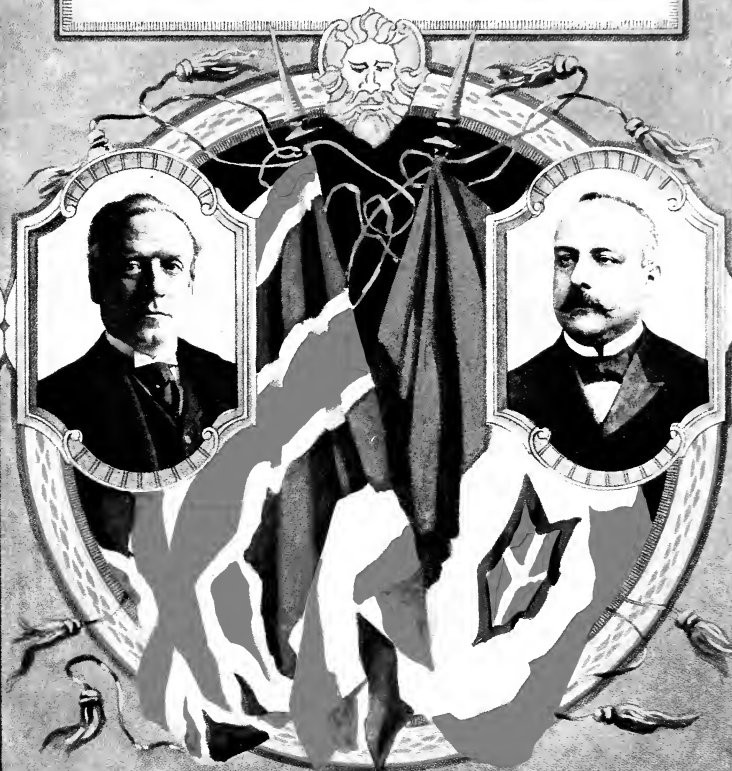


ITALY OUR · ALLY



**Being an Account of the Visit to Italy
of the Right Hon. H. H. Asquith, M.P.
Prime Minister of Great Britain.**

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ITALY OUR ALLY

“The admiration and affection which every Englishman feels for Italy have been quickened during the past six months in which our two nations have been comrades in arms. No words of mine are necessary to express the value which we attach to this comradeship. It is a pledge of the community of ideas and aspirations to which our long and unclouded friendship bears witness, and from our northern island we once more salute our Ally and pray that victory and glory may attend her arms.”—*Mr. Asquith in “The Book of Italy.”*

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1, ADELPHI TERRACE, LONDON.

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ITALY OUR ALLY.

AFTER Paris—Rome! After a significant Conference, a significant journey by the British Prime Minister.

The Conference of the Allies held its fourth and last sitting at five o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, March 28th. On Friday morning Mr. Asquith left Paris for Rome by special train. Signor Salandra, the Italian Prime Minister, and Baron Sonnino, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had already departed in order to be in Rome to welcome their guest. Mr. Asquith's train was due to arrive in Rome by three o'clock, but long before that hour the streets in the neighbourhood of the station were teeming with people. There were at least 50,000 people in the Piazza dei Cinquecenti, and the route from the station to the British Embassy was lined with crowds of people, kept back by a double row of soldiers. Just before half-past two Signor Salandra arrived, followed a little later by Baron Sonnino, Sir Rennell Rodd, the British Ambassador, and several Italian and English officials. At three o'clock precisely the train came into the station and Mr. Asquith stepped out on to the platform. He was welcomed by Signor Salandra and proceeded at once to a motor-car outside the station. As soon as he appeared in the street there was a great outburst of

cheering from the crowd. The car went to the British Embassy, and when shortly after arriving Mr. Asquith appeared on the balcony the applause of the crowd broke out again. After it had subsided a little Mr. Asquith came forward and said very distinctly :

“Italians ! we are here for the victory of justice and right. Long live Italy ! Long live the King !”

The crowd replied with loud cries of “Long live our Ally ! Long live England ! Long live King George !”

At five o'clock Mr. Asquith, accompanied by Sir Rennell Rodd, was received at the Quirinal, first by Her Majesty the Queen of Italy, and afterwards by His Royal Highness the Duke of Genoa. A little later he was received at the Palazzo Margherita by Her Majesty the Queen Mother.

THE BANQUET AT THE CONSULTA.

At half-past seven an official banquet was given at the Consulta in Mr. Asquith's honour. Baron Sonnino, whose guest Mr. Asquith was, proposed a toast in the following terms :—

It is with the most lively satisfaction that, in the name of the Government, I welcome Your Excellency among us, making myself the faithful interpreter of the warm sentiments with which the whole nation salutes the presence of the British Prime Minister in the capital of Italy.

Your presence confirms in us the consciousness of the traditional friendship which has united our Governments and our peoples throughout so many historic vicissitudes.

The friendship between Italy and England finds its sure foundation as much in a profound and general feeling of confidence and sympathy as in the substantial agreement of their political and economic interests. Those traditional ties are now strengthened by a brotherhood of arms and by an alliance which binds us to other noble nations, to those who fight in an unexampled struggle for justice and the liberty of peoples.

I raise my glass in honour of Their Majesties the King and Queen of Great Britain, of Her Majesty Queen Alexandra and the Royal Family, also in honour of allied Sovereigns and heads of States represented here, and to the health of Your Excellency who so worthily presides over the Government of a friendly and allied nation.

Mr. Asquith's reply was in French, of which the following is a translation :—

Signor Ministro ! On arriving in this historic city, which no one can approach without profound emotion, in order to convey to Italy, to her King and to all her gallant forces on land and sea the expression of our solidarity and of our entire confidence in the triumph of the cause which unites us, I must express to you the great pleasure I feel at receiving so cordial and enthusiastic a welcome. Our two peoples, notwithstanding the distance which separates them, notwithstanding their differences of temperament, are to-day more sensible than ever of the strength of the bonds which have held them together for more than half a century, through the identity of their principles and the community of their political and economic interests. The English people followed the heroic struggle of the Italian people for their liberation and their unity with a unanimous sympathy which is shared by all great minds, poets and statesmen. Destiny has willed that at the supreme moment, when the aspirations and principles which they share were menaced, the two peoples should find themselves in a fraternal alliance,

to defend the cause of liberty and to make justice respected by all nations, the weakest and the strongest alike.

Strong in the union of all our Allies, we shall march together through the hardest trials with an unshakable confidence in the final triumph, which will reaffirm these essential rights.

Thanking the Royal Government for so courteous a reception and Your Excellency for the sentiments which you have just expressed, I raise my glass in honour of Their Majesties the King and Queen of Italy, Her Majesty the Queen-Mother and the members of the Royal Family. In bearing my greeting to the first soldier of Italy, I beg Your Excellency to convey the greetings of the British nation to the glorious Army, which by the example of His Majesty is inspired and encouraged to new victories.

On Saturday morning at ten o'clock Mr. Asquith drove to the Pantheon, where he placed two magnificent wreaths on the tombs of King Humbert and King Victor Emmanuel II. He afterwards returned to the Embassy, where he received many prominent members of the English colony resident in Rome.

Sir Rennell Rodd received the following telegram from Signor Marcora, President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies :—

As an admirer from my youth up of the free and strong British people, and always remembering with gratitude the generous asylum found on its hospitable soil by Foscolo, Mazzini, and many others of our brethren when persecuted by tyranny, remembering also the precious aid given by this people and its greatest men to our Resurrection and to the cause of civilization and progress of all nations, I beg Your Excellency to be kind enough to convey to the illustrious Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, my respectful greetings and those of the Italian Chamber over which I preside, and of which I know I am on this occasion the most faithful interpreter. To Your Excellency I present my profound homage.

Sir Rennell Rodd replied :—

Profoundly moved and gratified by your telegram, the British Prime Minister asks me to express to Your Excellency, supreme interpreter of the sentiments of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, his warmest thanks, and at the same time he sends back his most friendly greetings to the representatives of a people which rose again by the blood of its martyrs, and now by the blood of fresh martyrs is vindicating the unconquerable cause of liberty. I add my own sentiments of particular devotion to Your Excellency.

At 11.20 on Saturday morning Mr. Asquith, accompanied by Sir Henry Howard, the British Minister at the Vatican, was received in audience by His Holiness Pope Benedict XV.

THE CEREMONY AT THE CAPITOL.

The ceremony at the Capitol on Saturday afternoon represented the official welcome of the City of Rome. Prince Prospero Colonna, First Citizen and Mayor of Rome, gave the reception, which was attended by Signor Salandra, all the members of the Cabinet, by the municipal authorities, representatives of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, and by the principal Ambassadors and Ministers, including those of France, Russia, Belgium, Japan, Portugal and the United States. M. Barrère, the French Ambassador, together with the Belgian Minister, was recognised and given a special ovation by the crowd, and the Portuguese Ambassador was greeted with cries of "Long live Portugal! Down with Germany!"

Mr. Asquith arrived in a motor-car, accompanied by Sir Rennell Rodd and Lady Rodd. He was received by the Mayor and conducted through the various halls of the Capitol, in which the Ministers and Under-Secretaries of State, members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Prefect of the Police and other civil and military authorities had assembled to meet him. In the Sala degli Orazi e Curiazi the Mayor, Prince Colonna, delivered an address of welcome :—

Signor Presidente, I have the honour to present you to my colleagues of the Municipal Council of Rome, and to convey to you their welcome and that of my fellow-citizens. Your presence here is particularly agreeable to us at this moment when the destinies of nations are maturing, and we are happy to express these sentiments to you to-day, for Italy always remembers the generous English nation which embraced in its sympathy the cause of our independence, and also assisted us in our most trying moments by her faith in the triumph of liberty and justice. From this Capitol Rome drew omens of her glory in the hour of her greatest trials. From this sacred hill to-day I draw omens of common victory in the sacred battles which we are fighting, together with your noble nation, on behalf of the liberty of peoples.

Mr. Asquith then made the following reply in English, speaking slowly and with great deliberation, giving force and solemnity to every word. He was frequently applauded, particularly in his eloquent remarks on Rome, “the centre and the spring of so many of the great ideas which have guided and dominated the West down to our times.” At the close of

his speech Mr. Asquith was greeted with a tremendous ovation.

Illustrissimo Signor Sindaco: I thank you very warmly for your words of welcome, which, pronounced in these memorable surroundings, assume a special significance.

This is the first occasion on which a British Prime Minister has had the exceptional honour of being received by the Chief Magistrate of Rome in this Capitol, which was the citadel and shrine of the ancient, the outpost of the mediæval world, and has to-day become the symbolic monument of the re-birth and union of Italy. I have come from my country, and still more recently from France, where the representatives of the Allied nations have met in conference at so grave a moment in the history of the world, to bring to our friends in Italy an assurance of the solidarity existing between all the Allies, to reaffirm our unalterable faith in the cause of liberty and justice which we are united to defend, and our irrevocable determination to vindicate the rights of weaker nations and to tolerate no violation of those elementary social laws which the efforts of centuries have struggled to establish. It seems to be especially appropriate that such a message should be delivered on the summit of the Capitol of Rome, the centre and the spring of so many of the great ideas which have guided and dominated the West down to our times.

It was from Rome, the founder of the European State, from her civilising genius, that the law of nations was derived, that law which, slowly developing and maturing in the long process of years, triumphed over barbarous instincts and practice, and has been until now accepted and loyally observed by peoples of every blood and race, to the world's infinite gain. In Rome, therefore, the scene and source of the world's mightiest movements, it is peculiarly appropriate that we should reaffirm the sanctity of the common law of Europe, which survived the ancient Roman state as the universal heritage of mankind.

I, who in my own lifetime have seen this venerable city once more take her place at the head of a great and progressive nation, rejoice that in this grave moment Rome should once more raise her authoritative voice, as it was raised in May last year, to denounce the systematic violation of that humane and beneficent code which was first formulated under her protecting arm. Such thoughts are inseparable from these august surroundings.

To you, Monsieur le Syndic, who have lately returned from the battle-front in the North, from which, day by day, new evidence reaches us of the prowess of the soldiers of New Italy, under the illustrious Sovereign who so worthily follows in the footsteps of the Liberator-King, I express my satisfaction at the brotherhood of arms, which now consecrates a friendship of more than half a century between the two countries, and, in the name of my countrymen, I send from this Capitol a message of faith and confidence and a greeting of affectionate admiration to the heroic armies and to the whole people of Italy.

THE WELCOME OF THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT.

The principal event of Mr. Asquith's third day in Rome was the luncheon given in his honour by Signor Salandra. There were present: all the Ministers and Under Secretaries, the Presidents of the Senate and Chamber, the Ambassadors and Ministers representing the Allies, about twenty members of the Senate and thirty deputies. At the end of the luncheon Signor Salandra proposed Mr. Asquith's health in the following terms:

To the illustrious guest who by his presence in Rome at this solemn hour in the history of the world, has desired to give us a living proof of the solidarity of the ties which bind the great British Empire to new Italy, I express with much pleasure and emotion the greetings of the Parliament and Government of Italy.

Parliament and Government are, in Italy as in England, bound together in a harmony which cannot be broken under the supreme guarantee of the national monarchy—a monarchy which is the protector of all the most ardent aspirations of civil and social progress. And since your noble efforts, in which, it must be remembered, we co-operated with all our power, were unsuccessful in warding off the premeditated conflict which for twenty months has been drenching the world with blood, Parliament and the Government, in Italy as in England, have repeatedly affirmed their determination not to lay down their arms until our just cause has been victorious.

How firm and unshakeable our determination is you will be told to-morrow by the grandson of Victor Emmanuel the Great, who will show you the dogged efforts which our nation in arms puts forth every day against the immense obstacles of nature and the powerful defences of the enemy. We, who humbly, but with firmness of heart are proceeding to carry out our arduous tasks, inspired by the ideals of the immortal authors of our Resurrection, recall how your country always gave them generous and inspiring sympathy. We recall those associates in the glorious peace of history—Giuseppe Mazzini, surrounded by affectionate veneration, Giuseppe Garibaldi hailed as a conqueror, Camillo di Cavour honoured in the greatest assembly of the modern world with words which have never been said of any other foreign statesman. We recall Gladstone denouncing those Governments which oppressed us, and Palmerston who wished to keep open the sea-routes for the ships of the Thousand.

You worthily occupy the place of your great predecessors, who will never die in the grateful memory of Italians; towards you there will go out from our people a feeling of lively sympathy and confidence of which, as of the warmth of our sun, I hope you will take back a kindly impression to your country. You can say to your fellow-countrymen that the Parliament and Government of Italy, henceforward free, are proud to carry out the last act of our national Resurrection, bound to you by an indissoluble tie of interests, forces, and ideals. I drink to your Excellency's health, to the greatness of the British Empire in peace and freedom, and to the victory of the Allied arms.

Mr. Asquith replied :—

The reception which you have given me here to-day and the kind and eloquent words of your Excellency give me peculiar gratification. As an old Parliamentarian myself, it delights me to have an opportunity of exchanging fraternal salutations with the members of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

Parliamentary institutions took their rise in England, and after many centuries of experience, with all their imperfections, they have been found, in all free countries, to be the best instrument that has been devised for the interpretation and the effective action of national opinion in the domain of Government.

As you, Sir, have reminded me, the friendship—may I not say the affection—between Italy and my country is not a plant of recent growth. I can, myself, remember the time when Italy was still divided by the accidents of history, and the efforts of the great patriots whose names you have recalled were directed to the double object of expelling the last remnants of foreign rule, and uniting in one body, as they had long been united in spirit, all the constituent elements of your integral national life. In every stage of that struggle it is not an exaggeration to say that the emancipators of Italy had with them the unfailing interest, the unbounded sympathy, and the inextinguishable hopes of the British people.

In truth, Sir, diverse in many ways as have been the lines of our development, the national life in our two countries is to a large extent fed from the same sources and animated by the same spirit. Hatred of tyranny, love of justice, the passion for liberty, the sense of the equality of all men before the law, free opinion, free speech—these are the ideas that are held and principles of policy which are practised with equal ardour and conviction in Great Britain and in Italy. No wonder, then, that the years since your unity was finally achieved have been years of unbroken friendship between the two nations—a friendship which no misunderstanding or mischance has ever been allowed even for a moment to imperil.

Such were our happy relations before the war. But to-day we are not only friends but Allies, finding in

our common efforts, our common sacrifices, our common hopes a new and ever more intimate bond of union. We watch with equal pride the glorious gallantry and skill of the Allied Armies and Navies. This is not a war which can be won merely by the multiplication of fighting men and the accumulation of munitions and material. It calls for the organisation, the co-ordination, the concentration in due proportion and proper perspective of all the various resources of the Allies. We have to work in concert, not only in the battlefield, not only on the high seas, not only in the air above and under the waters, but also in the not less essential domain of industry, of transport, of finance. Finally, I ask could these efforts and sacrifices be inspired by a worthier cause? Independence for the smaller and weaker states, respect for treaties and for public law, resolute resistance to the supremacy of brute force; in a word—for these are all means to an end—the free life of a free Europe. Together we stand or fall; and standing together, as we do, we shall achieve a decisive and durable victory, not for ourselves alone but for posterity, for the future of civilisation, for the dearest and most precious interests of humanity.

MR. ASQUITH LEAVES ROME.

At 7.30 on Sunday evening Mr. Asquith, accompanied by Sir Rennell Rodd, Brigadier-General Ratcliff, and General Elia, Italian Under-Secretary for War, left Rome for the General Headquarters of the Italian Army. A great demonstration to salute him on departing had been arranged by the Interventionists and at six o'clock a procession of several thousand people, carrying flags and headed by a band playing the "Marseillaise," formed up in the Piazza Colonna. It proceeded to the railway station, increasing

enormously as it went along, until, when the station was reached, the crowd numbered about 100,000. The houses all along the Via Nazionale were decorated with Italian and English flags and cheers were frequently given for England and Mr. Asquith. There were also shouts of "Down with Germany!" The immense procession reached the Piazza Esedra at 6.40, and at 7 the Italian Ministers, Prince Colonna, and various officials arrived at the station. Mr. Asquith's arrival some minutes later was greeted with tremendous cheers; the bands played the British National Anthem and the flag was saluted. Mr. Asquith seemed deeply impressed by the imposing character of this demonstration and frequently acknowledged the cheering of the crowds.

Inside the station Mr. Asquith was received by Signor Salandra and the Mayor of Rome, both of whom thanked him for his visit, while Mr. Asquith expressed his gratitude for the unforgettable welcome which Rome had accorded him. As the train moved out of the station the cry of "Long live England!" was raised, and the crowd outside continued to cheer enthusiastically.

The following telegrams were addressed by Mr. Asquith to Signor Salandra and Prince Colonna, respectively:—

•(1) At the moment of leaving your great country, friendly and allied, I feel the desire to send you my

warmest thanks for the hospitable courtesy with which you have surrounded me during my visit. I beg your Excellency, as chief of the Government, to make yourself the interpreter of my most fervent greetings to the Italian Senate and Chamber.

(2) At the moment of leaving the Eternal City I wish to express to its first citizen my warmest thanks for the exquisite hospitality which has been shown to me, and I beg you to be the interpreter of my profound gratitude to the generous people of the City.

The latter was read out at the Council of Rome, the members of which received it with applause and directed a reply to be sent by the Mayor, Prince Colonna:—

The cordial welcome and the exquisitely kind thought of your Excellency towards our city is particularly dear and agreeable to my fellow-citizens and I return your affectionate salute. I desire to assure the Prime Minister of the noble British land, our sure and loyal Ally, of all the lively sympathy which in his short visit he has been able to excite in the hearts of Romans towards his person.

MR. ASQUITH IN THE WAR-ZONE.

At 9.30 on Monday morning Mr. Asquith arrived in the war-zone, where he was given an enthusiastic welcome. Generals Brusati and Porro met him at the station and conducted him to the King, who gave a luncheon in his honour. Mr. Asquith afterwards left for the front, passing through towns and villages all decorated with Italian and English flags. He was frequently recognised and greeted with cheers by the inhabitants. At the front the King was able to point to the success his troops were having in smashing their way through the

immensely strong works of the enemy, particularly in the region of the Carnic Alps and of the Isonzo.

On Tuesday Mr. Asquith lunched with Generals Cadorna and Porro, who subsequently accompanied him to the station.

The train which took Mr. Asquith back to Paris made a halt of several minutes at Milan, where a large number of people had gathered at the station to welcome him. Among them were several prominent English residents of Milan, to one of whom, Mrs. Waterman, Mr. Asquith gave his impressions of the Italian front :—

“I have been to see the Italian front. Without doubt it is the most difficult of all the fronts in this war. It is impossible to form any conception of the difficulty without having seen with one’s own eyes. What the Italians have accomplished is marvellous, marvellous, marvellous !”

A representative of the newspaper “Secolo” was afterwards privileged to hold a few minutes’ conversation with Mr. Asquith, who asked him to convey the following message to the people of Italy :—

In the name of my august Sovereign, the King of England, and in the name of the English people, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the manifestations of sympathy and brotherhood which have been accorded me.

The friendship of the Italian people has always been very dear to me. This friendship has to-day ripened into an alliance, and we are proud of our Allies.

I come straight from the front, where I have been able to see with my own eyes, and to appreciate the almost insurmountable difficulties, against which with incomparable valour and magnificent tenacity the Italian army is struggling gloriously and successfully.

I take my leave from you with a greatly strengthened confidence, that victory for Italy and for her Allies is henceforward certain.

Long live the King ! Long live the Army ! Long live Italy !

Before leaving Italy Mr. Asquith sent a telegram to General Cadorna :—

At the moment of leaving the generous soil of Italy I feel the desire to express to you my thanks for your hospitality and also my admiration for the gallant soldiers fighting under a worthy leader for the sacred cause of humanity. I beg you to be the interpreter of my respectful thanks and homage to the first soldier of Italy, your august Sovereign.

IMPRESSION IN ITALY.

There can be no doubt that Mr. Asquith's visit to Italy caused the greatest satisfaction. At every public appearance he was recognised and enthusiastically cheered by the citizens of Rome, and the eloquent speeches made in his honour accurately interpreted the general feeling. During a stay of only a very few days he succeeded in gaining the affection of the Italian people, and it is said that the demonstration which was held just prior to his departure for the front was only equalled in fervour and

enthusiasm by the Interventionist manifestations of last spring.

Moreover, there was obviously something deeper than mere surface emotion on the part of the crowd. In intellectual and political circles alike Mr. Asquith's visit was hailed with as much pleasure and satisfaction.

He came as a representative of a great, allied people, standing in the forefront of an unparalleled struggle for the re-establishment of international justice and morality, and to all classes in Italy his coming seemed to symbolise fresh resolve and determination. This was apparent in all the addresses delivered as it was in the numerous eulogistic press comments on Mr. Asquith's principal speeches. The following extracts from a long and highly significant article in the "Corriere della Sera" for April 3rd are representative of the sentiments expressed in Italian papers generally, and they undoubtedly give a faithful interpretation of Italian opinion on the subject of Anglo-Italian relations—relations which Mr. Asquith's visit has done so much to strengthen and draw even closer than before :—

Received on his arrival with a genuine display of sympathy, saluted on departing by a fervent demonstration of popular enthusiasm, Mr. Asquith will take back to London from his stay in the Italian capital, and from his visit to the King and to the fighting Army this fundamental impression : that the ancient Anglo-Italian friendship is an emotional reality, an affection

which has, according to his own felicitous expression, become a second nature in our soul ; that it is an understanding fully responsive to the demands of our political intellect ; that, in effect, it forms the ancient historical foundation, still resistant to all insidious action, on which can be solidly established, both during and after the War, the relations between the two nations, joined as they are by so many recent and traditional bonds of union.

The visit of the English Premier will have served, we do not doubt, to clarify and to facilitate the solution of the particular problems which more especially interest the two countries ; but it has above all served to bring about a rapprochement of their souls, and from this rapprochement there arise encouraging reasons for believing in the possibility and the utility of a permanent collaboration between these two liberal European nations.

At the Parliamentary Banquet to-day Mr. Asquith uttered opportune words which correspond to and fully justified our expectations. "We have to work in concert," he said, "not only in the battlefield, not only on the high seas, not only in the air above and under the waters, but also in the not less essential domain of industry, of transport, of finance." These were opportune words which, although they form a mere parenthesis in a speech which dealt in more lofty accents with matters more essential, are yet supremely opportune, because they prove in the mind of the English Minister the conviction of the utility of surmounting in a manner suited to the varied circumstances of the two countries, those obstacles which spring from the exceptional economic situation of the world during the War.

These ideas were nobly expressed by Mr. Asquith in the speeches which he delivered during his stay in Rome. We ought to be grateful to Mr. Asquith for having encouraged us, and for having taken us so often into the realm of great ideals and of higher moral values. As men do not live by bread alone in their daily lives, so peoples do not live by battles and politics alone in the exceptional time of War. It is necessary

that from the depths of their souls there should be raised now and then a voice expressing those supreme causes for which men are fighting and dying. . . .

Mr. Asquith has often appealed to those supreme ideals and Signor Salandra has to-day most fittingly conveyed a greeting to the British Prime Minister, who must have felt on hearing it that Italy is making a noble response to the appeal of noble causes, and that she finds herself in an intimate communion of spirit with England in her judgment of the origins, needs and ends of the great War. This is a war of defence on the part of civilization against the premeditated aggression of the Central Empires, a war which England and Italy sought to prevent by combining their efforts in the hour of supreme decisions, but one which they will conduct with tenacity, so long as the just cause is not triumphant. This was clearly stated by Signor Salandra, who at the same time recalled the great figures of our Resurrection and the chief representatives of English Liberalism—records which constitute an indestructible bond between the two peoples—and concluded by affirming the existence of an indissoluble bond of interests, forces and ideals between Italy and England.

Mr. Asquith, who declared yesterday to the representatives of the Press that for Englishmen it would have been a matter of regret, and more than regret, if they had not found themselves side by side with the Italians in this epic struggle, has to-day happily formulated the ideas which lie at the foundation of the life of the two peoples: hatred of tyranny, love of justice, the passion for liberty, a sense of the equality of all men before the law, free opinion, free speech. And from these common ideas he deduces their alliance in support of the cause of small weak states, of respect for treaties and for public law, and of resolute resistance to the supremacy of brute force. These ideas, these formulas, are not vain, sterile metaphysics; they are symbols of human reality, they are manifestations of a will, fertile creator of new deeds, they are schemes big with history and productive of new history.

The speech which Mr. Asquith delivered yesterday in the Capitol was not made up of empty metaphysical ideas,

since it contained the clear consciousness of a world and of a civilization and in it likewise could be perceived the tenacious will which this world and this civilization have to live and to assert themselves in the future. There is an ancient world of Roman Christian civilization to which also Germany in the past gave essential elements, but against which an incorrigible race-instinct has sometimes revolted and revolts to-day with unspeakable violence—an instinct which is anarchical and tyrannical at the same time. Now in the face of unparalleled cunning, in the face of tremendous threats, the ancient civilization of the West has regained all her consciousness of herself, has gathered all her forces, and has recognised in the genius of Rome her origin and her law: “that law”—to use the lofty words spoken in the Capitol yesterday by Mr. Asquith—“which, slowly developing and maturing in the long process of years, triumphed over barbarous instincts and practice and has been until now accepted and loyally observed by peoples of every blood and race, to the world’s infinite gain.”

For this law and against the Germanic revolt men will fight and die to-day and conquer to-morrow; this is solemnly declared by an English Minister in Rome, this was said yesterday by a French Minister in Paris. It is the first and it will remain the greatest prize which Italy will have drawn from the great sacrifice of the War. Yesterday, held fast in a bond constructed by untiring diplomacy, her spirit was involved daily in a petty struggle, her position indeed was not without advantage, only without honour; to-day, in the fervour of an alliance corresponding to her ideals as to her destinies, she welcomes the homage of those free, strong peoples, who toil for it with growing strength and choose in the greatness of her past the symbol of their common cause.

Sir Joseph Causton & Sons, Ltd., London

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