

of nature that have caused the world to blush, were introduced into society, Archbishop della Chiesa was the first prelate in Europe to express his detestation, and his merciless invectives had a crushing effect throughout his diocese.

When the Archbishop of Bologna was created a Cardinal last May, little he thought he would be wearing the tiara within six months, and much less did it strike his devoted flock that he would soon leave them to take charge of the greater flock, the faithful of the world. But the Hand of the Most High had come on him, and when the balloting announced his return he immediately accepted the responsibility of Supreme Pontiff, choosing Benedict XV. as title.

Never did a Pope ascend the Pontifical Throne under such extreme circumstances. The sad sigh[†] before his eyes must weigh heavily on his loving heart. Pius X. was overcome with grief, and will Benedict XV. be able to bear the burden of sorrow? Surveying the world as it stands, what does he see? "The saddest and most mournful spectacle of which there is any on record." The civilized world is shaken to its nethermost foundations. The human race is literally drenched with blood. Millions of Catholics are being daily hurled against one another, and even the priest of God does not escape the horror of horrors, for thousands of them have been called to bear the armour and the rifle in the satanic desire of their rulers for world-domain. And as Christ came on earth to redeem all mankind, the millions outside the fold are just as dear to the Holy Pontiff—the children of every nation, colour and climate who look to Christendom for light and leading in the march of progress, the rule of justice, and the light of freedom.

But, even though Benedict came to the throne under such tragical circumstances, already events portend a glorious reign. Nations that for centuries have trod in darkness are again beginning to look to the Holy See for light and peace. England, that for four hundred years despised the Vatican, has despatched her ambassador to Rome; and Japan, that never knew the voice of Peter, has also sent her representative. And even though the belligerents did not accept Benedict's proposal for a truce at Christmas, cordiality and good will towards the Vicar of Christ was everywhere displayed. His proposal to exchange prisoners incapacitated for further fighting has already been agreed to by Germany and