

Italy—1915

*Originally published in the June 1915 issue of
The International.*

Tear from thy brow the olive wreath!
Thy laughter sickens to a leer;
Behold thy honor fall beneath
The hammer of the auctioneer.
Now Cain shall claim thee for his own
And Judas keep thee company;
Hell, when the blackest deeds are known,
Shall hail the name of Italy.

These are not Cæsar's Seven Hills,
Nor this the land that Dante trod;
A breed of ingrates plagued with ills,
To mankind traitor and to God.
Vesuvius speak, speak with molten lead;
Roll on her plains thy fiery sea
And, save for her immortal dead,
Wipe out the name of Italy!

Oh, Holy Father, held in gyves,
They stray too far from out thy fold,
These hucksters of their children's lives
Who sold their souls for British gold!
Pray for them, for thy heart is kind;
And where no mortal eye can see
Perhaps God's mercy still may find
A spark of shame in Italy.

She gave her brothers stone for bread;
Now through her towns shall ride the Goth
And ruined valleys drenched with red
Remind her of her broken troth.
The Teuton thundering through the land
Shall set God's prisoned shepherd free,
But thou shalt wear the scarlet band
Of England's strumpet, Italy!