

Barzilai have vigorously protested against the shame of remaining indifferent in the face of a colossal conflict where the liberties and the civilisation of Europe are at stake.' As regards the material considerations, they have been fully discussed for months past in the daily press, and every schoolboy is now familiar with the facts. Everyone knows that there are parts of Austria, for example, Trieste and Trentino, that are regarded as the 'unredeemed' parts of Italy—that is to say, as parts of the territory of Italy that are still in the grip of foreigners,—and the Italian people have never given up the hope of adding these districts to the existing Kingdom of Italy. Moreover, Italy desires and needs a commanding position in the Adriatic; and the victory of Austria would mean a death-blow to these very natural and reasonable aspirations.

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The terms of the Triple Alliance have never been published, but it is generally known that the agreement only bound Italy to come to the assistance of her partners in the event of an aggressive war being waged against them. Italy's neutrality during all these months is clear proof that that Power, at least, regarded Austria and Germany, and not Britain, as the aggressor in the war; and it happens that Austria and Germany have themselves justified Italy's attitude in that respect. It is true that a report was current at Rome, shortly after the outbreak of the war, that the Kaiser had despatched a telegram to the King of Italy couched in the following terms: 'Victor or vanquished, I will never forget thy perfidy.' But in an inspired article in the official *Fremdenblatt* of August 27, Austria asserted that 'if the Italian Government, after carefully weighing the reasons for and against, has arrived at the conclusion that it would be more opportune for her to remain neutral, such decision by no means implies the end of the Triplice, whatever may have been whispered in Italy and elsewhere. The bond between the three Powers exists, and will continue to exist even after the war, since it corresponds to their interests, and an Austro-German defeat—if indeed, anyone is credulous enough to believe in that possibility—would be a national disaster for Italy, whereas a victory would mean the victory of an orderly and modern element of culture in Europe, and would be therefore to Italy's interest.' A similar attitude was taken by the Austrian *Reichspost*, and also by the *Kölnische Zeitung* and other officially inspired German papers. In the face of such utterances, implying that the two Powers regarded the Alliance as intact, notwithstanding Italy's refusal to come to their aid, it is difficult to see how Germany and Austria can still attempt, with the slightest pretence at consistency, to ask the world to believe that they are engaged in a defensive war, which has been 'forced' upon them. For Italy, the significant and momentous aspect of her present decision is the fact that the Triple Alliance is now gone forever. It was always heartily detested by the Italian people; and the enthusiasm and tumultuous demonstrations in favor of the war are the measure of the popular rejoicing at its final collapse.

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As to the probable military consequences of the entrance of this new belligerent into the arena, it would be futile to attempt to prophesy: all that can be said is that it remains to be seen how Italy will comport herself. Her men are fresh, brave, and determined; and the nation is now reasonably well prepared for the struggle. Her intervention will at least cause a diversion of Austrian and German troops from the eastern and western fronts, and must necessarily make the task of the Allies appreciably easier. There are good grounds for believing that the entrance of Italy into the contest will be followed at no distant date by the appearance of Roumania as a belligerent—also on the side of the Allies. That country has an army six hundred thousand strong absolutely intact, and, like Italy, has been making large military preparations. If Russia, Roumania, and Serbia joined hands, a half circle would be formed round Hungary. The strain on the latter

country would be enormous, and the results would probably be seen very soon. It is not to be expected that Italy can take her place in this titanic struggle without suffering, perhaps severely; and as Catholics our satisfaction at the appearance of a new ally is tempered by regret that the calamity of warfare should have overtaken the land which cradled the infancy of our holy Faith, and in which dwells the earthly Vicar of our Lord. But because her action is calculated to shorten hostilities, and therefore materially to lessen the sum total of bloodshed, her intervention cannot be other than welcomed by those who desire to see the hateful and hellish struggle brought to a close.

Notes

The Social Study Scheme

We are now in a position to state that the Federated Catholic Clubs of New Zealand have decided to take up officially the work of carrying on the social study scheme in New Zealand, and of conducting, in conjunction with ourselves, the Catholic Social Guild examinations in connection therewith. Full particulars as to applications, course of study, and entrance fees will appear in our next issue.

The Pope and the Cables

During the last few days cables have been sent out from Rome and Paris intimating that the Pope had made a handsome contribution to the Italian war fund, and that he was on the point of issuing a manifesto expressing his sympathy with the Allies. It is easy to guess where the Pope's sympathies are likely to be at the present juncture, but whether he will consider it his duty to publish manifestoes, and to make precipitate and princely donations, is quite another matter. Readers will do well to hold their judgment in suspense in regard to all such cables until the messages have been definitely confirmed.

'I am a Country; Not a Road'

Here is the full text of a young Chinaman's witty summary of events which led up to the war, the best line of which—'I am a country, I am not a road'—has already been much quoted. The summary appeared in *L'Echo de Chine*.

'Now there is a great battle in Europe. This began because the Prince of Austria went to Serbia with his wife. One man of Serbia killed him.

'Austria was angry, and so wrote Serbia.

'Germany write a letter to Austria, "I will help you."

'Russia write a letter to Serbia, "I will help you."

'France did not want to fight, but they got ready their soldiers.

'Germany write a letter to France, "You don't get ready, or I will fight you in nine hours."

'Germany to fight them, pass Belgium.

'Belgium say, "I am a Country: I am not a road." And Belgium write a letter to England about Germany, to help them.

'So England help Belgium.'

What They Say

Here is a fresh instalment of pungent American comment on the war situation:—

Evidently Sir Edward Grey's family-tree doesn't bear olive-branches.—*Columbia State*.

The Turks seem to be in danger of having company at their back door and front door at the same time.—*Louisville Post*.

The Turks who proclaimed this a Holy War are apt to change their opinion as they get the nearer view of the Allied fleet in action.—*Duluth News Tribune*.

Krupp subscriptions to war loans look suspiciously like rebates.—*Wall Street Journal*.

Considering the reported scarcity of food in Germany, we question the judgment of the Germans in