

# 1915. ITALY GOES TO WAR

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May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1915, after ten long months of tension, diplomatic intrigues, political conspiracies and mass demonstrations, Italy entered the war on the side of the Triple Entente. Giorgio Petracchi reconstructs the national background and the international events that led to Italy's painful decision to sever her roots in the Triple Alliance and to go to war against her former allies.

*On Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1915, early in the morning, Giolitti arrived in Rome by train. He had left Turin surrounded by an echo of boos and hisses. In Rome a crowd of nationalists escorted him all along the way that led to his house hissing and shouting: «Down with you Giolitti!». To the king Vittorio Emanuele III Giolitti presented his arguments against the war: the weakness of the national economy, the lack of confidence in the state of the country, the poor training of the army. There was also a fourth argument, which concerned international morality: the worst thing of all was to break the treaty and the given word. «Well - he remarked - if only we had a good name; but we enjoy a really bad reputation, and we will remain dishonoured in history».*

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