


MARQUIS D'AZEGLIO

 GIUSEPPE MASSIMO TAPARELLI, MARQUIS D'AZEGLIO, a distinguished Italian patriot, statesman, and author, was born of a noble family at Turin, Piedmont, Oct. 24, 1798, and died there Jan. 15, 1866. Early in life a visit to Rome inspired him with a love for art, which he later studied there from 1821-29, and became noted as a landscape-painter. In 1830, he removed to Milan, where he married the daughter of the Italian novelist, Manzoni, and became engrossed in politics and literature, pursuing the latter with the definite hope of being able thereby to further the cause he had dear at heart, that of Italian unity. His historical novel, "Ettore Fieramosca" (1833), obtained considerable popularity, as did also its successor, "Niccolò de' Lapi" (1841). Politically, Azeglio was a constitutional monarchist and disapproved of the plots and conspiracies by which Mazzini and others attempted the freeing of Italy, but which resulted only in increasing the stress of the situation and making more complex the troubles of the time. In 1846, he published "Degli ultimi casi di Romagna" (Of the Last Events in the Romagna), a political treatise in which the papal rule of Gregory XVI was submitted to a scathing criticism and the republican insurrections denounced. After the death of Pope Gregory he was instrumental in persuading Pius IX to adopt a liberal policy. At the battle of Vicenza against the Austrians, in 1848, Azeglio commanded a legion and was severely wounded. In the same year he published "The Austrian Assassinations in Lombardy." During the first Sardinian Parliament he sat as a member of the Chamber of Deputies, and from 1849 to October, 1852, when he was succeeded by Cavour, Azeglio was Prime Minister of Sardinia. At the close of the Austrian War, in 1859, he was appointed general and commissioner-extraordinary for the Roman states. Azeglio was a statesman of the highest type, thoroughly devoted to the best interests of his country, and of undoubted private and public integrity. His writings, in addition to those above mentioned, include "The Court of Rome and the Gospels"; "Political Correspondence" (1866); "My Recollections" (1867), an autobiography; "Letters to My Wife, Luisa Blondel" (1870); "Letters to Giuseppe Torelli" (1870), and sundry other correspondence.

ON PRESENTING THE ESTIMATES FOR THE MINISTRY
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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THE commencement of the general debate on the estimates for foreign affairs appears to me to be not only fitting but an advantageous opportunity for me to explain some notions and principles bearing on general politics

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and upon diplomacy especially. They will not be either new or abstruse principles, for it would not be an easy task to say anything new on such a subject; but I will do my best to propound principles that shall be just and true.

In the times in which we live, I believe it to be sound policy, especially for a government, to establish the true principles on which human society and politics are based. Many persons think—I do not say that there are any such in this house—that political science is very abstruse and very complicated; to me it seems, on the contrary, that it is a very simple art and science, requiring much good faith, much good sense, and even some portion of shrewdness.

Political government founded on justice and good faith has always been the best, and in the long run the most useful. There was a time when much was said of statecraft. All those who have studied history, more especially Italian history and Italian politics, from the sixteenth century downward, will remember how often they have heard State policy talked of as a destiny, a necessity to which everything must yield, even morality.

I do not believe that there are two codes of morality, one for the governors and one for the governed. I do not hold that State policy requires a dispensation from common morality. There was however a time when a tortuous policy, a crafty policy could, at least for the moment, produce some good, and that was when public affairs were settled between a prince and a few ministers; often by a favorite or a mistress. But then the press was weak, the communications few, public opinion was unrepresented.

Yet even then a deceitful policy produced in the long run the very worst consequences. Revolutions, violent changes, evils of all kinds, to which mankind has been exposed, are

found to have mostly originated in bad faith—ancient injustice—iniquities which had too long enjoyed impunity. In our days the press, the various means of communication, the general spirit of inquiry, the liberty of speech, have rendered concealment and statecraft alike impossible.

In our days public opinion has a recognized form, not only in each country, but in the whole of Europe. If I touch public opinion at Turin it vibrates at Edinburgh and Moscow with the rapidity of an electric telegraph; and as concealment is thus out of the question a deceitful policy is equally impossible. However unjust, false, and treacherous individuals may be, they nevertheless trust only to the just and the straightforward; without trust man may tyrannize but not govern.

There is an obscure, I ought to say, terrible problem, which has undoubtedly forced itself on the attention of us all, and which we all have endeavored to solve. This problem is, What will be the future destiny of society? I do not consider myself more capable than others to solve it.

Yet I see but one solution of it. I know not what the future destiny of society may be, but I think that we may venture to affirm that society will find no rest except in an honest government, be its form what it may.

Looking at the primary causes of the decline and fall of empires we always find them, as I have observed a few moments ago, to be some injustice or iniquity of long standing. In modern times the stage is shorter and punishment falls on the head of the guilty with the velocity of steam. I am well aware that the theory of good faith in politics is laughed at by many as a folly. It is not so in this House: but as what I say will not be confined to these walls, there may be persons whom my enforcing the necessity of politi-

cal good faith may remind of the pastoral simplicity of a bucolic.

It does not require great talents or a rare genius for a man or a government, when harassed by truth, by justice, by equity, to avoid the inconvenience by having recourse to a falsehood, to violence, to illegality. No, no! it does not require great talent to act thus: I think, on the contrary, that the test of great ability is to teach us to know how much better it is to sacrifice an immediate advantage in order that we may enjoy the great future advantages which result from an honest and spotless name.

Ancient as well as modern history has hitherto taught us which of the two policies is the best, and this lesson we shall continue to learn as long as we live. Fully convinced of these truths the government has made them the rule of its policy both at home and abroad.

As to home politics, I beg to remind the House that when the present administration was formed, the country, struck by the magnitude of a recent misfortune, uncertain as to the future, agitated by parties, mistrusting them all, could only be settled by confidence and unanimity. The government has endeavored to win the former and to prepare the public mind for the latter. If the ministers have succeeded in this noble aim it is owing to Providence first, next to the good faith of the sovereign, to the prudence of Parliament, to the noble character of the whole nation; Piedmont is traditionally a land of probity and honor and by such virtues kingdoms are always saved.

Let us look about us and we shall find that the vigor and existence of a State has always been in a direct ratio with its morality. An immoral individual may exist—an immoral nation dies. Having established confidence and unanimity,

it was the duty of the government to seek for such improvements as were consistent with the letter and spirit of our constitution—it was its duty to solve the difficult problem of stability united to progress.

It was therefore bound to avoid and restrain extreme opinions. In this arduous undertaking the ministers were guided by justice and impartiality, and thus they hope to have fulfilled one of the highest if not the very highest of duties—that of setting a good example. To explain my meaning I beg to observe that in modern times we have heard a great deal about the rights of the people (something ought perhaps to have been said respecting the people's duties—but this is not the time to speak upon that subject); I have however never heard mentioned one of the rights of the people which seems to me second to none.

I will be the first to proclaim it: it is that a country has a right to a good example on the part of its government. This the ministry have endeavored to set as far as in them lay. All the disorders which befall society are generally the effect of illegalities under some form of injustice, of acts of bad faith. If a government will not be satisfied with what governments generally possess—physical force—but wishes to have the moral force requisite to overcome such disorders, its first care must be to set a good example.

I shall now say a few words on foreign affairs—a topic on which the House will at once perceive how requisite it is that I should exercise some reserve. I can and shall fearlessly say that the government has based its foreign, like its home policy, on justice and good faith.

Paramount to all others is independence, then come national honor and national dignity; and I can assure the House that in all his acts the minister for foreign affairs kept jus-

tice constantly in view. Our good faith we showed in keeping our word, and we shall ever continue to show it thus; for I cannot admit that a nation, any more than an individual, can ever be compelled to take an oath—death ought to be preferred to swearing that which is unjust or which it is felt cannot be observed; but an oath once taken must be kept.

By our following this course, Europe which (it cannot be denied) was prejudiced against us, has become satisfied that we were not a nation of anarchists, but that we desired and knew how to live free and independent. Confidence took the place of mistrust, contempt was changed into respect, and we now perceive that we enjoy throughout Europe the reputation of being an honest nation, entirely adverse to infringing the rights of others, but fully resolved to guard our own even to death.

Our foreign policy is founded on that which is adopted at home; the latter is the firmest support of the former, for there is no firmer support of a foreign policy than the reputation which a country enjoys.

I will now proceed to speak of our diplomacy. Whilst assuring the House that I did all in my power to cause our diplomatic body to follow the principles which I have just laid down, I must hasten to add that its members are too high-minded to be guided by any others. I shall here notice an attack often repeated out of doors, but of which I am not aware whether it will be re-echoed in this House. In party times suspicions are rife: we all know that many of our diplomatists were accused of aversion to the new institutions and to the present policy of the State.

I for one contend that a man of honor can acquiesce in a change of system legally introduced, although it may not be

entirely in accordance with his former opinions. The government endeavors, as it is bound, to heal dissensions. The process of elimination has at all times been a most delicate one.

I may here be allowed to quote the saying of an Italian historian who lived more than five hundred years ago, "Italy has too long been the land of factions and suspicions,"—I mean Dino Compagni. The House need not be reminded that at the beginning of the fourteenth century, when the Bianchi were expelled from Florence, the successful party were seized with the mania which always seizes a triumphant faction,—the mania for elimination; to a certain extent weeding out is absolutely necessary, but this ought not be indulged in to such an extent as to become what I now designate a mania. There were among Dino's party, the Neri, men who were always discovering that some of their own friends—persons in office—were not pure Neri, and wherever they looked they found only persons of the other faction—pure Bianchi. The single-minded historian in his naïve style says, "These persons are unceasingly seeking for Bianchi, as if there were not abundance of them."

A placeman who opposes the government which employs him ought, in my opinion, to be removed; but before removing him, before coming to such extremities, a minister must carefully avoid listening to a party spirit only, instead of following what ought to be his only guide, truth and justice. Let me observe however that the government is responsible for its agents, and I fully and boldly answer for those whom I have the honor to direct. I shall add moreover that when the case has happened that I have felt myself called upon to dismiss a person from office, I have done it; as I shall always do whenever I may think it necessary

for the good of the country, but without being moved by partisanship.

And again, with respect to diplomacy, it is to be observed that for a small State it is much more important to employ distinguished agents than it is for a great power. A great power gives importance to its agent. A diplomatist supported by twenty, thirty, or forty millions of men, be his title ever so low or his person insignificant, is sure of being deferentially listened to, whilst the representative of a small power, to be well received and listened to, must command a certain degree of respect for his person, by his talents, his intellect, his knowledge, and even his means and social position. For this reason the government has especially endeavored to render our diplomacy respected by making a good selection of agents, and we flatter ourselves we have succeeded.

We endeavored to preserve for our diplomacy the distinguished position which it occupied a century ago when Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son: "Wherever you go, inquire after Piedmontese diplomats: they are always persons of distinguished merit."

The government will continue to make efforts in that direction. The instructions given to our agents when they enter upon their missions are to regard first the interests and dignity of their country, and next to support, as far as by the law of nations their duties and powers permit, the government to which they are accredited; to abstain from interfering with, still more from censuring it, or favoring intrigues against it; for there is no action more base and more mean than under the protection of the sacred character of foreign ministers to intrigue against those who receive you: but our diplomacy is, thank God, free from such stain.