

IF ITALY SHOULD WAR ON AUSTRIA

New Theatres of Conflict on Land and Sea
Would Engage Interest of Military Observers—Strategical Geography of Frontiers.

New problems of military and naval strategy and new theatres of war by land and sea will engage observers of the European war if Italy's irredentists shall lead the nation into conflict with Austria. The province of Trentino, the peninsula of Istria, the Dalmatian islands, and the upper Adriatic will share in military interest with Flanders, Alsace, Poland, and the North Sea. Considerations that urge Italy toward war against Austria—the wish of the irredentists to free Italians living under the Austrian rule in the provinces, and a human, if apparently mercenary, eagerness for territorial expansion, for complete control of the Adriatic—have been thoroughly set forth in the accounts of Prince von Below's efforts in Rome. If armed conflict comes, what will be the new theatres of war?

What disposition would be made of the 1,000,000 men that Italy could be expected to add shortly to the Allies' strength could only be the subject of conjecture. Italy has had months in which to perfect war plans as for the disposition of troops. If an impasse were created for the Austrian or German invader in the Alpine approaches to Italy, and a moderate-sized army placed on the eastern frontier along the valley of the Isonzo to check a very improbable Austrian offensive at that point, a large body of Italian troops would be available where they would do the cause of the Allies most good.

Italy's War Equipment

But this is unlikely. The Italian quarrel is not primarily with Germany, and better results could be had from pitting Italian troops against Austrians in an offensive movement in the Istrian littoral. Or, it is conceivable that the Italian troops might be used to advantage in the campaign against Turkey, perhaps in the efforts directed against Constantinople, for the Turks are reported to have massed an army of 200,000 men on the Gallipoli peninsula to defend the approach to Constantinople. A Franco-British expeditionary force is expected to take the field against them. Two or three hundred thousand Italian troops, or half that many, would simplify enormously the problem of the Allies.

Current references multiply the number of Italy's available troops. In times of peace her standing army numbers about 250,000. Her first aid second reserves, which ought to be in the way of mobilizing rapidly, would bring this figure to something over a million. Back of that Italy's military resources must be guessed at. Eventually her so-called territorial militia might be whipped into shape, so that nearly a million more soldiers are to be regarded as a potentiality. For these latter the only arms available probably would be those several hundred thousand old-style Vetterli rifles which Huerta endeavored to buy for Mexico. The infantry of the line are armed with a 6.5 millimetre Mannlicher Carcano magazine rifle, and the field artillery is in process of being equipped with the 75 millimetre De Port gun. In siege guns, the Italians are strong. Tests made during the present month with their new 305 millimetre siege cannon are said to have demonstrated their superiority to the famous Austrian gun of like size. A number of these guns fresh from the trials at Spezia are ready to be put into commission.

The character of the frontier which Austria presents to Italy severely limits the field of military operations, if, indeed, it does not insure from the outset a deadlock except along the valley of the Isonzo. The ordinary lines of communication between Italy and Austria are through Alpine passes, which admit of defence by hundreds of troops against armies. Tunnels and bridges once dynamited would check an invasion for months. The railroad route from Verona to Trent, thence north through the Tyrol by the Brenner to Innsbruck, is the only practicable one for an invading army in either direction. Along this line the Austrians have many defences. Cement platforms at commanding positions are even now being utilized in mounting heavy guns. In addition masked batteries are being put in place to oppose every foot of an advance up steep dingles. Squads of Russian prisoners and Galician refugees are reported to be at work already digging trenches in the Trentino district, where the Italian offensive is expected.

This Trentino approach is also that along which Italy fears a sudden attack by a German force upon one of her rich cities of the north. For none of the other familiar ways into Italy are open. The road from Turin to Paris by the St. Cenis tunnel leads directly into French territory. The Simplon tunnel route from Milan through the Alps crosses Switzerland as does the St. Gothard route from Milan to Lucerne, and the preparations made by the determined Swiss to maintain their neutrality effectively bar that way. The Tivino, the valley through which the last route passes and which was so often the highway of opposing armies in the Italian wars, is not likely to have a place in the record of the impending struggle.

To block the Trentino route Italy would be able to mass what troops she has mobilized with little delay, and she would be certain to occupy the narrow mountain passes as her first move. For, once the Italian frontier is reached by an invader, the defences

of the weakest. True, there are fortifications at Casale, an important railroad junction; at Piacenza, also a railway centre, and the largest military depot in Italy; at Venice and at Alessandria. There are defences of a sort at Verona and Mantua—which, with Peschiera and Legnano, formed the old Austrian quadrilateral used to such good purpose by Radetzky in 1848—and the basin of the Po is studied with fortified places. But as the commission of 1902 reported, these defences are very far from being modern or adequate.

On the eastern frontier, Austria might force the fighting, where she of a mind to anticipate Italy's first move. For the two or three railroad arteries leading from the heart of Austria and Hungary emerge from mountain defiles upon the low coast lands well within the boundaries of the dual monarchy. These plans offer a suitable theatre in which to assemble an army quickly, and Italy has no defences on the artificial boundary line running down to the sea from the Julian Alps. This very point might well be selected by Italy for a forward movement. Railroads of northern Italy are numerous enough for a rapid concentration of troops there by roads crossing the frontier from Udine and S. Giorgio into the district about Trieste. This movement could be expedited by use of the very fair high roads leading into the Austrian peninsula. With the co-operation of an Italian fleet this form of attack by Italy, especially were it prompt enough to cut off the defenders' communications in the rear, might well put the whole Istrian promontory into the hands of the invaders. Pola, however, is strongly fortified against land attack.

One should not be misled by the existence of several railway lines from this quarter leading to Vienna and Budapest into believing that an Italian army could seriously threaten those cities, quite unfortified as they are. It is true that the distance from Venice to Salzburg via Val-lach is only 300 miles, or twelve hours by express, and that Vienna itself is but 400 miles away, or a matter of fifteen hours. The Taurin railway, opened in 1909, runs trains between Berlin and Trieste in twenty-two hours, and the Karawanken railway, opened in 1906, between Vienna and Trieste, in eleven hours. The Hungarian railway covers the distance from Flume to Budapest via Agram in about thirteen hours. But, notwithstanding these communications, so completely do the mountains shut off the Austrian and Hungarian interiors that invaders could be easily thwarted.

Of the character of these approaches it may be noted that on the Karawanken line 47 tunnels and 727 bridges, 50 of them of good size, are encountered between Trieste and Klagenfurt. Only about fifty miles out of Trieste, the railway enters the gorge of the Isonzo, after crossing that river on a stone bridge 270 feet long, 118 feet high, with a central arch 280 feet in width. This gorge extends for miles necessitating two tunnels and two viaducts in its course. The road finally leaves it by a steep ascent of the right bank through a series of tunnels. Not satisfied with these natural impediments to a hostile army the Austrians have fortified Malborghet Pass and other points farther along the roads into Carinthia.

Italian and Austrian Navies. The primary effect of a belligerent attitude on the part of Italy would undoubtedly be felt at sea. The powerful Italian fleet now assembled at Taranto, near the heel of the Italian "boot" would have two alternatives. It could join the allied squadrons now attempting to force the arduous and capture Constantinople, or it might combine with those which have the Austrians bottled up in the Adriatic, and begin aggressive measures against Pola, Trieste, or Flume.

Italy has witnessed since the war with Turkey, and the struggle in the Balkans, a great expansion of her navy. The first Mediterranean Power to take up construction of Dreadnoughts, ship for ship, she may be reckoned today a stronger naval power than Austria. Italy is credited with

fifteen effective battleships built and building, against thirteen for Austria. In cruisers she is twice as strong, a superiority she maintains in destroyers, torpedo boats, and submarines, although it should be noted that Austria will have a slight advantage in torpedo boats when her immediate building programme is carried out.

The Italian fleet is normally divided into six commands, with bases at Spezia, Naples, Venice and Taranto. Each has a government dockyard. Maddalena, a naval station in the group of fortified islands north of Sardinia, is also a base. The sixth command is known as the Mediterranean fleet. There is a building yard at Castellamare, and to strengthen Italy's resources on the Adriatic, Brindisi was a few years ago made the base of the torpedo flotilla, while Ancona was selected as an additional naval base. Other fortified points on the Italian coast line, which measures nearly 3,000 miles exclusive of Sardinia, Elba, and other small islands, are Vado, Genoa, Monte Argentario, Gaeta, and the Straits of Messina.

Italy's own facilities for warship and armament construction are good. The Ansaldo Company, which is consolidated with the British firm of Armstrong, Whitworth & Company, has works near Genoa, and a shipyard at Sestri Ponente. The Orlando and Vickers-Terni concerns have shipyards respectively, at La Spezia and Leghorn, and the latter has gun and steel works at Terni. Various companies manufacture torpedo craft at Naples.

Austria's Naval Defence

Of most interest, however, if Italy espouses the cause of the Allies are Austria's naval defences. For so completely do the French and English squadrons control the Mediterranean that Austria can never hope to do more than keep her ships within the protection of her fortifications and defend her naval arsenals as best she may. For such a contingency, the Austrian government, in spite of lean years and curtailed navy appropriations, has made effective preparations.

Austria has five Dreadnoughts and she will add another with the completion of the Szent Istvan, launched in January 1914. These vessels with several of the pre-Dreadnought type, and a few antiquated cruisers—a class of war ship of which, it appears Austria has never felt the need—are in the upper Adriatic, presumably bottled up in the vicinity of Pola, if not within the shelter of its fortifications. Since war began, Austria has lost two vessels to the French, a squadron which dogged them to their retreat: the Zrinyi, a battleship carrying four twelve-inch guns, and the Zenta, a torpedo cruiser. Austria's weakness in cruisers and destroyers is offset in some degree by torpedo boats of which class she has fifty-eight built, and twenty-seven building. It would seem that she relies particularly on these little craft and submarines of which she has ten, and is building four, for gun and steel work defensive tactics in the narrow waters of the upper Adriatic. Air craft are also being utilized as fleet auxiliaries in scouting and mine-laying.

Pola, is the key to the Austrian defence on the sea. There is a coaling base at Tvedo, on Cattaro Bay; Santa Caterina Island is a small coastwise steamer. A railroad connection between Pola and Trieste cuts this time down almost one-half. These two seaports are the windows of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and almost as indispensable to her ally Germany. For the dual monarchy to relinquish them, would mean signing its death warrant.

The Austrians have, therefore, done wonders for Pola since it became their chief base in 1848. And while few military secrets are better guarded than Austria's frontier defences, it may be said that with the assistance of submarines and aircraft, Pola is virtually impregnable. Its commodious harbor, almost land-locked, has been enlarged so that it easily contains the entire Austrian fleet. It is divided into two basins by a cabin of small islands. The entrance is strongly defended, and an extensive system of fortifications on the hills enclosing the harbor insure complete protection. There is a good roadstead in the large channel of Passana, which separates the mainland from the Brionian Islands. The marine arsenal of Pola is a vast establishment with all the requisites for a large fleet. Artillery laboratories and powder magazines are situated on the north shore, and behind the arsenal is San Policarpo, with huge barracks and hospitals. Trieste, eighty-six miles northeast

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Chatham, Ont., April 3rd, 1913. "Some two years ago I was a great sufferer from indigestion. One day my eye caught a billboard of 'Fruit-a-tives' and I said to myself 'If Fruit-a-tives will build me up like that, it is good enough for me.' I bought some. After taking these wonderful tablets for only three weeks, I found myself wonderfully improved. In a short time longer, I cured myself entirely. My case was no light one, either. Gas would often form in my stomach and I was in daily fear that it would get around my heart and kill me. 'Fruit-a-tives' is the only remedy for indigestion."

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along the coast line, is the modern jewel of the Adriatic, long coveted by Italy. Trieste now all but monopolizes the trade of that sea. Vast sums spent recently on harbor improvement, and the completion of the railway over the Taurin Mountains providing a greatly shortened trade route, have brought this about. That she was once a part of Venetian territory is a thing Italians have never forgotten, nor can

they forget that 77 per cent. of her population of 190,000 is Italian in tongue and blood. Trieste's shipyards are the largest in the Empire, and are fitted for the construction of warships. If Italy aided by the Allied fleet attempts an offensive upon this great storehouse of Austria, it will not be the first time she has attempted to coerce Austria by a demonstration of that port. An Italian blockade was maintained there from May until August, 1848.

With Flume the situation is similar. It is a royal free town, with a good trade, and a long history as a war port. Geographically it is part of Croatia, but has been a part of Hungary since 1870. Its transportation connections are good. The great Maria Louisa Road to Karistadt was built through the mountain hinterland in 1809, and two railways were opened in 1873—the Hungarian State Railway to Kronstadt, and a branch from the railway from Vienna to Trieste. The latter city is seventy miles by rail from Flume. About one-half of Flume's population of 40,000 is Italian.

The harbor of Flume has been improved since 1902 by construction of a mole and the enlargement of quays and breakwaters. One of its industrial establishments is the Whitehead torpedo factory, and the Danubius Ship-building Company, where two cruisers are now being built. Another cruiser is under construction at the Cantieri Navale Yard at Montefalcone.

While these three arsenals and storehouses of the dual monarchy will undoubtedly be the chief objectives in any Italian naval campaign, they will be able to check for a considerable time any assault from the sea. It is worth noting, however, that elsewhere on the Dalmatian coast, Austria's enemies would be able to gain a foothold with comparative ease, once

their attention were seriously directed to the task. All of the Dalmatian islands to which Italy lays direct claim would prove easy prey. Even Ragusa, almost at the extremity of the Dalmatian coast line which has only been longed to Austria since 1814, and was before that for centuries an independent republic under the protection of Venice and later of Hungary and Turkey, could offer little resistance despite the fact that it is the headquarters of the Sixteenth army corps.

A GENEROUS DONATION.

Acadia Bulletin, Wolfville, N. S.: At the last meeting of the Board of Governors, while discussing plans for rebuilding, the Board was much encouraged by a voluntary offer of D. C. Clark, of St. John, to give \$3,000 toward new buildings. His gift was very opportune, and much appreciated.

MAY LOSE A LEG.

Hannes Kolehmainen of Finland, who is considered the greatest distance runner in the world, is in danger of losing a leg, due to blood-poisoning. The trouble started with a boil between the toes, which Kolehmainen tried to doctor himself. Two weeks ago an infection set in. The Finn's leg is swollen to the hip and he is in great pain.

At his home in South Brooklyn yesterday it was said that he is suffering from a bad case of blood-poisoning and that an operation was necessary.

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fered with what three doctors called psoriasis. They could not help me, and one of them told me if anyone offered to guarantee a cure for \$50.00 to keep my money, I would not be cured. The disease spread all over me, even on my face and head, and the itching and burning was hard to bear. I used eight boxes of Dr. Chase's Ointment, and I am glad to say I am entirely cured, and a sign of a sore to be seen. I can hardly praise this ointment enough."

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