

## THE COST OF THE WAR.

The London Spectator has an interesting article on the probable cost of the war between the French and Prussians, and the relative resources of the combatants to meet it. It says the Italian war of 1859 cost France at least twenty million pounds or \$100,000,000 though it lasted only six weeks. Prussia's 1866 spent nearly as much in three weeks actual campaigning and she was obliged to borrow to keep her treasury. It is estimated that the fighting nations will need about \$500,000,000 a year at least to keep a million men in the field. The Spectator adds: "Both powers are good for many months' war even at the tremendous rate of expenditure involved. There is certainly no doubt about France, in spite of chronic deficit and increasing debt which has been characteristic of the empire. French finance has been dreadfully mismanaged, and the people have heavy taxes to bear from which economy would have saved them; but when all is said, the hard fact remains that there still is capacity in France to bear a heavy additional load. Whatever difficulty there may be in imposing new taxes to pay the interest of fresh debt—and the proposal of M. Hergeis show that a little war taxation is not impossible—the French revenue is elastic, and a few years' natural increase will provide a good deal more interest. To put the annual growth at three quarters of a million only, which is under the mark, the progress of ten years would nearly cover the annual interest of the loans required for a war expenditure of \$200,000,000.

Of course the French government will not be able to borrow all that at four per cent., but the anticipation of another year or two's recovery of revenue would permit the offer of a higher rate. There is this further consideration, that a great war, such as is implied by an expenditure of \$200,000,000 in a few months, would probably leave the combatants in such a state that economy in other expenditures would not be difficult. At present the cost of governing France, apart from the debt and the departmental and local budgets, is something like \$50,000,000 a year; and in England we spend less than \$40,000,000, though all our salaries are on a higher scale. Clearly France need not be undone by an addition of eight or ten millions to the annual interest of its debt, when economy is so practicable and its revenue is so elastic. It is true that after such a war the debt, which is now \$2,000,000,000, would equal or surpass that of England; but France in 1870 is certainly a more powerful State than England was in 1815.

Turning to Prussia—or as we should rather say, Germany—we can see no trace of inability to make an equal effort. The antagonist of France displays a curious equality with it in almost all financial conditions except one, in which it is strikingly superior to France. In population, to begin with, the North German Confederation and the South German States allied with it number about the same as France. The confederation itself includes 30,000,000; Baden, 1,450,000; and Bavaria, 4,300,000. Total, 35,000,000, and the last census of France in 1866 gives exactly the same figure.

In economical advancement the two countries are, moreover, about the same: they are about two-thirds agricultural, and though Germany has more ships, and more coal and manufactures, yet as French agriculture is naturally more productive, the two states may be considered very nearly balanced. The aggregate budgets of Germany, again, approach very closely those of France in bulk. The gross revenue of the Confederation is \$40,000,000, and of the other states \$12,000,000—total, \$52,000,000; which, with the smaller debt of Germany—the one point where Germany is superior—leaves as much as in France for all the purposes of government. Oddly enough, the expenditure on the two armies is about the same. France spends between thirteen and fourteen millions sterling, and Germany between twelve and thirteen millions. A very striking difference, though it should be noted that the French have lately had a great deal of extraordinary expenditure besides. But even if Germany is not so rich as France, her resources are much less pledged. The total debt of the Confederation and South German states is under \$200,000,000, about a third of that of France, so that there is a margin of \$400,000,000 to draw upon before they become as indebted as France now is. It cannot be thought, then, that Germany, any more than France, is financially unfit for the struggle now going on.

**Hogs as Snake Exterminators.**—The Columbus (Ohio) has the following: "A farmer living on the east side of the river, in walking about his place discovered a nest of rattlesnakes in an old log, about which several large pieces of rock lay scattered. Our friend had heard that hogs were death on snakes of all kinds and not caring to attack the nest himself, he determined to try the experiment and see the fight. He accordingly drove several hogs in the vicinity of the nest, and watched the result. The hogs soon seemed to scent the varmints and commenced rooting eagerly about the spot. In an instant half a dozen of the vicious reptiles emerged from their hiding place to attack the intruders, which manifested a zealous disposition to go in. A snake would rear himself to the height of the back of a hog, shake his rattles and plunge his fangs into the animal with lightning-like celerity, and then dart away, pursued by the grunter, who dexterously received the sting upon the fleshy part of the jaw. Time and again this would be repeated, until the hog got his foot upon the snake, when he would deliberately rip Mr. snake in twain, and then devour him. This slaughter continued until all the snakes were disposed of, when the hogs grunted contentedly, and without any sign of being disturbed, waddled off in search of other plunder. The eye-witness to this singular contest, which was not without its exciting features, declares himself convinced that a pig is impervious to the poisonous bite of any kind of serpent.

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