

The Herald

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ITALY ENTERS THE FIGHT

The European turmoil still grows. Italy has at last declared war against Austria and Germany has declared war against Italy.

Italy's object in taking part in the European struggle is from a double desire—that of gain and of revenge. Whether she will attain her first desire or achieve the latter object remains to be told when peace again visits Europe, and whether the attainment is worth the sacrifice that will be made must be determined by future results. Italy appears to have gone war-mad, and notwithstanding her close proximity to the dread and horrors of war, its awful sacrifice of life, and waste of money, time and the destruction of property, the anguish and intense suffering involved, nothing would suffice to appease the desire of her citizenship but to get into the midst of the huge fracas.

Distance lends enchantment to the horrid butcheries and suffering of war, and we are apt to read of the struggle, and feel even a degree of solace when heavy reverse has come to those whom we may have wished to suffer defeat, but we should study the humane side of the problem. It is true that they are foreigners, that comparatively few of those engaged speak our language, no difference from what side we claim our descent, but remember that they are all human, no matter what their nationality, and were our environment such that we came into close touch with any of them, except perhaps the Turk, we would find that in their characters which we would admire and love. And even in the Turk, barring his fanaticism on his religion, there must abide many of the characteristics that make for the better among all civilized nations.

"War is hell" and is the result of sin, wrong doing, and Peace, abiding Peace, resplendent in her robe of beauty, will not settle down over the world unless the nations become righteous—free from wrong doing.

Debt Tendency Must Be Checked

The tendency throughout the country is clear. The American people are inclined to plunge deeper and deeper into debt. This trait, made conspicuous from the census bureau, is sure to be reflected in higher taxes. The quicker the people, as a whole, come to realize what they are doing, the better for the present generation and for posterity.

The Washington legislature has submitted a constitutional amendment to limit debt and to limit franchise at elections to those paying taxes.

In Oregon a law has been passed limiting annual increase

in tax levies to six per cent, except by special vote of the people.

A special bulletin of the U. S. census bureau shows that in 1915 the cities, villages, towns, school districts, townships, drainage, irrigation and levy districts, poor districts, road districts and all other minor divisions having power to incur debt, reported a new indebtedness of \$3,475,954,353—an increase of \$1,845,884,743, or 113.2 per cent, over the total for 1902. A small part of the increase is doubtless due to a more complete canvass in the latter year.

Italy To The Fray

Italy has decided to step into the thick of it. Unquestionably it will be the verdict of the world that the Italian government might just as well have avoided war, had the temper of the Italian people permitted it.

Obviously it is a case of war fever with the Italians, and that fever was heightened by proximity to the great conflict—not only in the matter of locality, but in national ambition and prejudices.

It was easy to arouse the fighting spirit in Italy against the Austrian. Not a generation has passed since an Austrian Metternich defeated Italian hopes of unity under a republican form of government. Men are living who were active followers of Mazzini, and who fought with Garibaldi in the city of Rome. To those followers of patriot heroes and to their descendants Austria has existed and still exists as the arch enemy of all that is Italian. The seed that could readily ripen into war against Austria was sown by Austrian absolutism years ago.

True, Italy is not voluntarily seeking combat because of these traditional hatreds, but they serve as the motive power by which Italian diplomacy and statesmanship proposes to attain to their ambitions. They were dormant in the Italian mind, and now they give impulse, by which the Italian government hopes to improve the opportunity for its aggrandizement that presents.

The most palpable conclusion as to result is, that Italy's entrance into the conflict will darken Austro-German prospects. There can be no doubt that the most strenuous effort and astute persuasion were employed by German diplomats to avoid this conclusion. It may be said that had Germany labored half so earnestly with Austria in the latter days of August of last year, the fairest portions of Europe would not since have been devastated by war.

It is futile to indulge in predictions, any further than to say that when the end comes Italy's participation will add one more factor to the problem of settlement.—Telegram.

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