Camille Barrere and Franco-Italian Rapprochement: 1898-1902

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CAMILLE BARRÈRE AND
FRANCO-ITALIAN RAPPROCHEMENT: 1898-1902.

By

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Only in recent years have the decades bridging the nineteenth and twentieth centuries been accorded the attention their importance in the historical framework merits. The inadequacy of historical investigation for this period is particularly evident in the area of Franco-Italian relations. Yet, a study of France during the earlier half of her Third Republic reveals that this aspect of French foreign affairs was far from being insignificant. The consequences of a political accord the two nations reached in 1902 were to react favorably for France in the ensuing years and to culminate in ultimate Italian participation as a French, and not German, ally in World War I.

Camille Barrère served as French Ambassador to Rome during the decisive years in which the Franco-Italian rapprochement was realized. Barrère's diplomatic colleagues have generally acknowledged that his role was indispensable in the work of effecting the rapprochement—Paul and Jules Cambon, François Charles-Roux, Léon Noël, to name but a few. As surprisingly few

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1 Pierre Renouvin notes the inadequacy of critical studies in this area in *La Paix armée et la Grande-Guerre, 1871-1919*, Vol. II: L'Epoque contemporaine (1815-1919) (Paris, 1947), pp. 486-95. At the same time, since 1945 a formidable amount of documentary material has become available to the historian on both the French Third Republic and post-Risorgimento Italy.
studies have been devoted to either Barrère or the Franco-
Italian accords he successfully concluded, this dissertation
has examined Franco-Italian rapprochement and the importance of
Barrère's role in effecting its achievement.

The pertinent collections of published diplomatic docu-
ments have been utilized in the study, principally: Documents
diplomatiques français, i documenti diplomatici, La politique
extérieure de l'Allemagne, 1870-1914 and British Documents on
the Origins of the War, 1898-1914. The study draws as well on
unpublished archival material obtained from the Ministère des
Affaires Etrangère in Paris: Papiers Barrère, Papiers Delcassé
and Nouvelle Série, Italie. Several articles published by Bar-
rère himself in Revue de Paris and Revue des Deux Mondes have
been invaluable, as has been the research made available in the
publications of the Italian scholar, Enrico Serra. Serra's
studies, for which he had access to the private Visconti Venosta
and Stucchi-Prinetti archives, permit the documentation of cer-
tain aspects of Franco-Italian relations in this period that
would not otherwise be possible.
VITA

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Miss Burnikel received her early education in the east, her A. B. earned at Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart in Purchase, New York. She then pursued a business career, associated first with Time, Inc., and later with an international management consulting firm. In the latter capacity she was responsible to the corporate president for the administration of the Chicago-based consulting firm's operations.

Deciding then to return to the academic profession, Miss Burnikel pursued her graduate studies at Loyola University in Chicago. She taught while completing the requirements for a graduate degree in history. After receiving her A. M. in 1968, Miss Burnikel was granted Research and Teaching Assistantships at Loyola, where she continued her work for a doctoral degree in history. In 1971 she was awarded a Schmitt Fellowship, which enabled her to complete her dissertation and earn her Ph. D. in 1972.
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CHAPTER I

SETTING THE STAGE

Pierre-Eugène-Camille Barrère, who would represent France in the Italian kingdom as Ambassador to Rome from 1897 to 1924, was born in the town of Charité-sur-Loire on October 10, 1851.1 A grandson of the French Revolutionary leader Bertrand Barrère, his father Pierre was originally from the region of the Pyrenees and had married Agathe Crépin. Camille was the fifth of their six children. Until Louis Napoléon's coup d'état compelled him to seek exile in England, M. Barrère supported his family as director of one of the free secondary schools that were quite numerous in the French provinces in those days.2 Not surprisingly, the

1 Barrère left no personal papers that document his private life. Two volumes by former French diplomats are dedicated to Barrère and his work however: Léon Noël's Camille Barrère, ambassadeur de France (Bourges, 1948) and Jules Laroche's Quinze ans à Rome avec Camille Barrère (Paris, 1943). A distinguished member of the French diplomatic corps, Noël was elected to the Académie des Sciences morales et politiques in 1945. Under de Gaulle he served on both the Comité consultatif constitutionnel and Conseil constitutionnel. (His study is referred to hereinafter as Camille Barrère.) Neither Noël nor Laroche attempted an analysis of Barrère's diplomatic activity. The first work of this nature was undertaken by Enrico Serra in Camille Barrère e l'intesa italo-francesa (Milan, 1950). (It is hereinafter referred to as C. Barrère e l'intesa.) L. B. Atkinson's "Camille Barrère, Ambassador of France: the First Eight Years of a Mission" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1951) studies Barrère's diplomatic activities during the first eight years of his residence in Rome. (Hereinafter referred to as "Ambassador of France.")

2 The coup of December 2, 1851 had aroused a great deal of opposition among the Nivernais. Pierre Barrère was one of those
Barrère experienced considerable hardship in England. To provide for his family, M. Barrère gave private lessons to the children of other émigrés living in London.3

Barrère passed his childhood in England; his early education was essentially British, factors which may well account for his facility in English which he spoke as fluently as his native tongue. It is important, too, for an understanding of Barrère's mature years, to realize that his philosophical and political attitudes were developed in the milieu of French refugees then living in London, a milieu representing all shades of contemporary republican opinion.

When the Empire fell in 1870, Barrère returned to France, serving for several months as secretary to Martin Nadaud, with whom he had established contact earlier in London.4 The passionate convictions of the nineteen-year old republican then led him to ally himself with the Communards against the Versailles government of Adolphe Thiers and what he viewed as its policy of submission to

arrested by the authorities in their reaction to the activities of small insurrectionary groups opposing Napoléon's tactics.

3Mme Saint-René Taillandier relates that Barrère himself told her of his personal experiences of hunger during these years. Intimate friends of the Barrères, M. Saint-René Taillandier had served with Barrère in his early diplomatic assignments in Cairo and Munich. "Silhouettes d'Ambassadeurs," Revue d'Histoire diplomatique, LXV (1952), 7-22.

4Nadaud had been a member of the Legislative Assembly under the Second Empire. He was appointed Prefect of Creuse by the Government of National Defense. He resigned the post in March, 1871 and later became a member of the Chamber of Deputies during the Third Republic. Noël, Camille Barrère, pp. 13-17.
the enemy. He served with the Central Committee of Artillery, headquartered in the St. Thomas d'Aquin quarter of Paris. At the same time Barrère embarked on a journalistic career in his native land, becoming affiliated with L'Estafette, La Fronde illustrée and La Sociale. His vehement anti-governmental outbursts in La Sociale resulted in his inclusion on a list of journalists destined for deportation when the Commune was subdued in 1871.

In this second exile, Barrère again had recourse to British hospitality. Reinstated in London, he supported himself by translating and writing for a number of papers and reviews, among them: The Manchester Guardian, Fortnightly Review, Corhill and Frazer's Magazine. He also represented La République française, founded by Léon Gambetta in Paris in 1871. The topics on which he wrote were varied, ranging from history and literature to politics. Foreign affairs was apparently of major interest to him, his contacts with

5 In Barrère's obituary, the New York Times indicates that he enlisted in the French army when the Franco-Prussian war broke out. New York Times, October 10, 1940. Barrère was enraged by the treatment accorded Commune prisoners by the Thiers government at Versailles. Edouard Doliéans quotes his description of the inhumane conditions in Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, 1830-1871 (Paris, 1936), p. 381.


7 La Sociale was a daily political journal under the direction of Mme André Léo. See A. Zévaès, Henri Rochefort le pamphlétaire (Paris, 1946), p. 125, n. 1.

8 Zévaès indicates that Barrère's translations probably included the English editions of Rochefort's La Lanterne, published in London in 1874 after Rochefort's escape from New Caledonia. Ibid., p. 19, n. 1.

both French refugees and English liberals presumably confirming the attraction. Among Barrère's contacts in these early days were Sir Charles Dilke and Louis Blanc.\(^{10}\) Despite his admiration for Blanc, however, he was sufficiently astute even then to observe to a friend, "Revolutions are made with ideas but politics requires skill and foresight."\(^{11}\)

When the Russo-Turkish war broke out in 1877, the young journalist was sent to the Balkans. In Constantinople he became acquainted with Mlle Irene Damad, the daughter of a well-to-do Armenian banker. They were married several years later.\(^{12}\)

As a result of the competence he demonstrated in his reports from the Balkans, Barrère was assigned to cover the proceedings of the Congress of Berlin. It was a decisive appointment in the development of his career, affording him an opportunity to observe first-hand some of the leading European statesmen of the age: Otto von Bismarck, Benjamin Disraeli, Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, Marquess of Salisbury, Alexander Gortschakoff. France was represented at the Congress by her Minister of Foreign Affairs William Waddington.

\(^{10}\) The liberal Dilke, who served as Gladstone's Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1880 and as Minister of the Interior in 1882, would be a witness at Barrère's marriage along with Gabriel Charmes, editor of the Journal des Débats and author of numerous studies on the Orient and Egypt.

Blanc, French socialist, had been a member of the Provisional Government from February to May, 1848. Blamed for the failure of the National Workshops, he fled to England in June, remaining there until 1871. After his return to France he served as a deputy for Marseilles under the Third Republic.

\(^{11}\) Quoted by Noll, Camille Barrère, pp. 19-20.

\(^{12}\) Mlle Damad was Roman Catholic and had received a completely French education. Her parents eventually settled in France, where she and Camille were married while he was serving as Consul General in Cairo.
Impressed as much by the young Barrère's extraordinary grasp of international affairs as by his judgment and reliability, Waddington took him on as a secretary and subsequently helped arrange for his return to France, made possible by an act of amnesty of March 4, 1879.

The Berlin assignment may have provided Barrère as well with international contacts that would prove invaluable in his future diplomatic activities. Bernhard von Bülow, with whom he would later deal extensively, was also assigned to the Congress.\(^\text{13}\) In a journalistic capacity, Barrère also travelled to Rome in February, 1878, interviewing Italian Minister Agostino Depretis on the subject of irredentism.\(^\text{14}\)

In Paris Barrère was profoundly influenced by Gambetta. He joined the editorial staff of *La République française* and appears to have served as Gambetta's secretary for a brief period.\(^\text{15}\) The impact of the republican journal on Barrère was of paramount importance in the shaping of his lifelong diplomatic activities, particularly by bringing him into contact with a group of men who were destined to be leading figures on the French political scene in the

\(^{13}\)From November, 1879 to July, 1884 von Bülow acted as Secretary of the German Embassy in Paris. He was named German Ambassador to Rome in 1894, Foreign Minister in 1897 and served as Chancellor from 1900 to 1909. In 1914 he returned to Rome as German Ambassador in an attempt to prevent Italy with allying herself with Germany's enemies in World War I.


period leading up to the First World War. Eugène Spuller, Paul-Armand Challemel-Lacour, Paul Bert, Charles Freycinet and Eugène Etienne were among the well-known personalities on the paper's editorial staff in these days. From its ranks Barrère would form lasting friendships with Gabriel Hanotaux, the three Charmes brothers and Théophile Delcassé. His friendship with Delcassé was un­wavering and certainly crucial in the development of Franco-Italian rapprochement that occurred between 1898 and 1902. Of Gambetta's influence on him, Barrère wrote many years later, "I experienced it myself to such a degree my whole career has been affected."\(^\text{16}\) Gambetta, in turn, recognized the worth of his disciple.\(^\text{17}\) He con­sidered the young editor well qualified to pursue a career in di­plomacy, and as his ability to influence the political futures of aspiring young men in the Third Republic was considerable, had him nominated French Delegate to the European Committee on the Danube in 1880. Barrère embarked on the path of diplomatic service with the rank of Embassy Secretary of the First Class.\(^\text{18}\) The Danubian commission had been created by the Treaty of Paris in 1856; its political, administrative and technical competence confirmed at the

\(^{16}\) Camille Barrère, "La chute de Delcassé," Revue des Deux Mondes, 8, X (1932), 603.

\(^{17}\) After Gambetta's death Gabriel Charmes wrote Barrère of the statesman's high regard for him, remarking that "of all those around him you were certainly the one on whom he counted most. How many times didn't he tell me! How often he spoke of the won­derful future he believed was in store for you." Quoted by Noël from an unedited letter written by Charmes to Barrère several days after Gambetta's death. Noël, Camille Barrère, p. 22, n. 2.

\(^{18}\) Noël comments on the preoccupation of republican leaders of this era with building up a new regime staffed with administra­tive and diplomatic personnel dedicated to their own ideals. In his judgment their choices for implementing this program were often inspired by Gambetta. Ibid., p. 27.
Congress of Berlin in 1878. Barrère profited from the contacts and experience it provided. In 1882 he was signatory to an additional convention to the act which regulated navigation on the Lower Danube. The following year he sat as Plenipotentiary at another conference assembled in London to negotiate a treaty dealing with this same problem.

By 1883 French Foreign Minister Challemel-Lacour had appointed him French Consul General in Cairo with the task of studying the rights of suzerainty over the Khedive reserved to the Sultan. Barrère's task was essentially that of obtaining the promised evacuation of British garrisons in Egypt maintaining, at the same time, the positions France still occupied in the area. His dispatches reveal the extent of his opposition to British policy. Barrère's success in grasping the complexities of the situation in Egypt and promoting France's best interests led to his next assignment as First French Delegate to an International Finance Conference that was convened in London in the summer of 1884. The following spring he presided over another conference, this one in Paris, charged with preparing a treaty relative to the Suez Canal. As the result of French initiative the conference successfully drafted a

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19 France, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Documents diplomatiques français relatifs aux origines de la guerre de 1914 (Paris, 1929-62). Series I, V, Nos. 185, 186, 194, 200, 242, 320, 393, 403, 543, 559, 561; VI, No. 23; VII, Nos. 142, 268. (This French diplomatic correspondence has been divided into three series: 1, 1871-1900; 2, 1900-1911; 3, 1911-1914. (Hereinafter Series 1 is referred to as DDF; Series 2, as DDF2.) Sir Charles Dilke expressed surprise that an ex-refugee in London could demonstrate such opposition to English policy. Gwynn and Tuckwell, Sir Charles W. Dilke, II, 56.

20 DDF1, V, No. 317.
convention which guaranteed the Great Powers rights of intervention in Egyptian finances. Barrère's German and English colleagues testify to his competence in discharging his duties while at the same time managing to defend the interests of his own country. 21

In all probability it was the successful impression being created by the young French diplomat that prompted Count Herbert von Bismarck to arrange for a meeting with Barrère in Koenigstein that September. The Chancellor's son was in the habit of undertaking missions for his father during these years, and Barrère's future apparently appeared sufficiently promising to warrant his cultivation. 22

The premature death of Gambetta in 1883 was an irreparable loss to Barrère. 23 Fortunately, his work in Egypt had already brought him to the attention of Jules Ferry, then French Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ferry encouraged Barrère to write him directly, and in the course of their correspondence expressed confidence in


22 Cited by Noël from an unedited letter of Baron de Courcel, then Ambassador to Berlin to Barrère, September 2, 1884. Camille Barrère, p. 32, n. 2. De Courcel represented France in Germany from 1881 to 1886 and was Ambassador to London from 1894 to 1898. Noël suggests that the contact between Barrère and Herbert von Bismarck may have been established through Bernhard von Bülow, with whom Barrère was acquainted. Aboye, p. 5.

23 In "La chute de Delcassé," p. 64, Barrère alluded to the loss of Gambetta to both friends and country, consoling himself with the remark that "his teachings had germinated. Young and ardent men were impregnated with them." Noël also relates that Barrère always kept a large portrait of Gambetta in his study, which was framed with a letter Barrère had received from him on the occasion of an older brother's death. Camille Barrère, p. 33.
the manner in which the Cairo consul was conducting French affairs. When Ferry's colonial policy brought him into disrepute, Barrère felt deeply what he regarded as the injustice of public opinion towards one who had given France both Tunisia and Tonkin. Ferry's death in 1893 was almost as great a loss to him as Gambetta's. Both shared in his admiration, and he wrote of "the two . . . so great in spirit and heart who, each in his own way, lived only for la patrie." 25

In November, 1885 Barrère left Egypt to become French Minister to Sweden. Three years later he was entrusted with the Legation to Bavaria where he remained for more than five years. During this period he was less involved in high politics than he had been in Cairo; his role consisted more in being a well-informed observer, an experience that was to contribute to the maturation of his diplomatic talents. In 1892 and 1893 Barrère also participated in the International Sanitation Conferences that were held in Venice, Paris and Dresden, serving as president of the French Delegation in 1892. Here, as in Berlin earlier, he made contacts that would be extremely valuable when he became France's Ambassador to Rome.

24 Noël quotes an unedited personal letter from Ferry to Barrère, March 8, 1884: "I admire your activity and your diligence. You are in an extremely difficult situation, everyone in the department is counting on you . . . I congratulate you also for your prudence and have enough confidence in your wisdom to dispense with the need of preaching to you." Ibid., pp. 33-34.

25 Ibid., p. 34.

26 Apparently one of the reasons for Barrère's transfer from Cairo was the antagonism created with the English representative Sir Evelyn Baring, the future Lord Cromer, by the antipathy between their wives. See Atkinson, "Ambassador of France," p. 25, n. 32.
Among the Italian statesmen with whom he established cordial relations in the course of this work was Emilio Visconti Venosta.

In these years Barrère was forming judgments on German politics that provide invaluable insight into his later attitude towards Italy's participation in the Triple Alliance. There had been a brief interval in which he apparently entertained some possibility for peaceful rapport between France and Germany. Yet his fundamental attitude towards the German Empire is more likely that conveyed during the course of several conversations he had with Herbert von Bismarck. The two great obstacles to peace, Barrère reports saying, were Germany's policy of repression in Alsace-Lorraine and the national antipathy towards France that had been provoked by Prince von Bismarck. In Barrère's opinion, Bismarck wanted peace but he wanted it only as a means of gaining time to consolidate the German kingdom, found a colonial empire and build up the German navy for war.

As for Kaiser William II, Barrère wrote French Foreign Minister Alexandre Ribot in 1891, "If my instinct doesn't deceive me, he will be responsible for hastening the hour in which the hegemony and even the greatness of England will be put in question." By 1892 his distrust of the German sovereign was still more

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27DDF, VII, Nos. 375, 453, 484, 500. E. E. Berger in "Camille Barrère", Berliner Monatshefte, XVIII (1940), 707 infers that the role of peacemaker was assumed by Barrère in an attempt to be named Berlin's French Ambassador. Serra dismisses the validity of Berger's study for its lack of objectivity. C. Barrère e l'intesa, p. 33, n. 23.

28DDF, VII, Nos. 375, 453, 484, 500.

29Ibid., IX, No. 55.
pronounced. He described him as one "lured on by the force of events and his own temperament to want to govern Europe." Barrère considered that day relatively distant, with sufficient time for Germany's adversaries to prepare themselves and to weaken her alliances. At the same time he was concerned lest they relax their efforts. "Time," he warned, "is our most precious ally." 31

There are documents which indicate that as early as 1892 Barrère had arrived at the fundamental position that was to underlie his subsequent attitude towards the policy he believed France should adopt in her relations with Italy. The Triple Alliance was a threat to France. The weak spot in the alliance was Italy. In order to avoid "disastrous diplomatic consequences," it was therefore essential that the peninsular kingdom be detached from the menacing coalition. 32

There were obstacles impeding the achievement of this objective, however, and Barrère was not unaware of them. While in Munich he had undertaken a study of Italian public opinion and concluded that there was a distinction between the dispositions of the Italian monarch and the nation towards the Triple. The fidelity of King Humbert to the Triple Alliance appeared to be unquestionable; that of public opinion, less certain. 33 Yet despite widespread Italian disenchantment with her allies, in Barrère's estimation it remained a decided possibility that defection could provoke Italy's invasion by the belligerent Kaiser. Nor was the

30 Ibid., No. 246. 31 Ibid.
32 Ibid., X, No. 68. 33 Ibid., VIII, No. 166.
issue a simple one from a strictly Italian viewpoint. When president of the Italian Council in 1888, Antonio Rudini had remarked to Barrère that Italy actually found herself in a vicious circle:

To ameliorate the economic relations of France and Italy, it's necessary to modify our political relations; and the amelioration of those requires the amelioration of economic relations.34

Barrère's reply at the time was to suggest a third solution: simultaneous modification of both the political and economic relations of the two countries. Yet in 1893, as he observed to French Foreign Minister Jean Casimir-Périer, that solution was no longer possible. It could only be achieved after a long period of preliminary détente on the part of the Italian government.35

In April, 1894 Barrère was named Ambassador to Switzerland. There he successfully negotiated a commercial treaty with the Confederation that resulted in a notable increase in French trade.

During these years he was also formulating the program he was to follow later in Italy. François Charles-Roux, associated with Barrère in Rome as Secretary and then Conseiller d'Ambassade from 1916 to 1924, states explicitly that "Everything he accomplished in Rome he had in the back of his mind before arriving there. His work was the realization of a plan he'd formulated while Ambassador to Switzerland ... "36 As Barrère noted towards the close of his own diplomatic career, "For thirty years,

34 Ibid., X, No. 486. 35 Ibid.
I was convinced Germany could only be subdued by the detachment of Italy from her alliance. It was in this framework I came to Rome in 1897. 

The major preoccupation of the future French Ambassador to Italy now became a search for the means by which this objective could be accomplished. The first step lay in dissipating the antipathies that existed between the French and Italian governments. The opportunity for effecting such a rapprochement was afforded Barrère at the end of December, 1897 when French Foreign Minister Gabriel Hanotaux appointed him Ambassador to Rome.

Barrère's appointment coincided with a recent thaw in Franco-Italian relations. Rapport between the two nations had been severely strained since 1881 as a result of their conflicting interests in the Mediterranean. The rivalry was not unexpected. Bismarck had foreseen it in 1866 and Tunisia was the anticipated point of contest. Despite the traditional ties binding the two

37 Quoted by Noël, Camille Barrère, p. 38, from an unedited note of Barrère's dated August 12, 1919.

38 The appointment obviously had been under consideration for some time. Visconti Venosta was first alerted to Billot's replacement in a dispatch from his minister in Vienna, Count Costantino Nigra, on January 22, 1897. Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, p. 62, n. 42, from unedited material in the Archivio Visconti Venosta. Serra's study makes extensive use of material in the private Visconti Venosta and Stucchi-Prinetti archives. For complete citations refer to C. Barrère e l'intesa.

39 The Tunisian question and its bearing on Franco-Italian relations are treated by: W. L. Langer, 'The European Powers and the French Occupation of Tunis,' American Historical Review, XXXI (October, 1925), 55-78 and (January, 1926), 251-65; J. GanTage, Les origines du protectorat français en Tunisie, 1861-1888 (Paris, 1915); Luigi Chiala, Pagine di storia contemporanea (2d ed.; Turin, 1896), (hereinafter referred to as Pagine di storia,).
Latin sisters—affinities of language, culture and religion—the Mediterranean interests of both countries made ultimate conflict in the area almost inevitable.  

France, of course, was deeply involved in the events dominating nineteenth century Mediterranean history: Italian unification, the opening of the Suez Canal, and North Africa's Europeanization. The configuration of her coasts and establishment of French rule in Algeria had led Gambetta to regard the western Mediterranean as France's particular "scene of action." There were innumerable other arguments, however, to support French involvement in the Mediterranean basin. As well as strategic importance and economic considerations, France sustained the concept of her role as missionnaire civilisateur. In the nineteenth century the view still prevailed that the civilization and institutions of Paris could only be a blessing to the world's underdeveloped regions.

In this era

40 As Christopher Seton-Watson noted, the French seizure of Tunisia "caused an emotional revulsion against France and brought to the surface, in their most virulent form, all the mutual suspicions that have so persistently divided the two Latin nations." *Italy from Liberalism to Fascism: 1870-1925* (London, 1967), p. 109. See also Eugene N. Anderson, *The First Moroccan Crisis, 1904-1906* (Chicago, 1930) and Denis Mack Smith, *Italy: A Modern History* (Ann Arbor, 1959).


colonialism also afforded France a degree of prestige, providing certain compensations after the defeat and isolation that followed in the aftermath of Sedan's defeat. However, any hopes France entertained of creating a bridge across North Africa from the Atlantic to the Red Sea were thwarted at Fashoda. Yet Morocco remained to round off the French North African empire. The "pearl of North Africa" would actually entice Delcassé into acquiescing in the arrangements Barrère ultimately negotiated with Italy in 1900 and 1902--the Mediterranean and Neutrality Accords, of which the Franco-Italian rapprochement was integrally constituted.

It was inevitable that France's Mediterranean activities would engender certain difficulties for her in the realm of international relations, particularly with: Great Britain, entrenched in Egypt, Gibraltar and Malta; Spain and Italy. The Anglo-French problems would be resolved with the conclusion of an African Convention in 1899. Differences with Spain, in marked decline during this period, were of relatively less significance. Agreements with her on the question of Morocco were reached between 1899 and 1904.

43 Below, p. 21.  
44 Below, pp. 44, 45, 47.  
45 According to Christopher Andrew, for five years after Fashoda the main purpose of a section of the Comité de l' Afrique française was to persuade Delcassé to seek an "agreement with England based on the barter of Egypt for Morocco." Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale (London, 1968), p. 52.  
47 Below, pp. 52-59.  
48 Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale, pp. 147-51; 216-27.
Italy, now striving to attain the status of European power and wholly a Mediterranean country, was a different matter. The Mediterranean Sea and its surrounding lands were the sphere of her major interest. Seeking a realization of her political unity, the leaders of the Risorgimento had proclaimed the young nation's right to her national patrimony. Pagan and Christian Rome had been the capital of civilization! In her bid for empire the third Rome re­claimed domination of the Mediterranean, marking North Africa for her future expansion. Tunisia, within sight of Sicily and adjacent to Algeria, was the object on which Italy's immediate attention was focused. Yet France, in possession of Algeria, dominated the western Mediterranean!

Italy saw in Tunisia a guarantee of her Mediterranean security. She also viewed the region as an outlet for her constant flow of emigrants. Tunisia had actually been a sphere of Italian economic activity prior to the young nation's unification. Since 1869 Italy had exercised joint financial control over the territory with France and Great Britain.

Theoretically a part of the disintegrating Ottoman Empire, Tunisia was poorly governed during these years by a native dynasty that had left it largely uncontrolled, underdeveloped and subject to innumerable problems stemming from irresponsible financial management. The major Powers were acutely aware of the inherent danger in a disturbance of European equilibrium. Due to the ramifications

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49 By 1881 there were 11,200 Italians in Tunisia. The French, by comparison, only numbered 700. Brace, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, p. 37.
of colonialism, danger was implicit in North African territorial changes as well. Tunisia's relationship to the Ottoman Empire would ordinarily lend a particularly dangerous aspect to an alteration in her status quo. However, Tunisia had figured unofficially in the discussions of the Congress of Berlin, where French Plenipotentiary William Waddington was led to understand by both Germany and Great Britain that France might enjoy a free hand in the territory. Bismarck encouraged the French interest, regarding Tunisia as compensation for France's loss of Alsace-Lorraine and a means of destroying francophilism in Italy. Great Britain acquiesced as a concession to French acceptance of the Cyprus Convention.

Italian pretensions in Tunisia apparently moved France to definitive action. Dissatisfied with Italian Minister Benedetto Cairoli's "clean hands" policy in the negotiations that transpired in Berlin, Italy had adopted the unalterable position that France's occupation of Tunisia would be totally unacceptable. She preferred a preservation of the status quo that would have permitted free play to both French and Italian interests in the region. Italy's Tunisian Consul, Signor Maccio, enjoyed an unlimited exercise of power that permitted him to engage in a war of prestige and economy with his French colleague M. Roustan. Maccio's activities played into the hands of French colonialists. Opinion

50 For these aspects of the Congress of Berlin see W. N. Medlicott, Bismarck, Gladstone and the Concert of Europe (London, 1956), pp. 65-70, 113-34, 197, 306-11.

51 Cairoli headed two Italian ministries: the first, March-December, 1878; the second, July, 1879-May, 1881.
deepened that Italy was threatening France's position. In 1880 French Premier Charles Freycinet officially notified Italy that France considered Tunisia her sphere of influence. His country would not permit another power "to establish its influence in opposition to ours in a territory like Tunisia which is the natural annex and military key to our African holdings."52 The situation came to a head in 1881 when France established a virtual protectorate over the territory. Italy protested the French action effected by the Treaty of Bardo, claiming prior rights in Tunisia on the basis of a treaty of friendship, navigation and commerce she had concluded with the Bey in 1868.53 Her objections, however, proved to be of no avail.

Ratification of the Treaty of Bardo led Sidney Sonnino, influential leader of the Italian parliamentary center, to appeal for closer Italian ties with Germany as well as for friendship with Austria-Hungary and England. Convinced a rapprochement with the Central Powers was essential if Italy were to surmount the annihilation of isolation, Sonnino's position was supported by the King and Queen as well as by Parliament and the Italian press. Thus in 1882 Italy committed herself to Bismarck, becoming party to the Triple Alliance with her former enemy, Austria-Hungary.54

52 DDF1, III, No. 214. Bizerta would become a grave obstacle to already embittered Franco-Italian relations in the 1890's. See below, pp. 27-28.

53 For the text of the treaty see: Italy, Ministero esteri, Trattati e convenzioni fra il Regno d'Italia e gli altri stati, XIV (Roma, 1899), 309-52.

54 Objections to Italian overtures for the alliance had been raised in 1882. Italian Ambassador to Vienna Count Carlo Robilant,
The Triple Alliance (Triplice) became a fundamental international alignment of the age. The original treaty of 1882 secured Italy the support of Germany and Austria-Hungary against a French attack. When renewed in 1887, Italy won far more advantageous terms than those she obtained when originally orienting her policy towards the Central Powers. Supplementary accords with Germany and Austria-Hungary and a series of Mediterranean agreements with England, Austria-Hungary and Spain completed the stipulations of the original treaty of 1882. Italy received support for her Mediterranean policy as well as a pledge of German assistance against France if the latter attempted to modify the status quo in North Africa. Her Balkan problems with Austria-Hungary were brought under control and her traditional dependence on England in the Mediterranean was reinforced. With the agreements of 1887 Italy became a connecting link between the German orbit and British Mediterranean power, precisely when France was attempting to force England out of Egypt. Italy's international position during this period had been greatly enhanced.56

55See Medlicott's "The Mediterranean Agreements of 1887", Slavonic Review, V (June, 1926), 60-80 on the Mediterranean accords and James L. Glanville, Italy's Relations with England, 1896-1905 (Baltimore, 1934) for Anglo-Italian relations.

56Serra attributes the improvement to Robilant's diplomatic skill in a complex, changing international climate, the Italian minister successfully transforming a continental alliance into a
France viewed the situation with increasing concern, convinced it constituted a grave threat to her security. She found herself subjected to increased isolation and surrounded by a coalition that was determined to maintain the status quo and prevent her from initiating any action that might alter it.\textsuperscript{57} Significantly, the Franco-German détente of 1885 had ended with the fall of Jules Ferry's ministry. The departure of Ferry (staunch advocate of Franco-German colonial accord) from the political arena coincided with the rise of nationalistic, germanophobic sentiment in France. When General Boulanger was appointed French Minister of War in 1886, the danger of war between the two countries became acute.\textsuperscript{58} Furthermore, Franco-German estrangement was evolving as Germany again began to support British policy. Disturbed by the prospect of Russian aid to France with the increasing possibility of an outbreak in hostilities, Bismarck sought a defensive alliance with England. Count Wildenburg Hatzfeldt, German Ambassador to London, was instructed to convey to Lord Salisbury the German chancellor's personal conviction that the surest way to peace lay

continental-Mediterranean one. Bismarck, aware of Russia's growing animosity towards her Balkan rival, Austria-Hungary, and of the spirit of revanche prevailing in France (due to the growth of Boulanger's popularity among the masses), foresaw a confrontation by France were Germany to intervene in the event of a Russian attack on Austria. Thus the chancellor's objective in 1887 was to localize an eventual Austro-Russian conflict. In order to do so, he had first to guarantee Italian neutrality. C. Barrère e l'intesa, pp. 38-40.

\textsuperscript{57} Langer sees the acute tension in Franco-Italian relations developing directly from France's discovery that a potentially hostile coalition existed against her. European Alliances and Alignments (New York, 1935), p. 236.

\textsuperscript{58} See Adrien Dansette, Le Boulangisme (Paris, 1946) and Malcolm Carroll, French Public Opinion and Foreign Affairs, 1870-1914 (New York, 1931) on Franco-German relations in these years.
In the conclusion of a treaty binding the respective powers for a limited period "to combined resistance against a French attack." 59

Tunisia and the Triple Alliance were not the only sources of contention between France and Italy, however. Italy's annexation of Rome in the wake of France's defeat at Sedan remained an act of infamy to an overwhelming number of Frenchmen. France's Ambassador to Rome in 1874, the Marquis de Noailles, would attribute difficulties between the two countries to Italian ambitions as well-to Italy's desire to replace the defeated France of 1870 as the great Mediterranean power. 60

A fear of French republicanism figured prominently in the framework of Italian antipathy. The possibility of a republican overthrow initiated and supported by French radicals was regarded as a threat to Italy's monarchy and the continued existence of her national unity. Still a new creation, the Italian monarchy lacked the supports on which other monarchies rested; ancient loyalties, an old aristocracy, the clergy, surviving elements of feudalism. 61

The alienation of the neighboring Latin sisters became more

59 Bismarck's Relations with England, 1871-1890; German Diplomatic Documents, 1871-1914; ed. by E. T. S. Dugdale (New York, 1928), 1, 369-72. Although Germany's proposal was not followed up at this time, relations between England and Germany continued to improve. See Langer, European Alliances and Alignments, pp. 491-94 and L. Albertini, The Origins of the War of 1914, trans. by Isabelle M. Massey (London, 1952), 1, 61-64.

60 See Enrico Serra's reference to an unpublished "Note sur les relations entre la France et l'Italie" by de Noailles, included among unpublished Carte Hanotaux at the Qual d'Orsay. La questione tunisina, p. 3, n. 1.

pronounced after Francesco Crispi's rise to power in 1887. Given the Italian minister's tempestuous temperament and widely-known anti-French attitude, the deterioration was not too surprising. As early as 1871 Crispi had expressed his strong belief that "without force and grandeur, Italian unity would be useless." He resented what he considered France's appropriation of Nice and Savoy and her opposition to the Italian conquest of Rome, unshakable in his conviction that a natural rivalry existed between France and Italy both in the Mediterranean and with the Vatican. Benedetto Croce has described his attitude as that of one, "obsessed by the nightmare of France in alliance with the papacy, planning an invasion of Italy and the destruction of Italian unity." Crispi's anti-French sentiment was augmented by an admiration for the Prussia of Bismarck, a Prussia the Italian minister regarded as a natural French adversary.

62 A Mazzinian revolutionary after 1848, Crispi figured prominently in Garibaldi's Thousand. Initially a member of the Italian Parliament's extreme left, he soon became one of the monarchy's most fervent supporters, seeing in the Crown the best unifying force for the new kingdom. Crispi directed Italian policy as Prime Minister from 1887 to 1891 and again between 1893 and 1896. See G. Volpe, F. Crispi (Venice, 1928) and G. Salvemini, La politica estera di F. Crispi (Rome, 1919) for differing interpretations of Crispi and his work. Volpe's study, with reservations, is more positive; Salvemini's, substantially negative.

63 In fairness to the Italian minister, it has been noted that Crispi's counterpart in this period, French Foreign Minister René Goblet, "was hardly less irascible and passionate than Crispi himself." Langer, European Alliances and Alignments, p. 475.

64 Quoted by Serra in La questione tunisina, p. 33 from an article entitled "Italia e Francia" originally appearing in La Riforma, February 21, 1871.

65 Croce, A History of Italy, 1871-1915, p. 168. De Noailles had, in fact, related anti-French demonstrations in the 1870's to Italian resentment over the alleged theft of Nice, attributing the disturbances to the instigation of Bismarck. DDF², 11, No. 242.
The conflict in Franco-Italian relations assumed major proportions in 1868 when Italy concluded a military convention with Germany in which the representatives of the Trippice formulated a common plan to counteract possible French aggression.\[^{66}\] France retaliated by breaking off negotiations for a new tariff treaty with Italy. In 1886 the influence of rising protectionist sentiment, along with anger over France's rejection of a naval treaty, had led the Italian chambers to denounce a French tariff treaty that had been in effect since 1881. The rupture of negotiations for a new agreement that had been opened in 1887 initiated the equivalent of a tariff war between the two countries.\[^{67}\] This rift in commercial relations had grave consequences for Italy and was seized upon by the French government as an economic weapon in its efforts to wrest Italy from the Triple Alliance.

There were other measures than economic pressure, however, which France was able to bring to bear on Italy in their contest.\[^{68}\]

Italy was fully as sensitive to the Roman question as she had shown herself to be with regard to Tunisia.\[^{68}\] France was not

\[^{66}\text{See Pribram, The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary, 1879-1914, 11, 81-88.}\]

\[^{67}\text{See below, pp. 32-51; A. Billot, La France et l'Italie (Paris, 1905), 1, 47-56, 77-78 and E. Decleva, Da Adrian a Sarajevo (Bari, 1971), pp. 61-68.}\]

averse to exploiting this vulnerability. The young kingdom had been apprehensive of the threat to her monarchy, implicit in any forced restoration of papal temporal power, since first appropriating church territory during the course of Italian unification. The conclusion of the Triple Alliance in 1882 relieved much of her anxiety that Bismarck might support such a drive. \(^{69}\) Suspicions then reverted to France as the principal source of support for any movement aimed at restoring Rome to the papacy.

Animosity towards France became more embittered during the first Crispi ministry, which coincided with the ralllement and Pope Leo XIII's efforts to secure an entente with a re-Christianized France. In the succeeding decade France's influence at the Vatican became paramount, Italy's attitude towards the church changing to one of open hostility. \(^{70}\) Leo XIII's conviction he would be forced to abandon the Vatican aggravated existing tensions still further. The situation assumed crisis dimensions in 1889 when the erection of a statue of Giordano Bruno (considered a sixteenth-century victim of papal intolerance) resulted in an eruption of anti-papal demonstrations in Rome. Franco-Italian relations had deteriorated to such an extent by then that an outbreak of war between the two countries was believed to be imminent. Pope Leo XIII seriously considered leaving Rome, and it was common knowledge he hoped for intervention by the Catholic powers if his departure was resisted by the Italian

\(^{69}\) Italy's concern over this possibility had increased after the chancellor ended his quarrel with the Roman Curia.

government. Although a major international crisis was averted, Crispi contended that considerable pressure had been brought to bear on the pope by France throughout the episode. 71

Relations between France and Italy were also strained by a conflict of interests in the Red Sea during these years. Italy's attempts at colonial expansion, under the aegis of England, encountered the vigorous opposition of France, whose government refused to recognize the protectorate Italy established in Abyssinia or to conclude an accord regulating the two countries' respective spheres of interest. 72

A number of incidents took place during this period as well that contributed in no small measure to steadily-increasing discord between France and Italy. 73

The first of these occurred in December, 1887 when Italy learned France had concluded an accord with the Porte which extended the Tunisian frontier thirty kilometres to the east. Italian protests were ineffective; France proceeded with the territorial changes Italy debated.

In January, 1888 the extra-territoriality of the French Consulate in Florence was violated by Italian officials demanding


72 See R. Pinon, L'empire de la Méditerranée (Paris, 1912), pp. 36-37 and E. Serra, La questione tunisina, pp. 177-234. Serra also accuses the French of inciting the hostility of the Abyssinians against Italy.

73 For details, see Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, pp. 43-46 and Billot, La France et l'Italie, 1, 75-263.
the papers of a deceased Tunisian subject. France reacted to this affront by concentrating a fleet of warships at Toulon, a move Italy regarded as indicative of France's intent to open hostilities against her and launch a surprise naval attack at La Spezia. Alarmed at the possibly dire international repercussions inherent in the situation, Germany requested the dispatch of a British fleet to the Mediterranean for precautionary measures. Officially, London declined to view the affair as serious; yet a British squadron did arrive in Genoa and its appearance, accidental or intentional, was believed to have saved the situation in both Rome and Berlin.

Another dispute arose in June, this clash centering on the validity of the capitulations in Massawa.74 Disregarding what Italy claimed as her rights in the city, France supported a number of foreign businessmen protesting the authority of Italian municipal officials to tax them. Austro-German intervention prevented this disagreement from assuming greater proportions.

Additional difficulties then emerged in September, 1888 when the Bey of Tunis promulgated new legislation effecting education and associations. Apparently instigated by France, the decrees were contrary to the capitulations of Italy's 1868 Tunisian treaty. Efforts at resolving the conflict were merged with the unsuccessful negotiations for a Franco-Italian commercial accord then in progress.75

Despite British and Italian protests, France also engaged

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74 A Red Sea port, Massawa was within the confines of the territory established as Eritrea in 1890.

75 Below, pp. 32-51.
In the fortification of Bizerta, by its strategic location destined to be the great port of the French Mediterranean—a Toulon of Algeria-Tunisia. Italy considered the fortifications an indication of France's intention of proceeding to Tunisia's outright annexation. To Crispi, an extension of French sovereignty in Tunisia made Italy's occupation of Tripoli mandatory. In fact, since the establishment of France's Tunisian protectorate, Italy had attempted to penetrate Tripolitania and Cyrenaica with a number of scientific expeditions and had expended great effort developing Italian commerce. While interest in Tripolitania was tied to the imperialists' program of political and economic expansion in the eastern Mediterranean, it also excited a great deal of enthusiasm throughout the Italian peninsula—basically, as a means of achieving Italian domination of the Mediterranean. The interest was not superficial. In 1888 Robilant had informed the French Embassy in Berlin that a seizure of Tripoli would result in war.

France had no direct interest in Tripoli herself. Yet she was convinced that the presence of a signer of the Triple Alliance on the flanks of Algeria-Tunisia constituted a grave danger. In

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76 On Bizerta's significance see: G. Hanotaux, La paix latine (Paris, 1903), p. 12; Crispi, Mémoires, II, 441-76 and Pinon, L'empire de la Méditerranée, pp. 338-82. Italy regarded the Mediterranean military base as "a pistol pointed against Sicily." Quoted by Serra, La question tunisine, p. 52 from an unedited dispatch of Italy's Tunisian Consul General Machiavelli to Crispi, September 30, 1890. Nor was Bizerta's Importance under-estimated in France. Pinon quotes Jules Ferry's remark, "If I took Tunis, it was to have Bizerte." L'empire de la Méditerranée, p. 343.

the event of war, Italy would become an enemy. France would be compelled to defend her African frontiers, and Tripoli afforded a formidable base of operations against Bizerta, indeed against the entire Tunisian Regency!

When enlargement of the Tunisian borders continued, accompanied by further French claims to the hinterlands (territory which included the caravan routes uniting the Sudan with Tripoli), Crispi initiated negotiations with Paris for a solution to mutual Tunisian-Tripolitan problems. Yet France was unwilling to reach an accord while Italy remained in the Triple Alliance.78

An impasse had been reached.79 The situation remained substantially the same during the interim ministries of Italy's Rudini (February 1891-May, 1892) and Giovanni Giolitti (May, 1892-November, 1893). In 1892 Rudini renewed the Triple Alliance a second time; Giolitti's term at the Consulta was marked by the explosive incident at Algues-Mortes, in which a group of Italian workers were massacred by French workmen.

With Crispi's return to office in 1893 prospects for achieving Franco-Italian rapport appeared less promising than ever. Italy was experiencing the economic disabilities of tariff war with France in full. At the same time, Italian aspirations over Ethiopian

78 See Crispi, Politica estera (Milan, 1912), pp. 376-86. The basis of the proposal was Italy's acquiescence in France's annexation of Tunisia in exchange for French support to Italy's pacific acquisition of Tripoli.

79 For details of the period between 1891 and 1896 see Billot, La France et l'Italie, 1, 278-484; 11, 3-291 and Serra, C. Barrère e l'Intesa, pp. 43-62.
Harrar collided with French manoeuvres to separate Italy from Great Britain and gain recognition of the Tunisian protectorate. Even more significant was the termination of French isolation in the summer of 1892, with the conclusion of a Franco-Russian military convention that entered into vigor at the beginning of 1894.\textsuperscript{80} To complicate matters still further, Germany and Austria-Hungary were again making overtures to France. An international situation of these dimensions left Italy in an adverse position.\textsuperscript{81} A détente in Franco-Italian relations only emerged after Italy's disaster at Adowa in 1896.

While Italy struggled to regain her equilibrium after the African debacle, France announced her intention of ending the diplomatic arrangements that had existed in Tunisia since 1868. The move was an obvious demand for formal recognition of the protectorate France had essentially established in 1881. Although reluctant to abandon the favorable Tunisian capitulations, Italy had little hope of reversing the decision and attempted to obtain a new commercial accord in return for the political and economic concessions of a new Tunisian treaty.\textsuperscript{82} French Foreign Minister Hanotaux,\textsuperscript{80} The Franco-Russian rapprochement is treated by Langer in The Franco-Russian Alliance, 1890-1894 (Mass., 1929).

\textsuperscript{81} As Decleva points out, when Germany sides with France and Austria-Hungary with Russia, any hope of Italian compensation vanishes. Italy is isolated with only the insufficient platonic friendship of England. \textit{Da Adua a Sarajevo}, p. 49.

\textsuperscript{82} She learned in July, 1896 that Austria-Hungary had signed an accord which renounced the capitulations and recognized favorable treatment for France in Tunisia. Simultaneously, England was negotiating a new treaty in which Egypt would serve as a counterpart for the concessions France sought in Tunisia and Morocco. Serra, \textit{La questione tunisina}, pp. 406-15.
however, was unwilling to negotiate on such a basis. The obstacles blocking a solution to the Tunisian problem were only surmounted when Italian foreign policy was given a new direction by Minister of Foreign Affairs Emilio Visconti Venosta, patriot and eminent Italian statesman. 83

Confronted with the serious economic difficulties the customs war was inflicting on Italy when he was recalled to active political life in July, 1896, Visconti Venosta made the decision to salvage as much as possible for Italy in a new Tunisian treaty and await an opportune moment to negotiate a new commercial accord. A Tunisian treaty was subsequently concluded September 28, 1896 that held the promise of developing Franco-Italian rapprochement in the future. Included in the Tunisian arrangements were: a convention of commerce and navigation, a consular convention and a convention of extradition. 84

In April, negotiations were initiated for a commercial accord between the two countries. Although little progress was made towards its completion during the remainder of 1897, one of

83 Visconti Venosta served as minister of Foreign Affairs under Rudini from July, 1896 to June, 1898 and under General Luigi Pelloux and Giuseppe Saracco between May, 1899 and February, 1901. His program is known as one of raccoglimento. Convinced of the necessity of remaining in the Triple Alliance, he also realized the importance of improving Franco-Italian rapport. To achieve the latter he accepted a renunciation of the capitulations as stipulated by France in the terms of a new Tunisian treaty. Decleva, Da Adua a Sarajevo, pp. 32-60. See also William S. Halperin, Diplomat under Stress: Visconti Venosta and the Crisis of July, 1870 (Chicago, 1963).

84 The treaties are covered in detail by Billot, La France et l'Italie, II, 357-73 and Serra, La questione tunisina, pp. 405-53.
Ambassador Barrère's first accomplishments in Rome was the successful conclusion of a Franco-Italian commercial treaty in October, 1898—less than a year after he had assumed his new responsibilities in the Italian kingdom.
CHAPTER II

ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES:

THE COMMERCIAL ACCORD OF 1898

Barrère arrived in Rome on February 3, 1898. Tall, slender, with blonde hair and beard, comment was often made on the resemblance of the new French ambassador to Henri IV. Despite the impression of great dignity his presence conveyed, the poised, elegant Barrère was in no respect a retiring or self-effacing figure. Friends and diplomatic colleagues emphasize equally his vigor, the aura of authority that emanated from his person and an imperious quality that would permit him to be "none but chief."  

The Farnese Palace, which then served as the French Embassy in Rome, provided a distinguished setting for Barrère's ambassadorial activities. The famed Ecole française d'Archéologie et d'histoire, then under the direction of the Abbé Duchesne, was also housed in the Farnese, adding to French prestige already enjoyed in Rome.

1 Mme Saint-René Taillandier, "Silhouettes d'Ambassadeurs," pp. 7-22.

2 Mme Saint-René Taillandier, "Avant le sacerdoce. Le vicomte Chaptal diplomate," Revue des Deux Mondes, LXXVI (August 15, 1943), 392. Descriptions of Barrère's appearance are also given by Charles Benoist, Souvenirs (Paris, 1932-34), 11, 13; Noél, Camille Barrère, p. 77; Laroche, Quinze ans à Rome avec Camille Barrère, p. 11.
that of the highest scholarship. Barrère's own personal interests, however, ran less to the academic than the arts: painting, literature, and music—which was his first love. He was also an ardent sportsman. Despite these varied interests, the new ambassador soon acquired the reputation of being an indefatigable worker.

What were the objectives of the newly-assigned minister as he embarked on the mission that would occupy him for a quarter of a century? Ultimately, Barrère hoped to effect a corrosion of Italy's ties to the Triple Alliance, to empty the Tripllice of its substance. His immediate concern, however, was to suppress all sources of discord between France and Italy. Many years later he was to clarify this position. He regarded the state of France's relations with Italy at that time, Barrère wrote, as the equivalent of a demi-rupture whose effects were being felt more and more acutely. French occupation of Tunisia had unleashed so violent a reaction beyond the Alps it had led Italy to enter into her German alliances.
a policy Barrère feared had grave consequences for France. The Paris Bourse was also closed to Italian securities, and commercial exchange between the two nations was broken. Assuming his new responsibilities, Barrère was resolved to end a state of affairs he considered extremely prejudicial to the interests of the two neighboring countries. To this end he attached a political importance "of the first order" to reaching a commercial arrangement—on even an informal basis. For as he wrote Hanotaux in February, 1898, the key to Italian foreign policy lay in a resumption of Franco-Italian economic rapport.

Not that Barrère underestimated the difficulties inherent in the goal he proposed; nor did he believe France could expect any outside assistance in achieving it. English policy accommodated itself well to Franco-Italian dissidence; it assured her own preponderance in the Mediterranean. Russia, France's new ally, remained indifferent to the problems inherent in the Franco-Italian situation. The Holy See clearly had no interest in seeing a Franco-Italian rapprochement; the Germanic powers were openly hostile.

"Effacing the prejudices and griefs in the minds of our neighbors," the first step towards achieving the more immediate aspect of Barrère's program for Italy, was actually embarked on

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9 DDF, XIV, Nos. 120, 253, 512.

10 ibid., No. 52.

before he arrived in Rome. He began to lay a favorable groundwork for his new assignment while still in Berne, confiding to Italian Minister Plenipotentiary Alessandro Riva his own loyalty to Italy's dynasty. It may well have been an attempt to offset any prejudicial opinion a Communard past might arouse against him. Barrère informed Riva he didn't consider Italian constitutionalists good patriots or true Italians and that it was his belief dynastic sentiment not only cemented Italian unity but the very existence of Italy as a nation. He also indicated to the Italian minister that France's ambassadors to Rome were the target of repeated enticements by representatives of radical and clerical parties, mistakenly hoping through them to achieve their objectives. These contacts could not be evaded, Barrère added, but should occasion no concern once the probity and loyalty of the head of the French mission was known.

This attitude accorded with fundamental principles Barrère had long upheld. As far back as 1887 he had advocated the pursuit of a policy that was not only in opposition to the monarchical right within France but the extreme left as well. Barrère also understood how essential it was to the success of her foreign policy that France renounce any attempts to export her own institutional

12DDF2, I, No. 118.
13Quoted by Decleva, Da Adua a Sarajevo, p. 81, from unedited documents of the Archivio storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri.
14Decleva, Da Adua a Sarajevo, p. 81.
form of government. A few months after his arrival in Rome he confirmed this position during the course of a conversation with King Humbert. Assuring the Italian monarch that French democracy was essentially conservative, he made the remark that France's government "as much as a monarchy...looked with disfavor on the attempts of extremist parties and was in complete accord with the countries surrounding her on the need for maintaining order."  

There were concrete steps, however, which if taken Barrère believed would provide the keystone for effecting a Franco-Italian reconciliation. They were to be found in the resumption of economic rapport, the "principal object of concern on the part of officialdom" in Rome. Barrère considered the conclusion of a commercial accord a question of life or death for the moderate Rudini ministry then in power in the Italian government. Rudini himself, his Foreign Minister Visconti Venosta, and the francophilic Minister of the Treasury, Luigi Luzzatti, all agreed on the desirability of concluding the accord and concluding it quickly. Barrère warned Hanotaux, however, that nothing was more uncertain than the dispositions of the men who could succeed the Rudini ministry in power. The issue was crucial since the general consensus of Italian opinion was that economic rapprochement between France and Italy would begin a new chapter in Italian political life. Barrère was convinced that Italian hatred of France, rooted as it was in economics, was actually artificial—created by men who dreamt of rebuilding the  

16 Decleva, Da Adua a Sarajevo, p. 82.  
17 Barrère à Hanotaux, May 31, 1898, AAE, Nouvelle Série, Italie, XIII, D. n. 77. (Hereinafter cited as AAE, NSI).
grandeur of Italy on the spoils of France's ruin. Their work could be undone by dealing with the immediate problem at hand: seizing the opportunity of an opening and through it reaching a more satisfactory economic arrangement.¹⁸

When appointed Italian Foreign Minister in July, 1896, Visconti Venosta had unsuccessfully attempted to link a commercial accord with negotiations for the Tunisian treaty. However French Foreign Minister Hanotaux refused to join a study of the commercial question to that regulating Tunisian affairs.¹⁹ Once the Tunisian accords were signed on October 1, 1896, the Rudini ministry again pressed for a treaty of commerce on the basis of reciprocal concession of the French minimum and Italian conventional tariffs.²⁰ The overtures drew no positive response from Hanotaux and Billot, Hanotaux conceding only to a continuation of secret discussions directed towards the negotiation of a commercial treaty.²¹

In early 1897 Franco-Italian relations were aggravated further by a massing of French troops along the Tunisian frontier bordering on Tripoli. Italian Ambassador to Paris, Count Giuseppe Tornielli, expressed concern that France was contemplating military action in Tripolitania, forestalling an Italian move should the

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¹⁸ *DDF*, XIV, No. 52.
²⁰ The convention of commerce replacing the Italo-Tunisian treaty of 1868 was signed on September 28; the navigation convention on October 1. See above, pp. 29, 30.
²¹ Italy, Ministero degli affari esteri, *I documenti diplomatici italiani*. Third Series: 1896-1907. (Hereinafter referred to as *DDI*.) 1, Nos. 382, 385, 386, 389, 396, 403, 409. See also below, pp. 39-51.
European concert break up or Turkey disintegrate. Italy viewed the situation with alarm since "after Tunis", Visconti Venosta responded that, "Italy would not tolerate a French occupation of Tripoli." In assessing the international situation, the Italian minister concluded, however, that it was in Italy's best interests to avoid an open confrontation with France. Unless French action constituted a *casus foederis*, Italy faced her African problems alone.\textsuperscript{22}

At this point Hanotaux interjected a proposal for reciprocal Franco-Italian statements of disinterest in Tripoli.\textsuperscript{23} Hesitant to negotiate an accord with France which was contrary to the Triple Alliance, Visconti Venosta was at the same time unwilling to reject the French advances.\textsuperscript{24} Since returning to the Consulta in 1896 it had been his ardent desire to improve Italy's relations with France. In view of Germany's negative response to his subsequent soundings, Visconti Venosta therefore entered into the discussions Hanotaux had suggested.\textsuperscript{25} However, the Italian minister favored setting the pledges ultimately agreed on in a single statement—to be issued by the Italian ambassador in Paris. When Hanotaux insisted on concluding an actual *quid pro quo* protocol, negotiations came to a standstill.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{22}Serra, *C. Barrère e l'intesa*, pp. 54-56.

\textsuperscript{23}D\textsuperscript{D}I\textsuperscript{3}, Nos. 382, 385, 386, 389, 396, 403, 409.

\textsuperscript{24}Serra, *C. Barrère e l'intesa*, pp. 53-59.

\textsuperscript{25}La politique extérieure de l'Allemagne, 1870-1914; documents officiels publiés par le ministère allemand des affaires étrangères (Paris, 1928), (hereinafter referred to as *PEA* with corresponding document no. in *Die grosse Politik* in brackets), XIV, No. 3529 [3295]; D\textsuperscript{D}I\textsuperscript{3}, II, No. 101, n. 2.

\textsuperscript{26}Serra, *C. Barrère e l'intesa*, p. 55.
Separate negotiations for a commercial accord did continue, however. Nevertheless, French reservations regarding their ultimate success, together with extensive economic concessions demanded of Italy, resulted in a series of misunderstandings and stalemates between October, 1896 and December, 1897. At that time, Luigi Luzzatti formally requested a resumption of Franco-Italian commercial negotiations. Billot, in the interim, had submitted his resignation, and on December 24 announcement was made of Barrère’s nomination as French Ambassador to Rome.27

Arriving in the Italian capital on February 3, 1898, one of Barrère’s first moves, February 14, was to request of Hanotaux the list of tariff reductions France demanded of Italy in exchange for commercial rapprochement. As France's ambassador in Rome, Barrère considered it essential he be involved in a matter he regarded as vital to the development of improved Franco-Italian rapport. A knowledge of the French demands obviously was indispensable for any participation in the negotiations. Barrère believed his involvement to be all the more necessary in view of his conviction that a more conciliatory attitude towards these demands prevailed in Rome than in Paris.28

Barrère's own relationship with Italian Ambassador to Paris, Tornielli, had never been felicitous. Tornielli had opposed Barrère's nomination fiercely. Totally reactionary, the aristocratic Italian

27 DDF¹, XIV, No. 151; Billot, La France et l'Italie, II, 412-420; Luigi Luzzatti, Opere (Bologna, 1926), II, 526.

28 DDF¹, XIV, No. 52.
diplomat was unalterably opposed to the idea of dealing with an heretical ex-communard and, recognizing the inevitability of Barrère's appointment, had requested his own transfer from Paris. Tornielli justified his request on the basis of hostility he felt he had encountered in the French city, intolerably manifested, in his mind: with Barrère's nomination, made "behind my back," as well as with abuse of the Schwartzkoppen-Panizzardi correspondence in the Dreyfus affair.29

Barrère, in turn, repeatedly voiced his suspicions of Tornielli, not only finding a divergence between the ambassador's attitude and that of his government but accusing him as well of ill will towards the successful conclusion of the negotiations in which both France and Italy were engaged.30 This was not the case with respect to Barrère's relationships on the ministerial level in Rome.31 He had no doubt of Rudini's desire to conclude an economic accord with France.32 His judgment had been reinforced, Barrère wrote Hanotaux, with both Visconti Venosta and Luzzatti's assurances of Rudini's wish to modify Italian policy. Luzzatti

29 Tornielli considered the letters introduced in the Zola-Dreyfus trial to be apocryphal. Serra, C. Barrère e l'Intesa, p. 63. For Tornielli's position with regard to Panizzardi, see H. Wickham Steed, Through Thirty Years (London, 1924), I, 147. According to Decleva, the Dreyfus Affair not only raised international uncertainty—and the corresponding danger France would be thrown into European isolation—Italy also feared France might become militaristic again and threaten peace. Da Adua a Sarajevo, p. 101.

30 DDF¹, XIV, Nos. 52, 120.

31 Barrère à Hanotaux, February 12, 1898, AAE, NSI, XIII, D. n. 25.

32 DDF¹, XIV, Nos. 52, 120; Barrère à Hanotaux, February 12, 1898, AAE, NSI, XIII, D. n. 25.
had also affirmed the sincerity of Rudini's desire to do so in 1892 during his preceding ministry. At that time however, the financier reminded him, there was insufficient understanding on the part of France to help Rudini achieve his objective—an objective for which an opportunity was once again presenting itself.33

As regards Visconti Venosta, Barrère considered him Italy's foremost statesman, whose eminent qualities had gained respectability and prestige for his country. Barrère also attributed to the Italian foreign minister the intention of making Franco-Italian rapport the base of diplomacy in the Italian kingdom.34 Visconti Venosta had told him he regarded the source of division between their respective countries to have had its origin in the Mediterranean—responsible, in turn, for the alliances subsequently imposed on Italy. To change Italian orientation, liquidation of the Tunisian question was fundamental. Visconti Venosta had undertaken the serious rapprochement of the two nations on the terrain of interest, he added, "and policy inexorably follows interests; political rapprochement inevitably results from material rapprochement."35 Barrère also regarded Visconti Venosta's independence of action significant for Franco-Italian relations, finding him devoid of servitude to anyone: King, Court or allies.36 In Barrère's opinion,

33DDEI, XIV, No. 120. In 1891 Rudini had attempted to improve relations with France. His efforts were unsuccessful, France refusing to engage in any negotiations until Italy evidenced her non-aggressive intentions by disclosing the terms of the Triple Alliance.

34Ibid., No. 168.

35Ibid., No. 219.

36Ibid., No. 168.
This quality was further enhanced by the opposition various political parties in the kingdom voiced towards Franco-Italian rapprochement as well as by a degree of uncertainty with respect to King Humbert's attitude towards it.\(^\text{37}\) This attitude explains a great deal of Barrère's insistence on concluding an economic accord without any necessary delays.\(^\text{38}\)

Luzzatti, of course, was the most ardent champion in the cause of resuming economic relations between the two countries. An eminent Italian economist, he had long sought a policy of friendship with France within the framework of Italy's existing alliances. When Visconti Venosta resigned from the Rudini Cabinet in May, 1898, Barrère was not hesitant in writing Hanotaux that the former Italian foreign minister had told him everything pertaining to the commercial talks would have had to be begun anew if Luzzatti had left the ministry with him.\(^\text{39}\)

The commercial discussions showed signs of decided progress during Barrère's first months in Rome. In May Visconti Venosta was able to speak of his elation on learning Paris would raise no political objections to a resolution of the economic question. That day, he remarked, he glimpsed the future realization of everything towards which he had directed his efforts and desires. For

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\(^\text{37}\) Ibid., Nos. 52, p20. See Decleva's Da Adua a Sarajevo for a recent analysis of Italy's internal political groupings during this period. Most hostile to the idea of Franco-Italian rapprochement were the Crisplans and Sonninians.

\(^\text{38}\) Ibid., No. 52.

\(^\text{39}\) Ibid., No. 219. Visconti Venosta resigned over a law regarding the withdrawal of the exequator to bishops which was proposed by Zanardelli. The foreign minister deemed it inopportune and dangerous. Ibid., n. 3.
in Visconti Venosta's judgment, France's persistence in subordinating the resumption of economic and financial relations to the rupture of past Franco-Italian alliance had compelled Italy to perpetuate it. Nevertheless, June was a crucial month for the negotiations, with the direction of foreign policy in both France and Italy changing hands. Not only was Admiral Felice Canavero appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Pelloux cabinet, Théophile Delcassé replaced French Foreign Minister Hanotaux in the aftermath of Fashoda.

Delcassé and Barrère were old friends. Their association dated back almost twenty years to the period in which both were launched on their journalistic careers as staff members of Gambetta's La République française. Barrère first encountered Delcassé when, in an editorial capacity, he was required to supervise the work of the clever, young provincial lawyer-journalist. Gambetta's mark on both his proteges was evident. Delcassé himself testified to the influence, remarking that all he accomplished in his career went back to Gambetta's teaching and the precepts of his more immediate companions and spiritual heirs. However, the idea of Franco-Italian rapprochement cannot be traced directly to

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40 Ibid.
41 Delcassé, in turn, was forced to resign in the aftermath of the Moroccan Crisis of 1905. From 1911-1913 he served as naval minister. After a brief period as ambassador in St. Petersburg he returned as foreign minister in 1914, remaining in office until October, 1915. For studies of Delcassé consult: C. W. Porter, Career of Théophile Delcassé (Philadelphia, 1936); P. J. V. Rolo, Entente Cordiale (London, 1969); and Andrew's Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale.
the master, although he would certainly have been aware of the
significance to France of Italian friendship. 42

In July Barrère brought French Foreign Minister Delcassé
up-to-date on developments in Rome after the Pelloux cabinet re­
placed that of Rudini. His major preoccupation during the prolonged
ministerial crisis, Barrère related, had been to learn whether or
not discussions for a commercial accord could be continued and what
the attitude of the new ministers towards economic rapport actually
was. 43 He had also to determine the wisdom of dealing with some
of them--men with whom Barrère was certain transactions of this
nature become "morally impossible." 44

It was then, Barrère related to Delcassé on July 10, he had
received a visit from Italian Senator Rattazzi, intimate friend
and adviser of King Humbert and the most influential architect of
the new Pelloux cabinet. Rattazzi told Barrère of Pelloux's desire
to further develop the cordial relations with France that had been
established by Rudini and Visconti Venosta. According to Rattazzi,
even the King was genuinely hopeful of uncovering areas of agree­
ment between the two countries. Barrère reacted to Rattazzi's
words, he reported, by suggesting the sentiments the senator was
expressing might best be put to the test by confiding responsibility
for continuation of the commercial discussions to Luzzatti. His
proposal had been fruitful, Barrère observed, for several days later

42 See below, pp. 143-9 for an evaluation of Delcassé's role
in the Franco-Italian rapprochement.
43 Barrère à Delcassé, AAE, NSI, XIII, T. n. 224.
44 DDF1, XIV, No. 253.
Luzzatti informed him he had been approached by Rattazzi and accepted the mission proposed to him. Luzzatti appended one stipulation to the offer, however: that there be no contradiction between the intentions of the Italian government and the work of reconciliation in which he would be engaged. Luzzatti was shrewd enough to recognize that the commercial advantages of an eventual economic accord might not live up to Italian expectations. Yet, like Barrère, he viewed its importance primarily as a turning point in Franco-Italian relations, one with serious consequences for the future. Above all, he saw in the successful completion of a commercial accord "the creation of a new situation, of numerous and unpredictable common interests that will make it difficult if not impossible to continue in the errors of an unfortunate past." Following his conversation with Luzzatti, Barrère continued, both General Luigi Pelloux and Admiral Canavero had informed Barrère of the role being assigned Luzzatti and assured the French ambassador of their own amical sentiments. Similar assurances were expressed by King Humbert, Barrère added, with whom he had requested an interview. On that occasion, Barrère noted, he glimpsed the first indication of the strong interest the King attached to the success of the negotiations.

Barrère then left Rome on annual leave. In October Luzzatti arrived in Paris, having received virtual carte blanche from the Italian government to conclude the negotiations for the commercial accord. In Paris he was put in touch with MM. Bompart and Chandèze,
of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Commerce respectively, and with M. Bousquet, Director General of Customs. Barrère and Tornielli collaborated in these final discussions which were brought to a successful conclusion on November 21, 1898. 47

Negotiations had resulted in an accord, consisting of two letters exchanged by the Minister of Foreign Affairs for France, Théophile Delcassé, and Italian Ambassador to Paris, Giuseppe Tornielli. 48 Under the terms of the agreement Italy accorded France most-favored nation treatment, France extending her minimum tariffs to Italy in return. 49

The last stages of discussion had been complicated by international apprehension over Fashoda. 50 Italy was alarmed by the prospect of naval war between France and England in the Mediterranean. In such an event, the necessity of protecting her neutrality would pose grave financial and political problems for Italy.

Yet when he returned to Rome in early November, Barrère found his immediate task had assumed a greater dimension than that of merely calming Italian alarm over possible repercussions of the

47 Albert Billot, "Le rapprochement commercial entre la France et l'Italie," Revue des Deux Mondes, 4, CLI (1899), 144.

48 See Appendix I for texts of the letters exchanged by Delcassé and Tornielli. The accord, in its entirety, is reproduced in Basdevant, Traité et conventions en vigueur entre la France et les Puissances (Paris, 1922), II, 760.

49 See Billot for details of the arrangements. La France et l'Italie, II, 431-33. Silk was excluded from the tariff arrangements and France also maintained its demand for a modification of the Italian tariffs on wines, woolens and materials for upholstery and blankets. DDF1, XIV, No. 529.

50 DDF1, XIV, Nos. 497, 508, 518.
Anglo-French African conflict. On October 26, Italian Minister of Post and Telegraph, Nunzio Nasi, had pronounced a discourse at Trapani, Sicily that endangered ultimate ratification of the commercial accord then in the final stages of negotiation in Paris. Referring to the Italian colony in North Africa, particularly that in Tunisia, Nasi had alluded to the land which may not belong to Italy "but whose soul is ours." The Italian government formally disassociated itself from the minister's statements. Yet from the French viewpoint, the incident had been poorly reported in the press. Barrère considered it essential to convince Italian Foreign Minister Canavero it was imperative any future journalistic polemics be prevented that could unfavorably dispose French public opinion towards economic rapprochement with Italy. In Barrère's estimation a favorable attitude on the part of the French public was an indispensable condition for the success of the commercial arrangements awaiting ratification by the French Parliament. The Nasi declaration was a specific instance of attacks against France by the Italian press. To Barrère, all obstructed not merely economic rapport but every other favorable effect that could flow from friendship between the two peoples. His endeavors were

51 Ibid., No. 512.
52 DDF, XIV, Nos. 100, 102.
53 According to Barrère, Nasi's remarks had been unduly publicized by Crispian newspapers opposed to Franco-Italian rapprochement. DDF, XIV, No. 512.
54 Ibid. Although subsiding, protectionist sentiment remained a significant factor in French political life in 1898.
55 Ibid., No. 526.
apparently successful for the attacks of the Tribuna, at least, ceased immediately.

Luzzatti had also returned to Rome in early November, elated over the successful conclusion of the accord in Paris. In view of King Humbert's obvious satisfaction, Luzzatti suggested the Italian monarch, in his next royal discourse, refer specifically to the excellent relations existing between France and Italy. However the opposition of several Crispi ministers, and their threats to submit their resignations were he to do so, precluded adoption of Luzzatti's proposal.

Yet general reaction to the treaty was quite favorable. Barrère heard from Luzzatti that Pelloux looked on the accord as a point of departure, attaching more political importance to it than commercial interest. Nor, in Pelloux's estimation, did Germany regard the accord with indifference. Although Italy was a guarantee of Germany's territorial integrity--she herself gained nothing from Germany now that France was no longer a menace.56 Foreign Minister Canavero also apprised Barrère of his interest in the political aspect of the transaction.57

In effect, Barrère remarked to Delcassé, the accord produced a veritable thunderbolt. Everyone concurred in finding it useful, adroit and of great political import.58 Assessing the more significant non-economic consequences of the treaty, Barrère laid great emphasis on the impossibility it created of Italy's

56 Ibid., No. 527, n. 1.
57 Ibid., No. 527.
58 Ibid., No. 535.
participation in a maritime war. He stressed as well the inability of Italian francophobes to continue forcing the hand of government. The Crispian-Sonninian offensive, as he expressed it, whose arms had been deployed against France for ten years had been broken.59

Despite his elation Barrère lost no opportunity of benefiting from the slightest occasions that might further improve Franco-Italian relations. He would advise Delcassé, for instance, to encourage the exchange of decorations in which Admiral Canavero had expressed interest and suggest that Luzzatti be awarded the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honor. The motive behind these gestures was always deliberate: the more manifestations of good will with which France surrounds this affair, he wrote the Quai d'Orsay, the better.60

Although the impressions created by the Commercial Accord surpassed all his expectations, Barrère was aware it was a development no one had actually expected or believed could be achieved. Public sentiment had attributed implacable hatred for Italy to France for too long, along with a desire to reduce her by ruin and revolution. The gallophobic and Crispian press had reinforced these attitudes, presenting France as Italy's enemy and responsible for all her ills.61 The Commercial Accord had not succeeded in transforming Italian sentiment. While he knew it was too early to fully evaluate its consequences, Barrère was convinced all the same the accord had created a significant impact. As he remarked to Delcassé, 

59 Ibid.  
60 Ibid.  
61 Ibid., No. 552.
everyone was now aware that the economic peace achieved should lead to financial peace. At the same time they realized financial peace would never be obtained without compensations and guarantees. That was precisely why, he explained, he had not wanted to attach any political conditions to the Commercial Accord. Doing so would have created an impossible situation and demanded more of Italy than she was capable of giving. Yet from the beginning, Barrère also reminded Delcassé, he had indicated he would pose the political question the very day the royal government decided to have recourse to France and extend the benefits of the commercial rapprochement to financial ground.\(^{62}\)

Barrère predicted approval of the accord by a strong majority in the Italian Parliament. It received an overwhelming majority: 236-34 in the Chamber, 105-16 in the Senate.\(^{63}\) Reporting on the four-day discussion accompanying the ratification proceedings, Barrère was obviously impressed with the care taken during the course of debate to avoid any remarks that might be received adversely in France. While certain aspects of the treaty were criticized, chiefly those of an agricultural nature, the dominant note of the discussions centered on those aspects "which put an end to a troublesome tension and reconciled the two countries."\(^{64}\)

Parliamentary sanction left the French ambassador with a sense of security. Italy had returned! He held all the reins of the team in his hand; "it only remained necessary to avoid any ruts,\(^{62}\)ibid. \(^{63}\)ibid., XV, No. 53, n. 2. \(^{64}\)ibid.
not permitting one's self to be overturned." The violent, tense Italy of a year ago, enraged at the first sign of French criticism, was no longer in evidence. 66

65 Barrère à Delcassé, January 30, 1899, AAE, PD, 1.
66 DDF¹, XV, No. 53.
CHAPTER III
TOWARDS RAPPROCHEMENT:
THE MEDITERRANEAN ACCORD OF 1900

Although the threat of Anglo-French conflict had deeply disturbed Italy during the height of the Fashoda crisis, she was far more perturbed to learn France and Great Britain had concluded a convention March 21, 1899 which, in effect, divided North Africa into British and French spheres of influence.1

Italian Ambassador to London, Francesco de Renzis was particularly incensed at Lord Salisbury's attitude in the matter, inexplicable to de Renzis in view of England's professed friendship for Italy.2 No mention was made in the accord of Italy, who was concerned not only for Tripoli but for the caravan routes leading from Lake Tchad into Tripolitania as well. Under the terms of the agreement France gained control of that region south of Lake Tchad and Tummo on the Tropic of Cancer. Thus the hinterland, still claimed by Turkey and coveted by Italy, from the Italian point of view appeared to be falling into French hands.3

1 The text of the Convention is reproduced in DDF1, XV, No. 122, Annex. Delcassé wrote Barrère of the imminent conclusion of the treaty he described as being "equally honorable and advantageous to both parties." Delcassé à Barrère, Papiers Barrère. March 2, 1899, V. (Hereinafter cited as AAE, PB.)

2 DDI3, III, No. 206.

3 Ibid., Nos. 209, 210; British Documents on the Origins of
General Italian reaction to news of the convention, as would be expected, was one of anger. Italy's interest in the area was longstanding, and since the French occupation of Tunis in 1881 she had been particularly sensitive to any change in the Mediterranean status quo. Officially, however, the governmental attitude remained calm. Admiral Canavero informed the Italian Senate that both the French and British governments had assured him Italy need have no fear for Tripoli and its trade route. 4

Yet Italy regarded the situation in which she found herself as a difficult one. Friendship with England had long been the cornerstone of her policy, and she was anxious to maintain close relations with her traditional ally. 5 This--despite the obvious deterioration in Anglo-Italian relations that had occurred during the course of the 1890's. 6 Even the temperate Visconti Venosta had remarked rather bitterly that England regarded Italy as no more than a quantité négligeable, and it was no secret Lord Salisbury was known to lack confidence in Italian reliability and had expressed doubt as to her ability to come to terms with France. 7

4 BD, I, No. 247.
5 Atti parlamentari della Camera dei Deputati e del Senato (Rome, Turin, 1848-1921), Deputati, DL II, 3609.
7 BD, VI, No. 780.
Canavero was the more distraught for having considered Tripoli secure in view of discussions he had held on the matter with British Ambassador to Rome, Lord Currie, the preceding November. Complaining to Germany of the shoddy treatment England had accorded her, the Italian foreign minister let it be known the only amends England could make lay in British support of Italian ambitions in China and recognition of her rights in Tripoli. Accordingly, Canavero proposed to Currie that Italy station a small military force in Tripoli as a joint garrison with Turkey or, as an alternative, that England and France issue a declaration disclaiming their intentions of acquiring territory or political influence in Tripoli. The Italian minister indicated there would be no difficulty with France in doing so since the French government had recently stated to Ambassador Tornielli it would have no objections if the Italians were to take Tripoli. A week later Canavero's proposal was more explicit. He requested a joint Anglo-French declaration that neither country would acquire "territory or political influence north of the parallel of latitude touching the southern extremity of Fezzan ... and that there be full and entire liberty of commerce for the caravan routes coming from Lake Tchad and the neighboring regions towards Tripoli." Britain refused, informing Italian Ambassador de Renzis that neither Britain or Italy had any right to discuss the future of a country whose ownership was not in doubt. Britain had other bases for the refusal. Such a

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8 Ibid., I, Nos. 236, 246, 247.
9 Ibid., No. 247.
10 Ibid., No. 249.
declaration was obviously unilateral. There was also the possi-

bility of a disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the more serious

in light of Britain's fear of French action in the event this oc-
curred. And Italy's own internal situation was highly unstable.11

Italy was accurate in assessing her need of international

support. Her finances were in a precarious state. Compounding

the problem of dire poverty in rural and southern regions of the

peninsula was the marked contrast of relative prosperity in the

north. Yet the necessary political correctives were not forth-

coming. A spirit of malaise, of parliamentary immaturity, largely

the result of selfish aristocratic and bourgeois rivalries, pre-

cluded any direction of the country along the paths of essential,

constructive programs. As a result, there was a tendency to suc-
cumb to those feelings of inferiority which had reached their

peak in 1896 and since then never entirely subsided. Thus Italy

was nurturing a political policy of maneuvering in these years which
did not always reflect creditably on her.12

Barrère had been on leave in Paris when Italy first pro-

tested the Anglo-French African Convention.13 The Qual d'Orsay had

11Ibid., No. 252.

12On Italy's internal situation in this period see Seton-

Watson, Italy from Liberalism to Fascism: 1870-1925, pp. 41-164.
Commenting on Italy's tradition of "having as many irons in the

fire as possible . . ." von Bülow remarked in his Memoires that any-
one familiar with earlier Venetian dispatches or Instructions written
by the Papal Cancellaria cannot be in the least surprised by this
tendency. It rather fills one with "admiration for the political
intelligence displayed therein." 1, 664.

13He was away from Rome between March 24 and April 7.

OEF 1, XV, No. 129, n. 1; No. 131, n. 5.
been advised by the French Embassy in Rome on April 10 of the Italian government's "pained surprise"—not only on learning the terms of the accord but by the silence with which the two powers had surrounded it.  

The reaction was apparently conveyed to Barrère as well by his friend Luzzatti, then in Paris to improve certain clauses of the commercial accord.  

Barrère contacted Delcassé, at the time in Sesses, suggesting a course of action he believed would alleviate the tension in Franco-Italian relations created by the agreement. Barrère felt certain benefits would ensue if France were to advise Italy of her disinterest in Tripoli and its legitimate hinterlands.

Accordingly, he sought Delcassé's permission to offer Italy a political concession of this nature, warning the French foreign minister that if he returned without it his credit in Rome would be ruined.  

Barrère obviously believed such an admonition to be necessary since Paul Cambon, aware of Italian interest in the area when initial Anglo-French negotiations were in process, let Delcassé know he saw no inconvenience to French possessions in central Africa if the hinterlands of Tripoli and the Cyrenaica, "in other words the Libyan desert," were attributed to Italy when circumstances might permit the realization of her designs in Tripolitania. Delcassé had rejected the idea, considering the region of the Libyan desert to fall within England's sphere of interest and that area behind Tripoli to be within France's and of decisive importance for the security of her littoral establishments and the Mediterranean.

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14 Ibid., No. 129, n. 3.  
15 Ibid., No. 178, n. 2; No. 180.  
16 Ibid., No. 129.  
17 Ibid., No. 42, n. 1.
Delcassé was unwilling to go the extent of his ambassador's request, preferring Barrère to be more generalized in any discussions in which he became involved in Rome. The foreign minister was concerned lest the results of the Anglo-French convention be put in question and felt as well that since Italy had discussed the subject with England, she should at least have advised France of her position. 18

The day before he returned to Italy, Barrère heard from his friend, Russian Ambassador to Rome, Aleksandr Nelidoff, that the situation in Italy had grown extremely serious and was likely to involve the fall of both Canavero and the Italian cabinet. 19 It was also Nelidoff's considered opinion that a subsequent ministry would be forced to adopt an anti-French policy. By offering Italy some vague hope for her African interests, Barrère wired Delcassé, France could not only counter Italian apprehensions but safeguard the future as well. He pleaded for permission to tell Canavero "the day the Italians become our neighbors in Africa, they will meet only with our good will in facilitating their legitimate expansion." 20

However, Delcassé's attitude remained unchanged. Barrère was to adhere to generalities in his discussions with the Italian government. 21 He did refer his ambassador, however, to the argument with which he had allayed Turkish apprehension over the convention.

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18 Ibid., No. 129, n. 4. 19 Ibid., No. 130.

20 Ibid. British Ambassador Currie also reported that if the Italian government was unable to produce some explanation or assurances that would satisfy public opinion, it would probably be overthrown. BD, I, No. 247.

21 DDF, XV, No. 130, n. 4; No. 131.
In it he conveyed France's intention of infringing in no way on the rights or possessions of the Sultan in Turkey, and although acknowledging the exercise of French control over a portion of the hinterlands, pointed to the fact that French colonies also served as protection for commerce and the caravans—from which the Tripolitan interests of the Sultan could only benefit. 22 "Reaffirm on your return to Rome," Delcassé instructed Barrère, "that we have no intention of harming the Italian government." He hoped in this way to convince not only Canavero of France's intentions but those who were exploiting the situation as well—exploiting it against the Pelloux cabinet as much as against France. 23

When Barrère subsequently presented the official French position, Canavero admitted that France's stand was unattackable but nevertheless made the same request for a declaration of disinterest that had been proposed to Great Britain. 24 Reaffirming France's known disinterest in Tripoli, Barrère reserved further comment until he had an opportunity of becoming more fully informed. Delcassé, in the meanwhile, continued to caution the most prudent reserve to his ambassador. 25 Barrère's own opinion was that France had everything to lose in refusing the declaration while she stood to gain everything by accepting. 26

In his assessment of the situation Barrère reminded Delcassé that the Italian foreign minister, and to a lesser degree the

22 Ibid., No. 127. 23 Ibid., No. 131.
24 Ibid., No. 138, Annexes 1 and 2.
25 Ibid., No. 135. 26 Ibid., No. 137.
government, were being accused of having lost foresight—not only on this issue but with respect to other matters as well. While Canavero undoubtedly feared the loss of his portfolio, in Barrère's judgment a degree of agitation over the African convention did exist that a gesture on the part of France would do much to dispel. Barrère doubted Canavero would succeed in protecting himself against the attacks of his enemies but at the same time envisioned French policy as operating in a far larger framework than that of the person of the Italian foreign minister.

A private letter to Delcassé was far more revealing of Barrère's views on the matter. Canavero told Barrère that Delcassé had informed Ambassador Tornielli Italy could have Tripoli if she wanted it. Dumbfounded, Barrère asked for a detailed report of all that had transpired to be sent him immediately. "Pas de deux langues," he chided the French minister in a frequently quoted admonition, "It can result in serious problems, inevitable when one's instruments aren't harmonized!" France could no longer avoid a declaration of disinterest in Tripoli after Delcassé's remark, the letter continued, something had to be done. Barrère concluded with an ironic reference to the superfluous recommendation of prudence the foreign minister had urged on his ambassador in a recent wire.

Repeating to Barrère's remonstrances, Delcassé explained that his remarks had been inaccurately reported. He had merely stated France planned nothing in Tripoli—which he was furthermore in no

27 Ibid., No. 138.  
28 Ibid.  
position to offer Italy since it was not his to give. He had mollified Tornielli, Delcassé continued, by telling him that if Italy nourished hopes and ambitions for Tripoli she would not find the French foreign minister standing in her way. 30

Delcassé still opposed issuing any declaration dealing with an eventual division of the Ottoman Empire, since a declaration of that nature would ultimately have to be read in parliament and made public. 31 He did not object, however, to Canavero's informing the Italian parliament of his earlier remarks to the Turkish ambassador regarding the March 21 agreement. 32 After expressing satisfaction with this arrangement, Canavero made a point of reading Barrère a telegram from Tornielli. It alluded to Delcassé's purported statement that he would not refuse continued discussions with the Italian ambassador aimed at reaching a secret accord, satisfying to Italy with regard to both Tripolitania and the penetration of her African routes. 33

Despite Delcassé's refusal to give Canavero written assurances that French colonial expansion in the region would stop at the borders of Tripoli and Cyrenaica, a later letter of Barrère's relates that Delcassé did advise Luzzatti--then in Paris--of his willingness to do so were Visconti Venosta returned to power. 34 There is no further documentation of this offer, nor is there any indication of the precise moment it was extended.

30 DDP1, XV, No. 143. 31 Ibid., No. 148.
32 Ibid. 33 Ibid., No. 152.
34 Ibid., XVI, No. 79. See below, p. 64.
All negotiations, however, were interrupted by the ministerial crisis that developed at this time over Italian affairs in China. 35 When General Pelloux subsequently resigned, Barrère was alarmed lest a reconstitution of the Italian cabinet include Sidney Sonnino, "the man of the German alliances." 36 Barrère considered Sonnino hostile to France. 37 However, when a new Pelloux cabinet was formed May 14, Visconti Venosta was named foreign minister. Barrère wrote Delcassé that in terms of Franco-Italian relations he regarded Visconti Venosta's nomination as indicative of the importance France had come to assume in Italy's political life. He felt the francophobic sentiment apparent in the current ministerial crisis was of a different character than that which had surfaced following the conclusion of the commercial accord in 1898. In the latter instance, Italian antipathies towards France were longstanding and not unexpected. In the cabinet crisis of April-May, 1899, however, Barrère believed a great deal of anti-French feeling had been stimulated by foreign intervention. 38

Cagliari revealed the extent of apprehension aroused by the improved Franco-Italian relationship. In April, during the height of the cabinet crisis, the French fleet was sent to Cagliari to salute King Humbert of Italy, then on his way to Sardinia. 39 Barrère had seized on the occasion in an attempt to create an impression

36Decleva, Da Adua a Sarajevo, p. 103.
37DDF, XVI, No. 39. 38Ibid., XV, No. 166, n. 3.
39Ibid., No. 149, n. 1.
of Latin solidarity. England subsequently followed suit, dispatching the English fleet to pay its respects to the Italian monarch in turn. English Ambassador Currie was well aware of the direction in which Barrère's efforts had been aimed. In a dispatch to Lord Salisbury he related Canavero's remark to him at the time, that "Barrère's attempt to coin money with the French fleet was going too far... and that Paris was mistaken if she expected any further results beyond the general friendly feeling Italy had for her powerful neighbor." It was precisely this sense of friendship, of course, that Barrère wanted to strengthen.

Nor had the implications of the French gesture at Cagliari been overlooked by Germany. Von Bülow subsequently warned Italian Ambassador Lanza of the dangers accruing to a "new orientation" on the part of Italy. Barrère was convinced that the von Bülow-Lanza confrontation had been responsible for Pelloux's initial attempt to form a cabinet agreeable to Germany. Canavero himself told Barrère of the strong protests he'd received from Germany as a result of "the commercial accord with France and all that's followed. You wouldn't believe the assaults I've had to submit to...", he complained.

Rome's influential salons had naturally not remained aloof during the political upheaval. Barrère attributed the anti-French stances adopted by many of them to snobbishness, fear of democracy, love of power, and women who wanted their husbands to be ministers

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40 BFD, 1, No. 250.  
41 DFD 1, XV, No. 196.  
42 Barrère à Delcassé, May 12, 1899, AAE, NSI, XV.
or their sons, ambassadors.43

In general, Barrère wrote Delcassé, he felt that only the unceasing efforts of Rattazzi and Luzzatti had blocked the formation of an anti-French ministry during the last governmental crisis and led instead to one whose foreign minister was France's friend, Visconti Venosta.44 A country's customs and policies do not radically change from one day to another, the ambassador philosophized to Delcassé, convinced as he was at the same time that the Italy of May, 1899 differed essentially from what it had been earlier. In the interim Italian relations with France had become a factor of the first order.45

Shortly after his return to the Consulta, Visconti Venosta made a point of telling Barrère he intended to continue developing bonds of friendship between their two countries and that with good will he was certain France and Italy could also come to terms in the Mediterranean. Their interests were perfectly compatible in the area, he remarked, since the base of both French and Italian policy was the maintenance of the status quo.46 As for Italian undertakings in Tripoli, the Italian minister was emphatic in his opposition to such ventures, noting all the same that France understood how important it was to avoid upsetting certain Italian sensitivities in that direction. With great discretion, Barrère wrote Delcassé, Visconti Venosta made it clear that France—without putting rights in question or alienating legitimate liberty of possession, could engage in

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43 DDF, XV, No. 180.  
44 Ibid.  
46 Ibid.
confidential discussions with Italy that would forestall any misunderstanding as to her intentions and eliminate all suspicions between the two nations originating in the Mediterranean. Visconti Venosta was obviously reopening discussion of the French declaration of disinterest in Tripoli, offered by Delcassé in April.

Despite the encouragement extended Barrère, Visconti Venosta was at the same time informing Ambassadors Lanza in Berlin and Nigra in Vienna that Italy would continue to regard the Triple Alliance as the fundamental base of her policy. Yet the words of reassurance to Barrère were not mere rhetoric. In July Tornielli was advised that Visconti Venosta did not intend to alter his past policy with regard to France. Irrationality and prejudice, he was told, had already wrought too much destruction! Still, the achievement of the goal would be futile, the foreign minister added, if there were no means of maintaining and consolidating Franco-Italian rapprochement. In view of the new international situation, he no longer saw any incompatibility with the obligations of Italy's other alliances in adhering to such a policy. Anglo-French antagonism had come to an end; that between England and Germany had begun! Austria and Russia had concluded a Balkan agreement, with Italy of course regarding any Austro-Russian rapprochement as harmful to her own aspirations.

He had been reluctant to sign a formal act with Hanotaux, Visconti Venosta told Tornielli, in his concern it might be associated

47 Ibid.
48 See above, p. 60.
49 DDI, III, No. 257.
50 Serra, C. Barrère e l'Intesa, pp. 83-84.
with other exchanges Italy was unwilling to discuss. There had also been the question of Tripoli's guarantee by Italy's German allies. It would have been difficult not to advise them of any such action she might have taken. It was a different matter when there was no longer any question of a true bilateral act. Visconti Venosta may well have found it far more significant that since Hanotaux's earlier overtures, Germany had limited what she considered her obligations to Italy under the terms of the Triple Alliance, specifically excluding from them the Tripolitan hinterlands.

Visconti Venosta therefore instructed Tornielli to continue the negotiations, secretly and prudently, cautioning him that when speaking of Tripoli he was to be certain the Cyrenaica was included in the term. Luzzatti was also to be questioned as to any information he may have uncovered regarding French plans for Morocco.

In reply to the instructions he received from Rome, Tornielli expressed doubt the French government, then experiencing grave internal difficulties, would grant a unilateral declaration on Tripoli when England had refused a similar request.

A few weeks later Barrère left on vacation, continuing the negotiations, however, and entering into personal discussions with

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51 DDI 3, III, No. 310.
52 Serra, C. Barrère e l'Intesa, pp. 83-86.
53 Ibid.; DDF 1, XV, No. 178, n. 2; No. 180.
54 Serra, C. Barrère e l'Intesa, p. 86. Tornielli's allusion was to the Dreyfus Affair. See above, p. 40. French internal governmental instability was a constant preoccupation with the Italian ambassador. See DDF 1, XV, No. 298; DDI 3, III, Nos. 336 and 338.
Tornielli in Paris. In October he informed the Italian ambassador of France's readiness to grant a written declaration on Tripoli and Cyrenaica but that Delcassé, in turn, wanted to know what Italy's reaction would be to French expansion in Morocco. Barrère himself was not in favor of grafting Morocco onto the Tripoli question.

Tornielli's reaction, as he indicated to Visconti Venosta, was that a substantial difference existed between the previously discussed status quo and element of French expansion the new proposal introduced. He wondered, as well, if the substitution was prompted by French plans for imminent action in Morocco or inspired by Barrère, "who could have found in the archives of the Farnese Palace something which made him suspect the existence of a secret Anglo-Italian accord." Visconti Venosta responded to the French proposal by instructing Ambassador Lanza to determine Germany's attitude towards the eventuality of a French move in Morocco. Tornielli, if questioned in the meanwhile, was advised to reply he was awaiting instructions.

Both Visconti Venosta and Tornielli then avoided any further discussion of the Morocco-Tripoli declaration. Luzzatti confirmed the foreign minister's hesitation, at the same time acquainting

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55 DDF, XV, No. 298, n. 1; DDI, III, No. 336.
56 DDI, III, No. 336.
57 DDF, XVI, No. 79.
58 DDI, III, No. 336.
59 Ibid., No. 344.
60 Ibid., No. 337.
61 Ibid., No. 338.
62 DDF, XV, No. 298.
Barrère of Tornielli's negative attitude towards the new direction in which France appeared to be moving. Luzzatti cautioned Barrère to proceed slowly, reminding him that although Italy was in need of at least ten years of peace—if the question of Morocco were to be opened, the Italian public would become inflamed and demand compensation. Tunisia was not forgotten! To this Barrère replied that Italy's share would be precisely Tripoli. "We have to take things as they are, not as we'd like them to be!", he reminded Luzzatti. 63

When the Italian silence continued, Barrère decided to sound out Visconti Venosta and attempt to discover his actual attitude to the French proposal. He learned the Italian minister would still be happy to receive a written declaration of the verbal assurances Barrère had given Canavero in April. As for going further, he preferred to proceed gradually "to the extent events made adjustment necessary." 64

The Boer War, of course, had complicated the situation from the Italian point of view. It was generally conceded in the Consulta that either an enlargement or diminution of the English African patrimony would result in war, war which in turn could well produce a grave contrecoup in the Mediterranean. 65 The probability of France's move to an occupation of Touat at this time had also begun to alarm Visconti Venosta. 66 He was concerned that a French

63 ibid.
64 ibid., Annex.
65 ibid., XVI, No. 14. In this regard, while discussing the possible annexation of Transvaal and Orange, King Humbert told Barrère he feared the repercussions certain to follow: "There are too many interests involved for such a development to take place peacefully."
66 Barrère à Delcassé, November 13, 1899, AAE, NSI, XV. Barrère wrote Delcassé of Visconti Venosta's preoccupation, adding
occupation of Morocco, at a time Italy herself was unable to go into Tripoli, might arouse such discontent within Italy the dynasty itself would be imperilled.

Visconti Venosta's fear of the French occupation of Touat was not ungrounded. In late 1899 and early 1900 France actually began the penetration of Interior Morocco. Franco-Moroccan relations were regulated by a treaty dating back to 1845. Although the Algerian-Morocco border was governed by the treaty, sections of the frontiers remained indefinite. Border incidents were frequent, and possession of the Touat, Gourara and Tidikelt oases--discovered after the treaty was drawn up--had never been settled. When objections were raised to French occupation of the oases and the construction of railroads to them, Delcassé merely replied that France had no intention of changing the status quo in the Mediterranean. She was merely exercising the legitimate expansion of her influence in the region.

That if the Italian minister entertained doubts as to France's intentions they were surely inspired by English sources "... trying to profit from English embarrassment and acquire a preponderant situation in Italy ...".

67 PEA, XVIII, No. 4474 [5158].

68 See Anderson, The First Moroccan Crisis, 1904-06, pp. 5-18.

69 DDF, XVI, Nos. 92, 96. French acquisition of Morocco was being actively promoted at this time by the Comité de l'Afrique française, organized in 1899 to popularize African questions with the French people as well as to exert pressure on the government and carry on an organized campaign for colonial expansion. Its membership, although small, was influential and included in its numbers French deputies, senators, military and naval officers, government officials, newspaper editors and owners and members of various geographic and colonial societies. Delcassé's own policy, from the start of his ministry, was associated with the Moroccan question--whose settlement he believed would both fortify and aggrandize France's situation in Europe. Anderson, The First Moroccan
possible French action in Touat eventually led him to express his concern to Lord Currie. Yet Currie merely advised the Italian minister to keep a strict watch and be prepared to avert any injury to Italian interest. As for British resistance to French interference with the integrity of Morocco, Currie expressed the opinion that despite traditional English policy to forcibly resist any attack on the Mediterranean coast, it would be extremely difficult to prevent a French occupation of Touat. This English indifference undoubtedly influenced Visconti Venosta in his decision to have Tornielli reopen the Morocco-Tripoli discussions with Delcassé a few weeks later. Yet after informing the French foreign minister of this decision on December 18, Tornielli—as well as Visconti Venosta—again reverted to silence on the subject.

In the meanwhile Tornielli came to believe that England’s current preoccupations made the present a most propitious time for French expansion in Morocco. Under those circumstances he thought Italy’s silence would be a serious mistake, one which could only weaken her diplomatically and leave an impression of her complete disinterest towards France’s eventual expansion—without any opportunity of obtaining compensation.


70 Bo, 1, No. 288.

71 DDF, XVI, No. 3, n. 1. In May, 1899, Barrère also wrote Delcassé that Canavero’s brother-in-law, the Duc de Zoagli, had confided to him that Italy had nothing to hope for from British cooperation in the Mediterranean. Barrère à Delcassé, May 23, 1899, AAE, NS1, XV.

72 DDF, XVI, No. 3, n. 1, 2; No. 24. 73 DDI, III, No. 352.
Yet Visconti Venosta was unwilling to take decisive action. On January 14, 1900 he wrote Ambassador Lanza of his concern with the international situation and fear of a possible alteration in Mediterranean conditions. Should that be the case, he told Lanza, he himself would be unwilling to adopt Italy's traditionally negative policy of the past. In Visconti Venosta's estimation, the solution to which Italy should resort was a state of calm preparedness. Diplomatically, the first step in this course of action would involve a frank exchange of views with Germany, since the Italian minister was convinced it was in Italy's own best interests to act in harmony with her Central Ally.  

When approached, however, Germany proved unresponsive. Von Bülow had high regard for Visconti Venosta, considering him a wise and prudent statesman in whom Germany could have full confidence. Nevertheless, Lanza reported, it was almost certain von Bülow would avoid any accords or exchange of ideas on eventual Italian action in the Mediterranean. Ostensibly the reluctance derived from the secretary's fear a less prudent man than Visconti Venosta might some day provoke a causus foederis which overreached Germany's understanding of her obligations to her Italian ally. Any discussions, consequently, would have to take place on a strictly personal basis.

Von Bülow was less diplomatic when he informed London of Lanza's overtures. He intended to limit himself, he wrote, to the remark that Delcassé had given Germany precise assurances France

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74 Ibid., No. 353.
75 Ibid., No. 361.
would respect current treaties. At the same time, he was going to make it clear that British indifference with respect to Touat was such that little hope remained for any protest over the controversial border. He would avoid any detailed discussions with Italy on the Moroccan question, von Bülow added, considering it preferable that Germany approach Italy only after having reached agreement with Britain on how best to proceed.76

While for all practical purposes, then, an impasse had been reached on the Morocco-Tripoli declaration, there had been progress in resolving another Franco-Italian problem: that concerning the borders between Eritrea and French Somaliland. A protocol establishing the frontiers was signed in Rome on January 24, 1900.77 Barrère had urged Delcassé to adopt a conciliatory approach in the negotiations, regarding the settlement as a definitive conclusion to a source of much misunderstanding between France and Italy.78

During a meeting that finalized the Red Sea boundary settlement, Barrère and Visconti Venosta again resumed an exchange of views on Tripoli and Morocco. According to Barrère the discussions were initiated when he expressed the hope they could also resolve other problems between the two countries. Agreeing wholeheartedly with his sentiments, Visconti Venosta had replied that if Barrère was alluding to the Mediterranean, he would always find him ready

76PEA, XVIII, No. 4476 [5158].
77DDF, XVI, No. 24, 51. Text of the agreement delimiting the frontier between French Somaliland and Eritrea is reproduced in Basdevant, Traité et conventions en vigueur entre la France et les puissances étrangères, 11, 767-68.
to talk "in confidence and as a friend." Visconti Venosta then expressed his own inability to establish a correlation between the question of Tripoli and that of Morocco. In his analysis of Visconti Venosta's hesitation, Barrère wrote Delcassé that although the Italian minister recognized France's legitimate interests in Morocco, he still feared to open the question prematurely since France was not alone in her interest in the area. To this Delcassé had retorted that France could well address the same words to Italy in the face of her desire for a French declaration of disinterest on Tripoli.

In Visconti Venosta's version of the resumption of talks, Barrère had requested a confidential discussion, in the course of which he told the foreign minister that France was ready to renew its formal assurances respecting the status quo in Tripoli-Cyrenaica and would not oppose eventual action Italy might exercise in order to extend her influence in Tripolitania. However France desired to know, in return, that she would not meet with Italian opposition in Morocco. Visconti Venosta's objections to the proposal, he afterwards wrote Tornielli, had not derived from the base of the question but from a certain repugnance he felt in pledging Italy to remote, incalculable action. When the Italian minister queried Barrère as to the nature of any French action in Morocco, the French ambassador had reserved further elaboration.

A few weeks later Barrère learned Visconti Venosta was in ill health and not expected to remain long in the cabinet. He

79 DDF, I, No. 51. 80 Ibid., No. 55.
81 Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, p. 88.
therefore began urging Delcassé to proceed as quickly as possible with the negotiation of the declarations, asking as well for specific information with regard to Delcassé's intentions in order to be prepared for all eventualities that might occur in subsequent discussions. Typical of the points on which he wished to be informed:

-- was Delcassé asking for a statement on all of Morocco?

-- was it only mutual assurance that France renounced Tripolitan territory and Italy, Moroccan?

-- did France demand recognition of her superior rights to interior Morocco as far as the Atlantic in exchange for her recognition of Italy's to Tripoli?

By February 10 Barrère reported that there was fundamental accord on the contents of the declarations. Once Visconti Venosta understood the French sphere of influence reserved the question of Tangier and Spanish possessions on the Mediterranean coast, he was no longer concerned that France's intentions in Morocco were not peaceful. Barrère's repeated assurance of French disinterest in Tripoli and of non-interference with the caravan routes had also relieved him of any anxiety over a possible clash between French and Italian interests.

There was then the matter of the form the declarations were to be given. Barrère rejected the declaration originally proposed by Delcassé, considering it inopportune and even dangerous. He

82 Camille Barrère, "Lettres à Delcassé," pp. 726-28. Undated, this letter was apparently written in response to Delcassé's letters to Barrère of January 7 and 20, 1900.

83 DDF1, XVI, No. 203.


85 DDF1, XVI, No. 79. The text of this declaration, not included in the French diplomatic documents, is among the papers of
pointed out that it was quite probable Visconti Venosta would eventually wish to communicate the contents of any agreement to Italy's German allies. Obviously, a paper with the character of a veritable political convention could present difficulties. Furthermore, Barrère did not consider the problem to actually involve Morocco. Yet with regard to Tripoli, he reminded Delcassé, he had always been of the opinion it would be a grave error not to repeat France's verbal assurances by way of letters. Tripoli had its place in the Triple Alliance: "It was the object, under cover of destruction of Mediterranean balance, of a casus belli against France." Thus France was in a position, Barrère argued, of suppressing not only the pretext but one of the principal bases of the treaty. If France persisted in asking Italy for a Moroccan guarantee, Barrère then insisted it be under a prudent form. In his opinion, this was best provided by an exchange of letters which had the London Convention of 1899 as their point of departure. 86

Barrère also objected to Delcassé's use of the expression "acquisition of territory" in the letters. He preferred limiting

the Delcassé MSS. It reads:

"Italy engages vis à vis France never to raise territorial claims in Morocco or oppose in any manner the efforts France might be led to make in order to establish her influence there. This engagement extends neither to the question of Tangier, which remains open, nor to Spain's present possessions on the Rif coast, which France excludes from discussion.

"France engages vis à vis Italy never to raise territorial claims in Tripolitania, as at present defined, or oppose in any manner the efforts Italy might be led to make in order to establish her influence there." Delcassé, "Projet de déclaration," February 4, 1900, AAE, PD.

their phrasing to the effect that insofar as France was concerned, the convention had no intention of cutting the caravan routes of Tripoli-Cyrenaica and that France's colonial expansion stopped at the borders of that region.87

As for the Italian letter on Morocco, Barrère merely wanted it to inform France that Italy found nothing incompatible with her own interests were France in a position of power in Morocco.

Barrère's overriding concern at this stage of the negotiations was to eliminate any reason for a violation of the secrecy of the correspondence. He felt, of itself, it should contain nothing that could be construed in any way as being menacing in character.88 Delcassé agreed to these requests, insisting only that the character of the declarations be that of a response by France to Italy's request for a statement on Tripoli.89

According to Barrère, Delcassé's acquiescence left him with two alternatives:

-- a response, in letter form, to Italy's request for assurance that France had no intention of interrupting the caravan communications of Tripolitania with the African interior and that French colonial expansion would stop at the Tripolitan borders,

-- if Delcassé persisted on grafting Morocco onto the Tripoli affair, having Italy inform France, in consequence of the above-stated letter, that she [Italy] found nothing contrary to her own interests in defense of France's interests as "Puissance voisine" of Morocco.

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87 Ibid. 88 Ibid. 89 DDF, XVI, No. 72, n. 2.
Since the latter formula consisted of assurances to Italy and contained nothing contrary to Italian interests, Barrère considered it a less dangerous form than any other for the Morocco-Tripoli declaration.  

Barrère planned on being in Paris during most of April, and although another ministerial crisis arose in Italy during March, Visconti Venosta advised the French ambassador before his departure of his own desire to carry their exchange of views on Tripoli and Morocco through to a conclusion. On Barrère's return, the Italian minister then indicated his interest in extending the proposals still farther than had been France's intent. The French government would pledge herself to not occupying Tripoli, Visconti Venosta observed, but did not authorize Italy to assert her rights in the region. In other words, France conserved the right to formally oppose her eventual Italian expansion in Tripoli.

Barrère immediately grasped the implications of Visconti Venosta's proposal. His response was to be crucial in the subsequent development of Franco-Italian relations. Although Delcassé had not expressed his position on the particular point made by the Italian minister, Barrère unequivocally stated that French approba-

tion of an Italian move in Tripoli would have to carry, as a condition, Italy's non-engagement against France in Europe. He pointed out that while recognizing the justice of Visconti Venosta's distinction, Italy could certainly understand France's reserve towards such a hypothetical undertaking. An Italy free of any

\[90\text{Ibid.}, \text{No. 79.} \quad 91\text{Ibid.}, \text{No. 136, Annex.} \quad 92\text{Ibid.}, \text{No. 136.}\]
political or military obligations against France would make every
difference to France in Africa. 93

Negotiations continued in this spirit, Visconti Venosta
fully aware of the obstacles the Triple Alliance placed in the way
of French assent to the new Mediterranean orientation of his policy. 94
Barrère by now had no doubt that the direction of Italian foreign
policy was centered on Tripoli. His conviction was strengthened
through observation of the Consulta-inspired press as well as by
Visconti Venosta's own overtures to him. 95

During the course of the discussions that followed, Delcassé
expressed his willingness to accede to Visconti Venosta's request
for a more positive limitation on the French sphere of influence,
expressing to Barrère at the same time his hope the Italian minister
would recognize the necessity of granting the reciprocal assurances
France was seeking. 96 Yet France would enter into the "larger
arrangement Italy sought," Barrère reiterated to Visconti Venosta,
only to the extent Italy was able to extend pacific assurances to
France respecting her own treaties with the Germanic powers. Until
that time conversations would have to remain confined to what
Barrère defined as "the preliminary stages": excluding French
recognition of Italian sights on Tripoli and a parallel arrangement
for Morocco. 97

95 Ibid., No. 136. A report to Delcassé from Ambassador
de Noailles in Berlin also noted Italy's apparently strong interest
in Tripoli at this time. DDF, XVI, No. 156.
96 Ibid., Nos. 148, 160. 97 Ibid., No. 171.
Accordingly, on June 9, Barrère submitted three proposed letters to Delcassé, urging immediate reply since the Italian ministerial crisis was expected to crest within a matter of days. Basically they remained confined to the negative agreement which excluded French recognition of Italian designs on Tripoli and laid down a parallel arrangement regarding Morocco. Barrère himself was satisfied with the letters insofar as they terminated his concept of the first phase of the current Franco-Italian negotiations: establishing the existence of friendly discussions and exchanges of view which envisioned an entente between France and Italy on the ground of their former divisions. His concern for haste centered on what Barrère believed would be Visconti Venosta's absence in a reconstituted Italian cabinet.

Precisely because of this doubt as to Italy's future foreign minister, however, Delcassé refused to authorize the exchange of letters. Since independent operations had already resulted in France's expansion in the defined areas, he preferred to continue the negotiations with Italy after her governmental crisis was resolved and he knew with whom he would be dealing in the future.

Barrère did not agree with the French minister, maintaining that the probability of Visconti Venosta's withdrawal only increased the need for expressing the results of recent Franco-Italian

\begin{footnotes}
\item[98] For texts of the letters of proposal see DDF, XVI, No. 171, Annexes 1, 2 and 3.
\item[99] Ibid., No. 171.
\item[100] Ibid., No. 185. See Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale, pp. 153-57 for French expansion on the Moroccan border in this period.
\end{footnotes}
discussions under Visconti Venosta's signature. In Barrère's opinion it was more than likely the views of Visconti Venosta's successor would differ.\textsuperscript{101} He objected to Delcassé's point of view because it appeared to imply a complete entente could only be reached if Visconti Venosta were a permanent minister, which could never be the case in Italy! Barrère would prefer to have taken advantage of the Italian minister's presence and have Italian policy so firmly engaged in the path on which France had thrust it his successors could only reverse its direction with difficulty. Even with Visconti Venosta, he had complained to Delcassé, we weren't at all certain the second step would follow.\textsuperscript{102}

Barrère was convinced it was essential for France to conclude the agreement Delcassé now held in abeyance. Urging him to act, he reminded Delcassé that if—as Barrère—the foreign minister viewed the matter as much European as African, he realized there were serious reasons for writing, as well as for having already given verbal assurance, that France had no intention of going into Tripoli. Neither could he fail to recognize Italy's right to extend her influence in Tripoli when, in exchange, she left France free in Morocco. You know, Barrère told Delcassé, Italy will modify her alliances only if it becomes politically expedient for her to do so. What France then had to do was create that interest. Beyond financial and commercial questions, Barrère felt, Italian interests lay in the Mediterranean, in Tripoli; Italy's fear was precisely that France might first enter this area. This fear had been one of the causes leading to Italy's current alliances. Since

\textsuperscript{101} DDF\textsuperscript{1, XVI, No. 187.} \textsuperscript{102} Ibid., No. 190.
France had no interest in Tripoli, he reasoned, she should suppress Italy's apprehensions in writing. The day Italy asked France to go farther and recognize her right to extend her influence in Tripoli, France could demand in return--beyond her liberty in Morocco--the guarantee that Italian alliances were no longer directed against her. 103

Delcassé was not convinced by Barrère's argument. He saw no fundamental problem, for instance, were a less prudent foreign minister than Visconti Venosta to reveal a Morocco-Tripoli declaration. As for Barrère's preoccupation in snatching Italy from German domination, he refused to be impressed with the reasoning that Tripoli was the object of a casus belli against France, arguing that because France had no intention of conquering Tripoli, the casus foederis could never be invoked. France could not write Italy she did not covet Tripoli, Delcassé added, without at the same time recognizing Italian rights, which merited compensation! And doing so, he concluded, would expose France to needless involvement with Turkey--a factor Germany would never hesitate to use against France in the event of any Italian indiscretion. Delcassé also felt that the more generalized phrasing Barrère had proposed in exchange for France's declaration of disinterest might permit Spain and England to claim their Mediterranean interests were being threatened. 104

As events developed, Visconti Venosta maintained his post in the new Italian cabinet formed on June 24, 1900. He and Barrère then continued their efforts to produce a declaration which would

103 Ibid. 104 Ibid., No. 203.
satisfy all who were party to it.105 By July 21 Barrère felt sufficient agreement had been reached to propose that Visconti Venosta meet him in Rome to sign the exchange of letters.106 Visconti Venosta, however, considered the letters' phrasing too restrictive with respect to Tripoli. Leaving shortly on his annual vacation, Barrère decided to postpone a resumption of negotiations until his return in November.107 On November 12 he submitted another letter of proposal to Visconti Venosta.108

When submitting the November 12 letter-proposal, Barrère had expressed regret that agreement had not been reached in an overall European sense. Visconti Venosta remarked in reply that more was involved than France's interest in the Triple Alliance; there was also the question of Italy's surveillance and defense against one of her allies, the allusion being made of course with reference to Austria.109 A few weeks later, however, the Italian minister informed Barrère of his desire to acquaint Victor Emmanuel with the negotiations, which until then had been carried on in the greatest secrecy.110 King Victor Emmanuel III expressed his entire

105 Ibid., No. 190, n. 2; Nos. 226, 230, 232, 236.
106 DDF, III, No. 431. 107 DDF, XVI, No. 251.
108 Ibid., No. 375, n. 4. This document has not been found.
109 Ibid., No. 375. Visconti Venosta was also in the final stages of negotiating two accords with Austria: the first pledging both governments to maintain the status quo in the Balkans; the second, a naval convention providing for the coordination of the Austrian and Italian fleets in case of war against France and Russia. The Austrian accords were the more significant in view of a recently concluded Russo-Austrian treaty.
110 Ibid., No. 401. The assassination of King Humbert in July had left Italy with a new monarch. Barrère was favorably impressed by the young king, finding him both intelligent and well-
satisfaction with the rapprochement the tentative accords implied, and on December 29 Barrère wired Delcassé that with only minor modifications of wording, complete agreement had been reached. To this Delcassé responded January 2, 1901, authorizing Barrère to proceed in the signing and exchange of the letters.111

The exchange of notes, predated December 14 and 16, 1900, took place on January 4, 1901. In Barrère's letter to Visconti Venosta the French Government reiterated its intent of not extending its frontier or sphere of influence to the province of Tripoli and of respecting caravan communications between Tripoli and French territory. It did not, however, without French consent, recognize Italy's right to expand in the Tripolitan province. Visconti Venosta's reply recognized the right of France to extend her influence in Morocco, with the reservation that if such action modified the political or territorial integrity of the Chérifien Empire in Morocco Italy was entitled to the development of her influence in Tripoli.112

Barrère attached great significance to this Mediterranean Accord, which he believed "modified profoundly, and to France's advantage, the position of active forces in the Mediterranean." In his estimation, it resolved one of the most difficult aspects of

Informed. Victor Emmanuel III was also reputed to be an ardent irredentist, Barrère wrote Delcassé, and had reportedly informed his father-in-law, the Grand Duc Pierre Nicolaievitch, that he had had enough of the Triple Alliance and intended to maintain full liberty of action. He would subordinate Italian independence to no one. Ibid., No. 374.

111 Ibid., No. 413; No. 413, n. 2.
112 DDF², I, No. 17. The Barrère-Visconti Venosta letters are reproduced in Appendix II.
Franco-Italian relations. Barrère saw the Mediterranean as the keystone of Italian action, contributing to the formation of her alliances against France and leading her to establish accords with England. Since Tunis, France had been suspected of attempting to expand her hegemony in the Mediterranean, not only in Morocco but in Tripoli. Yet as much as Italy coveted Tripolitania, she was unlikely to undertake any direct action for lack of sufficient military and financial resources. Nor was she likely to secure the blessings of the Powers on any such venture, particularly her allies. Even her internal affairs weighed the scales against any Italian Mediterranean undertaking. France, on the other hand, gained far more tangibly from the accord. In a sense, not only had Italy become dependent on France with regard to her Tripolitan aspirations; she recognized French rights to Morocco as well. To Barrère the Morocco-Tripoli accord had the additional value of greatly reducing fear and jealousy in Italy—lessening, in turn, the possibility of a Mediterranean agreement between Italy and England that he felt would actually have been directed against France.113

Delcassé also evinced considerable satisfaction with what had been accomplished, sharing with Barrère an appreciation of the advantages inherent in the Franco-Italian Mediterranean accord of 1900. Despite certain dissimilarities between his own views and those of Barrère during the course of the negotiations, he had come to value particularly, he wrote Barrère, the essentially conservative character that had ultimately prevailed in the accord. It excluded any temptation, on the part of Italy, to precipitate action in

113 Ibid.
Tripoli and of obliging France, at the same time, to accelerate her own resolutions concerning Morocco. He was also assured that Rome understood the importance of not disturbing the Mediterranean equilibrium—unless to reap legitimate compensation, were France one day constrained to renounce the status quo in Morocco and impose her sovereignty over the African empire. The French minister thanked Barrère profusely for his skill and patience in the negotiations and, at Barrère's suggestion, informed Visconti Venosta of his appreciation for the efficacious help the Italian minister had given. Delcassé also had Barrère tell Visconti Venosta he considered it one of the privileges of his political life to have joined his own efforts to those of Visconti Venosta in the achievement of such a felicitious accomplishment.

Barrère, however, entertained greater ambitions for Franco-Italian rapprochement than had resulted with the Mediterranean accord of 1900. The core of his over-all policy was the slow corrosion of Italy's ties to the Triple Alliance. He viewed the Tunisian negotiations, commercial arrangements, delimitation of the Red Sea boundaries, and Morocco-Tripoli accords as mere stages, stages marking the road to the vastly more significant political accords of 1902. For it was Barrère's ultimate hope that the Triple could gradually be emptied of its substance. It was towards the achievement of this objective that his efforts would henceforth be directed.

114 Ibid., No. 255. 115 Ibid., Nos. 82, 255. 116 Ibid., No. 17

CHAPTER IV

RAPPROCHEMENT ACHIEVED:
THE NEUTRALITY ACCORD OF 1902

A greater degree of cooperation as well as a noticeable increase in the warmth of Franco-Italian relations followed the exchange of the Barrère-Visconti Venosta letters. France bestowed the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honor on Victor Emmanuel III who, in turn, made the first appearance of an Italian monarch at the French Prix de Rome exhibition in the Villa Medici. Representatives of the two countries met to discuss a railroad project between Nice and Cuneo and also reached a modus agendi regarding the protection of the rights of Christians in China.

Barrère, however, was acutely aware of the need to stimulate still closer collaboration between the two nations in order to achieve his ultimate objective of corroding Italy's ties to the Triple Alliance. One of the first steps he took towards attaining this goal was a natural one for the former journalist; he warned Delcassé of the harm he believed various French newspapers were inflicting on Franco-Italian relations. He cited journalistic preoccupation with Austro-Italian antagonism as an example. While

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2 DDF, Nos. 58, 72.
the subject was certainly a worthwhile one, he remarked to his superior, it was one to be treated with prudence and discretion. Barrère felt the tactics being employed would only succeed in offending a large number of Italians. He was convinced many of them regarded French articles on Italian affairs as essentially aggressive manoeuvres aimed at reducing Italy to isolation. Rather than countering France's own interests, Barrère suggested the newspapers adopt a more positive approach. He recommended the substitution of objective, rational articles that were supported by facts, figures and tables. These articles could demonstrate, for instance, the incompatibility of Italian and Austro-Hungarian economic interests. Italy's commercial treaty with Austria was due to expire in two years, Barrère reminded Delcassé, and it seemed doubtful at the moment it would be renewed on the same advantageous terms for Italian agricultural products. A suppression of the favorable terms accorded Italian wines would provoke a severe agricultural crisis in Italy. Competently exposed, Barrère believed this thesis would have a considerable impact in Italy, one from which France could very well benefit.

Following the same line of reasoning, Barrère protested a proposed French surtax on wines having an alcoholic content of more than 12 per cent. Although a complementary proposal was being introduced to exempt foreign wines from the tax, Barrère expected the latter proposal to encounter opposition on the part of French winegrowers. Were they successful, he felt Italian reaction could

3Ibid., No. 12.
be sufficiently adverse to lead to demands for a modification of the recently concluded Franco-Italian Commercial Accord. France should not be destroying the hopes to which the Commercial Accord gave birth, he argued, further diminishing the advantages of the accord in the area of its greatest interest to Italy.\(^4\) If Delcassé's influence in protecting Italian wines from the surtax were ineffectual, Italy would consider the matter a material and moral violation of the commercial arrangements the two countries had contracted. In Barrère's estimation the repercussions on Franco-Italian political relations would be serious.\(^5\)

Of course, a far broader application of economic assistance was implicit in Barrère's approach to achieving the degree of Franco-Italian rapprochement he sought. He deeply regretted the absence of French capital in the development of Italian industrial projects. French capital was, in Barrère's own words, "a powerful army in the conquest of foreign markets."\(^6\) He considered it unfortunate it was so inexplicably timid at times, not only depriving France of the customary benefits she might expect from her assistance in this area but of the appreciable influence normally accruing to such cooperation as well.\(^7\)

In February Barrère took advantage of an opportunity provided by Delcassé's Senate budget address to underscore the concept of Franco-Italian rapport he was attempting to develop. Asked for his reaction to the remarks Delcassé proposed making on France's Italian

\(^4\)ibid., No. 13. \(^5\)ibid., No. 73. \(^6\)ibid., No. 192. \(^7\)ibid. Nos. 192, 579.
policy, the ambassador showed no hesitation in suggesting revisions which would make them accord more closely with his own thinking. 8

Barrère's efforts to improve the Franco-Italian relationship were not confined to the area of economics, however. To further facilitate the achievement of his ultimate objective, he also repeatedly urged Delcassé to enlist the assistance of Emperor Nicholas of Russia and the Prince of Montenegro in influencing the Quirinal in France's behalf. 9 For Barrère was convinced considerable pressures would be brought to bear on the Italian King to renew the Germanic alliances. 10 In Barrère's opinion it was therefore imperative every effort be made to bring Italy's alliances into harmony with re-established Franco-Italian rapport and the moral obligations that relationship imposed. 11

As matters developed, relations between the two countries were affected decisively by the emergence of the Zanardelli Ministry on February 14, in which the direction of foreign affairs was assumed by Giulio Prinetto. 12 Prinetto was a successful businessman

8 Ibid., Nos. 56, 59. Barrère preferred a warmer tone than Delcassé had adopted, and one more flattering to Italy. He suggested, for instance, referring to Italy as "un grand pays voisin."

9 Ibid., Nos. 118, 132, 176, 252, 279, 300. As a natural rival of Austria-Hungary, Russia was in a position to exert considerable influence on Italy's foreign-policy attitudes. Since Victor Emmanuel III was known to be deeply in love with his Montenegrin wife, Barrère also hoped the relatives of the Princess would be able to develop francophilic tendencies in the Italian court.

10 Ibid., No. 104. 11 Ibid.

12 Politically conservative, Giulio Prinetto was Italian foreign minister from February, 1901 to March, 1903. He had previously served as Minister of Public Works from July, 1896 to December, 1897.
from Milan who assumed office with an anti-Triple Alliance reputation. The reputation had its origins in remarks Prinetti supposedly made while a deputy in 1891. Inexperienced in the role of diplomat ten years later, the new foreign minister gave immediate evidence of considerable indiscretion. The faux pas may well have been occasioned by Prinetti's attempt to offset any reservations his earlier pronouncements against the Triple Alliance may have led Italy's German allies to entertain towards him. In any event shortly after his nomination to the Consula, Prinetti remarked to Bavarian Minister Tucker that his earlier apprehensions were actually inspired by Crispian policy. However, Prinetti had continued, since time and experience had demonstrated both the peaceful character of the Tripplic and advantages afforded Italy by it, he intended henceforth to direct all his efforts towards maintaining the alliance. This supposedly confidential disclosure appeared in papers in Milan and Berlin the following day. Publication of the remarks was believed to have originated with Prinetti himself, despite his later denial to the Italian Parliament that any such conversation with Tucker had taken place.13

Barrère and Prinetti had been acquainted for several years and relations between the two were cordial, although Barrère initially adopted a more reserved tone with Prinetti than he had with Visconti Venosta. The reserve was based on more than the Italian minister's indiscretion to Baron Tucker. Barrère wrote in later years that Prinetti was at first hesitant and fearful. Newly arrived in the diplomatic milieu, with only a secondary standing in

13 DDF², 1, Nos. 92, 97, 150.
parliament and little influence with his monarch, he was also subjected to the pressures of the Germans who were fully aware of the approaching expiration of the tripartite treaty. Although Barrère felt Prinetti was in no position to adopt a definitive pro-French stand—which is where he was convinced the Italian minister's personal sympathies actually lay—he thought Prinetti should at least have given France some pledge of his good will. As matters stood, in Barrère's opinion the new Italian minister still had "some way to go to walk with us in the path of peace and friendship."

Yet by April relations between the two countries had become increasingly cordial. The French government condoned Italy's establishment of postal service in Tripoli, a significant gesture to Barrère who believed Italy viewed France's acquiescence as verification of her own disinterest in Tripoli. Barrère had also encouraged joint discussion by the two countries of a railroad linking the Adriatic with Constantinople, a project in which Italy had evinced great interest. In addition, he attempted to draw Italy and France's ally, Russia, into a closer relationship, assisting their endeavors to reach an economic entente. To this end he brought together his friend Luzzatti and Russian Ambassador Nelidoff, with whom he was on the closest of terms.

However, more than any other factor, Barrère regarded the visit of the Italian fleet to Toulon as indispensable in improving

14 Ibid., No. 92: 11, Annex.
15 Ibid., 1, No. 92.
16 Ibid., No. 167.
17 Ibid., No. 182.
18 Ibid., No. 191.
Franco-Italian relations at this time. He attached such significance to it, in fact, that in 1912 he referred to the events as the point of departure for the discussions which resulted in the secret Neutrality Accord of 1902. "At that moment," he wrote, "Franco-Italian rapprochement was an accomplished fact. The Tunisian negotiations, commercial arrangements, delimitation of the two countries' Red Sea possessions, and finally Morocco-Tripoli accord of 1900, had been mere stages.19

This visit, which took place in the spring of 1901, brought together French President Emile Loubet and Italy's royal family; the Italian fleet was under the command of the young Duke of Genoa. The festivities surrounding the event were of considerable import to Italy. Barrère was in close touch with Delcassé while arrangements were being made and emphatic in his insistence the occasion retain a strictly Franco-Italian character.20 He expressed his disturbance on learning plans called for Russian participation in the festivities and laid down conditions of protocol he deemed requisite were Delcassé unable to arrange diplomatically for the Russian's departure.21 When three Russian ships subsequently arrived in Toulon, Barrère, in response to Prinetti's questioning, was able to inform the Italian minister the vessels were only in port for repairs and their arrival was entirely unofficial.22

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21 Ibid., Nos. 137, 141, 164, 169. The situation developed out of President Loubet's desire to demonstrate French interest in a newly-launched Russian ship constructed by French shipbuilders. Delcassé thought the Russian officers, and any other foreign officials at Toulon, might be invited to the dinner being held in honor of the Duke of Genoa.
22 Ibid., No. 170.
Despite Barrère's apprehension, the Toulon visit went smoothly and more than surpassed his expectations. In Barrère's estimation it created more than an excellent impression throughout Italy. The popular sentiment engendered also served to reduce much of the import attached to the Triple Alliance. The French ambassador was not alone in ascribing considerable significance to the Toulon demonstrations. Ambassador de Noailles informed Delcassé that the visit of the Italian fleet completely absorbed Germany's attention, where the question was already being raised as to whether or not Italy intended to desert the Triple Alliance. The official German reaction was, of course, one of indifference, although German diplomatic reports actually began commenting on the forthcoming event as early as February. At that time German Ambassador to Rome, Charles de Wedel, wrote von Bülow concerning Barrère's great zeal in consolidating Franco-Italian relations. German Ambassador to Paris, Hugo de Radolin, also reported Franco-Italian rapprochement was being credited to Barrère, "who had also concluded the Franco-Italian commercial accords." By March 31 Wedel expressed the fear Toulon was being exploited in the press and supporting a widespread conviction of growing Franco-Italian intimacy. While Wedel subsequently discounted any idea of a change in Italy's attitude towards the renewal of the Triple Alliance, he nevertheless suggested that a more amicable attitude towards Italy on England's part would

23 Ibid., No. 185. 24 Ibid., Nos. 185, 201.
25 Ibid., No. 190.
26 Ibid.; PEA, XX, No. 4881 [5830].
27 PEA, XX, No. 4973 [5833]. 28 Ibid., No. 4950 [5831].
contribute decisively to the future retention of Italy's political orientation. Wedel felt England could not only assure Italy of coastal protection but offer a guarantee as well against her greatest preoccupation, the displacement of influence in the Mediterranean.29

Several days after Wedel's dispatch to Berlin, British Ambassador Currie sent Lord Lansdowne a report of a conversation he had been engaged in by his Austrian and German colleagues. Discussion had centered on England's attitude towards the renewal of the Triple Alliance and the reception of the Italian fleet at Toulon. Currie related that while the Triplace representatives had expressed confidence no change in policy was contemplated, both revealed considerable anxiety as to the effect the Toulon demonstrations might produce in Italy. Wedel, Currie added, specifically indicated the desirability of greater English interest in Italian affairs.30

As these developments were unfolding, Barrère began a vigorous drive aimed at bringing Italy's treaty commitments into harmony with the friendly rapport continuing to develop between the two countries. The rapprochement imposed moral obligations, he told Delcassé in February, informing the French minister it was essential Ambassador Tornielli have a clear understanding of France's Italian policy.31 Increased pressure being brought to bear on Italy to renew the Triple Alliance made it imperative there be no doubt as to France's position: regardless of the alliances Italy chose to conclude, they should contain no offensive obligations against France—even those under a defensive cover.32

29ibid., No. 4960 [5832]. 30BD, I, No. 352.
31DDF2, I, No. 104. 32ibid., No. 118.
Barrère's pressure on Delcassé to engage Tornielli in discussion on this point intensified after Toulon. At the end of May he submitted a text which would convey the French position to the Italian ambassador and urged Delcassé to speak to Tornielli before the upcoming Italian budgetary discussions scheduled for June. Barrère's concern was based on more than his observation of general Italian preoccupation with renewal or modification of the Triple Alliance. His confidence in Prinetti had lessened considerably in the course of the minister's first few months at the Consulta. Barrère feared Prinetti lacked the authority and conviction necessary to follow an independent path and envisioned Italy's possible reversion to the domination of Triplce policy.

To heighten the effect of his pronouncement to Tornielli, Barrère suggested that Delcassé draw the Italian ambassador's attention to one of the most decisive arguments in favor of Italy's modification of her political treaties: the rise in Italian stocks on the French market, unequalled since the Initial Franco-Italian rupture. It would also be wise, Barrère advised, were Delcassé to apprise Tornielli of Prinetti's prior knowledge of their discussion.

In pressing the issue as he obviously was, Barrère was not without the support of certain influential Italian statesmen. As he reminded Delcassé, Rudini, Luzzatti, Visconti Venosta and Sonnino had also expressed the opinion that Italy's treaties should be

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33 Ibid., Nos. 185, 201, 258, n. 1; Nos. 262, 267, 268.  
34 Ibid., No. 258.  
35 Ibid., No. 118.  
36 Ibid., No. 262.  
37 Ibid., No. 267.
modified to accord with current Franco-Italian rapport.38 Premier Giuseppe Zanardelli himself, in an interview accorded the Paris edition of the New York Herald a few months earlier, stated openly that Italy had to resolve questions of commerce as well as of alliance. Zanardelli considered it "absolutely necessary any suggestions of animosity towards France be dissipated . . . France and Italy had to remain friends under any circumstances!"39

On June 7 Delcassé notified Barrère that his discussion with Tornielli had taken place. The points Barrère had signalled for inclusion in the conversation had been touched on and Tornielli was to inform Prinetti of Delcassé's remarks.40 The effects of the confrontation Barrère had urged were immediate. June 9 Barrère wired Delcassé that Prinetti had just given two verbal declarations. While discussing the imminent Italian budgetary debate, Barrère had again expressed hope the impression would not be created that Italy planned on contracting any obligations directed against France. In response, Prinetti assured Barrère that he would not treat the question of the Triple Alliance. His discourse stated as well that if the Triple Alliance had once been aggressive in character, it was now compatible with the reestablished Franco-Italian rapprochement.41 In reporting this conversation to Delcassé Barrère asked the French minister to be certain to allude to Prinetti's assurances when next speaking with Tornielli. He also advised Delcassé

38 Ibid., Nos. 104, 267, 268, 277.
39 Cited by Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, p. 106.
40 DDF², I, No. 273.
41 Ibid., No. 275.
to express his great satisfaction with this proof of the Italian government's position towards France.

Prinetti then reassured Barrère further by reading him an excerpt of his parliamentary address prior to its actual delivery. Referring to the compatibility of Italy's intimate relations with France and the Triple Alliance, the discourse alluded to the Toulon visit, in which the two peoples "having put aside reciprocal suspicions no longer recognized the existence of fundamental discord between their respective interests and yielded to demonstrations of cordial friendship that were so natural between two nations who were sisters by race, spirit and culture." ⁴²

When Barrère thanked the Italian minister for his gracious words, he wrote Delcassé, he could tell he visibly disturbed Prinetti by asking him if he wasn't afraid his address might leave the impression the Triple Alliance was about to be renewed. Prinetti insisted Barrère was wrong in drawing such a conclusion, admitting however that his remarks regarding the Triple were the minimum he was in a position to make. As Italy's official representative he could not omit all reference to the alliance. Barrère interpreted Prinetti's explanation as a further indication the renewal of Italy's alliances was not a simple Italian affair. France was involved, and in a large way. Barrère had not pressed the issue further, his report to Delcassé continued, when he realized a further remark of Prinetti's actually opened discussion on the character of the alliance as it regarded France. Prinetti had continued the conversation

⁴²Ibid., No. 293.
with the significant observation that "the French press would be wrong in seeing in his words the intention of again contracting the same obligations towards the Germanic powers." 43

Barrère and Prinetti met several days later; Barrère again clarified France's position with regard to the possible renewal of France's treaties. He explicitly advised the Italian minister that under its actual form, France did not consider the renewal of the Triple Alliance compatible with the manifestations of Franco-Italian friendship demonstrated at Toulon or with the recent accords the two countries had concluded. It would not be sufficient for Prinetti to tell him the treaty was not aggressive and Italy only obliged to provide a third Power with military assistance if the latter were attacked by France, Barrère continued. For in response Barrère would only inform the Italian minister France held a differing opinion. "War is more often brought on," the French ambassador stated, "by the one who declares it. Such a disposition would thus constitute an indirect threat to our security." 44 To this Prinetti had replied that he was aware of Barrere's meaning and in response would offer him two declarations:

--first, the Italian Government would not renew the Triple Alliance before its anticipated expiration;

--second, if renewed it would contain, with regard to Italy, no clause of a nature to arouse France's suspicions that her security was threatened either directly or indirectly. 45

Barrère considered these formal assurances to be of the greatest importance, providing French policy with the support it

43 Ibid. 44 Ibid., No. 311. 45 Ibid.
lacked and which he had long been seeking. Delcassé immediately advised Tornielli of Prinetti's declarations to Barrère, not only expressing deep appreciation for them but accepting them formally in the name of France.

Other efforts of Barrère now began to reach harbor as well. As Prinetti was delivering his declarations to Barrère on June 25, Russian Ambassador Nelidoff was having an important conversation with Victor Emmanuel III. Nelidoff advised the Italian monarch that the Russian Emperor believed Franco-Italian rapport would be gravely compromised if any clauses remained in Italy's alliance treaties which were contradictory to the ties of interest and friendship between the two peoples. Nelidoff later told Barrère his words appeared to leave a visible impression on the young sovereign.

The path on which Italy, under Prinetti, now definitively embarked was a questionable and controversial one. It is also one for which both Prinetti and Italian foreign policy in general have been severely criticized. Italy first became a participant in the Triple Alliance in 1882, the bitterness permeating her relations with France in that period contributing significantly to Italian participation in the Germanic alliance. Accordingly, several articles of the treaty did bear directly on Franco-Italian relations. Consequently, Barrère's persistent attempts to safeguard France

46 ibid., No. 311.
47 ibid., Nos. 302, n. 1., 312, 332, 376.
48 ibid., No. 302 and Annotation du Ministre, July 30, 1901.
49 ibid.
50 See above, pp. 18-19.
against the possibility of Italian hostility was a very real problem confronting Prinetti.

Article II of the original *Tripplice* pact declared that if Italy were attacked by France without provocation, Germany and Austria would come to Italy's assistance. Italy, in turn, was obliged to go to the assistance of Germany if the latter were attacked without provocation by France.\(^{51}\) Under the terms of Article V, if the peace of any of the contracting parties were threatened, they would counsel together as to military measures to be taken with a view to eventual cooperation. In case of war they engaged not to conclude an armistice, peace, or treaty except by common agreement.\(^{52}\)

In 1887 the original treaty was renewed, supplemented by new German-Italian and Austro-Italian agreements. Article III of the separate German-Italian treaty stated that if France moved to extend her occupation, protectorate or sovereignty in North Africa and Italy considered herself obliged to undertake action in North Africa to protect her Mediterranean position, the ensuing state of war between Italy and France would constitute the *casus foederis* on Italy's demand with all the effects foreseen by Articles II and V of the treaty of 1882.\(^{53}\)

France had only a general idea of these treaty stipulations when Barrère and Prinetti began the discussions that ultimately resulted in the Neutrality Accord of 1902. On the basis of


\(^{52}\)ibid., 67-69.

\(^{53}\)ibid., 112-13.
confidential information Barrère had managed to gather he had prepared a report for Delcassé in June of 1900 which permitted France to reconstruct certain clauses apparently contained in the Tripple treaty. Barrère had remarked when submitting his findings that "one of the principal objects of interest to a French ambassador to Rome should be in piercing the mystery of an alliance pact which concerns us to such a high degree." As a result of his investigations it was Barrère's conclusion that

-- the Tripple Alliance was defensive in character in the sense it only engaged the contractants if one of the two was attacked,

-- an attempt by a third Power to seize Tripoli would constitute a casus belli. On this basis he reasoned that the occupation of Tripoli could lend the Tripple Alliance an offensive character,

-- if Austria-Hungary expanded territorially to the East she was obliged, in turn, to give Italy territorial compensation,

-- subject to parliamentary approbation, the contractants were assured of most-favored nation treatment.

Admitting the Tripple's defensive character, Barrère was nonetheless convinced it was open to extremely broad interpretation respecting the allies' obligations. He thought it doubtful, for instance, that Italy would consider herself dispensed from her obligations if France were provoked to a declaration of war. On the contrary, he thought nothing would prevent her from going beyond the text itself if Italy judged it opportune to be associated in an attack against France. Barrère was even inclined to believe the latter eventuality had been foreseen in the negotiation of annexed

54 DDF, XVI, No. 167.
military protocols, in a stipulation granting Italy the right of intervention in a Franco-German conflict despite the absence of a casus foederis. 55

On the basis of considerations such as these Barrère had concluded the Triple Alliance was essentially offensive in character and should be modified in the interests of French security. 56 His views were shared by France's Russian ally. French Ambassador to St. Petersburg, Adrien Montebello, wrote Delcassé that Russian Foreign Minister, Count Vladimir Lamsdorff, also thought Italy should disassociate herself from all clauses directed against France. Information the Russian Government had gathered on the matter also led him to believe Victor Emmanuel was personally disposed to act accordingly. 57

Italy, however, was admittedly in a difficult position. Great as her need of France's good will and assistance might be, the Triple Alliance provided security in other areas she considered equally vital to her wellbeing. Austro-Italian antagonism probably posed the greatest threat once Franco-Italian animosity gave way to the rapprochement of recent years. The tension derived from various sources: history, temperament, irredentism, rivalry for Albanian influence, commercial competition, disagreement over an ultimate Balkans settlement. 58 The antagonism was intensifed

56 Ibid.
57 Ibid., I, No. 176.
by strained relations between the ruling families of the two countries, largely the result of Emperor Franz Joseph's failure to return King Humbert's visit to Austria-Hungary in 1881. Here again the complexity of the still broader international framework was a major factor. It had been primarily papal opposition that prevented the Emperor from journeying to Rome.

In a discussion of the papacy with Barrère in 1901, Prinetti acknowledged the existence of suspicions still directed against France as a supposed advocate of the re-establishment of papal temporal power. Prinetti himself felt such allegations could no longer be taken seriously and should be directed more realistically towards Austria-Hungary. Franz Joseph was seventy-four, the Italian minister remarked, and Archduke Francis Ferdinand--the heir apparent and an intense clerical--was not as weak-willed as rumour had it!

Nor did Prinetti conceal his anxiety over the fate of the Italian-Austrian commercial treaty. Indications pointed to a renewal on terms far less advantageous to Italy. In a discourse before the Delegations on May 22, Austrian Foreign Minister Agenor Goluchowski had opposed the idea of subordinating political alliances to considerations of a purely commercial order. It was precisely in this area, of course, that Barrère repeatedly urged Delcassé to exert his influence and enhance France's position through a more adroit exploitation of the Italian market.

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59 *DDF*², I, No. 311.  
Prinetti, as his predecessor Visconti Venosta, was also aware of changes on the international scene. The Franco-Russian alliance was firm, he reminded Barrère, and France's relations with Germany had undergone profound modification. "We Italians also have great need of peace," he added, "but that is not incompatible with the defense of our own interests."62

It was on this twofold basis that Prinetti was obviously proceeding. For Italian interests were unmistakably centered around Tripoli. In July Prinetti suggested that in order to dissipate any remaining suspicions regarding France's disinterest in Tripoli, the Barrère-Visconti Venosta letters be made public.63

Barrère's one reservation to the disclosure was the effect this step might produce within the Ottoman Empire, although he felt such difficulties might be surmounted beforehand. The letter accords could be presented as a means of relieving Italian apprehensions over French intentions in Tripoli, he told Delcassé. Viewed under this aspect they could be regarded as a guarantee for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. However Delcassé was initially opposed to the idea of publication confined to the declaration on Tripoli. He was certain it would raise the question as well of why there had been no reciprocal assurances concerning Morocco, and in Delcassé's mind the moment was still inopportune for any Moroccan disclosures.64 Barrère and Delcassé apparently continued their discussions of Prinetti's proposal in Paris, where Barrère was expected towards the end of August.65

62 Ibid., No. 311.  
63 Ibid., No. 334.  
64 Ibid., Annotation du Ministre.  
65 Ibid.
However, a crisis in Franco-Italian relations developed at this time over Franco-Turkish conflict. On August 26, 1901, France severed diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire. Turkish failure to comply with the arrangements subsequently agreed on to resolve their difficulties led to a French naval demonstration against the Ottoman Empire and ultimate occupation of Mitylene. The Franco-Turkish developments were extremely disturbing to Prinetti, who discussed his concern with Ambassadors Wedel and Passetti. According to Wedel, Prinetti queried him as to what action Germany would be willing to take under Article VI of the Triple Alliance were France to encroach on Turkish territory. He saw, the Italian Minister told Wedel, only two alternatives: the allies could question France in a friendly way as to her objectives, or Italy could demand compensation.

Barrère's explanation of the Mitylene occupation apparently satisfied Prinetti, who decided against taking any impulsive action in the presence of an only temporary French occupation. He told Barrère he had advised the Porte to comply with French demands for satisfaction and postponed a pending courtesy visit of the Italian fleet to Constantinople until the incident was settled. Nevertheless, the Italian minister informed Barrère, if the occupation was prolonged to the point of becoming permanent, the French government

66 Ibid., Nos. 464, 474, 490; Camille Barrère, "Lettres à Delcassé", p. 748. The problem originated with Delcassé's determination to obtain reparations due French citizens for property damage during the 1895-'96 Armenian Massacres. Delcassé was also determined to maintain the French religious protectorate in the Turkish Empire, threatened by the Porte.

67 PEA, XXI, No. 5167 [5680].
should not be surprised if Italy were forced to investigate what action she might have to take to safeguard her own Mediterranean interests.

Italian apprehensions were actually augmented by the additional fear of a French occupation of Ghadamès. In the pursuit of brigands operating in Tunisia, French troops had reportedly penetrated almost to the walls of this town located on Tripoli's western border. In reporting Prinetti's concern over these military operations, Barrère reminded Delcassé that any entry of French soldiers to Ghadamès, accidental or provisional, would provoke a dangerous reaction in Italy. To preclude the possibility of any incident, he asked Delcassé to issue explicit and rigid instructions to the military, placating Prinetti in the interim with assurances that France "would hardly destroy with one hand what she had underwritten with the other." When Barrère conveyed Delcassé's confirmation of France's scrupulous respect for Tripolitan territory, Prinetti accepted it with obvious appreciation.

Delcassé himself had exhibited a certain annoyance with Italian apprehensions over Tripoli, finding it "superfluous after so many declarations to repeat that the most precise and formal instructions have been given to avoid any incursion into Ghadamès." Barrère reminded him, however, that a segment of the Italian public

68 DDF, 1, Nos. 474, 506.
69 ibid., Nos. 465, 473, 474, 490.
70 ibid., No. 465.
71 ibid., No. 474, n. 1.
was still convinced of Italy's obligation to match any undertaking attempted by other Powers or face dishonor. France was considered most suspect in this regard, some Italians convinced the recent naval demonstrations had not been undertaken to obtain satisfaction from the Sultan; rather, France was in reality awaiting an opportune occasion to seize Tripoli. Barrère observed that news of a Franco-Turkish settlement came as a great surprise to these individuals. Still he felt the diplomatic crisis indicated the considerable progress that had been made in Franco-Italian relations in recent years and was of the opinion that before the rapprochement a similar situation would have created an explosive situation in Italy.72

Once his alarm over Mitylene and Tripoli had subsided, Prinetti expressed interest in resuming the discussion of a publication of the Barrère-Visconti Venosta accords. Prinetti now proposed relating the matter directly to Mitylene, Barrère reported to Delcassé. The Italian minister remarked to Barrère that it had been erroneously reported Italy tried to provoke a countermanifestation of the Triple Alliance in the East. He asked Barrère if Delcassé could not have himself interpolated on that allegation. Prinetti went on to suggest that the French minister could then respond with an assurance of the amical relations that existed between the two countries, indicating the concordance of their views. Prinetti, in turn, would have himself interpolated in the Italian Chamber and confirm Delcassé's words in the same terms. To enhance his bargaining power, Prinetti reminded Barrère the time was fast

72 Ibid., No. 490.
approaching in which Italy would be engaged in treaty discussions with her allies. The publicity on Tripoli "would to a degree facilitate what Barrère was seeking."73

Despite his previous reluctance, Delcassé agreed in late November to permit Prinetti to make the declaration. The pronouncement was to follow an Italian parliamentary debate in which the Italian minister formally commented on the recent Franco-Turkish conflict.74 On this occasion, as in the past, Barrère resolved the differences of form and content both ministers initially proposed for the declaration.75 The final version read as follows:

Proposed Declaration

France's recent naval demonstration cannot arouse any susceptibility in Italy nor disturb the mutual confidence which has become the rule in the relations of the two governments. This confidence is all the firmer on our part since the Government of the Republic for some time has taken care to inform us that the Franco-English convention of March 21, 1899 marked for France, in relation to the countries and regions adjoining the eastern frontier of its African possessions (notably the vilayet of Tripoli) a limit it does not intend to succeed, adding that neither does it intend to cut the caravan routes from Tripoli into Central Africa. Since then the friendly relations of the two countries have become such that the two governments have been able to exchange explanations, as clear as satisfying, on their interests in the Mediterranean Sea. And these explanations have led them to become aware of a perfect concordance in their views of what is of a nature to interest their respective situations.76

As arrangements were being finalized, Barrère also impressed on Delcassé the necessity of the French minister's own official confirmation of Prinetti's statement. Delcassé agreed to do this on the occasion of his next budgetary discussion.77

73 Ibid., No. 504. 74 Ibid., No. 508. 75 Ibid., Nos. 508, 510, 514, 541, 542, 549. 76 Ibid., No. 549. 77 Ibid., No. 514.
The Prinetti declaration, made on December 14, 1901, produced an excellent impression in Italy. According to Barrère's account of Italian reaction, even the former Crispian papers expressed satisfaction with the evidence of a new Franco-Italian relationship. Barrère took advantage of the annual New Year's reception at the Farnese Palace to heighten the effect of the declaration and to lend French support to its authenticity. The ambassador's address to the French colony on that occasion confirmed the significance of the rapport created by the Barrère-Visconti Venosta letters, noting the perfect accord that had been established between the two governments as well as the absence of any conflict over Mediterranean questions.

Despite the favorable press his address received, Barrère still considered it essential that Delcassé confirm Prinetti's statement, and preferably in the French Chamber. In view of the importance that was certain to attach to the French minister's discourse, he also suggested several points he hoped Delcassé would incorporate in his remarks. Among others, he wanted confirmation of his own New Year's address in order to dispel any impression the French Ambassador to Italy was not in complete agreement with his government on the matter.

78 Ibid., No. 565; II, No. 57. In his delivery, Prinetti altered the declaration slightly, retaining the intent of the statement although in stronger and more definite phraseology.

79 Ibid., Nos. 5, 19, 26, 57.

80 Ibid., Nos. 19, 28.

81 Ibid., No. 57.
On January 21, 1902 Delcassé made the declaration Barrère had been seeking. Barrère found it less than satisfactory, however, and told Delcassé quite bluntly that in the opinion of the Italian press circumstances had called for a warmer and less reserved appreciation of Franco-Italian rapport. It would serve French interests well, he added, if Delcassé were to again allude to the declaration in the upcoming Senate budget discussions.82

Barrère's diplomatic endeavors had been compromised in the meanwhile by a rather serious faux pas on the part of his superior. Delcassé had accorded the Giornale d'Italia's Ugo Ojetti an interview which appeared in Le Temps on January 7, 1902. The interview touched on Franco-Italian interests in the Mediterranean, including France's desire for the maintenance of the status quo. When Ojetti made the observation that Italy also supported the status quo for Albania, Delcassé had responded with the remark that France and Italy could only agree in the Balkans as well. Alluding to the sharing of friends, he unwisely added, "What Power better than Russia could understand and cooperate with Italian interests in the Balkan peninsula?"83

Reverberations were instantaneous, Ambassador Reverseaux reporting that Austrian Foreign Minister Goluchowski found the interview so incredible he could only conclude it was pure invention.84 Barrère immediately requested authorization to make a formal denial of Delcassé's remarks on Albania, advising the French minister at

82 Ibid., No. 57.  
83 Ibid., No. 10, n. 1.  
84 Ibid., Nos. 8, 9, 14, n. 2; 15.
the same time that any reference to the subject in the French Chamber would cause Prinetti grave embarrassment. However, the denial Delcassé subsequently issued was apparently satisfactory to Prinetti. 85

At this point the obvious concern of both Barrère and Prinetti to make a public declaration of French disinterest in Tripoli does raise the question of their specific objectives. The motivation underlying Barrère's continuous efforts to secure Delcassé's approval for the action appears quite clear: the French ambassador hoped in this way to lead Prinetti along a path that would compel him to harmonize Italy's alliances with her newly-established relationship with France. 86

Certain ambiguities present themselves, however, in a consideration of Prinetti's objectives. His recurring admonitions to Barrère that only a revelation of the Mediterranean accords would facilitate negotiation of a revised Triple Alliance do not accord with the evidence contained in the German diplomatic documents. 87 Perennial Italian interest in Tripoli would, of course, have colored Prinetti's thinking. And Barrère's reports do reveal the enthusiasm with which both the Italian and French declarations were received by the Italian press, statesmen and general public. 88 In this sense the declaration unquestionably consolidated Prinetti's position in various political circles where he sorely lacked support. 89 Yet, objectively, there was no genuine need for publication

85 Ibid., No. 8, 9, 16, 25. 
86 Ibid., Annex. 
87 Below, pp. 113-15. 
88 DDF², I, No. 565; II, No. 57. 89 Ibid.
of the accord. In the first place, the Italian government would never have permitted Prinetti to launch a Tripolitan enterprise. Nor can the publication be considered essential as a means of obtaining additional power support for Italian Mediterranean ambitions. Diplomatic documents reveal that even before December 14 Prinetti began divulging the contents of the accord in far more detail than was contained in the highly generalized declaration made before the Italian Chamber. Furthermore, the pressure Germany exerted on England to improve her relations with Italy, in conjunction with the confidential discussions in which Prinetti began to engage Lord Currie at this time, would appear to have been far more effective in eliciting the English declaration of disinterest actually obtained in March, 1902.

Whatever the Italian minister hoped to achieve, Barrère's diplomatic skills were more than adequate in safeguarding his own objectives from the dangers inherent in Prinetti's dubious tactics. The developments which led to the conclusion of the Franco-Italian Neutrality Accord in 1902 reveal the measure of the two diplomats.

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90 Decleva, Da Adua a Sarajevo, p. 159.
91 PEA, XXI, Nos. 5199 [5834], 5207 [5837], 5210 [5840], 5230 [5846], 5233 [5849]; BD, I, Nos. 359, 360, 361.
92 PEA, XX, No. 4960 [5832], XXI, No. 5216 [5030]; BD, I, Nos. 352, 362. Included in the "list of sins" German Ambassador to London Metternich informed Lord Lansdowne England had committed against Italy, Lord Salisbury's and British Ambassador Currie's negligence figured prominently. This position refutes somewhat the Decleva assumption that Prinetti's insistence on obtaining a public statement of the accords derived from his desire to obtain analogous guarantees from Germany and Great Britain. See Decleva, Da Adua a Sarajevo, pp. 158-60. See below, p. 113.
By late December concern over the renewal of the Triple Alliance had become quite marked, not only in France and Italy but on the part of Germany and Austria as well. Chancellor von Bülow drew public attention to Germany's interest in his Reichstag address on January 8. Touching on the question of the Triple and Italy's role in the alliance, he insisted that since the treaty was exclusively defensive—the Franco-Italian Mediterranean Accord was in no way contrary to the Triple Alliance. He emphasized the point with his now classic comment: "In a happy marriage the husband doesn't become overly distressed if his wife has an innocent waltz with some one else." Privately, Germany was not regarding the matter with the same serenity.

Although Visconti Venosta had indicated France and Italy were exchanging views with regard to Tripoli in 1900, he had not informed Germany of the terms of the actual accord once it was concluded. Bülow, by his own admission, knew only the grandes lignes of the agreement. German apprehension mounted when Prinetti began to gradually disclose the specific contents of the Barrère-Visconti Venosta letters. Despite an officially benign attitude, Bülow considered the agreement extremely dangerous.

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93 *DDF*, II, Nos. 19, 23, 26, 27.
95 *PEA*, XXI, Nos. 5213 \(5842\), 5244 \(5851\).
96 *Ibid.*, No. 5202 \(5709\).
97 *Ibid.*, No. 5208 \(5838\).
In conversation with Barrère during this period, Prinetti continued to affirm his intention of adhering to the declarations he had already given regarding the non-aggressive nature of Italy's treaty obligations as they pertained to France. From France's point of view it was well Barrère continued to urge Delcassé to lose no opportunity of holding the Italian minister to his commitments. German Foreign Counsellor Holstein's observation may provide the most revealing description of the path on which the Italian minister now set out. "Italy wants to go in search of booty," Holstein noted, "and then to make the booty secure and protect it against anyone--even France--by the canons of the Triple Alliance." 

On December 26 Prinetti informed German Ambassador Wedel of his readiness to sacrifice France's friendship to the Triple Alliance, declaring at the same time he would never sacrifice the Triple Alliance to the friendship of France! The following week Wedel reported that Prinetti had indicated his desire to proceed to a renewal of the Tripple as soon as Italy's commercial relations with her German allies could be satisfactorily regulated. The Italian minister confided that he had a completely free hand, having given Barrère no more than a promise the treaty would contain nothing aggressive against France. In view of his pacific interpretation of the treaty's base, Wedel expressed some surprise at Prinetti's remark. Prinetti then went on to say he had only spoken

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98 DDF², 11, No. 99.
99 ibid., Nos. 28, 99, 133, 143.
100 PEA, XXI, No. 5219 [5844].
101 ibid., No. 5213 [5842].
as he did in order to calm Barrère, whose concern the Italian minister attributed to a probable knowledge of the military accords. Although Prinetti himself was unacquainted with the protocols, he had no intention of familiarizing himself with them, he explained, so he could continue declaring he had no knowledge of their contents. When Wedel then remarked on the superfluousness of the military accords in themselves, their application subordinate to the condition of a French attack, Prinetti reminded Wedel it was also true the treaty itself could not be revealed to France! The Italian minister then suggested that since he had given Barrère "his word of honor" the treaty contained nothing aggressive against France, a preamble might be attached which could be made public and in which the allies would confirm the purely defensive nature of the alliance.102

It is quite significant, in view of his repeated declarations to France, that Prinetti himself exhibited no interest in suppressing Article II of the treaty. It was Article II of course, by which an isolated French attack against Germany or Italy sufficed to put the three Tripli-\_ ce allies in action. Barrère considered this aspect of the Triple Alliance a sword pointed at France's heart.103 However, as Bülow assessed the situation--if Article II were suppressed while Article III, pertaining to an attack of several powers against one of the contracting parties, were maintained, Italy would be the loser. A guarantee against the isolated

102 Ibid., No. 5223 [571].
103 DDF², II, No. 168.
aggression, or its threat, by France had far more practical value to Italy than Germany.104

Germany, of course, had no intention of playing Prinetti's game, and the Italian minister was informed that if Italy undertook any action in Tripoli it would be in violation of Article IX of the Triplace treaty whereby she pledged to maintain the status quo in Tripoli. Under the circumstances Germany would not recognize the existence of a casus foederis and Italy would find herself outside the protection of the Triple Alliance.105

There appears to be little doubt that Barrère's activities exercised a decisive influence in shaping the German line that noticeably hardened in this period. Barrère figures significantly in the German diplomatic documents between December, 1901 and February, 1902.

On December 17 German Foreign Secretary Richthofen made note of the influence attributed Barrère by Italian Ambassador Lanza and British Chargé d'Affaires Buchanan.106 That same day German Ambassador Wedel was commenting at length on Barrère's tactics in a report to Bülow. The ambassador's clever manoeuvres to draw France and Italy closely together had been preoccupying the Italian press, Wedel wrote, and it was said Barrère had assumed his role four years earlier convinced he would soon be able to draw Italian policy into France's current. Despite this unwarranted optimism, Wedel continued,

104 PEA, XXI, No. 5227 [5712].
105 Ibid., No. 5227 [5712].
106 Ibid., No. 5201 [5708].
Barrère had not succumbed to discouragement but adopted an attitude of *veni, vidi, vici* and began to court the Italians with painstaking attention and political affability. Wedel considered Barrère's termination of the Franco-Italian tariff war to be the first pillar in the bridge he was erecting to reunite France and Italy. And since the visit of the Italian fleet to Toulon, the German ambassador remarked, France had seized every opportunity to demonstrate consideration and amiability towards Italy. She supported her credit, enticed her with more favorable commercial relations, and with the Mediterranean agreement had alleviated much of the Italian mistrust that originated in Italy's anxiety over Tripoli.107

**Bülow** himself was becoming increasingly aware of how effectively Barrère was influencing Italian foreign policy.108 He wrote Wedel in early January regarding what he termed "M. Barrère's campaign to suppress Article II of the Triple Alliance. This role of adviser to Prinetti in the formulation of a new treaty," Bülow commented, "is of a nature to increase our prudence."109 Since Bülow felt Barrère's concern derived less from the possibility of a future Franco-German than Franco-Italian conflict, he considered it imperative to know if and under what circumstances Germany could count on Italy's support in case of war.

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108 *Ibid.*, Nos. 5206 [5835], 5209 [5839], 5227 [5712], 5234 [5715], 5272 [5078], 5280 [5727].

On January 12 Bülow summoned Lanza to a meeting in which he informed the Italian ambassador that Germany was ready to renew the Triple Alliance but only on two conditions: Italy had to declare she had concluded no accords with any other state which, of their nature, could compromise the defensive efficacy of the Triple Alliance; the treaty was to remain unchanged in all aspects relating to Germany. He could not escape the impression, Bülow added, that Prinetti was too weak and trusting with regard to Barrère.

By the end of February Barrère was being referred to as "our principal adversary." The chancellor wrote Emperor William II that in Prinetti's discussions with Wedel on the alliance renewal the expression recurred on several occasions, stripped of any pretense, "Barrère wants this or he doesn't want that." Acceding to Barrère's wishes, Bülow remarked, would leave the alliance directed solely, or at least principally against Russia. And from Barrère's point of view, he added, that would probably be the best way of convincing the Russians that Germany nourished the darkest designs against her.

Prinetti, for his part, had informed Wedel of his readiness to proceed to immediate renewal of the Triple on January 12. He was willing to leave the treaty essentially unchanged, although he did hope to secure the preamble he had requested, a favorable commercial treaty and some modification with regard to the Balkans.

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110 Ibid., No. 5234 [5715 and 5850].
111 Ibid., No. 5280 [5727].
112 Ibid., No. 5272 [5078].
113 Ibid., No. 5241 [5718].
By January 22 Prinetti had not only abandoned the idea of a preamble, the question of France no longer entered into subsequent negotiations with any significance.  

Barrère, in the meanwhile, continued to assume it would be possible for Prinetti to obtain the treaty revisions he considered essential for France's security. His convictions in this regard had been strengthened by the support he believed they were also accorded by Messrs. Rudini, Luzzatti, Zanardelli, Giolitti and Sonnino.

On March 20, as Barrère had urged, Delcassé again alluded to the excellence of Franco-Italian rapport in an address before the French Senate. Barrère had been involved in the preparation of that portion of the text relating to Franco-Italian rapport and also insisted an article be inserted in the *Journal de Débats* to provoke comment on Delcassé's declaration by the French press. The address was so well received in Italy, Barrère reported, it put a campaign in motion to continue the consolidation of future Franco-Italian rapport.

A few days later Prinetti informed Barrère that at Bülow's request he planned on meeting the chancellor during the latter's brief vacation in Venice. According to Wedel it was actually

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115 *DDF*², II, No. 76, Annex.


Prinetti who had requested the meeting. Barrère replied that he thought such an encounter was not only indicated but necessary, since it would require Prinetti to examine the new conditions underlying Italy's ties with Germany. He would say no more, Barrère added, since he regarded Italy as a friend with whom it was no longer necessary to take precautions. At that Prinetti again reassured Barrère of his fidelity to the declarations he had previously extended. There was no agreement between him and Bülow, the Italian minister stated, and he would "sign nothing in the future that France could consider contrary to the bonds of friendship uniting us or as a direct or indirect threat to her security." Although Prinetti now indicated it would probably not be possible to modify the actual text of the Tripplice treaty, he told Barrère that "what she has the right to preoccupy herself with and consider hostile is not in the treaty but in the acts that are annexed to it. These must fall and disappear."

In his report of the Prinetti conversation Barrère indicated that, in his opinion, the door had been opened for negotiation and an entente. And as he remarked to Delcassé, "We at least

119 PEA, XXI, No. 5312 [5734].
120 DDF², 11, No. 168.
121 Ibid., No. 168, Annex. Victor Emmanuel III had "been freed" of the obligation of providing Germany with military assistance in the event of war in March, 1901. PEA, XX, No. 4966 [5823]. It would appear the King hoped in this way to be free to tell France the Triple Alliance contained no offensive clauses directed against her. By September, 1902, however, Italian Chief of Staff Saletta spoke with his German colleagues as though the military convention was in effect. Ibid., XXI, No. 5426 [5825]. Italian Foreign Minister Tittoni, in 1908, told the Russian ambassador the military convention had been allowed to lapse when the Triple Alliance was renewed in 1902. DDF², XI, No. 560.
have something to sell . . . since Italy according to the terms of
the Notes [Barrère-Visconti Venosta] . . . can try nothing in Tri-
poli without French consent. 122 Barrère therefore suggested that
when Delcassé next spoke with Tornielli he make a point of allud-
ing to Prinetti's words and indicate that only the execution of the
promises made could assure Franco-Italian relations a long and fe-
cund future. 123

When Prinetti returned to Rome at the end of March he told
Barrère nothing definitive had been accomplished in Venice, the
conversations centering on the pacific nature of the Triple Alli-
ance and the commercial treaty. In Bülow's report of the encounter
Prinetti had asked to discuss the modifications of the treaty he
sought "in an academic manner." 124 Prinetti, on the other hand,
told Austrian Ambassador, Marsus Pasetti, he had informed the Ger-
man chancellor he would refuse any pledges "of a nature to menace
the tranquillity and security of France." 125 Barrère's own impres-
sion was that the meeting had been indecisive, Prinetti lacking the
courage to raise the question of modifying the clause France con-
sidered objectionable. 126

Despite Prinetti's repeated misrepresentations to Barrère
of the Triplice's character vis-à-vis France, Barrère still

124 PEA, XXI, No. 5326 [5739].
125 DDF², No. 180, n. 2.
126 Ibid., Nos. 181, 193.
considered modification of the treaty to be imperative.\textsuperscript{127} He urged Delcassé to remind Tornielli, on every possible occasion, that he was most anxious to learn Italy's intent in the matter of the treaty-renewal.\textsuperscript{128} This Delcassé did on April 24, emphasizing his concern with a reference to various Berlin and Vienna publications that had begun to affirm the treaty's forthcoming renewal without modification.\textsuperscript{129} The admonition proved highly effective. On April 28 Prinetti conceded the validity of France's objections to certain clauses in the Triple Alliance, particularly to that which had become most disturbing to Barrère--provocation of war by a Power not actually declaring it. Prinetti told Barrère that when the time came for definitive conversations, he would be prepared to leave no doubt on the limits of the obligations binding Italy. Barrère thought Prinetti's remarks might well be the point of departure for a secret accord and advised Delcassé not to mention the matter to Tornielli.\textsuperscript{130}

A few days later Prinetti again unequivocally affirmed to Barrère that France was not named in the treaty of the Triple Alliance and that only the annexes were of concern to her. However when Barrère again raised the question of Italy's position in a war against France that had been provoked by one of the Triplice allies, Prinetti replied that the moment for such discussion had not yet arrived, although he had every intention of explaining himself to Barrère and reaching conclusions on this question of provocation. An actual modification of the treaty text presented insurmountable

\textsuperscript{127}ibid., No. 194. \textsuperscript{128}ibid., No. 209. \textsuperscript{129}ibid., No. 218. \textsuperscript{130}ibid., No. 224.
difficulties, the Italian minister continued. Among other interests
to be safeguarded, Italy's commercial needs and her relationship
with Austria precluded her leaving the Triple Alliance. Neverthe­
less, he anticipated being able to provide solutions which would
completely satisfy France and be compatible with the most intimate
relations between the two countries. Prinetti then admitted the
Triple Alliance was about to be renewed and suggested he and Barrère
arrange for discussions on the future of Franco-Italian relations.

It was his intent, Barrère informed Delcassé, to request
a protocol defining the rapports and reciprocal pacific intentions
of the two countries. This protocol:

would engage them to refrain from attacking each other, of
not participating in any aggression on the part of one or
several Powers against one of the contractants, of not con­
sidering as aggressive on the part of the contractants the
[lacuna in text] manifest provocation, the abandonment of
military protocols and other agreements of the same sort
concerning us and envisaging war with us.

Under this form the protocol would be directed towards England as
well as Germany. In Barrère's judgment it would provide France
with all she hoped for.132

Barrère also thought the moment opportune for encouraging
Russian attentions to Italy and thus offset Austrian inferences
that influence in the Balkans was a matter of concern to only
Austria-Hungary and Russia. He thought as well it would be advan­
tageous to encourage a trip by Victor Emmanuel III to Russia. The
contact with Emperor Nicholas might counter Germanic influences on
the young monarch.133

131 Ibid., No. 225. 132 Ibid., No. 235. 133 Ibid.
Although Prinetti was now encountering considerable difficulties with Austria-Hungary in the negotiation of the Triplice renewal, responding to a budgetary interpolation in the Italian Chamber on May 23, he finally affirmed its forthcoming renewal. In a brief declaration he stated that the treaty was pacific and defensive in nature, containing no protocol or convention directed against France which could be considered in opposition to the excellent relations Italy enjoyed with her Latin sister and hoped to develop still further.

On May 24 Barrère and Prinetti completed their draft of a proposed bilateral declaration which Barrère took to Paris for discussion with Delcassé. Delcassé then wired Chargé d'Affaires Legrand in Rome that the declaration was basically acceptable and, as prearranged, Prinetti could instruct Tornielli to proceed to transmit it to him formally in Paris. However, Tornielli considered the declaration to be so dangerous he refused to submit it before June 4, delaying communication until Prinetti again directed him to do so. On June 4 Tornielli read Delcassé his handwritten

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134 Ibid., Nos. 222, 225, 262; PEA, XXI, Nos. 5332 [574], 5336 [5743].

135 Prinetti read the declaration to the German and Austrian ambassadors prior to its delivery. PEA, XXI, No. 5369 [5768]. According to French Chargé d'Affaires Prinet it was well received in German papers, although the Gazette de Voss commented that if the Italians simply wanted 'an innocent waltz they had nothing to say; if they hoped to serve two masters, they would be creating an indecisive situation in international relations of which they would be the first victims. DDF², II, N. 267.

136 DDF², II, Nos. 235, 263, 269, Annex. The proposed declaration is reproduced in DDF², II, No. 263 and as Appendix III.

137 Ibid., Nos. 269, 271, Annex.

138 Ibid., Nos. 277, 278, 293, Annex. Legrand attributed
copy of the declaration, which the French minister personally copied and retained.\textsuperscript{139}

Barrère then returned to Rome and resumed negotiation of the formal Neutrality Accord that was to follow the presentation of the declaration. Before a final text was agreed on, the preliminary draft was subjected to a number of revisions. Direction Politique had objected to a limited duration of time in the document—five years for example—on the grounds that it would permit Italy to become France's African neighbor regardless of the political relations existing between the two countries at the time of expiration. They therefore suggested the same duration apply as was accorded under the earlier Mediterranean arrangements. Since Delcassé feared Italy would object to this change and compromise the negotiations, Direction Politique proposed instead an addition to the last paragraph. The statement "conforming to the spirit of the letter addressed by M. Barrère in the Visconti Venosta Ministry December 14, 1900," was to be added after the words "which has a definitive character." Such a change would indicate French concessions with regard to Tripoli were accorded because of the friendly relations that had been established between France and Italy. Delcassé subscribed to this view, and asked Barrère to have it incorporated in the final draft, along with the stipulation that the duration of the accord be at least equal to that of the Triplice.\textsuperscript{140}

\textsuperscript{139}ibid., No. 277.

\textsuperscript{140}ibid., Nos. 291, 292.
Delcassé also insisted on coupling the term "honor" with "security" in the paragraph relating to a declaration of war. He suggested another change in wording as well to avoid creating the impression that prior communication of intent was given in order to "permit" the other contractant to assume a judgment of legitimate defense. 141

Prinetti was willing to accept France's formula on provocation but did insist on giving the declarations the form of a letter exchange as had been the case with the Mediterranean Accord. He told Barrère the King was extremely anxious to avoid any appearance of having negotiated a counter-treaty. 142 Barrère acceded to this request, insisting, in turn, that the signatures be exchanged before the end of the month; Prinetti and Victor Emmanuel had both exhibited a reluctance to simultaneously sign the declaration and Triple Alliance renewal. 143 It was also agreed that Italy would take the initiative in the letter exchange. Prinetti, in the name of the Italian government, would incorporate the declarations in a letter to Barrère. Its counterpart would be Barrère's letter to Prinetti, reproducing the same declaration. 144 Delcassé consented to the concession on form in exchange for signature of the accord prior to the end of month. 145

Since the accord was to remain in force as long as Italy's actual international agreements were not modified, Delcassé considered it essential that the accord stipulate France was to be

141 Ibid., No. 291. 142 Ibid., No. 300.
143 Ibid., Annex. 144 Ibid., No. 303.
145 Ibid., No. 305.
informed of any modification in Italy's alliances. He also wished further clarification of the phrase relating to provocation.\textsuperscript{146}

Barrère had foreseen this latter objection and already discussed it with Prinetti. Prinetti's understanding of provocation, Barrère reported to Delcassé, was that it had to result from direct relations between the provoked and provoker, such as were involved in Fashoda, the publication of the Ems Dispatch, King William's refusal to receive Benedetti, and the Schnaebelé incident. The Hohenzollern candidacy, on the other hand, was not. Since Prinetti had promised to send Barrère a letter expressing his full interpretation of the term, Barrère felt Delcassé's desires in the matter were fully met.\textsuperscript{147}

The Barrère-Prinetti letters, which were essentially a neutrality accord, were signed on June 30, 1902, two days after the renewal of the Triple Alliance.\textsuperscript{148} Barrère's concern in pressing for the early conclusion was based on his fear of German intervention. He wrote Delcassé that he had been under very close observation and, although unable to divine the truth, German suspicions were obviously aroused and considerable pressure exerted on Prinetti.\textsuperscript{149} The observation was accurate. Wedel, for instance, had been instructed by Bülow to act on Prinetti and set the tone of the Italian press. "Our gracious Sovereign will be following the manifestation of the principal organs of this press with extreme interest," the chancellor noted in his dispatch to the Rome ambassador.\textsuperscript{150}

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., Nos. 311, 312. \textsuperscript{147} Ibid., No. 312. \textsuperscript{148} Ibid., Nos. 311, 313. \textsuperscript{149} Ibid., No. 316. \textsuperscript{150} PEA, XXI, No. 5396 [5774].
Bülow had instructed Ambassador Lanza, in turn, to warn Prinetti to be on guard against France, whose "good conduct marked hidden motives." 151

The Barrère-Prinetti letters deliberately opened with a reference to the reciprocal Franco-Italian positions in Morocco and Tripoli. 152 As Barrère commented, it was not without reason Italy associated this question with her interpretation of the Triple Alliance. She hoped in that way to justify her interpretation of the Triplace, signifying the importance she attached to a regulation of French and Italian interests in the Mediterranean. It was a vital emphasis in her subsequent guarantees to France in the eventuality of a Franco-German conflict. 153

On July 11, Prinetti responded to Barrère's written request for a more precise interpretation of Italy's understanding of the term "direct provocation" employed in the declarations. 154 The letter confirmed the verbal interpretation Prinetti had previously conveyed.

Delcassé took advantage of a Chamber interpolation on July 3 to again allude to the excellent rapport existing between France and Italy. Referring to a certain concern France had experienced

151 DDF2, II, No. 316.

152 Ibid., No. 329. The Barrère-Prinetti letters are reproduced in Appendix IV. On their dating, see below, p. 151, n. 4.

153 Ibid., Annex.

154 Ibid., Nos. 329, 340. These letters are reproduced in Appendix IV with the Barrère-Prinetti letters.
when announcement was made of the **Triplice** renewal, the foreign minister remarked that the preoccupation had not been of long duration:

... the Government of the King having taken care itself to clarify and settle the situation. And the declarations which have been given us have permitted us to acquire the certitude that the policy of Italy, in consequence of its alliances, is directed neither directly nor indirectly against France; that it could in no instance be construed as a menace to us, either under a diplomatic form or through protocols or under international military stipulations; and that in no event, or under any form, can Italy become either the instrument or the ally to any aggression against our country.\(^{155}\)

Barrère reported that the declaration met with great success in Italy.\(^{156}\) Even Tornielli conveyed Prinetti's formal appreciation.\(^{157}\)

However, Tornielli was also responsible for what Barrère regarded as the one jarring incident surrounding the achievement of the 1902 accord. Marcel Hutin published an interview in the July 13 *Echo de Paris* entitled "Le Roi d'Italie et la Triplice." In this interview with Tornielli, the ambassador—whose identity was unquestionable although not specified—stated that the Triple Alliance had been renewed unchanged. Hutin drew the inevitable conclusion that there could be no doubt at all if France were to declare war on Germany, Italy would march against her.\(^{158}\) Prinetti attempted to excuse Tornielli on the grounds the ambassador had been misunderstood or misquoted. He also justified the indiscretion on the basis of Tornielli's ignorance of developments which had taken place between France and Italy in recent months. However the

\(^{155}\) *ibid.*, No. 324, n. 1.  
\(^{156}\) *ibid.*, Nos. 320, 326.  
\(^{157}\) *ibid.*, No. 324.  
\(^{158}\) *ibid.*, No. 332, n. 1.
Quai d'Orsay considered it highly improbable Tornielli was unin­formed.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, No. 349. Visconti Venosta had also inferred Tornielli was unaware of the transaction of the 1900 Mediterranean accords. Serra's research in the Visconti Venosta archives prove this was not the case. \textit{C. Barrère e l'Intesa}, p. 134.} \footnote{\textit{DDF}², 11, Annex. Italy did receive assurance of British disinterest in Tripoli on March 2, 1902. However, Lord Lansdowne refused to give Prinetti the type of declaration he initially re­quested, limiting English assurances to "... no aggressive or ambitious designs ... maintenance of the status quo ... [such, if altered to be] in conformity with Italian interests ... ." The statement gives no indication of renewed Anglo-Italian rapport,}

Despite his dim view of the \textit{Echo} interview, Barrère was well satisfied with the 1902 accord. Prior to its negotiation, he observed, an access of jealousy or bad humour sufficed to dispose Italy to listen to the suggestions of France's adversaries and to interpret or modify her alliances in a sense dangerous to France. He felt the Neutrality Accord made that impossible. Italy's obligation to notify France of any modification of the Triple Alliance would appear to make it difficult for her to modify it to France's detriment. The accord also supposed, by its wording, that France was familiar with at least that part of the \textit{Tripllice} concerning France. Italy, in avowing it, would automatically be suspect of having divulged the terms of the Triple Alliance. Barrère considered, further, that the Italian government would have to look twice before placing herself in a situation where she would alienate France's friendship. To do so would place her under the dominance of her allies, without France for counterweight, and under conditions worse than they had previously been since Italy no longer found powerful support from England.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, No. 349. Visconti Venosta had also inferred Tornielli was unaware of the transaction of the 1900 Mediterranean accords. Serra's research in the Visconti Venosta archives prove this was not the case. \textit{C. Barrère e l'Intesa}, p. 134.} \footnote{\textit{DDF}², 11, Annex. Italy did receive assurance of British disinterest in Tripoli on March 2, 1902. However, Lord Lansdowne refused to give Prinetti the type of declaration he initially re­quested, limiting English assurances to "... no aggressive or ambitious designs ... maintenance of the status quo ... [such, if altered to be] in conformity with Italian interests ... ." The statement gives no indication of renewed Anglo-Italian rapport,}
conviction that the declarations on Morocco and Tripoli lost none of their interest for France as long as she had not definitively established her dominion over the Chérifien territory.  

Barrère summed up the accomplishments of the accords in a letter to Delcassé. In his view they left France ready to attend to the defense of her national interests in full security and safe from all menace. She was freed from all possible coalition against her in the Mediterranean and elsewhere, making it possible for her to develop her legitimate influence in Morocco. She was also assured the security of her alpine border. And in no way to be underestimated, he added, there was the psychological lift the new relationship with Italy afforded. "Yesterday," he wrote, "we were condemned to impotence; today we can speak and act."  

Italy was also content. Under the terms of the Barrère-Prinetti letters, prior French initiative in Morocco was no longer a prerequisite for her own action in Tripoli. The accord secured her more immediate benefits as well.  

Italy had long sought the entry of her bonds on the Paris Bourse. Prior to the signature of the 1902 accord, Barrère had advised their admission only when Franco-Italian political relations comparable to that existing prior to the 1890's. It would appear, in fact, that Britain's assurance of disinterest was largely the result of Prinetti's disclosure of the Barrère-Viscontì Venosta letters of 1900. BD, I, Nos. 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360. For a differing interpretation see Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale, pp. 188-89.  

161 See DDF 2, II, Annex.  
162 Camille Barrère, "Lettres à Delcassé", p. 753.
had been definitively concluded. When Prinetti had broached this question on June 26, Barrère informed him there would be no difficulty in the matter after the declarations under negotiation were signed. July 1, 1902 Barrère accordingly requested announcement to be made that Italian bonds were being admitted to the Paris Bourse. Significantly, he wished the announcement to be made through the Rome Embassy, not through Ambassador Tornielli. In November Prinetti and Italian Treasury Minister di Brogllo then requested admittance of new 3 1/2 per cent bonds to the Bourse as well. Barrère replied that the French Finance Ministry would grant authorization provided none were entered before the beginning months of the coming year. In this way Barrère adhered to the principles he had previously enunciated to Delcassé: the financial operations Italy envisaged with France became a reality once a political rapprochement had been effected between the two countries.163

With the conclusion of the Neutrality Accord Barrère had realized the objective he set out to accomplish, and which he had described so prophetically to Delcassé in December, 1900. "In a year and one-half I will have accomplished here all that remains to me as important business," he wrote after the Mediterranean Accord had been concluded. "There remain now only the alliances." Eighteen months later he had indeed extricated from his post all the alluring work of great diplomacy it can provide."164

163 DDF², II, No. 483.
164 Barrère à Delcassé, December 30, 1900, AAE, PB, V.
CHAPTER V

BARRÈRE AND THE
FRANCO-ITALIAN RAPPROCHEMENT

When Camille Barrère assumed responsibility as French Ambassador to Rome in February, 1898 the long-standing antagonism between the two nations had yet to be resolved. Although a détente had been reached after Italy's Adowa disaster in 1896, Franco-Italian relations remained extremely tenuous.\(^1\) The efforts of Hanotaux and Billot to terminate the troublesome tariff war had not been fruitful. Yet in less than nine months of diplomatic endeavor, Barrère succeeded in concluding a commercial treaty in November, 1898. He regarded the resumption of commercial relations, however, as no more than a preliminary in effecting an over-all Franco-Italian reconciliation. In Barrère's estimation the essential first step towards the attainment of this ultimate objective lay in the development of mutual Franco-Italian interests. He envisioned such cooperation as the requisite means of eliminating sources of friction between the two countries.\(^2\)

The rapprochement itself was actually accomplished during the course of Barrère's first four years in Rome, culminating in the Neutrality Accord of 1902. Its achievement may be considered


\(^2\) DDF\(^2\), I, No. 118.
largely due Barrère's efforts and the diplomacy he exercised so skillfully between 1898 and 1902. This acknowledgement was expressed by a number of Barrère's contemporaries, among whom the Cambons, Charles-Roux, Combarieu, Luzzatti and Dilke figure prominently. Modern historians recently engaged in studying this area also tend to regard Barrère's role during this period of Franco-Italian rapprochement to have been indispensable. There are differing interpretations of course as to precisely where credit should be laid for the achievement. Langer, for example, regards the work of rapprochement to be largely due Hanotaux and Billot. Yet his interpretation, based so extensively on Billot’s writings, is open to question. More recently Thomas Iiams has also credited Hanotaux with the Franco-Italian rapprochement, although Iiams' study is limited to the period 1894-98 and does not attempt a comparative evaluation of Hanotaux's achievement in the specific area of Franco-Italian relations.

In any attempt at assessing the roles of the individuals involved in the Franco-Italian rapprochement, there can be no


4The works of Serra and Decleva are among the most recent studying this period of Franco-Italian relations.

5Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, II, 205.

question of Gambetta's influence in shaping the fundamental attitudes of his young proteges on La République française: the men who would formulate French foreign policy during the 1890's. Yet Gambetta's influence was an indirect one. The Triple Alliance, major source of French antipathy towards Italy, was not concluded until the year of Gambetta's death. Moreover, Gambetta's work itself was characterized by a highly personalized quality and contained a minimum of doctrine and ideology. It dealt with actual rather than theoretical policies. It is certainly true that the spirit of revanche, and basic attitude towards Germany on which an alliance with England was predicated, are concepts which Delcassé, Hanotaux, Barrère and Paul Cambon absorbed during the years of their association with Gambetta. Delcassé himself acknowledged the idea of a political accord with England to be Gambetta's legacy.7 Freycinet also related Gambetta's vision of an alliance between France, Russia and England. According to Freycinet, Gambetta had spoken to the Prince of Wales in 1880 of a Franco-Russian accord which could serve as a guarantee against German aggression.8

Not surprisingly then Paul Cambon could write his son in 1904 that "the day a satisfactory entente can be established between France, Russia and England, with Italy as an eventual support, we'll be in a position to talk with Germany."9 Cambon had grasped the implications of Gambetta's ideas much earlier, however. In

7Above, p. 43.
8S. Lee, King Edward VII (London, 1925), 1, 452.
9Paul Cambon, Correspondance: 1870-1924, 1, 332-33.
1889 he wrote in a personal letter to Eugene Spuller:

I consider the reconciliation of France and Italy, and later an entente of these two powers with England as the obvious goal of French policy—embroilment with Italy would put a sword in our back the day of the duel with Germany, it would alienate us with England whom she considers our counterbalance in the Mediterranean. Accommodation with Italy is equality of forces with Germany and England's good will.10

The same Cambon wrote Barrère in 1919 of the "rapprochement with Italy that is your work."11

Cambon's theme in 1889 was that which had appeared in Barrère's writings fully a decade before his appointment to Rome. The Triple Alliance was a threat to France. Since the weak spot in the alliance was Italy, it was essential she be detached from the menacing coalition.12 Nor as a young diplomat had Barrère underestimated the difficulties inherent in that task. He realized that any Franco-Italian reconciliation would only be achieved after a long period of preliminary détente.13

In a sense, then, if only as a result of the influence he exerted on the future architects of French foreign policy, Gambetta's mark is apparent on the Franco-Italian rapprochement. The influence was indirect, however, and it would be inaccurate to attribute the specific idea of a Franco-Italian alliance to the ardent republican of the 1870's.

A more difficult assessment to make is the significance of Hanotaux's role in effecting the rapprochement. While it is true

10 Ibid.
11 Ibid., III, 369.
12 DDF¹, X, No. 68.
13 Ibid., No. 486.
a détente was reached during Hanotaux's ministry, it remained merely a détente. There are strong arguments for attributing the failure of this preliminary thaw to reach fruition to the policies adopted by Hanotaux and his Rome ambassador, Albert Billot.

Hanotaux gave little indication of interest in gaining Italy's good will when negotiating the Tunisian treaty in 1896. He was adamant in the demands he made of Italy, refusing Visconti Venosta's requests to prorogue the Italo-Tunisian treaty or combine commercial negotiations for new Italo-Tunisian and Franco-Italian treaties. Once the treaty was ratified, he adopted a fundamentally temporizing attitude in response to Italian entreaties to open negotiations for a commercial accord. His one concession was to agree that discussions might be undertaken if they were carried on with the utmost secrecy. Only in May of 1897, when Italian apprehensions over French activity in Tripoli were mounting, did Hanotaux indicate positive interest in arriving at a more satisfactory relationship with Italy. However, what he then sought was a statement of reciprocal disinterest in Tripolitania. Visconti Venosta, despite his desire to improve Franco-Italian relations, was reluctant to enter into a secret accord with France that might be considered contrary to Italy's good faith with her Triple alliance. Yet Germany's negative response to Visconti Venosta's approaches eventually led the Italian foreign minister to enter

15 DDF 1, XIII, Nos. 22, 198, 360.
16 Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, p. 53.
17 DDF 3, 11, Nos. 30, 45, 51; Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, pp. 53-55.
willingly into negotiation of the accord Hanotaux was seeking. However Hanotaux's insistence on concluding a formal protocol was to bring the Franco-Italian discussions to a standstill. Hanotaux was unwilling to accede to Visconti Venosta's request that the mutual Franco-Italian pledges be framed in a single declaration.

Although the separate discussions relating to a commercial accord were continued, various concessions France demanded of Italy eventually resulted in another stalemate that was not resolved until December, 1897. Here again Hanotaux proved somewhat intransigent. Regarding the responsibility for the original economic rupture in 1886 to be Italy's, he considered France's demands moderate and any further negotiation impractical if Italy was unwilling to recognize them as such. The impasse was only bridged with Luzzatti's formal notification of Italy's desire to continue negotiating specific points of disagreement. It appears highly significant that shortly after the resumption of commercial discussions, announcement was made of Barrère's nomination as French Ambassador to Rome.

Barrère's predecessor, Albert Billot, has also been credited with the essential achievement of Franco-Italian rapprochement.

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18 Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, pp. 59-60; PEA, XIV, No. 3529.
19 Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, pp. 55-56.
20 DDF, XIII, No. 151; Billot, La France et l'Italie, II, 412-14.
21 Billot, La France et l'Italie, II, 420; Luzzatti, Opere, 526.
22 The announcement was made on December 24, 1897.
23 See Emory's "The Mission of Albert Billot" for a sympathetic...
Yet there is sufficient evidence to suggest that Billot, to the contrary, bears much of the responsibility for its delay.

Billot's personal rapport with his diplomatic colleagues apparently left a great deal to be desired. Tommaso Tittoni wrote of his ambassadorship as "most unfortunate in tone and results." He found Billot haughty and arrogant and believed he exercised a negative influence in Rome, both personally and as a result of his own rapport with the Quai d'Orsay. According to Serra, a good deal of Billot's unpopularity stemmed from his attempts to pressure the king and Rudini for the text of the Triple Alliance. Serra also relates that rumours circulated as well that Billot had fomented the French newspaper campaign against Crispi and Italy. While these considerations remain highly subjective, there is certainly some question as to Hanotaux's own satisfaction with his ambassador. Visconti Venosta had knowledge of Billot's proposed substitution as early as January of 1897; Tornielli heard Hanotaux first refer to Barrère in March. Yet Billot officially submitted his resignation for reasons of health in December, 1897--first broaching the subject with Hanotaux that summer.

interpretation of Billot and his role in the Franco-Italian rapprochement. Dethan also treats Billot favorably, although acknowledging Barrère's larger role in the over-all rapprochement. "Le rapprochement franco-italien, 1896-1900", pp. 223-29.

24 T. Tittoni, "Visite ad ambasciatori," Nuova Antologia, 4, CVIII (1903), 147.
25 Serra, La questione tunisina, p. 133.
26 Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, p. 62.
27 Ibid.
In assessing Billot's diplomatic activities it becomes immediately apparent that his fundamental approach towards achieving a Franco-Italian rapprochement differed radically from that of his successor. Barrère, of course, regarded the resumption of economic rapport as the keystone to reconciliation. He was convinced Italian animosity towards France could be overcome if no opportunity was lost that might lead to more satisfactory economic arrangements. In Barrère's estimation the attainment of political objectives in Italy would only be possible when an improved economic relationship had been established. Luzzatti attested to the wisdom of this approach whereby Barrère demonstrated France's "sincerity and friendship without questioning Italy on the matter of her alliances."

Billot's preoccupation with Italy's political alliances, however, appears to have impeded the successful conclusion of the commercial accord he professedly sought. Once the Tunisian treaty had been ratified and Italy pressed for the conclusion of a commercial treaty, Billot repeatedly temporized. He was suspicious of Italy's actual motivation in seeking an entente and expressed reservations about reaching complete economic agreement unless significant advantages for France were involved.

Barrère was also aware of the leverage to be gained through an adroit handling of financial considerations. Yet he was acutely aware, as he constantly reminded the Quai d'Orsay, that any rapprochement would be secured only when Italy believed it was in her

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29 Luzzatti, Opere, II, 526.

30 Billot himself wrote in January, 1899: "If we were unable to detach the Italians from the Triple Alliance, we could at least create opposing interests and, in a certain measure, paralyze their action." Emory, "The Mission of Albert Billot," pp. 221-30.
best interests to work towards its achievement.\textsuperscript{31} The principle on which Barrère therefore predicated his activities in Rome was to create that interest.

Perhaps the differing approaches of the two ambassadors are revealed most clearly in a remark Billot made to Hanotaux in March, 1897. In the course of a conversation with Billot, Luzzatti had discussed his intention of formally requesting reactivation of negotiations for a commercial accord. He asked Billot to act as an intermediary, hoping to assure a favorable reception to his overtures. "I did not accept the engagement of becoming advocate in the cause the Italian minister pleaded so warmly," Billot wrote Hanotaux. "All I promised was to prepare you to expect it... and conscientiously report the arguments that are believed here to lend it support."\textsuperscript{32}

Billot's rather negative approach is also apparent in his attitude towards the Italian statesmen with whom he was in constant contact. He never appeared entirely sympathetic, for instance, to Luzzatti and his aims. At one point, in 1896, he wrote Hanotaux that he was certain Luzzatti's concern for haste in opening commercial discussions was rather suspect. He suggested Luzzatti's impatience was due the minister's desire to place a financial program before the Italian parliament. According to Billot, that would permit Luzzatti to indicate the means he planned on using to resolve Italy's budgetary problems and reestablish its finances on a solid basis.\textsuperscript{33} Billot seemed to ignore the fact that this motivation

\textsuperscript{31}DDF\textsuperscript{1}, XIV, No. 253. \textsuperscript{32}Ibid., XIII, No. 151. \textsuperscript{33}Billot, \textit{La France et l'Italie}, II, 18.
was not at all incompatible with the reestablishment of commercial peace between the two countries. Unlike Billot, Barrère tended to regard Luzzatti's eagerness as an asset. His reports to Hanotaux stress the positive aspects of the former Italian minister's outlook; the transaction of a commercial accord, after all, constituting the "first act of a new era in Franco-Italian relations, the certitude of renewing financial relations with the Paris market that were necessary to free her from the tutelage of others."

A further incident reinforces the impression that, far from having effected the Franco-Italian rapprochement, Billot was actually ill-suited for his role in Italy during this critical period in Franco-Italian relations. In the January, 1899 issue of Revue des Deux Mondes, Billot published an article which clearly exposed the efforts of the French Embassy to detach Italy from the Triple Alliance. In a dispatch to the British Foreign Office at the time, Ambassador Currie described the piece as "singularly indiscreet," noting as well that Barrère's success in concluding the commercial treaty had quite obviously excited the jealousy of his predecessor. Jeopardizing important diplomatic activity that has just begun to evidence success implies, at best, a lack of the fundamental tact essential in one engaged in the delicate work of reconciliation.

Delcassé's signal success in achieving the Triple Entente inevitably raises the question of his role in the earlier Franco-Italian rapprochement. There is little documentary evidence of

34 DDF, XIV, No. 120
35 BD, I, No. 347.
the French foreign minister's initial attitude towards the Italian rapprochement as such. However, as Barrère, Delcassé shared in the ideas and aspirations Gambetta had inspired. Barrère himself also noted that Delcassé arrived at the Quai d'Orsay when relations between France and Italy were strained. It was essential an entente of some sort be found in Rome to preclude the possibility of Franco-Italian conflict.36

As foreign minister Delcassé was absorbed in the complexities of France's over-all foreign policy. Theoretically, at least, his ambassadors not only represented his views of French policy in their respective posts they provided him, in turn, with an intimate knowledge of affairs in the countries to which they were assigned. In this regard Delcassé was singularly fortunate. The reputation enjoyed by Paul Cambon as French Ambassador to London has seldom been surpassed.37 Although less known, the diplomatic achievements of Barrère are frequently compared with those of his friend and counterpart in London.38

The working relationship that existed between Barrère and Delcassé has a decided significance for any assessment of their achievements. Their rapport was not one ordinarily established between an ambassador and his superior.39 Reflecting the intimacy

37 See Keith Eubank, Paul Cambon: Master Diplomatist (Norman, Oklahoma, 1960) for a recent evaluation of Cambon and his work.
38 Noël, Camille Barrère, pp. 38, 76; G. P. Gooch, Before the War: Studies in Diplomacy (New York, 1938), 1, 126; Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale, p. 287.
39 Barrère was best man at Delcassé's wedding. Andrew refers
of their long-standing friendship, it permitted Barrère a freedom of suggestion and criticism that emerges throughout his reports and letters. Thus, on the one hand, Barrère might complain it had been too long since he last received any personal word from his old friend and rather severely chastise him, on the other, for a lack of discretion in his dealings with the Italian ambassador in Paris. Barrère himself remarked on the complete liberty of action Delcassé accorded him in his diplomatic activities.

Barrère's work in Rome had begun, of course, before Delcassé assumed his post at the Quai d'Orsay in May, 1898. It was then, in Delcassé's unofficial capacity, that Barrère had first introduced his friend to Rudini and Visconti Venosta. The informal discussions Delcassé subsequently engaged in with these Italian men of state were probably a significant element in the development of his later attitude towards France's Italian policy. While Barrère and Delcassé were in basic agreement on the necessity of effecting a closer Franco-Italian relationship, a study of the Barrère-Delcassé diplomatic and personal correspondence suggests that Barrère exercised a decisive influence on the actual development of Delcassé's Italian policy. This in no way casts Delcassé in a negative role; rather, it demonstrates the great confidence he placed in the judgment and ability of his ambassador.

Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale, p. 10, n. 4.


Serra, C. Barrère e l'intesa, p. 73.
Barrère's ultimate diplomatic objective in Rome was the corrosion of Italy's ties to the Triple Alliance, hoping thereby to empty the Triple of its substance.43 His program for accomplishing this mission was twofold, its most immediate aspect to be achieved by eliminating the sources of friction and discord that existed between France and Italy.44 The work of realizing this ambition was facilitated by the conclusion of a Franco-Italian commercial treaty in 1898. The ambition itself was realized in 1900 with the conclusion of the Mediterranean Accord. This accord succeeded in resolving one of the most difficult aspects of Franco-Italian relations and opened the path to the conclusion of the Neutrality Accord of 1902, the accord in which Barrère's ultimate objective for Italy was culminated. It has been the aim of this dissertation to establish that these accords of 1900 and 1902, and the rapprochement they signify, were achieved principally through the efforts of Camille Barrère and that in his diplomatic endeavors he received the active cooperation and support of French Foreign Minister Théophile Delcassé.

The first direct steps leading to this end were taken after the conclusion of the Anglo-French African Convention in 1899.45 Barrère responded to Italy's angry reaction to the agreement by urging Delcassé to offer Italy a declaration of French disinterest.

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44 DDF2, I, No. 118.

45 The developments leading to the Mediterranean Accord of 1900 are covered in Chapter II, pp. 32-51.
in Tripolitania. The foreign minister was initially unwilling to accede to this request, preferring to alleviate Italian apprehen-
sion by means of a generalized reassurance of France's good inten-
tions. Yet Delcassé gradually succumbed to Barrère's persuasion,
first promising to grant such a declaration if Visconti Venosta
were returned to power, and then not only responding to the lat-
ter's overtures but grafting onto it his own desire for a recipro-
cal Italian declaration on Morocco.46

In the interval spanning these concessions, Barrère in-
creased his efforts to improve Franco-Italian rapport, cultivating
his own personal relationships within the diplomatic orbit and
taking advantage of the opportunity provided at Cagliari to strength-
en the sense of Franco-Italian friendship. The task was not eased
by Ambassador Tornielli's negative reaction to Delcassé's proposal
or Visconti Venosta's hesitation in the face of probable French
activity in Morocco.

Barrère had initially disapproved Delcassé's suggestion
of a Moroccan declaration, feeling it injected complications that
could easily jeopardize the conclusion of negotiations on the
more urgent issue of Tripolitania. Yet when it became apparent an

46Andrew suggests that Delcassé's policy towards Italy
changed at the beginning of the Boer War. At that time he de-
termined to distinguish the international question from the Franco-
Moroccan question in Moroccan affairs, settling the former with
each power separately in order to possess the freedom to settle
the latter directly with Morocco. He felt that Barrère, on the
other hand, was "preoccupied with the desire to wrest Italy from
German domination." At the same time, Delcassé was reluctant to
seize the initiative with Italy on a Morocco-Tripoli agreement
because he wanted to avoid giving any impression of French pres-
sure on Italy to sanction French ambitions in Morocco. Théophile
Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale, pp. 138-41.
Impasse had been reached, Barrère bridged the gulf threatening to separate the two nations. He arranged the settlement of a Red Sea boundary dispute to Italy's satisfaction, urging on Delcassé the necessity of adopting a conciliatory approach during the course of the negotiations. He then successfully reopened discussions on the Morocco-Tripoli declarations. By February 10, 1900 he had reached fundamental accord with Visconti Venosta on their contents. When question next arose as to the form the declarations were to assume, Barrère argued against Delcassé's suggestion of a formal convention, preferring to embody the statements in letters of exchange. Delcassé acquiesced, as he also did with regard to Barrère's objections to various qualifications the foreign minister would have incorporated into the documents.

Barrère's most significant initiative in the negotiations, however, was exercised in April of 1900. When Visconti Venosta expressed a desire to extend the proposals still further and gain French approbation of an Italian move in Tripoli, Barrère immediately established as a sine qua non, the condition of Italy's non-engagement against France in Europe. Despite Delcassé's subsequent willingness to accede to Visconti Venosta's request, Barrère continued to reiterate that France would enter into the larger arrangement only to the extent she received pacific assurances as to the nature of Italy's treaties with her Triplce allies. Visconti Venosta was not willing to meet this demand, and the Barrère-Vsconti Venosta letter accords remained confined to the Mediterranean. Yet Barrère's decision had been decisive, laying the groundwork for the negotiation of the subsequent Neutrality Accord of 1902.
Even on its own merits, of course, the Mediterranean Accord was crucial in the development of Franco-Italian rapprochement. As Barrère wrote Delcassé, Italian interests were Mediterranean, and they were centered on Tripoli. At the same time, Italy feared a corresponding interest on the part of France! Because that interest was non-existent, Barrère had repeatedly argued in support of suppressing Italian apprehension in writing. The day Italy desired more—a recognition of her right to expand in Tripoli—France would be in a position to demand the guarantee Italian alliances were no longer directed against her. In the interim Barrère had secured Italy's recognition of France's right to extend her influence in Morocco. While France, in turn, disclaimed any intent of expansion in Tripoli, she did not recognize Italy's right to expand in Tripoli without her prior consent. Delcassé himself appreciated all that had been accomplished with the accords. As well as thanking Barrère for the skill he had demonstrated in their negotiation, he acknowledged the value he had come to place on their essentially conservative character. That this tone ultimately prevailed was primarily due the insight and persistence of his ambassador.

Having achieved his initial objective in Italy, Barrère intensified his efforts to attain the far more significant "detachment of Italy's offensive obligations" against France. This work was successfully culminated with the Neutrality Accords of 1902.47 Here again, Barrère's initial approach lay in the active encouragement of French collaboration with Italy. The areas in which he

47 The developments leading to the conclusion of the Neutrality Accord of 1902 are covered in Chapter IV.
promoted Franco-Italian cooperation were diverse, ranging from railroad projects to capital investment and wine importation. Barrère also urged Delcassé to enlist the aid of Russia in developing Franco-Italian ties, attempting to draw Italy and Russia into a closer relationship himself by means of his own contacts in Rome. While engaging in these activities, Barrère also sought to offset what he regarded as the deleterious effects of French journalism on improved Franco-Italian rapport.

The most significant activity in this period, of course, was that surrounding the visit of the Italian fleet to Toulon. Because of the great importance he attached to the event, Barrère was in close touch with Delcassé on all arrangements made for the festivities surrounding the occasion.

Toulon's signal success inaugurated the drive Barrère then undertook to bring Italy's treaty commitments into harmony with the new Franco-Italian relationship. Basic to the program he adopted for this task was an insistence on Delcassé's corroboration and reinforcement in Paris of his own activities in Rome. Thus, in February of 1901 he advised Delcassé how essential it was for Tornielli to have a clear understanding of France's Italian policy. Similar requests occurred repeatedly, the specific points Barrère wished emphasized always clearly defined.

The first indication of the two-pronged campaign's success came in June, when Prinetti assured Barrère of the Triplice's non-aggressive character. Using Prinetti's statement as his opening, Barrère began stressing French concern over the incompatibility of
the Triple Alliance with Franco-Italian friendship, particularly in the matter of provocation. It led to Prinettil's formal assurance that if renewed, the Triple Alliance would not contain any causes directed against France. Delcassé, in accordance with Barrère's program, then advised Tornielli he formally accepted the Prinetti declaration made in Rome.

Barrère's attention next turned to Prinetti's request for publication of the Barrère-Visconti Venosta letters. Delcassé had opposed such a move, only consenting to a disclosure of the Mediterranean Agreement after France's occupation of Mitylene. In the negotiations that then followed, Barrère resolved the differences of form and content that Delcassé and Prinetti initially proposed for the declaration Prinetti subsequently made before the Italian Senate.

Perhaps at no time was the significance of Barrère's crucial role in effecting the Franco-Italian rapprochement more apparent than during the months following Prinetti's disclosure of French disinterest in Tripoli and the renewal of the Triple Alliance. More is involved than the acknowledgment of Barrère's influence in diplomatic circles. In his efforts to safeguard France against the offensive aspects of Italy's participation in the Triple Alliance, Barrère operated under serious disadvantages. In the first instance, not only did he lack precise knowledge of the Triplce's terms as they related to France—he was deliberately misled by Prinetti as to what those terms were. Throughout the spring of 1902, Prinetti continued assuring Barrère that nothing in the treaty itself could be construed as a direct or indirect
threat to France's security, affirming that her only concern should be with "the annexed acts." Even in a Senate declaration of May 23, Prinetti stated unequivocally that the treaty contained no protocols or conventions directed against France. Yet an application of Article II of the treaty specifically engaged Germany and Italy against France, and as early as January 12 Prinetti had informed German Ambassador Wedel of his willingness to renew the treaty essentially unchanged! According to Wedel's report to Bülow, Prinetti had also abandoned his request for a preamble that would publicly affirm the alliance's defensive nature by January 22. It was only April 28 that Prinetti conceded to Barrère the validity of France's objections to certain clauses in the treaty. Without Barrère's perspicacity, as well as the skill he demonstrated in negotiating with Prinetti, it would appear highly improbable the Neutrality Accord of 1902 could have been concluded. It was Barrère who successfully led Prinetti to the point of desiring to formally harmonize Franco-Italian relations. It was Barrère who then seized the opportunity presented by Prinetti's desire to

\[48\] As well as Barrère's difficulties in dealing with Prinetti, there remained the additional problem he encountered with Italian Ambassador to Paris Tornielli. Their antagonisms have already been cited. As Direction Politique noted after Tornielli's alleged interview in *l'Echo de Paris*, July 13, 1902,

A government that does not have enough confidence in its agent to keep him informed of all that concerns its relations with the country where he is accredited, recalls him, no longer permitting him to speak and act in its behalf. If, however, such a situation actually exists, it should not be permitted to continue. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs should not be deprived in this way of a direct means of communication with the Italian government.

DDF², II, No. 349, Annotation du Département.
request a protocol defining the rapports and pacific intents of the two countries. In the negotiation of the formal accord that ensued, it was again Barrère who assumed the role of intermediary between the two foreign ministers, winning acceptance of the various revisions demanded or, on his own initiative, suggesting others in order to hasten the accord to a conclusion. This Neutrality Accord, signed June 30, 1902, put a definitive seal on the Franco-Italian rapprochement that began developing with the conclusion of a commercial treaty in 1898. Its achievement was Barrère's accomplishment. In terms of his objectives it demonstrated considerable success in diminishing long-standing Franco-Italian antagonisms and in emptying the Triple Alliance of its substance as a political instrument directed against France.

A total evaluation of Franco-Italian rapprochement as it evolved between 1898 and 1902 cannot be attempted within the confines of this dissertation; the full significance of Barrère's achievement is only revealed in the events of succeeding years. The more outstanding effects of the work Barrère began in these

49Although signed June 30, 1902, the letters were dated November 1 and 2, 1902 to comply with the desires of Prinetti and Victor Emmanuel III. Both objected to signing them at the time of the Triplice renewal. As a precaution, however, it was prearranged that a duplicate set of letters were also signed, dated July 11 and 12, 1902. These duplicates were then destroyed, November 2, 1902. This posed no problem for Barrère. As he remarked, Prinetti had always affirmed it was essential any Franco-Italian accord be in harmony with Italy's alliances--understood to mean Italian alliances as they were renewed, without the military protocols. France had never asked Italy to enter into an engagement contradictory to her alliances. In Barrère's judgment, "that would have raised an entire different order of questions, and what faith could we have had in a government capable of violating the commitments she had made to others?" Ibid., Annex.
years occur in a later period. They are discernible in the influence of Franco-Italian rapport on: the Algeciras Conference of 1905, the Italo-Turkish War of 1911-12 and, ultimately, Italy's emergence as an ally of France in 1915. Although Paul Cambon signed the secret Anglo-French-Russian-Italian Convention against Germany, it was Barrère who negotiated Italy's inclusion in the alliance against the Central Powers. As his associate Charles-Roux remarked, "the act was only accomplished because he had sewn and maintained in the Triple Alliance a germ of dissolution, the principle of its disintegration."51

Perhaps the extent of Barrère's personal role in the Franco-Italian rapprochement is most appropriately expressed in the tribute accorded him by the Italian statesman-financier Luigi Luzzatti who wrote:

When our illustrious Ambassador Barrère, as far in the future as possible, retires from public life, I would hope he might write me a book of memoirs—in which we would recount all that Mephistopheles in the course of thirty years has attempted to divide France from Italy ... nor is he yet dead!52

50 It was largely through Barrère's efforts that the offices of Visconti Venosta were secured as Italy's representative at the Algeciras Conference. There, the Italian statesman decidedly exercised his influence in France's behalf. On Algeciras and the Italo-Turkish war see Laroche, Quinze ans à Rome avec Camille Barrère, pp. 261-66 and Seton-Watson, Italy from Liberalism to Fascism: 1870-1925, pp. 338-41, 366-81.


52 Luzzatti, Opere, I, 75-77.
APPENDIX I

THE FRANCO-ITALIAN
COMMERCIAL ACCORD: 1898

A

His Excellency Count Tornielli, Italian Ambassador to
Paris, to His Excellency M. Delcassé, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Paris, November 21, 1898

With the objective of establishing a commercial *modus vivendi* between Italy and France, and as a result of negotiations undertaken for this purpose between M. Luigi Luzzatti, Italian Parliament Deputy, and myself and MM. Bompard, Director in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gabriel Chandèze, Director of Commerce, and G. Bousquet, State Counsellor and General Director of Customs in October and November, 1898, I have the honor of presenting Your Excellency with the table of tariff reductions on certain articles for which my Government intends to seek Italian Parliamentary approval as well as the modification of certain regulations which will govern the application of certain articles of the tariff.

The Government of the King, noting the declaration which has been made by the Government of the Republic that, when the
Italian tariff is adjusted according to the conditions indicated in the aforementioned table the most-favored-nation customs treatment will apply to Italian products in France, with the exception of silk and silk goods, has authorized me to notify Your Excellency that cognizant of the modification of regulations that will govern the application of certain articles of the French customs tariff, it engages, on its side, to propose in exchange to its Parliament the application of most-favored-nation customs treatment on French products, with the exception of silk and silk goods.

B

His Excellency M. Delcassé, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to His Excellency Count Tornielli, Italian Ambassador to Paris.

Paris, November 21, 1898

I have the honor of acknowledging receipt of the letter Your Excellency addressed me today, transmitting the table of reductions and regulations governing the application of certain articles of the Italian customs tariff that the Royal Government proposes submitting to Parliamentary approbation or to prescribe to the customs administration at the same time it requests Parliamentary authorization to apply to French products, other than silk and silk goods, the most-favored-nation customs treatment.

In response to this communication, I have the honor of confirming to Your Excellency that, on its part, the Government of the Republic will request Parliamentary authorization to apply to Italian products, other than silk and silk goods, the most-
favored-nation customs treatment, at the same time this treatment will be applied in Italy to French products, after the Italian tariff has been modified according to the conditions indicated on the table attached to your letter of today.

Your Excellency will also find attached the modification of regulations which will be followed by French customs in the application of certain articles of the tariff and which, you informed me in your letter of today, you have duly noted.

C

Verbal Note

The Italian Ambassador to Paris to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Italian Government agrees that most-favored-nation treatment will be applied to the products of French colonies, upon their entry into Italy, and to Italian products upon their entry into French colonies, with the exception of the colony of Erythema as regards exportation to, as well as importation from, France.

Paris, November 21, 1898
His Excellency M. Barrère, French Ambassador to Rome, to His Excellency M. le Marquis Visconti Venosta.

Rome, December 14, 1900

Following the conclusion between France and Great Britain of the Convention of March 21, 1899 my government, replying to your honorable predecessor, had the occasion to give to him, through me, explanations of a nature to dissipate all equivocation on the significance of this instrument.

Since then Your Excellency has expressed the opinion that these assurances, reiterated in a more explicit manner, would contribute to strengthening the good relations between our two countries.

I have been authorized, in consequence, by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to make known to Your Excellency, because of the friendly relations which have been established between France and Italy and with the thought that this explanation will improve them further, that the Convention of March 21, 1899, in leaving
the vilayet of Tripoli outside of the partition of influence that it sanctions, marks for the French sphere of influence in relation to Tripolitania-Cyrenaica a limit that the Government of the Republic has no intention of surpassing and that it does not enter into its plans to intercept the caravan communications of Tripoli with the regions envisioned by the aforesaid convention.

These explanations, which we have agreed to keep secret, will contribute, I have no doubt, to the consolidation on this point, as on others, of the friendly relations between our two countries.

His Excellency M. le Marquis Visconti Venosta, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to His Excellency M. Barrère, Ambassador of France.

Rome, December 16, 1900

The current situation in the Mediterranean and the eventualities which could occur in that area have formed between us the object of a friendly exchange of ideas, our governments being equally animated by the desire of eliminating, in this regard, everything which would be capable of compromising, in the present and in the future, mutually good understanding.

In that which more particularly concerns Morocco, it has resulted from our conversations that the action of France has the objective of exercising and of safeguarding the rights which
result for her from the proximity of her territory with that Empire.

Thus defined, I have recognized that such an action is not, in our eyes, of a nature to injure the interests of Italy as a Mediterranean Power.

It has been equally understood that if a modification of the political or territorial status of Morocco were to occur, Italy would reserve to herself, as a measure of reciprocity, the right eventually to develop her influence in relation to Tripolitania-Cyrenaica.

These explanations, which we have agreed to keep secret, will contribute, I have no doubt, to the consolidation of friendly relations between our two countries.
APPENDIX III

BARRERE-PRINETTI PROPOSED

BILATERAL DECLARATION: MAY 24, 1902

The undersigned, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the King and Ambassador of France to His Majesty, duly authorized by their respective governments, have exchanged the following declarations:

In reference to the letters exchanged on December 14 and 16, 1900 between the Marquis Visconti Venosta and M. Barrère regarding the reciprocal situation of their two countries in the Mediterranean basin, and more especially on their respective interests in Tripoli and Morocco, they consider it proper to render the engagements that resulted more precise, in the sense that each of the two Powers will be able freely to develop its sphere of influence in the aforementioned regions at the moment it judges opportune, without the action of one of them being necessarily subordinated to that of the other.

The undersigned declare that this interpretation leaves no divergence between their governments regarding their respective interests in the Mediterranean. And this declaration has led them to formulate the following arrangements relative to their general relations, which the two governments engage to observe.
The two Powers will not engage themselves against each other in any direct or indirect aggression; they will not associate themselves, directly or indirectly, with any aggression directed against one of them by one or more Powers and, in case of aggression, they will observe a strict neutrality towards each other.

It would be the same if one of the two Powers were constrained to declare war for the defense of its security. For the case to be considered as legitimate defense, they must previously notify each other.

In order to remain faithful to the spirit of friendship which has inspired the present declarations, the undersigned state that there does not exist on either side and that there will not be concluded by the two Powers, any protocol or military agreement of an international contractual nature which would be in conflict with the present declarations.

It is understood that, save for the interpretation of the Mediterranean interests of the two Powers, which has a definitive character, the above declarations will be valid for . . . years and will remain secret.

Made in two copies, the . . .
APPENDIX IV

THE FRANCO-ITALIAN
NEUTRALITY ACCORD: 1902

A

M. Prinetti, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs to
M. Barrère, French Ambassador to Rome.

Rome, July 10, 1902

As a result of the conversations we have had touching the
reciprocal situation of Italy and France in the Mediterranean ba-
sin, and touching more especially the respective interests of the
two nations in Tripolitania-Cyrenaica and Morocco, it appeared
opportune to us to make more precise the engagements which result
from the letters exchanged on this subject between Your Excellency
and the Marquis Visconti Venosta, December 14 and 16, 1900, in
the sense that each of the two Powers will be able freely to devel-
op its sphere of influence in the aforementioned regions at the
moment it will judge opportune, and without the action of one of
them being necessarily subordinated to that of the other. It was
explained on this occasion that by the limit of French expansion
in North Africa, alluded to in the letter cited above of Your
Excellency of December 14, 1900, is understood the frontier of
Tripolitania indicated by the map annexed to the declaration of
March 21, 1899, additional to the Anglo-French Convention of June 14, 1898.

We have ascertained that this interpretation leaves actually no divergence between our two Governments on their respective interests in the Mediterranean.

On the occasion of these conversations, and in order to eliminate in a definitive manner all possible misunderstanding between our two countries, I do not hesitate, in order to make their general relations more precise, to make spontaneously to Your Excellency, in the name of the Government of His Majesty the King, the following declarations:

Should France be the object of a direct or indirect aggression on the part of one or more Powers, Italy would maintain a strict neutrality.

It would be the same were France, as the result of a direct provocation, to find herself compelled, for the defense of her honor or of her security, to take the initiative of a declaration of war. In this eventuality, the Government of the Republic must previously communicate its intention to the Royal Government, enabling the latter to determine that it is indeed a case of direct provocation.

In order to remain faithful to the spirit of friendship which has inspired the present declarations, I am authorized, further, to confirm to you that there does not exist on the part of Italy, and that there will not be concluded by her, any protocol
or military arrangement of an international contractual order which would be in conflict with the present declarations.

I have to add that, save for the interpretation of the Mediterranean interests of the two Powers, to which a definitive character has been given, in conformity with the spirit of the correspondence exchanged December 14 and 16, 1900 between Your Excellency and the Marquis Visconti Venosta, the declarations which precede being in harmony with the actual international engagements of Italy, the Royal Government understands that they will have their full value as long as it has not informed the Government of the Republic that these engagements have been modified.

I would be grateful were Your Excellency to acknowledge receipt of this communication, which must remain secret, in the name of the Government of the Republic.

B

M. Barrère, Ambassador of the French Republic to Rome, to M. Prinetti, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Rome, July 10, 1902

In your letter of today, Your Excellency has desired to remind me that following our conversations with respect to the reciprocal situation of France and Italy in the Mediterranean basin, and more especially on the respective interests of the two countries in Tripolitania--Cyrenaica and Morocco--it appeared opportune to us to make more precise the engagements which result
from the letters exchanged on this subject December 14 and 16, 1900 between the Marquis Visconti Venosta and me, in the sense that each of the two Powers will be able freely to develop its share of influence in the aforementioned regions at the moment it will judge opportune and without the action of one of them being necessarily subordinated to that of the other.

It was explained on that occasion that by the limit of French expansion in North Africa, alluded to in my letter cited above of December 14, 1900, is understood the frontier of Tripolitania indicated by the map annexed to the declaration of March 21, 1899, additional to the Anglo-French Convention of June 14, 1898.

This interpretation leaves, as we have stated, no actual divergence between our two Governments in their respective interests in the Mediterranean, and with the objective of eliminating, in a definitive manner, all possible misunderstanding between our two countries, you have been authorized by the Government of His Majesty to make spontaneously certain declarations intended to make more precise the general rapport of Italy vis-à-vis France.

I have the honor of presenting Your Excellency with these declarations in the name of my Government.

I am authorized, in return, to formulate in the following manner the conditions by which France understands, on her part, and in the same friendly spirit, to govern her general rapport vis-à-vis Italy.
Should Italy be the object of a direct or indirect aggression on the part of one or more Powers, France would maintain a strict neutrality.

It would be the same were Italy, as the result of a direct provocation, to find herself compelled, for the defense of her honor or of her security, to take the initiative of a declaration of war. In this eventuality, the Royal Government must previously communicate its intention to the Government of the Republic, enabling the latter to determine that it is indeed a case of direct provocation.

I am authorized to declare to you as well that there does not exist on the part of France, and that there will be concluded, no protocol or military arrangement of an international contractual order which would be in conflict with the present declarations.

It is understood, of course, that save for the interpretation of the Mediterranean interests of the two Powers, to which a definitive character has been given, in conformity with the spirit of the correspondence exchanged December 14 and 16, 1900 between the Marquis Visconti Venosta and me, the preceding declarations, which are to remain secret, being in harmony with the active international engagements of Italy, will have their full value as long as the Royal Government has not informed the Government of the Republic these engagements have been modified.
C

M. Barrère, French Ambassador to Rome, to M. Prinetti, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Rome, July 11, 1902

Regarding the declarations we have exchanged by our letters of yesterday on the general relations of France and Italy, it seems necessary to me, to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding, to make more precise the meaning and intent which should be attributed to the word, direct, in the expression, direct provocation.

I would be grateful to receive confirmation of precisely what, in your opinion, the term signifies.

D

M. Prinetti, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to M. Barrère, French Ambassador to Rome.

Rome, July 11, 1902

In your letter of today you have expressed the desire that, in order to avoid all possibility of misunderstanding, I make more precise for you the meaning and intent to be attributed to the word, direct, in the expression, direct provocation used in the declarations I made in my letter to you of yesterday.

I hasten to confirm for you in the matter what I have had the occasion to express to you verbally. The word, direct, has
this meaning and intent, in understanding that an action could be considered eventually as constituting provocation if it concerned the direct relations between the provoking Power and the Power provoked.
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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Catherine Burnikel has been read and approved by members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

May 23, 1972
Date

Signature of Advisor