

1919-20. Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1920-21. His recollections of that period are given in his book, "Makers of Modern Europe," wherein he defends his own policy. We see him there obsessed by the constant ambition—"Italy a Great Power." He reveals himself as bitterly Anglophobe, bitterly antagonistic to Greece. "It was really not for a Great Power like Italy," he declared, "to have written Agreements to the effect that Greece should 'support' any essential point of Italian interest." \*

We see him at Rapallo, determined "to impose on Belgrade Italy's amplest and most complete geographical frontier line," and to make Italy "the leading power in Central and Oriental Europe." He did "not agree with any of the so-called practical men" who thought that, "cost what it might, we must heal the gaping wound of the Adriatic question."

"Titoni," he says, "had been ready to accept a frontier line only eight kilometres beyond Trieste; Scialoja, to share Istria." His leader, Giolitti, had "never been so optimistic," as to hope for all Sforza succeeded in gaining, which he described gleefully as:—

*"A frontier line more perfect than any under the Roman Empire, the whole of Istria, the islands of Lussin and Cherso, Zara, privileges for the Italians of Dalmatia" (which were not granted to the Slavs in the territories Italy was annexing) "independence to Fiume recognised as a free Italian town contiguous with the Italian boundaries; that is to say, Italian in practice, but with the autonomy traditional in its long history, which was better for its economic life than formal annexation."*

Such untenable expedients were then in the air; the ill-fated Polish Corridor was a contemporary fabrication.

On Zara he was advised to compromise, he says, "from almost all Italian quarters." He tells us: "Signor Mussolini, whom I had received at length at the Foreign Office before my departure for Rapallo, had suggested Zara independent with Italian diplomatic representation."

Now that Fascism has long fallen and Mussolini is consigned to history's chamber of horrors it appears strange that the proud Count Sforza received the Fascist agitator in the exclusive sanctuary of the Foreign Office, but the "Duce" of Fascism was at that time a coadjutor of Prime Minister Giolitti.

Though Giolitti telegraphed to him not to break off negotiations on account of Zara, Sforza was so determined to secure the port for Italy that he told the Yugoslavs his leader entirely supported his demand for it. He negotiated directly with the Yugoslavs in order to present the conference of the Powers with an accomplished fact, because in open conference he would have had to face the hostility of President Wilson, who was strongly opposed to Italian expansion into the Slav territories and along the Slav seaboard

just liberated from Austria, thus imposing a new foreign domination on their populations and a new stranglehold on their commerce.

Count Sforza does not mention that his negotiations concerning Fiume were facilitated by the Italian occupation of it under D'Annunzio, which Giolitti had permitted and allowed to continue until after the signature of the Treaty of Rapallo. Sforza tells, however, that he pressed his demands on the Yugoslavs by urging the danger of a Habsburg restoration and by promises binding only upon his own fugitive Government, which was soon to fall.

We see him as one of the three Allied High Commissioners in Turkey, during the Armistice of 1918, \* with Admiral Calthorpe and Admiral Ahmet, his British and French counterparts, each of the three with his squadron. Sforza played a lone hand, endeavouring to get the whole of Turkey as "a market for Italian industries," and negotiating with the leader of the Senussi, who had fled from Italian rule in Libya, to induce him to acknowledge Italian sovereignty and to bind himself to favour Italy's political and economic interests in Benghazi and Tripoli. Sforza alleges that Mustapha Kemal Ataturk sent him this message:—

*"The maintenance of Turkish domination over the Arabs has been one of the causes of our decline. We do not want to hear any more about them. Let them settle matters with you as they please and as you please."*

Sforza commended Kemal for daring "to renounce the noisy rhetorical legacies which the empty prestige policy of the previous régime had bequeathed to him."—"Makers of Modern Europe," page 365.

Sforza himself lacked that courage when he possessed the power to use it. When he wrote those words he was in what appeared might be a permanent exile from Government Office.

Vast political changes in great countries, prominent actors on the stage of contemporary history were, for him, all subordinate to his conception—Italy a Great Power. He writes of Kemal Ataturk, "The rubbish of most of his reforms," of Sun Yat-Sen, "his mental and cultural immaturity," "his empty Minn." "Makers of Modern Europe," pages 5, 363, 386.

### The Rise of Fascism

Thus decrying the heroes of other lands he endeavours to clothe with a mantle of greatness the old Giolitti, telling us that his leader knew by heart the whole of Dante's *Divina Comedia*, or to discount the view that he was a mere political wire-puller, or a mere administrator. Nevertheless, Sforza makes some startling and terrible admissions concerning Giolitti's sombre political record and his cynical partnership with Fascism:

\* "Makers of Modern Europe," by Count Sforza, page 161.

\* "Makers of Modern Europe," p.p. 348-364.