

Translation by Teresa Celestino from *Piemonte Oggi*:

VERCELLI – The American Chemical Society sends to the Scientific Liceo “Amedeo Avogadro” a commemorative plaque dedicated to the A. Avogadro’s law – “Collaborating with foreign institutions helps us in giving the right prominence to our tradition and our heritage”

(r. p.) The American Chemical Society is the largest scientific association in the world. This institution is one of the most influential international scientific information sources. The History of Chemistry Division of the ACS encourages knowledge advancement and circulation of the chemical science history among chemists, students, science historians and towards general public.

Every year this organization confers an award to the institutions that welcomed scientists who wrote papers while they were working there. These papers have to be revolutionary in their outcomes at scientific and social level. The History of Chemistry Division has given Scientific Liceo “Amedeo Avogadro” a commemorative plaque honouring the 1811 paper in which Avogadro formulated the famous law bearing his name: “Equal volumes of gases at the same temperature and pressure contain the same number of molecules”.

This award has been strongly supported by the [History of Chemistry committee] whose member -Professor Jeffrey I. Seeman- is from the University of Richmond; the committee considered that the Scientific Liceo could be the more suitable institution for the plaque reception and exhibition. On October 2011 the High School celebrated the 200th anniversary from the Avogadro’s law formulation, reminding the town that this glorious page of the history of science was written just in Vercelli, where the scientist was teaching *Positive Philosophy*¹ at the *École Normale*². The High School made a documentary exhibition entitled “Amedeo Avogadro in his time, in his town” involving devoted teachers and students. The main institutions contributed in carrying out the project, and other town schools were involved too. This exhibition, presented during the conference, is on a website created by teachers and students.

This Saturday morning, on October the 20th 2012, at nine o’clock, in the High School hall “Nino Marione”, has taken place the meeting honouring the great scientist, followed by a plaque exposition ceremony. Teresa Celestino participated as representative of the History of Chemistry Division of the American Chemical Society. She said: “*This Avogadro’s paper represents a*

¹ *Physics and Mathematics* teaching was named as *Positive Philosophy* in high school and academic institutions.

² *École Normale Supérieure* indicates higher education establishments. I think that the school in which Avogadro taught was maybe the *École Normale Primaire* (or *d’Instituteur*), high school designed to train future teachers of the public education system (in French and in Italy under French domination, during the Napoleonic era). Anyway, I didn’t find the expression “*école normale*” reading the book “Amedeo Avogadro, una politica per la scienza”, a detailed biography of the scientist, whose author is the Italian historian Marco Ciardi. The historian uses only the word “liceo”.

breakthrough publication because it put an end to the confusion reigning between atoms and molecules³; a series of experimental procedures were planned starting from this very important paper. Basic knowledge that laid the foundations of chemistry. Initiatives such this school project and this celebration create little bridges between us and foreign scientific institutions, and help us in giving the right prominence to our heritage. Italy has an historical-scientific heritage of great value, it's a pity not cultivating it. I think this High School represents an exception in the overall picture⁴. This kind of collaboration with foreign societies contributes in [rekindling⁵] the interest in our tradition."

³ Even though – I told – the Avogadro's Law was accepted definitively many years after its formulation.

⁴ I'd want to say: "this high school represents an exception in the overall picture of the school education system".

⁵ I used the verb "rinfocolare" (to rekindle), in Italian language sounding like "ripopolare" (as the journalist wrote), whose English translation is "to repopulate" (that is not what I meant).