

Italians having a goodly admixture of Germanic blood, cannot be classed among these. One of the typical crimes of Latin Italians, rarely found among other people, is the Black Hand—a modernized brigandage.

The story of the dying Italian officer told by Professor Buonaiuti is beautiful, but it is not new. Some time ago I saw in a German paper the same words attributed to a German *Landwehrmann*, and I fear it will be difficult to decide which of the two reports is original. Perhaps both have been copied from an old story founded on fact, the events of which may have taken place in ancient Greece.

It is a pity, however, that the Italian officer to whom Professor Buonaiuti attributes these sweet words was mistaken on the main point: He did not die for Italy, but for England in whose interest alone Italy joined the Entente. The war was not undertaken for Italy; on the contrary it was an un-Italian war, a war that was against the honor of Italy and also against Italian interests. It served the purpose of helping the Russians in their attacks on Germany and Austria, and of relieving the French and English in their anxiety concerning the outcome of the present war. The heavy sacrifices which the Italians offer now will in no way bring advantage to Italy; on the contrary they involve Italy in great dangers and serve only to impede the success of the Central European powers and afford a temporary advantage to France, Russia and England. But be comforted; to die for Old England is also a consolation. Is not England as good as Italy?

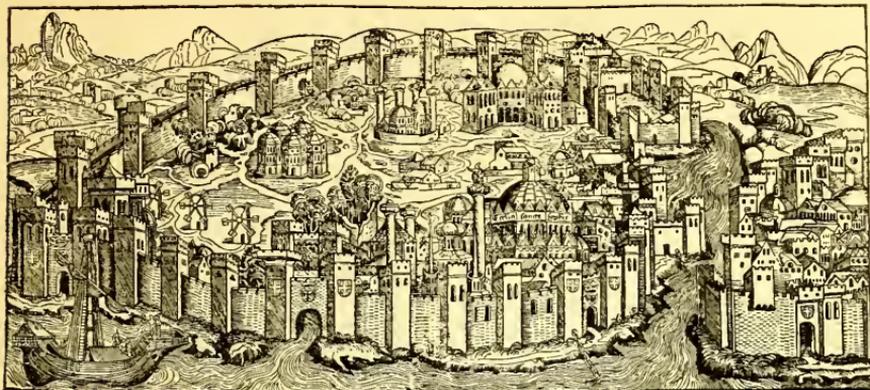
I have been puzzled why the Italians entered upon this war against Austria; now I know they have ancient and sore grievances against the German race, especially the Saxons. Further, I have learned that the Italians are very pacific, in spite of their expedition to Abyssinia and the conquest of Tripoli. But I only wonder whether in a few years they themselves will not adopt my views concerning the present war and criticize those politicians of theirs who have induced them to go to war. *Nous verrons.* EDITOR.

THE SIEGE OF CONSTANTINOPLE IN 1453.

In 1453 Constantinople fell a victim to the besieging Turks and it has remained in Turkish possession down to the present time. The reason why this important city could not be saved is not so much because of the weakness of the Greeks—at that time the rulers of the city—as because of the dissensions which prevailed in the Christian world. Greek Christianity had established itself independently of Rome, and the Roman church insisted on the submission of the patriarch of Constantinople as the condition of protection against the Turk. But the patriarch preferred to submit to the Turks rather than to Rome. He capitulated to Mohammed II on the condition that he should be guaranteed the right of exercising his authority within the domain of the Christian population. Emperor John VIII was ready to surrender the autonomy of the Greek church in exchange for assistance against the Turkish invasion. The proclamation of the union with Rome was solemnly read in Florence on July 6, 1439. The leading men of the orthodox Greek clergy were bitterly opposed to the step and only the Syrian sects of Armenians, Roumanians and Ruthenians who were already allied to Rome accepted it, but Christian Byzantium would rather belong to the infidel Turks than to the

Romans, and so the catastrophe of May 29, 1543, could not be averted in spite of the brave defense of the Greek garrison.

Our frontispiece represents a miniature contained in the book of travels of Bertrandon de la Brocquiere of the fifteenth century and is preserved in



CONSTANTINOPLE.

From Hermann Schedel's *Weltchronik*, Nuremberg, 1493.

the National Library at Paris. It represents the siege of Constantine's city and the firm establishment of the Turkish empire whose fate is now dependent on the outcome of the present war.

AMERICA FIRST.

BY LOUIS DORN.

Last night, at a meeting of Germans, I heard
 The thundering song of the Rhine, and it stirred
 My soul to its depths, so that mightily grew
 The love for the land of my fathers anew;
 And firmly it held me with powerful reins:
 The blood of the Teuton awoke in my veins.

I stepped to the street and I glanced at the stars
 That smile upon peace and that frown upon wars;
 My heart was entranced, for they seemed to bring down
 For Germany's head the victorious crown.
 But, passing along, by a friend I was hailed
 Whose ancestors whilom from Britain had sailed.

He said: "Do you see yonder stars in the sky?
 "As far as they travel, they shine from on high
 "On British domain; and your Germany must
 "Submit to my England and squirm in the dust.
 "Britannia rules o'er the lands far and wide,
 "She's queen of the oceans, we sing it with pride."