

pale and agitated to remonstrate, the generals joined in, but the king was resolute, and set out that night with a single attendant for Oporto, where his exile's life was ended not many months afterwards by death. And so Charles Albert's brave struggle for Italy was over, and a younger hand was henceforth to grasp the sword that he let fall.

Travelling through Italy one is apt to grumble at the innumerable piazzas and horsos when the name of Vittorio Emanuele has replaced older historic and local ones, at the statues and busts of that by no means classically beautiful profile that are everywhere met at the half finished monument to his memory whose scaffolding disfigures the Capitollian heights in so many Roman views. One grumbles and wonders what this man had done to thus endear him to the Italian people. One knows his faults—they were blazoned abroad to all Europe by many a foe of his own country—one knows that honour supplied the keen scheming brain. Garibaldi the arm swift to strike, and yet in this case the people have judged aright, Victor Emanuel was the real maker of Italy. Cavour's keen brain, Garibaldi's onslaught against tyranny, the passionate popular impulse that stirred all Italy from Turin to Palermo, all these might have counted for nothing, but for that one man's dauntless, unfaltering resolve to free his country from the Austrians, and to make of her a nation.

Victor Emanuel was twenty-eight when he came into his kingdom on that dark day for Piedmont. He was born and spent his childhood at Poggio Imperiale near Florence, to which his father was exiled after some Liberal outbreaks in Turin.

Here he met with the first of the many hair breadth escapes which were his lot through life, when his nurse accidentally setting fire to his bed curtains only saved his life at the cost of her own.

Here he met with the first of the many of Genoa, received a strict military training from their father whom they nevertheless adored with strong family feeling characteristic of the house of Savoy.

At the age of twenty-five, he is described as of middle stature, broad shouldered, powerfully built, with a brown complexion, snub nose and heavy jaw; frank and simple in manners and yet not without a touch of soldierly dignity.

He was married while still young to his cousin, Maria Adelaide, daughter of the Archduke Raineri, Austrian Viceroy of Lombardy. The marriage was looked on coldly by the Piedmontese on account of the Austrian connection, but the princess, a noble woman, was from the day of her marriage staunch to her husband and his country, in spite of any temptations that may have arisen from his neglect of her. Taking after his ancestors Victor Emanuel was above all things a soldier.

When in March '48 the war that was to have such a disastrous ending was declared, he roamed to and fro like an uneasy spirit until he learned the welcome news that he was to be allowed to take part in the campaign, and when he first heard the cannon at Santa Lucia, his whole face lit up as he shouted, "Ah this is the music that pleases me." He caused great anxiety among the generals that his reckless exposure of himself might endanger a life so valuable to Piedmont. At Goito

when the weary dispirited troops were giving way, he dashed towards the guards crying out "With me guards, to save the honour of Savoy," and leading the charge changed the fortunes of the day to victory of which he himself carried the tidings to his father. But those days of hope were over, and the young king's first task was to try and make some possible terms of peace with the Austrians.

The outlook was a gloomy one. There was not a single Italian ruler who was not delighted at his misfortunes. Within his own state he found enemies equally malignant in the Jesuits and in Mazzini's fanatical republicans.

After one fierce outburst of grief on his father's departure, the king pulled himself together and faced the situation. He consented to interview with Radetzky, at which he spoke those brave words "Sooner than subscribe to such conditions I would lose a hundred crowns. I will call my nation to arms once more and you will see what Piedmont is capable of. My house knows the road to exile, but not of dishonour." At last the armistice was concluded and in spite of the king's endeavours, the terms were very bitter. But what he felt most was the cold reception given to him on his return to Turin, after meeting the hostility of Parliament he broke down in private into overwhelming grief. What the strain of those early days must have been may be guessed from the dangerous illness which struck the strong man down a month after his coming to the throne.

It was about this time that he acquired the name "Il Re Galantuomo," "the honest king," by which he has been so universally known. Massimo D'Azeglio used it once in talking to him and the king was so pleased with it that when the Turin census papers were brought to him, he signed it under "Professor," and from that it passed into general use. But the affectionate Piedmontese name for him was "Barbo Vittorio," Uncle Victor.

It was soon after his accession that Victor Emanuel's long struggle with the clerical party began, the struggle which ended with his excommunication. This formed one of the great griefs of his life, for, a devout Catholic, any doubt thrown upon his reverence for religion touched him in his most sensitive point. In reading his long correspondence with the Pope one cannot but be struck with his evident intense desire for conciliation, and even up to the last when the king had taken up his abode in the Quirinal, and Pius IX. was making all Europe resound with his cries, the king crept on his attempts at conciliation, sending official messages to the Vatican on every appropriate occasion, doing all in his power to soften the inevitable to the head of his church.

It is one of the strangest facts about that period of upheaval, the personal liking that in spite of all official warfare, always seemed to exist between the Pope and the king. Through all those years of bitter strife there were kindly private letters that passed between them, and even when Victor Emanuel lay on his death bed, an excommunicated man, the Pope could not resist the truly Christian impulse that made him send his Pontifical blessing to the dying man whom he was so soon to follow. With this sentiment strong on the king's side, it was

thus no slight addition to his grief when the great blow fell, of the death of his mother, his wife, and his only brother, all within less than a month, that the clerical party should raise an outcry proclaiming his sorrows to be a judgement of heaven upon his persecution of the church.

Of his relations with the more fanatical clergy there are many anecdotes told. Cardinal Corsi, hearing king and Count were to visit Pisa cathedral had the great gates closed, but when the indignant crowd wished to force them, the king seeing a side door open, said, "Let us pass in here, my friends. It is the narrow way which leads to Paradise." At Bologna also, the king found only the side door of the cathedral open, and a few of the inferior clergy within, but the bishop, being alarmed at the popular indignation, coming to apologize, the king said, "You were quite right not to inconvenience yourself, my lord. I do not go to church to visit priests, I do to worship God." When the interdict was threatened, the king was warned that it could not take effect unless the document could be placed in his own hands. "In that case, be content," he said, "When I see a priest looking as though he would speak to me, I will put my hands in my pockets and never take them out until he has gone." When the Crimean war came, Victor Emanuel became a popular English hero. He visited England in '55 and received an ovation on his entry into London. It was a cold winter day with a bitter north wind blowing, but the king drove in an open carriage in full dress without an overcoat, and while everyone else appeared shivering and wretched, he alone seemed perfectly content. The queen decorated him with the garter and he was banqueted at the Guildhall.

All these first ten years of his reign were a breathing space before the final struggle with Austria. No real peace was possible while Italy lay under that iron yoke. At last in January '59 the war trumpet was sounded in the king's speech at the opening of parliament. "We are not insensible," he said, "to the cry of anguish—il grido di dolore—which comes up to us from many parts of Italy." A storm of mad enthusiasm followed these words. Deputies sprang on the benches and cheered, Italian exiles wept unrestrainedly.

This speech spread like wild fire all over Italy. Young men flocked across the frontiers in bands to join the Piedmontese army. Garibaldi offered his sword to the king. Ladies sold their jewels so that they might contribute towards raising troops. Cavour received a regal reception when he returned to Turin after successfully completing the French alliance. Not that this alliance could be one without a sacrifice. The emperor should have determined that Prince Napoleon should marry Victor's daughter, and so it was necessary to hand over this shining child of fifteen, to the already well known rone. The father faltered, but Cavour, who would have offered up anything under heaven to aid the Italian cause, made the Princess Clothilde see this absolute necessity of the step, and she, with a staunchness of heart equal to his own, consented and left her home and friends a true martyr for Italy. What labours and wrongs she endured are well known.