

1713 gave Victor Amadeus many advantages. Among the additions to his territory was the island of Sicily, with the title of King. Five years afterward he exchanged his island of Sicily for that of Sardinia, and then took the name now so well known—King of Sardinia, Cyprus and Jerusalem, Duke of Savoy, Prince of Piedmont.

"Victor Amadeus was a man of intellect as well as of heroism. Not only did he establish the independence of his country, and erect it into a second class kingdom, but he gave his people a code of better laws than they had ever before known. In 1730, seeing everything prosperous, and finding himself old, he married a beautiful subject, and abdicated the throne. His subsequent fate was melancholy. On the plea that he repented of his abdication, his son separated him from his wife, and placed him in a confinement where he remained till death, from rage and mortification, released him two years after. Victor Amadeus was a modern Lear.

"The French Revolution revenged him on his descendants. Piedmont was partially conquered by the generals of the Republic, and wholly subjugated by Bonaparte, who made its plain of Marengo the theatre of a memorable exploit. The entire continental territory was annexed to France, and the reigning monarch, Charles Emanuel IV., driven off to die in the island of Sardinia. But the great treaty of Vienna, in 1815, according to the customary fortunes of the house, not only restored all to its old dominions, but added to them the city and territory of Genoa. At that date the kingdom took the proportions it has since held. But with this territorial aggrandizement commenced the internal alteration of political character. The leaven of the French Revolution created a popular demand for a constitution. In 1821 the country attempted to enforce this demand by an appeal to arms. Its reigning sovereign, Victor Emanuel I., abdicated rather than grant it. Carlo Felice, his brother, put down the insurrection with the strong hand. He died without children, and Charles Albert, the head of the cadet branch of the family, the Prince of Carignan, ascended the throne in 1831.

"This man is one of the problems of history. It is difficult to say whether he was, as the people still believe him to have been, a hero and a martyr, or a faithless egotist. The most probable solution is that he was a ruler who had conceived an idea too great for his execution. That idea was the expulsion of the Austrians from Italy, and the establishment of an Italian kingdom. Twice he led the constitutional party, and twice he deserted it. But when the revolutionary ideas of 1847 and 1848 began to ferment, he conceived his time to be come. He placed himself again at the head of its memorable movement, and this time set his crown upon the chance, for he engaged his country in a war against Austria. The Lombards received him as their savior. Parma, Modena and Lombardy were declared part of the Piedmontese kingdom, and the appeal to arms was at first rewarded with brilliant success. But the King of Naples and other despots who had at first seconded him, under the pressure of their people, deserted the cause so soon as they were able to do so; the feeble forces of Piedmont were found no match for those of the Austrian Empire, and the equivocal talents of the Sardinian king, were cyphers in the field when fairly weighed against the genius and experience of Marshal Radetsky. Defeat and retreat soon became the chronicle of the day, till the hope of Italian independence was finally extinguished in the bloody rout of Novara.

"Failing to find the death which he eagerly sought throughout that famous field, on which he had concentrated all his force, Charles Albert abdicated his throne in the evening of the battle, and returning to his capital, went away unattended, it is said, even by a servant—to what destination no one at the time knew. Two years afterward he died in Portugal, of a broken heart.

"The last act of this monarch's reign was the promulgation of a constitution which had been demanded by the popular voice for thirty years. His son, Victor Emanuel II., the present monarch, ascended the throne with an oath to observe it. Up to that time the king had been the sole power of the state—since then that officer has only been a stately cypher. The government is now in the hands of the people, guided by an oligarchy; their rule has been beneficial to the country; railroads have been extensively built, and the religious and civil institutions improved.

"The new reign was inaugurated by a treaty of peace with Austria, by which Sardinia was bound to pay seventy millions of francs toward the expenses of the war, but by which, according to the invariable fortune of the house on all similar occasions of general pacification, the independence and territory of the kingdom was preserved intact. A fierce contest with the Church of Rome, and the religious corporations of the country, which once pressed more heavily upon it than any other in Italy, was early undertaken, and has lately been terminated wholly to the advantage of the state. Up to the last year all had gone well with the constitutional kingdom; but within the past twelve months its politicians have thought proper to engage it in a war with a great power, that has never injured it heretofore, and is debarred by distance from endangering it in the future. The calculations which induced the step may be just, but they may all be over-

thrown by the chances of war, and at the moment they cost the treasury a handsome sum.

"In the foregoing paragraphs I have merely catalogued the chief epochs in the history of the Savoyard monarchy. To give even a concise abridgement of that history would occupy several volumes. It comprises the reigns of forty sovereigns, and a period of eight hundred and fifty-two years, and it is involved in nearly every general war and treaty in Europe during that time. The strongest kingdom in Europe has not been more active than this poor and weak monarchy. Indeed, unceasing energy and care have been the conditions of its existence. And it is even wonderful that any industry could have kept up such a state for so long a period, undefended by natural boundaries, and surrounded by powerful and lawless neighbors. Such success, however, is partially accounted for by the hereditary ability and courage of the reigning family, which was long unique among royal races. Their uniform cleverness was once the general remark of writers on European politics. Montesquieu, in the 'Spirit of Laws,' renders them a splendid eulogy; and Robertson explains the succession of great princes by the fact that, developed on all sides by ambitious neighbors, their little kingdom would only subsist by the force of intelligence and tension of nerve on the part of its rulers. It may be added that the Salic law, early put in force, has had something to do with the perpetuity and renown of the family. In 1829, the reigning count having died without male issue, and the States General of Savoy having assembled to select his successor, his daughter, then Duchess of Brittany, demanded the sceptre; but this assembly of bishops and nobles unanimously decided that 'never should the crown of Savoy fall from the lance to the distaff,' and this response has since been a fundamental law of the monarchy."—*From the Washington Union.*

#### ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEYDEN.

That distinguished French periodical, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, is now publishing a series of interesting articles from the pen of M. Alphonse Esquiros, on the Netherlands and life in Holland. From a late number, we translate his graphic account of the origin of the celebrated University of Leyden.

The foundation of this famous university is connected with the siege which Leyden sustained in the year 1573. The United Provinces had risen against the Spanish domination. Liberty of conscience basely violated, political and religious despotism, the inquisition, and the establishment of arbitrary taxation, had all tended to exasperate the national feelings. "At this time," says the historian Hooft, surnamed the Tacitus of Holland, "all ranks, ages, and sexes were confounded in one general persecution. The gibbet and the wheel did not suffice; the trees which bordered the public roads were laden with corpses, and the flames of the funeral-piles of martyrdom darted upwards to the sky. Scaffolds were erected in every quarter; and the very air became infected with a vapor of death." Then was seen a spectacle rarely paralleled in the world's history. A few hundred men pushed to despair—fishermen, shepherds, merchants—banded themselves together to struggle against the crushing oppression of a powerful government, and against armies reputed invincible. Following the example given by other towns of Holland, the inhabitants of Leyden declared themselves in favour of the union of the provinces; but towards the end of October they were attacked and surrounded by the Spaniards. The Prince of Orange wrote directions to the citizens at all hazards to offer resistance. He promised on his part to seek every means of assisting them. "Hold out for three months," he said, "and even if the siege should last longer, do not lose courage. If you persevere deliverance is certain; but if you surrender perpetual servitude awaits you."

The enemy, meanwhile, sought by insidious promises to obtain an entrance into the place. The only reply vouchsafed by the besieged was this Latin verse—

*Fistula dulce canit, volucrum dum decipit aucup.*

The defence of the city was entrusted to Janus Douza. The burghers bound themselves by oath to die beneath the ruins of their houses, rather than yield. Although in the first instance all the useless mouths had been sent away, famine soon pressed on the city. No bread was to be seen, and provisions of all sorts became every day more scarce. At length grass, leaves, the bark of trees, the skin of the animals which had long since been devoured, even clay, came to be used as nutriment. Pestilence followed famine. Of 16,000 inhabitants between 6000 and 7000 perished. Everywhere living skeletons were seen burying the dead. The town, defended by shadows, still sustained itself against the fury of the invading army and its own internal divisions. To the soldiers, who shouted to them: "You are dying of hunger—surrender, and you shall have food," they answered from the top of the ramparts: "When our provisions are quite gone, we will eat our left hands, and keep our right to defend our liberty."

One day, however, a famished crowd presented themselves before the burgomaster of Leyden, Pieter Adriaanszoon van der Werff: they promptly demanded either bread or the surrender of the city. "I