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ITALY HAS PROBLEMS

ECONOMIC STRESS CAUSED THE RECENT TROUBLES.

Just at the Present Time Political Considerations Are in the Background — Some of the History Back of the Development of Modern Italy Since the Revolution of 1848.

ITALY, in the midst of another of her recurrent crises, this one perhaps the most significant of them all, is a good example of the eternal discontent, divine or diabolical, which marks the human race.

For more than a century, Italy has been in successive periods of transition, but the periods are so sharply marked in contrast as to make an illuminating commentary on the trend of modern thought and action.

From early in the nineteenth century until 1870, the struggle was for political liberty. Since 1870, the struggle has been for economic liberty.

To-day's "revolution" is not in the political field, except in the latter's economic aspects. Control of industry and ownership of property are the new points of issue.

All over the world, a similar development is taking place. In Italy the movement can be studied graphically. It can also be studied not as a remote and theoretical phenomenon, but as a fundamental and practical conflict within the borders of a state immediately adjacent to France and thus near, geographically, to us all.

Great names securely lodged in history, emerge from the first phase of modern Italian aspiration, from 1800 to 1870—names like Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi. From different angles, these leaders worked for Italy, either to establish her independence of foreign domination or to secure freedom from irresponsible if petty, tyrants at home.

During the French revolution, French armies unseated many of the despots in control of the individual Italian states, giving promise both of greater liberty and of union for Italy.

The Congress of Vienna, however (that counterpart, in comparative chronology at least, of the Peace Conference at Versailles), carried its policy of "reaction" into Italy, re-dividing the country into separate states ruled by autocratic princes. Uprising followed uprising, now successful, now defeated—all political in their aims.

The Carbonari formed themselves, in the early twenties, into a secret society, whose aim was to unify Italy under constitutional government. Their methods were conspiracy, assassination and insurrection.

Mazzini, a young Italian, belonging to a prominent family, of Genoa, and a graduate in law, showed his passion against the political subordination of his people, by wearing mourning in public places. He joined the Carbonari, but, disagreeing with their main policy of conspiracy and assassination, founded a new society, "Young Italy." Men dedicated to liberate their country from foreign and domestic tyrants and to establish a united Italian republic on a democratic basis.

The revolution of 1848 was followed by another period of reaction. Then came Cavour, Prime Minister of Sardinia, an exponent of Parliamentary Government under a monarchy.

"Parliamentary government," he said, "like other governments has its inconveniences, it is better than all the others. I may get impatient at certain oppositions and repel them vigorously; and then, on thinking it over, I congratulate myself on these oppositions because they force me to explain my ideas better and to redouble my efforts to win over public opinion. Believe me, the worst of Chambers is still preferable to the most brilliant of anti-Chambers."

After a perpetual see-saw of success and failure, a united, politically democratic Italy did arrive in 1861, confirmed more fully in 1870, when the Romans decided to join, thus completing the union.

It is "a representative monarchical government," with King, Senate and Chamber of Deputies.

The year 1870, however, marking constitutional government for a completely united Italy, did not bring the millennium. Almost at once, the emphasis began to shift to economic problems. That these are still unsolved is shown by a recent opinion that the position of the industrial worker in Italy is worse than that of any other western nation, except Spain. It is also shown by recent events.

As for politics, Prof. Schapiro says, "Italian politics since 1870 are a sorry tale of parliamentary intrigue, office-seeking and political corruption."

In 1898, there was an insurrection of workmen in Milan. The streets were barricaded and fighting occurred.

In 1903, Giolitti became Premier. It is this same man, now nearly 80 years old, who is Premier to-day. As at present, his attitude then towards the workmen was conciliatory, and, as at present so far, he declared the Government would remain neutral in the struggle between capital and labor.

These tactics did not save him from trouble twenty years ago, nor to-day. There was an epidemic of strikes from 1903 to 1905, including a general strike tying up the whole country.

In 1912, the basis of the franchise was widely extended, but the serious general strike in 1914 showed once more that the trouble was economic rather than political.

Stockholm, Christiania, Berlin and London, in the order named, have the lowest death rates among the European cities.

Oh!

"That man is always talking about sylvan glades, rustic views, an earthly paradise, golden gardens and balmy breezes," said the Thin Man. "Is he a poet?"
"New," replied the Fat Man. "He's a real estate man from California, and he can't get out of the habit."

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Although it means hardship to many, it is a wholesome process. Normal levels are coming again.

Do not lose heart. The present may be dark, but the future is bright. Prosperity will return. Canadian resources and Canadian ingenuity are equal to it.

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