PREMIER SAYS ITALY WILL KEEP NEUTRAL

But Must Have Her Army and Navy Prepared for Any Eventuality.

ASKS POLITICAL HARMONY

Speech at Opening of Parliament Applauded—Cheers Given by Deputies for "Heroic Belgium."

ROME, Dec. 3.—The Italian Parliament opened today. The sittings of both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate were witnessed by large gatherings of deeply interested spectators. Among those present were ex-Premiers Giolitti, Luzzatti, and Pelloux. The diplomatic tribune was overcrowded.

Premier Salandra made a statement in which he explained the situation of Italy and advised that the country maintain an attitude of loyal, but watchful and armed, neutrality. He was frequently applauded.

When Premier Salandra alluded to what he termed "the just aspirations of Italy" the whole Extreme Left arose, crying "Viva Trent! Viva Triest!" The spectators in the tribunes joined in the demonstration. It was noticed that ex-Premier Giolitti joined with the Deputies in their expressions of approval.

Premier Salandra said in his statement that the European conflict started suddenly, without involving Italy directly, and in spite of her efforts to avert the war for the sake of peace and civilization. A careful study of her treaty obligations and the causes of the conflict convinced the Government that Italy was not called upon to participate, and she accordingly declared her neutrality. In view of the necessity of protecting Italian interests, however, a declaration of neutrality alone was not sufficient to safeguard the country against contingencies which might arise in consequence of such an enormous upheaval.

The political divisions of the Continent of Europe, the Premier pointed out, were perhaps about to be modified. Italy, he added, had vital interests to protect, and justly aspired to maintain her position as a great power and to preserve intact her policies. She must therefore be watchful, powerful, and ready for any eventuality. Thus the supreme task of the Government was to bring the army and navy to a state of preparedness, since when law ceases to govern, the only safety of a nation was in force. Italy had no plans for aggression, but must be ready to protect herself against aggression on the part of others.

The Premier announced that economic conditions had been ameliorated. He asked that the people be ready to make any sacrifice and that conflicting political and economic aspirations be set aside for the time being by all parties, groups, and classes, since at the present time the solidarity of all elements was essential. The Government would consider it entirely improper, he said, to consider solely the policies of any one party, and accordingly requested the patriotic co-operation of all members of Parliament, so that it might possess the strength necessary to accomplish the hard task before it.

As the session was about to adjourn Deputy Gomandini said he wished to ask the Chamber to send greetings to "heroic and unfortunate Belgium." The whole Chamber, including the President, the Ministers, and the people in the tribunes, rose and shouted, "Hurrah, Belgium!"

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