

**ROYALTY AND REPUBLICANISM  
IN ITALY: OR NOTES AND  
DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE  
LOMBARD INSURRECTION AND  
TO THE ROYAL WAR OF 1848**

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Insurrection and to the Royal War of 1848 by Joseph Mazzini

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**JOSEPH MAZZINI**

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE subject of the following pages is the National Italian Cause. Their object is to correct public opinion in England, which has been misled on several important points. They may contain errors of intelligence in their appreciation of facts, but as to the facts themselves, there is not a syllable which is not true, and dictated by the most profound sense of the duties of a writer pleading a just cause very often misunderstood. Will they be read with an equally serious attention? I hope so. There is in the English character a foundation of innate honesty, a truth-seeking instinct of fair play, which cannot be long deceived by calumny. When once the characteristics of the case are fairly set forth, it is impossible that a people educated in the school of liberty, should long consent to accept without examination the accusations which the interested partizans of things as they are, have at all times



flung upon those who combat in the name of the future. It is impossible that a people which has suffered and bled in the defence of its rights against the tyranny of usurped power, should not sooner or later awaken to active sympathy with a nation, which for fifty years has suffered and bled to obtain all that is most sacred in this world—independence—a recognized existence without, and freedom of thought and action within. And it is impossible that a serious people, calling itself religious, and having for many years written in the first page of its gospel of life the inviolability of conscience as its highest law, should not comprehend the European importance of the Italian movement, and feel the breath of God sanctifying and giving soul to the enterprise of twenty-four millions of men, whose political revelation, thanks to Rome, must inevitably be religious. Indifference in such a case is more immoral than antagonism. The one may be the fruit of error, the other is atheism. We must combat it by every means in our power, not only for ourselves who are struggling, and have need of encouragement and support, but for the sake of those whom we address, and for the honour and the future of humanity.

I have said that the subject of the following writings is the *National* Italian Cause. I ought perhaps to have said the *Republican* Italian Cause. They tend, in fact, to show, by evidence, what the Republican party has *done* in Rome, and to explain its con-

duct elsewhere. For in Italy, the Republican party and the National party are one and the same thing. The party which entitled itself *moderate*, when it was but *weak* and illogical, has endeavoured within the last few years to make itself the National party ; it has succeeded only in making itself the party of a local dynasty.

It destroyed the cause by limiting the forces which should have contributed to its triumph. Its regular disciplined troops, its arsenals, its well-furnished treasures, could not save it from two dishonourable failures. Rome and Venice, with their banner bearing the Republican device, *God and the People*, fell through the concentration of forces infinitely superior ; but they fell with honour, and their fall has bequeathed to the Italians a greater consciousness of their strength, and of their future, than could have been given by ten victories under any other banner. There is another reason which needs but to be mentioned to have its importance at once felt by English good sense, when unobscured by prejudice or by an entire ignorance of Italian history. The Republican party in Italy is not the offspring of a *system*, a governmental theory, originating in the brain of one man, or of several men ; it springs from *facts* : it is the offspring of tradition, and the exponent of the vital conditions of Italian society.

This not a justification sought for *post factum* :

those who know me, know that I am incapable of such. I am by principle a Republican, that is to say, rationally speaking, there are for me but two legitimate masters, God, in heaven, and the People—the country guided by the best among them, upon earth. The system which, instead of seeking to acknowledge power where it really exists, that is to say, wherever God has given the highest amount of genius and of virtue, places it arbitrarily in aristocratic privilege or hereditary royalty, is to me but the materialism of chance substituted to an enlightened choice. But the fact that a thing be true in principle cannot give the right of suddenly enthroning it in practice. Conviction brings with it the duty of a peaceful apostolate, it does not create the right to realize in application. Humanity is not created here below, we but continue it. Truth is eternal as the stars, but man only discovers the stars in proportion as the power of his telescope is enlarged. The telescope of humanity is its progressive education. The ground must be prepared. Truth must not be the monopoly of a few, but the aspiration, the desire, the prevision of the masses. Is it, or is it not so in Italy? This is the question.

The men who reject the Republican idea with unreasoning antipathy are evidently as much in the wrong as those who make of it the *sine quâ non* of their political action. A Republic may be a good or a bad thing, according to time and place. There is no