 10; and where, in 1859, those in major orders "shall not recite the Divine Office at any of the hours set apart for religious exercises,"²⁴ now they "may recite the Divine Office at Mass, but at no other devotional exercise of the community."²⁵ The 1887 rules had ten chapters instead of the previous nine, the first chapter being new and dealing with the government of the college and the powers of the rector, vice-rector, the other superiors and the *decano*.

For some years after this, there seems to have been a certain amount of trouble, not among the students, but with the Spanish domestic staff. Changes in personnel were very frequent, cooks in particular succeeding one another with surprising rapidity.²⁶ A fifth servant was taken on—a boy who ran messages and helped the two other male servants. A seamstress also worked in the college, but did not live in.

As far as the students were concerned, however, "the tone of the Community was on the lines of a friendly, family existence."²⁷ The spells at Boecillo were the highlights of the year, with cricket nearly every day on the village threshing ground, an occasional match against the English (until the custom ceased because feeling ran too high), bathing in the Duero and—the big event of the holidays—the day-long donkey expedition.²⁸ When in town, study and class were the order of the day, but in warm weather the students bathed in the Pisuerga, using the English small riverside farm, and some acquired a good knowledge of Spanish through their contact with Spaniards, particularly the students of the Augustinian college, the *Filipinos*, whom the Scots boys unsubtly nicknamed the Flops.²⁹

Around the time of Bishop McLachlan's visit, the teaching staff was augmented by the arrival of two priests from Scotland, James J. Dawson coming in September 1886, just before the episcopal visitation, and Augustine McDermott just after it, in the following January. The former taught dogmatic theology, the latter moral at first, and afterwards philosophy. McDermott was quite a musician, encouraging the formation of a brass band and an orchestra in the college; he also began a class in Gregorian chant and became interested enough in it to make the journey to the Benedictine abbey of S. Domingo de Silos to hear the monks there.³⁰ James Macdonald taught classics

24. Op. cit., chapter VIII, no. 4.

25. Op. cit., chapter X, no. 2.

26. College archives A/16.

27. Ibid., 71/2: Reminiscences of Mgr. William Macmaster (Ms).

28. Handball and golf were introduced to Boecillo in the 1890s.

29. Ibid., 71/2.

The name "*Filipinos*" is derived from the fact that, once ordained, many of the students of the college go to work in the Philippines.

30. Ibid., A/16.

One of the monks also came to the college and spent some weeks there instructing the students in plain chant. It became the practice for all to take part in the singing during high Masses, and not only a select few of the students removed to the choir loft.

and the rector took the deacons twice a day. But the distribution of subjects among the professors changed frequently.

It was at the end of 1886 that Fr. Dawson, with the rector's approval, sent out an appeal to old students and other friends of the college, asking them to subscribe to a billiards table for the students; the latter played football, cricket, rounders and tennis at their different seasons, but they had no indoor recreation, nor even a proper common room. The appeal was successful³¹ and a billiards table was bought, sent out and installed in the *entresuelo*, the room where it was placed also providing a place where the whole community might gather socially.

The presence of three assistant professors in the college was too good a thing to last and James Macdonald left to return to Scotland in September 1888. After a lot of persuasion, the Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh at last gave permission to one of his priests, James McGinnes, to go to Valladolid as Fr. James' replacement. He did not arrive until August 1889 and, by this time, Dawson's health had broken down; the rector and McDermott were having to do all the teaching and "if both of us break down, you need not be astonished."³² Dawson was forced to return to Scotland in the spring of 1890 and Rev. John Doherty was sent to replace him, but not until the end of the year.³³

The rector had been writing indignant letters about the shortage of staff, but there had been another reason for his anger during the summer of 1889 when Archbishop Eyre informed him that he was recalling two of the Glasgow students in order to send them to Partickhill. "I have lost all heart and would most willingly throw up my whole charge... I could weep to see how the College and I have been treated."³⁴ There was a series of acrimonious exchanges, the archbishop being reported as considerably "surprised at your attitude" and the rector maintaining that such withdrawals from a small community were most unsettling and destructive of discipline. In the event, the archbishop desisted from his plan and, as has been seen, the college was supplied, if not always promptly, with a reasonable number of professors during these years. The rector admitted this, but felt that the bishops were not really interested in the college and its welfare; "certainly I shall take no students, until justice is done to the college and, in the last extremity, would appeal to Rome or,

31. Cf. James J. Dawson to Alexander Munro, Glasgow, 5th December 1887. (Glasgow archives, loc. cit.)

32. McDonald to Archbishop Smith, 23rd May 1889. (St. Andrews and Edinburgh archives, G 9.)

33. It is said that, when he arrived late at night, he was admitted by the rector in nightgown and cap and carrying a candle, and was led through dismal corridors to the room allocated to him. Left alone there, he sat down on the bed and wept.

34. Canon John A Maguire V. G., Glasgow, 28th June 1889. (Glasgow archives, loc. cit.)

what would be still better, throw off all connection with the college."³⁵ Strong words.

At this time, the college had twenty-seven students, a record number, although, on several other occasions in these years, there were over twenty students.

In that year of 1890, Fr. David completed twenty-five years in the college and, at the instance of the Scottish bishops, he was made a doctor of theology, *honoris causa*, by Rome.³⁶ His jubilee day was celebrated on 30th September at Boecillo, where, after the reading of an illuminated address composed, written and ornamented by the students, the rector gave a modest reply. Then,

"On leaving the rector's room, the college brass band ranged itself in front of his window outside and gave to the poetry of a fresh sunshiny morning several variations of select music. All further celebration of the day, by athletic sports, was omitted owing to the unusual heat."

At dinner there were more speeches and "immediately after dinner a symphony from Haydn was played by the College orchestra... The performance occupied three quarters of an hour."

At a soiree in the evening, Haydn's Toy Symphony, some toasts and various songs provided the entertainment, which ended with three cheers for the rector and the visitors.³⁷

It was on the occasion of this jubilee in 1890 that the students made the rector a present of a statue of the Sacred Heart (a statue that is still venerated in the college) in appreciation of his fostering of the devotion, so much associated with the college in its Jesuit days. (Through his efforts and encouragement, the students also now received Holy Communion two, three and even up to five times a week.)

Present at the jubilee celebrations were three priests from Scotland, one of them Alexander Munro, whose place on the staff Fr. David had taken in 1865 and who was still a frequent visitor to Valladolid. By now provost of the Glasgow chapter of canons and a domestic prelate, he also acted as the college's agent in Scotland, paying bills, procuring books when asked, receiving money from parents for transmission to their sons, etc. More than that, he was a considerable benefactor of the college, because, in addition to a valuable microscope, a set of vestments and his library, he donated money to the college (partly shares which he had bought in Spain

35. McDonald to Bishop-elect Smith, Dunkeld, 20th October 1890. (St. Andrews and Edinburgh archives, G 9.)

36. College archives 67/11.

37. *Ibid.*, 67/12: contemporary newspaper account.

while on the staff, but also £1,000 which he sent out in 1891 to be invested in Spanish funds). The income from these bequests was to be used in various ways: the maintenance of an extra student for Glasgow, over and above the number allocated to the archdiocese; each student who was ordained or who left the college to be ordained in Scotland was to receive 300 pesetas so that he might buy a breviary and a few necessary books, and might have some pocket money; and, in addition, up to 250 pesetas each year was to be spent on games equipment and excursion expenses while the students were at Boecillo.³⁸ When Munro died in 1892, one hundred Masses were offered for him as a mark of the college's gratitude.

A visitor to the college round about this time was the writer and traveller, Robert Cunninghame Graham and, in a book of essays published later,³⁹ he gives his impressions of the college and its rector:

"Passing the ponderous door set in a horse-shoe arch, the present melts away. On every side the past looks down on one. A flagged and vaulted corridor leads to a long refectory, with the tables set, as in the 'Cena' of Leonardo, with bread and jugs of rough Valencian pottery...

...I fancy the Rector of the Scots Castilian College is the last surviving type. *Scotissimus Scotorum*, a Scot of Scots, tall, thin and sinewy, a Highlander, a scholar and linguist, withal a gentleman, with the geniality that Presbyterianism seems to have crushed out of the modern Scotsman... Something quite unlike Scotland in the urbanity of the man... a Scoto-Spanish priest and gentleman speaking Castilian faintly tinged with Gaelic, and dinning education and religion into fledgling Scoto-Spanish or Hispano-Scottish priests."⁴⁰

The summer following his jubilee, Fr. David paid his first visit to Scotland since 1883 and, on his return, the main theme of his letters for several years was the difficult economic straits through which the college was passing. About ten years previously, the college income had been a little over £1,000 p.a. (£800 from the Madrid property after expenses, £150 from the sale of wine, and £80 from investments); the main items of expenditure were the students' maintenance (at £25-£30 per student p.a.) and wages and salaries (a little over £300). In 1886, the maintenance cost of a student was £60, but the Madrid houses now brought in about £1,200 and the government stock held by the college about £300. But in 1892, he reported that, in the previous year, expenditure had exceeded income by £100, due to price increases and the fact that the Madrid property

38. *Ibid.*, 31 *passim*, especially 31/1/4.7.11.13.16.17.

39. G. & R.B. Cunninghame Graham, *Father Archangel of Scotland and Other Essays*, London, 1896.

40. *Op. cit.*, pp. 68-70.

was not fully rented.⁴¹ In 1893, unlet houses cost the college £200⁴² and, at the end of that year, he notified the bishops that, due to lack of money, he could hardly accept any more students; if any were in fact sent, they had to be of one class, since there was a shortage of staff in the college.⁴³

On this topic of lack of assistants, he worked himself up into a state of high indignation over the next few months. He angrily repeated his rejection of the idea of bringing in a Spanish priest to teach and, as for sending the students to the college of the Augustinians (the "*Filipinos*"), they "have their own peculiar course and no one knowing anything about their laws etc. would have ever thought of making such a proposal, even if they would admit of it." He added an ultimatum: either he had to be given three assistants or he would resign.⁴⁴ In letters to the Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh in April of that year, 1894, he accused the bishops of flouting his right, according to the college's royal charter and the bishops' own agreement, to retain as professors students who had finished their courses.⁴⁵ "I must insist on my right... If my permanence here as Rector is an obstacle to the Bishops executing any of these plans proposed, they have only to ask me to resign..." "I hope you will insist on my getting my rights for otherwise I shall not receive any students, nor lay any more eggs."⁴⁶ Similar letters were being despatched to other bishops, each one more bitter in tone than its predecessor.

Most of the bishops were sympathetic but felt that the new professor could not be spared from anywhere but Glasgow.⁴⁷ In fact, the situation in Valladolid was very bad—Doherty went in May of that year and McGinnes in June. The latter, who is the author of the work on preaching and sacred eloquence entitled *The Ministry of the Word*,⁴⁸ left Valladolid, according to McDonald, "disappointed

41. McDonald to Alexander Munro, Glasgow, 13th March 1892. (Glasgow archives, loc. cit.)

42. To Archbishop Eyre, 1st September 1893. (Ibid., loc. cit.)

43. To id. (?), 3rd November 1893. (Ibid., loc. cit.) Fr. McDermott had left in May 1892.

44. To —, 24th February 1894. (St. Andrews and Edinburgh archives, G 9.)

45. As far as the Royal Charter is concerned, see Appendix II B, point no. 9.

The 1859 rules, authorised by the bishops, had also, it is true, laid down that students "shall return to the Mission when the Rector orders them, or remain in the College to teach or fill any other station, if he thinks it necessary" (chap. VIII, no. 5; college archives 30/23); but the wording of the 1887 rules was merely that, "in the interval that may occur between a student's ordination and his return to Scotland, he must be prepared, like any of his comrades, to teach or fulfil any other duty the Rector may think fit to impose" (chap. X, no. 3; *ibid.*, 30/25a), without stating that it was the latter who would decide when a student should return to Scotland: "When ordered home, he will receive intimation from the Rector of the date of his departure..." (chap. X, no. 5).

46. To Archbishop Macdonald, 8th and 27th April 1894. (St. Andrews and Edinburgh archives, G 9.)

47. E.g., Bishop Turner, Galloway, to McDonald, 13th April 1894; Bishop Smith, Argyll and the Isles, 13th July 1893; Bishop McLachlan, Galloway, 27th April 1892. (College archives 65/1/60.62.75.)

48. Glasgow (Hugh Margey), 1891. Its original purpose was to further the aims and objects of the Academy in the college in Valladolid. McGinnes is said to have written the words of the college song, "The Star of Ambrosio," and McDermott the music.

and soured," unable to brook any opposition to his projects and fads.⁴⁹

For the last few months of that scholastic year, Don David was on his own, trying to cope with all the teaching that had to be done. He wanted younger assistants since older men seemed unwilling to remain long in the college; in particular, he asked for Frs. Anselm Steven and William Macmaster, both newly back in Scotland after ordination in Valladolid. Archbishop Angus Macdonald of St. Andrews and Edinburgh was sympathetic to the request—the two, in fact, returned to Spain in September—though he confessed ruefully: "The good Rector's tone is at times somewhat dictatorial; but after all we must make allowances for ill health and a good deal of uphill work in the past."⁵⁰ In the circumstances, it was hardly politic of two of the bishops to inform Fr. David in July, during the summer of his frustration, that two of his students (John Joyce and Joseph McHardy) were being transferred to Rome. The reaction was immediate and forceful: "I repeat what I said on the occasion of the former requests, [Eyre's of 1889] that I will resign rather than give my consent... Excuse my language if it is too strong; I speak from a wounded heart. Might I not have been consulted beforehand?"⁵¹ "I must inform Your Lordships that I shall carry the case to Rome..."⁵² Both the Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh and the Bishop of Galloway yielded, though only to avoid a crisis; the former, at least, thought Fr. David's attitude intolerable, suspected that his mind was affected and suggested that the time had come for him to be relieved of his office.⁵³ The rest of the bishops, though not condoning the rector's behaviour, were not as anxious for his removal and so nothing was done. Fr. David himself thought that the archbishop's antagonism was due to his having listened to McGinnes' criticisms.⁵⁴

Early in 1894, the rector had introduced physical training or "drill" for the students, with Indian clubs, bar-bells and dumb-bells; it proved popular at first, but enthusiasm soon waned. Two other practices begun later that year enjoyed a more lasting popularity: permission was given for smoking ("we are one and all alive to its soothing and balmy effects"); and the students were allowed to hire bicycles to go to Boecillo or make similar outings and, in this connection, "within the four walls of the 'Corral' many of us learned

49. To —, 27th August 1894. (St. Andrews and Edinburgh archives, G 9.) These projects included an effort to introduce the practice of periodic reports on the students' class work and to have the examination marks made public. (College archives 71/2: Reminiscences of Mgr. William Macmaster.)

50. Memorandum for the other bishops, 1894. (St. Andrews and Edinburgh archives, G 9.)

51. To Bishop Smith, Dunkeld, 24th July 1894. (Ibid., G 9.)

52. To Archbishop Macdonald, 19th August 1894. (Ibid., G 9.)

53. Memorandum for other bishops, 6th September 1894. (Ibid., G 9.)

54. McDonald to Bishop —, 27th August 1894. (Ibid., G. 9.)

to ride... and although at first the damage done to many wheels was great, the enjoyment we derived was infinitely greater."⁵⁵

Matters simmered down after the fireworks of 1894 and, for some years, as McDonald got on well with his two young professors, the only complaints coming from Valladolid were concerned with shortage of money. In the 1880s, sizable groups of up to a dozen had been accepted every two years or so and similar groups had come to the college in each of the years 1892, 1893 and 1894. However, only one student was received in 1895 and none in 1896. In 1897, Don David wrote to say that, due to increasing prices and taxation, he could not accept anyone that year either.⁵⁶ At this time, a certain D. Francisco Alonso had offered to construct an annex to the college building in Valladolid and the bishops gave their permission in 1897; Sr. Alonso said that construction would begin as soon as certain difficulties were removed—but, because of improvements made in the existing building, the project was later cancelled as unnecessary.

55. *The Ambrosian*, 8th December 1896, p. 16.

56. To Bishop — , 15th July 1897. (*Ibid.*, G 9.)