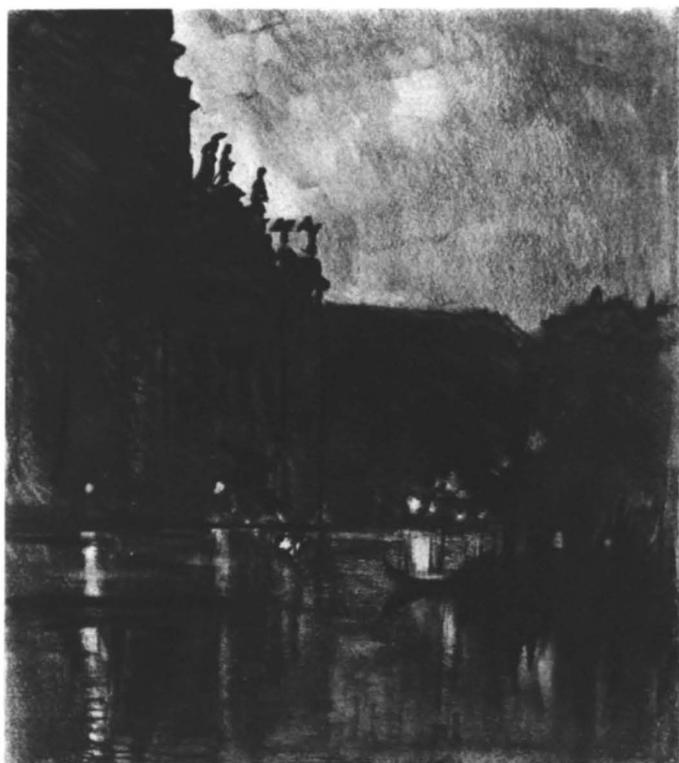


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# SALVE · VENETIA

GLEANINGS  
FROM VENETIAN HISTORY

BY  
FRANCIS MARION CRAWFORD

*WITH 225 ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOSEPH PENNELL*

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. II



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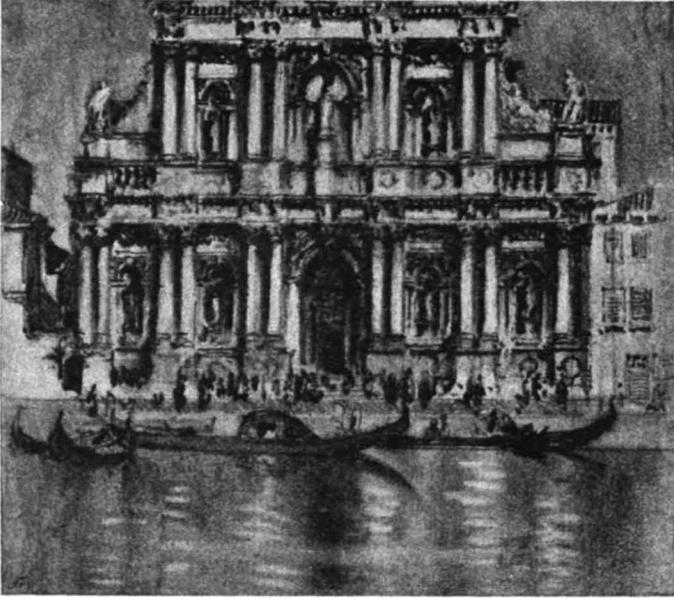
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SALVE • VENETIA





S. MARIA DEGLI SCALZI, GRAND CANAL

## I

### THE ARISTOCRATIC MAGISTRACIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

LIKE other aristocracies, the Venetian government rarely destroyed or altogether abolished any office or regulation which had existed a long time. When a change was needed the duties or powers of one or more of the Councils were extended, or a committee of the Council

of Ten was appointed and presently turned into a separate tribunal, as when the Inquisitors of State were created.

In one sense the government of Venice had now existed in a rigid and unchangeably aristocratic form during two centuries, and that form never changed to the very end. But in another sense no government in the world ever showed itself more flexible under the pressure of events, or better able to provide a new legislative weapon with which to combat each new danger that presented itself. This double character of an administration which inspired awe by its apparent immutability and terror by its ubiquity and energy, no doubt had much to do with its extraordinarily long life; for I believe that no civilised form of government ever endured so long as that of Venice.

It is therefore either frivolous or hypocritical to seek the causes of its ultimate collapse. It died of old age, when the race that had made it was worn out. It would be much more to the point to inquire why the most unscrupulous, sceptical, suspicious, and thoroughly immoral organisation that ever was devised by man should have outlasted a number of other organisations supposed to be founded on something like principles of liberty and justice. Such an inquiry would involve an examination into the nature of freedom, equity, and truth generally; but no one has ever satisfactorily defined even one of those terms, for the simple reason that the things the words are supposed to mean do not anywhere exist; and the study of that which has no

real existence, and no such potential mathematical existence as an ultimate ratio, is absolutely futile.

The facts we know about the Venetian government are all interesting, however. It had its origin, like all really successful governments, in the necessities of a small people which held together in the face of great dangers. It was moulded and developed by the strongest and most intelligent portion of that people, and the party that modelled it guessed that each member of the party would destroy it and make himself the master if he could, wherefore the main thing was to render it impossible for any individual to succeed in that. The individual most likely to succeed was the Doge himself, and he was therefore turned into a mere doll, a puppet that could not call his soul his own. The next most probable aspirant to the tyranny would be the successful native-born general or admiral. A machinery was invented whereby the victorious leader was almost certain to be imprisoned, fined, and exiled as soon as his work was done and idleness made him dangerous. Pisani, Zeno, Da Lezze are merely examples of what happened almost invariably. If a Venetian was a hero, any excuse would serve for locking him up.

Next after the generals came the nobles who held office, and lastly those who were merely rich and influential. They were so thoroughly hemmed in by a hedge of apparently petty rules and laws as to their relations with foreigners, with the people, and with each other, that they were practically paralysed, as individuals, while

remaining active and useful as parts of the whole. No one ever cared what the people thought or did, for they were peaceable, contented, and patriotic. Every measure passed by the nobles was directed against an enemy that might at any moment arise amongst themselves, or against the machinations of enemies abroad. Of all Italians the Venetians alone were not the victims of that simplicity of which I have already spoken. They believed in nothing and nobody, and they were not deceived. They were not drawn into traps by the wiles of the Visconti as Genoa was, and as many of the principalities were; they were not cheated out of their money by royal English borrowers as the Florentines were; they were not led away out of sentiment to ruin themselves in the Crusades as so many were; on the contrary, their connection with the Crusades was very profitable. For a long time they could be heroes when driven to extremities, but they never liked heroics; they were good fighters at sea, because they were admirable merchant sailors, but on land they much preferred to hire other men to fight for them, whom they could pay off and get rid of when the work was done.

Like other nations, their history is that of their rise, their culmination, and their decline. Like other nations, Venice also resembled the living body of a human being, of which it is not possible to define with absolute accuracy the periods of youth, prime, and old age. But we can say with certainty that each of those stages lasted longer in the life of Venice than in the life of any other European state, perhaps because no one of

the three periods was hastened or interrupted by an internal revolution or by the temporary presence of a foreign conqueror.

It can be said, however, that Venice was, on the whole, at the height of her glory about the year 1500, and it would have needed a gift of prophecy to foretell the probable date of the still distant end. At that time the Great Council was more than ever the incarnation of the State, that is, of the aristocracy; and every member of the great assembly had a sort of 'cultus' for his own dignity, and looked upon his family, from which he derived his personal privileges, with a veneration that bordered on worship. The safety and prosperity of the patrician houses were most intimately connected with the welfare of the country; a member of the Great Council would probably have considered that the latter was the immediate consequence of the former. As a matter of fact, under the government which the aristocrats had given themselves, it really was so; they were themselves the State.

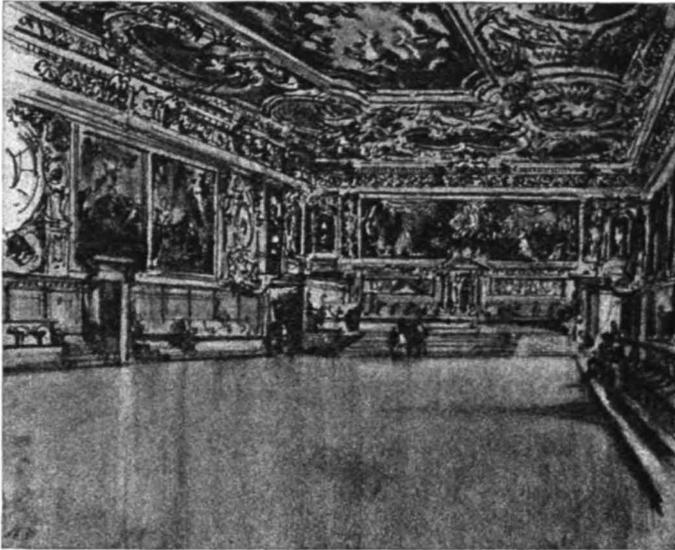
It was therefore natural that they should guard their race against all plebeian contamination. From time to time it became necessary to open the Golden Book and the doors of the Great Council to certain families which had great claims upon the public gratitude, as happened after the war of Chioggia; but the book was opened unwillingly, and the door of the council-chamber was only set ajar; the newcomers were looked upon as little better than intruders, and *Rom. iv. 469.* the 'new men,' while they were invested with the

outward distinctions of rank before the law, were not received into anything like intimacy by their colleagues of the older nobility.

It is a law of the Catholic Church that baptism creates a relationship, and therefore a canonical impediment to marriage, between the baptized person or his parents on the one hand, and the godfathers and godmothers on the other, as well as between each of the godparents and all the rest. But it was the custom of Venice to have a great many godfathers and godmothers at baptisms, and the nobles were therefore obliged by law to choose them from the burgher and artisan classes. It was perfectly indifferent that a young patrician should contract a spiritual relationship with a hundred persons — there were sometimes as many godparents as that — if these persons were socially so far beneath him that he must lose caste if he married one of them; but it was of prime importance that the law should forbid the formation of any spiritual bond whereby a possible marriage between two members of the aristocracy might be prevented, or even retarded. Every parish priest was therefore required to ask in a loud voice, when he was baptizing a noble baby, whether there were any persons of the same social condition as the infant amongst the godparents. If he omitted to do this, or allowed himself to be deceived by those present, he was liable to a very heavy fine, and might even be imprisoned for several months.

The Avogadori now replaced their old-fashioned register by the one henceforth officially known as the

Golden Book, in which were entered the marriages of the nobles and the births of their children. Every noble who omitted to have his marriage registered within one week, or the birth of his children within the same time, was liable to severe penalties. But the



HALL OF THE GREAT CLOCKS, DUCAL PALACE

names of women of inferior condition who married nobles were not entered in those sanctified pages, since the children of a burgher woman could not sit in the Great Council. Nevertheless, it happened now and then that a noble sacrificed the privileges of his descendants for the present advantage of a rich dowry; and as this again constituted a source

*Molmenti, Dog.*

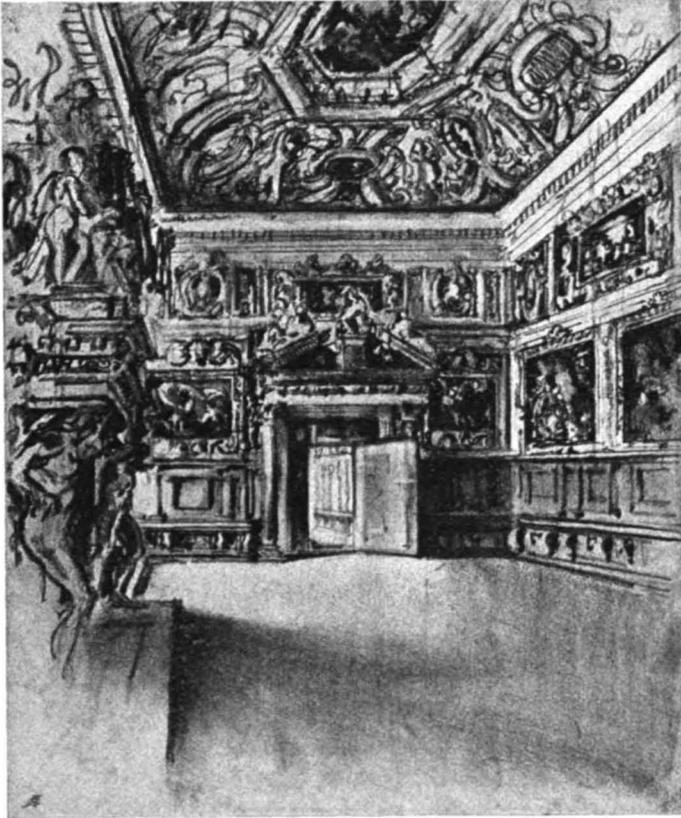
of anxiety for the State, the amount of a burgher girl's marriage portion was limited by law to the sum of two thousand ducats.

The young aristocrats received a special education, to fit them for their future duties and offices. We have already seen that young men not yet old enough to sit in the Great Council were admitted to its meetings in considerable numbers, though without a vote. The instruction and education of young nobles were conducted according to a programme of which the details were established by a series of decrees, and especially by one dating from 1443; and in the Senate very young noble boys were employed to carry the ballot-boxes, in which office they took turns, changing every three months. There were probably not enough noble children to perform the same duty for the Great Council, which employed for that purpose a number of boys from the Foundling Asylum.

The young nobles were brought up to feel that they and their time belonged exclusively to the State, and when they grew older it was a point of honour with them not to be absent from any meeting of the Councils to which they were appointed. Marcantonio Barbaro, the patrician whose life M. Yriarte has so carefully studied, missed only one meeting of the Great Council in thirty years, and then his absence was due to illness. When one considers that the Great Council met every Sunday, and on every feast day except the second of March and the thirty-first of

*Yriarte, Vie  
d'un Patricien  
de Venise, 67.*

January, which was Saint Mark's day, such constant regularity is really wonderful.



HALL OF THE PICTURES, DUCAL PALACE

During the summer the sittings were held from eight in the morning until noon, in winter from noon to sunset; this, at least, was the ordinary rule, but the

Doge's counsellors could multiply the meetings to any extent they thought necessary, and we know that when a doge was to be elected the Great Council sometimes sat fifty times consecutively.

The public were admitted to the ordinary sittings of the Great Council, and in later times one could even be present wearing a mask, as may be seen in certain old engravings. But no outsiders were admitted when an important subject was to be discussed, and on those occasions a number of members were themselves excluded. If, for instance, the question concerned the Papal Court, all those who had ever avowed their sympathy for the Holy See, or who had any direct relations with the reigning Pope, or who owed him any debt of gratitude, were ordered to leave the hall. Such persons were called 'papalisti,' and were frequently shut out of the Great Council in the sixteenth century, a period during which the Republic had many differences with Rome.

In 1526, for instance, the Patriarch of Venice laid before the Great Council a complaint against the Signors of the Night, who refused to set at liberty a certain priest arrested by them, or even to inform the ecclesiastical authorities of the nature of his misdemeanour. That would have been one of the occasions for excluding the 'papalisti.' The Patriarch seems to have been a hot-tempered person, for on finding that he could get no satisfaction from the Great Council, he excommunicated the Venetian government and everybody connected with it, and posted the

notice of the interdict on the columns of the ducal palace. The matter was patched up in some way, however, for on the morrow the notice disappeared.

The Senate met twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. I find among their regulations a singular rule by which the beginning of every speech had to be delivered in the Tuscan language, after which the speaker was at liberty to go on in his own Venetian dialect.

I have already spoken at some length of the Council of Ten; it is now necessary to say something of the Inquisitors of State, to whom the Ten ceded a part of their authority in the sixteenth century.

*Fulin, Studii,  
Arch. Ven. i.  
1871 (unfinished).*

In the first place, the Inquisitors of State never had anything to do with the 'Inquisition,' nor with the 'Inquisitors of the Holy Office,' a tribunal, oddly enough, which was much more secular than ecclesiastic, and which belongs to a later period.

Secondly, the so-called 'Statutes of the Inquisitors of State,' published by the French historian Daru, in good faith, and translated by Smedley, were afterwards discovered to be nothing but an impudent forgery, containing several laughable anachronisms, and a number of mistakes about the nature of the magistracies which prove that the forger was not even a Venetian.

*Rom. vi.*

Thirdly, the genuine Statutes have been discovered since, and are given at length by Romanin. They do not bear the least resemblance to the nonsense published by Daru. No one except Romanin would have

attempted to whitewash the Inquisitors and the Council of Ten, and even he is obliged to admit that for 'weighty reasons of state' they did not hesitate to order secret assassinations; but they were not fools, as the 'Statutes' of Daru make them appear.

The proof that the Statutes published by Romanin are genuine consists in the fact that two independent copies of them have been found; the one, written out by Angelo Nicolosi, secretary to the Inquisitors, with a dedication to them dated the twenty-fifth of September 1669; the other, a pocket copy, written out in 1612, with his own hand, by the Inquisitor Niccolò Donà, nephew of the Doge Leonardo Donà. The Statutes in these two copies are identical; the earlier one, which belonged to Donà, contains also a number of interesting memoranda concerning the doings of the tribunal in that year.

Lastly, it is conjectured by Romanin that the author of the forgery that imposed on Daru and others was no less a personage than Count Francesco della Torre, the ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire. He died in Venice in 1695.

These facts being clearly stated, we can pass on to inquire how and why the court of the Inquisitors of State was evoked, it being well understood that although they were not the malignant fiends described by Daru, who seems to have had in his mind the German tales of the 'Wehmgericht,' yet, in the picturesque language of their native Italy, 'they were not shinbones of saints' either.

Most historians consider that 'Inquisitors of the Council of Ten' were first appointed by that Council



THE STAIR OF GOLD, DUCAL PALACE .

in 1314, and it is generally conceded that they did not take the title 'Inquisitors of State' and begin to be regarded unofficially as a separate tribunal till 1539. The

mass of evidence goes to show that these two dates are, at least, not far wrong, and during more than two hundred years between the two, the members of the committee were called indifferently either the 'Inquisitors,' or the 'Executives' of the Ten.

They were at first either two, or three; later they were always three, and they were commissioned to furnish proofs against accused persons, and occasionally to make the necessary arrangements for secretly assassinating traitors who had fled the country and were living abroad. At first their commission was a temporary one, which was not renewed unless the gravity of the case required it. Later, when they became a permanent tribunal of three, two of their number were always regular members of the Council of Ten, and were called the 'Black Inquisitors,' because the Ten wore black mantles; the third was one of the Doge's counsellors, who, as will be remembered, were among the persons always present at the meetings of the Ten, and he was called the 'Red Inquisitor' from the colour of his counsellor's cloak.

The fourteenth century was memorable on account of the great conspiracies, and it is at least probable that after 1320 the secret committee of the Ten became tolerably permanent as to its existence, though its members were often changed. Signor Fulin has discovered that during a part of the fifteenth century they were chosen only for thirty days, and that the utmost exactness was enforced on those who vacated the office. A long discussion took place at that time as to whether

the month began at the midnight preceding the day of the Inquisitor's election, or only on the morning of that day; since, in the latter case, an Inquisitor at the end of his term would have the right to act until sunrise on the thirty-first day, whereas, in the other, he would have to resign his seat at the first stroke of midnight. The incident is a good instance of the Venetian manner of interpreting the letter of the law.

So long as the tribunal was merely a committee depending on the Ten it had no archives of its own, and whatever it did appeared officially as the act of the Council, of which the Inquisitors were merely executive agents. They were dismissed at the end of their month of service with a regular formula:—

‘The Inquisitors will come to the Council with what they have found, and the Council will decide what it thinks best with regard to them.’

In those times they received no general authorisation or power to act on their own account, and their office must have been excessively irksome, since a heavy fine was exacted from any one who refused to serve on the committee when he had been chosen. Though they were not, as a rule, men of over-sensitive conscience, they felt their position keenly and served with ill-disguised repugnance, well knowing that they were hated as a body even more than they were feared, and that their lives were not always safe.

In early times their actual permanent power was very limited, though the Ten could greatly extend it for any special purpose. For instance, they could not,

of their own will, proceed even to a simple arrest; they could not order the residence of a citizen to be searched; and they could not use torture in examining a witness, without a special authorisation from the Ten on each occasion.

Their work then lay almost wholly in secretly spying upon suspected persons; and it often happened that when such an one was at last arrested the whole mass of evidence against him was already written out and in the hands of the Ten. It also certainly happened now and then that a person was proved innocent by the Inquisitors who had been suspected by the Ten, and who had never had the least idea that he was in danger.

The machinery did not always work quickly, it is true, especially after the accused was arrested and locked up. Trials often dragged on for months, so that when the culprit was at last sentenced to a term of prison, it appeared that he had already served more than the time to which he was condemned. This abuse, however, led to a vigorous reform by a series of stringent decrees, the time of inquiry was limited, for ordinary cases, to three days, and for graver matters to a month, and ruinous fines were imposed on Councillors and Inquisitors who were not present at every sitting of the Court.

It was towards the close of the sixteenth century that the Inquisitors, being then elected for the term of a year, were given much greater power than theretofore. Though they were still closely associated with the Ten, they now had a sort of official independence, including

the right to a method of procedure of their own, with secret archives quite separate from those of the Ten. The year 1596 is generally given as the date at which the separate tribunal was definitely created, with permanent instructions to watch over the public safety, and to detect all plots and conspiracies that might threaten the 'ancient laws and government of Venice.'

It cannot be said that the procedure of the Ten, or of the Inquisitors, was arbitrary, and the supreme Venetian tribunals have not deserved all the obloquy that has been heaped upon them; but at a time when the most inhuman methods were used to obtain evidence, they certainly did not give an example of gentleness.

Signor Fulin, to whose recent researches all students of Venetian history are much indebted, says, with perfect truthfulness, that torture was by no means used with moderation. He cites a document signed by the Ten and the Inquisitors, dated the twenty-fifth of April 1445:—

'We have received a humble petition from Luigi Cristoforo Spiaciario, sentenced to two years' imprisonment and ten years of exile for unnatural crimes. The said convict has passed two years in prison according to his sentence, and five years more in the corridors of the prisons, because his feet having been burnt and his arms dislocated by torture, he could not leave Venice. The said convict petitions that, out of regard for so much suffering, he may be pardoned the last five years of his condemnation.'

The same writer also tells us that in spite of the

precautions which were supposed to be taken, torture often ended in death; and in the archives of the Ten there are instances of horrible mutilations besides public decapitations, secret stranglings, and hangings and poisonings; there are also some cases of death inflicted by drowning, though these were less frequent than has been supposed; and lastly, the quiet waters of the canals have more than once reflected the blaze of faggots burning round the stake.

Romanin's industry has left us an exact list of the official drownings that took place between 1551 and 1604, a period of fifty-three years. As it is not long, I append it in full. The list is made out from the register of deaths which is preserved in the church of Saint Mark's.

In 1551 there were secretly drowned 2 persons			
1554	"	"	2 "
1555	"	"	2 "
1556	"	"	3 "
1557	"	"	4 "
1558	"	"	1 "
1559	"	"	8 "
1560	"	"	7 "
1569	"	"	6 "
1571	"	"	4 "
1573	"	"	7 "
From 1574 to 1584	"	"	12 "
1584 to 1594	"	"	55 "
1594 to 1600	"	"	50 "
1600 to 1604	"	"	40 "
Total number of drowned			<u>203</u> during 53 years

The last person who suffered death by drowning was a glass-blower of Murano in the eighteenth century.

Before going on to say a word about the prisons in the sixteenth century it is as well to call attention to the fact that the Inquisitors of State twice found themselves in direct relations with the English government; once, in 1587, when they called the attention of England to a conspiracy which was brewing in Spain; and again, a few years later, in connection with the tragedy of Antonio Foscarini in which they played such a deplorable part. Is it not possible that there may be some documents in the English Record Office bearing upon those circumstances, and likely to throw more light upon the tribunal of the Inquisitors?

In connection with the prisons, I take the following details, among many similar ones, from documents found by Signor Fulin in the archives of the Inquisitors of State. He says, in connection with them, that they are by no means exaggerated. One of the most characteristic is a case dated towards the end of the fifteenth century, and it will serve as an example, since it is known that no great changes were made in the management of the prisons until much later.

‘There has been found in the prisons a youth named Menegidio Scutellario, whom the Council of Ten had sentenced to twenty-five blows of the stick, which he received, and to a year’s imprisonment. He was transferred from the new prisons to the one called Muzina, where he contracted an extremely painful

inflammatory disease which has produced running sores. He has several on his head, and his face is much



RIO S. ATANASIO

swollen. Moreover, this boy is shut up in the prison with twenty-five men of all ages, which is very dangerous

for him from a moral point of view. A widow, who says she is his mother, comes every day to the Palace begging and imploring that her son may not be left in this abominable prison, lest he die there, or at least learn all manner of wickedness in the company of so many criminals. We consequently order that in view of the justice of these complaints the boy be kept in the corridor of the prisons till the end of his year.'

As in the Tower of London, so also in the gloomy dens of the Pozzi, former prisoners have left short records of themselves. For instance: *Mutinelli, Annali Urb.* '1576, 22 March. I am Mandricardo Matiazzo de Marostega'; 'Galeazzo Avogadro and his friends 1584'; and lower down the following misspelt Latin words, 'Odie mihi, chras tibi (*sic*)' — 'My turn to-day, to-morrow yours.'

Occasionally some daring convict succeeded in escaping from those deep and secure prisons. In his journal, under the fifth of August 1497, Marin Sanudo writes: —

It has happened that in the prisons of Saint Mark a number of convicts who were to remain there till they died have plotted to escape; they elected for their chief that Loico Fioravante, who killed his father on the night of Good Friday in the church of the Frari. There was also Marco Corner, sentenced for an unnatural crime; Benedetto Petriani, thief, and many others. On the evening of the fourth, when the jailers were making their usual rounds, the prisoners succeeded in disarming and binding them, and went on from one prison to another, their numbers increasing as they went, till they reached the last (*novissima*); there they found arrows and

other arms, and began to discuss a plan of escape. Now it chanced that two Saracens who were amongst them wished to get out more quickly, without waiting for the deliberations of their comrades. One of them was almost drowned in the canal, the other took fright and began to cry out for help. A boat of the Council of Ten which was just passing picked up the half-drowned man; the fact that he was a Saracen suggested that he might be a fugitive, and he was frightened into confessing. The plot was now revealed and the guard was immediately informed. On the following morning the chiefs of the Ten, Cosimo Pasqualigo, Niccolò da Pesaro, Domenico Beneto, went to the prisons with a good escort, but they could not get in, for the prisoners defended themselves. Then wet straw was brought, and it was lighted in order that the smoke might suffocate them. And they were advised to yield before the order of the Council of Ten was repeated thrice, for otherwise they would all be hanged. Marco Corner was the first to surrender, and after him all the others. They were taken back, each to his prison, under a closer watch.

In Marco Corner's case the love of liberty must have been strong, for in the same journal of Sanudo we find that in little more than a year after their unsuccessful attempt at flight, he and some companions actually succeeded in getting out and made their exit through the hall of the Piovego, that is to say, through the Doge's palace. Their numbers were considerable, and six of them were sentenced to imprisonment for life. During the night they reached the monastery of Saint George, and at dawn they were already beyond the confines of Venetian territory.

Having disposed of the Inquisitors of State, I shall

now endeavour to explain the position and duties of the Inquisitors of the Holy Office, with whom the ordinary reader is very apt to confound them.

In the first place, the Holy Office in Venice was a much milder and more insignificant affair than it was at that time in other European states. In Venice it seems to have corresponded vaguely to the modern European Ministry of Public Worship. There are some amusing stories connected with it, but no very terrible ones so far as I can ascertain.

The Republic had long resisted the desire of the Popes to establish a branch of the Holy Inquisition in Venice, but by way of showing a conciliatory spirit, while maintaining complete independence, the government had created a magistracy which was responsible for three matters, namely, the condition of the canals, the regulation of usury, and — of all things — cases of heresy. It is perfectly impossible to say why three classes of affairs so different were placed under the control of one body of men. Considering the gravity of the Venetian government we can hardly suppose that it was intended as a piece of ironical wit at the expense of the Holy See. It may, at all events, be considered certain that the Savi all' Eresia, literally the Wise Men on Heresy, of the thirteenth century, had not accomplished what was expected of them, since in 1289 the government recognised the necessity of establishing a special court to deal with affairs of religion, presided over, at least in appearance, by a person delegated for that purpose from the Vatican. The

Holy Office was thereby accepted in Venice, but with restrictions that paralysed it.

The tribunal was, in principle, composed of three persons, the Apostolic Nuncio, the Patriarch, and the

*Molmenti,  
Stud. e Ric.*

Father Inquisitor, all three of whom had to be approved by the Republic. As a first step towards hindering them from acting rashly, they were strictly forbidden to discuss or decide anything whatsoever, except in the presence of three Venetian nobles, who were appointed year by year, and preserved their ancient title of Wise Men on Heresy. Next, the Holy Office was not allowed to busy itself about

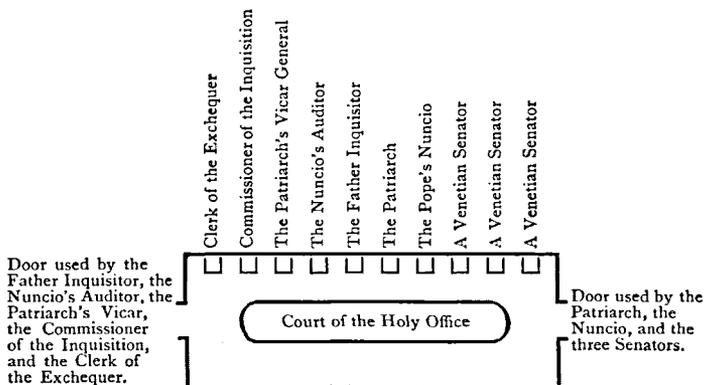
*Rom. ii. 252,  
and viii. 348.*

any religious matter except heresy, in the strictest sense; it could not interfere in connection with any violation of the laws of the Church, not even in cases of sorcery or blasphemy, for magicians fell under the authority of the Signors of the Night, and blasphemers were answerable to the Executives against Blasphemy.

These laws had not changed in the sixteenth century, and the Holy Office had less to do than most of the contemporary tribunals. An examination of the documents preserved in its archives shows that from the year 1541 to the fall of the Republic there were three thousand six hundred and twenty trials, of which fifteen hundred and sixty-five fell in the sixteenth century, fourteen hundred and ninety-seven in the seventeenth, and only five hundred and sixty-one in the eighteenth. In the majority of cases the testimony was declared insufficient; in others, the accused hastened to

abjure their errors. Sometimes, however, we find long trials in the course of which torture was used as by the other tribunals, and in these cases the end was frequently a sentence of death or a condemnation to the galleys. No heretic was ever burned alive in Venice; death was inflicted by strangling, beheading, or hanging. Each Doge promised, indeed, on his election, to burn all heretics, but it is amply proved that only their dead bodies or their effigies were really given to the flames.

*Molmenti, Stud.  
e Ric., and  
Cecchetti, Corte  
di Roma.*



The tribunal of the Holy Office sat in a very low vaulted room in the buildings of Saint Mark's, which was reached by a narrow staircase after passing through the Sacristy. The Court had no prisons of its own. Persons who were arrested by it, or sentenced by it to terms of imprisonment, were confined in the prisons of the State, probably in those of the Ponte della Paglia. It is likely that the Court had at its disposal two or

three cells near its place of sitting, for the detention of the accused during the trials. Signor Molmenti has ascertained precisely how the members of the tribunal were placed, and has published a diagram which I here reproduce for the benefit of those who like such curious details.

As will be seen by the diagram, one half of the personages used one entrance, and the rest came in by the other. Until the year 1560, the Inquisitor himself was a Franciscan monk, but afterwards he was always a Dominican.

The hall was gloomy and ill-lighted, the furniture poor; it did not please the Republic to spend money for the delectation of a court which it did not like.

It was here that two famous trials took place in the sixteenth century, namely, that of Giordano Bruno, the renegade monk, dear to Englishmen who have never read the very scarce volume of his insane and filthy writings, and that of the celebrated painter Paolo Veronese. The contrast between these two documents is very striking, but both go to prove that the Holy Office in Venice was seldom more than a hollow sham, and that its proceedings occasionally degenerated towards low comedy.

Having escaped from Rome, Giordano Bruno left the ecclesiastical career which he had dishonoured in every possible way, and wandered about in search of money and glory. In the course of time he came to London, where his coarseness and his loose life made him many enemies. Thence he went on

to Oxford, where, by means of some potent protection, he succeeded in obtaining the privilege of lecturing on philosophy; but the university authorities were soon scandalised by his behaviour and frightened by the extravagance of his doctrines; in three months he was obliged to leave. He revenged himself by writing a libel called 'La Cena delle Ceneri,' in which he described England as a land of dark streets in which one stuck in the mud knee-deep, and of houses that lacked every necessary; the boats on the Thames were rowed by men more hideous than Charon, the workmen and shop-keepers were vulgar and untaught rustics, always ready to laugh at a stranger, and to call him by such names as traitor, or dog. In this pleasing pamphlet the Englishwoman alone escapes the writer's foul-mouthed hatred, to be insulted by his still more foul-mouthed praise. One may imagine the sort of eulogy that would run from the pen of a man capable of describing woman in general as a creature with neither faith nor constancy, neither merit nor talent, but full of more pride, arrogance, hatred, falseness, lust, avarice, ingratitude and, generally, of more vices than there were evils in Pandora's box; one might quote many amenities of language more or less senseless, as, for instance, that woman is a hammer, a foul sepulchre, and a quartan fever; and there are a hundred other expressions which cannot be quoted at all.

Towards 1591, the patrician Giovanni Mocenigo, an enthusiastic collector of books, found in the shop of a Dutch bookseller a little volume, entitled *Eroici Furori*,

which contains some astrological calculations and some hints on mnemonics. The purchaser asked who the author might be, learned from the bookseller that it was Giordano Bruno, entered into correspondence with him, and at last invited him to Venice.

Bruno, it is needless to say, accepted the invitation eagerly, as he accepted everything that was offered to him, but it was not long before Mocenigo regretted his haste to be hospitable. He had begun by calling his visitor his dear master; before long he discovered the man to be a debauchee and a blasphemer. Now it chanced that Mocenigo had sat in the tribunal of the Holy Office as one of the three senators whose business it was to oversee the acts of the Father Inquisitor, and he was not only a devout man, but had a taste for theology. He began by remonstrating with Bruno, but when the latter became insolent, he quietly turned the key on him and denounced him to the Holy Office. A few hours later the renegade monk was arrested and conveyed to prison. He was examined several times by the tribunal, but was never tortured, and as the judges thought they detected signs of coming repentance they granted him a limit of time within which to abjure his errors. But the trial did not end in Venice, for the Republic made an exception in this case and soon yielded to a request from the Pope that the accused should be sent to Rome. He was ultimately burnt there, the only heretic, according to the most recent and learned authorities, who ever died at the stake in Italy. He was in reality a degenerate and

a lunatic, who should have ended his days in an asylum.

M. Yriarte has published in the appendix to his study of the Venetian noble in the sixteenth century the verbatim report of the proceedings of the Holy Office on the eighteenth of July 1573. The prisoner at the bar was Paolo Veronese. I quote the following from M. Yriarte's translation:—

REPORT of the sitting of the Tribunal of the Inquisition on  
Saturday July eighteenth, 1573.

This day, July eighteenth, 1573. Called to the Holy Office before the sacred tribunal, Paolo Galliari Veronese residing in the parish of Saint Samuel, and being asked as to his name and surname replied as above.

Being asked as to his profession:—

Answer. I paint and make figures.

Question. Do you know the reasons why you have been called here?

A. No.

Q. Can you imagine what those reasons may be?

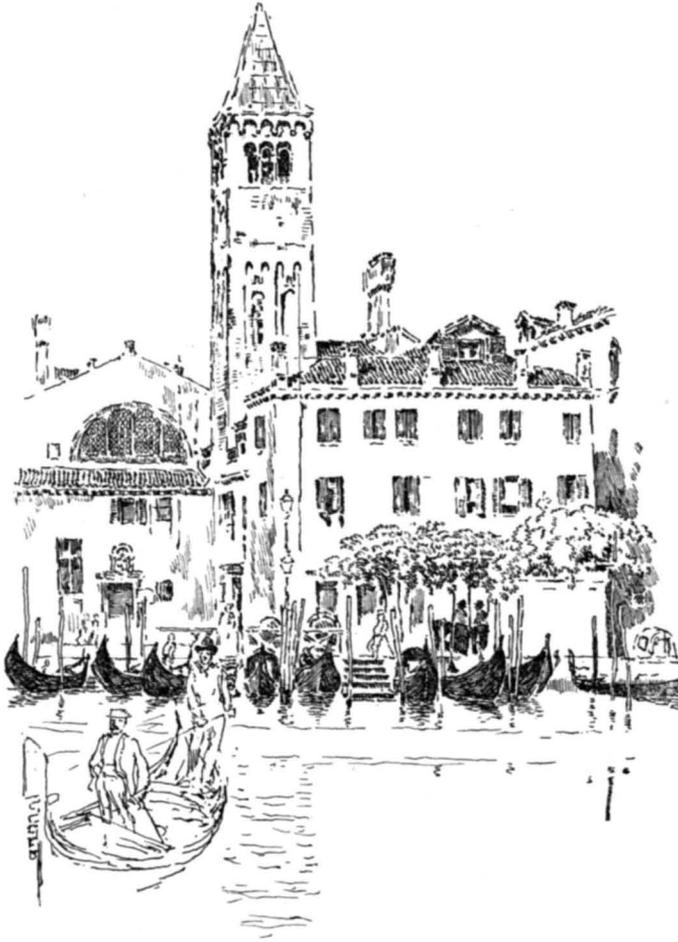
A. I can well imagine.

Q. Say what you think about them.

A. I fancy that it concerns what was said to me by the reverend fathers, or rather by the prior of the monastery of San Giovanni e Paolo, whose name I did not know, but who informed me that he had been here, and that your Most Illustrious Lordships had ordered him to cause to be placed in the picture a Magdalen instead of the dog; and I answered him that very readily I would do all that was needful for my reputation and for the honour of the picture; but that I

*The Supper  
in the house  
of Simon,  
Paolo Veronese;  
Accademia,  
Room IX.*

did not understand what this figure of Magdalen could be doing



S. SAMUELE

here; and this for many reasons, which I will tell, when occasion is granted me to speak.

Q. What is the picture to which you have been referring?

A. It is the picture which represents the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with His disciples in the house of Simon.

Q. Where is this picture?

A. In the refectory of the monks of San Giovanni e Paolo.

Q. Is it painted in fresco or on wood or on canvas?

A. It is on canvas.

Q. How many feet does it measure in height?

A. It may measure seventeen feet.

Q. And in breadth?

A. About thirty-nine.

Q. In this Supper of our Lord, have you painted (other) persons?

A. Yes.

Q. How many have you represented? And what is each one doing?

A. First there is the innkeeper, Simon; then, under him, a carving squire whom I supposed to have come there for his pleasure, to see how the service of the table is managed. There are many other figures which I cannot remember, however, as it is a long time since I painted that picture.

Q. Have you painted other Last Suppers besides that one?

A. Yes.

Q. How many have you painted? Where are they?

A. I painted one at Verona for the reverend monks of San Lazzaro; it is in their refectory. Another is in the refectory of the reverend brothers of San Giorgio here in Venice.

Q. But that one is not a Last Supper, and is not even called the Supper of Our Lord.

A. I painted another in the refectory of San Sebastiano in Venice, another at Padua for the Fathers of the Maddalena. I do not remember to have made any others.

Q. In this Supper which you painted for San Giovanni e Paolo, what signifies the figure of him whose nose is bleeding?

A. He is a servant who has a nose-bleed from some accident?

Q. What signify those armed men dressed in the fashion of Germany, with halberds in their hands?

A. It is necessary here that I should say a score of words.

Q. Say them.

A. We painters use the same license as poets and madmen, and I represented those halberdiers, the one drinking, the other eating at the foot of the stairs, but both ready to do their duty, because it seemed to me suitable and possible that the master of the house, who as I have been told was rich and magnificent, should have such servants.

Q. And the one who is dressed as a jester with a parrot on his wrist, why did you put him into the picture?

A. He is there as an ornament, as it is usual to insert such figures.

Q. Who are the persons at the table of Our Lord?

A. The twelve apostles.

Q. What is Saint Peter doing, who is the first?

A. He is carving the lamb in order to pass it to the other part of the table.

Q. What is he doing who comes next?

A. He holds a plate to see what Saint Peter will give him.

Q. Tell us what the third is doing.

A. He is picking his teeth with his fork.

Q. And who are really the persons whom you admit to have been present at this Supper?

A. I believe that there was only Christ and His Apostles; but when I have some space left over in a picture I adorn it with figures of my own invention.

Q. Did some person order you to paint Germans, buffoons, and other similar figures in this picture?

A. No, but I was commissioned to adorn it as I thought proper; now it is very large and can contain many figures.

Q. Should not the ornaments which you were accustomed to paint in pictures be suitable and in direct relation to the subject, or are they left to your fancy, quite without discretion or reason?

A. I paint my pictures with all the considerations which are natural to my intelligence, and according as my intelligence understands them.

Q. Does it seem suitable to you, in the Last Supper of our Lord, to represent buffoons, drunken Germans, dwarfs, and other such absurdities?

A. Certainly not.

Q. Then why have you done it?

A. I did it on the supposition that those people were outside the room in which the Supper was taking place.

Q. Do you not know that in Germany and other countries infested by heresy, it is habitual, by means of pictures full of absurdities, to vilify and turn to ridicule the things of the Holy Catholic Church, in order to teach false doctrine to ignorant people who have no common sense?

A. I agree that it is wrong, but I repeat what I have said, that it is my duty to follow the examples given me by my masters.

Q. Well, what did your masters paint? Things of this kind, perhaps?

A. In Rome, in the Pope's Chapel, Michel Angelo has represented Our Lord, His Mother, St. John, St. Peter, and the celestial court; and he has represented all these personages nude, including the Virgin Mary, and in various attitudes not inspired by the most profound religious feeling.

Q. Do you not understand that in representing the Last Judgment, in which it is a mistake to suppose that clothes are worn, there was no reason for painting any? But in these figures what is there that is not inspired by the Holy Spirit?

There are neither buffoons, dogs, weapons, nor other absurdities. Do you think therefore, according to this or that view, that you did well in so painting your picture, and will you try to prove that it is a good and decent thing?

A. No, my most Illustrious Sirs; I do not pretend to prove it, but I had not thought that I was doing wrong; I had never taken so many things into consideration. I had been far from imagining such a great disorder, all the more as I had placed these buffoons outside the room in which Our Lord was sitting.

These things having been said, the judges pronounced that the aforesaid Paolo should be obliged to correct his picture within the space of three months from the date of the reprimand, according to the judgments and decision of the Sacred Court, and altogether at the expense of the said Paolo.

Et ita decreverunt omni melius modo. (And so they decided everything for the best!)

The existing picture proves that Veronese paid no attention to the recommendations of the Court, for I find that it contains every figure referred to.

After this brief review of the more serious offices of the Republic, I pass on to speak of a tribunal which, though in reality much less serious, gave itself airs of great solemnity, and promulgated a great number of laws. This was the Court of the 'Provveditori delle Pompe,' established in the sixteenth century to deal with matters of dress and fashion. As far back as the end of the thirteenth century, the 'Savi,' the wise men of the government, had feebly deplored the increase of luxury. Their plaintive remarks were repeated at short intervals, and on each occasion produced some new decree against foolish and unreasonable expenditure.

THE LAST RAYS, ST. MARK'S







The length of women's trains, the size and fulness of people's sleeves, the adornment of boots and shoes, and all similar matters, had been most minutely studied by these wise gentlemen, and the avogadors had their hands full to make the regulations properly respected. One day a lady was walking in the square of Saint Mark's, evidently very proud of the new white silk gown she wore. She was stopped by *Molmenti, Vita* two avogadors who gravely proceeded *Priv.* to measure the amount of stuff used in making her sleeves. It was far more than the law judged necessary. The lady and her tailor — there were only male dressmakers in Venice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries — were both made to pay a fine heavy enough to make them regret the extravagance of their fancy. I quote this story from Signor Molmenti. Marin Sanudo tells of another similar regulation in his journal under the month of December 1491: 'All those who hold any office from the State, and those who are finishing their term of service, are forbidden to give more than two dinner-parties to their relations, and each of these dinners shall not consist of more than ten covers.'

At weddings it was forbidden to give banquets to more than forty guests. Some years later another regulation was issued on the same subject. It was decreed 'that at these wedding dinners there shall not be served more than one dish of roast meats and one of boiled meats, and in each of these courses there shall not be more than three kinds of meat. Chicken and pigeons are allowed.'

For days of abstinence, the magistrates take the trouble to inform people what they may eat, namely, two dishes of roast fish, two dishes of boiled fish, an almond cake, and the ordinary jams. Of fish, sturgeon and the fish of the lake of Garda are forbidden on such days, and no sweets are allowed that do not come under one of the two heads mentioned. Oysters were not allowed at dinners of more than twenty covers. The pastry-cooks who made jumbles and the like, and the cooks who were to prepare a dinner, were obliged to give notice to the provveditors, accompanied by a note of the dishes to be served. The inspectors of the tribunal had a right to inspect the dining-room, kitchen, and pantry, in order to verify all matters that came under their jurisdiction.

As if all this were not enough, considerable fines were imposed on those who should adorn the doors and outer windows of their houses with festoons, or who should give concerts in which drums and trumpets were used. In noting this regulation in his journal, Sanudo observes that the Council of Ten had only succeeded in framing it after meeting on three consecutive days in sittings of unusual length. One is apt to connect the Council of Ten with matters more tragic than these; and one fancies that the Decemvirs may have sometimes exclaimed with Dante —

*Le leggi son, ma chi pon mano ad esse ?*

(‘There are laws indeed, but who enforces them?’)

The Council judged that there was only one way of

accomplishing this, namely, to create a new magistracy, whose exclusive business it should be to make and promulgate sumptuary laws. For this purpose three nobles were chosen who received the title of *Provveditori delle Pompe*.

M. Armand Baschet, whose profound learning in matters of Venetian law is beyond dispute, is of opinion that the new tribunal helped Venice to be great, and hindered her from being extravagant. I shall not venture to impugn the judgment of so learned a writer, yet we can hardly forbear to smile at the thought of those three grave nobles, of ripe age and austere life, who sat down day after day to decide upon the cut of women's gowns, the articles necessary to a bride's outfit, and the dishes permissible at a dinner-party.

'Women,' said their regulations, 'shall wear clothes of only one colour, that is to say, velvet, satin, damask, of Persian silk woven of one tint; but exception is made from this rule for Persian silk of changing sheen and for brocades, but such gowns must have no trimming.'

Shifts were to be embroidered only round the neck, and it was not allowed to embroider handkerchiefs with gold or silver thread. No woman was allowed to carry a fan made of feathers *Mutinelli, Less.* worth more than four ducats. No gloves were allowed embroidered with gold or silver; no earrings; no jewellery in the hair. Plain gold bracelets were allowed but must not be worth more than three ducats; gold chains might be worth ten. No low-neck gowns allowed!

Jewellers and tailors and dealers in luxuries did their best to elude all such laws, but during a considerable time they were not successful, and it is probable that the temper of the Venetian ladies was severely tried by the prying and paternal 'Provveditori.' The only *Molmenti, Vita Privata.* women for whom exceptions were made were the Dogess and the other ladies of the Doge's immediate family who lived with him in the ducal palace. His daughters and grand-daughters were called 'dozete,' which means 'little dogesses' in Venetian dialect; and they were authorised to wear what they liked; but the Doge's more distant female relations had not the same privilege.

At the coronation of Andrea Gritti, one of his nieces appeared at the palace arrayed in a magnificent gown of gold brocade; the Doge himself sent her home to put on a dress which conformed with the sumptuary laws. Those regulations extended to intimate details of private life, and even affected the furnishing of a noble's private apartments. There were clauses which forbade that the sheets made for weddings and baptisms should be too richly embroidered or edged with too costly lace, or that the beds themselves should be inlaid with gold, mother-of-pearl, or precious stones.

Then the gondola came into fashion as a means of getting about and at once became a cause of great extravagance, for the rich vied with each other in adorning their skiffs with the most precious stuffs and tapestries, and inlaid stanchions, and the most marvellous allegorical figures.

In the thirteenth century the gondola had been merely an ordinary boat, probably like the modern 'barca' of the lagoons, over which an awning was rigged as a protection against sun and rain. The gondola was not a development of the old-fashioned



ON THE ZATTERE

boat, any more than the modern racing yacht has developed out of a Dutch galleon or a 'trabacolo' of the Adriatic. It had another pedigree; and I have no hesitation in saying, as one well acquainted with both, and not ignorant of boats in general, that the Venetian gondola is the caique of the Bosphorus, as to the hull,

though the former is rowed in the Italian fashion, by men who stand and swing a sweep in a crutch, whereas the Turkish oarsman sits and pulls a pair of sculls of peculiar shape which slide in and out through greased leathern strops. The gondola, too, has the steel ornament on her stem, figuring the beak of a Roman galley, which I suspect was in use in Constantinople before the Turkish conquest, and which must have been abolished then, for the very reason that it was Roman. The 'felse,' the hood, is a Venetian invention, I think, for there is no trace of it in Turkey. But the similarity of the two boats when out of water is too close to be a matter of chance, and it may safely be said that the first gondola was a caique, then doubtless called by another name, brought from Constantinople by some Greek merchant on his vessel.

In early times people went about on horses and mules in Venice, and a vast number of the small canals were narrow and muddy streets; but as the superior facilities of water over mud as a means of transportation became evident, the lanes were dug out and the islands were cut up into an immense number of islets, until the footways became so circuitous that the horse disappeared altogether.

In the sixteenth century there were about ten thousand gondolas in Venice, and they soon became a regular bugbear to the unhappy Proveditori delle  
*Mutinelli, Less.* Pompe, who were forced to occupy themselves with their shape, their hangings, the stuff of which the 'felse' was made, the cushions, the carpets, and the

number of rowers. The latter were soon limited to two, and it was unlawful to have more, even for a



RIO DEL RIMEDIO

wedding. The gondola did not assume its present simplicity and its black colour till the end of the seven-

teenth century, but it began to resemble what we now see after the edict of 1562.

As usual, a few persons were exempted from the sumptuary law. The Doge went about in a gondola decorated with gold and covered with scarlet cloth, and the foreign ambassadors adorned their skiffs with the richest materials, the representatives of France and Spain, especially, vying with each other in magnificence. To some extent the youths belonging to the *Compagnia della Calza* — the Hose Club before mentioned — were either exempted from the law, or succeeded in evading it. Naturally enough, the sight of such display was odious to the rich noblemen who were condemned by law to the use of plain black; and on the whole, the study of all accounts of festivities held in Venice, down to the end of the Republic, goes to show that the *Provveditori* aimed at a most despotic control of dress, habits, and manners, but that the results generally fell far short of their good intentions. They must have led harassed lives, those much-vexed gentlemen, not much better than the existence of 'Jimmy-Legs' on an American man-of-war.

Now and then, too, the government temporarily removed all restrictions on luxury, as, for instance, when a foreign sovereign visited Venice; and then the whole city plunged into a sort of orgy of extravagance. This happened when Henry III. of France was the guest of the Republic. Such occasions being known and foreseen, and the nobles being forced by the *Provveditori* to save their money, they spent it all the more

recklessly when they were allowed a taste of liberty — like a child that breaks its little earthenware savings-box when it is full of pennies.

One naturally returns to the Doge after rapidly reviewing such a legion of officials, each of whom was himself a part of the supreme power. What was the Doge doing while these hundreds of noble Venetians were doing everything for themselves, from directing foreign politics to spying upon the wardrobes of each other's wives and auditing the accounts of one another's cooks?

It would be hard to ask a question more embarrassing to answer. It would be as unjust to say that he did nothing as it would be untrue to say that he had much to do. Yet the Venetians themselves looked upon him as a very important personage in the Republic. In a republic he was a sovereign, and therefore idle; but he was apparently necessary.

I am not aware that any other republic ever called its citizens subjects, or supported a personage who received royal honours, before whom the insignia of something like royalty were carried in public, and who addressed foreign governments by his own name and title as if he were a king. But then, how could Venice, which was governed by an oligarchy chosen from an aristocracy, which was the centre of a plutocracy, call herself a republic? It all looks like a mass of contradictions, yet the machinery worked without breaking down, during five hundred years at a stretch, after it had assumed its ultimate form. If a modern sociologist had to define

the government of Venice, he would perhaps call it a semi-constitutional aristocratic monarchy, in which the sovereign was elected for life — unless it pleased the electors to depose him.

What is quite certain is that when the Doge was a man of average intelligence, he must have been the least happy man in Venice; for of all Venetian nobles, there was none whose personal liberty was so restricted, whose smallest actions were so closely watched, whose lightest word was subject to such a terrible censorship.

Francesco Foscari was not allowed to resign when he wished to do so, nor was he allowed to remain on the throne after the Council had decided to get rid of him. Even after his death, his unhappy widow was not allowed to bury his body as she pleased. Yet his was only an extreme case, because circumstances combined to bring the existing laws into play and to let them work to their logical result.

From the moment when a noble was chosen to fill the ducal throne, he was bound to sacrifice himself to the public service, altogether and till he died, without regret, or possible return to private life, or any compensation beyond what might flatter the vanity of a vulgar and second-rate nature. Yet the Doges were very rarely men of poor intelligence or weak character.

At each election, fresh restrictions were imposed by 'corrections' of the ducal oath. M. Yriarte says very justly that the tone of these 'corrections' is often so dry and hard that it looks as if the Great Council had

been taking measures against an enemy rather than editing rules for the life of the chief of the State. He goes on to say, however, that the principle which dictated those decrees protected both the Doge and the nobility, and that the object at which each aimed was the interest of the State. He asks, then, whether those binding restrictions ever prevented a strong personality from making itself felt, and whether the long succession of Doges is nothing but a list of inglorious names.

It may be answered, I think, with justice, that the Doges of illustrious memory, during the latter centuries of the Republic's existence, had become famous as individual officers before their elevation to the throne. The last great fighting Doge was Enrico Dandolo, the conqueror of Constantinople, who died almost a hundred years before the closure of the Great Council. In the war of Chioggia, Andrea Contarini's oath not to return into the city till the enemy was beaten had the force of a fine example, but the man himself contributed nothing else to the most splendid page in Venetian history.

There were Doges who were good historians and writers, others who have been brave generals, others like Giovanni Mocenigo who were good financiers; but the fact of their having been Doges has nothing to do with the reputation they left afterwards. The sovereignty, when it was given to them, was a chain, not a sceptre, and from the day they went up the grand staircase as masters, their personal liberty of thought and action

was more completely left behind than if they had entered by another door to spend the remainder of life in the prisons by the Ponte della Paglia, beyond the Bridge of Sighs.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century the Doge Michel Steno was told in open Council to sit down and hold his peace. No change in the manners of the counsellors had taken place sixty years later when the Doge Cristoforo Moro objected to accompanying Pius the Second's projected crusade in person, and was told by Vittor Cappello that if he would not go of his own accord he should be taken by force.

It is hard to imagine a more unpleasant position than that of the chief of the State. Suppose, for instance, that by the choice of the Council some post or dignity was to be conferred on one of his relatives, or even on one of his friends; he was literally and categorically forbidden to exhibit the least satisfaction, or to thank the Council, even by a nod of the head. He was to preside at this, and at many other ceremonies, as a superbly-dressed lay figure, as a sort of allegorical representative of that power with which every member of the government except himself was invested. And as time went on this part he had to play, of the living allegory, was more and more defined. He was even deprived of the title 'My Lord,' and was to be addressed merely as 'Messer Doge,' 'Sir Doge.' From 1501 onward he was forbidden to go out of the city, even for an hour in his

*Tassini, under  
'Moro.'  
Rom. iv. 319.*

*Yriarte, Vie d'un  
Patricien, 359,  
and Marin  
Sanudo.*

gondola, without the consent of the Council, and if he disobeyed he had to pay a fine of one hundred ducats; he was not allowed to write a letter, even to his wife or his children, without showing it to at least one of his six counsellors, and if he disobeyed he was to pay a fine of two hundred ducats, and the person, his wife or his own child, to whom the letter was addressed, was liable to be exiled for five years.

After 1521 the Doge was never allowed to speak without witnesses with any ambassador, neither with the foreign representatives who came to Venice, nor with Venetian ambassadors at home on business or leave; and when he spoke with any of them in public, he was warned only to make commonplace remarks.

The Dogess never had any official position in Venice, but during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries she was made use of as an ornamental personage at public festivals. After that time she returned to the retirement in which the wives of the early Doges had lived. An outcry was raised against the custom of crowning her when she entered the ducal palace, and from that time forth she never appeared beside her husband on state occasions; and if any foreign ambassador, supposing that he was acting according to the rules of ordinary court etiquette, asked to be presented to her, she was bound to refuse his visit.

Everything in the life of the Doge was regulated by the Great Council. That august assembly once even remonstrated with the so-called sovereign because the Dogess bore him too many children. If any one hesitates

to believe these amazing statements he may consult Signor Molmenti's recent historical work, *La Dogaresa*, which is beyond criticism in point of accuracy.

At certain fixed times the Doge was allowed the relaxation of shooting, but with so many restrictions and injunctions that the sport must have been intolerably irksome. He was allowed or, more strictly speaking, was ordered to proceed for this purpose, and about Christmas time, to certain islets in the lagoons, where wild ducks bred in great numbers. On his return he was obliged to present each member of the Great Council with five ducks. This was called the gift of the 'Oselle,' that being the name given by the people to the birds in question. In 1521, about five thousand brace of birds had to be killed or snared in order to fulfil this requirement; and if the unhappy Doge was not fortunate enough, with his attendants, to secure the required number, he was obliged to provide them by buying them elsewhere and at any price, for the claims of the Great Council had to be satisfied in any case. This was often an expensive affair.

There was also another personage who could not have derived much enjoyment from the Christmas shooting. This was the Doge's chamberlain, whose duty it was to see to the just distribution of the game, so that each bunch of two-and-a-half brace should contain a fair average of fat and thin birds, lest it should be said that the Doge showed favour to some members of the Council more than to others.

By and by a means was sought of commuting this

annual tribute of ducks. The Doge Antonio Grimani requested and obtained permission to coin a medal of the value of a quarter of a ducat, equal to about four shillings or one dollar, and to call it 'a Duck,' 'Osella,' whereby it was signified that it took the place of the traditional bird. He engraved upon his medal figures of Peace and Justice, with the motto 'Justitia et Pax osculatae sunt,' 'Justice and Peace have kissed one another,' in recollection of the sentence he had undergone nineteen years previously as Admiral of the fleet defeated at Parenzo. In 1575 the Doge Luigi Mocenigo engraved upon his Osella the following inscription referring to the victory of Lepanto: 'Magnae navalis victoriae Dei gratia contra Turcos'; the reverse bears the arms of the Mocenigo family, a rose with five petals. Later, in 1632, the Doge Francesco Erizzo was the first to replace his own effigy kneeling before Saint Mark by a lion. In 1688 Francesco Morosini coined an Osella bearing on the obverse a sword, with the motto 'Non abstinet ictu,' and on the reverse a hand bearing weapons, with the motto 'Quem non exercuit arcus.' In 1684 Marcantonio Giustiniani issued an Osella showing a winged lion rampant, bearing in the one paw a single palm, and in the other a bunch of palms, with the motto 'Et solus et simul,' meaning that Venice would be victorious either alone or joined with allies.

*Portrait of  
Antonio Grimani  
kneeling before  
Religion, Titian;  
Salu delle  
Quattro Porte.*

The successor of Antonio Grimani, Andrea Gritti,

chose for his Osella to have himself represented as kneeling before Saint Mark; the reverse bore his name with the date.

*Andrea Grilli,  
praying,  
Tintoretto; Sala  
del Collegio.*

But fresh trouble now arose. It came to pass that some nobles sold their medals or used them for money, and disputes even took place as to the true value of the ducal present. The Council of Ten was obliged to examine seriously into the affair. As it appeared certain that it would be impossible to avoid the use of medals as money, it was decided to replace them definitely by a coin having regular currency.



MOUTH OF THE GRAND CANAL

## II

### GLEANINGS FROM VENETIAN CRIMINAL HISTORY

THE records of the different tribunals of Venice are a mine of interesting information, and it is to be wondered that no student has devoted a separate volume to the subject. I shall only attempt to offer the reader a few gleanings which have come under my hand, and which may help to give an impression of the later days of the Republic.

There were two distinct classes of criminals in Venice, as elsewhere — namely, professional criminals, who helped each other and often escaped justice; and, on the other hand, those who committed isolated crimes under the influence of strong passions, and who generally expiated their misdeeds in prison or on the scaffold.

Though the professionals were infinitely more dangerous than the others, it is a remarkable fact that they enjoyed the same sort of popularity which was bestowed upon daring highwaymen in England in the coaching days. They were called the 'Bravi,' they were very rarely Venetians by birth, and they had the singular audacity to wear a costume of their own, which was something between a military uniform and a mediæval hunting-dress. One might almost call them condottieri in miniature. They sold their services to cautious persons who wished to satisfy a grudge without getting into trouble with the police, and they drew round them all the good-for-nothings in the country. 'Bandits' — that is, in the true interpretation of the word, those persons whom the Republic had banished from Venetian territory — frequently returned, and remained unmolested during some time under the protection of one of these bravi. The most terrible and extravagant crimes were committed in broad day, and the popular fancy surrounded its nefarious heroes with a whole cycle of legends calculated to inspire terror.

The government cast about for some means of checking the evil, and hit upon one worthy of the Inquisitors of State. The simple plan consisted in

giving a free pardon for all his crimes to any bravo who would kill another. We even find that a patrician of the great house of Quirini, who had been exiled for killing one of Titian's servants, obtained leave to come back and live peacefully in Venice by assassinating a



THE RIALTO AT NIGHT

bravo. It is easy to imagine what crimes could be committed under this law, and the government soon recognised the mistake and repealed it in *Pinelli, Raccolta* 1549, in order to protect 'the dignity of *di Leggi Crim.* the Republic, and the goods and lives of its subjects.'

Thereafter the bravi and the bandits led more quiet lives, and returned to their former occupations.

There existed at that time a statue of a hunchback modelled by the sculptor Pietro di Salò, which had been used to support a ladder, or short staircase, by which the public criers ascended the column of the Rialto, in order to proclaim banns of marriage and other matters



FROM THE BALCONY OF THE DUCAL PALACE

which were to be made public. From 1541 to 1545 thieves were usually sentenced to be flogged through the city from Saint Mark's to the Rialto, where the ceremony ended by their being obliged to kiss the statue of the hunchback. In order to get rid of this degrading absurdity a small column was set up near by, surmounted by a cross, in order that

‘sinners might undergo their sentence in a Christian spirit.’

On the sixteenth of December 1560, the Council of Ten met to discuss the question of the bravi. It was now admitted that the government no longer had isolated criminals to deal with, but regular bands of ruffians con-



THE COLUMNS, PIAZZETTA

tinually on the look-out for adventures. The Ten published an edict by which all bandits were formally warned that any one who exercised the profession of a bravo, whether a subject of the Republic or not, would be taken and led in irons to the place between the columns of the Piazzetta, where his nose and ears would be carved off. He would then be further sentenced to five years at the oar on board one of the State galleys, unless some physical

defect made this impossible for him, in which case he was  
*Horatio Brown,* to have one hand chopped off and to be im-  
*Venetian Studies.* prisoned for ten years. In passing, I call  
attention to the fact that life between decks on a State  
galley cannot have been pleasant, since five years of  
it were considered equivalent to the loss of a hand  
and ten years of imprisonment.

These terrific penalties inspired little or no fear, for  
the bravi were infinitely quicker and cleverer than the  
sbirri of the government, and were very rarely caught.  
Besides, they had powerful supporters and secure refuges  
from which they could defy justice, for they were  
sheltered and protected in the foreign embassies, where  
they knew how to make themselves useful as spies, and  
occasionally as professional assassins, and it was not an  
uncommon thing to see a sbirro standing before the  
French or the Spanish embassy and looking up at a  
window whence some well-known bravo smiled down  
on him, waved his hat, and addressed him with ironical  
politeness. The picture vividly recalls visions of a cat  
on top of a garden wall, calmly grinning at the frantic  
terrier below.

Then, too, the bravi were patronised by the  
'signorotti' of the mainland, a set of rich, turbulent,  
and licentious land-owners, who could not call them-  
selves Venetian nobles and would not submit to be  
burghers, but set themselves up as knights, and  
lived in more or less fortified manors from which  
they could set the police at defiance. They em-  
ployed the bravi in all sorts of nefarious adventures,

which chiefly tended to the satisfaction of their brutal tastes.

It was a second period of transition, as Molmenti very justly says, and in the beginning of the decadence the knight had already ceased to be knightly. Those rough lordlings were neither without fear nor without reproach, says the learned Italian writer, but were altogether without remorse, and if they were ever bold it was only in breaking the law. From time to time one of them was caught perpetrating some outrageous crime, and was dragged barefooted, in a long black shirt and black cap, to the scaffold, as an awful example, there to be flogged, hanged, and quartered. Such horrors had long ceased to have any effect in an age that saw blood run in rivers. By way of increasing the disgrace of a shameful death, a gibbet was set up which was so high that the victim had to mount thirty-two steps, and it was painted scarlet. The first miscreant who adorned it was one of the chiefs of the *sbirri* himself, who had used his position to protect a whole gang of thieves with whom he divided the plunder.

I abridge from Signor Molmenti's work the following story, in which more than one type of the sixteenth-century criminal makes his appearance.

The village of Illasi is situated in a rich valley in the territory of Vèrona. At the end of the sixteenth century its castle was inhabited by a certain Count Geronimo and his beautiful lady, Ginevra. From time to time the couple introduced a little variety into their

solitude by receiving Virginio Orsini who, though a Roman noble, was in the service of Venice as Governor of Verona. He was, I believe, a first cousin of that Paolo Giordano Orsini who murdered his wife Isabella de' Medici in order to marry Vittoria Accoramboni. I have told the story at length in another work.

Virginio, the Governor, fell in love with the Countess Ginevra before long; but she, though strongly attracted to him, tried hard to resist him, would not read his letters, and turned a deaf ear to his pleadings.

On a certain Saturday night, when Count Geronimo was away from home and Ginevra sat by the fire in her own chamber, having already supped and said her prayers, the curtain of the door was raised and two men came in. The one was Grifo, the man-at-arms whom the Count trusted and had left to guard her; the other was Orsini. Ginevra sprang to her feet, asking how the Governor dared to cross her threshold.

'Madam,' he said, coming near, 'as you would not answer my letters, I determined to tell you face to face that if you will not hear me you will be my ruin.'

'Sir,' answered the Countess, 'that is not the way to address a lady of my condition. You are basely betraying my noble husband, who entertains for you both friendship and esteem.'

Here Grifo joined in the conversation and began to persuade the Countess that every noble lady of the time had her 'confederate knight.' No doubt he

knew that she loved Orsini in spite of herself, and when he had done speaking he went away, and the two were alone together in the night.

An hour later Virginio took his leave of her, and now he told her with words of comfort that he would presently send her poison by the hand of Grifo, that she might do away with her husband; for otherwise he must soon learn the truth and avenge himself on them all three. But Ginevra was already stung by remorse.

‘I have dishonoured my husband for you,’ she answered. ‘But I will not do the deed you ask of me. It is better that I should myself die than that I should do murder.’

‘In that case,’ answered Orsini, ‘I myself must put him beyond the possibility of harming you.’

Thereupon he left her; but she was tormented by remorse, until at last she went to her husband and told him all, and entreated him to kill her. He would not believe her, but thought she had gone mad, though she repeated her story again and again; and at last he rose and went and found Grifo, the traitor, and dragged him to her room.

‘Is it true,’ she asked, ‘that you brought the Governor here to my chamber unawares?’

The man denied it with an oath. Then Ginevra snatched up a dagger and set the point at Grifo’s breast. He saw that he was lost, and told the truth, and then and there the woman whose ruin he had wrought did justice on him and was avenged, and stabbed him again and again, that he died.

There ends the story, for that is all we know. After that the chronicle is silent, ominously silent; and when the castle of Illasi was dismantled a walled niche was found in one of the towers, and within the niche there was a woman's skeleton. That is known, surely; but that the bones were those of the Countess Ginevra there is no proof to show.

I should say that Grifo belonged to the type of the bravi, so that the crimes of passion which his betrayal caused were connected, through him, with those of the professional type. But others were committed, then as now, in passion, quick or slow. As an example of them, here is a story from another of Signor Molmenti's exhaustive works.

*Molmenti,  
Vecchie Storie.*

It is first mentioned by the Bishop Pietro Bollani in a letter addressed to his noble friend Vincenzo Dandolo, in the month of July 1602:—

'A certain Sanudo, who lives in the Rio della Croce, in the Giudecca, made his wife go to confession day before yesterday evening; and she was a Cappello by birth. During the following night, at about the fifth hour (one o'clock in the morning at that season according to the old Italian sun-time), he killed her with a dagger-thrust in the throat. He says that she was unfaithful, but every one believes that she was a saint.'

We learn that the poor woman was thirty-six, and that Giovanni Sanudo had been married to her eighteen years. The Council of Ten ordered his arrest, but he had already escaped beyond the frontier, and he was

condemned to death in default and a prize of two thousand ducats was offered for his head.



THE SALUTE FROM THE GIUDECCA

He had left five children in Venice, three boys and two girls; and the oldest, a daughter christened

Sanuda, addressed a petition to the Ten which is worth translating: —

Most Serene Prince (the Doge), Most Illustrious Sirs (the Ten), and most merciful my Masters (the Counsellors, the High Chancellor, and the Avogadors):

Never did unfortunate petitioners come to the feet of your Serenity and of your most excellent and most clement Council, more worthy of pity than we, Sanuda, Livio, Aloïse, Franceschino and Livio second, the children of Messer Giovanni Sanudo; misfortune has fallen upon our house because our father having been accused of taking our mother's life, the justice of your Serenity and of your most excellent Council has condemned him to death; wherefore we, poor innocent children, have lost at once our father and our mother, and all our possessions; and we assure you with tears that we should have to beg our bread unless certain charitable souls helped us. Therefore I, the unhappy Sanuda, who have reached the age of eighteen years, and my brothers and sisters who are younger than I, shall all be given over to the most abject poverty and exposed to the greatest dangers unless your Serenity and your most excellent Council will consent to help us for the love of religion and justice. And so, in order to prevent five poor and honest children of noble blood from perishing thus miserably, we prostrate ourselves at the feet of your Serenity and of your most Illustrious Lordships, imploring you, by the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, to allow our unhappy father to come back to Venice for two years, that he may provide for the safety of his family and especially of his daughters, whose honour is exposed to such grave peril in that state of neglect in which they are now living. We pray that the good God may grant your Serenity and your Lordships long and happy life.

The Council of Ten was apparently moved by the

appeal. It answered the petition by the following resolution:—

‘The case of Sanuda, Livio, Aloïse, Franceschino, and Livio second, brothers and sisters, the children of Giovanni Sanudo, condemned to death by this Council on July twenty-ninth, is so serious; the petition of these poor children is so humble, so honest and so reasonable, that it behooves the piety and clemency of our Council to grant the said Giovanni Sanudo a safe-conduct, good for two years, in order that during this period he may provide for the future of his family.’

Sanudo came back, and before the two years had expired he obtained a prolongation of the grace for two years more, at the end of which time he presented another petition worded in the same manner, which was also granted; and so on from two years to two years until 1621, nineteen years after the crime, he being still technically under sentence of death.

Now, however, he obtained a formal pardon from his wife’s family, the Cappello. This curious document reads as follows:—

In the name of God and of the Holy Trinity, March thirtieth, 1621.

I, Carlo Cappello, son of the late Pietro Cappello, considering the weakness and the lamentable vicissitudes to which humanity is subject, and desirous of forgiving the shortcomings and misdeeds of others, in order that the Lord our God may protect me also, and desiring, too, the full pardon of every sin: do forgive my brother-in-law, Giovanni Sanudo, the offences

he may have committed against me, promising henceforth to bear him neither hatred nor malice, and I pray God to grant us both a good Easter and the pardon of every sin.

(Signed) CARLO CAPPELLO.  
PIETRO CAPPELLO.  
LIVIO CAPPELLO.

Having obtained forgiveness of his wife's family, Giovanni Sanudo now looked about for a means of extorting a final pardon from the Council of Ten. There existed in the Venetian states a small town, called Sant' Omobono, which had received, as the reward of some ancient service rendered to the Republic, the privilege of setting at liberty every year two outlaws or two bravi. Sanudo succeeded in winning the good graces of the municipality, and was then presented by the mayor and aldermen to the Signory as one of the yearly candidates for a free pardon. The Council of Ten then permanently ratified its decree of immunity, and Giovanni Sanudo was once more a free man. Considering the usual character of the Council, it is hard not to surmise that it had found some cause for regretting the sentence it had passed. The poor murdered woman had confessed and received absolution before death: may we not reasonably suppose that, after all, there had been something to confess?

There is ground for believing it possible that Shakespeare may have used the original murder as part of the groundwork of his *Othello*. If we compare the dates and glance at the history of Italian literature, we

may reasonably conclude that Shakespeare, after perhaps planning his tragedy on a tale of Giraldi's, was much struck by the details of Sanudo's crime, and especially by the murderer's wish that his wife should confess before dying.

Mr. Rawdon Brown supposed the poet to have used another incident, related by Marin Sanudo in his voluminous journal, but the hypothesis involves an anachronism. *Othello* is thought by good authorities to have been first played in London in the autumn of 1602, only a few months after the crime in the Giudecca; whereas Mr. Rawdon Brown's heroine was not murdered until thirteen years later.

The legend of the Fornaretto belongs to the beginning of the sixteenth century, a hundred years earlier. Travellers will remember being told by their guides how a poor little baker's boy, who was carrying bread to a customer on a January morning in 1507, stumbled over the body of a noble who had been stabbed by an unknown hand. The sheath of the dagger lay on the pavement, and the boy was imprudent enough to pick it up and put it into his pocket, for it was richly damascened and very handsome. The police found it upon him, it was considered to be conducive circumstantial evidence, the poor boy confessed under torture that he had committed the crime, and he was hanged on his own confession.

A few days later the real murderer was arrested and convicted; and thereafter, in recollection of the tragic injustice that had been done, whenever the

magistrates were about to pass a sentence of death, they were admonished to remember the poor Fornaretto.

By way of making the story more complete, the guide usually adds that the little lamp which always burns before an image of the Blessed Virgin on one side of the Basilica was lighted as an offering in expiation of the judicial murder, and that it is for the same reason that a bell is rung during twenty minutes on the anniversary of the baker boy's execution.

Strangely enough, there is hardly a word of truth in this story. The only record in the archives of the Ten which faintly suggests it is the trial and execution of a baker named Pietro Fusiol, who had murdered a man of the people in January 1507, and there is no reference to any mistake on the part of the court. The ringing of the bell and the little lamp which burns day and night before the image, are a sort of *ex voto* offerings left by certain seamen in recollection of a terrible storm from which they escaped.

I pass on to speak of the political prisoners of the Republic, who were not by any means all treated alike, since some of them were confined in places

*Dr. Heinrich  
Thode, Der Ring  
des Frangipane.*

of tolerable comfort, whereas others were treated little better than common criminals. The story of Cristoforo Frangipane shows that political delinquents were not judged according to any particular code, and that each case was examined as being entirely independent from any other.

I must recall to the reader that during the league of Cambrai the Emperor Maximilian was commissioned

to win back Friuli, Istria, and other provinces annexed by the Republic. Though the league had been formed in great haste, Venice was not taken by surprise, for it had long been apparent that the European powers desired her destruction and dismemberment.

*Venice defying  
Europe, Palma  
Giovane; Sala  
dei Pregadi,  
ducal palace.*

During the war which followed the Venetian army was at one time under the orders of Bartolomeo d' Alviano, and that of the Emperor was commanded by Cristoforo Frangipane. Now the Frangipane family held lands in fee from Venice as well as from the Emperor, and owed feudal service to both; so that the Republic was justified in considering Cristoforo as a traitor according to feudal law, since he was in command of a hostile army.

A learned German student, Doctor Heinrich Thode, has discovered and told with great charm the following story concerning the imperial general. In 1892, Doctor Thode being then in Venice, certain peasants of the village of Osopo, near Pordenone, showed him a gold ring of marvellous workmanship and in the style of the sixteenth century, which they had found in a field. The ring consisted of two spirals, one within the other, which could be taken apart, so that a lock of hair or a relic could be placed between them. On the outer spiral of the ring were engraved the words, 'Myt Wyllen deyn eygen,' which may be translated, 'By mine own will thine own.' Doctor Thode bought the ring, but for a long time could make nothing of it. At last, however, his industry was rewarded by the

discovery of an interesting passage in the almost inexhaustible diary of Marin Sanudo, of which I shall abridge the substance as much as possible.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the Emperor Maximilian met in Augsburg a very beautiful girl named Apollonia von Lange, with whom he fell deeply in love. He caused her to come to the Court of Vienna, where she behaved so admirably that, according to the chronicler, all the Austrian nobles wished to marry her. As a matter of fact she was married in 1503 to the Count of Lodron, who happens to be the very person whom the Cappelletti of Verona wished to marry to their Juliet in spite of her promise to Romeo Montecchi.

The Count of Lodron died soon after his marriage, leaving no children. The Emperor continued to extend to the young widow his honourable protection, and in 1514 he married her to his favourite general Cristoforo Frangipane. It was no doubt on this occasion that the warrior received from her the ring of which the motto answered a question that had often been on his lips. He might, indeed, reasonably have supposed that she was marrying him in deference to the Emperor's wishes; he must have asked her if this were true, and no doubt more than once she answered, 'Of my own will I am thine own.' The marriage had scarcely taken place when Frangipane was obliged to take command of the imperial army and to leave his wife. The first battle of the campaign was fought near Pordenone in the Venetian territory. Marin Sanudo

narrates that on that day Frangipane lost a precious



A GARDEN WALL

relic, a fact which he considered to be of bad augury for the future.

Only a few days later, when reconnoitring the

position of the enemy, he was climbing over a boulder which overlooked the valley. It either gave way with him, or else some large piece of stone rolled against him and threw him down. The accident was seen from a distance, and it was at once reported to Venice that he was dead. But he was only wounded, and was carried in a litter to Goritz, whither his wife hastened at once. Under her loving care he soon recovered, but before he was able to ride again the Venetians took the town and made him prisoner. He was conveyed to Venice, and was confined in the tower of the ducal palace which overlooked the Ponte della Paglia. In his confinement he kept up a constant correspondence with his wife, which, it is needless to say, was carefully examined by the government; every letter which came or went was read aloud before the Senate, so that Marin Sanudo had ample opportunity to copy the documents for his journal, as he frequently did.

The beautiful Apollonia was in a state bordering on despair, the grief of the separation preyed upon her mind, and she fell into a state of terrible languor and depression. Amongst many tender messages she makes mention of the ring.

‘As for the ring,’ she wrote, ‘most gracious and beloved husband, let me tell you that the one ordered of John Stephen Maze should be a little smaller than the old one, and on it must be engraved the words with which I answered the question you asked me, and which is graved on the ring I always wear on my finger.

I wish you to wear the ring in memory and for love of me, but as we have no good jewellers here, I entreat you to order it yourself.'

In the face of such evidence it is hardly possible to doubt that the ring found at Osopo is the identical one given to Frangipane by his bride, and is the 'relic' which he lost in his first engagement with the Venetians.

The correspondence of the loving couple, passionate and sad, continued during six months, at the end of which time Apollonia wrote to the Signory imploring permission to share her husband's prison; but this was refused her, though her request was supported by the warmest recommendations from the Emperor himself. Exasperated, Frangipane attempted to escape from prison, but his plan was discovered, and he was only the more closely watched. Apollonia now requested the favour of a safe-conduct that she might, at least, come to Venice as a traveller and visit her husband; this also was refused, not once only, but again when she wrote a second time.

There was now but one thing left for her to do, and she determined to risk coming to Venice without a safe-conduct. She arrived in the depth of winter in 1516, with four maids of honour, her chamberlain, her physician, and twenty-two servants. As the Council of Ten was ashamed to imprison her it placed her in the keeping of the patrician Dandolo, who was the general inspector of the ducal prisons, and he placed at her disposal his palace on the Grand Canal, which

is now the Hôtel Danieli. She took up her quarters there on the thirteenth of January with her suite, and on the twentieth she appeared before the Doge and his counsellors arrayed in a magnificent silk gown and a black satin mantle lined with sable; a heavy gold chain hung down upon her bosom, and a golden coif was set upon her hair in the German fashion; three young girls dressed in black cloth followed her, one after the other, and an old duenna, the physician, and the chamberlain brought up the rear.

The fair Countess addressed the Doge with feminine eloquence and tact. She began by rendering thanks for the kindness and consideration shown to her husband, and she requested permission to see him twice a week. She argued that this permission was absolutely necessary to her, for she said that she was very ill, and that the treatment ordered by her doctor was of such a nature that she entirely declined to submit to it except in the presence of her husband. The Doge and his counsellors had never had to face such arguments before; they felt themselves absolutely powerless, and yielded at once.

But on the morrow old Dandolo, the inspector of prisons, appeared before them in a condition of indescribable dismay and excitement. He said that when the Countess was at last in her husband's prison, on the previous evening, she had made such a scene in order to be allowed to stay all night that he, Dandolo, had yielded much against his will and had left the couple together. And now, in the morning, he had found the

PALAZZO RESSONICO







Countess still in bed, declaring that she was dangerously ill, and demanding that her doctor should be sent to her without delay.

The Doge and his counsellors were in a quandary, and Dandolo was tearing his hair. Sanudo informs us that 'there was much noise in the council' that morning, and it is easy to believe that he was telling the truth. Almost half of the grave magistrates were in favour of leaving the Countess with her husband; the rest, with a very small majority, voted that she must quit the prison. The motion passed, but it was one thing to decide what she should do, and quite another thing to make her do it. She declared that since she was inside the tower, no power on earth should get her out of it, and she defied the Doge, the Council of Ten, and all their works. Before such portentous obstinacy the government of Venice retired in stupefaction, and she was left in peace.

But she was human, after all, and under prolonged imprisonment her health broke down, and she was obliged to leave the tower each year to go to the waters of Abano; but even then she refused to go out until a formal promise had been given her that she should be allowed to return immediately after the cure.

No doubt it was owing to her presence that Frangipane's confinement became by degrees less rigorous, and that he was even allowed to watch the procession of Corpus Domini from the balcony of the Library.

Apollonia had come in January 1516, and the pair

were not liberated till more than two years later. Germany, France, and Venice signed a truce of five years, and agreed to exchange prisoners and give hostages on the thirty-first of July 1518. Francis I. asked that Germany should hand him over Frangipane as security for keeping the peace, promising that he should not be imprisoned, but should be merely a prisoner of the King on parole. It was not freedom yet, but such a change was more than welcome, and the negotiations with the Signory for Frangipane's delivery were completed on the third of September. The words he wrote in the embrasure of the window of his prison may still be read, says Dr. Thode, who copied the inscription which I reproduce:—

Fo    incluso . qua . in . torise . . . . fina . . terzo  
zorno de . setembro . del . M.D. XVIII . io . Christoforo . Frang-  
-epanibus Chonte . de . Veglia . Senia . et Modrusa  
Et io . Apollonia . Chonsorte . de sopradicto signor . chonte .  
Vene . far . chompagnia . a . quello . adi . XX . Zenar . MDXVI perfina  
sopra dicto setembro . Chi mal . e . ben . non . sa . patir . a . gra-  
-nde honor . may . pol . venir . anche . ben . ne . . mal . de . qui . per .  
sempre . non . dura .

I translate literally as follows:—

I was shut up here in the Torrisella till the third day of September of 1518, Christopher of the Frangipane, Count of Veglia, Senia, and Modrusa. And I, Apollonia, wife of the aforesaid lord Count, came to keep him company on the twentieth of January 1516 until the said September. ‘Who cannot bear good and ill fate, Will never come to honour great.’ Also, Nor good nor evil lasts for ever here.

Frangipane seems to have written this record during one of his wife's absences at Abano, being perfectly sure that he was about to be set at liberty. But there had been a hitch in the negotiations. Venice was not ready to hand him over, and meanwhile, when Apollonia came back she was refused admittance. Dandolo again offered her a home in his palace, and did all he could to help her. Frangipane, deprived of her comforting presence, fell ill and went almost mad. Even the Doge himself supported his request to be allowed to be taken to a private dwelling. It was in vain; but Apollonia was at last allowed to return to her husband. They left no means untried to obtain the fulfilment of the treaty, and at last Dandolo became so exasperated with the Council of Ten that he resigned his post of inspector of prisons, telling the councillors to their faces that of twelve thousand prisoners who had been in his keeping, first and last, Frangipane was the only one who had been able to complain of injustice.

The Ten accepted his resignation almost without comment, and replaced him by two nobles. Then the couple tried to escape, but were discovered and again separated. At last the government consented to ask the King of France what was to be done with his hostage, whom he seems to have quite forgotten. He answered by requesting that Frangipane should be sent to Milan and handed over to the French governor, De Lautrec.

The loving pair were allowed to meet in the prison again, two days before the departure, but Apollonia

was not permitted to follow her husband to Milan, and a heart-rending farewell took place at Lizzafusina, on the frontier. Having reached his destination, the unlucky Frangipane found himself in a much worse prison than the one he had occupied so long in Venice. Again his faithful wife succeeded in joining him, to share his captivity. But her strength was far spent, and she died on the fourth of September 1519, in the fortress of Milan; and soon afterwards Frangipane succeeded at last in escaping by sawing through the bars of his window and letting himself down by a rope.



### III

## VENETIAN DIPLOMACY

BEFORE quitting the subject of Venetian official life, I must devote a few pages to the diplomacy of the Republic, which has remained famous in history.

The kings of France often confided diplomatic missions to the clergy, but the Venetian diplomatists were always laymen, without a single exception. The Signory constantly professed the most devout faith in Catholic dogma, and as constantly exhibited the most profound distrust of the popes. The Vatican was, indeed, the chief object of the government's suspicion. From the fifteenth century onward, any noble who

entered holy orders lost his seat in the Great Council, and  
*Cecchetti, Corte Romana.* I have already explained that during the  
 discussion of matters relating to Rome, all the 'papalisti' were ordered to withdraw. When Sixtus V. was elected Pope in 1585, and the Republic sent four ambassadors together to congratulate him, the sixteen nobles who attended the mission were most carefully chosen from among those who never could be 'papalisti.'

In answer to any criticism of her methods, Venice was almost always able to bring forward the unanswerable argument of success; but the pages which record her diplomatic relations with other powers are not the fairest in her history. Her dealings with her neighbours were regulated by strictly business principles; and 'business' is, I believe, the art of becoming legally possessed of that which is not our own.

The marvellous accuracy with which the Venetian ambassadors related to their government the details of what they observed abroad is proverbial, and has been a godsend to students of history, such as M. Yriarte, to whom the world is so much indebted for his study of Marcantonio Barbaro.

The post of foreign representative was a most honourable one, but there were overwhelming responsibilities connected with it. In early times, when diplomatic relations were less close and less continuous, the Republic had sent permanent embassies only to Rome and Constantinople; to other capitals special envoys were only despatched when some matter was to be

discussed. But in the sixteenth century Venice had ambassadors everywhere, and each week brought long letters from all countries teeming with details, not only of political or military events, but concerning social festivities, manners, customs, court intrigues, and every sort of gossip.

These letters were read aloud on Saturday to the Senate, which thus assisted at a sort of consecutive series of lectures on the history of the times; and as it was customary to choose the ambassadors from among the senators, it was tolerably sure that when chosen they would always be well informed, up to the latest moment.

The missions of the Republic were limited to a residence of two years in any one foreign capital; but this short time was amply sufficient to bring about the financial ruin of the ambassador if he was not very rich. It was his duty to display the most boundless magnificence for the greater glory of the Republic, and his expenses bore no proportion to his salary.

The following instructions, according to M. Yriarte, were given to Marcantonio Barbaro on his departure for the court of France:—

‘You are to keep eleven horses for your service, including those of your secretary and his servant, and four mounted messengers. You will receive for your expenses two hundred gold ducats monthly (about £1800 yearly), of which you are not required to render an account. You will receive a thousand gold ducats for presents, and three

hundred for the purchase of horses, harness, and saddle cloths.'

The Secretary of Embassy was also named by the Senate, and though the attachés might be chosen by the ambassador, his choice had to be confirmed by the government. He was not allowed to take his wife with him, as her presence might have distracted him from business, and also because it might possibly have been a little prejudicial to the keeping of secrets; but he was allowed to take his cook. These same instructions appear as early as the thirteenth century.

Modern diplomatists, and especially Americans, will be interested to know that the post of ambassador was so little desired as to make it necessary to impose a heavy fine on any noble who refused it when he was appointed; and it actually happened more than once that men paid the fine rather than ruin themselves altogether in the service of their sordid government. Once having left Venice, however, no resignation was allowed, and the ambassador dared not return unless he was ordered to do so. Requests for leave were very rare, and were only made under the pressure of some very exceptional circumstances. Such a petition was considered so serious a matter that when one arrived from abroad all persons related to the ambassador were ordered to leave the Senate, lest their presence should interfere with the freedom of discussion; but the request was never granted unless two members of the family would swear that the reasons alleged in the petition were genuine.

Legend assures us that each ambassador received, together with his credentials, a box full of gold coin and a small bottle of deadly poison. This is childish nonsense, of course, so far as the portable realities were concerned, but ambassadors were instructed to hesitate at nothing which could accomplish the purpose of the State, neither at spending large sums which would be placed at their disposal when necessary, nor at what the Senate was good enough to call measures of exceptional severity — namely, murder.

The most important post in Venetian diplomacy was the embassy at Constantinople, where the chief of the mission enjoyed the title of Bailo, together with the chance of making a fortune instead of losing one. The Bailo of Constantinople and the ambassador to the Pope took precedence over all other Venetian diplomatists, and they were expected to make an even greater display, especially at the pontifical court. The four ambassadors sent to congratulate Sixtus V. on his election had each four noble attachés, four armed footmen, and five-and-twenty horses, and the one of the four who was already the resident in Rome was indemnified for his expenses in order that he might appear as magnificently as his three newly arrived colleagues.

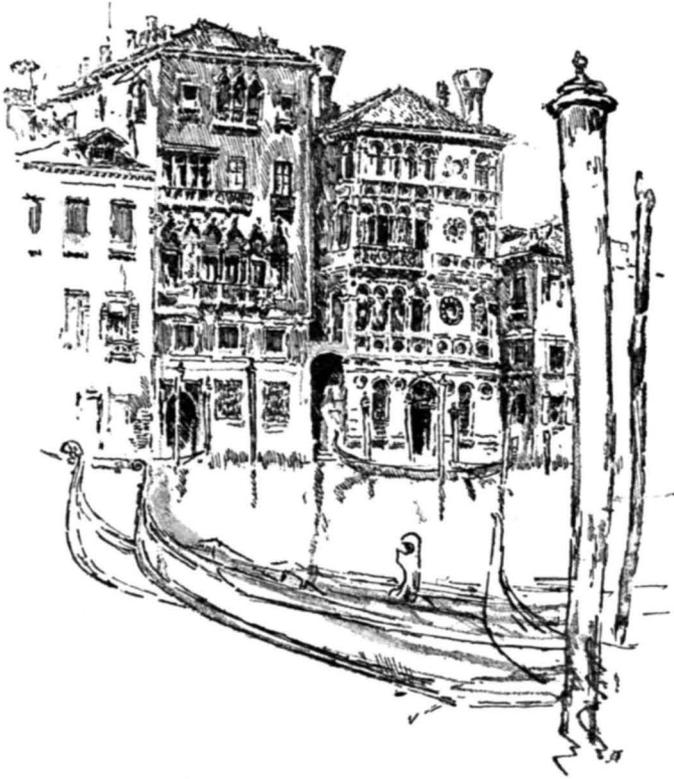
On their return from a foreign mission the envoys of the Republic were bound to appear at the chancery of the ducal palace, and to inscribe their names there in a special register; and within a fortnight they were required to render an account of what they had seen

and learnt abroad, and of the affairs with which they had dealt. These accounts, called 'relazioni,' were brief recapitulations of their weekly letters to the Senate; the first phrases were always written in Latin, but the body of the discourse might be in Italian, or even in dialect. The ambassador presented himself in full dress, wearing his crimson velvet mantle and bringing the manuscript of his speech, which he afterwards handed to the High Chancellor; for as early as the fifteenth century all public speeches were required to be written out, in order that they might be preserved exactly as they had been spoken, or rather read, for it was not even allowable to recite them by heart. I need hardly add that no stranger was ever admitted to hear an ambassador's account of his mission, and the senators swore a special oath of secrecy for the occasion, even with regard to the most insignificant details.

Any one who examines a number of these documents will soon see that they all begin with a portrait of the sovereign to whom the envoy was accredited, and there is often a great deal about the royal family, its surroundings, tastes, and habits. Almost invariably also the account ends with a list of the presents and titles or decorations bestowed upon the ambassador at the close of his mission, and all these he was required to hand over intact to the Signory. Not uncommonly, however, the presents were returned to him; but as no foreign titles could be borne by Venetians, the recipient of them was usually created a Knight of the Golden

Stole, the only heraldic order recognised by the Republic and in the gift of the government.

. It would be curious to examine into the first causes



PALAZZO DARIO

of the relations between Venice and the other European states. It was the exchange of raisins for wool which obliged England and Venice to send each other

permanent diplomatic missions. Up to that time only occasional special envoys had been necessary. The first time that England addressed a letter to the Signory she employed as her official agent a Neapolitan monk, the Bishop of Bisaccia, chaplain to King Robert, and this was in 1340. The envoy came to say that King Edward the Third of England had the honour to inform the Doge Gradenigo that he had defied Philippe de Valois to say that he was the anointed of the Lord. The envoy further stated that the two rivals were about to invoke the judgment of God, either by going unarmed into a den of wild beasts, who would of course respect the Lord's anointed and promptly devour the pretender, or else by 'touching for King's Evil.' Beginning in the fifteenth century there is a long list of English ambassadors and ministers resident in Venice. The last English diplomatic representative in Venice was Sir Richard Worsley, of whom I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

All the foreign diplomatists in Venice were constantly on the look-out for the arrival of the special mounted messengers attached to each foreign embassy. These were celebrated throughout Europe for their speed and discretion. In the fifteenth century they were thirty-two in number, and formed a small guild which was under the protection of Saint Catharine; and they were almost all natives of Bergamo, a city which is still singularly noted for the honesty and faithfulness of its inhabitants, and which even now furnishes Venice

with trusty house-porters and other servants of whom responsibility is required.



CALLE BECCHERIA

In the *Souvenirs* of M. Armand Baschet, I find that the courier who brought the news of the signing of

the treaty of Cambrai from Blois to Venice covered the distance in eight days, the best previous record to Paris, which is about the same distance, having been nine, and the usual time employed being fifteen. The employment of State courier could be bought and could be left by will.

Each ambassador of the Republic seemed to possess a part of the marvellously universal vision that belonged to the Council of Ten. Mr. Rawdon Brown made a special study of the weekly letters of the Venetian ambassadors in England, and found, for instance, that one of the Republic's representatives succeeded in regularly copying the letters which Queen Elizabeth wrote to her lovers, which were therefore read aloud to the Senate with the greatest regularity, together with many other curious details of English court life.

I shall give two specimens, translated from the weekly letters in the Albèri collection. In 1531 the patrician Ludovico Falier came to render an account of his mission to the Court of Henry VIII. He expresses himself as follows, concerning that King and the English:—

In order that my discourse may be better understood I shall divide it into two chief parts, of which the one concerns my journey, and the other the most puissant King Henry VIII., and the manners and customs of his country from the year 1528 to 1531. . . . On the tenth of December I reached Calais [he had left Venice in the middle of October, but had travelled by short stages with a numerous suite]; it is a city of the French coast which belongs to the most serene King of

England, as I shall have occasion to repeat hereafter. There I went on board a vessel to cross the ocean, which after behaving furiously during the passage at last threw me upon the English shore. I therefore arrived at Dover much more tired by these few hours of navigation than by a journey of ninety days on dry land. Having rested a little at Dover I got on horseback to go to London. At St. George's I met my most illustrious predecessor Venier with several personages of the Court, including the most reverend the Cardinal (Thomas Wolsey), and we all entered the city together, and they accompanied me to my house. I was ordered almost at once to go to the Cardinal, in order to kiss his hand, for this ceremony always preceded that of an audience with the King; such is the power of this prince [of the Church]. On leaving his apartment I was conducted to his most serene Majesty, with whom I then had the interview which I described in detail in my letter to your Signory and to this glorious Senate.

The ambassador goes on to speak in the past tense of Cardinal Wolsey, who had fallen into disgrace in the interval. He goes on to speak of the Queen, who was then Catharine of Aragon.

My lady the Queen is small of stature, and plump, and has an honest face; she is good and just, affable and pious. She speaks fluently Spanish, Flemish, French, and English. Her subjects love her more than they ever loved any Queen; she is five and forty years old, and she has already lived thirty-five years in England.

The ambassador speaks of the King next.

God has united in King Henry VIII. beauty of soul with beauty of body, so that every one is astonished by such wonders . . . he has the face of an angel, for it would not be enough to say that he is handsome; he resembles Cæsar, his

look is calm, and contrary to English fashion, he wears his beard; who would not admire so much beauty accompanied with so much strength and grace? He rides very well, jousts and handles a lance with great skill; he is a very good shot and an excellent tennis player. He has always cultivated the extraordinary qualities with which nature has adorned him from his birth, for he thinks that nothing is more unnatural than a sovereign who cannot dominate his people by his moral and physical qualities.

And here the ambassador seems to have thought that he had gone rather far, for he finds something to say about Henry's less admirable characteristics.

Unhappily this prince, so intelligent and reasonable, is given up to idleness, has allowed himself to be led away by his passions, and has left the government of the State in the hands of a few favourites, the most powerful of whom was the Cardinal, until he fell into total disgrace. Since then, from having been generous, he has become miserly, and whereas formerly all those who treated of affairs with him went away satisfied and covered with gifts, he now allows all to leave the Court with discontent. He makes a show of great piety, hears two low masses every day, and high mass also, on feast days. He gives to the poor, to orphans, widows, young girls, and infirm persons, and for these charities he gives his almoner ten thousand ducats yearly. He is beloved by all. He is forty years of age and has reigned twenty-two.

Falier speaks next of the climate of Great Britain and the products of the country, and gives a long description of a brewery. He briefly but sufficiently describes the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and gives some account of the British Constitution. He

gives also a statement of the King's sources of income with their amount, and the accuracy of the figures suggests that he must have got access to papers not intended for his perusal.

His Majesty may count upon over five hundred thousand ducats [£375,000] a year, divided as follows :—

	Ducats.
From the Crown (Lands) . . . . .	190,000
Customs . . . . .	150,000
Vacant Benefices . . . . .	40,000
Privy Seal . . . . .	10,000
Rebels (Confiscations, etc.) . . . . .	50,000
Lands on the Continent . . . . .	10,000
Fines for Crimes . . . . .	25,000
Royal Guards . . . . .	50,000
Total	<u>525,000</u>

I cannot tell exactly what he gets from taxes, but from information which I have endeavoured to obtain from grave and experienced persons, His Majesty exacts from his subjects about a million of ducats; for the six millions of ducats which he had inherited from his father were all spent in the wars with France, Flanders, and Scotland. His Majesty usually spends 425,000 ducats for his Court, which consists of five hundred men; namely, twenty-six chamberlains, of whom one is Treasurer of the Chamber [keeper of the privy purse?], one is a Majorduomo called a 'Steward,' his assistant, who carries a little white stick as a sign of his dignity; the Treasurer General, who pays all accounts; the accountant who distributes [the payments]; the 'cofferers' in charge of the said accounts; the Master of the Horse who has the management of the royal stables. There are three hundred horses, between Arabs, Turk-

ish horses and racers, hackneys and others. His Majesty has also eight chaplains, of whom one distributes his charities, and there are many persons for his service of whom I do not speak in detail lest I should fatigue Your Serenity. His Majesty has always in his pay three hundred halberdiers who are on guard by tens at a time for the King's person, and pass the night in the private antechamber.

His Majesty spends as follows :—

	Ducats.
For the Maintenance of his Court . . . . .	100,000
Presents . . . . .	120,000
Horses . . . . .	20,000
Parks, and Packs of Hounds . . . . .	50,000
Soldiers who guard the Fortresses . . . . .	30,000
His Majesty's Chamber (Privy Purse) . . . . .	30,000
Buildings . . . . .	10,000
Charities . . . . .	10,000
Embassies and King's Messengers . . . . .	40,000
Expenses of the Queen (Catharine of Aragon), and the Princess (Mary) . . . . .	<u>30,000</u>
Total	<u><u>440,000</u></u>

In case of war his Majesty could arm four thousand light horse and sixty thousand infantry. The latter would fight in the old-fashioned way, with bow, sword, shield, helmet, and with pikes of one or two points which are excellent against charges of cavalry. They are now beginning to use guns and artillery. The English do not fear death. As soon as the battle commences, they provoke the enemy and charge furiously; in very quick engagements they are generally victorious, but they often yield if the war drags on. They have not the slightest fear of Frenchmen, but they are much afraid of the Scotch.

During forty days they are obliged to serve in the army without receiving pay; after that time they receive three crowns and a half for a period of service determined beforehand. The fleet consists of one hundred and fifty vessels.

It now only remains for me to tell you who are the friends of the King, and what consequences his divorce might have, and I shall then add a few words on the most Reverend the Cardinal York.

Since the affair of the divorce has come up [Falier is writing in 1531, and Henry VIII. married Anne Boleyn the next year] the Pope [Clement VII.] is not in his Majesty's good graces. If the Holy Father will not grant the King permission to divorce, the result will be a very great advantage for the English crown, and a great danger to the Roman Church, for the King will detach himself from the latter, and will seize all the revenues of the ecclesiastical benefices; this will yield the Crown more than six million ducats [£4,500,000].

Falier was not mistaken, unless, perhaps, in his figures. He proceeds to speak of the relations between England and all the other European states, after which he returns to the question of the divorce, expressing himself in a very singular way for a Catholic. It must be remembered, however, that he was a Venetian, and therefore a man of business first, and a baptized Christian afterward.

The Englishman [Henry VIII.] must necessarily divorce, for he wishes to have a legitimate son, and he has lost all hope of one being born to him by the Lady Catharine [of Aragon]. He will therefore marry his favourite [Anne Boleyn] the daughter of the Earl of Vuilcer (*sic*) [Wiltshire — note the Venetian's phonetic spelling!] as soon as possible. He will have trouble, for the faction that is for the Queen will rise.

It is quite clear that Venetian diplomatists did not indulge themselves in sentiment, and the information they presented to the Senate was as brutally frank and coldly precise as a medical diagnosis. They sought for facts and did not philosophise about them. Here is Falier's opinion of Cardinal Wolsey:—

The King and the kingdom were in his hands, and he disposed of everything as the King himself might have done, or the Pope. All the princes were obliged to bow down to him. He received one hundred and fifty thousand ducats yearly over and above the gifts which he had from the English and the foreign princes. He counted much on France, with which kingdom he kept up extremely affectionate relations. His court was magnificent, more magnificent than the King's. He spent all his income, he was very proud, and he wished to be adored like a god rather than respected as a prince.

In connection with the great Cardinal, I shall translate a passage of the letter in which Falier had informed the Senate of his disgrace. The fragment has some value also, from the light it throws on the comparative values of coins at that time. It must be remembered that the value of the gold ducat never changed to the last, while that of all other European coins varied greatly.

The King of England has had the Cardinal put in prison, has deprived him of the government, and has confiscated all his property. His fortune is valued at forty thousand pounds English, equal to twenty thousand of our grossi [the silver mark], or two hundred thousand [silver] ducats; in these forty thousand pounds must be included thirty thousand pounds English in cash, that is, fifteen thousand of ours or one hun-

dred and fifty thousand [silver] ducats. His real estate has also been confiscated, consisting of his Archbishopric, which brought him a very large sum.

At the risk of wearying my readers I give a short extract from the report of another ambassador to England, Jacopo Soranzo, which was read before the Senate on the ninth of August 1554 (Queen Mary then reigning). The Venetian expresses his surprise at the way in which trials by jury were conducted in England.

Crimes are tried before twelve judges who may not leave the court, nor eat, nor drink, until they all agree, without one exception, on the sentence to be passed. . . . When sentence has been passed, the judges execute it immediately, but without ever resorting to the mutilation of a member or exile. If the accused is innocent, he is acquitted; if he is guilty, he is condemned to death.

I need not lay stress on the defective form of such trials; your Lordships see for yourselves how reprehensible such a mode of procedure is, for it often happens that eleven persons who wish to acquit the accused decide to condemn him to death in order to be of the opinion of the twelfth, who is determined to bear starvation till this verdict is given.

Before closing this chapter it is worth while to note that if the Venetian ambassadors abroad succeeded in knowing almost everything that was happening, the government took good care that foreign representatives residing in Venice should not follow their example. They were never told anything in the way of news, and though honours and

*A. Baschet,  
Archives.*

privileges were heaped upon them, they were kept at arm's length. As far back as the fourteenth century there was a law forbidding all patricians to have any acquaintance or social intercourse with any foreign representative except under the most exceptional circumstances, and M. Baschet has found material in the Archives sufficient to prove that the foreign ambassadors lived in something very like the seclusion of exile, and were altogether banished from all intercourse with the upper classes. The same writer adds that the diplomatists resented this rude exclusion, and that the practice of it made the Republic not a few enemies.

To such a criticism Venice would have answered, as usual, by the argument of success on the whole during many centuries. Those who care to examine the point more closely may read M. Baschet's interesting work on the Secret Chancery.



PONTE DEL CRISTO

#### IV

### THE ARSENAL, THE GLASS-WORKS, AND THE LACE-MAKERS

THE old Arsenal is such a museum of shadows nowadays that it is hard to realise what it once meant to the Venetians. Six hundred years ago, the sight of it inspired one of Dante's most vivid descriptions of activity, and I have sometimes wondered whether in his day the three dwelling-houses of the Proveditors were already nick-named Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell, as they were always called at a later date.

The Arsenal was founded in the twelfth century, and from the very first was one of the institutions most jealously watched over by the government. In the sixteenth century it had grown to be a vast enclosure of docks and basins, protected by a crenellated wall, and having but one entrance, which was guarded by sentinels. In the interior, the houses of the Provveditors had grown to be three great palaces, built round a courtyard, each officer occupying one of them during the thirty-two months of his term of office.

The Provveditors were nobles, of course, but they must necessarily have been men who thoroughly understood nautical matters, for it was their duty to oversee all work done in the place, to the minutest details, and they had absolute control of all the vast stores accumulated for building and fitting the fleet of the Republic. Every manufactured article was stamped with the arms of the Republic as soon as it was made or purchased, and not a nail, not a fathom of rope, not a yard of canvas could be brought out of the storehouses without the consent of one of the Provveditors. If anything was found outside the walls of the Arsenal with the public mark on it, the object was considered by law to be stolen, an inquiry was made, and if the culprit who had committed the misdemeanour could be caught, he was condemned to the galleys.

In order to enforce the rigid regulations the government not only required all three Provveditors to inhabit constantly the palaces assigned to them, but insisted that one of them should remain day and night within the

STEAMERS COMING IN







boundaries of the yard, during a fortnight, without going out at all. This service was taken in turn, and the official who was on duty was called the 'Patron di Guardia.' Into his hands all the keys were given every evening when work was over.

The artisans of the government ship-yard were the finest set of men in Venice, and their traditions of workmanship and art were handed down in their families from father to son for generations, as certain occupations still are in Italy. I know of a man-servant, for instance, whose direct ancestors have served those of the family in which he is still a servant for more than two hundred years without a break. In the Venetian Arsenal, it sometimes happened that an old man was foreman of a department in which his son was a master smith or carpenter, and his grandson an apprentice.

There was something military in the organisation, which bound the artisans very close together, for they trained themselves in fencing and gymnastics, and also in everything connected with extinguishing fires and saving wrecks or shipwrecked crews, for in any case of public danger it was always the 'Arsenalotti' who were called in. They were sober and courageous and excessively proud of their trade, and the government could always count on them. Twice, towards the end of the sixteenth century, the ducal palace took fire, and would have burnt down but for the prodigious energy of the workmen from the government docks. On the first occasion they proudly refused the present of five

hundred ducats which the Doge offered them, but gratefully accepted an invitation to dine with him in a body; and as they numbered over fifteen thousand the Doge did not save money by the arrangement. Three years later, all their efforts could not hinder the hall of the Great Council from burning, and priceless works of art by such men as the two Bellini, Titian, Tintoretto, and Pordenone were destroyed in a few moments. But the Arsenalotti saved the rest of the building, and again refused any recompense for their services.

When Henry III. of France came to Venice, the Arsenal employed about sixteen thousand men, and could count on a budget of two hundred and twenty-four thousand gold ducats, of which one hundred and twenty-four went to pay the wages of the workmen, and the rest was expended for materials. Those were large sums in the sixteenth century, but Venice looked upon the Arsenal as the mainspring of her power, and spared nothing to keep it in a state as near perfection as possible. In the long struggle with Genoa, the enemy used every art to bring about its destruction, but always in vain. The men who guarded the docks were absolutely incorruptible. In the sixteenth century it seemed as if the pure blood of the old Venetians ran only in their veins, and as if they alone still upheld the noble traditions of loyalty and simplicity which the founders of the Republic had handed down from braver days.

Next to the construction of her war-ships and merchant fleets, one of the most important matters to

the commerce of Venice was the manufacture of glass, which brought enormous profits to the State and to



S. MICHELE

individuals, as is usually the case when a valuable product is made out of cheap materials by processes which are secret, and therefore have the effect of a monopoly.

As early as the fourteenth century the government had understood the immense importance of the art, and the glass-blowers of Murano were protected and favoured in a most especial way. As in one part of France, a sort of nobility was inherent in the occupation, and an early law sanctioned the marriage of a master



VENICE FROM MURANO

glass-blower's daughter with a patrician by allowing their children to be entered in the Golden Book.

The glass-works were all established in the island of Murano, as their presence in the city would have caused constant danger of fire at a time when many of the houses were still built of wood, and the whole manufacture was subject to the direct supervision of the Council of Ten, under whose supreme authority Murano governed itself as a separate city, and almost as a

separate little republic. Not only were the glass-blowers organised in a number of guilds according to the special



THE DUOMO CAMPANILE, MURANO

branches of the profession, such as bead-making, bottle-blowing, the making of window-panes and of stained glass, each guild having its own 'mariegola' or charter;

but over these the Muranese had their own Great Council and Golden Book, in which the names of one hundred and seventy-three families were inscribed, and their own Small Council, or Senate. The Ten gave Murano a 'Podestà,' but he had not the power which similar officers exercised in the other cities and islands of the Dogato, and it is amusing to see that the people of Murano treated him very much as the Venetians themselves treated their Doge. He was required to be of noble blood; he was obliged by law to spend three days out of four in Murano; he was forbidden to go to Venice when important functions were going on; he could not interfere in any affair without the permission of both the Councils of Murano, and altogether he was much the same sort of figure-head as the Doge himself. On the other hand, Murano supported a sort of consul in Venice with the title of Nuncio, whose business it was to defend the interests of the island before the Venetian government.

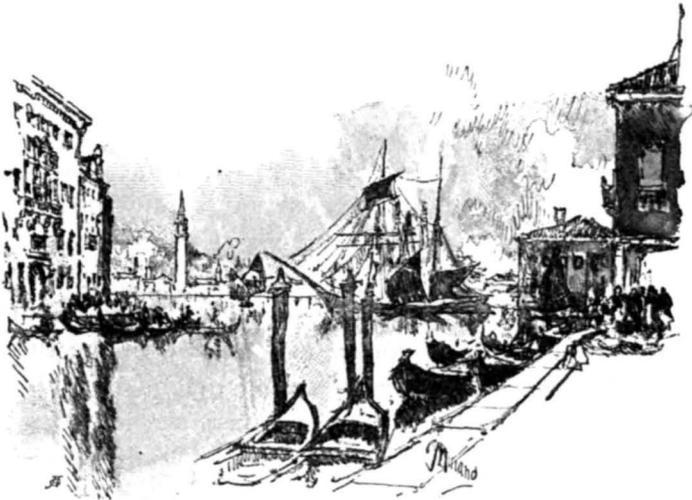
Neither the *Missier Grande*, the chief of the Venetian police, nor the '*sbirri*,' were allowed to exercise their functions on the island. Offenders were arrested and dealt with by the officers of the Murano government, and were handed over to the Venetian supreme government only in extreme cases, most trials taking place on the island.

The heraldic arms of Murano displayed on an azure field a cock with red legs, wearing a crown of silver.

In the sixteenth century the population was about thirty thousand souls, and the little city had a great

reputation for the beauty of its churches and especially of its gardens, in which quantities of exotic plants and flowers were cultivated.

The two most powerful families amongst the glass-blowers were those of Beroviero and Ballarin. I have told at length in the form of a romance the true story



MURANO, LOOKING TOWARDS VENICE

of Zorzi Ballarin and Marietta Beroviero, availing myself only of the romancer's right to be the apologist of his hero. The facts remain. Angelo Beroviero, a pupil of Paolo Godi, the famous mediæval chemist, worked much alone in his laboratory, noting the results of his experiments in a diary which became extremely valuable. By some means this diary came into the

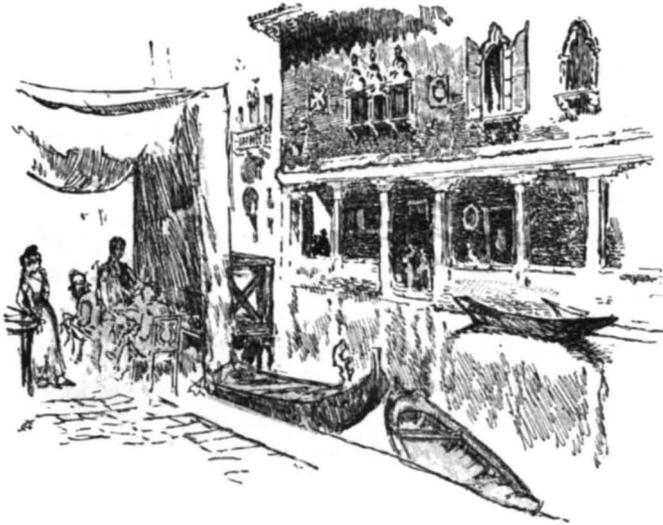
hands of Zorzi Ballarin, so-called by his comrades on account of his lameness. He loved Marietta, and she loved him, but he was poor, and moreover, as far as I have been able to ascertain, he was of foreign birth, and could therefore not become a master glass-blower. When he found himself in possession of the precious



MURANO

secrets, he used his power to extort Beroviero's consent, he married Marietta, obtained the full privileges of a master, lived a highly honourable life, and became the ancestor of a distinguished family, one of whom was a Venetian ambassador, as may be read in the inscription on his tomb in Murano. Beroviero's house, with the sign of the Angel, is still standing in Murano, and I think the ancient glass-works nearly opposite were probably his. As for Zorzi Ballarin, I daresay that the

process by which he really got possession of the diary was not strictly legal, but love has excused worse misdeeds than that, and Beroviero does not seem to have suffered at all in the end. If there had been any foundation for the spiteful story some chroniclers tell,



THE HOUSE OF BEROVIERO, MURANO

a man of Beroviero's power and wealth could have had Zorzi imprisoned, tortured, and exiled without the slightest difficulty.

Venice was almost as famous for her lace as for her glass. On the admittedly doubtful authority of Daru and Laugier, Smedley gives an anecdote of the Emperor Frederick III. for what it is worth. It at least illustrates the fact that all foreigners did not esteem Venetian

glass as highly as the Venetians themselves. When Frederick visited the city on his way to Rome, he was most magnificently entertained, and amongst other presents offered to him was a very beautiful service of Murano glass. The Emperor was not pleased with the gift, which, to his barbarous ignorance, seemed of no value; he ordered his dwarf jester to seem to stumble against the table on which the matchless glass was set out, and it was all thrown to the ground and smashed to atoms. 'If these things had been of gold or silver, they could not have been broken so easily,' said the imperial boor.

In contrast with this possibly true story of the fifteenth century, I find that the lace collar worn by Louis XIV. at his coronation was made in Venice, and was valued at an enormous sum. He afterwards bribed Murano glass-blowers to settle in France.

In those times, more or less as now, women made lace at home, and brought the results of their long and patient labour to the dealers, who bought and sold it at a fabulous profit. A few specimens of the finest lace of the sixteenth century are still in existence, and are worn on great occasions by Italian ladies whose ancestresses wore them more than three hundred years ago; but the art of making such lace is extinct. Glance only, for instance, at a picture by Carpaccio, in the Museo Civico of Venice, representing two patrician ladies of the fifteenth century, one of whom wears white lace on her gown. It is of the kind known as 'point coupé' or cut point, and is the same which Francesco

Vinciolo taught the French a hundred years later when it was no longer thought fine enough, in Venice, for ornamenting anything but sheets and pillow-cases. It is inimitable now. Or look at the exquisite lace of network stitch with which Gentile Bellini loved to adorn the women he portrayed. Yet in the sixteenth century still further progress had been made, and the 'air point' was created, which surpassed in fineness anything imagined before then, and for which fabulous prices were paid. The collar of Louis XIV. was of this point, and it is said that as no thread could be spun fine enough for it, white human hair was used. There is also a story to the effect that the Emperor Joseph II., who ascended the throne in 1765, ordered a set of air point worth the improbable, though not very great price of 77,777 francs. As neither Austrians nor Venetians used the franc, the story is most likely of French origin.

Another lace greatly valued in Venice was the 'rose point,' which is probably the best known of the ancient laces. It was preferred, for collars, both by high officials and great ladies, and the Dogesses often used it for their veils. The Doge Francesco Morosini possessed some wonderful specimens of it, which I am told are still in the possession of his descendants.

One more stitch was invented in the sixteenth century, which oddly enough obtained the generic name of 'Venetian point.' There is a pretty story about it. A sailor, says the legend, came home from a long voyage and brought his sweetheart a kind of

seaweed known to botanists by the name of *Halimédia Opuntia*, of which the little branches were so fine that the people called the plant 'Siren's hair.' The man sailed again on another voyage, and the girl, full of loving and anxious thoughts for him, occupied herself by copying the dried plant with her needle, and in so doing created the Venetian point.

The minister Colbert introduced it into France a century later, under Louis XIV., and gave it his own name; and the King and the Republic quietly quarrelled about this French infringement of a Venetian monopoly. In the end, the Inquisitors of State issued a decree which was intended to recall errant and erring Venetian lace-workers and glass-blowers to the security of their homes: —

'All workmen or artisans who carry on their trade in foreign countries shall be ordered to come back; should they disobey, the members of their families shall be imprisoned, and if they then return, they shall be freely pardoned and again employed in Venice. But if any of them persist in living abroad, messengers shall be sent to kill them, and when they are dead their relations shall be let out of prison.'

The glass-blowers who were to be murdered were men, but the lace-makers were women, and the decree, which was made about 1673, is a fine instance of Venetian business principles, since the killing of men and women by assassination was a measure introduced solely for the protection of trade.

Coloured bobbin lace was also made in Venice,

with dyed silk thread and threads of gold, in the fifteenth century, and Richard III. of England desired his queen to wear it on her cloak at their coronation in 1483.

The modern Burano lace was first made after the



THE PALACES

end of the Republic, and is almost the only sort which is now manufactured in any quantity. Some of the finer points are imitated, it is true, and are vastly advertised, advertisement having taken the place of assassination in business methods as a means of creating a fictitious monopoly; but in spite of some really good pieces of needlework wrought with great care — as

advertisements — the mass of the work turned out is of a cheap and commercial character.

The policy of Venice with regard to her manufactures was one of protection, as has been seen, and the result was on the whole very satisfactory to the people as well as to the great merchants. Very heavy duties were levied on almost all imported articles, and among the very few excepted were the silk fabrics from Florence known by the name of 'ormesini.' This material was in such common use in Venice that the local silk weavers could not meet the demand for it. One of the reasons why the working people of Venice were always satisfied was that they were almost always prosperous; the price of labour was high, while that of necessities was relatively low, and the people accordingly lived in comfort without excessively hard work.

On the other hand, some of them were always extravagant, as some of the nobles were, and some were unfortunate; and though there was no pauperism, there were many families of hopelessly poor persons. In a measure the hospitals, hospices, and orphan asylums provided for those in want, but in Venice, as in modern cities, the candidates for charity were always just a little more numerous than the shares into which charity could divide herself.

There were also those who, if not exactly poor, were in difficulties, the class that for ever feeds the pawnbroker and the small money-lender. The Republic exercised the strictest supervision over these industries, and few cities in the world ever turned a harder face

against the inroads of the Hebrews. It was with the greatest unwillingness and with many precautions that Jews were ever admitted into the city at all, and a special code provided the most extraordinary and cruel penalties for the most ordinary misdemeanours when committed by them. They were forced to wear a special dress with a large patch of yellow on the chest, and they could only follow the meanest occupations. In mediæval Rome it was the business of the Jews to bury the Christian dead, but it often happened that the Pope's private physician was a Hebrew. I do not find that in Venice they were ever forced to be grave-diggers for the poor, but they were forbidden to act as physicians except for their own sick. Both Church and State rigorously forbade their intermarriage with Christians, and, so far as the happy ending of the love story is concerned, Lorenzo and Shylock's daughter could never have married. More than once, before the sixteenth century, the Jews were expelled from Venice and made to live in Mestre, which seems to have been their regular headquarters, but they were allowed to come into the city during the time of certain public fairs. If they prolonged their stay beyond the limit, however, they became liable to fine or imprisonment. Some of these measures had been partly relaxed by the middle of the sixteenth century, but the Jews never enjoyed anything like equality with the other citizens.

Oddly enough the money-lender of the lower classes in Venice was the wine-seller, whom the

people called the Bastionero. In the wine-shop it was customary to pawn objects for wine and money



THE RIALTO STEPS

simultaneously, one-third of the value being given in wine, which was generally watered. If the pledge were not redeemed within three months, the amount

to be paid for getting it back was increased, and again at the end of the next three months, and so on, until,



NOON ON THE RIALTO

at the end of the year, the original sum lent was doubled. If it was not paid, the wine-seller had a right to sell the object for what it would bring.

A modern Eastern proverb says that one Greek can cheat any ten Jews, but that one Armenian can cheat ten Greeks. Considering that Venice had a distinctly oriental character during the Middle Ages, and since we know that the small money-lending wine-sellers were not Jews, I suspect that they were principally Greeks and Armenians, the more probably so as we know that great quantities of Greek and Armenian wine were imported into Venice, and that those wines will bear a good deal of watering. The latter is an important point, for it is manifest that when the pledge was redeemed within the first three months, the lender's profit was the difference between the nominal and the real value of the wine which formed one-third of the loan.

The government which tolerated this ignoble occupation exhibited the most extraordinary prejudice against the government pawnbroking offices which were common in other Italian cities. Historians have in vain endeavoured to discover why this prejudice went so far that, in 1524, the Council of Ten published a decree threatening with death on the scaffold any one who should even propose the creation of such an establishment. Without entering into any ingenious speculation, it seems possible that the Venetians, who were wise if not virtuous, considered that while it was impossible to prevent the poor from borrowing small sums on their little possessions, to authorise such borrowing by making the government the lender would greatly increase the temptations of

that more shiftless class to whom borrowing seems to be a prime necessity of existence.



AT THE RIALTO

The centre and heart of all this activity, good and bad, was the bridge of the Rialto. We find it hard to

realise that until near the end of the sixteenth century it was still built of wood with a movable drawbridge in the middle to admit the passage of larger vessels. Carpaccio, who lived in the fifteenth century, has left us a faithful representation of it as it remained for nearly a hundred years afterwards. It would be interesting to place beside that picture Turner's lost painting of the same subject, a very beautiful canvas which I have twice had the good fortune to see in the course of its more than mysterious peregrinations. I last heard of it, though not certainly, as being in the south of France.

The present bridge was begun after infinite hesitation in 1588, and was built after the designs of Antonio da Ponte, whose name was certainly prophetic of his career. Twelve thousand elm piles had to be driven into the soil on each side of the canal to a depth of sixteen feet to make the foundations of the arch. The construction occupied three years, and is said to have cost 250,000 ducats, presumably of silver. The bridge as it stands is a remarkable piece of work, and would be beautiful if the hideous superstructure of shops could be removed. It is interesting to note that fifty years before its completion, Michelangelo offered the Doge Andrea Gritti a plan for a bridge, as is amply proved by the existence of a picture in the Casa Buonarrotti in Florence representing the subject.



EVENING OFF S. GEORGIO

V

CONCERNING SOME LADIES OF THE  
SIXTEENTH CENTURY

THE clever modern Italian playwright, Signor Martini, makes one of his witty characters say that there are 'women,' but that there is no such thing as 'woman' in the abstract. In other words, 'women' are a fact, but 'woman' is a myth. Though this may be a little paradoxical,

*Martini, 'Chi sa  
il giuoco non  
l'insegna.'*

there are certainly distinct types of women in each class of life. The smart society woman of to-day and the labourer's wife, like the Venetian patrician lady of the sixteenth century and the fisher-wives of Chioggia, have in common only their sex, their weaknesses and their sufferings; there is very little resemblance between their virtues, and none at all between their joys.

The noble ladies of Venice in the sixteenth century were as idle and frivolous as Orientals. The fact must be admitted by any one who studies the times; and if it is not of a nature to please those who idealise that period, it may be partly excused by the consideration that the Venetian nobleman treated his womankind very much as a Turk treats his harem. He was not jealous, as lovers understand jealousy; granted a certain degree of beauty and a dowry of a certain value, he cared very little whom he married. When Kugler, the famous art critic, says of Titian's picture of the Schiava, the Slave, in the Barberini Gallery in Rome, that the name is utterly meaningless, he shows that he knew nothing of Venetian life. The slave in the sixteenth century not seldom meant everything, where the wife meant nothing; and if the wives were idle and frivolous, we must remember that when they were young and good-looking, they often found themselves in competition with beautiful Georgian and Circassian women for their masters' favour. Where women are plentiful, beautiful, and not clever, the men who love them are rarely jealous. But those grave and magnificent Venetians, who had not a scruple in

politics, nor in matrimony, were excessively sensitive about anything which touched their technical honour, and it seemed to them altogether safer and wiser to teach their wives and daughters what they were pleased to call 'habits of domestic seclusion.' To be plain, they encouraged them to stay at home; and sometimes, by way of making obedience easier, they locked them up. M. Yriarte says with partial truth that their 'seclusion' was that of the harem, not that of the classic gynaeceum; he did not realise that the latter was nothing but a harem too, and that if the Greeks kept their wives at home, it was that they might sup undisturbed in the society of Phryne.

The influence of the East on everything connected with private life in Venice increased with the Renaissance, and is even more perceptible than during the nominal domination of the Byzantine Empire, when Roman traditions still had great force, and new currents of thought reached Venice from the Lombards.

Yet in one respect there was nothing oriental about the Venetian noble of the sixteenth century. When he ordered his women to appear in public at all, he sent them out adorned like those miraculous images which are covered with 'ex voto' offerings, and they mixed in the crowd that filled the Piazza of Saint Mark's, shoulder to shoulder with the shameless free.

The Venetian gentleman, so sensitive about his technical honour, was not even displeased when the chronicler, the reporter of his day, confounded ladies

and courtesans in pompous praise of their beauty and dress. One of the nobleman's principles seems to have been that a woman was never in danger in public, nor when her door was locked on the outside and the key was in her husband's pocket, but that any intermediate state of partial liberty was fraught with peril.

At home the Venetian ladies suffered the pains of boredom in common with the Georgians and Circassians, who not infrequently lived under the same roof, but who presumably saw something more of their masters. The young mother had not even a resource in her children, for it was necessary that the latter should be brought up to be precisely like their fathers and mothers, and in order to accomplish this the fathers kept the boys with themselves, and made them serve in the Senate when they were still quite small; whereas it seems that the girls were brought up largely in convents, such as that of the Vergini, lest they should learn too well from their mothers what it meant to be the wife of a member of the Great Council.

Does any one remember, in all the portraits of Venetian ladies by Carpaccio, Tintoretto, Veronese, or Titian, to have seen a mother accompanied by her little child? There is the conventional flower, there is the jewel, there is often the lap-dog; but the child is as conspicuously absent as the effigy of Brutus at Junia Tertia's funeral. Children were born and were splendidly baptized; but after that they had no part in their mothers' lives. And the ladies themselves had

no great part in Venetian social life, except on its great occasions of baptisms, marriages, and funerals, or in public ceremonies, when they appeared in a body, by order of the Ten, in their richest clothes and as a part of the decoration. It is no wonder that they had few friends and were bored to extinction.

As a specimen of what a young and noble Venetian girl could become if emancipated, one cannot do better than take Bianca Cappello. She was *Mutinelli, Annali.* born in 1548 in the magnificent palace which her father, Bartolommeo Cappello, had built for himself near the Ponte Storto. Her mother died when Bianca was a little child, a misfortune which probably had no very great influence on the girl's education or character, seeing how little the Venetian ladies occupied themselves with their children. She received the usual teaching, and learned to read and write after a fashion, and such of her letters as have been preserved show that her writing was anything but good. No doubt she had the usual number of pet birds and lap-dogs to play with, and plenty of sweetmeats, and when she was sixteen she was very like other girls of her class and age.

In Italy young girls are taught not to look out of the window in town. Bianca was terribly bored, and she looked out of the window. Opposite her father's palace was a house occupied by two Florentine burghers, uncle and nephew, Bonaventuri by name, who represented the great Tuscan banking-house of Salviati.

Bianca looked out of her window, dreaming, no

doubt, of the dancing lessons which she would be allowed to have when she should be married, and of other similar and harmless frivolities; and young Pietro Bonaventuri also looked out of the window, neglecting his ledgers.

The girl was very lonely and excessively bored. She never left the palace except to go with her father *Galliccioli,* to their villa in Murano for a few weeks *iii. 210.* in the fine season. She was not even taken to church, because, some eighty years earlier, a young girl called Giovanna di Riviera, when going to mass with her mother on the morning of the third of March 1482, had been picked up and literally carried off by a too enterprising lover. After that, young girls of good birth were not allowed to go to church, and mass was said for them in a little chapel at home.

Bianca was so terribly bored that she began to make signs to Pietro from her window. She had nothing else to do. One of her most important occupations was to sun her hair on the high 'altana.' That was a real pleasure, for the palace was gloomy, though it was new, and her room felt like a prison cell; but she could not be always sunning her hair.

The young banker's clerk responded to her signals of distress with alacrity, and a dumb love affair began, apparently highly approved by the youth's uncle, who *1564.* was a man of business. On the night between the twenty-eighth and the twenty-ninth of December the two eloped and got away from Venice without being caught.

Bartolommeo Cappello's appeal to the Council of Ten is extant. I give the most interesting part of it:—

'I shall here expose, and not without tears, the cruel and atrocious deed of which I was the victim on the night of December the twenty-ninth. The scoundrel Pietro Bonaventuri, with the consent of his uncle, Giovanni Battista, and of accomplices whom I know not . . . entered my house, which is almost opposite his, and carried off my only daughter, sixteen years old; he first took her to his house and then hid her from place to place, to my great dishonour and that of all my family.'

The document goes on in a strain of lamentation, and ends with the request that the Council of Ten should set a price on the head of the seducer, and bring the girl back to be locked up in a convent; and the unhappy father offered a prize of six thousand lire to any one who would bring him Pietro Bonaventuri, alive or dead. The letter expresses more hatred of the lover than sorrow for the lost child.

The Ten proceeded in the matter without delay; Pietro's uncle was thrown into prison, and died there soon afterwards of a putrid fever. Bianca's woman-servant and the latter's husband, who was a gondolier, and who had, of course, both been acquainted with the plan of her flight, were arrested and tortured; as for Pietro and Bianca, they had been already some time in Florence, where they learned that they had both been condemned to death by default. The Ten had

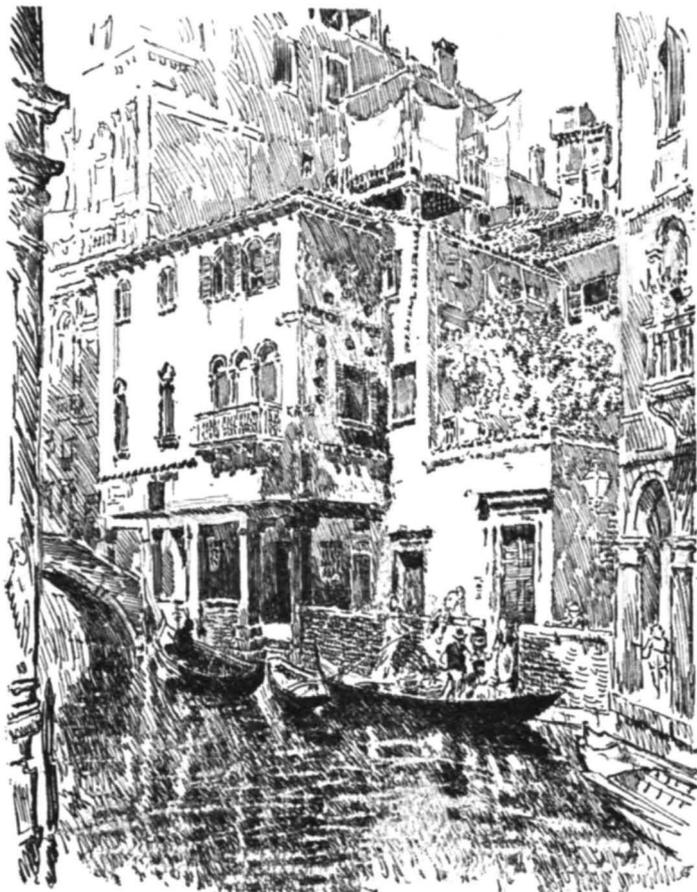
proceeded against the insignificant banker's clerk with terrible energy.

But Bianca, who had been so dreadfully bored, now had too much to do. Pietro's affairs did not prosper, and after selling the jewels she had brought with her, she was obliged to work with her hands in his house, which was not at all what she had bargained for. Chance favoured her, however, and she helped chance as well as she could, and succeeded in attracting the notice of Francesco de' Medici. He was the son of Cosmo, the Grand Duke, and the brother of Isabella, then not yet drowned in her own basin by Paolo Giordano Orsini, and of Cardinal Ferdinando, who afterwards poisoned his brother and became Grand Duke. Francesco lost his heart to the beautiful Bianca, and she had no objection to winning it; Pietro Bonaventuri, who was a man of business instincts, but not sufficiently cautious, had no objection either. But old Cosmo, the Duke, was much scandalised by his son's behaviour, though he himself had been accused of nothing less than loving his own daughter Isabella, and he remonstrated with Francesco.

'You know,' he said, 'that I do not wish to weary you with preaching, but when things go too far you must learn what I think of you.'

Francesco learned, but does not seem to have been much affected by the knowledge, for he presently installed Bianca and her complaisant husband almost under the same roof with his wife. Pietro, however, was really so superfluous that he was soon suppressed,

after which his widow occupied an official position in



CASA WEIDERMANN

the court of Tuscany as the acknowledged mistress of the heir to the throne. Francesco now attempted to

get a reversal of the sentence passed on Bianca by the Council of Ten, and employed an influential person to plead the cause; but it was thought improper that such a case should be treated in the name of old Cosmo while he insisted on ignoring Bianca's existence. Cosmo died in 1574, but still nothing was done.

It may be doubted whether any woman in Bianca's situation ever went to such extremes of treachery and effrontery. Her victim, the gentle Archduchess Giovanna of Austria, Francesco's wife, died at last in 1578, possibly without being helped out of the world, and Francesco married Bianca secretly two months later; but the marriage was not announced to the people until the year of mourning was over. Bianca was Grand Duchess of Tuscany.

The effect of the news in Venice was magical. The Senate made the following curious declaration:—

'The Grand Duke of Tuscany having deigned to choose as his consort the lady Bianca Cappello, of noble Venetian family, endowed with such great qualities that we judge her worthy of that dignity, it is but right that our Republic should exhibit its satisfaction at the honour conferred upon it by this important and prudent decision of the said Grand Duke. We therefore decree that the aforesaid illustrious and puissant lady, Bianca Cappello, Grand Duchess of Tuscany; be declared the adopted and beloved daughter of our Republic.'

Bianca's father, who, being a good Venetian, was

almost as good a man of business as Salviati's murdered clerk, and much more prudent, wrote a letter full of touchingly tender feeling to the daughter whom he had cursed so loudly and so long; he and his sons, Bianca's brothers, were made Knights of the Golden Stole, and all the records of the scandalous trial that had taken place fifteen years earlier were burnt. Bianca's public marriage and coronation took place on the twelfth of October 1579, and the Republic sent two ambassadors and the patriarch Grimani to show the Grand Duchess that all old scores were forgotten. She was thirty-one years old.

We know even more than is necessary of Bianca's life and intrigues. She survived her triumph eight years, till she and her ill-gotten husband died of poison within a few hours of each other; but whether the drug was administered by the Cardinal Ferdinando, Francesco's brother, or whether the two meant to give it to him and took it by mistake, is not clear. He himself declared that he had not poisoned anybody. It is at least certain that he would not allow Bianca to be interred in the Medici vault, but had her privately buried in the crypt of San Lorenzo.

The Venetian Republic did not go into mourning for its 'well-beloved adopted daughter,' since it was best not to quarrel with the Cardinal Grand Duke, who had probably suppressed her, though his physician made an autopsy and assured the public that she had died of frightful excesses of all sorts.

The moral of this unpleasing tale is that the

manner of bringing up Venetian girls in the sixteenth century was not of a kind to develop their better instincts, for there is nothing to show that Bianca Cappello was very different from other girls of her time, except in the great opportunities for doing harm which fell to her share.

Probably the most enjoyable weeks of a noble Venetian girl's life were those which preceded her marriage, and were chiefly spent in the preparation of her wedding outfit. The age was eccentric as to dress; it was the time of the huge Elizabethan ruffle and hoops; in Venice it was especially the time of clogs.

The latter had been introduced in the fourteenth century on account of the mud in the still unpaved streets, and they continued to be worn and grew to monstrous dimensions after their usefulness had very much decreased.

*Urbain de  
Gheltof,  
Calzature.*

It became the rule that the greater the lady was, the higher her clogs must be, till they turned into something like stilts, and she could no longer walk except leaning on the shoulders of two servants. In China, the Chinese men, as distinguished from the Tartars, encourage the barbarous breaking of girls' feet, because it makes it impossible for them to gad about the town when they are older, and still less to run away. The Venetian noblemen approved of clogs for the same reason.

M. Yriarte tells how a foreign ambassador, who was once talking with the Doge and his counsellors in 1623, observed that little shoes would be far more convenient

than the huge clogs in fashion. One of the counsellors shook his head in grave disapproval as he answered: 'Far too convenient, indeed! Far too much so.'

The civic museum in Venice contains two pairs of clogs, one of which is twenty inches in height, the other seventeen. Some were highly ornamented, and the *Provveditori alle Pompe* made sumptuary regulations against adorning them with over-rich embroidery or with fine pearls. At the same time, shoemakers were warned that they would be liable to a fine of twenty-five lire for any pair of clogs not of proper dimensions and becoming simplicity. Yet they continued to be worn of extravagant size and excessively ornamented till the end of the seventeenth century, when they suddenly sank to nothing, so that a clever woman of the time complained that the Venetian ladies were beginning to wear shoes no thicker than a footman's.

They were especially affected by the nobles, for the burgher class wore them of much more moderate size. Altogether the life of the burghers' wives was far more enjoyable; they occupied themselves with music and painting; they held gatherings at which men and women really exchanged ideas, and 'academies' at which women with a turn for poetry or science could compare themselves with the most gifted men of Venice.

The most alive of the noble women of the sixteenth century, the one of whom we have the most vivid impression, was assuredly Bianca Cappello, who was a monster of iniquity. The others, who had not her

opportunities for great crime, all seem like lay figures, or common odalisques, who lived a sensuous existence that was never disturbed by an idea. But the burgher women amused themselves, and thought, and wrote, and sometimes even allowed themselves a little sentiment.

As for the women of the people, we know nothing about them, as there are no documents regarding them, but it seems probable that they were, on the whole, both happy and honest.

There was one more category of women in Venice, as elsewhere, a class that numbered eleven thousand six hundred and fifty-four members, towards the end of the century, all young, many of them fair, all desirous of pleasing, and all, strange to say, present at every public festival — the class of those who were outside of class, the gay and shameless free. A Venetian of those days made a catalogue ‘of all the chief and most honoured courtesans of Venice . . . their names . . . the lodgings where they live . . . and also the amount of the money to be paid by noblemen and others who desire to enter into their good graces.’ This list is dedicated ‘to the most magnificent and gracious Madam Livia Azzalina, my most respected patroness and lady . . . the princess of all Venetian courtesans.’ Moreover, at the end of the pompous dedication, the writer, who signs only his initials, adds that he kisses the gay lady’s ‘honoured hands.’

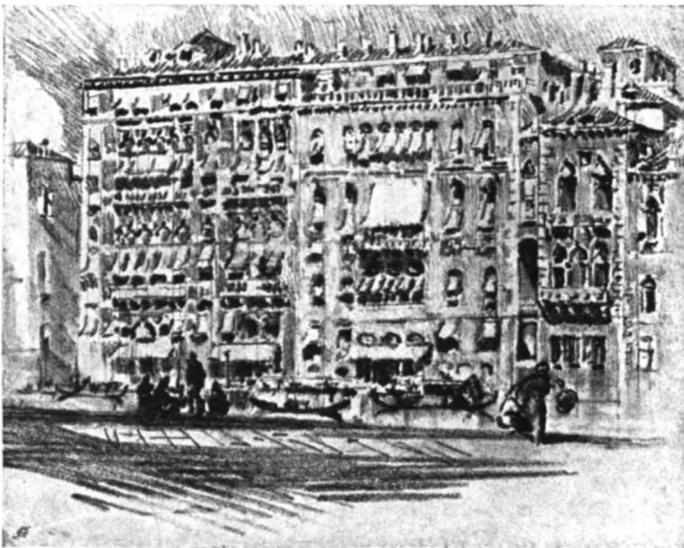
Some authors, taking this for a catalogue made out by the government, inform us that the Venetian Senate

always gave courtesans the title of 'deserving.' Lord Orford refuted this calumny in a curious pamphlet quoted by Mr. Horatio Brown in his valuable and delightful *Venetian Studies*. The catalogue contains two hundred and fifteen names; at number two hundred and four stands the name of the famous Veronica Franco — 'that skilled writer of the sonnet and curiously polished verses which say so little and say it so beautifully,' says Mr. Brown.

Tassini tells an anecdote in point. Two gentlemen were walking one day over the bridge near the Church of Saint Pantaleo, and they were confiding to each other their conjugal troubles. 'Do you know who is the only honest woman in Venice?' asked one of them. 'There she is!' He pointed to a little marble head which is still visible in the front of a house below the bridge. The story went the rounds, and the bridge itself was re-christened 'Il Ponte di Donna Onesta.'

The elegance of the gay ladies was incredible, and it was in order to be distinguished from them that respectable women little by little adopted the black silk gown and veil which they wore to the end of the Republic. The veil was black for married women and white for young girls.

I find in some statistics for the year 1581 the following statement as to the women of the better classes. There were 1659 patrician ladies, 1230 noble girls, 2508 nuns, and 1936 women of the burgher class. What could they do against 11,654? The note adds that all the others were women of the people.



THE GRAND CANAL IN SUMMER

## VI

### A FEW PAINTERS, MEN OF LETTERS, AND SCHOLARS

ACCORDING to some trustworthy authorities, Raphael, Martin Luther, and Rabelais were born in the same year. The fact that they were certainly contemporaries with each other and with many other men of genius of contradictory types is one of the principal features of that most contradictory age. Signor Molmenti compares the gifts of Carpaccio and the two

Bellini to rays that warm and gladden, those of Titian and Tintoretto to lights that dazzle but give no heat. In two centuries that immense change in art had taken place; from having spoken to the soul it had come to appeal to the eye.

The best painters of the fifteenth century touch us, and remain impersonal to us. What do we know, for instance, of Carpaccio's dreams or struggles or sufferings while he was painting his great picture of Saint Ursula and her maiden company? We gaze upon those virgin faces, those crowns of martyrdom, those tenderly smiling women's lips, those almost childlike gestures, and they touch us deeply. Perhaps we should like to ask them the secret of Carpaccio's melancholy soul. But the lips move not, nor do the eyes answer; the eleven thousand maidens seem rather to beckon us away to that place of refreshment, light and peace, where we may hope that the great painter's sadness ended at last. They tell us not of him, nor of themselves, but of heaven.

A hundred years have gone by, and still artists paint pictures; but they tell us no longer of anything but their own selves, their own lives, their own passions. It is the world that has changed; perhaps it is not faith that is gone, faith the evidence of things unseen, but most assuredly belief has taken flight and left men sceptical, the belief which is the mother of all bright dreams, and which must see in order to believe, if only in imagination, and, believing, cannot fail to see.

The time had come when the artists were interesting for their own sakes as well as for what they did, and when the reporter-chronicler thought it worth while to note every anecdote of their daily lives, to put down the names of their models, to tell us who sat to them for their Madonnas. And those names are mostly names of good and honest women, and we know to a nicety why they chose this face for one purpose and that for another. There is an end of all the legends of saintly heads begun by the artist and finished before morning by an angel's hand. There is an end, too, of dreams of refreshment, light and peace. The artists of the sixteenth century are the most human of mankind, the most subject to humanity's passions, its weaknesses and even its madness, and their works bear the stamp of the sensuous naturalism in which they lived.

The patrician Alvise Pisani possessed a beautiful house at San Cassian, standing on a tongue of land called Biri Grande. From the embrasured windows Murano could be seen, and the island of San Cristoforo, and of Pace; beyond these, in the distance, rose the tall tower of Torcello, and a dark line along the water marked the forest of the distant island called Deserto; to the left rose the Euganean Hills, to the right stretched a long beach of gleaming sand. The fishermen used to say that when the mysterious glow spread over the waters of the lagoon at night, the Fata Morgana had floated up the Adriatic and was bathing in the dark.

AFTERGLOW, THE GRAND CANAL







All those things might be seen from the windows of Alvise Pisani's house; and there dwelt Titian, no longer the thoughtless gallant of his earlier days, but grave now, stately and magnificent. Violante is forgotten, he lives honourably with his wife Cecilia, but he



EUGANEAN HILLS FROM THE LAGOON, LOW TIDE

still keeps his love of conversation, his luxurious tastes, his lordly manner; and now he feels himself the equal of the great of the earth, and it amuses him to exchange letters with princes. For secretaries he has poets, historians, and even a cardinal; he is the Titian who will allow an emperor to stoop for the brush that has fallen from his hand. But few men ever had such

grace and winning charm, and his house is ever open to his countless friends, a place of gathering, of wit and of good talk, where ladies are received, some of whom a later age will call blue-stockings, ladies who are members of learned academies, and ladies that play the lute.

Such was Titian, and such the house in which he was rarely alone. He had among many friends two at least with whom he was really intimate, the sculptor Sansovino, and Pietro Aretino the man of letters. The former was the friend of his heart and of his artistic intelligence; the latter he himself regarded as a sort of wild beast whom he had tamed and whom he kept to frighten his rivals and his enemies. He could not let a day go by without seeing both, and the three were generally together. If one of them was asked to dinner, he invariably begged his host to invite the other two.

They certainly did not resemble one another. Aretino was an adventurer who had tried most things: in his boyhood he had forged and stolen; in his young prime he had been a renegade monk, and then a courtier; in his maturity, to use one of his own expressions, he earned his living by the sweat of his ink. The Grand Duke of Tuscany had hired a house for him at the Riva del Carbon, for sixty soldi  
*Tassini, under*  
*Carbon.* yearly, on the Grand Canal, and it was there that he followed an occupation which procured him all the necessaries and some of the luxuries of life. He made it his business to address the most abjectly

flattering panegyrics to eminent persons, and even to sovereigns like Francis I. and the Emperor Charles V., and they rewarded him with presents of money or old wine. Or if some unlucky aspirant to office was in need of popularity or favour, Aretino quietly explained to him that a little article from his own pen could make or mar success; and there was nothing to be done but to pay, and to pay handsomely. Between the composition of one libel and the next, the amiable Tuscan lived riotously on his latest earnings with his two daughters Adria and Austria; in plain language he was a blackmailer, a voluptuary, a man of the highest taste, and of the lowest tastes.

No one loved him, but he was generally feared, and was therefore much sought after. His house was always full, and it was said that it was impossible to go there without meeting *Mutinelli, Annali.* a scholar, a soldier, and a monk. He himself said pleasantly that the steps of his house were as much worn by the feet of visitors as the pavement before the Capitol was by the cars of triumphing Roman generals. Nor was it only those that could pay blackmail who mounted the stairs. The man was full of contradictions; the poor crept up to his door and did not return empty-handed. Aretino was charitable.

He could not bear to see a child crying for cold or hunger, nor to see men or women sleeping shelterless in the streets, and often he took in under his roof pilgrims and poor wandering gentlemen. On Easter day he never failed to feed eighteen little beggar children

at his table. But when he was tired of his visitors, rich or poor, he took refuge with Titian at San Cassian, for Titian was the only human being whom he loved sincerely, and all the resources of his venomous wit and cruel pen were at the disposal of this one friend. As for Titian's other friends, Aretino spared them, but the artist's enemies he harassed without mercy.

He was a physical coward, of course, as all such men are. He hated Jacopo Tintoretto for two reasons, first, because his growing reputation was beginning to be a source of anxiety to Titian, and secondly, because he was too poor to be blackmailed and too proud to show himself in Titian's house with the threadbare clothes which his wife, good soul, made him wear for economy's sake. Aretino accordingly abused him, and Tintoretto heard of it and determined to put an end to it in his own way.

One day he met Aretino in the street, stopped him, and proposed to paint his portrait. The blackmailer was delighted, as the picture would cost him nothing and would certainly be valuable, and he at once made an appointment to go to Jacopo's studio. On the appointed day he appeared punctually, and seeing an empty canvas ready for the portrait, sat down in a becoming attitude. But the painter's turn had come. 'Stand up!' he said, and Aretino obeyed. Then Tintoretto pulled out a long horse-pistol. 'What is this?' asked Aretino, alarmed. 'I am going to measure you,' replied the artist, and he proceeded to

measure his adversary by the length of the pistol. 'You are two pistols and a half high,' he observed; 'now go!' and he pointed to the door. Aretino was badly frightened, and lost no time in getting out of the house; and from that day he neither wrote nor spoke any word that was not flattering to Jacopo Tintoretto.

Aretino received another lesson one day from the famous Andrea Calmo. The latter was an extremely original personage, half man of letters, half actor, whose improvised speeches in the character of Pantaloon were so remarkable as to give rise to the mistaken belief that he had invented that mask. He also wrote open letters to prominent men, as Aretino did, and published them, and as his were quite as libellous as the Tuscan's, and sometimes even more witty, they had an immense success. In fifty years they went through fifty editions, and there is positive proof that Shakespeare was acquainted with them, for he quotes a line and a half from one of Calmo's works:—

*Love's Labour's  
Lost, Act iv. Sc. 2  
(Cambridge  
edition, 1863).*

Venetia, Venetia,  
Chi non ti vede non ti pretia.

Calmo's chief virtue was neither patience nor forbearance, and it appears that Aretino irritated him exceedingly. One day his nerves could bear no longer with the Tuscan, and he gave vent to his feelings in an ironical open letter addressed to the object of his dislike. Here is a fragment of it:—

*Molmenti, Studi,  
and Nuovi  
Studi.*

‘You are not a rational, natural human being, but aërial, celestial, deified, a devout man and a calm one, esteemed by all, adorned with every treasure and with all the virtues that no one being possesses, from the East to the West. You are the temple of poetry, the theatre of invention, a very sea of comparisons — and you behave in such a manner as to scare even the dead!’

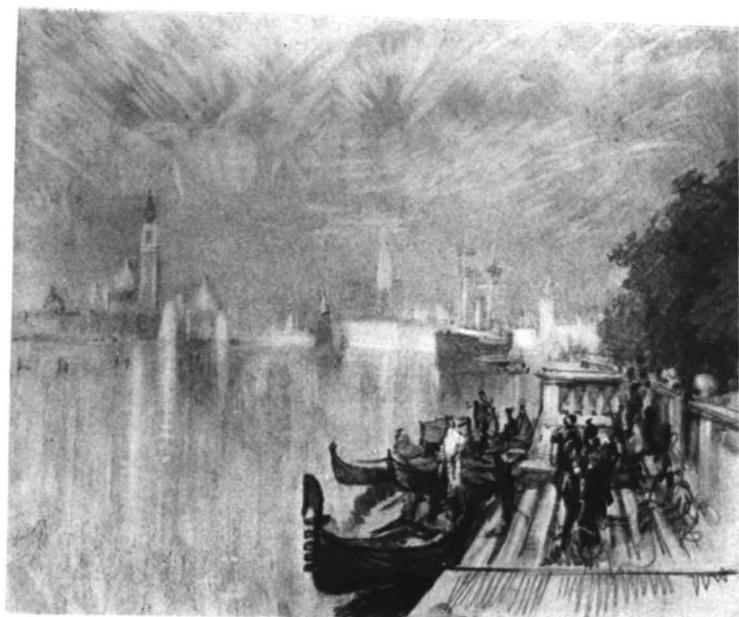
Titian’s other friend, Jacopo Sansovino, the celebrated architect, was also a Tuscan by birth, but was of quite another stamp. His youth had been wild, but he had then married a woman of great beauty and refinement whose name was Paola, and who completely dominated him. The couple were often seen at the house at San Cassian, as Titian and Cecilia his wife often visited them in their dwelling in Saint Mark’s Square close by the clock tower.

Sansovino was handsome still, and rather a fashionable person, but excitable withal and a brilliant talker; his life had been saddened for some length of time by the wild doings of his son, but to his great relief the young man at last took to literature and the art of printing. The Sansovino couple also made their house the general meeting-place of many friends, as Titian did.

Though Jacopo was a Tuscan, Venice made every effort to monopolise his time and industry after he had become famous throughout Italy, and he was appointed the official architect of Saint Mark’s. He was charged with the erection of the Mint and the Library, and of

VENICE FROM THE GARDEN







a new Loggia to replace the very simple one in which the patricians had been accustomed to gather before the meetings of the Great Council, ever since the thirteenth century. How well he succeeded in that, the beautiful construction which fell with the Campanile amply showed.

While he was at work on the Library, Titian was called to Rome to execute an important commission, and set out in the certainty that on his return he should find the building finished and his friend covered with glory. The construction grew indeed, and was soon finished, with its two stories, of Doric and Ionic architecture, and the balustrade that crowns the edifice, and the really royal staircase, and all the rest.

But unhappily, on the night of the eighteenth of December 1545, the vault of the main hall fell in, with no apparent reason. Instantly all Sansovino's rivals raised a terrific outcry, accusing him of having neglected the most elementary rules of his art, and asserting that the accident was altogether due to his negligence and incapacity. The zealous magistrate whose duty it was to oversee the construction of public buildings did not even wait for a proper warrant, but seized Sansovino instantly and sent him to prison.

Paola was in despair, and when the news was generally known, early on the following morning, the indignation of the architect's friends knew no bounds. In a few hours Aretino wrote a consoling letter to Paola, another to Titian, explaining to him what had happened, and a series of libellous

*Mutinelli,  
Annali.*

articles against every architect in Venice except Sansovino himself. No one escaped who could be supposed to have uttered a single word against the reputation of the artist in trouble. There was a certain architect called Sanmichele, a man of great piety — greater perhaps than his talent — a frequenter of Titian's house, a rich man, too, such as Aretino delighted to fleece. Possibly also the good old artist's character was irritating to the evil Tuscan, who could not see why a man should be both distinguished and virtuous, nor why Sanmichele should have a special mass said when he was about to begin an important work. One of Aretino's favourite tricks was to use the most frightful language before the mild old man, till the latter, having exhausted entreaty and finding reproach useless, was driven to buy the blasphemer's silence with a handsome present of rare old wine.

The occasion of Sansovino's imprisonment seemed to Aretino an excellent opportunity for venting his spleen against the devout artist, and at the same time for obtaining a lucrative return for his industry. He therefore accused Sanmichele of being the direct cause of his friend's arrest, and the abuse heaped upon him was so virulent and so persistent that its victim was obliged to have recourse to the usual bribe, which this time consisted of a fine basket of fish.

Sansovino's friends soon triumphed, for they were many and powerful. I do not know whether a vaulted ceiling only just constructed can suddenly collapse and fall in of itself without some fault on the part of the

architect, but Sansovino was unanimously declared to be entirely innocent, and the unlucky magistrate who, with some show of reason, had ordered his arrest was thrown into prison in his place.

His brilliantly successful career continued until he was eighty years of age, when, being too old for work, he was succeeded in the post of architect to the Republic by the celebrated Palladio. After that he lived eleven years longer in the society and friendship of Titian, who was two years older than he. On the register in the church of San Basso is to be found the following entry: 'On November the seventh 1570 died Jacopo Sansovino, architect of the Church of Saint Mark; he was ninety-one years old and he died of old age.'

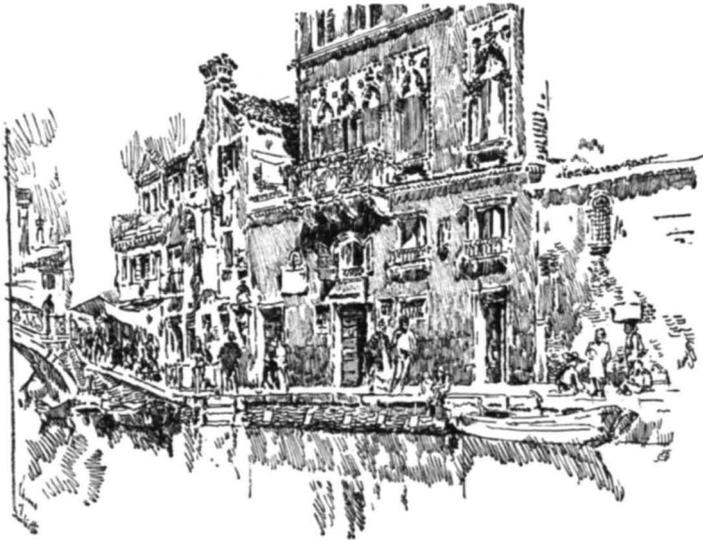
Aretino's life had come to an abrupt close fourteen years earlier. I find in Tassini under the name 'Carbon,' Aretino's place of residence, a statement of the singular fact that Aretino's death was predicted a few months before it took place, though he was at that time perfectly well. The author of the *Terremoto*, addressing the Tuscan man of letters, says: 'In this year LVI thou shalt die; for the appearance of the star to the Wise Men at the birth of Our Lord was held 1556. to be a great sign, and I now hold the comet of this year to be a little sign which comes on thy account, because thou art against Christ.' In that year Aretino actually died. It is said that his death was caused by his falling off his chair when convulsed with laughter at an abominable story, and though there may be some exaggeration about the tale, the physiognomy of the

man might justify it. No one regretted him. In the State Archives of Florence a letter from a Venetian has been found which says: 'The mortal Pietro Aretino was taken to another life on Wednesday evening at the third hour of the night by a (literally) cannonade of apoplexy, without leaving any regret or grief in any decent person. May God have pardoned him.'

Titian died six years after Sansovino, surviving to be the last of the triad of inseparable friends. He was then ninety-nine years of age, and was carried off by the plague when, judging from the picture he was painting at the time of his death, he was still in full possession of his amazing powers. Of all the victims of the terrible epidemic, amongst tens of thousands of dead, he was the only one to whom the Republic granted a public funeral.

If we ask what was the 'social standing' of Titian and of some of the most famous Venetians, we shall find that they were simple members of a Guild, and were reckoned with the working men. The Golden Book was the register of the nobles, the Silver Book was reserved for the class of the secretaries, that is, of the burghers or original citizens; but he who exercised an art such as painting, sculpture, or architecture, belonged to the people. Like the commonest house-painter, or the painter of gondolas and house furniture, Titian and Tintoretto were subject to the 'Mariegola,' or charter of their Guild, and had to pass through the degrees of apprentice and fellow-craftsman before becoming masters.

The law was that 'no painter, either Venetian or foreign, should be allowed to sell his paintings unless he was inscribed on the register of painters and had sworn to conform to the rules of that art,' in other words, to the charter of the Guild. Furthermore, if



HOUSE OF TINTORETTO

he sold his work anywhere except in his shop, he was liable to a fine of ten lire.

We know that neither Titian nor any of the great artists of his time rebelled against these regulations. They were all their lives 'brethren' of their Guild, and every one of them was obliged to obey the chief of the corporation in all matters concerning that fraternity,

though he might be a mere painter of doors and windows. It was not until the eighteenth century that the artist painters organised themselves in a separate body called the College of Painters. The examination of Paolo Veronese, which I have translated in speaking of the Holy Office, shows clearly enough what a poor opinion the authorities had of artistic inspiration.

Many writers, amongst whom Monsieur Yriarte is an exception, have told us that literature and the sciences were not cultivated with any success in Venice during the sixteenth century. It is at least true that the few who occupied themselves with those matters displayed qualities not far removed from genius.

It was very common for the great Venetian nobles to play patron to poets, painters, and architects, and almost every name that became famous in the arts and sciences recalls that of some patrician or secretary who protected the artist, the writer, or the student. The Republic was often the refuge of gifted men whom political or personal reasons had exiled from their homes. Roman, Tuscan, and Lombard celebrities spent their lives in Venice and added their glory to hers. Who remembers that Aldus Manutius was a Roman? Or that Gaspara Stampa, who is always counted as one of the best of Venetian poets, was born in Milan? The Venetians, too, showed a wonderful tact in the degree of the hospitality they accorded. One need only compare the reception Petrarch met with in the fourteenth century, which was nothing less than royal, with the good-natured toleration shown to Pietro

Aretino two hundred years later. The Republic's treatment of the two men is the measure of the distance that separates the immortal poet from the brilliant and vicious pamphleteer. If the latter spent some agreeable years in Venice, that was due much more to the protection of a few friends than to any privileges granted him by the government.



HOUSE OF ALDUS

There were certainly a great many intellectual centres in Venice at that time, and one might fill many pages with the names of the so-called academies that were founded and that flourished for a time. Almost every special tendency of human thought was represented by one of them, from the Aldine, devoted enthusiastically

to classic Greek, to those academies which adorned their emptiness with such titles as 'The Seraphic,' 'The Uranian,' and the like, and which gave themselves up to the most unbridled extravagance of taste. Of such follies I shall only quote one instance, which I find in Tassini under the name 'Bernardo.'

In the year 1538 the will of that academician was opened. He therein directed his heirs to have his body washed by three famous physicians with as much aromatic vinegar as would cost forty ducats, and each physician was to receive as his fee three golden sequins absolutely fresh from the mint. The body was then to be wrapped in linen clothes soaked in essence of aloes, before being 'comfortably' laid to rest in a lead coffin and enclosed in one of cypress wood. The coffin was then to be placed in a marble monument to cost six hundred ducats. The inscription was to enumerate the actions and virtues of the deceased in eight Latin hexameters, of which the letters were to look tall to a spectator placed at a distance of twenty-five feet. The poet who composed the verses was to receive one sequin for each. Moreover, the history of the dead man's family was to be written out in eight hundred verses, and seven psalms were to be composed after the manner of the Psalms of David, and twenty monks were to sing them before the tomb on the first Sunday of every month.

We read without surprise that this will was not executed to the letter, and the tolerably reasonable monument erected to Pietro Bernardo by his descendants,

ENTRANCE TO THE SACRISTY, FRARI







twenty years after his death, may still be seen in the church of the Frari.

There were also academies which bore names, devices, and emblems of a nature that might well shock and surprise us, were they not the natural evidences of that coming decadence, moral and artistic, whereof all Italy, and Venice in particular, already bore the germs.

Amongst the great names that belong to the end of the fifteenth century, as well as to the sixteenth, hardly any has more interesting associations for scholars than that of Aldus Manutius.

The founder of the great family of scholars and printers was born at Sermoneta in the Pontifical States in 1449, and was over forty years old when he finally established himself in Venice. *Firmin-Didot, Alde Manuce.* He had been tutor in the princely family of Pio, where he had educated the eldest son, and he himself added the name to his own, though he did not transmit it to his descendants.

One of the legends about the origin of printing tells that it was invented in the Venetian city of Feltre, by a certain Castaldi, who was robbed of his invention by Germans, presumably Faust and Guttenberg. There is probably no foundation for this tale, but it is certain that the Venetians brought the art of printing to something near perfection within a few years of its creation, and that the government protected it by laws of singular wisdom and great severity, in an age when the idea of copyright was in its infancy.

Aldus was neither a money-maker nor a man given

up to ambition; he was a true artist, and cared only for perfecting his art. When he first invented the italic type he was almost beside himself with delight, and instantly applied to the Council of Ten for letters patent to forbid any imitation of his work during ten years. The petition is curious, for Aldus went as far as to suggest to the Ten the penalties to be incurred by any one who defrauded him of his rights, and they were by no means light.

He dreamed of never allowing any work to leave his press which was less than perfect at all points. When he meditated the printing of a Greek classic, he gathered about him all the most conscientious men of letters in Venice; such men as Sabellico and Sanudo, the highly accomplished Cardinal Bembo, and Andrea Navagero all worked at comparing the best texts, in order to produce one that should be beyond criticism. In the course of such profound study, learned discussions arose and conclusions were reached which were destined to influence all scholarship down to modern times. Little by little, and without any artificial encouragement or intention, the workshop of Aldus became the gravest of classical 'academies'; a vast amount of work was done there, and a very small number of books were very wonderfully well printed.

In two years five publications appeared, among which was the first Greek edition of Aristotle's works. That Aldus might have done better is possible, and every reader of ancient Greek must deplore the selection of type he made for printing in that language. It is

ugly, unpractical, and utterly inartistic, but such was the man's influence that he imposed it upon scholars, and it is by far the most commonly used type to this day. Aldus might have done better; but, on the other hand, the unquestionable fact stands out that no one, in those days, did half so well, and that if his Greek type is displeasing, his italic is beautiful and has never been surpassed; finally, good copies of his best publications bring high prices at every modern sale.

He and his friends were busy men, and spent whole days shut up together, thereby rousing much curiosity, and attracting many unwelcome visitors. At last Aldus was wearied by their importunity, and the loss of time they caused became a serious matter. He composed the following notice and put it up outside his press:—

‘Quisquis es, rogat te Aldus etiam atque etiam: ut si quid est quod a se velis perpauca agas, deinde actutum abeas: nisi tanquam Hercules defesso Atlante, veneris suppositurus humeros. Semper enim erit quod et tu agas, et quotquot huc attulerunt pedes.’

I quote the Latin from Didot. It is hardly worthy of the editor, printer, and publisher of Aristotle, but Aldus himself printed it in the preface, addressed to Andrea Navagero, which precedes the edition of Cicero's *Rhetoric*, published in 1514. Here is a translation of it:—

‘Whoever you are, Aldus begs you again and again, if you want anything of him, to do your business with few words and then to go away quickly; unless, indeed, you come as Hercules to tired Atlas, to place your

shoulders under the burden. For there will always be something to do even for you, and for as many as bend their steps hither.'

The story even goes so far as to say that Erasmus came one day to Aldus's door with the manuscript of his *Adagia* under his arm, but that he was disconcerted by the notice and was going away, when the great printer himself caught sight of him and made him come in.

Aldus, who was not a Venetian, was not a man of business, and did not grow rich by his work. He gave his time lavishly, for no true artist, such as he was, ever said that time was money; and his expenses were very heavy, not the least being that incurred for the fine cotton paper he got from Padua. On the other hand, he hoped to encourage learning and to disseminate a general love of the classics. Some of his prices, however, were very high; for instance, a complete Aristotle sold for eleven silver ducats, which Didot considers equal to over ninety francs in modern French money. But a copy of the *Musæus*, which would perhaps sell to-day for forty pounds sterling, could be bought for a little more than one 'marcello.'

Aldus had established himself in Venice about 1490. Eight years later, a visitation of the plague decimated the population, and the great printer himself sickened of it. Believing himself all but lost, he vowed that if he recovered he would abandon his art, which would be by far the greatest thing he could give up, and would enter holy orders. He recovered, but the sacri-

fice was greater than he could make, though he was a good man, of devout mind. He at once addressed a petition to the Pope, begging to be released from his vow, and M. Didot discovered in the Archives of the Council of Ten the favourable answer returned by Alexander VI., who, it will be remembered, was the Borgia Pope, of evil fame. It was, of course, addressed to the Patriarch, and it reads as follows :—

Venerable Brother :

Our beloved son Aldus Manutius, a citizen of Rome, set forth to us some time ago that when the plague was raging he, being in danger of death, took an oath that if he escaped he would enter the holy orders of priesthood. Seeing that since he has recovered his health, he does not persist in his vow, and seeing that in his condition of poverty he cannot subsist otherwise than by the work of his hands, whereby he earned his living, now therefore he desires to remain a layman, and we have granted his petition. We commission you therefore and command your fraternity to absolve in our name the said Aldus from the vow he took, if he humbly requests you to do so, and if things stand as he says, requiring of him a return by such other acts of piety as it shall seem good to your conscience to impose, and this if there be no other obstacle.

Given in Rome, August the eleventh, 1498, in the sixth year of our Pontificate.

It is characteristic of the far-reaching power of the Council of Ten that this curious document should have been found in their Archives.

One year after having been released from his vow, Aldus married Maria, daughter of Andrea Torresano. I do not know whether an attachment which perhaps

dated from before the plague could have had anything to do with the great printer's aversion to fulfilling his vow; if so, the world is deeply indebted to his wife. There was, however, a considerable interval in his career after 1498, during which no books were issued by the Aldine press, and those belonging to the first period have a much higher value than the rest.

Possibly children were born to the couple and died between the time of their marriage and the birth of their son Paulus Manutius in 1512, three years before the death of his father Aldus. The dates show the absurdity of the story that Aldus brought up his son to be a scholar and a printer like himself. He died when that son, who was destined to be famous also, was less than four years old. He breathed his last on the sixth of January 1516, being not yet sixty-seven years old, surrounded by his faithful friends and his manuscripts. Owing to his having married so late, and to his son not having been born till thirteen years after his marriage, the lives of the father and son cover the period between 1449 and 1574, no less than one hundred and twenty-five years.

Prince Pio, his former pupil and one of the most distinguished members of the Aldine Academy, claimed the honour of burying him at Carpi, a feudal holding of the Pio family. His body was carried thither with great pomp, and he was laid in state in the church of Saint Patrinian, surrounded by books, and was finally buried in the Prince's family vault.

Another and very original type of scholar was Marin

Sanudo, whose name occurs so constantly in all writings that deal with the sixteenth century in Venice. He was of a patrician family, and was so early predisposed to observe and note everything of interest that when he was only eight years old he copied the inscriptions which Petrarch had written under the pictures in the hall of the Great Council, and it is thanks to his childish industry that we know the nature of those great works which were destroyed in the fire of 1474.

*Martin Sanudo,  
Diario; Mutinelli, Annali.*

As the child grew up he cultivated the habit of making notes of all he saw and heard; and, though he strictly adheres to the principle of relating daily events briefly and clearly, he constantly reveals himself to us as a man of broad views and keen sight, cautious, slightly sceptical, and thoroughly independent. As soon as he had attained the required age he was admitted to the Council, and he kept a journal of everything that happened there. It is surprising to find that a government which knew everything should allow any one such full liberty to make notes. Possibly the value of his work was not at first understood, but when it was, the manner in which appreciation showed itself was not flattering to the chronicler.

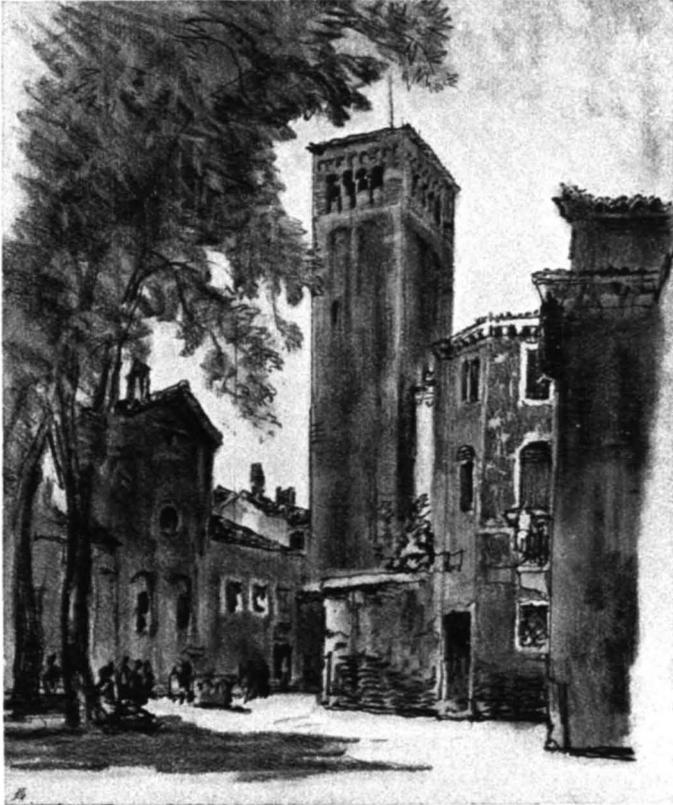
The Republic always employed a regular official historian whose business it was to narrate the deeds and misdeeds of the government in a manner uniformly pleasant to Venetian vanity. One of the most successful writers in this manner was the untrustworthy Sabellico, and when he died Marin Sanudo aspired to succeed

him, being in poor circumstances, and having on several occasions rendered services to the Republic. But to his infinite mortification Cardinal Bembo was appointed to the post, and, as if to add insult to injury, Sanudo was requested to place his valuable diaries at the disposal of the new public historian. Sanudo was deeply hurt, as may be imagined, but he was poor and in debt, and the paternal government of his business-like country easily drove him to the wall. For the use of his diary, and for his promise to bequeath it to the State at his death, he accepted a pension of one hundred and fifty ducats (£112) yearly. This small stipend was not enough to lift him out of poverty. The expense of the paper which he used for his notes was a serious item in his little budget, and the binder's bill was a constant source of anxiety. He was often obliged to borrow money, and once he was imprisoned for debt. On the latter occasion he made the following entry in his journal:—

‘December eighteenth, 1516. — On this day in the morning a dreadful thing happened to me. I was going to Saint Mark's to hear mass as usual when I was recognised by that traitor Giovanni Soranzo, to whom I have owed a hundred ducats for ten years, and forty-seven for a debt before that. Now I had solemnly promised that I would pay him the money, but in order to shame me he had me imprisoned till next day in San Cassian. I vow to be avenged upon him with my own hands.’

Having vented his wrath on paper, Sanudo promptly

forgot his sombre vows of vengeance. For many years afterwards he went backwards and forwards



S. GIACOMO IN ORIO

between the ducal palace and his own house at San Giacomo in Orio, where he had collected books and prints to a very great value. He was almost forgotten

until very recent times, when he was rediscovered in his diary, and treated with the honour he deserves by his own countrymen.

There was no university in Venice, but the government encouraged those teachers who established themselves in the city and gave instruction in their own homes. In this way they formed little schools which quarrelled with each other over definitions, syllogisms, and etymologies in the most approved fashion. There is a good instance of one of these miniature civil wars in connection with the historian Sabellico. He was *Cicogna, Iscrizioni, i. 341.* ferociously jealous of a certain learned priest called Ignatius, who taught literature, as he did, and had many more scholars. In his lectures Sabellico attacked Ignatius furiously, and did his best to destroy his reputation. The priest on his side held his tongue, and waited for a chance of giving his hot-headed adversary a lesson. At last Sabellico published a very indifferent work, of which the priest wrote such a keen criticism that the book was a dead failure. The State historian's rage broke out in the most violent invectives, and from that time Ignatius was his nightmare, and the mere mention of his name drove him into uncontrollable fury, until, dying at last, Sabellico realised that his hatred of the priest had been the mortal sin of his life, and on his deathbed he sent for him and asked for a reconciliation. Ignatius freely pardoned him, and even delivered a very flattering funeral oration over his body a few days later.

A distinguished man of this period who deserves

mention was Federigo Badoer, who may almost be said



DOORWAY OF THE SACRISTY, S. GIACOMO IN ORIO

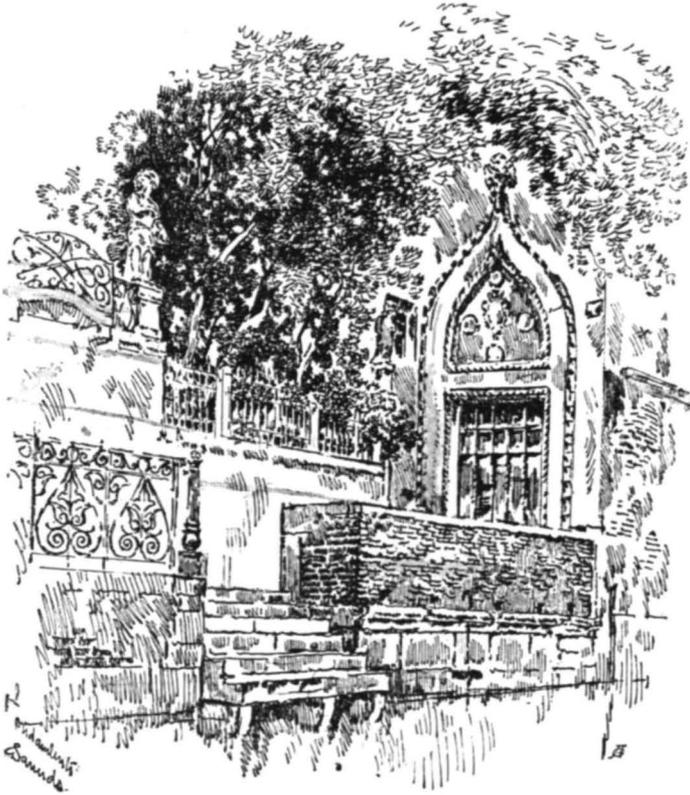
to have been educated in the printing press of Aldus,

and afterwards became the friend of Paulus Manutius. Like all Venetian nobles, he learned from his boyhood how he was to serve the State, and became acquainted with the working of its administration, and he was soon struck by the condition of the Code. The laws had multiplied too much, and were often obscure, and the whole system was in great need of revision. Badoer conceived the idea of founding an academy for the purpose of editing and printing the whole body of Venetian Law; the Council of Ten gave him their approval, and he founded the Academy of 'La Fama'—of Fame—with the singularly inappropriate motto, 'I fly to heaven and rest in God.' The printing of the new Code was entrusted to Paulus Manutius.

*Mutinelli,*  
*Annali.*

My perspicuous reader, having recovered from his astonishment at the unexpected liberality of the Council of Ten, has already divined that such a fit could not last long, and that Badoer and his noble academy were doomed to failure. Badoer was not rich enough to bear the expense of such an undertaking alone, and the Ten had no intention of helping him. Moreover, he and the scholars of his academy kept up a continual correspondence with doctors of law in other countries. It would have seemed narrow-minded, however, to suppress the academy by a decree; it was more in accordance with the methods of the Council to accuse Badoer of some imaginary misdeed for which he could be brought to trial. Accordingly, though he had sacrificed his own fortune in the attempt, he was

accused of having embezzled the academy's funds, and in three years from the time of his setting to work the



FONDAMENTA SANUDO

academy was crushed out of existence, and he was a ruined man.

Another shortlived but celebrated literary society

was that of the 'Pellegrini,' the 'Pilgrims,' whose pilgrimage led them only from their solemn palaces in Venice to the pleasant groves of Murano, and was performed by moonlight when possible. The pilgrims were Titian, Sansovino, Navagero, Gaspara Stampa, the old Trifone, Collaltino di Collalto, and some others, and it is very unlikely that their evening meetings had any object except pleasant converse and intellectual relaxation. We know something about the lovely Gaspara and Collalto, at all events, and it can be safely said that they were more pleasantly occupied than in conspiracy, and that what they said to each other concerned neither the Doge nor the Council of Ten.

Though there was no university in Venice, the Republic possessed one of the most renowned in Europe by right of having conquered and annexed Padua; and it is interesting to note that because that great institution of learning was not situated in Venice itself, it was allowed a degree of liberty altogether beyond Venetian traditions.

Padua was temporarily obliged to submit to Louis XII. of France at the beginning of the sixteenth century, but the Republic took it again in 1509, and from that date until 1797 there was never the least interruption in the academic courses. The only influence exercised upon the university by the Venetian government was intended to give it a more patriotically Venetian character. In earlier times the Bishop of Padua had been *ex officio* the Rector of the university; he was now deprived of this dignity, which was

conferred jointly on three Venetian nobles, who were elected for two years, and were required to reside in Venice and not in Padua, lest they should be exposed to influences foreign to the spirit of the Republic. Their title was 'Riformatori dell' Università,' and great care was exercised in choosing them. They were also the official inspectors of the Venetian schools and of the national libraries, and it was their business to examine candidates for the position of teachers in any authorised institution.

They were no doubt terrible pedants, inwardly much dignified by a sense of their great responsibilities, and to this day, in northern Italy, it is said of a man who wears his family and his acquaintances with perpetual 'nagging' — there is no dictionary word for it — that he is like a 'Riformatore' of the University of Padua, though the good people who use the phrase have no clear idea of what it means.

These three patricians had an official dress of their own, which was a long robe, sometimes black and sometimes of a violet colour, changing *Yriarte, Vie ; Rom. iv. 449.* according to some regulation which is not known, but always made with sleeves of the 'ducal' pattern; and they put on a black stole over it. If one of them was a Knight of the Golden Stole, as often happened, his robe was of velvet and his stole was of cloth of gold.

The Holy See was not much pleased by the way in which the Republic treated the Bishop of Padua, and constantly complained that the students of the

University were allowed too much license to express opinions that ill accorded with Catholic dogma. Like all commercial countries, Venice was Protestant in so far as any direct interference of the Vatican was concerned. Mr. Brooks Adams was, I think, the first to point out the inseparable connection between Protestantism and commercial enterprise, in his extraordinary study, *The Law of Civilization and Decay*. The peculiarity of Venice's religious position was that it combined an excessive, if not superstitious, devotion to the rites of the Church with something approaching to contempt of the Pope's power.

The University of Padua was resorted to by students of all nations, including many English gentlemen. In the Archives of the Ten a petition has been found signed by a number of foreign students in Padua to be allowed to wear arms, and we find that the necessary permission for this was granted Rom. iv. 449,  
note 5. in 1548 to Sir Thomas Wyatt, 'a Knight of the English Court,' Sir — Cotton, Sir John Arundel, Christopher Mayne, Henry Williams, and John Schyer (?).

It is amusing to find that the French students in Padua excelled in fencing, riding, dancing, and music, but apparently not in subjects more generally considered academic.

I cannot close this chapter without saying a few words about Galileo Galilei, who was for some time in the employ of the Republic. I quote from his life, written by his pupil Viviani, but not published till 1826.

After lecturing in Pisa for three years Galileo was appointed by the Venetian government to be professor of mathematics in Padua for a term of six years, during which he invented several <sup>1592.</sup> machines for the service of the Republic. Copies of his writings and lectures of this time were scattered by his pupils throughout Italy, Germany, France, and England, often without his name, for he thought them of such little importance that he did not even protest when impostors claimed to be the authors of them. During this period, says Viviani, he invented 'the thermometers (*sic*) . . . which wonderful invention was perfected in modern times by the sublime genius of our great Ferdinand II., our most serene reigning sovereign . . .,' the Cardinal Grand Duke who poisoned his brother and Bianca Cappello.

At the end of his term Galileo was re-appointed for six years more, and during this time he observed a comet in the Dragon, and made experi- <sup>1599.</sup>ments with the magnet. He was re-appointed again and again with an increase of salary.

In April or May, in 1609, when he was in Venice, it was reported that a certain Dutchman had presented Maurice of Nassau with a sort of eyeglass which made distant objects seem near. This was all that was known of the invention, but Galileo was so much interested by the story that he returned to Padua at once, and in the course of a single night succeeded in constructing his first telescope, in spite of the poor quality of the lenses he had, and on the following day he returned to Venice

and showed the instrument to his astonished friends. After perfecting it he resolved to present it to the reigning Doge, Leonardo Donà, and to the whole Venetian Senate.

I translate literally the letter he wrote to the Doge to accompany the gift.

Most Serene Prince: Galileo Galilei, your Serenity's most humble servant, labouring assiduously and with all his heart not only to do his duty as lecturer on mathematics in the University of Padua, but also to bring your Serenity some extraordinary advantage by means of some useful and signal discovery, now appears before you with a new device of eye-glass, the result of the most recondite theories of perspective; the which [invention] brings objects to be visible so near the eye and shows them so large and distinct, that what is distant, for instance, nine miles, seems as if it were only one mile away, a fact which may be of inestimable service for every business and enterprise by land and sea; for it is thus possible, at sea, to discover the enemy's vessels and sails at a far greater distance than is customary, so that we can see him two hours and more before he can see us, and by distinguishing the number and nature of his vessels, we can judge of his forces and prepare for a pursuit, or a battle, or for flight. In the same manner, on land, the quarters and the defences of the enemy within a strong place can be descried from an eminence, even if far away; and even in the open country, it is possible with great advantage to make out every movement and preparation; moreover, every judicious person will clearly perceive many uses [for the telescope]. Therefore, deeming it worthy to be received and considered very useful by your Serenity, he [Galileo] has determined to present it to you, and to leave it to your judgment to determine and provide concerning this

invention, in order that, as may seem best to your prudence, others should or should not be constructed. And this the aforesaid Galilei presents to your Serenity as one of the fruits of the science which he has now professed in the University of Padua during more than seventeen years, trusting that he is on the eve of offering you still greater things, if it please the Lord God and your Serenity that he, as he desires, may spend the rest of his life in the service of your Serenity, before whom he humbly bows, praying the Divine Majesty to grant you the fulness of all happiness.

The letter is not dated, but on the twenty-fifth of August 1609 the Signory appointed the astronomer professor for life, with 'three times the highest pay ever granted to any lecturer on mathematics.'

It was in Padua that Galileo invented the microscope, observed the moon's surface, and the spots on the sun, discovered that the milky way and the nebulae consist of many small fixed stars, discovered Jupiter's moons, Saturn's rings, and the fact that Venus revolves round the sun, 'and not below it, as Ptolemy believed.'

Much has been written of late about Galileo, but most of what has appeared seems to be founded on this life by his pupil Viviani.



A HOLIDAY ON THE RIVA

## VII

### THE TRIUMPHANT CITY

WHEN Philippe de Commines came to Venice in 1495 as ambassador of Charles VIII. he wrote: 'This is the most triumphant city that ever I saw.'

He meant what he said figuratively, no doubt, for in that day there was something overwhelming about the wealth and splendour, and the vast success of the Republic. But he meant it literally too, for no state

or city of the world celebrated its own victories with such pomp and magnificence as Venice.

The Venetians had never been altogether at peace with the Turks, in spite of the treaty which had been made soon after the fall of Constantinople; but when Venice herself was threatened

*Daru; Rom.*

by all the European powers together, it was with the highest satisfaction that she saw the Moslems attack her old enemies the Hungarians. Yet her joy was of short duration, for the Emperor soon made peace with the Sultan. It will be remembered that the Imperial throne had then already been hereditary in the Hapsburg family for many years.

The character of Turkish warfare in the Mediterranean was always piratical, of the very sort most certain to harass and injure a maritime commercial nation like Venice, and the latter began to lose ground steadily in the Greek archipelago, and now found herself obliged to defend the coasts of the Adriatic against the Turks as she had formerly defended them against the pirates of Narenta. From time to time a Turkish vessel was captured, and hundreds of Christian slaves were found chained to the oar.

There were also other robbers along the Dalmatian coast, who exercised their depredations against Turks and Christians alike, with admirable equity. These were the so-called 'Us-

*Niccolò da  
Ponte triumphs  
over the Usocchi;  
Tintoretto, Hall  
of the  
Great Council.*

cocchi,' a name derived from a Slav root meaning to 'leap out'—hence, those who had escaped and fled their country and were outlaws.

About this time the island of Cyprus had fallen in part under Turkish domination. The Turks had made a piratical descent upon Nicosia, and had carried off all the women who were still young enough for the Eastern market. But one of these, a heroine whose name is lost, fired the ship's powder-magazine and saved herself and her companions from outrage by causing the instant death of every soul on board. This was in the latter half of the sixteenth century.

Thirsting for vengeance, the Venetians now eagerly joined Philip II. of Spain in the league proposed by the Pope. The three fleets were to meet at Messina, and much precious time was lost, during which the Turks completed their conquest of Cyprus, which was heroically defended by Marcantonio Bragadin. His fate was horrible. His nose and ears were cut off, and he was obliged to witness the death of his brave companions, Tiepolo, Baglione, Martinengo, and Quirini. They were stoned, hanged, and carved to shreds before his eyes, and a vast number of Venetian soldiers and women and children were massacred before him during the following ten days. At last his turn came to die; he was hung by the hands in the public square and slowly skinned alive. It is said that he died like a hero and a saint, commending his soul to God, and forgiving his enemies.

The ferocious Mustapha, by whose orders these horrors were perpetrated, ordered his skin to be stuffed

*Cicogna, Iscr.  
Ven. iii. 134.*

*Death of M.  
Bragadin, un-  
known; Church  
of SS. Giovanni  
e Paolo.*

and had it carried about the streets, under a red umbrella, in allusion to the arms of the Bragadin family. The hideous human doll was then hoisted to the masthead of Mustapha's ship as a trophy and taken in that way to Constantinople.

But in his lifetime Bragadin had ransomed a certain man of Verona from the Turks, and had earned his undying gratitude. This Veronese, hearing of his benefactor's awful end, swore to bring home his skin, since nothing else remained, and with incredible skill and courage actually entered the Turkish arsenal at Constantinople, where the trophy was kept, stole it and brought it home. It is related that the skin was found as soft as silk and was easily folded into a small space; it is preserved in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo.

The vengeance of the league was slow, but it was memorably terrible; in 1571 Don John of Austria, a stripling of genius, scarcely six and twenty years of age, commanded the three fleets and led Christianity to victory at Lepanto.

One of the decisive battles of the world checked the Mohammedan power for ever in the Gulf of Corinth, and the blood of eighty thousand Turks avenged the inhuman murder of Bragadin and the self-destruction of the captive Venetian women.

Not many days later, on the eighteenth of October 1571, the great 'Angel Gabriel,' a galley of war, came sailing into the harbour of Venice, full dressed with flags, and trailing in her wake a long line of Turkish standards, and turbans and coats.

*Molmenti,  
Seb. Venier.*

*Lepanto,  
A. Vicentini;  
ducal palace.*

*Molmenti,  
Seb. Venier.*

Then the cannon thundered, and the crew cried 'Victory! Victory!' and the triumphant note went rolling over Venice, while Onofrio Giustiniani, the commander of the man-of-war, went up to the ducal palace. Then the people went mad with joy, and demanded that all prisoners should be set free in honour of the day; and the Council allowed at least all those to be liberated who were in prison for debt. Then, too, the people cried 'Death to the Turks!' and would have massacred every Mussulman in the Turks' quarter; but to the honour of Venice it is recorded that the government was strong enough to hinder that.

And then the Doge, Aloise Mocenigo, found his way through the closely packed crowd to the Basilica, *Aloise Mocenigo, praying, Tintoretto; Sala del Collegio.* and fifty thousand voices sang 'Te Deum laudamus Domine,' till the triumphant strain must have been heard far out on the lagoon. During four days processions marched through the streets and hymns of victory and thanksgiving were sung; the greatest battle of the age had been fought and won on the feast of Saint Justina, who was one of the patrons of Venice. In return for her military assistance an enthusiastic and devout people resolved to set up a statue of her in the Arsenal and to build her a church in Padua, as she already had one in Venice.

Religious obligations being thus cancelled, the universal rejoicing manifested itself in civic pageantry, and, to use a modern expression, the Venetians held a general exhibition of their treasures. *Rom. vi. 317.* The square of the Rialto was draped with

scarlet cloth, on which were hung the pictures of the most famous masters, at a time when some of the greatest that ever lived were alive in Venice and at the height of their glory. In the midst of the square a trophy was raised, composed of Turkish arms and banners, turbans, slippers, jewels, and all sorts of ornaments taken from the slain. From the jewellers' lane to the bridge a canopy of blue cloth covered with golden stars was spread high across the way, the most precious tapestries were hung on the walls of the houses, the shops showed all their most artistic wares in their windows. The German quarter was so crammed with beautiful objects that it seemed one great enchanted palace. To increase the general gaiety, the government made a special exception and allowed masks in the streets.

When it is remembered that Venice really obtained little or no immediate advantage from the battle of Lepanto, her frenzy of triumph may seem exaggerated; yet it was moderate compared with the reception Rome gave to the commander of the Papal fleet, Marcantonio Colonna. The Venetian captain, Sebastian Venier, was not present, and there was not the least personal note in the rejoicings; that, indeed, would have been very contrary to the usual behaviour of the Republic towards her own sons, for if they failed she disowned them or put them to death, and if they succeeded it was her motherly practice to disgrace them as soon as possible, and generally to find an excuse for imprisoning them, lest they should grow dangerous to herself.

We cannot help reproaching her for that; yet out

of her magnificent past comes back ever that same answer: she succeeded, where others failed. She bred



DOOR OF THE CARMINE

such men as Enrico Dandolo, Vittor Pisani, Carlo Zeno, and Sebastian Venier, yet she was never enslaved by one of her own children. Rome served her Cæsar,

and her many Cæsars; France, her Bonaparte; Russia, her Ivan Strashny, the Terrible; Spain, her Philip II.; England, her Richard III. — and her Cromwell, Protector and Tyrant. But Venice was never subject to any one Venetian man beyond the time needed to compass his destruction and death, which was never long, and sometimes was awfully brief.

Venier did not return to Venice till long after the battle of Lepanto, and his presence was necessary in the Archipelago in order to protect such colonies as were left to the Republic. *Venier returns in triumph, Palma Giovane; Sala dei Pregadi.* For though the Turks had suffered a disastrous defeat, final in the sense that their advance westwards was checked as effectually as the spreading of the Moorish conquest had been by Charles Martel at Poitiers, yet they were still at the height of their power in Constantinople, and were strong on the eastern side of the dividing line which was now drawn across the Mediterranean, and which marked the eastern limit of Christian domination. When Venier returned, the Turks were absolute masters of the island of Cyprus, and Venice was already beginning to pay what was really a war indemnity, destined to reach the formidable sum of three hundred thousand ducats. As Montesquieu truly says, it looked as if the Turks had been the victors at Lepanto.

Three years after that battle Venice was again adorned in her best to greet Henry III. of France, who visited the city in July 1574, *Rom. vi. 34r.* the year of his accession. The King was to make his

entry on the eighteenth, and he was requested to stop at Murano on the previous evening, in the Palazzo Cappello, which was all hung with silk and cloth of gold in his honour. Forty young nobles were attached to his person and sixty halberdiers mounted guard, dressed in yellow and blue, which were regarded by the Venetians as his colours, and wearing a cap with a white tuft for a cockade. Their weapons were taken from the armoury of the Council of Ten. There were also eighteen trumpeters and twelve drummers dressed in the King's colours.

*Henry III.  
visits Venice,  
A. Vicentino;  
Sala delle  
Quattro Porte.*

Henry III. was still in mourning for his brother Charles IX., and appeared very plainly clad in the midst of all this display. The chronicles have preserved the details of his costume; he wore a brown mantle that fell from his neck to his feet, and beneath it a violet tunic of Flemish cloth with a white lace collar. He also wore long leathern boots, perfumed gloves, and an Italian hat.

The night was passed in feasting, during which the French and the Venetians fraternised most closely, and on the following morning a huge galley was ready to take the King to Venice by way of the Lido.

On the high poop-deck a seat was placed for the King, covered with cloth of gold; on his right sat the Papal Nuncio, who was the Cardinal San Sisto, then came the Dukes of Nevers and Mantua; on his left the Doge and the Ambassadors. Four hundred rowers pulled the big vessel over, and fourteen galleys followed

bringing the Senators and many others. To amuse the King during the short passage, the glass-blowers of



INTERIOR OF THE CARMINE

Murano had constructed on rafts a furnace in the shape of a marine monster that belched flames from its jaws and nostrils, while the most famous workmen blew

beakers and other vessels in the beast's body, of the finest crystal glass, for the King and his suite.

Just when he might be thought to be weary of this spectacle a long array of decorated boats began to manœuvre before his eyes, with sails set and banners flying. These belonged to the various guilds and were wonderfully adorned. One represented a huge dolphin; on its back stood Neptune driving two winged steeds, while four aged boatmen in costume stood for the four rivers of the Republic, Brenta, Adige, Po, and Piave. Some of the boats had arrangements for sending up fireworks, others were floating exhibitions of the richest and most marvellous tapestries and stuffs.

The royal vessel, instead of proceeding straight to Venice, went round by the Lido to the landing of Saint Nicholas, where the State architect Palladio had erected a triumphal arch which Tintoretto and Paolo Veronese had covered with ten beautiful paintings. Here the King was invited to leave his galley in order to go on board the Bucentaur. Tintoretto was in the crowd, looking out for a chance of sketching the King, precisely as a modern reporter hangs about the docks and railway stations to get a snapshot at royalty. Tintoretto did not disdain the methods of a later time either; he succeeded in exchanging his threadbare cloak for the livery of one of the Doge's squires or footmen, by which trick he managed to get on board the Bucentaur. Once there he made a sketch in pastels of the King which pleased the royal treasurer, De Bellegarde, and the latter persuaded his master to sit to

the artist for a full-length portrait, which was presented to the Doge on the King's departure, in recollection of the visit.

During the following days nothing was omitted which might amuse the Sovereign or tend to strengthen the pleasant impression he had already received. Every sort of Venetian game was played, and all the traditional contests of strength and skill between Niccolotti and Castellani were revived, and with such earnestness on both sides as to lead to a fresh outbreak of their hereditary hate. Two hundred men fought with sticks at the Ponte del Carmine, as savagely as if the safety and honour of their wives and children depended on the result. At the most critical moment the fisherman Luca, the famous chief of the Niccolotti, fell into the canal, his followers were momentarily thrown into disorder by the accident, and the Castellani won the day.

Afterwards a banquet was given to the King, of which the remembrance remains alive amongst the people to our own time. The gondoliers and fishermen of to-day describe the feast, its magnificence, the beauty of the patrician ladies, the splendour of the service, as if they were speaking of something that happened yesterday instead of more than ten generations ago.

The tables were set in the hall of the Great Council for three thousand persons. The King sat in the middle of the hall under a golden canopy. We are told that the bill of fare set forth twelve hundred different dishes, and that all the company ate off solid silver plates, of which there were enough for all without

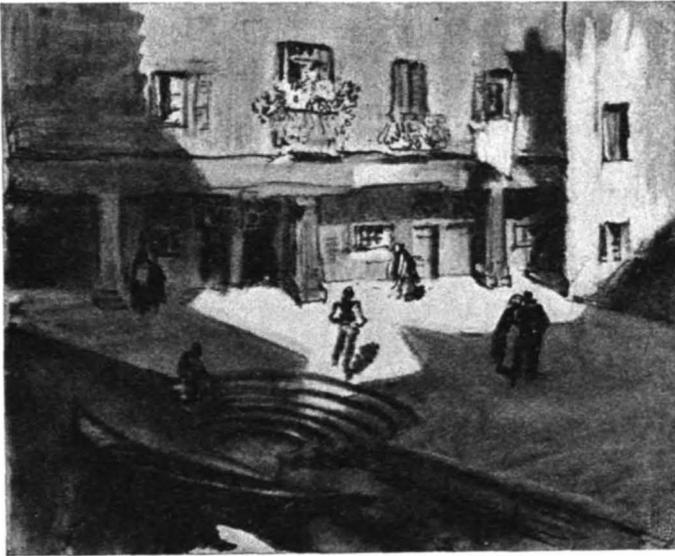
having recourse to the reserve which had been set up for show on a huge sideboard at the end of the hall. After the feast, the King assisted at the performance of the first opera ever given in Italy, composed by the once famous master Zarlino da Chioggia.

The banquet and the music must have occupied several hours; yet we are amazed to learn that so short a time sufficed for putting together a whole galley, of which Henry had seen the pieces, all taken apart, just before sitting down to table. When he left the ducal palace, he saw to his stupefaction the vessel launched into the canal on rollers, and towed away towards the Lido.

Not surfeited by the official amusements offered him by the Republic, the King diverted himself on his own account and went about the city in disguise, like Otho of old. The government had directed the jewellers and merchants to have in readiness their finest wares in order that when the King sent for them, he might buy objects worthy of the reputation of the Venetian shops; and the shopkeepers inquired with feverish anxiety when they were to go to the *Palazzo Foscari*.

But Henry preferred to go out shopping himself. One morning the jeweller at the Sign of the Old Woman on the Rialto Bridge was visited by a noble stranger, who inquired the price of a marvellously chiselled golden sceptre: apparently the Venetian jewellers kept sceptres in stock in case a king should look in. The price of this one was twenty-six thousand

ducats, or between eighteen and nineteen thousand pounds, which seems dear, even for a sceptre. But the noble stranger was not at all surprised, thought the matter over for a few seconds, nodded quietly, and ordered the thing to be sent to the Foscari palace, to



CAMPO BEHIND S. GIACOMO IN ORIO

the inexpressible joy of the jeweller, who knew the address well enough.

At that time there dwelt in Venice a branch of the famous Fugger family of Augsburg, the richest bankers of the sixteenth century. They owned all the district of the city round the church of San Giacomo, and had even protected themselves by

*Mutinelli,  
Annali.*

a sort of wall. There they had built a bank, a hospital, and houses for their numberless retainers, and they lived in a kind of unacknowledged principality of their own which was respected both by the State and the people.

The family had the most magnificent traditions of hospitality. When the Emperor Charles V. passed through Augsburg in the earlier part of the same century, he lodged in the Fuggers' house, and as it was winter, his hosts caused his fires to be made only of aromatic wood imported as a perfume from Ceylon. Henry III. visited the Fuggers in Venice, and they were neither surprised by his unannounced visit nor unprepared to receive a royal guest.

While in Venice the King spent much of his time with Veronica Franco, the celebrated poetess and courtesan. She, on her side, fell deeply in  
*Tassini.* love with the man who was to be the worst of all the French kings. But he was only twenty-three years old then, he was half a Medici by blood, and all of one by his passionate nature. Veronica loved him with all her heart, and amidst all the evil he did there was at least one good result, for when he was gone she would not be consoled, nor would she ever look on another man, but mended her life and lived in a retirement to which she sought to attract other penitent women.

She had a picture of the King painted, and no doubt he was vividly present in her thoughts when she wrote the following sonnet, which is attributed to her, and which I do into prose for greater accuracy:—

Begone, deceiving thoughts and empty hope,  
Greedy and blind desires, and bitter cravings,  
Begone, ye burning sighs and bitter woes,  
Companions ever of my unending pain.

Go memories sweet, go galling chains,  
Of a heart that is loosed from you at last,  
That gathers up again the rein of reason,  
Dropped for a while, and now goes forth in freedom.

And thou, my soul, entangled in so many sorrows,  
Unbind thyself and to thy divine Lord  
Rejoicing turn thy thoughts ;

Now bravely force thy fate,  
Break through thy bonds ; then, glad and free,  
Direct thy steps in the securer way !

In order to give my readers some idea of what was done to furnish the Palazzo Foscari for Henry's visit, I quote some items of the expenditure from the *Souvenirs* of Armand Baschet : —

'Crimson silk and gold hangings, fifty-eight pieces making three hundred and seven braccia and a half at a ducat for each braccio and twelve inches. White silk and silver stuff; shot-silk and silver stuff; white satin with gold lines, etc. Cushions of brocade embroidered with gold and of blue velvet with gold and fringes etc. at forty ducats each. A bed quilt with gold lines and scarlet checks, twenty ducats. Yellow damask with little checks at one ducat the braccio. A rep rug of gold edged with blue velvet and lined with red silk, sixty ducats. A tablecloth of silver and gold brocade with white and gold fringe, thirty-four ducats. Green

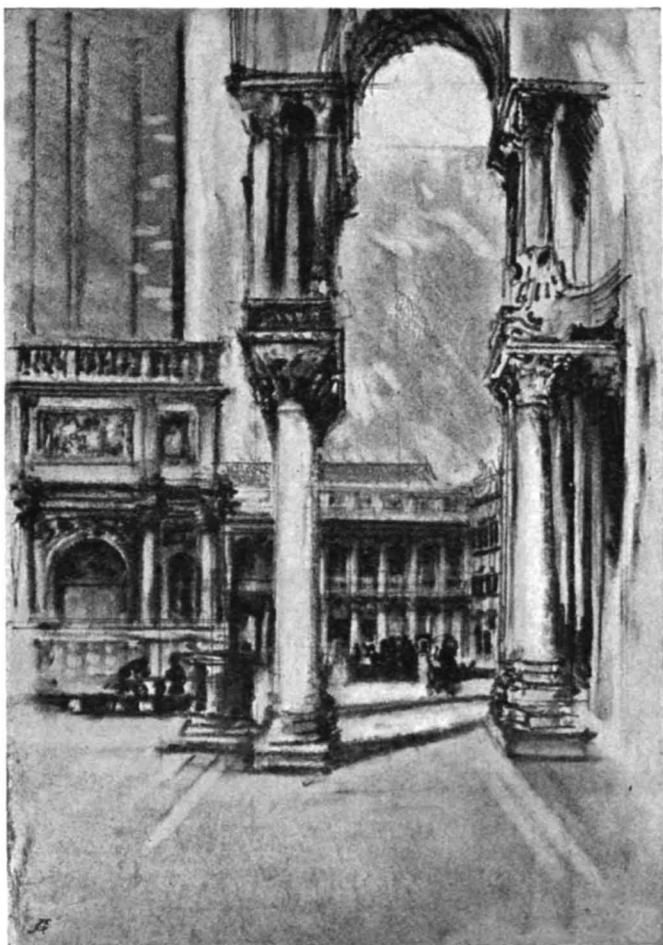
and blue velvet for the floor, at one ducat the braccio. Complete hangings for a room of yellow satin with gold and silver fringe and gold lace, over seven hundred and thirty ducats.'

Further, we find for the royal gondolas the following items:—

'Felse of scarlet satin, one hundred and fifty-six ducats. A boat's carpet of violet Alexandria velvet; a felse of the same velvet lined with silk, fifty-five ducats. Another velvet carpet of the same colour, two canopies, one of violet satin fringed and embroidered with gold, the other of white satin, and two cushions of scarlet satin and gold.'

These things were put away in boxes, an inventory was taken, and they were valued at four thousand two hundred sequins, or more than three thousand pounds. The King on his side was generous. When he went away he presented each of the young noblemen who had attended him with a chain worth a hundred ducats, and gave a collar worth three hundred to his host, Foscarei. The captain of his guard received a silver basin and ewer worth a hundred crowns. For the halberdiers of the guard there were three hundred crowns, eighty for the trumpeters and sixty for the drummers. His Majesty left a thousand crowns for the workmen of the Arsenal, two hundred for the rowers of the Bucentaur, one hundred for the major-domo, and fifty to the chief steward of the house.

The Duke of Savoy, who accompanied the King of France, also left some splendid presents. To the wife



THE PIAZZA

of Luigi Mocenigo, in whose house he had been staying, he gave a belt composed of thirty gold rosettes, ornamented with fine pearls and valuable precious stones. The Duke was doubtless unaware that as soon as he was gone the handsome ornament would have to be handed over to the *Provveditori delle Pompe*, not to be worn again unless a special and elaborate decree could be obtained for the purpose.

In the first year of the reign of Sixtus V. Japan sent ambassadors to the Pope 'to recognise him officially as Christ's vicar on earth.' These  
*1585.*  
*Rom. vi. 387.* personages, who were converts to Christianity, were received with demonstrations of the greatest joy and esteem when they visited Venice, and were regaled with spectacles which were partly religious in character and partly secular. A procession was organised against which the Pope himself protested in the most formal manner; but the Republic paid no more attention than usual to this expression of papal displeasure. It was always the dream of Venice to be Roman Catholic without Rome.

The Japanese envoys looked on while all the clergy of the city passed in review before them, as well as all the guilds bearing the images of their patron saints and their standards; these  
*Giustina Renier*  
*Michiel,*  
*Origini.* were followed by cars carrying enormous erections of gold and silver vessels, built up in the form of pyramids, and of columns, stars, eagles, lions, and symbolic beasts. Other cars came after these with

platforms, on which actors represented scenes from the lives of saints, even including martyrdom. The



PIGEONS IN THE PIAZZA

Japanese may have been more amazed than edified by these performances.

The Venetians always loved processions, and it is to

one of these pageants that the pigeons of Saint Mark's owe their immunity. As early as the end of the fourteenth century it was the custom to make a great procession on Palm Sunday, in the neighbourhood of Saint Mark's. A canon of the Cathedral deposited great baskets on the high altar, containing the artificial palms prepared for the Doge, the chief magistrates, and the most important members of the clergy. The Doge's palm was prepared by the nuns of Sant' Andrea, and was a monument of patience. The leaves were plaited with threads of palm, of gold, of silver, and of silk; and on the gilded handle were painted the arms of the Doge. According to the appointed service the procession began immediately after the distribution of the palms; and while the choir chanted the words 'Gloria, laus et honor' of the sacred hymn, a great number of pigeons were sent flying from different parts of the façade down into the square, having little screws of paper fastened to their claws to prevent them from flying too high. The people instantly began to catch the birds, and a great many were actually taken; but now and then, one stronger than the rest succeeded in gaining the higher parts of the surrounding buildings, enthusiastically cheered by the crowd. Those who had once succeeded in making their escape were regarded as sacred for ever with all their descendants. The State provided them with food from its granaries, and before long, lest by some mistake any free pigeons should be caught on the next Palm Sunday, the Signory decreed that other birds than pigeons must be used on the occasion.



SOTTO PORTICO DELLA GUERRA

## VIII

### THE HOSE CLUB — VENETIAN LEGENDS

IN the fourteenth century, life in Venice was simple and vigorous, and found its civic expression in the formation of the Guilds which united in close and brotherly bonds men of grave and energetic character, devoted to their country and to its advantage. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the tendencies of the later Venetians took visible shape in brotherhoods of joyous and not harmless amusement, and chiefly in that

*Molmenti,  
Vita Privata.  
Sansovino.  
Galliccioli,  
ii. 267, 269.  
Mutinelli,  
Lessico.*

known as the 'Compagnia della Calza,' in plain English the 'Hose Club.'

The learned Professor Tomassetti of the University of Rome, whose authority in all that concerns the Middle Ages in Italy is indisputable, informs me that he believes the right of wearing hose of two or more colours, as one leg white and one leg red, or quartered above and below the knee, belonged exclusively to free men, and that the fashion was adopted by them in order that they might be readily distinguished from the serf-born, in crowds and in public places. This is, indeed, the only reasonable explanation of the practice which has ever been offered, and is borne out by a careful examination of the pictures of the time. The 'Hose Club' distinguished themselves and recognised one another by their hose, which were of two colours, one leg having at first a peacock embroidered on it, whence the whole company was sometimes nicknamed 'The Peacocks.'

The Doge Michel Steno, who painted his four hundred horses yellow, and had been concerned in the  
*1400.* libel against the nephew of Marin Faliero, had been counted among the gayest youths of his day; and when he was elected the rich young men of Venice, knowing by hearsay from their fathers that he had been wild in his youth, determined to celebrate the accession of a former dandy in a manner suited to their own tastes. They agreed upon the dress which afterwards became famous, and each paid a sum of two thousand ducats into a general fund

which was entirely spent in pageantry, banqueting, and masquerades.

They had not at first intended the Club to be permanent, but when the anniversary of the Doge's coronation came round in the following year, they met again to consider the advisability of prolonging an institution which made such an agreeable contrast to the general gravity of Venetian life.

They now composed a sort of charter or constitution, which would have made the heads of the artisan Guilds tremble with indignation, and might well have caused the fathers of Venetian 1401. families to look even more grave than usual.

The Club was to be always a Company of twenty members, chosen for four years only; for as soon as a young Venetian married, or took his seat in the Great Council, he put on the long gown of older years and more dignified habits, which effectively eclipsed his brilliant legs from the public gaze. Each Company was to choose its name, an emblem, and a motto. There were to be officers, a president, a secretary, and a treasurer; and as the Venetians had a mania for sanctioning even the most frivolous doings by means of some religious exercise, each Company was to have a chaplain to celebrate a solemn mass at the admission of each young scapegrace who joined. The chaplain also administered the oath which every Companion was bound to take on admission.

The smallest infraction of the rules entailed a heavy fine, and the fines were, of course, periodically spent

in riotous amusements. As for the dress, the hose always remained a part of it, but the greatest latitude was allowed in the matter of colour and embroidery, or other ornamentation.

The formation of the joyous Companies was a natural reaction after the huge efforts, the strenuous labours, the awful dangers that had filled the fourteenth century, and had placed Venice high among the European powers. From the foundation of the first of the Company, that of the 'Peacocks,' to the dispersion of the 'Accesi,' the 'Ardent,' which was the last, a hundred and eighty-six years went by, which may be called six generations, during which forty-three Companies succeeded each other, and the 'Hose Club' became famous throughout Europe for its extravagance, and for the fertility of its festive inventions.

It made it its especial business to adorn with its presence in a body the public baptisms of noble children, and important weddings, the visits of illustrious personages, and even elections where there was much at stake. When a foreign sovereign stopped in Venice, he asked to be made an honorary member of the Company, he sometimes adopted its dress, and he took home with him its emblem and its motto.

The most famous of all the Companies was that of the 'Reali,' the 'Royals,' which was in existence about the year 1530. The members wore a red stocking on the right leg, and a blue one on the left, which was embroidered on one side with large flowers of violet colour, and on the other the

*Cicogna,  
Iscr. iii. 366.*

emblem of the Company, which was a cypress, over which ran the motto, 'May our glorious name go up



FONTE S. ANTONIO

to heaven.' The members wore a vest of velvet embroidered with gold and fine pearls, and the sleeves were fastened on by knots of ribband of different colours,

a fashion permitting the wearer to display his shirt of gossamer linen, exquisitely embroidered.

A leathern or a gilded girdle was worn too, ornamented with precious stones, and over the shoulder was carelessly thrown a short mantle of cloth of gold, or damask, or brocade, with a hood thrown back, in the lining of which was seen again the emblematic cypress.

Last of all the 'toga,' the great cloak, was red, and was fastened at the neck by a small golden chain, from the end of which a handsome jewel hung down below the ear, over one shoulder. The boots were of embroidered or cut leather, and were made with very thin soles.

Venice had to thank the Companions of the Hose Club for some of the first real theatrical performances ever given, which gradually led to the creation of the 'ridotti,' and were more or less aristocratic gambling clubs in connection with the theatres. We read that in 1529 the Companions played a comedy with immense success in the house of one of the Loredan family. In the following year the Duke of Milan visited the city, and the Club determined to out-do all its previous festivities. A Giustiniani was then the president of the 'Royals,' and he appeared with a deputation before the Doge and the Signory. After announcing that the Club had determined to produce the spectacle of a naval combat, he requested the government to lend for the purpose forty of the light war-pinnaces from the Arsenal. As if this were nothing

unusual, he went on to ask for the use of the hall of the Great Council for a dance, of the Library for a supper, and of the Square of Saint Mark's for a stag-hunt.

The Hose Club evidently had large ideas. The Doge, however, granted all that was necessary for the naval show, but said that he should have to think over the other requests!

It is needless to say that the ladies of Venice had their share in the gay doings of the Club, first as invited guests only, but later as honorary Companions, wearing the emblem embroidered on their sleeves and on the scarlet 'felse' of their gondolas, until the sumptuary laws interfered.

There were times when the Signors of the Night and the Council of Ten thought fit to limit the Club's excessive gaiety, and it was found necessary to issue a decree which strictly prohibited any of the eleven thousand light ladies of the city from being received as Companions, or asked to its entertainments; for, oddly enough, the reputables do not seem to have resented the presence of the disreputables in the sixteenth century.

Now and then the Companions fell out among themselves. Marin Sanudo, in his diary, mentions that in February 1500 the Companions *Marin Sanudo,* dined in the house of Luca Gritti, son of *iii. 1, 39.* the late Omobono; and after dinner Zuan Moro, the treasurer of the Club, went out with Angelo Morosini, Andrea Vendramin, and Zacaria Priuli; and they

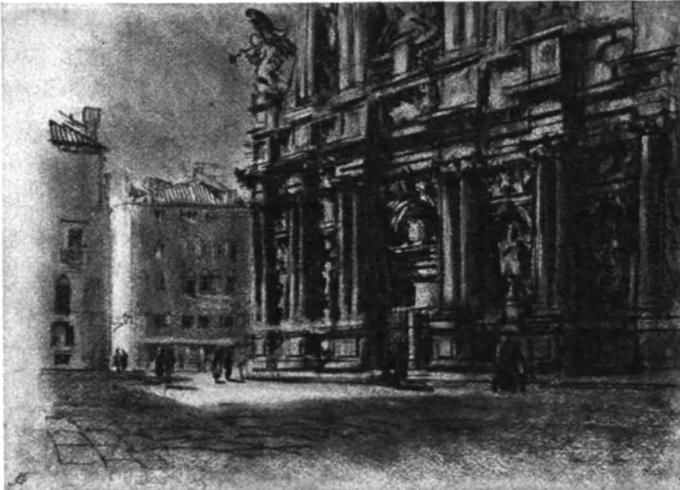
quarrelled about a matter concerning which I refer my scholarly reader to his Muratori, and Zuan Moro was wounded in the face, and turned and gave his assailants as good as he had got, to the infinite scandal of the whole city, for these Companions were all the young husbands of beautiful women, and they disfigured each other!

We learn also from Sanudo that the Companions frequented the parlours of nunneries as well as the palaces of their noble relations and friends, and that in 1514, for instance, they played a comedy by Plautus in the convent of Santo Stefano. The Company of the 'Sempiterni,' the 'Eternals,' wished to give a performance of Pietro Aretino's 'Talanta' in one of the monasteries, but this was more than the monks could endure, which will not surprise any one who has read Aretino's works; they might as well have proposed to give one of Giordano Bruno's obscene comedies; and perhaps they would, if he had then already lived and written. Refused by the monks, the Companions hired a part of an unfinished palace on the Canarregio for their performance.

At first sight, what surprises us is the impunity enjoyed by these young gentlemen of pleasure, and we ask what the three 'Wise Men on Blasphemy' were doing. They were the Censors of the Republic, and it is amusing to note that they acted in regard to licensing plays precisely as the modern English government censorship does, for whereas they allowed a scandalous piece by Aretino to be performed un-

challenged, they most strictly forbade the presentation of any biblical personage or subject on the stage. The stories of Judith, of Jephthah's daughter, and of Samson were those of which the wise magistrates most particularly disapproved, I know not why.

The first theatre Venice had was built by the Com-



S. ZOBENIGO

panions in 1560 after the designs of Palladio, of wood, in the court of the monastery of the Carità, but after a few years it took fire, and the monastery itself was destroyed with it.

I find that the Companions were great 'racket' players; but I apprehend that by 'rackets' the chroniclers intended to describe court tennis, which

was played in Venice, whereas in most other Italian cities the game of 'Pallone' was the favourite, and has survived to our own time. It is played with a heavy ball which the player strikes with a sort of wooden glove, studded with blunt wooden pins and covering most of the forearm.

To return to the question of the large freedom and impunity granted to the Club by the government, the reason of such license is not far to seek. Young men who spend their time in a ceaseless round of amusement do not plot to overthrow the government that tolerates them. The Signory, on the whole, protected the Companions even in their wildest excesses, and no doubt believed them to be much more useful members of society than they thought themselves, since their irrepressible gaiety and almost constant popularity helped to keep the people in a good humour in times of trouble and disturbance.

At the time of the league of Cambrai, for instance, when Pope Julius II., the Emperor Maximilian, Louis XII. of France, and Ferdinand of Aragon agreed to destroy the Venetian Republic, and when it looked as if they must succeed, the Company of the 'Eternals' produced a mummerly which was highly appreciated both by the government and the population.

They gave a sumptuous feast, after which the dining-hall was, as by magic, turned into an improvised theatre. In the middle of the stage

1510.  
*Rom. v. 246.*

sat a young noble who personated the King, splendidly arrayed in the Byzantine fashion,

and attended by his counsellors, his chancellor, and his interpreter. Before him there came in state one who played the Papal Legate, dressed as a bishop in silk of old-rose colour, and he presented a brief and his credentials; whereupon, after crowning and blessing the King, he observed that he should like to see a little dancing, and two of the Companions at once danced for him with two of the fairest ladies. The Legate was followed by the Ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire, and the Ambassadors of France, Spain, Hungary, and Turkey arrived in turn; each spoke in the language of his country, and his speech was interpreted to the King. Last of all came the Ambassador of the Pigmies mounted on a tiny pony accompanied by four dwarfs and the professional buffoon Zanipolo. We must suppose the speeches to have been very witty, and the dwarfs and buffoons highly comic, since this incomprehensible nonsense was a stupendous success and was talked of long afterwards.

The taste for these 'momarie,' literally 'mummies,' grew in Venice. Marin Sanudo describes one which was produced in the Square of Saint Mark's on the Thursday before Lent in 1532. I translate a part of the list of the masks, to give an idea of the whole.

First, the goddess Pallas Athene with her shield and a book in her hand, riding on a serpent.

Second, Justice riding on an elephant, with sword, scales, and globe.

Third, Concord, on a stork with sceptre and globe.

Fourth, Victory on horseback, with sword, shield, sceptre, and palm.

Fifth, Peace riding a lamb, and holding a sceptre with an olive branch.

And so on. Then Ignorance, riding an ass, and holding on by the tail, met Wisdom and fought and was beaten. And Violence appeared on a serpent, and Mars on a horse, and Want on a dog with a horn full of straw for its emblem. And Violence was soundly beaten by Justice, Discord by Concord, and Mars by Victory, and Abundance drove Want from the field.

Such were the shows that amused the Venetians, while written comedy was slowly growing out of infancy.

The Companions of the Hose Club revenged themselves cruelly on any one of their own number who showed signs of meanness. Sanudo tells the following anecdote. Alvisè Morosini, one of the 'Eternals,' on the occasion of his marriage with a daughter of the noble house of Grimani, gave his fellow-Companions a very meagre dinner. Not long afterwards they got into the Grimani palace and carried off two magnificent silver basins; these were placed in the hands of professional buffoons who paraded the city with them, informing the public that the bridegroom meant to pawn them to pay for the dinner which the Companions were going to eat at the sign of the Campana instead of the dinner which they should have eaten at

*Tassini, under  
Osteria della  
Campana.*

the Palazzo Mōrosini, and also to pay for wax torches for taking home the fair ladies who were to be asked to the feast.

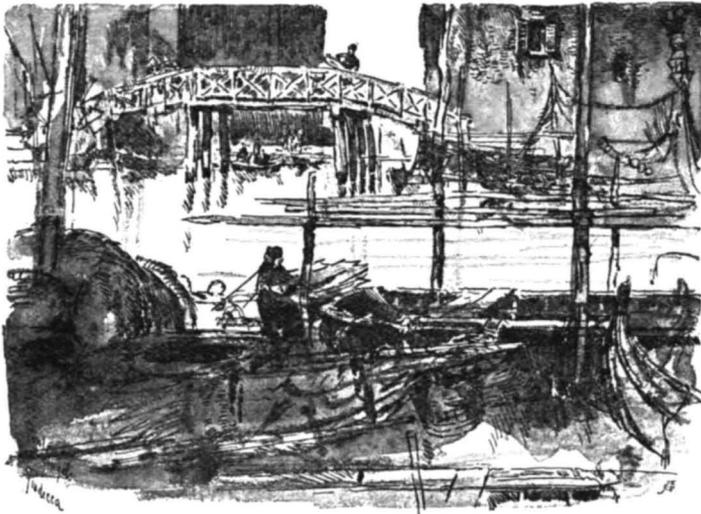
The paternal and business-like government of Venice, seeing how much the Companions contributed to the national gaiety, allowed them to transgress the sumptuary laws which were so binding on every one else. For instance, ordinary mortals were forbidden to ask guests to more than one meal in the twenty-four hours, but the Companions eluded the law — with the consent of the police — by keeping an open table all night, so that breakfast appeared to be only the end of supper. Even in the matter of the gondolas, the rule was that the 'felse' should be of black cloth, yet the Companions covered theirs with scarlet silk and the *Provveditori delle Pompe* had nothing to say.

Then, suddenly, the government had a fit of morality, and in 1586 the Hose Club was abolished by law, all privileges were revoked, and the decree was enforced. Venice lost some amusement and much beautiful pageantry, and gained nothing in morality. It was not very long before the grave senators who objected to the Companions were seen in their scarlet togas presiding over authorised gambling establishments in the 'ridotti.'

The Venetians were an imaginative people who delighted in fables, amusing, terrible, or pious, as the case might be. Their stories differ from those of other European races in the Middle Ages by the total absence

of the element of chivalry upon which most other peoples largely depended for their unwritten fiction. One can make almost anything of a business man except a knight.

Near the Ponte dell' Angelo in the Giudecca stands a house which shows great age in spite of much



PONTE DELL' ANGELO, GIUDECCA, OLD WOODEN BRIDGE

modern plastering. The windows are gothic, of the *Tassini, under* ogival design, and on the façade there is an image of the Virgin with the infant Christ in her arms. Higher up, a bas-relief represents an angel standing with outstretched wings as if he were about to fly away after blessing with his right hand the globe he holds in his left.

In the year 1552 this house was inhabited by a barrister of the ducal court who professed unbounded devotion to the Madonna, and practised the most indelicate methods of improving his fortunes.

One day the lawyer asked to dinner a holy Capuchin monk who enjoyed the highest reputation for sanctity. Before sitting down to table he explained to the good friar that he had a most wonderful servant in the shape of a learned ape, that kept his house clean, cooked for him, and did his errands. The holy man at once perceived that the ape was no less a personage than the Devil in disguise, and asked to see him; but Satan, suspecting trouble, hid himself till at last he was found curled up in his master's bed, trembling with fright.

'I command thee,' said the monk, 'in the name of God, to say why thou hast entered this house.'

'I am the Devil,' answered the ape, seeing that prevarication would be useless, 'and I am here to take possession of this lawyer's soul, which is mine on several good grounds.'

The monk inquired why the Devil had not flown away with the soul long ago, but the fiend replied that so far it had not been possible, because the lawyer said 'Hail, Mary,' every night before going to bed. Thereupon the Capuchin bade the Devil leave the house at once; but the Devil said that if he went he would do great damage to the building, as the heavenly powers had authorised him to do. But the monk was a match for him.

‘The only damage you shall do,’ said the friar, ‘shall be by making a hole in the wall as you leave, which shall be a witness of the truth of what we have seen and heard and of the story we shall tell.’

The Devil obeyed with alacrity and disappeared through the wall with a formidable crash, after which the lawyer and his guest sat down to table, and the monk discoursed of leading a good life; and at last he took the table-cloth and wrung it with both hands, and a quantity of blood ran out of it which he said was the blood the lawyer had wrung from his clients. Then the sinner began to shed tears and promised to make full reparation, and he told the monk that if the hole in the wall were not stopped up, he feared the Devil would come in by it again. So the friar advised him to place a statue of the Madonna before the hole and an angel over it, to scare the Devil away. And so he did.

Another Venetian legend of slightly earlier date tells how there was once in the confraternity of Saint John the Evangelist a man who led a bad life, *Tassini, under* the great scandal of all who knew him. *‘San Lio.’* One of the brethren having died, the Superior hoped to touch the heart of that wicked man by asking him to bear the Cross in the funeral procession. ‘I will neither walk in the procession to-day,’ answered the sinner, ‘nor do I wish to be so accompanied when the Devil carries me off.’ After some time he died, and the brethren proceeded to bury him, walking in procession after the Cross; but when they reached the bridge

of San Lio it became so heavy that it was impossible to lift it from the ground, much less to carry it. The Superior now remembered the words of the blasphemer, and told the story to the brethren while they halted. So they all decided that the Cross must not follow the procession, and thereupon it instantly became light again, and was carried back to the chapel of Saint John the Evangelist.

*Picture representing the scene, Mansueti; Accademia delle belle Arti.*

The fireside is the natural place for telling stories, and there is certainly some connection in the human mind between firelight and the fabulous. Dante tells that in his time the women of Venice consulted the fire in order to know the future. When a girl was engaged to be married she appealed to one of the burning logs, and decided from the augury whether she was to be happy or unhappy. Those who wanted money struck the log with the tongs, calling out softly, 'Ducats! ducats!' If the sparks flew out abundantly there was some hope that a rich relation might die and leave the inquirer a legacy. When the sparks were few and faint, poverty was prophesied.

Unlike all other Italians, who believe that hunchbacks bring good luck, the Venetians feared them excessively. A Venetian proverb says, 'Leave three steps between thyself and those whom God has marked, eight if it is a hunchback, and twenty-eight if the man be lame.'

One of the pretty superstitions of Venetian mothers was that if they took their little children out before

dawn on Saint John's Day, the twenty-fourth of June, so that the morning dew might dampen their cheeks and hair, they would have lovely complexions and golden locks. There are old Venetian lullabies that promise babies the midsummer dew.



RIO S. SOFIA, NIGHT

## IX

### THE DECADENCE

THE seventeenth century, like the fourteenth, was one of transition; but whereas the earlier period was one of improvement, the latter was one of decay. When time at last began to do its work upon the Republic, Venice had been independent nine hundred years; she was still at the height of her glory, still in the magnificence of her outward splendour, but the long-strained machinery of government was beginning to wear out.

At the commencement of the seventeenth century all Italy seemed to be threatened by war; the peace patched up between Philip II. of Spain and Henry IV. of France at Vervins had been of an unsatisfactory and precarious nature; the Holy See was more and more on its guard against the Protestant powers, and Spain took advantage of this in order to sow discord between the court of Rome and other governments. Venice was especially involved in these difficulties, because she had signed in 1589 a commercial treaty with the Grisons which had greatly displeased Spain, the latter being then in possession of Milan. The Republic was accused of being too obliging to Protestants, and her enemies assured the Pope that she had seriously endangered the safety of the Catholic Church by allowing the English ambassador to have an Anglican Church service in his private oratory. The complaints of Clement VIII. and Paul V. were received with stony indifference by the Republic, which never had the slightest respect for Rome. The latter had many causes of complaint. Venice had been granted in former times the privilege of trying priests for ordinary crimes in the ordinary courts, on condition that the Patriarch should sit among the judges. Little by little the Venetian government stretched this privilege to make it apply to all suits whatsoever brought against ecclesiastics, and in most cases the Patriarch was not even represented. It chanced, at the very time when the Pope had com-

<sup>1598.</sup>  
*Rom. vii. 5.*

*Rom. vi. 412.*

*Rom. vii. 43,*  
*notes.*

CAMPIELLO DELLE ANCORE







plained of the liberty granted to the English ambassador, that two priests were accused of an abominable crime, and were tried like ordinary delinquents. This encroachment upon the bulls of Innocent VIII. and Paul III. took place just when the Senate was passing a law which greatly restricted the holding of property by the clergy. As if these facts were not enough to show the Pope that the Venetian flock intended to manage its own corner of the Catholic fold in its own way, the government, on the death of the Patriarch, named as his successor a member of the house of Vendramin, and merely announced the fact to the court of Rome, although the old canonical law required that in cases where governments were authorised to appoint their bishops, the latter should be examined and approved by the Pope's delegates.

Spain took advantage of all these circumstances to bring about a complete rupture between Venice and the Holy See. Paul V. now hesitated no longer, and discharged a major excommunication against the whole Venetian State. This measure produced little impression on the Senate, and none at all on the Doge Leonardo Dandolo. He declared openly that the sentence was unjust, and therefore null and void. The Capuchin, Theatin, and Jesuit orders closed their churches in obedience to the Pope, and were immediately expelled from Venetian territory by the government. The Pope's wrath was as tremendous as it was futile, and it is impossible to say how far

*Rom. vii. 45,  
50-51.*

matters might have gone if Henry IV. had not used his influence to bring about a reconciliation. It was his interest to do so in order that Venice, being friendly to him, might in a measure balance the power of hostile Spain, and he sent the Cardinal de Joyeuse to Italy to try and obtain from the Pope some concession which

*Rom. vii. 53.* might facilitate an act of submission on the part of the Republic. Spain was playing a double game as usual, but the Cardinal was too much for the Spanish diplomatists, and he brought about an arrangement by which Venice handed over to the Pope the two priests who were on trial, and

*Rom. vii. 64.* permitted the Patriarch to undergo the examination required by the canonical law. On his side the Pope exempted from that examination all future Patriarchs.

It is a singular fact that the usually docile Venetian population greatly resented the attitude taken by the government towards the Holy See. The Doge himself was hissed and howled at when he went to the church of Santa Maria Formosa on the Feast of Candlemas. ‘Long live the Doge Grimani, the father of the poor,’ yelled the rabble, for Grimani had been a man of exemplary piety and had been dead and buried for some time. ‘The day will come when you shall wish to go to church and shall not be able!’ screamed others. Even after the reconciliation with the Pope,

*Rom. vii. 251.* Spain did not cease to conspire against the Republic, and while persecuting the Catholics in Valtellina tried to make out that the

Republic was allied with the Protestant powers because it opposed those persecutions.

It is impossible to speak of the quarrels between Venice and Rome without mentioning the monk Paolo Sarpi who played so large a part in them. At the



SANTA MARIA FORMOSA

time when the attitude of the Pope made it clear that serious trouble was at hand, the Signory felt the need of consulting a theologian in order to give her resistance something like an orthodox shape. There was at that time in Venice a monk well known for his profound learning and austere life. He had entered the order of the Servites as a novice at the age of thirteen, and was

now fifty-four years old. In more than forty years his love of retirement and study and his profound devotion had suffered no change. He was brought from his seclusion by an order from the Senate to give his opinions on the burning questions of the moment. Fra Paolo Sarpi vigorously sustained the cause of the Republic, and was at once denounced to the Pope as a sectarian and a secret partisan of the Protestants. Fanatics attempted to assassinate him, and the government spread the report that the murder had been attempted by the court of Rome. These reports further exasperated the Vatican against him, while the Republic supported him all the more obstinately and consulted him on every occasion. He was installed in a little house in the Square of Saint Mark's in order to be within easy reach of the ducal palace, and the severest penalties were threatened for any attempt against his life.

*Statue of Fra  
Paolo Sarpi  
erected in 1812  
in the church of  
Santa Fosca,  
near the spot  
where he  
narrowly escaped  
assassination,  
Marsili.*

In spite of these precautions two more attempts were made to assassinate him, and he was heard to say that death would be preferable to the existence which the government obliged him to lead. Nevertheless he lived sixteen years in the service of the Republic. The unbounded confidence which was placed in him is amply proved by the fact that he, and he only, in the history of the Council of Ten, was allowed free access to its archives, a privilege which, oddly enough, proved fatal to him; for it was while working on his own account amongst those documents that he caught

a cold from which he never recovered, and he died three months afterwards in the winter of 1622. On the fourteenth of January he felt his end approaching, and the news was at once known throughout the city. The Signory at once sent for Fra Fulgenzio, his most intimate friend. 'How is Fra Paolo?' inquired the Ten. 'He is at the last extremity,' answered the monk. 'Has he all his wits?' 'As if he were quite well,' answered Fra Paolo's friend.

Immediately three questions regarding an important affair were sent to the dying man, who concentrated his mind upon them and dictated the answers with marvellous clearness and precision. His last words were a prayer for his country's enduring greatness. 'Esto perpetua!' he prayed as he closed his eyes for ever.

The government gave him a magnificent funeral, and ordered the sculptor Campagna to make a marble bust of him for the church of the Servites; but the Venetian ambassador in Rome advised the Republic not to rouse the Pope's anger again by such a tribute to the great monk's memory. We are not called upon to decide upon the orthodoxy of Fra Paolo's opinions, but he was undeniably one of the greatest and most gifted Italians of the seventeenth century.

The troubles with Rome, and the general excommunication which had brought them to a crisis, had disturbed the confidence of the Venetian people in their government more than anything that had happened for years; and soon afterwards matters were

made worse by the terrible judicial murder of Antonio Foscarini, in which England was deeply concerned.

Foscarini was a fine specimen of the patriotic Venetian noble, devoted to his country, imbued with the most profound respect for the aristocratic caste to which he belonged, haughty and contemptuous towards most other people, as the following anecdote shows. He was in Paris as ambassador when Maria de' Medici, the wife of Henry IV., was crowned, and as he had only recently arrived he was not acquainted with all his diplomatic colleagues when he met them in the church of Saint Denis. After the ceremony he bowed to the Spanish Ambassador, who inquired who the stranger was who saluted him. Foscarini introduced himself. 'Oh,' exclaimed the Spaniard, 'the Ambassador of the Pantaloon!' 'Pantaloon' was a Venetian theatrical mask, and the word had become a contemptuous nickname for the Venetians. But the Spaniard

*Molmenti,*  
*St. e Ric.* had counted without his host, for Foscarini fell upon him then and there. He described what he did in a letter to his government: 'I loaded the Spanish Ambassador with vigorous blows and kicks, as he deserved.'

A Venetian, Pietro Gritti, who was in Foscarini's suite, wrote a letter at the same time in which he said that his chief kicked the Spanish Ambassador down the whole length of the court.

Foscarini was afterwards ambassador in England, and the long series of circumstances which led to his tragic end dates from that period. He was still young,

he was inclined to be fond of amusement, and for some unknown reason the secretaries of embassy who were sent with him hated him and calumniated him in the basest manner, accusing him to the Council of Ten of being a Protestant in secret, and of carrying on a treacherous correspondence with the Spanish government. But there was worse than this. A famous French spy, La Forêt, bribed Foscarini's valet, Robazza, got access to the ambassador's rooms when he was out, and copied his most important letters for the French government.

His second secretary of embassy, Muscornò, obtained leave to return to Venice on pretence of visiting his father who was ill, and when Foscarini was suddenly recalled he found the ground prepared for an abominable action against him. He himself, his valet, and his chaplain were all imprisoned, and his trial for high treason began. It proceeded very slowly, but he was acquitted after having been in prison three years, for Robazza confessed his treachery without being tortured. Having been declared innocent of high treason, Foscarini had little difficulty in disproving some minor accusations that were brought against him; and a few weeks after his release he appeared before the Senate to give an official account of his embassy in England. Muscornò, who had accused him falsely, was condemned to two years' imprisonment in a fortress; Robazza, the valet who had been bribed, had his right hand struck off and was exiled for twenty years.

James I. of England sent Foscarini especial con-

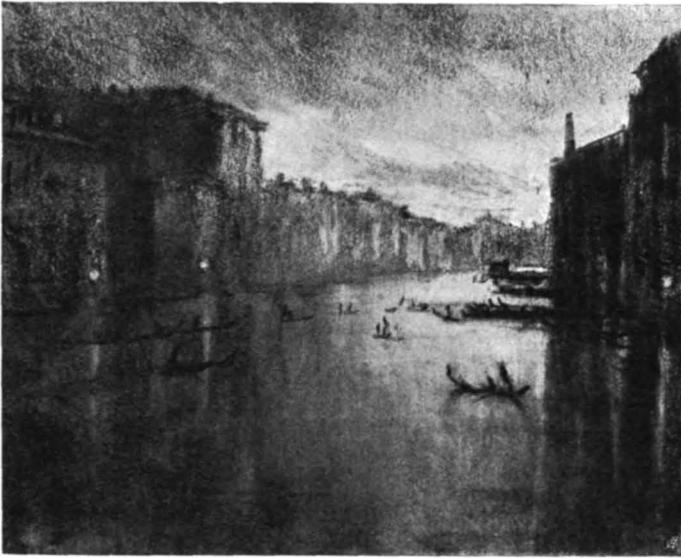
gratulations, and he was again employed in important affairs. Unhappily, however, Muscorno had a successor worthy of him in the person of Girolamo Vano, a professional spy in the service of the Republic. If by any chance the smallest State secret was known abroad, it was always insinuated by Foscarini's enemies that he was responsible for divulging it, and it was quite in keeping with the ordinary practice of the Venetian government to employ spies to watch a man who had been once suspected, even though he had been declared innocent and was again in high office.

The spy Vano took advantage of Foscarini's friendship, or affection, for the English Countess of Arundel, as a means of making out a strong case against him. Foscarini had known her in London, and she had afterwards made long visits to Venice, in order to be near her sons, who were making their studies at the university of Padua. At her house Foscarini often met the Envoy of Florence and the secretaries of the Spanish and Austrian embassies.

She did not spend all her time in Venice, however, but was often many months in England. It was when she was returning to Venice after one of these absences that she was stopped at some distance from the city by a messenger from the English ambassador, Sir Henry Wotton, who entreated her to turn back. The unfortunate Foscarini had been convicted of high treason and strangled, and his corpse was that very morning hanging between the two red columns of the fatal window in the ducal palace. Lady Arundel's

name had been connected during the trial with that of the condemned man, and the ambassador was anxious to save her any possible trouble.

But she was not of the sort that turns back from danger at such times, and that very evening she reached



GRAND CANAL, LOOKING TOWARDS MOCENIGO PALACE

the English Embassy and demanded an audience of the Doge; it was with the greatest difficulty that she could be made to understand the impossibility of being admitted until the next morning, and she reluctantly retired for the night to her hired house, that Mocenigo palace which was afterwards successively inhabited by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and by Lord Byron.

On the morrow the ambassador went with her to the ducal palace, and she must have passed below the window from which the body of her friend had hung all the previous day. She was admitted to the presence of the Signory, and the Doge made her sit on his right hand. She now learned that she was believed to have allowed Foscarini to use her house as a place from which to carry on intrigues with foreign courts. Sir Henry Wotton spoke in the Countess's defence, and proved that her relations with Foscarini had always been of the most honourable character, and that the two had not met for many months. England's star was in the ascendant, Elizabeth had reigned, and it was not good to contradict an English ambassador nor to speak lightly of an English lady. The Doge made the Countess his most humble excuses and promised to send them to her husband, the Earl Marshal, through the Venetian ambassador in London.

The Senate took cognisance of the affair also, and voted a small sum of money to be expended in a present of comfits and wax to the Countess, this being the custom for all persons of quality who appeared before the Signory. But that was all. Lady Arundel had exculpated herself, but so far Foscarini's guilt seemed to be so incontrovertibly proved, that Fra Paolo Sarpi refused to accept a legacy which the unhappy patrician had left him in his last will.

But as time went on the whole of Vano's fabricated evidence began to go to pieces. The Inquisitors of State themselves seem to have been the first to suspect

that they had made a mistake, and before long the dreadful truth was only too clear. Foscarini had been perfectly innocent and had been murdered by justice. It was not a case that could be hushed and put out of the way, either, for too many people knew what had happened.

*Rom. vii. 196;  
Armand Baschet,  
Arch. 631.*

The Council of Ten made amends: let us give them such credit as we can for their public repentance, without inquiring too closely what pressure was brought to bear upon them by the public, and not improbably by England. Monsieur Baschet becomes lyric in his praise of their magnanimity. For my part, I do not think it would have been safe for the Council to try and hide its mistake. The Ten apologised amply before the world: that is the important matter. Monsieur Baschet gives the original text of the apology, of which I translate a part from the Italian: —

‘Since the Providence of our Lord God has disposed, by means truly miraculous and incomprehensible to human intelligence, that the authors and promoters of the lies and impostures machinated against our late beloved and noble Antonio Foscarini should be discovered . . ., it behoves the justice and mercy of this Council, whose especial business it is, for the general quiet and safety to protect the immunity of the honour and reputation of families, to rehabilitate as far as possible those who lie under the imputation of an infamous crime . . .,’ and so on.

The Ten also decreed that an inscription should be set up in the church of Sant’ Eustachio, recording the

error of the court, a unique example of such a public and enduring retractation.

Other circumstances occurred to prove that organisation of the Venetian tribunals was beginning to wear out. Too many conflicting regulations had been introduced, and there were too many magistracies. Venice was 'over-administered,' as generally happens to old countries, and sometimes to new ones that are too anxious to be scientifically governed. The jurisdictions of the different officials often encroached upon one another. The three Inquisitors of State were frequently at odds with the other seven members of the Council of Ten, and in the confusion which this caused it was impossible that the laws should be as well administered as formerly.

About this time a grave case enlightened the public as to certain abuses of which the existence had not been previously suspected. The Council of Ten was always charged with the duty of seeing that the Doge performed to the letter the promises of the 'Promission ducale.' These solemn engagements were several times violated by the Doge Corner for the advantage of his sons. He allowed one of them to accept the dignity of the Cardinalate while two others were made senators, but as the Council of Ten did not like to interfere, one of its heads, Renier Zeno, took upon himself to impeach the Doge. The latter was accused of illegal acts in contradiction with the 'Promission,' and the question was taken up by the whole aristocracy and discussed before all the different

*Rom. vii. 210,  
215, 223, 229.*

Councils. The opposite parties were fast reaching a state of exasperation, when one of the Doge's sons attempted the life of Renier Zeno. He and his accomplices were merely exiled to Ferrara, and the lenity of the sentence sufficiently shows the weakness of the government.

At the same time Renier Zeno was arbitrarily forbidden, contrary to all law, to call into question the conduct of the courts in general, but he was too proud and energetic to submit to such despotism, and what it pleased the Council of Ten to call his 'pride' served his adversaries as a pretext for accusing him. The Council had the imprudence to condemn him to ten years' imprisonment in the fortress of Cattaro; but this was too much, and the Ten were soon forced to revoke the sentence as completely as they had annulled that of the unfortunate Foscarini. But the world saw, and the prestige of the Council was gone; the government cast about in vain for some means of restoring it, and could find nothing to do except to make a few reforms and changes in its old system of spying and repression.

Ever since the fourteenth century there had been a locked box with a slit in it, placed in a public part of the ducal palace, into which any one might drop an anonymous written accusation against any one else, from the Doge down. Little by little the use of this means of 'informing' developed, until it had now become common to try cases on the mere strength of such unsupported accusations. The boxes were called

the Lions' Mouths on account of the shape they had taken, and there was much talk about them when it was attempted to reform the Code of Laws in the seventeenth century. A decree of the year 1635 restored the old regulations as to the nature of the misdeeds which might be thus denounced.



THE FONDAMENTA S. GIORGIO, REDENTORE IN DISTANCE

It was decided that if the accusation was signed, four-fifths of the judges must agree before the case could be brought to trial; if the information was anonymous there could be no trial without the consent of the Doge, his counsellors, and the chiefs of the Ten to bring the case before the Great Council, and the trial could not be opened unless it were voted necessary by

five-sixths of the assembly. These measures were no doubt prudent, but it was the system itself that was at fault; any Venetian was authorised by it to take upon himself the duties of a detective, and was encouraged to spy on his neighbours, because the courts generally rewarded the informer after a conviction.

It is always a fault in a government to make laws unchangeable like those of the Medes and Persians, and some authors have said that the Venetian Republic never looked upon any of its decrees as immutable. This is true as regards the form, for no government ever remodelled its laws more often in their text. Sometimes the same decree appears in more than one hundred shapes, but neither the spirit nor the point of view is modified. A law passed against the freemasons in the eighteenth century is conceived in precisely the same spirit as the decrees against the conspirators in the days of Baiamonte Tiepolo and Marin Faliero; the last Missier Grande of the police was very like the sbirri of the Middle Ages in character and in methods. The Republic was growing old; the tree might still bear fruit, but the fruit it bore had no longer within it the seeds of future life.

It cannot be denied that Venetian diplomacy was better of its kind than Venetian magistracies. During the thirty years' war, for instance, Venice never once lost sight of the great Rom. vii. 275. object it had in view, which was to abase the closely related powers of Spain and Austria, while skilfully avoiding any action which might bring about reprisals.

On the other hand, it was impossible to remain neutral in the war of succession to the Duchy of Mantua, in which Carlo Gonzaga, Duke of Nevers, was supported by France, and Ferrante Gonzaga by the Emperor. As Austria's



STEPS OF THE REDENTORE

enemy, Venice naturally backed the former. Venice furnished him abundantly with money and soldiers, and between the month of November 1629 and the month of March following, spent six hundred and thirty-eight thousand ducats to support the party which was defending the cause of Italian independence against the Empire. Austria nevertheless succeeded, and got

the better of the formidable coalition; but though the Imperials took possession of Mantua at the time, they were obliged to give it up to Carlo Gonzaga soon afterwards, in April 1631, by the treaty of Cherasco.

About the same time Venice suffered another terrible visitation of the plague, and more than thirty-six thousand persons perished in the city alone. On a similar occasion in 1575 the *Rom. vii. 302.* Venetians had vowed a church to the Redeemer if the plague was stayed, and the church they built is that of the Redentore; in 1630 a church was vowed to the Blessed Virgin, under the name of the Madonna della Salute. This was at first only a wooden *Rom. vii. 306.* building, in which a great thanksgiving took place on the first of November. The present church was not finished until 1687.

Amongst the many circumstances which hastened the decadence of the Republic during the seventeenth century was the terrible war in Crete. In *Quadri, 275.* that memorable struggle with the Turks for the possession of the island the Venetians displayed much of their old heroism and good generalship, but the Republic was no longer young, and could not make such gigantic efforts with impunity; Venice was permanently weakened by that last great war. It originated in a piece of rash imprudence on the part of the Knights of Malta, who seized a number of Turkish vessels; it lasted twenty-five years, and it cost the Republic her best generals and her bravest soldiers, besides vast sums of money. Yet the enthusiasm was

boundless; mindful of Enrico Dandolo and Andrea Contarini, the aged Doge Francesco Erizzo determined to take command himself, but death overtook him on the eve of his departure.

Prodigies of valour were performed. Tommaso Morosini, with a single ship, victoriously resisted the attack of forty-five Turkish galleys, but lost his life in the engagement. Lorenzo Marcello took eighty-four Turkish vessels and their crews with a far inferior force, but like Morosini he was killed in the fight. Ten thousand Turks were slain and five thousand were taken prisoners.

Europe looked on in amazement and admiration, and many brave captains and soldiers thought it an honour to serve under the standard of Saint Mark. There were more Germans and Frenchmen among these volunteers than soldiers of other nations, and Louis XIV. himself hoped to associate his name with the campaign. He sent the Duc de Beaufort with a considerable fleet, twelve of his best regiments, and a detachment of the Guards, besides a great number of volunteers under the command of the Duc de Noailles. Yet all was in vain, and after a quarter of a century of fighting Venice was obliged to yield Crete to the Turks.

The peace was of no long duration, for the Turks attacked Austria next, and, though the brave Sobieski drove them away from Vienna, they allied themselves with the Hungarians, and became so dangerous to the Empire that the Pope himself was in anxiety for the

safety of Christianity in general. Exhausted by her long war in Crete, the Republic attempted to decline all requests that she should join a league against the Turks, but was at last obliged to yield, and war was renewed in the Archipelago and the Peloponnesus.

Francesco Morosini, the same general who a few years earlier had been obliged to evacuate Crete after the most heroic efforts, was placed in command of the Venetian forces and commissioned to drive the Turks from the islands of Santa Maura and other strong places in the Ionian Sea. On the eleventh of August 1687 a swift felucca brought to Venice news that Morosini had taken Patras and Corinth, besides Santa Maura. In joyful enthusiasm the Senate forthwith voted the victor a bronze bust, which was placed in the hall of the Council of Ten, with the standard taken from the Turks. It bears the inscription: —

*Rom. vii. 490.*

*Bust of Francesco  
Morosini, Hall  
of the Council  
of Ten.*

FRANCISCO MAUROCENO  
Peloponnesiaco adhuc viventi  
Senatus.

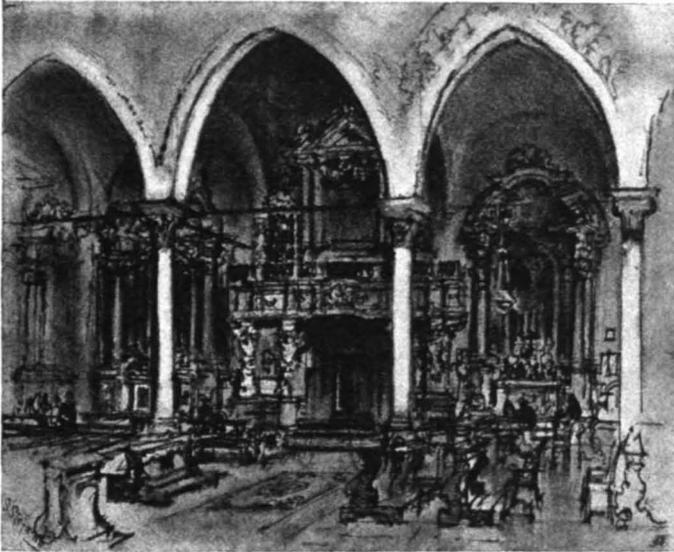
Another monument in Venice recalls the glorious war of the Peloponnesus. After having taken Athens, Morosini hastened to the Parthenon, for he appears to have been a man of highly cultivated tastes. To his inexpressible disappointment he found the temple half ruined, for the Turks had used it as a powder magazine, and a Venetian bomb had blown it up. Morosini was so much overcome that he broke

*Quadri, 302 ;  
Rom. vii. 491.*

out into lamentations over a loss which nothing could replace. But there amidst piles of ruins he saw two splendid lions of marble from Pentelicus, which he at once caused to be placed on board his vessel, rather to save them, perhaps, than to exhibit them as trophies. In Venice they were set up on each side of the gate of the Arsenal.

Morosini was one of the few Venetian generals who was not made to suffer for his success. When <sup>1688.</sup> at the very height of his triumph he *Rom. vii. 504.* learnt that he was elected Doge, and though he had little success in the campaign after that, and was even dangerously ill, he was magnificently received when he returned to Venice. Pope Alexander VIII., Ottoboni, sent him the staff and military hat which it was customary to give to generals who had distinguished themselves in war against infidels. But it was clear that in his absence nothing could be accomplished, and he soon obtained permission of the government to take command of the Venetian forces once more. His departure on the twenty-fourth of May 1693 was a sort of national festivity. The Senate went to fetch him in his own apartment, and a long procession accompanied him to Saint Mark's. Preceded by halberdiers, singers, files of servants in liveries of scarlet velvet and gold, many priests, canons, and the Patriarch himself, besides the traditional silver trumpets, the Doge walked between the Pope's nuncio and the French ambassador. He wore the full dress of a Venetian commander-in-chief, which was of gold

brocade with a long train. But even in his glory the Venetians noticed with displeasure and suspicion that he carried in his hand the staff of the General, which he evidently preferred to the sceptre of the Doge, and which suggested to the crowd the thought that he might seize the supreme power.



THE NAVE OF S. STEFANO

On the following day he embarked upon the *Bucentaur*, which took him on board his flagship amidst the applause of the crowd, the pealing of the church bells, and a salute of artillery from the fort of Saint Nicholas on the Lido, as his vessel got under way.

The expedition proved of little advantage to the

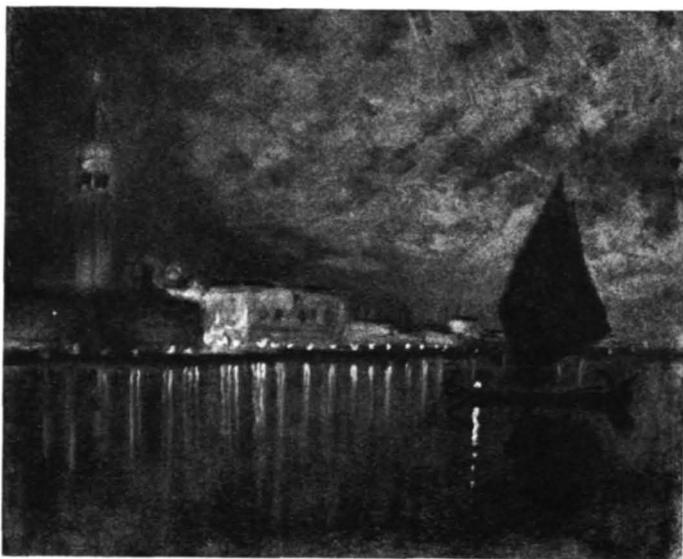
Republic, and cost Morosini his life, for his health was undermined by the fatigues of his previous campaigns, and he died in the Greek province of Romania, where he had hoped to rest for a few weeks. His body was brought back to Venice, and buried with great pomp in the church of Santo Stefano.

The war went on under his successor, Silvestro Valier, but it now entered upon a new phase, for the Czar Peter the Great threatened the Turks on their northern frontier, while the Venetian fleet held them in check in the south. A treaty of peace was signed at Carlowitz in 1699, by which the Republic kept her conquests in the Morea as far as the isthmus of Corinth, including the islands of Egina, Santa Maura, and other less important places. Dalmatia was also left to her, but she was obliged to withdraw her troops from Lepanto and Romania on the north side of the Gulf of Corinth.

From all this it is clear that the military spirit was still alive in Venice, when the administration had almost completely broken down. Nothing gives the measure of the situation better than the fact that in order to meet the expenses of the war in Crete any Venetian who would engage to support a thousand soldiers for one year, or any foreigner who would support twelve hundred for the same period, was allowed thereby to have and hold all the privileges of nobility. This speculation was never sanctioned by law, and was even rejected by the Great Council when proposed, but it was nevertheless actually

*Rom. vii. 370,  
371, 487;  
Quadri, 293.*

practised, and a number of seats in the Great Council were sold to the highest bidder. The government went one step farther, and sold the office of procurator of Saint Mark. The decadence had reached the point of decay.



THE RIVA FROM THE DOGANA

## X

### THE LAST HOMES — THE LAST GREAT LADIES

Two men, a painter and a dramatist, have left us the means of knowing exactly what the eighteenth century was in Venice. It is not a paradox to say that Longhi painted comedies, and that Goldoni wrote portraits. Both were Venetians, and they had the courage to depict and describe respectively the glaring faults of their own people, not realising, perhaps, that

*Pictures of Venetian life by Longhi; Accademia, Room XIV., and Museo Correr, Rooms II. and IX.*

the general corruption was beyond remedy, and that the end was at hand.



CAMPO S. BARTOLOMEO, STATUE OF GOLDONI

Look at Longhi's 'Fortune-Teller' or 'Dancing-Master,' at his 'Tailor,' his 'Music-Master,' or his 'Toilet,' and you may see precisely what the Republic

was when it died of old age; there are all the successions of light colours, as in a pastel-painter's box; you can hear the high running laughter that rings from rosy lips, you can guess what dreams of pleasure fill those pretty heads, and yet there is something sad about it all; unless one belongs to that little band of human beings who love the eighteenth century, it sets one's teeth on edge — like the dance music in the 'Ballo in Maschera,' danced while Riccardo is dying. Something rings false; I think there is too much discrepancy between what we see or read and what we really know about that time. About other centuries, even the nineteenth and twentieth, we can still have illusions, but the eighteenth was all a sham that went to pieces with the French Revolution.

As for the position of women at that time, it was never lower. They were dolls, and nothing more. They were perhaps more neglected in the sixteenth century, but, at least in theory, there was still some respect for them. In the eighteenth they existed only to adorn places of amusement, theatres, and gambling houses. The biographer of that remarkable woman, Giustina Renier Michiel, says they were so little esteemed that it seemed useless to teach them anything, and he adds that the Signory looked upon an educated woman as a being dangerous to society and the State.

Most young girls of noble family were brought up in convents, where the most crass ignorance accompanied the loosest ideas of morality. The greater number of

these convents were only nominally connected with the ecclesiastical authorities. In practice they were controlled by lay inspectors, *Rom. viii. 35r.* 'Provveditori sopra Monasteri,' who were commissioned by the government to superintend the morals of convents in general, but found it much more diverting to help in undermining them.

While the girls were being brought up in such places, their father was chiefly preoccupied in assuring and increasing the fortune which was to be inherited by his eldest son. The natural consequence of this was that the marriage portions of the daughters became smaller and smaller, so that it was found hard to marry them at all, and much less troublesome to leave them in their convents for life. Each of the fashionable convents was a little court of noble ladies; in the one, Her Most Reverend Excellency the Mother Abbess was a Rezzonico; in another, the Noble Dame Eleonora Dandolo was Mistress of the Larder.

The scholars did not leave the convent at all while their education lasted, but nothing was neglected which could amuse them, and their principal lessons were in dancing, singing, and reciting verses. In Carnival, the convent parlours were turned into theatres or ball-rooms; dames and cavaliers danced the minuet or the 'furlana'; 'Punch,' 'Pantaloen,' and 'Pierrot' vied with each other to make the be vies of aristocratic young ladies laugh at jests they should never have understood.

Even during the rest of the year the convents were

what would now be called brilliant social centres, to which married women came accompanied by their officially recognised 'cicisbei,' while young gentlemen of leisure flirted with the scholars. It was even common for the girls to keep up a regular correspondence with their admirers.

*Mutinelli,  
Ult. 92.*

*Mutinelli,  
Ult. 61-62.*

Take the following passage which I translate from Goldoni's autobiography, a book which may be trusted and is singularly free from exaggeration. The adventure happened to him in Chioggia.

*Goldoni, vol. i.  
chap. xix.*

I had always cultivated the acquaintance of the nuns of Saint Francis, where there were some very beautiful scholars, and the Signora B. (one of the nuns) had one under her direction who was very lovely and very rich and amiable. She would have been exactly to my taste, but my youth, my condition, and my want of fortune did not allow me to entertain any illusions.

However, the nun did not refuse me hope, and when I went to see her she always made the young lady come down to the parlour. I felt that I should become attached to her in good earnest, and the governess (the nun) seemed glad of it; and yet I could not believe it possible. But one day I spoke to her of my inclination and of my timidity; she encouraged me and confided the secret to me. This young lady had good qualities and property, but there was something doubtful about her birth. 'This little defect is nothing,' said the veiled lady; 'the girl is well behaved and well brought up, and I will be surety to you for her character and conduct. She has a guardian,' she continued, 'and he must be won over, but leave that to me. It is true that this guardian, who is very old and ruined in health,

has some pretensions as to his ward, but he is wrong, and — well, as I am also interested in this — leave it to me,' she repeated, 'and I will manage for the best.' I confess that after this talk, after this confidence and this encouragement, I began to think myself happy. The Signorina N. did not look unkindly on me, and I considered the matter as settled. All the convent had noticed my inclination for the pupil, and there were some young ladies who knew the intrigues of the parlour and had pity on me, and explained to me what was happening; and this is how they did it. The windows of my room were precisely opposite the belfry of the convent. In building it there had been placed in it several casements of cloudy glass through which one could vaguely make out the outlines of people who came near them. I had several times noticed at those apertures, which were oblong, both figures and gestures, and in time I was able to understand that the signs represented letters of the alphabet, and that words were formed, and that one could talk at a distance: almost every day I had half an hour of this mute conversation, in which, however, we conversed properly and decently.

By means of this hand-alphabet I learned that the Signorina N. was very soon to be married to her guardian. Angry at the Signora B.'s way of acting, I went to see her during the day in the afternoon, quite determined to show her all my displeasure. She is sent for, she comes, she looks steadily at me, and perceiving that I am angry, guessing what had happened, she does not give me time to speak but is the first to attack me vigorously, with a sort of transport.

'Well, sir,' she said to me, 'you are displeased, I see it in your face' — I tried to speak, but she does not hear me, raises her voice and goes on — 'Yes, sir, the Signorina N. is to be married, and she is going to marry her guardian.' I tried to raise my voice too. 'Hush, hush,' she cries, 'listen to me; this marriage is my doing: after having reflected upon it, I helped

it on, and on your account I wished to hasten it.' 'On my account?' I said. 'Hush,' she replied, 'you shall understand the conduct of a prudent woman who has a liking for you. Are you,' she went on, 'in a position to take a wife? No, for a hundred reasons. Was the Signorina to wait your convenience? No, she had not the power to do so; it was necessary to marry her; she might have married a young man and you would have lost her forever. She marries an old man, a man in his decline and who cannot live long; and though I am not acquainted with the joys and disappointments of marriage, yet I know that a young wife must shorten the life of an old husband, and so you will possess a beautiful widow who will have been a wife only in name. Be quite easy on this point, therefore; she will have improved her own affairs, she will be much richer than she is now, and in the meantime you will make your journey. And do not be in any anxiety about her; no, my dear friend, do not fear; she will live in the world with her old fellow and I shall watch over her conduct. Yes, yes! She is yours, I will be surety to you for that, and I give you my word of honour——'

And here comes in the Signorina N. and approaches the grating. The nun says to me with an air of mystery, 'Congratulate the young lady on her marriage!' I could bear it no longer; I make my bow and go away without saying more. I never saw either the governess or her pupil again, and thank God it was not long before I forgot them both.

After reading such stories and looking into the archives of the 'Superintendents of Convents,' it is easy to understand that Pope Gregory XIII. should have exclaimed bitterly, 'I am Pope everywhere except in Venice'; and more than one of his successors in the eighteenth century had cause to

*Rom. vi. 360.*

repeat his words. The Church protested in vain against the abuse of the veil by Venetian ladies, for the State protected them on the specious pretext of superintending their morals, and the remonstrances of the popes and of the patriarchs of Venice were not even heard within the walls of those sham cloisters. With such a system of education and such examples the bankruptcy of morality was merely a question of time. The number of marriages diminished amongst the aristocracy, and when a young man made up his mind to matrimony he consulted nothing but his financial interests.

The expenses of a fashionable marriage were considerable. There were always several festive ceremonies in the bride's house. The first was the signature of the contract; the second, *Mutinelli, Ut. 86;* which followed soon afterwards, was a *Goldoni, vol. i. chap. xxvi.* gathering of all the relations and friends of the two families with a sort of standing collation, and it was on this occasion that the future bridegroom gave his betrothed the first present, which was generally a big diamond set in other stones, and was called the 'ricordino,' the 'little remembrance.'

A few days before the wedding the two families and their friends met again, and if the man's mother was still alive it was she who gave the bride a pearl necklace; otherwise the duty fell to one of his near female relations. This pearl necklace was thought absolutely indispensable for the honour of the family, and the bride was bound to put it on at once and to wear it till the end of the first year of her marriage. Where it would have

caused financial difficulty it was simply hired for the time, and was returned to the jeweller at the end of the year.

After her marriage every well-born woman took a 'cicisbeo' or 'cavalier servente.' These cavaliers were in most cases, especially at the beginning of the century, neither young, nor handsome, nor the least lover-like, though there were exceptions to the rule. The choice of them was often the occasion of the first conjugal dispute, and a lady of the Condulmer family retired to a convent for life because her husband objected to the cavalier whom she wanted.

The serving cavalier accompanied his lady on all occasions, for the husband never did, and the two were seen everywhere together, and especially under the felse of the gondola; for ladies never used the gondola uncovered, even on beautiful summer evenings. And they were perpetually out, so that grave historians inform us that they only spent a few hours of the night in their palaces, and during the day the time they needed for dressing. When required, the 'cicisbeo' waited on his lady instead of her maid; her smallest caprices were his law, and she dragged him after her everywhere, to mass, benediction, and the sermon. 'The object of mass is to go to walk,' said Businallo in one of his satires, after saying that the proper purpose of pilgrimages was to make a great deal of noise.

Not unfrequently the cicisbei were mere adventurers

*Rom. ix. 13.*

*Tassini, under  
'Grassi.'*

*Rom. viii. 207,  
303, and ix. 11;  
Molmenti, Vita  
Priv.*

who pretended to be great nobles from other Italian cities, and to have left their homes in consequence of some misfortune.

Goldoni wrote a comedy called 'Il Cavaliere e la Dama' on the subject of the 'cicisbei,' whom he calls 'singular beings, martyrs to gallantry, and slaves to the caprices of the fair sex.' In speaking of this piece, in his autobiography, he observes that he could not have printed the word 'cicisbeatura' on the bill for fear of offending the numerous class whom he intended to satirise.

He goes on to say of his play that a man is presented who is the husband of one lady and the serving cavalier of another, and the mutual satisfaction of the two women is exhibited. 'A married woman,' Goldoni says, 'complains to her cicisbeo that one of her lacqueys has been disrespectful to her; the cavalier answers that the man should be punished. "And whose business is it but yours to see that I am obeyed and respected by my servants?" cries the lady.'

The playwright no doubt heard the speech in actual life. The cavalier was the real master of the house in many families, yet now and then a husband could be jealous, though not in the least in love.

Goldoni says that there were husbands who put up with their wives' cavaliers in a submissive spirit, but that there were others who were enraged by those strange beings, who were like Goldoni, vol. ii. chap. x. second masters of the house in disorganised families.

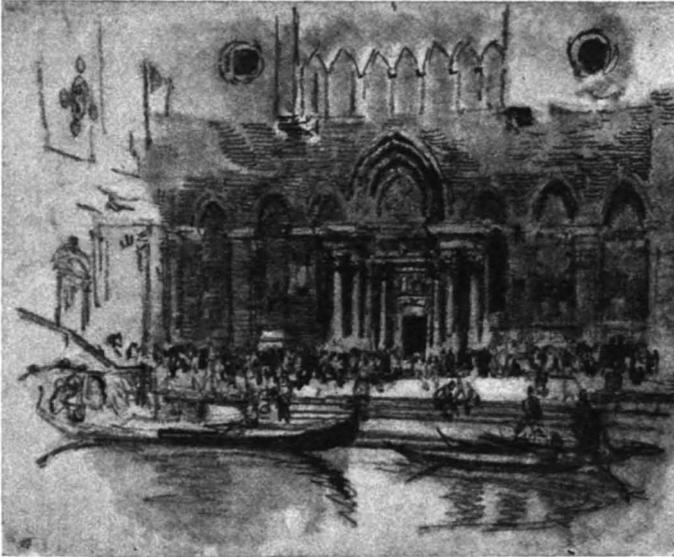
It is certain that the Venetian ladies cared more for

gambling than for adornment, or anything else. In the morning they wore a dress of more or less rich stuff, but always black, and when they went out they wore a long scarf, also black, which they disposed with much grace upon their heads, crossed upon their bosom, and knotted loosely behind the waist. This dress went by the general name of 'Cendaleto,' and it was the custom to apply the appellation also to those who wore it. They said, for instance, that there were so many 'Cendaleti' at a ceremony, meaning that number of ladies. Giustina Renier Michiel, the historian of all that was left of grace and beauty in Venice, says that the scarf had the magic power of making the plainest women pretty.

Though dress was simple enough on ordinary occasions, conforming to certain rules, yet on gala occasions the latest fashions were consulted.

*Rom. viii. 303.* In earlier times Venice had set the fashion for the world, and beautifully dressed dolls had been sent by the Venetian women's tailors as models to Paris. In the eighteenth century Paris sent dolls to Venice. These dolls were exhibited at the fair of the Ascension, near the entrance to the Merceria, and took the place of fashion-plates and dressmakers' journals. The men wore the cut-away coat, breeches, silk stockings, shoes with buckles, wigs, and three-cornered hats, then common throughout Italy and France; but they had invented a singular fashion of their own, which was that of throwing a light mantle of velvet, satin, or cloth over their hat and wig. It was called the 'velada,' and was adorned with embroidery,

lace, or a fringe. In the end, it was sometimes made of lace only. As the law did not allow any member of the Great Council to appear in public without his toga, the nobles introduced a fashion which soon became common in all classes; they wore a black or white mask,

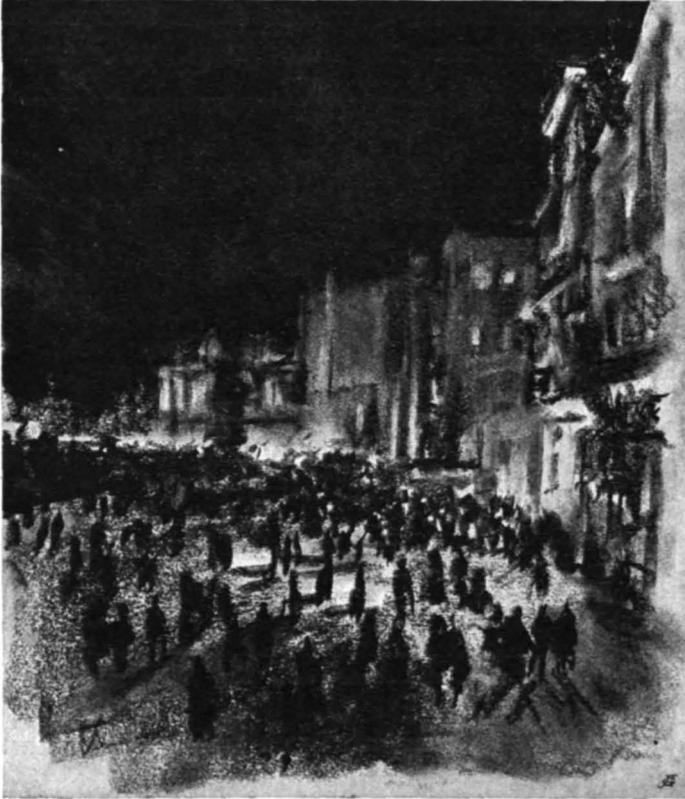


SS. GIOVANNI E PAOLO

and covered themselves entirely with a black silk mantle having a hood, on the top of which they placed the three-cornered hat. This garment was nothing, in fact, but a domino. Of course the women soon discovered the advantages of a dress in which they could not only disguise themselves but could even pass for men. The

*Mutinelli,  
Lessico;  
G. R. Michiel,  
i. 283.*

'Cendaleto' remained as the proper dress for going out in the morning, but in the afternoon and evening, at



NIGHT ON THE RIVA

the theatre, at the ridotti, or in the piazza, the mask and domino became indispensable, and men and women wore precisely the same three-cornered hat.

It was soon noticed, however, that the domino did not tend to improve the public morals, and a decree was issued limiting its use to the period between the first Sunday in October and Advent Sunday, and during Carnival and the festivities which took place at the Ascension.

The women, no doubt, amused themselves in various ways, not excepting that form of diversion in which women have such marked advantages over men; but their chief enjoyment, if not their principal occupation, was gambling. Games of chance were played for very high stakes in the *ridotti*, which were gaming-clubs, not much better than the 'hells' of modern cities. The most celebrated was that connected with the theatre of San Moisè, which the government protected as a useful social institution. A patrician, generally a senator, presided in his toga at the tables, in order to see that there was no cheating. The singular rule of admission was that one must be either noble or masked, and the consequence was that the Venetian *ridotti* were frequented not only by the Venetians themselves, but by half the gamblers, adventurers, and blacklegs in Europe.

King Frederick IV. of Denmark once visited San Moisè disguised in a domino, and won a large sum of money from a Venetian noble who was *Tassini, under*  
risking the last remains of his fortune. *'Ridotto.'*

On being told the circumstances, he pretended to stumble, upset the table with all the money on it, and disappeared, leaving the embarrassed gentleman to pick up his gold again, which he did with marvellous

alacrity. The number of players at San Moisè was so great that in 1768 the government enlarged the place, using for the purpose the proceeds of property confiscated from the nuns, which terribly scandalised the population and provoked some bitter epigrams. At the ridotto the most illustrious patrician ladies quarrelled for places at the table with ladies of no character at all, and a contemporary observes that in order to pay their gambling debts and continue to amuse themselves, they were reduced to the last extremity. He adds that they played from the hour of tierce, which is half-way between dawn and noon at all times of the year.

*Mutinelli,*  
*Ult. 54.*

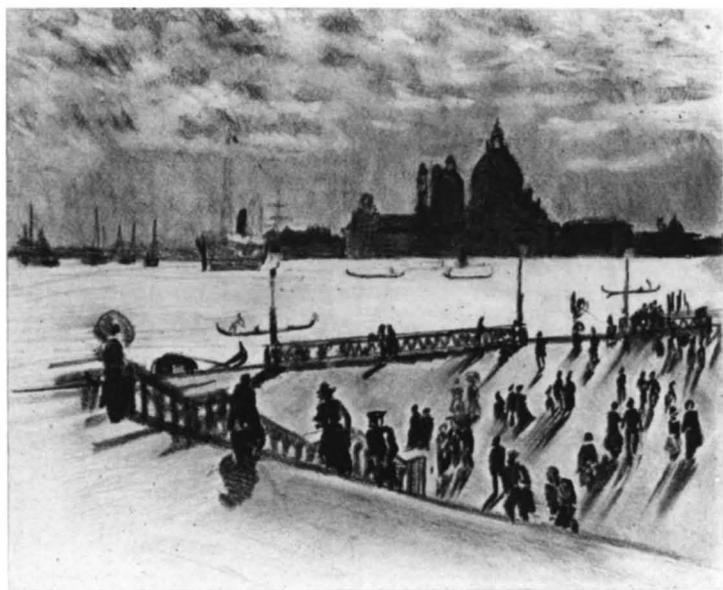
In 1780, when the Republic had but a few years more to live, the two ridotti of San Moisè and San Cassian, which had been protected and superintended by the government, were suppressed, but the only result was that a new class of gaming-houses came into existence called Casini, which were much worse in character than the old establishments. Ruined nobles borrowed enormous sums from usurers, and even from plebeians, sharing the winnings with the lender when successful, and being entirely at his mercy if they lost. Some women kept private Casini of their own, to which they invited men and women; and while they played at Pharaoh, Basset, and Biribissi within, the gondoliers played Morra at the landing outside.

*Mutinelli, Ult.*

Venice slept little, and was devoured day and night by the fever of pleasure. The lighting of the city

THE SALUTE FROM THE RIVA







was paid for by the proceeds of the lotto, which had been introduced in 1734. Goldoni says that the shops were always open until ten o'clock at night, while a great many did not close till midnight, and some never shut at all. In Venice, he continues, you would find eatables exposed for sale at midnight exactly as at midday, and all the eating-houses were open. It was not the custom to give many dinners or suppers in Venetian society, but a few such occasions have remained famous, and the invited guests appear to have behaved with as little restraint as if they had been in a common eating-house. A certain noble, of the Labia family, once gave a supper at which he showed all his finest plate, and the guests could not refrain from admiring the magnificent chiselled pieces of gold and silver that covered the table. Suddenly, as the gaiety increased, the master of the house jumped up and began to throw the plates and dishes through the open windows into the canal, accompanying this mad proceeding with one of the worst puns ever made in the Italian language, or rather in the Venetian dialect: 'L'abia o non l'abia, sarò sempre Labia' — the words mean, 'Whether I have it or not I shall always be Labia.'

*Goldoni, vol. i.  
chap. xxxv.*

*Tassini, under  
'Labia.'*

The conditions of married life in the decadence were such amongst the nobles that it is best not to inquire too closely as to what went on. In a great number of cases husband and wife were like strangers to each other, and the children were utterly neglected, when there were any.

*Rom. viii. 303;  
Mutinelli,  
Ult. 36.*

When divorce becomes common, the family, which is the first of social institutions, soon ceases to exist, and no country has ever shown vitality or long endurance where society was not based on the relations of father, mother, and children to each other. There never was any divorce law in Italy, but there was, and is, such a thing as the annulment of marriage. In Venice, between 1782 and 1796, the Council of Ten registered two hundred and sixty-four applications for annulment, and the great part of them were admitted.

As generally happens when a form of government is exhausted and is about to go to pieces, the Venetian *Mutinelli, UH. 71.* people retained ideas of morality longer than the wealthy burghers or the worn-out nobility; the wives of the artisans necessarily lived more at home than their richer sisters, and were generally able to keep their husbands. The love of pleasure was too universal to admit of excepting a whole class from its influence, and to the last the working people seem to have been very prosperous under the old government; but their amusements were harmless and their pleasures innocent compared with those of the upper thousands. The women of the people organised their diversions with a good deal of system, forming groups among themselves, each of which had a presidentess and a treasurers, who collected the subscriptions, kept the money in safety, and made out the accounts when, at intervals, the little fund was drawn upon for excursions and parties of pleasure, to which men were not invited.

On the morning of one of those appointed days, the women and girls met at the landing from which they were to start, all dressed very much alike. Those who belonged to the class of the better artisans wore a rather dark cotton skirt, a blouse of scarlet cloth, a chintz apron with a design of large flowers, and lastly, a white linen kerchief called the 'niziol,' which was to them what the black 'cendal' was to the Venetian ladies; and from 'niziol' the word 'nizioleto' was formed, like 'cendaletto,' and meant a pretty woman or girl of the people. Of course, when they met for a day's pleasure they wore whatever ornaments they possessed.

The women of the poorest class wore over the dark skirt a very wide apron which covered it entirely when let down, but which they pulled up over their heads like a sort of hood when they went out.

The fathers, husbands, and brothers of the women came with them as far as the boat, but left them then, as the people would have thought it highly improper that decent women should amuse Rom. ix. 18. themselves in the company of the other sex. Yet for their protection two elderly men of unexceptionable character went with them, as well as the necessary rowers, and it was a common practice to be rowed about for a time before leaving the city, singing songs together.

The principal diversions of the day were the picnic, which was a solid affair, a dance, generally the country 'villotta,' accompanied by the singing of couplets, and

the return to Venice in the boat, illuminated with festoons of little coloured lanterns. At the landing they parted, dividing what was left of the provisions, lest anything should be lost, and no doubt each good wife did her best to bring home a few titbits for the men of her household, if only to make them envy her for being a woman. I find no record of what the men did with themselves on picnic days, but it must have been very quiet in the house, and they may have felt that there were compensations even for being left at home.

Another time of gaiety was the evening after a regatta. Then the houses of the winners were decked with garlands of green, and the doors were open to every friend; the silk flag, which was the token of victory, was hung in a conspicuous place for all visitors *Molmenti, Nuovi Studi, 318.* to admire, and when it grew late they all sat down to a plentiful supper, which on those occasions generally consisted principally of several dishes of fish washed down with copious draughts of the island wine. The last homes of Venice, in any real sense, were the homes of the working people.

Life in the country did little to bring the members of a noble family nearer together, but there was a good deal of it, such as it was. At a time when France set the fashions, which she was before long to impose on the greater part of Europe, every rich Venetian noble dreamt of making a little Versailles of his own villa. The residences of the Marcello, the Corner, the Gradenigo, the Foscarini, and the Pisani, on the road

to Treviso and on the banks of the Brenta, were so many little courts, in which every element was represented from the sovereign to the parasite, from the parasite to the buffoon, and the lesser nobles imitated the greater throughout a scale which descended from the sublime to the ridiculous. The villas themselves were often decorated by the greatest artists. In the hall of the Pisani's country-house at Strà, for instance, Tiepolo had painted a wonderful picture representing the reception of Henry III. in Venice.

In going from the city to the villas, people went by water as far as it was possible, and each family had a sort of light house-boat for this purpose, *Molmenti, Ul.* called a 'burchiello,' and fitted with all *112, 116.* possible comfort. The travellers dined and supped sumptuously on board, and spent most of their time in playing cards; and when the end of the journey was reached a long round of pleasures and amusements began, in which the 'cicisbei' played an important and, one would think, a terribly fatiguing part. They were assisted by regular relays of parasites who were invited for a few days at a time, and who were expected to pay with ready flattery and story-telling for the hospitality they received.

Eating then played a much larger part in what was called pleasure than we moderns can well understand. We are ourselves no great improvement *Molmenti,* on our fathers, in respect of manly virtue, *Vita Priv.* faith in things divine, or honesty when it does not happen to be the best policy; but as an age of men we

are not greedy of food. The Venetians were. Not only did they employ French cooks and spend much time in considering what things to eat, but their dinners were so interminably long, and the courses they ate were so numerous, that they found it convenient to use three dining-rooms in succession for the same meal, the first being for the soup and the beef, the second for the roast meats and vegetables, and the third for the pudding and dessert.

The Venetians were near their end when they ceased to be men of business and turned into gamblers and spendthrifts. All this extravagance, especially in the country, led to financial embarrassment at the end of the season; and in order to satisfy the creditors who then appeared in force, it was necessary to rackrent the peasants or to sell property and produce at ruinous prices. In one of his comedies Goldoni makes a ruined nobleman say again and again to his steward, 'Caro vecchio, fè vu' — 'My dear old man, manage it yourself.' The expression was so true to life that not one but a number of nobles complained to the government that they were being publicly libelled by a playwright.

Everything was in a state of decay already approaching ruin. When the Princess Gonzaga came to Venice she had such an abominable reputation that no Venetian lady had the courage to present her to the society of the capital. At last, however, the Signora Tron, the wife of a procurator of Saint Mark, offered to do so. She introduced the

*Archivio Stor.  
Ital. fourth  
series, vol. xvi.  
p. 180.*

Princess with these historic words: 'Ladies, this is the



RIO DELLA TORESELA

Princess Gonzaga. She belongs to an illustrious family.

As for the rest, I will not answer for her, nor for you, nor for myself.'

She was wise in refusing to answer for herself, at all events, for she was accused of setting a higher price on

*Horatio Brown, Sketches.* her box at the theatre than on herself. 'That is true,' she answered, 'for I sometimes give myself for nothing.'

It is comprehensible that where great ladies talked like this, a burgher dame should have put up her

*Mutinelli, Ut. 82.* daughter's honour at a lottery, for which the tickets were sold at a sequin, about fifteen shillings, each.

The decadence was turning into final degeneration, and everything morbid was hailed with enthusiasm.

*Carrer, Annali, 34.* Two lovers committed suicide, for instance, and immediately handkerchiefs were sold everywhere adorned with a death's head in one corner, and embroidered in the middle with the lovers' initials surrounded with stains of the colour of blood.

The average Venetian lady was at once ignorant and witty, yet here and there one succeeded in cultivating her mind by reading and intercourse with the famous foreigners who spent much time in Venice at the end of the eighteenth century. Giustina Renier Michiel was undoubtedly the most remarkable and admirable Venetian woman of her times. She was born in 1755, the daughter of Andrea Renier, afterwards Doge, and the niece of Marco Foscarini. At the age of three she was sent to a convent of Capuchin nuns at Treviso; at nine she was brought back to Venice and placed in a

fashionable boarding-school kept by a Frenchwoman, where she learned French badly, and Italian not at all. But the girl was a born bookworm, and even in her school succeeded in reading a vast number of books, and in filling her girlish imagination with a vast store of ideals. She naturally hated complication and prejudice, and aspired to be simple and just. Like many women of independent mind, she could not help associating dress with moral qualities and defects; and when she was old enough to please herself, she always wore a long straight garment of woollen or white linen, according to the season, and adorned her beautiful hair with a crown of roses. Such a costume might surprise us nowadays, but she loved flowers, and deemed that to wear them brought her nearer to nature. If she was obliged to wear fashionable clothes for some public occasion, she spoke of them as a disguise, and hastened to 'take off her mask and domino,' as she expressed it, as soon as she reached home. 'Molière may say that a Countess is certainly something,' she wrote in French to a friend; 'he should have written that a Countess is very little, or a Count either!' She often used to say: 'I should like to know why every one does not try to please me, since it would take so little to succeed!' One of her hobbies was not to give trouble, and she pushed this admirable virtue so far that one day, when her frock caught fire, she would not call any one, but rolled herself on the carpet till the flames were extinguished.

She had a great admiration for the Cavalier Giusti-

niani, the same who faced Bonaparte so bravely a few years later, but she did not marry him.

She is said to have been very beautiful, but short, a fact which disturbed her unnecessarily, to judge by a note found in one of the commonplace books in which she copied passages from her reading and wrote out her own reflections. 'A monarch who was rather famous in the last century,' she wrote with child-like simplicity, 'forbade his soldiers to marry short women; on the other hand, he rewarded them if they married gigantic women. Can it be because people fear that short women will turn out more mischievous than tall ones?'

At the age of twenty she was married to Marcantonio Michiel, and a few months later she accompanied him to Rome, where her father, Andrea Renier, was ambassador. She made a profound impression on Roman society, and soon went by the name of 'Venerina Veneziana,' the little Venetian Venus. In Rome she met the genial poet Monti, then very young, and recommended to the Venetian ambassador by Cardinal Braschi. To fill her idle hours, the industrious little lady studied engraving on wood.

Not long after her return from Rome her paternal uncle was elected Doge. He was not a very estimable personage, and as he had married a dancer whom the people refused to accept as the Dogess, his niece Giustina did the honours of the ducal palace when occasion required.

In her early youth she began several literary works, among which a rather inaccurate translation of some of

Shakespeare's plays has come down to us. She was a literary personage, however, when still young, and the drawing-rooms of the Palazzo Michiel were frequented by all that was most distinguished in Venice, as well as by the best of the foreign element. Giustina, like all women who succeed in gathering intellectual people about them, encouraged the discussion of all sorts of subjects from the broadest point of view. At that time she was slightly inclined towards the new order of ideas, and boasted of being somewhat democratic; but if this was true, it did not prevent her from sincerely lamenting the fall of the Republic a few years later.

On the twelfth of May 1797, after the fatal session which ended the history of Venice, a few nobles gathered at her house to mourn over the sudden end. While they sat together, heavy-hearted and conversing in broken sentences, they heard the rabble in the street below, howling at those whom it called the assassins of Saint Mark. The little group upstairs understood the danger, and after a moment's silence Giustina called upon them to save the city at least, if they could no longer save the Republic. Her cousin Bernardino Renier was there, and was temporarily charged with seeing to the safety of the city. The only means he could think of for preventing pillage was violence, and he swept the streets with artillery.

For a while Giustina cherished the vain hope that Bonaparte would help Venice to rise from her ashes. That fact explains why she was willing to receive in her house the handsome, fair-haired Marina Benzon, who

danced round the tree of liberty in the Square of Saint Mark's with the 'Carmagnola' on her head, on the day that saw the Venetian flag replaced by the Phrygian cap of liberty. It explains, too, why Giustina was in the square ten years later, when Napoleon  
*1809.* came to Venice a second time. It was a singular meeting enough.

When the Emperor was passing his troops in review in the square, Bernardino Renier pointed out his cousin Giustina, who was in the crowd looking on, and Napoleon at once sent two officers to bring her to him. The story is that the Emperor planted himself before her with his arms crossed and his legs apart.

'What are you celebrated for?' he asked roughly.

'I, sire? Celebrated?' cried the lady.

'Yes, you. But to what do you owe your celebrity?'

'To friendship, no doubt, which attributes to me an importance I do not possess.'

'What have you written?' demanded the Emperor.

'Little things not worth mentioning,' answered Giustina.

'Verse or prose?'

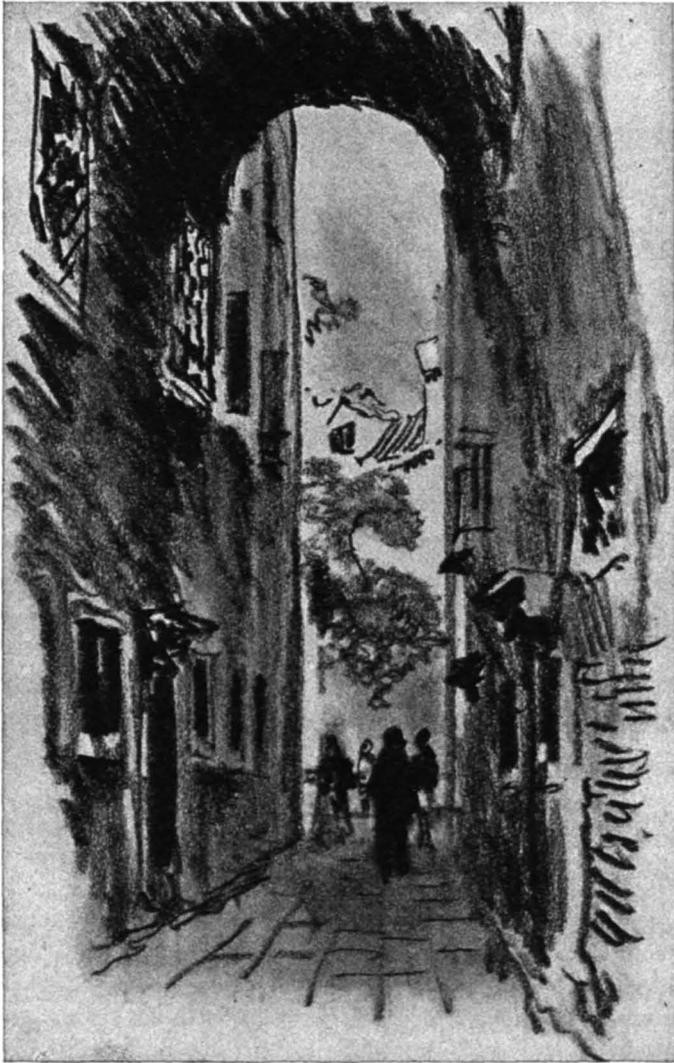
'In prose, sire. I never was able to write a verse in my life.'

'Ah, then you improvise, you improvise, do you?'

'I wish I could, sire! for I should have an excellent opportunity to-day of covering myself with glory!'

'Come, what have you written?' asked the Emperor impatiently.

'A few translations.'



A NARROW STREET, NEAR THE ACADEMY

‘Translations?’

‘Of tragedies,’ answered Giustina.

‘The tragedies of Racine, I suppose?’

‘I beg your majesty’s pardon, I have translated from the English.’

The eye-witnesses of this meeting say that when the Emperor received this answer he turned on his heel and left the high-born lady standing there.

The final state of Giustina’s mind was somewhat contradictory, for her frankly democratic dreams had faded away, yet there remained an unlimited indulgence for the most contradictory opinions which were sometimes expressed in her presence, together with the greatest indignation against those who judged Venice by modern standards, whether they were Venetians or foreigners. She seemed to make it her duty to prevent anything from disturbing the ghost of the defunct Republic.

When Chateaubriand made his first visit to Venice  
 1806. he had the bad taste to write an article  
 in the *Mercure de France*, from which I  
 translate a few extracts:—

TRIESTE, July thirtieth, 1806. — In Venice there had just been published a new translation of the *Génie du Christianisme*. This Venice, unless I am mistaken, would please you as little as it pleases me. It is a city against nature; one cannot take a step without being obliged to get into a boat, or else one is driven to go round by narrow passages more like corridors than streets! The Square of St. Mark alone is by its general effect worthy of its reputation. The architecture of Venice, which is almost altogether Palladio’s, is too capricious and too varied;

it is as if two or three palaces were built one upon the other. And the famous gondolas, all black, look like boats that carry coffins; I took the first one I saw for a corpse on the way to burial. The sky is not our sky beyond the Apennines. Rome and Naples, my dear friend, and a bit of Florence, there you have all Italy. There is, however, one remarkable thing in Venice, and that is the number of convents built on the islands and reefs round the city, just as other maritime cities are surrounded with forts which defend them; the effect of these religious monuments seen at night over a calm sea is picturesque and touching. There are a few pictures left by Paolo Veronese, Titian. . . .

Giustina was filled with indignation on reading these lines, which were signed by an author whose sentimentalism had found an echo in her heart. A lady who admired Foscolo's *Jacopo Ortis* would naturally be pleased with the *Génie du Christianisme*. The attack on her beloved native city seemed all the more unkind for that, and she hastened to reply in a long letter written in French, which she published in Pisa in the *Giornale dei Letterati*. She answered Chateaubriand categorically, concluding with the following words:—

I know that you have promised to return here; come then, but come in a mood less sad, in a spirit less weary, with feelings less cold. . . . I do not flatter myself that you will exclaim with that Neapolitan poet that Venice was built by the gods, but I hope at least that you will find here something more interesting than the convents on the islands and the translation of your works.

Giustina had been in her grave eighteen years when Chateaubriand returned to Venice, with a spirit indeed

less weary, and allowed himself to grow enthusiastic, and wrote a beautiful description of the city in his *Mémoires d'Outre Tombe*.

At one time Napoleon ordered a species of inquiry to be made on the following and similar questions:—What are the prejudices of the Venetians? What are their political opinions? What are their dominant tastes? The well-known and learned writers, Filiasi and Morelli, were commissioned to answer these inquiries, but they refused on the ground that such questions admitted no answer. Giustina's interest and ambition were roused at once, and during several weeks she worked hard at a book on moral statistics which has never been published, but which, no doubt, suggested to her the excellent work she afterwards produced on the origin of Venetian feasts, a book which I have often quoted in these pages. She worked at this with enthusiasm, bent on evoking in the minds of future generations the memory of beautiful and touching ceremonies long disused when the Republic fell. In that age which loved epithets and classic parallels, the lady who had been nicknamed in Rome the little Venetian Venus was now called the Venetian Antigone. Indeed, she made it her business to defend Venice and Venetian history too. But as she grew old her enthusiasm got the better of her, and she wrote such terrible answers to people who made small mistakes that she could not always get her articles printed. In particular, the tragedian Niccolini published in 1827 a tragedy upon the story of Antonio Foscarini, in which he held up

the court that condemned and executed that innocent man to execration, but by methods not honestly historical. Giustina was now over seventy years of age, but she wrote such a furious article on Niccolini's play that no one dared to publish it.

She was fond of Englishmen, and called them the Swallows, because they came back to Venice at regular intervals, and she used to say that England seemed to her the sister of the ancient Republic of Venice. She had known the Duke of Gloucester when he was a mere child, and when he returned to Venice in 1816 his first visit was for her. I translate the note she wrote in answer to his message announcing his visit:—

A message from H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, delivered at the theatre last night, and saying that he wished to honour the Michiel with his presence, has filled her with lively exaltation. She much desired to see him again. If H.R.H. had not become the great Prince he is in virtue of his birth; if he were still that amiable little boy whom she so often embraced, she would have let him know by this time that she desired to embrace him affectionately. And indeed she might have said so now, since the difference of ages is always the same. Then he was a child and she was young and pretty; now he is young and charming and she is a little old woman, and also somewhat deaf. There might therefore still be the purest innocence in the sweetest embrace. But setting aside this jesting, which is indeed too familiar, H.R.H. will please to accept in advance the thanks of Giustina Renier Michiel for the honour which he intends to do her this evening, and she is impatiently awaiting that desired moment.

Though Giustina had begun life by giving signs of

being emancipated, she behaved with the greatest devotion to her daughter and her grandchildren. 'I have hardly any company but that of children,' she wrote to a friend. 'I think very highly of their patience, since there is between me and them the same distance of age which exists between them and me. I find I have nothing in common with them but the taste for "anguria," and this is a good argument for the truth of what I say.'

Her most intimate friend was Isabella Teodochi Albrizzi. This lady was born in Greece, and was a passionate worshipper of the beautiful; her taste in all matters seems to have been more delicate than Giustina's and her character was much more gay and forgetful. Giustina lived in the past, Isabella in the present. Everything about Giustina was Venetian, the mantilla she wore on her head, the furniture she had in her house, the refreshments she offered her friends; to the very last everything connected with her belonged to the eighteenth century. With Isabella Albrizzi nothing, on the contrary, was Venetian, nothing was durable; at one moment the French taste ordered her furniture, her bibelots, and her books, and provided her with subjects of conversation; at another, everything about her was English. 'When you left the Michiel's drawing-room you had learned to love Venice,' says her biographer; 'when you left Madame Albrizzi's drawing-room you had learned to love Madame Albrizzi.'

They died nearly at the same time. Giustina breathed her last at the age of seventy-seven on April sixth,

1832, surrounded by her grandchildren and her friends. Andrea Maffei wrote that the death of Giustina Michiel was indeed a public loss. 'To the excellence of her mind she united in a high degree the beauty of her character, and I know of no writer who more dearly loved his country than she.'



GRAND CANAL

## XI

### THE LAST CARNIVALS — THE LAST FAIRS THE LAST FEASTS

No people ever combined business with pleasure so advantageously as the Venetians, and few governments have understood as well as theirs how to make use of amusement in managing the people; indeed, the method was so convenient that at last the Signory preferred it to all others, and took most pains to promote the

public gaiety just when the Republic was on the verge of dissolution. There is something unnatural in the contrast between the outward Rom. ix. 213. life and the inward death of Venice in those last years; something that reminds one of the strangest tales ever told by Hoffmann or Edgar Poe.

Never dull, even at the last, all Venice went mad with delight at the feast of the Ascension, when the great fair was held. It will be remembered that Pope Alexander III., on the occasion of his visit 1177. to Venice, issued a brief granting numerous indulgences to all persons who would pray in the basilica of Saint Mark between the hour of Vespers on the eve of Ascension Day and Vespers on the day itself; and the brief concluded by invoking the malediction of heaven on any one who should oppose this practice or destroy the document itself.

With their usual keen eye for business, the Venetians saw at once that while their souls were profiting by the much-needed indulgence, their pockets could be conveniently filled without vitiating that state of grace which is especially necessary during such religious exercises. Many strangers from the mainland would visit the city on the anniversary, and by holding out a rational and sufficient inducement they could be made to come again, in greater numbers, year after year. Nothing was so sure to attract a rich class of pilgrims as a great annual fair, and to make their coming absolutely certain it was only necessary to suspend the duties on imported wares during eight days.

The first Ascension Fair was held in the year 1180, when Orio Mastropiero was Doge, and it was a vast financial and popular success. Merchants of all the nations of the earth spread out their merchandise for sale in booths and tents, and under every sort of improvised shelter. For more than a week the Square of Saint Mark's was a vast bazaar of little shops, following the most irregular and winding lanes, just wide enough for two persons. Every merchant, foreign or Venetian, was free to set up his booth as he pleased and where he pleased, and there were thousands of them, in each of which at least one person had to sleep at night. The effect of it all must have been vastly picturesque, as many things were when effect was never thought of.

The annual fair was held in this same way for about five hundred years, during which time it did not occur to any of the Signory that the contrast between the amazing irregularity of the bazaar and the solemn symmetry of the surrounding architecture was disagreeable.

*1678.* Then in the Barocco age came artificial taste and set things to rights, and the Senate issued a decree ordering that the shops should be set up in straight lines, and by squares, like Chicago; and it seems to me that about that time the Ascension Fair turned itself into the first Universal Industrial Exhibition. From that time there was a commission established to which all exhibitors were required to send a detailed list of their merchandise. There were no prizes and no medals, yet I have no doubt but that the result was much the same, and that certain houses of mer-

chant-manufacturers made their reputations and their fortunes on the strength of the impression they created at the Venetian Fair.

It was destined to be still more like a modern exhibition. In 1776 the Signory commissioned an architect to put up a vast oval building of wood, like a double portico, looking both inwards and outwards, and almost filling the Square of Saint Mark's. It was very practically arranged, for to those who sold the more valuable objects shops were assigned on the inside of the oval, where they were better protected, and the shops on the outside, facing the porticoes of the Procuratie, were filled with the more ordinary wares, which would naturally attract more buyers from the lower classes.

On this occasion painters and sculptors exhibited their work, and Canova, who was then but nineteen years old, is said to have shown one of his earliest groups. But we learn without surprise that the products offered for sale by Venetians were of inferior quality, and that there was a bad contrast between the showy architectural shops and the poor wares they contained. The end was at hand, and Venetian manufacture was dead.

*G. R. Michiel,  
vol. i. 279.*

*Marble Group,  
Daedalus and  
Icarus, Accade-  
mia, Room XVII.*

But the people cared not for that, and were as gay and happy over the Fair as their ancestors had been hundreds of years ago. It mattered nothing to them; if the wares were poor, the charlatans who cried them up were wittier than ever. There was one in particular, a certain Doctor Buonafede Vitali of Parma, who

employed four celebrated actors, one of whom was Rubini, famous in Goldoni's companies; they were dressed in the four Italian theatrical masks, and by their clever improvisations and witty sallies they advertised the doctor's miracles, and amused the clients that waited to be cured by him.

There were professional jesters, too, who joked on their own account, and there was usually somewhere a black African buffoon-contortionist; and there were long-legged tumblers, called 'guaghe,' absurdly dressed as women, who kept the crowd laughing, and while the people looked on they chewed the pods of carobs, which were sold off trays with nuts and other things by the Armenians who moved about in the throng. In the

*Mutinelli, Ull.*

motley multitude nobles and magistrates and foreign ambassadors elbowed each other, and great ladies and light ladies, all effectually disguised under the 'tabarro,' the 'bauta,' and the mask, which were allowed in public during the Fair.

The Espousal of the Sea was the great ceremony of the week, and the one which most directly recalled the visit of Alexander III. It was last performed by the last Doge in 1796, the six-hundred-and-eighteenth time, I believe, since its institution, and all the ancient ceremonial was carefully followed.

On the eve of the Ascension, the Bucentaur was hauled out of the Arsenal and anchored off the Piazzetta

*Mutinelli,  
Lessico.*

in full view of the delighted population. It was no longer the 'Busus aureus,' built by the Senate in 1311, and towed by a small boat from

Murano, called the 'peota.' In four hundred years new ones had been constructed several times, and the last



CHURCH OF THE MIRACLE

Bucentaur was built in 1728. It was about one hundred and fifteen feet over all, with twenty-two feet beam,

and was twenty-six feet deep from upper poop-deck to keel. In length and beam it had therefore about the dimensions of a fair-sized schooner yacht, but it was vastly higher out of water, and was flat-bottomed, so as to draw very little. The consequence was that even in smooth water it might have been laid over by a squall, and it was never used except in absolutely fine weather. It was rowed by one hundred and seventy-eight free artisans from the Arsenal, who swung forty-two oars, each of which, however, according to the model now preserved, consisted of three, linked and swung together in one rowlock. The rowers occupied what we should call the main deck, and the upper deck was fitted up

*G. R. Michiel, as one long cabin or saloon, taking the*  
*Origini, i. 197.* whole length of the vessel, but rising by a step at the after end, and having a small window at the stern from which the Doge threw out the ring in the course of the ceremony. His throne was further raised by two steps. Over the cabin were spread enormous draperies of crimson velvet, ornamented with gold fringe, gold lace, and gold tassels. In the stern, within the cabin, was figured a marine Victory with appropriate trophies, and two carved babies, of the rotund and well-creased breed dear to the eighteenth century, supported a huge shell as a canopy over the throne. The fair Giustina Michiel's description of the decorations makes one's blood run cold. Prudence and Strength stood sentinels at the Doge's elbows. In the ceiling of the saloon Apollo smiled upon the nine Muses, pleased to consider the Bucentaur as his temple; the Virtues were

inappropriately present, too, and with more reason the Arts, or Occupations, of Shipbuilding, Fishing, Hunting, and the like. The saloon had no less than forty-eight windows, from which the numerous party of ambassadors, magistrates, and distinguished strangers who accompanied the Doge could see all that went on. Lastly, the vessel's figurehead was a colossal wooden statue of Justice, 'protecting goddess of every well-regulated government,' says the lady Giustina, and therefore as inappropriate there as the Virtues themselves.

At the hour of tierce, which was somewhere near eight o'clock in the morning at Ascension, all the bells began to ring, except, I think, that solemn one that tolled while condemned men were being led to death; and excepting, too, that one of lighter tone, the 'Bankrupt's Bell,' which was rung every day for half an hour about noon, during which time debtors might walk abroad and sun themselves without being arrested.

Then the Doge came from his palace preceded by his squires, and the silver trumpets, and the standards, and the bearer of the ducal sword, and the Missier Grande, who was nothing more nor *Carrer, Annali.* less than the head constable of Venice; and after his Serenity came the High Chancellor, the Pope's Nuncio, the ambassadors, and the principal magistrates. When all were on board the Bucentaur, a salute of artillery gave the signal of departure, and the huge oars began to swing and dip; and after the big barge came the smaller one of the 'Doge' of the fishermen, the

Nicolotti, the little 'peota' of the Murano glass-blowers, and the barges and boats of the Signory, and all the gondolas of Venice, richly draped for that one day. So all moved slowly out; and when they passed the statue of the Virgin before the Arsenal all the people sang, and sent up prayers and invocations with suppliant gestures 'to the Great Mother of Victories,' and the sailors cheered and yelled. Then they went on to Saint Helen's island.

There the Patriarch was waiting with his flat boat, and the monks of Saint Helen served him a collation of chestnuts and red wine, which, at eight or nine o'clock in the morning, was cruelly ungastronomic; and the Patriarch gave his sailors bread and fresh broad beans in the shell.

The Patriarch sent acolytes to the Doge with a nosegay of Damascus roses; and his flat boat having been taken in tow by the Bucentaur, and another boat in which a choir sang the hymns composed for the occasion, they all moved out towards the open sea.

Then, in profound silence, the Doge opened the little stern window behind his throne, and the Patriarch, *Horatio Brown, Venice,* who had come on board, poured holy water into the sea and prayed, saying, 'Lord, vouchsafe calm and quiet weather to all them that journey by sea'; after which prayer the Patriarch *Carrer, Annali.* handed the ring to the Doge, who dropped it into the sea just where the holy water had been poured, saying, 'We espouse thee, O Sea, in token of perpetual sovereignty.'

The guns of the fortresses thundered out a salute, and all the thousands of spectators cheered for Saint Mark, and all the young men waved flags; then the whole company began to throw flowers, freshly cut, from boat to boat, and the Patriarch presented great silver dishes full of flowers to the Doge; and all went ashore at San Nicola on the Lido to hear the pontifical high mass, after which every man went home to his own house.

That was the ceremony at which the Venetians assisted in 1796, little guessing that they saw it for the last time. A few months later a vandal mob beached the Bucentaur on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, and stripped it of all its ornaments, to burn them and get the gold. The hull was then armed with four heavy old guns, and was turned into a sort of floating battery and sailors' prison at the entrance of the harbour. On her stern was painted her new name 'Idra,' the Hydra, and there she rotted for years. A few fragments of the old vessel are now preserved in the Arsenal. More than two hundred men worked at reducing the Bucentaur and the two big carved boats of the Signory to the democratic standard of beauty.

The last pilot of the Bucentaur was Andrea Chiribini, who, like all his predecessors, called himself 'admiral,' and was a ruffian not worth the rope with which he should have been hanged when he was young. He was one of the worst types in the Venetian revolution; and after living all his life on the bounty of the Signory, he was the first to help in

*Rom. x. 305;  
Mutinelli,  
Lessico and Ult.*

*Mutinelli, Ult. ;  
Bembo, Ben. 265.*

breaking up the Bucentaur, and in sacking the Arsenal. In order to reward him for these noble acts of patriotism, and in the absence of appropriate funds, he was given a magnificent carved jewel of oriental chalcedony from the treasure of Saint Mark. The talisman did not bring the fellow luck. After wandering about for nearly thirty years, living more or less dishonestly by his wits,



THE PROCESSION OF THE REDENTORE

he presented himself one day in 1826 at one of the asylums for the poor, where he spent a day; but when towards evening he was requested to put on the dress of the establishment, he flew into such a terrible rage that he had fever all night, and had to be watched. On the following morning he shook the dust from his feet and departed, declaring that a gentleman like himself could not live among such brigands. During two years the workmen of the Arsenal subscribed to give him a

pittance; at the end of that time, feeling that his days were numbered, he consented to enter the little hospice of Saint Ursula, which a pious person of the fourteenth century had founded for the perpetual support of three poor old men.

It is said that the last Carnival of Venice was the gayest in all her history, and fully realised the condition of things described by Goldoni some years earlier in his comedy *La Mascherata*. I translate the couplet into prose: —

Here the wife and there the husband,  
Each one does as best he likes ;  
Each one hastens to some party,  
Some to gamble, some to dance.  
Provided every one in Carnival  
May do exactly as he chooses,  
It would not seem a serious matter  
Even to go raving mad.

A good many different traditional and legendary feasts amused the Venetians in old times, but the only one that has survived to our own day is *G. R. Michiel*, the Festa del Redentore, the feast of the *iii. 389.* Redeemer, which was instituted as a thanksgiving after the cessation of the plague in 1576, and is kept even now both as a civil and religious holiday. The serenades, illuminations, and feasts in the island of the Giudecca certainly delight the Venetian populace of to-day as much as in the times when the old flag of Saint Mark floated over everything, and the little movable kitchens on wheels were adorned with the symbols of the Evan-

gelist prettily outlined with flowers on a ground of green leaves.

The central point of all amusement in Carnival was the theatre, for the Venetians always had a passion for spectacles, and, at a time when the worst possible taste debased the stage throughout Italy, the reform which has since raised the Italian theatre so high began in Venice with Goldoni's comedies. Properly speaking, there was no dramatic art in Italy before him. As I have explained in speaking of the sixteenth century, the Hose Club founded the first theatre, but most of the performances were what we still call mummeries, in which more or less symbolic personages said anything witty or profound that occurred to them, or talked nonsense in the absence of inspiration. Pantaloon was the national mask of Venice, and was always supposed to be a doctor who became involved in the most astonishing adventures. Valaresso, a man of taste in those days, produced a play that ended with a battle supposed to be fought behind the scenes. In his satire the poet makes the prompter appear upon the stage carrying a little lamp. 'Ladies and gentlemen,' he says, 'I see that you are expecting some one to bring you news of the battle; but it is of no use to wait, for every one is dead.' Thereupon he blows out his lamp, and goes off to bed.

*Aureli, Vita  
del Pergolesi.*

In his memoirs Goldoni explains the rules then followed by dramatic authors. He had occasion to learn them himself when he read his first piece, *Amalasuunta*, to Count Prata, director of one of the large theatres in Milan.

*Goldoni, i.  
xxviii.*

‘It seems to me,’ said the Count, ‘that you have studied tolerably well the *Poetics* of Aristotle and the *Ars Poetica* of Horace, and that you have written your composition according to the true principles of tragedy. Then you did not know that a musical drama is an imperfect work, subject to rules and traditions which have no common sense, it is true, but which must be followed to the very letter. If you had been in France you might have thought more of pleasing the public, but here you must please actors and actresses, you must satisfy the composer of the music, you must consult the scene-painter; everything has its rules, and it would be a crime of *lèse majesté* against the art of playwriting to dare to break them or not to submit to them. Listen to me,’ he continued, ‘I am going to point out to you some rules which are unchangeable, and which you do not know. Each of the three principal characters in the drama must sing five airs — two in the first act, two in the second act, and one in the third. The second actress and the second “man” soprano can only have three, and the third parts must be satisfied with one, or two at the most. The author of the words must provide the musician with the different shades which form the *chiaroscuro* of the music, taking good care that two pathetic airs shall not follow each other. It is also necessary to separate with the same care showy airs, airs of action, of undefined character, minuets, and rondeaux. One must be especially careful to give no airs of affection or movement nor showy airs nor rondeaux to the second parts. These poor people must be contented with what is assigned to them, for they are not allowed to make a good figure.’

Count Prata would have said more, but Goldoni stopped him, for he had heard quite enough. He went home in that state of mind which some young authors have known, and obtained a sort of morbid satisfaction from burning his manuscript.

‘As I was poking the pieces of my manuscript together to complete the burning,’ he says, ‘it occurred to me that in no case had any disappointment made me sacrifice my supper. I called the waiter, and told him to lay the cloth and bring me something to eat at once. . . . I ate well, drank better, went to bed and slept with the most perfect tranquillity.’

Goldoni was of the strong, to whom is the race. From the ashes of his *Amalasuunta* rose the comedies that reformed the Italian stage.

*Portrait of Goldoni, P. Longhi; Museo Civico, Room IX.*

The composers were not much better off than the playwrights.

‘The modern master,’ says Marcello, ‘must make his manager give him a large orchestra of violins, hautboys, horns, and so forth, saving him rather the expense of the double basses, as he need not use these except for giving the chords at the beginning. The Symphony is to consist of a French time, or *prestissimo* of semiquavers in major, which as usual must be succeeded by a *piano* of the same key in minor, closing finally in a minuet, gavotte, or jig, again in the major, thus avoiding fugues, *legature*, themes, etc., etc., as old things outside of the modern fashion. He will endeavour to give the best airs to the prima donna, and if he has to shorten the opera he will not allow the suppression of airs or roundels.’

*Teatro alla moda, Benedetto Marcello, quoted by Molmenti in Nuovi Studi.*

The same master observes wittily that the authors of the words to accompany this sort of music generally excused themselves from reading the works of older writers, on the ground that the latter had not been able to read their successors, but had, nevertheless, done

very well. When the playwright or musician had succeeded in pleasing the actors, the actresses, the manager, the scene-painter, and all the rest of the company, he still had to please the Council of Ten, not to mention the Inquisitors of State and the Inquisitors of the Holy Office, for they all had something to say in the censorship of the theatre.

The infamous Jacopo Casanova, who amongst a number of ignoble occupations acted as a confidant or spy to the Council of Ten, called attention *Molmenti, Nuovi Studi, 300.* in 1776 to a piece called *Coriolanus*, which was being given in the theatre of San Benedetto. It appears to have been a sort of pantomime, which presented on the stage a starving population, a cruel nobility, the unjust condemnation of Coriolanus, the tears of Virgilia and Volumnia, everything, in short, which, according to the scrupulous Casanova, could pervert the Venetian people; and the Inquisitors accordingly suppressed the piece.

Sometimes these gentlemen shut up the provincial theatres altogether for a time with a view to stopping the advance of modern ideas. Here is an edict relating to these measures of prudence, signed by the Doge one year before the fall of the Republic. The first paragraph is in Latin, the rest is in Italian.

Ludovicus Manin, by the grace of God Doge of Venice, to the noble and wise man, Federicus Bembo, by *Molmenti, Nuovi Studi.* his commission Podestà and Captain of Mestre, Fid. Dil. Sal. et Dil. Aff. [*Fideli dilecto salutem et dilectionis affectum.*]

Seeing that the Austrian troops now coming down from Friuli are about to enter the Trevisan province, to which some of the French troops may also move, and it being according to the zealous forethought of the government to remove all inducements which give individuals of the troops the desire to come still nearer to these lagoons, the Council of Ten, considering that one inducement might be the reopening of the theatre, orders you to put it off as long as may seem best to the prudence of the Heads of the said Council.

Given in our Ducal Palace on the twenty-seventh of September in the fifteenth year of the Indiction, 1796. [I find that the year of the Indiction does not correspond with the date.]

There was another magistracy which also had to do with the theatres. The 'Provveditori di Commun' *Mutinelli.* fixed the price of the libretto of the play. *Lessico, 'Teatro.'* It was the Council of Ten, however, that named the hour at which the performance was to begin and end.

The lighting of the theatres was wretched and the boxes were completely dark, which appears to have *Molmenti,* given the ladies a considerable sense of *Nuovi Studi.* security, for I find that in 1756 the noble dame Pisani Grimani, who owned the theatre of San Benedetto, was forbidden by the Inquisitors of State to stand at the door of her box in a costume which might 'produce grave disorder.'

In 1776 the government made an effort to limit such extreme views of comfort in warm weather, and an edict was issued commanding ladies to wear modest dresses, with domino and hood, at the theatre. The noble ladies Maria Bon Toderini and Elisabetta Labia

Priuli were put under arrest in their own houses in the following year for having, in their boxes, thrown back their hoods and allowed them to slip down upon their shoulders.

The musicians' desks were lighted with candles of Spanish wax, from Segovia in Castile. The stage was illuminated by lamps fed with olive oil. In the dim house there seems to have been a good deal of rough play, and the patricians in the boxes occasionally threw 'projectiles' — possibly hard sweet-meats are meant — at the people in the pit. The lights were put out as soon as the curtain fell on the last act, and the spectators groped their way out in the dark as they could, helped by the big brass lanterns which the gondoliers brought to the door when they came to wait for their masters.

Plays were not advertised at all. A small bill giving the name of the play and the names of the authors was pasted up in the Piazzetta, and another was to be seen at the Rialto, but that was all. It was the business of the State to provide foreign ambassadors and ministers with boxes, and a vast deal of care was bestowed on this matter, which was full of difficulties; for the boxes were generally the property of private families that did not at all like to give them up. But the government always reserved the right to take any boxes it chose for the use of the Diplomatic Corps. In Venice, the smallest affairs were always conducted according to a prescribed method, and there was a regular rule by which the boxes were distributed. The document has been found by Signor Molmenti in the

Archives of the Inquisitors of State, docketed and labelled: 'Theatres. Foreign Ambassadors. Boxes.' Here it is:—

The Ambassadors present themselves with a formal request (memoriale) to the Most Excellent Council. By the latter, through a Secretary of the Senate, His Serenity is requested to draw the lots for the boxes of each. He puts into the ballot-box the numbers of all the boxes on that row which corresponds to the rank of the Minister who applies, and he draws one number. The proscenium boxes are excepted, and the balcony, the boxes occupied by other Ministers, and the one that belonged to the Minister who last went away. Afterwards, by the method explained hereinafter, notice (of the number drawn) is sent to the Minister, the owner (of the box), and the Council.

When the Minister does not like the box drawn for him, he lays before the Council his request that it may be changed, and by the same method His Serenity is requested to draw again. In that case he only puts in the numbers of the boxes opposite which are free, he draws again and sends the notices to that effect, informing the owner of the second box that he may use the one first drawn.

When the box was at last drawn and had been accepted by the Minister, the owner of it received a notice in the following form:—

This day . . . (date). By order of the Most Excellent Savi (literally, 'Wise Men') notice is given to Your Excellency the Noble Sir, etc., etc. . . . (or Noble Dame, or Your Illustrious Worship, or other proper title), that His Serenity has drawn Box No. . . . Row . . . in the . . . theatre belonging to Your Excellency (or other title) for His Excellency the Ambassador (or Minister) of . . ., and this notice is sent you for your guidance.

The feelings of the box-owner, dispossessed by this formal nonsense, may be guessed, for the indemnity paid by the ambassadors was very small.

*Mutinelli,  
Lessico.*

It seems that even the Council anticipated that he would use bad language, for the underling who took him the notice was a Comandator-Portier, and was made to wear a red cap with the arms of the Republic as a badge 'to protect him against abuse'!

In 1791, when a company formed of nobles undertook to build the Fenice Theatre, using part of the ruins of the old theatre of San Benedetto, they presented to the Doge a memorandum concerning the boxes for the Diplomatic Corps, of which I give an extract for the sake of its monumental absurdity, translating the terms quite literally:—

The reverend Company of the New Theatre is disposed to meet the public commands with submissive obedience, and will therefore at all times venerate whatsoever Your Serenity may be pleased to prescribe. . . .

In order to continue the building begun, it is necessary to sell the new boxes which have been added to those which formed the last theatre, and the greatest profit that may be hoped for lies in those situated in the first and second rows; but, as those places are subject to the dispositions above alluded to, which take from the owners the use of their own boxes, without fixing the measure of the corresponding indemnity, the sale of those boxes would be rendered impossible in the present state of things, to the incalculable damage of the sinking company, which would thus see removed the hope of soon finishing the building begun, or else would be put to new and enormous expense which would cause to vanish those expecta-

tions of profit which the Sovereign Clemency of the Most Excellent Council of Ten had benignly permitted the Company to entertain.



NEAR THE FENICE

The memorandum ends with the rather startling statement that the pretensions of the ambassadors, if

admitted, would cause the Company to lose eleven thousand ducats.

The Doge, who afterwards showed small alacrity to act when the country was in mortal danger, was apparently much moved on receiving the Company's petition, and forthwith summoned the Senate to consider the weighty matter; it is true that if he had done anything for the petitioners without appealing to that body, he would have been naturally suspected of being a shareholder.

The Senate decided that, without making any change in the method of drawing boxes, and without prejudice to the existing system in any other theatre, ambassadors should pay owners one hundred and sixty ducats for boxes in the first row, and that ministers should pay eighty ducats for those in the second; whereby, said the Senate, which still preserved traditions of business, the owners of the said boxes would be getting four per cent on the money they had invested.

The construction of the famous Fenice lasted twenty months, and the new theatre opened with an opera by Paisiello on a libretto by Alessandro Pepoli.



GRAND CANAL FROM THE FISH MARKET

## XII

### THE LAST MAGISTRATES

THE philosophical reader will naturally ask what elements composed the Great Council of the Venetian Republic at a time when France was on the brink of the Revolution, and all Europe was about to be shaken by the explosion of the first new idea that had dawned on mankind since Christianity. I shall try to answer the question.



S. BARNABÒ

There were three classes of men in the Council: first, the ancient aristo-plutocracy which, though with a few additions to its numbers, and though itself  
*Rom. ix. 7.* divided into two parties, had on the whole steered the Republic through eleven hundred years of history; secondly, a number of families, mostly of 'new men,' though they had sat in the Council four hundred years and more, but who had all been more or less occupied with the legal profession since they had existed; thirdly and lastly, the poor nobles called the 'Barnabotti,' from the quarter of San Barnabò, where most of them were lodged at the public expense.

The first category generally held the posts of highest dignity, many of which implied a salary by no means small, but never sufficient to pay for the display which the position required, according to accepted customs. The traditional splendour which the Venetian ambassadors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had inaugurated was dear to the Senate, and had come to be officially required, if not actually prescribed in so many words. These great families had long been accustomed to play the leading parts, and as the business spirit which had made Venice the richest power in Europe died out, their pride was often greater than their sense of responsibility. These and many other causes lowered the standard according to which young Venetians had been brought up during centuries to understand the administration of their country; and the result was that they were not fit to fill the offices to which they were called, and therefore handed over their work to private

secretaries, who were generally ambitious and intriguing men. To be a member of the Great Council had now only a social value, like those hereditary coats of arms in which there had once been such deep meaning. Throughout ages the aristocracy of Venice had differed altogether from the nobility of other countries, but as decadence advanced to decay, and decay threatened destruction, the Venetian senator grew more and more like the French marquis of the same period.

In an access of greatness Louis XIV. is reported to have said, 'L'état c'est moi!' but the State continued to exist without him. The Venetian nobles might have said with much more truth, and perhaps with more reasonable pride, 'We nobles are the Republic!' For when they degenerated into dolls, the Republic soon ceased to exist.

The second category of nobles comprised by far the sanest and most intelligent part of the aristocracy, and it was generally from their ranks that the Quarantie were chosen, as well as the 'Savi,' and those magistrates from whom special industry and intelligence were required, or at least hoped.

The Barnabotti had nothing in common with the two other classes, except their vanity of caste, which was so infinitely far removed from pride. As I have said, they owed their name to the parish *Molmenti, Nuovi Studi, 308.* which most of them inhabited. Their nobility was more or less recent and doubtful, and almost all had ruined themselves in trying to rival the richer families. The majority of them had nothing

but a small pension, paid them by the government, and barely sufficient to lift them out of actual misery. It was especially for them that the College of Nobles had been founded, in which their sons were educated for nothing, with all the usual imperfections of gratuitous education. Like the 'New Men' of the fourteenth century, they felt that an insurmountable barrier separated them from the older and richer classes, and the humiliations to which they were often exposed by the latter kept alive in them the sort of hatred which was felt in other parts of Europe by the agricultural population for the owners of the land. Their poverty and rancorous disposition made them especially the objects of bribery when any party in the Great Council needed the assistance of their votes against another.

The better sort of Venetians were well aware of the evils that were destroying the governing body. In 1774 a member of the Council made a speech on the subject, in which he said that the greatest damage the Republic had suffered had been caused by the action of time; it lay in the already very sensible diminution in the numbers of the Great Council, which was, in fact, the government itself. He pointed out that within one century a large number of patrician families had become extinct, and that the condition of the aristocracy must clearly continue to go from bad to worse. It could not be otherwise, since marriages were yearly becoming less numerous. A family was looked upon as a calamity, because

*Horatio Brown,*  
*Venice, 109;*  
*Rom. ix. 7.*

*Cecchetti, quoting*  
*Arch. Ven.*  
*iii. 435.*

it meant a division of fortune, and therefore interfered with those ancient traditions of almost royal



INSTITUTO BON, GRAND CANAL

magnificence which appealed to the vanity of younger men.

The speech to which I have alluded was delivered not very many years after the time when a number of seats in the Grand Council had been sold in order to meet the expenses of the Turkish war. In 1775, in order to increase the numbers of the Council, it was proposed to admit to it forty noble families from the provinces, provided they could prove that they had a yearly income of ten thousand ducats. The proposal was energetically opposed by a Contarini. If the sons of ancient families showed so little zeal for the public welfare, he argued, what could be expected of strangers? Was it wise to display to all Europe the evils from which the Republic was suffering? Moreover, even if the bill were passed, would it be easy to find forty families willing to leave their homes and establish themselves in the capital to the great damage of their fortunes? And if they were found, would their admission not result in impoverishing the provinces by the amount of their incomes which would be spent in Venice? It was luxury and extravagance that were ruining the country, he said.

A lively discussion followed. 'Beloved sons,' cried one old noble, 'for us who are old there may be a little of the Republic left, but for you children it is completely finished!' The bill passed, but Contarini had been right; only about ten families asked to be inscribed in the Golden Book.

Satirists and lampooners made merry with the proceedings of the Great Council. After the stormy sittings just referred to, the caricatures of the five

patricians entrusted with framing measures of reform were to be seen everywhere in the city, and a copy of the cut is still in the Archives. *Rom. viii. 211.* It represents the most eloquent and zealous of the committee, Alvise Emo, urging his horse against an enormous marble column; two of his colleagues follow him in a post-chaise and observe his movements with a spy-glass; a fourth, who is lame, is trying to follow the carriage on foot, and the fifth comes after him, beating him to make him mend his pace.

On the twenty-second of May 1779 the secretary of the Inquisitors of State wrote to his brother Giuseppe Gradenigo, then in France: 'If these gentlemen do not seriously think of taking measures to meet the events which are brewing, if they do not introduce some order into the affairs of the army and navy, the Republic will be lost as soon as an enemy appears on land or by sea.'

This letter was prophetic. The idleness and indolence of the nobility were such that it was hard to obtain an attendance at meetings of the Great Council or the Senate. The members were accustomed to spend their nights in gambling-dens and cafés, and it was a hard matter for them to get up in the morning. Their physicians recommended rest, which they indeed needed; and as they could not take any at night, they devoted a large part of the day to following the doctor's advice. Yet as it was necessary that the government should go on in some way, it became habitual to leave everything to the Savi of the Council, who on their part fell

into the habit of not always rendering an account of what they did. By obligingly saving their colleagues the trouble of getting out of bed, they made themselves the arbiters of the Republic's final destiny.

With regard to the other magistracies, a few anecdotes will give a good idea of what they had become. My readers know that the Avogadori enjoyed very great consideration, and that it was their business to see that all the tribunals did their work smoothly and regularly. One of these important officers, Angelo Quirini, who was at the same time one of the most distinguished members of the Senate, exhibited his power and courage by banishing from Venice a little milliner who had made a mistake in trimming certain caps for a great lady in whom he was interested. From her exile the woman wrote a protest to the Inquisitors of State, who did her justice and recalled her. Quirini now lost his temper with these gentlemen and swore that they were encroach-

*Rom. viii. 104.* ing upon his rights. Just at this time a rich member of the parish of San Vitale departed this life, and the sacristans prepared to bury his body; but the deceased belonged to a confraternity called La Scuola Grande della Carità, and his brethren claimed the right of burying him to the exclusion of the parish sacristans. The Inquisitors of State and the Council of Ten took the matter up; the Provveditori alla Sanità, who were the health officers, declared that the matter concerned them only; the elders and judges of the guilds and corporations took part in the discussion, and a general quarrel ensued, which was only

brought to a close by the authority of the Council of Ten. But this did not please Angelo Quirini, who violently attacked the Council and began to give himself the airs of a popular tribune, though not possessing the popularity which is essential for the position. The people, in fact, would have none of him. One night the Council of Ten caused him to be quietly taken from his palace and carried off under a good escort to the fortress of Verona. The matter now had to be brought before the Great Council, and a regular trial was held to ascertain how the Council of Ten and the Inquisitors were in the habit of performing their duties.

During several days the *Corregitori* received all the complaints that were handed in, and examined the archives of the two tribunals. Those of the Ten were found to be in perfect order, but those of the Inquisitors were in the utmost confusion. The whole city discussed the affair

*Rom. viii. 108.*

*Rom. viii. 114.*

excitedly, and nothing else was spoken of in the streets, in the cafés, and in drawing-rooms. It was the first time in history that the tribunal of the Inquisitors of State had been put under an inquiry, and this tremendous result had been produced because a little milliner had made a cap that did not fit.

Endless discussions followed. A number of patriicians declared that if the Council of Ten and the Inquisitors of State were abolished, they themselves would not stay another day in Venice, as there would no longer be any check on the violence and the intrigues of men of their own class: a confession which

suddenly exhibits the whole aristocracy in its true light.

Others proved beyond all question that a tribunal which was particularly charged with the preservation of the State from danger could not always do its work with the miserable tardiness of the other magistracies, and they recalled the many cases in which the Ten had saved Venice. One of the debates was prolonged for five consecutive hours. At last the Conservative party carried the day.

The wild enthusiasm of the population, on learning that the Ten and the Inquisitors were to remain in existence, shows well enough what the people thought; their only protection against the nobles lay in the two tribunals. Six thousand persons waited in the Square of Saint Mark's to learn the result of the contest, and when it was known proceeded to burn fireworks before the palaces of the nobles who had been the chief speakers in defence of the Ten — Foscari, Marcello, and Grimani. The populace then declared that it would set fire to the houses of the nobles who had tried to do away with the only institution they still feared, and the palaces of the Zen and the Renier were only saved from fire and pillage by the energetic intervention of the Inquisitors of State, whose office those aristocrats had attempted to abolish.

I know of no more convincing answer to the numerous dilettante historians who have accused the Council of Ten of oppressing the people.

If the Council and the Inquisitors were in need of an excuse for occasionally overstepping their powers in order to act quickly, they had a good one in the absurdly cumbrous system of the magistracies, as they existed in the eighteenth century. As a curiosity, *Rom. viii. 399.* I give a list of the principal magistracies, taken by Romanin from an almanack of 1796, the last year of the Republic:—

The Doge's Counsellors . . . .	6
Savi of the Council . . . .	16
Procurators of Saint Mark . . . .	9
'Criminal' Quarantia . . . .	40
'Old' Civil Quarantia . . . .	40
'New' Civil Quarantia . . . .	40
Colleges of the XXV. and the XV. . . .	40
Senate . . . . .	60
'Zonta,' supplementary to Senate . . . .	60
Council of Ten . . . . .	10
Inquisitors (of Ten) . . . . .	3
Avogadori of the Commonwealth . . . .	3
Total . . . . .	327

besides the whole of the Great Council, which consisted of all nobles over twenty-five years of age, and of the younger men chosen by lot to sit without a vote.

And these are only the principal magistracies. The secondary ones comprised over five hundred officials, divided between something like one hundred and thirty offices, such as *Provveditori*, or inspectors of some forty different matters, from artillery to butchers' shops, from 'Ancient and Modern Justice' to oats: *Savi*,

Inquisitors of all matters except religion, Auditors, Executors, Correctors, Reformers, Deputies, and Syndics; a perfect ant-hill of officials who were perpetually in one another's way.

Here is an instance of the manner in which ordinary justice was administered, even by the Council of Ten.



WHEN THE ALPS SHOW THEMSELVES, FONDAMENTA NUOVE

On the sixth of March 1776 a patrician called Semitecolo, who was a member of one of the Quarantie, and therefore a magistrate, was walking in the Fondamenta Nuove when he saw a big butcher named Milani unmercifully beating a wretched peddler of old books. He stopped and expostulated; the butcher took his

interference ill, and delivered a blow with his fist which caused the blood to gush abundantly from the magistrate's nose. Semitecolo was taken into a neighbouring house, and the butcher walked off.

Still covered with blood, Semitecolo hastened to lay the matter before the Council of Ten, demanding the



CAFÉ ON THE ZATTERE

arrest of Milani. But Pier Barbarigo, who was one of the Capi for the week, while sympathising deeply, excused himself from arresting the culprit, on the ground that a detailed account of the affair signed by witnesses must be laid before the Council; and, moreover, the Council was busy just then, he said, owing to the arrival of the Pope's Nuncio, and there would be no

meeting on the next day. Semitecolo could not even get an order to have the butcher watched by the police, and the culprit had full time and liberty to leave Venice before anything was done. Note that he himself did not expect impunity, but only a very long delay before his arrest was ordered.

The public followed the affair and was indignant, and freely criticised the Ten in public places; whereupon the Inquisitors ordered all the cafés to be closed two hours after dark. This was especially galling to the Venetians, who were fond of sitting up late, and loved the bright lights of the cafés.

One morning a notice appeared on the walls, drawn up in the following terms:—

‘The Guild of the Night-Thieves wishes to thank his Excellency the “Capo” Barbarigo for having provided them with much more sufficient and convenient means of earning their bread during the present hard times.’

*Rom. viii. 196.*

The Inquisitors’ ordinance was soon modified so as to allow the cafés to remain open till midnight.

As for the minor courts, Goldoni, who was brought up to be a lawyer, says that there were nearly as many different ones as there were different kinds of suits possible. They paralysed each other, and could not have worked well even if they had been honest.

But they were not. An Avogador acquitted a man accused of theft. The Signors of the Night — the chiefs of police — who had committed the accused for trial believed him guilty and

*Mutinelli,  
Ult. 143.*

determined to examine the papers relating to the trial.



THE DOGANA

With this intention they made a search in the house of

the Avogador and confiscated the private accounts in which he set down the profit and loss of his judicial industry; for he was a very careful man. Surely enough, the Signors found an entry of one hundred and fifty sequins (£112:10s.) received for acquitting the thief.

About the same time there was a very beautiful dancer called the Cellini at the theatre of San Cassian.

*Mutinelli,*  
*Ult. 144.* A magistrate who exercised the righteous functions of an 'Executor against Blasphemy' became anxious to get into her good graces, but as she would have nothing to do with him, he brought an accusation against her in his own court, tried her, and condemned her to a severe penalty. But she appealed to the Council of Ten, proved her innocence, and was acquitted. Thereupon the Venetians began to swear 'by the holy Virgin Cellini.'

With such a state of things in Venice, it was only to be expected that the condition of justice in the provinces should be still worse. When *Mut. Ult.* Goldoni was Secretary to the Chancery of Feltre, in the Venetian territory, there was a huge scandal about a whole forest cut down and sold without any order or authority from the government. An inquiry was attempted and begun; it was found that more than two hundred persons were implicated, and as it soon became apparent that the same thing had been done before them, within the century, it was judged better to draw a veil over the whole affair.

This naturally encouraged others. In 1782 the

Provveditor Michiel informed the Senate that the Podestà of the city of Usmago had calmly pocketed the price of an oak forest, which he had asked leave to cut down on pretence of using the funds for repairing his official residence.

Finally, a number of posts, especially in the ducal household, were openly sold; in the last years of the Republic even the office of a procurator of Saint Mark could be bought.

In close connection with the magistracies and the legal profession generally, I give the following amusing extract from Goldoni's memoirs.

He begins by telling us that although he had been entered at a lawyer's office for two years, he left it fitted for the profession in eight months, because the administration interpreted the *Goldoni, i. 23.* two years to mean the dates of two consecutive years, without any regard to the months. Young Goldoni then took a lodging in the lawyers' quarter near San Paterniano, and his mother and aunt lived with him.

I put on the toga belonging to my new station (he continues), and it is the same as that of the Patricians; I smothered my head in an enormous wig and impatiently awaited the day of my presentation in the Palace. The novice must have two assistants who are called in Venice *Compari di Palazzo* ['Palace godfathers']. The young man chooses them amongst those of the old lawyers who are most friendly to him. . . .

So I went between my two sponsors to the foot of the grand staircase in the great courtyard of the Palace, and for an

hour and a half I made so many bows and contortions that my back was broken and my wig was like a lion's mane. Every one who passed before me gave his opinion of me; some said, Here is a youth of good character; others said, Here is another Palace sweeper; some embraced me, some laughed in my face. To be short, I went up the stairs and sent the servant to find a gondola, so as not to show myself in the street in such a dishevelled state, naming as a place of meeting the Hall of the Great Council, where I sat down on a bench whence I could see every one pass without being seen by any one. During this time, I reflected on the career I was about to embrace. In Venice there are generally two hundred and forty lawyers entered on the register; there are ten or twelve of the first rank, about twenty who occupy the second; all the others are hunting for clients; and the poorer Procurators gladly act as their dogs on condition of sharing the prey. . . .

While I was thus alone, building castles in the air, I saw a woman of about thirty approaching me, not disagreeable in face, white, round, and plump, with a turned-up nose and wicked eyes, a great deal of gold on her neck, her ears, her arms, her fingers, and in a dress which proclaimed that she was a woman of the common class, but pretty well off. She came over and saluted me.

‘Sir, good day!’

‘Good day, Signora!’

‘Will you allow me to offer you my congratulations?’

‘For what?’

‘On your entrance into the Forum; I saw you in the courtyard when you were making your salaams. Per Bacco! Sir, your hair is nicely done.’

‘Isn't it? Am I not a handsome young fellow?’

‘But it makes no difference how your hair is done; Signor Goldoni always cuts a good figure.’

‘So you know me, Signora?’

‘Did I not see you four years ago in the land of the lawyers, in a long wig and cloak?’

‘True; you are right, for I was then in the house of the Procurator.’

‘Just so; in the house of Signor Indrie’ [Goldoni’s uncle].

‘So you know my uncle too?’

‘In this part of the world I know every one, from the Doge to the last copyist of the Courts.’

‘Are you married?’

‘No.’

‘Are you a widow?’

‘No.’

‘Oh — I do not dare ask more!’

‘All the better.’

‘Have you any business?’

‘No.’

‘From your appearance I took you for a well-to-do person.’

‘I really am.’

‘Then you have investments?’

‘None at all.’

‘But you are very well fitted out; how do you manage to do it?’

‘I am a daughter of the Palace, and the Palace supports me.’

‘That is very strange! You say you are a daughter of the Palace?’

‘Yes, sir; my father had a position in it.’

‘What did he do?’

‘He listened at the doors and then went to take good news to those who were expecting pardons, or verdicts, or favourable judgments; he had capital legs and always got there first. As for my mother, she was always here, as I am. She was not proud, she took her fee, and undertook some commissions. I was born and brought up in these gilded halls, and, as you see, I also have gold on me.’

‘Yours is a most singular story. Then you follow in your mother’s footsteps?’

‘No, sir. I do something else.’

‘That is to say?’

‘I push lawsuits.’

‘Push lawsuits? I do not understand.’

‘I am as well known as Barabbas. It is very well understood that all the lawyers and all the Procurators are my friends, and a number of people apply to me to obtain advice for them and counsel for defence. Those who come to me are generally not rich, and I look about amongst the novices and the unemployed [lawyers] who want nothing but work in order to make themselves known. Do you know, sir, that though you see me as I am, I have made the fortunes of a round dozen of the most famous lawyers in the profession. Come, sir, courage, and if you are willing, I shall make yours too.’

It amused me to listen to her, and as my servant did not come, I continued the conversation.

‘Well, Signorina, have you any good affairs on hand now?’

‘Yes, sir, I have several, indeed I have some excellent ones. I have a widow who is suspected of having occultated her monkey; another who wishes to prove a marriage contract got up after the fact; I have girls who are petitioning for a dowry; I have women who wish to bring suits for annulment of marriage; I have sons of good families who are persecuted by their creditors; as you see, you need only choose.’

‘My good woman,’ I said, ‘so far I have let you talk; now it is my turn. I am young, I am about to begin my career, and I desire occasions for showing myself and obtaining occupation; but no love of work nor fancy for litigation could make me begin with the disgraceful suits you offer me.’

‘Ha, ha!’ she laughed, ‘you despise my clients because I warned you that there was nothing to earn; but listen! My

two widows are rich, you will be well paid, and shall be even paid in advance, if you wish.'

I saw my servant coming in the distance; I rose and answered the chattering woman in a fearless and resolute tone.

'No, you do not know me, I am a man of honour. . . .'

Then she took my hand and spoke gravely.

'Well done! Continue always in the same mind.'

'Ah!' I exclaimed, 'you change your tone now?'

'Yes,' she replied, 'and the tone I take now is much better than the one I have been using. Our conversation has been somewhat mysterious; remember it and see that you speak to no one about it. Good-bye, sir. Always be wise, be always honourable, and you will be satisfied with the result.'

She went away, and I was left in the greatest astonishment. I did not know what all this meant; but I learned later that she was a spy and had come to sound me; yet I never knew, nor wished to know, who sent her to me.



RIO DELLA SENSA

### XIII

#### THE LAST SBIRRI

It is worth while to glance at the agents of the police, of the Council of Ten, and of the Inquisitors of State  
*Mutinelli,* at the end of the Republic. The two  
*Lessico.* Councils had six in their service, called the Fanti de' Cai, the footmen of the Heads, and one of them was at the beck and call of the Inquisitors. This particular one was the famous Cristofolo de'

Cristofoli, whose name is connected alike with all the tragedies and the comic adventures of the last days.

He was a sort of general inspector of freemasons, rope-dancers, circus-riders, antiquaries, bravi, and gondoliers, and he exercised in his manifold functions all the civility of which a detective can dispose. He was a giant in body, a jester and a wit by nature, a combination certainly intended for the stage rather than the police.

His especial bugbear was freemasonry, together with all the secret societies which were then largely in the pay of France, employed by her to promote general revolution. A manuscript preserved in the Museo Correr gives an account of the first discovery of a Lodge.

A patrician named Girolamo Zulian, says this document, when returning one night from a meeting of the Lodge left upon the seat of his gondola a piece of paper on which were drawn certain incomprehensible signs. The gondoliers found the paper, and supposed that the symbols were those of some kind of witchcraft. One of the men took the scrap to a monk he knew and begged him to decipher the signs, or at least to give his advice as to what should be done with the thing, as it might be fatal even to destroy a spell of black magic. The monk told the gondolier to take it to the Inquisitors of State. The man did so, and one of them kept him in a garret of his house, to protect him against any possible vengeance on the part of the secret society, and Cristofolo de' Cristofoli was com-

missioned to clear up the mystery. On the following night he raided the house indicated by the gondolier with thirty Sbirri, and found there assembled a large meeting of the brethren, one of whom had the presence of mind to throw into the canal the heavy register containing a complete list of their names. Cristofoli took a quantity of papers, however, together with the paraphernalia of the Lodge, and he afterwards, says the manuscript, dictated from memory the names of the persons he had seen at the meeting. But he must have made mistakes, since several of the persons he designated are known to have been absent from Venice on foreign missions at the date of the raid, May sixth, 1785.

Another manuscript, published by Dandolo, gives a different account of the affair, under the same date. It was copied by the famous Cicogna, and is amusing for its language:—

It was the anniversary of the feast of the principal Protector of this most serene dominion, Saint Mark the Evangelist, April the twenty-fifth, 1785, when it was discovered that the public Arsenal of Venice had been treacherously set on fire; the fire was eventually discovered by a certain woman, who was rewarded for life [*i.e.* with a pension] by the public munificence; and by the discovery of it, a fire was prevented which might have been fatal to a large part of the city, and which was not to have broken out till the night following the twenty-fifth, but which showed itself after noon on account of an extraordinary wind which had temporarily arisen from the east and which blew with fury all day.

Such an accident, as fatal as its prevention by the Evangelist

FONDAMENTE NUOVE







Saint Mark was miraculous, not only moved the public vigilance to guard that public edifice under more jealous custody, but also [to watch] all the quarters of the city; to this end multiplying watchmen and spies, in order to discover, if that



RIO S. STIN

might be possible, the perpetrators of such an horrible and terrifying felony.

In the inquiries, it was observed by trustworthy spies on the night of the [date omitted in the original] May, that a certain palace situated in Riomarin, in the parish of San Simon

Grande, was entered from time to time after midnight by respectable-looking persons, for whom the door was opened at the simple signal of a little tap. Information of this being given to the Supreme Tribunal, the latter ordered the most circumspect inquiries; when, on the same morning, information was given to the Secretary of the said Supreme Magistracy by a certain ship's carpenter that having, on commission of N. N., finished making a large wardrobe, he inquired of that cavalier where he was to bring it in order to set it up properly; and that he had been told to bring it to a certain palace in Riomarin and to leave it in the entrance (gateway) of the same, and that he would be sent for later to place it where it was to go; that seeing several days go by without receiving that notice, and yielding to curiosity, he stole near in the night to see if the wardrobe were still in the entrance of the palace, where he had placed it, and he convinced himself that it had been taken elsewhere; and being displeased with this, because some other workman might have handled his work, and guessing from a hint of the gentleman's that the wardrobe had been intended to be placed against the windows of a balcony, and observing in this palace a balcony of just about the length of the wardrobe made by him, he tried to get into the apartment above the one where the balcony was [let to some one], explaining to the people who lived in that house that his suspicion induced him to ask their permission to make a hole with a gimlet, in order to see whether his wardrobe had been put up where he guessed it must be; and that he had obtained consent to this request, because the lodgers in that second apartment had conceived some curiosity to know who the persons might be who met there only at night time; that therefore he betook himself to that dwelling on the night of the fourth of May, having previously made a hole, and stopped there till the first-floor apartment was opened, and he saw that after midnight a hall was lighted up which was hung with

mourning and furnished with a throne covered with blue cloth and with other symbols of death, and here and there were disposed small lanterns, and persons also sitting here and there, dressed in black robes; so that at this horrid sight he was terrified, and he heard him who sat on the throne say these very words: 'Brethren, let us suspend our meeting, for we are watched'; and in that room he saw indeed his wardrobe placed against a balcony.

And that he left the lodgers in that second apartment in consternation, and he himself, full of amazement and terror, and still surprised by the novelty of the things, and supposing, in his simplicity, that witchcraft was practised there and the works of the devil, he was scandalised, and went to the parish priest of San Simon Grande, his confessor, and that having told him all he had seen, heard, and observed, he (thè priest) advised him to quickly lay before the government all that he had chanced to see and hear.

The good man did so, and told all to the Secretary of the Inquisitors of State. A warrant was therefore issued on that same morning of the sixth of May by the Supreme Tribunal to its own officer Cristofoli, to go thither (to Riomarin), accompanied by the Capitan Grande and twenty-four men. Having entered that apartment, where he surprised a nobleman who guarded the place, he (Cristofoli) discovered a lodge of freemasons.

Emanuele Cicogna [the distinguished historian] copied this on the twenty-fourth of August 1855, from two codices existing in his collection.

On the following day, the Inquisitors publicly burned the black garments, the utensils, the 'conjuring books,' as they are described, and all the booty Cristofoli had confiscated, *Mutinelli, UH.* while the populace, believing that it was all a case of

witchcraft, danced round the fire and cheered for Saint Mark.

The persons implicated were treated with the greatest indulgence, and Malamani observes that in the whole affair it was the furniture that got the worst of it.

About the same time Cristofoli made a vain attempt to arrest the notorious Cagliostro.

This man, whose real name was Giuseppe Balsamo, was born in Palermo on the eighth of June 1743. His youth was wild and disreputable. He tried being a monk, but soon tired of it, and threw his frock to the nettles, as the French say, in Caltagirone, in Sicily; after that he lived by theft, by coining false money, and by every sort of imposture. In Rome he married a girl of singular beauty, Lorenza Feliciani, who became his tool in all his intrigues.

The French freemasons made use of the singularly intelligent couple to propagate the doctrines of the revolution. Pretending to change hemp into silk, and every metal into gold, and selling marvellous waters for restoring the aged to youth and beauty, the two got into many excellent houses, changing their names and their disguises whenever they were compromised.

Balsamo arrived in Venice in 1787 or 1788, under the name of Count Cagliostro, and began an active revolutionary campaign, to the great annoyance of the Inquisitors, who fancied they had suppressed the whole movement when Cristofoli had discovered the famous Lodge. He was less for-

*Mutinelli,*  
*Ult. 31.*

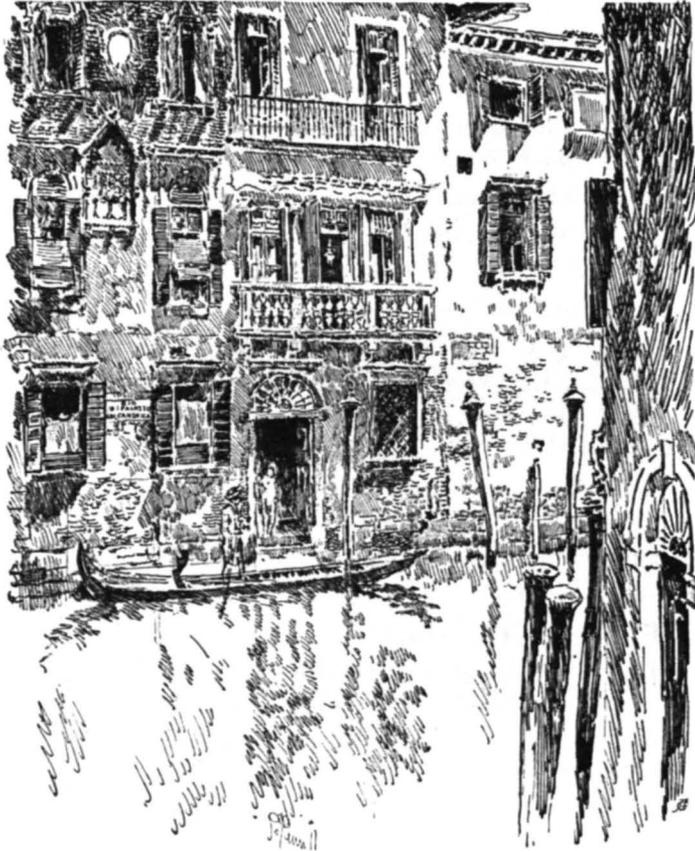
tunate this time. He tracked the Count everywhere, but could get no substantial evidence against him, till he suddenly came upon positive proof that the impostor had stolen a thousand sequins from a rich merchant of the Giudecca. And then, at the very moment when the great policeman was sure of his game, the man disappeared as into thin air and was next heard of beyond the Austrian frontier.

The chief of the Sbirri had better luck when he raided the Café Ancilotto, which was a favourite place of meeting for the revolutionaries. They *Tassini, under* tried to open a reading-room there, fur- *'Ancilotto.'* nished with all the latest revolutionary literature, but Cristofoli got wind of the plan, called on the man who kept the café, and informed him that the first person who entered the 'reading-room' would be invited to pay a visit to the Inquisitors of State. After that, no one showed any inclination to read the French papers. In connection with Cristofoli, we also come upon the curious fact that he arrested, at the Café *Tassini, under* of the Ponte dell' Angelo, a number of *'Caffetero.'* Barnabotti, who were preaching suspicious doctrines. As usual, the poor nobles were the class most easily bribed and most ready to betray their country.

Cristofoli was occasionally entrusted with missions more diplomatic than the arrest of revolutionaries. He was sometimes sent to present his respects to great nobles who did not guess that they had attracted the eyes of the police.

It was the business of the Inquisitors to watch over

the artistic treasures of the capital. During the last year of the Republic a number of nobles sold precious



RIO DELLA GUERRA

objects to strangers, such as paintings and statues, of which the government much regretted the loss to the

city. A few measures were passed for preventing this dispersion of private collections, but it happened only too often that priceless things were suddenly gone, leaving no trace of their destination, except in the pockets of the former owners.

The Grimani family possessed some magnificent statues and a wonderful library of rare books, inherited from Cardinal Domenico Grimani, who died in 1523. Shortly before the fall of the Republic a foreigner bought the statue of Marcus Agrippa; the boat which was to take it on board an outward bound ship was at the door of the palace, and the men who were to take it down from its pedestal and box it were ready, when Cristofolo Cristofoli appeared at the entrance, gigantic and playful.

*Statue of  
M. Agrippa;  
Museo Correr.*

He walked straight to the statue, took off his cap to it and bowed gravely before he delivered his message to the marble: 'The Supreme Tribunal of the Inquisitors, having heard that you wish to leave this city, sends me to wish a pleasant journey, both to you and his Excellency Grimani.'

'His Excellency Grimani' did not relish the idea of exile; the workmen disappeared, the boat was sent away, and the statue remained. It was destined to be left as a gift to the city by another Grimani, less avaricious than 'His Excellency.'

In spite of his good-humour, Cristofoli inspired terror, and his mere name was often used to lend weight to practical jokes. It is related, for instance, of the famous Montesquieu,

*Molmenti, Studi  
e Ricerche.*

the author of the *Esprit des Lois* and the friend of King Stanislaus Leczinski, that when he was making notes in Venice his friend Lord Chesterfield managed to cause a mysterious message to be conveyed to him, warning him to be on his guard, as the Chief of the Ten employed spies to watch him, and Cristofoli was on his track. And thereupon, says the story, the excellent Montesquieu burned all his most compromising notes, and fled straight to Holland with the remainder of his manuscripts.

The Council of Ten and their Sbirri had not yet done with the Bravi. They were numerous in the provinces, and when they were caught they were tried and hanged in Venice. The 'Signorotti' — the rich landowners, who were not Venetian nobles, but called themselves 'knights' — were many and prosperous, and were the professional murderers' best clients. Indeed, the Venetian mainland provinces and much of Lombardy presented a case of arrested development; at the end of the eighteenth century they had not emerged from the barbarism of the early fifteenth.

The lordlings entertained Bravi, and when there was no more serious business on hand, they laid wagers with each other as to the courage of their hired assassins. A bet of this kind was made and settled in 1724 between an Avogadro and a Masperoni, two country 'knights' who lived on their estates in the province of Brescia. One evening the two were discussing the character of a ruffian whom Masperoni had just taken into his service. His new master maintained that the

fellow was the bravest man in the 'profession.' Avogadro, on the other hand, wagered that he would not be able to traverse the road between his master's castle and Lumezzane, which belonged to Avogadro. Masperoni took the bet, and explained the situation to the man. The latter, feeling that his reputation was at stake, started at once, carrying on his shoulder a basket of fine fruit as a present from Masperoni to his friend, and he took his way across the hills of Valtrompia. When he was a few miles from Lumezzane he was met by two well-armed fellows, who ordered him to turn back, but he was not so easily stopped. He set down his basket, and in the twinkling of an eye killed both his adversaries, after which he quietly pursued his journey.

Avogadro was very much surprised to see him, and asked with curiosity what sort of trip he had made.

'Excellent,' he answered. 'I met a couple of good-for-nothings who wanted to stop me, but I killed them, and here I am.'

Avogadro, filled with admiration, gave him a purse of gold and sent him back to Masperoni with a letter of congratulation.

*Molmenti,  
Banditi, 289.*

Incidents of this kind occurred long afterwards, even after the fall of the Republic. The name of Cristofoli is associated with that of Count Alemanno Gambarà in a story which could not be believed if the documents that prove it were not all preserved in the various archives, and principally in those of the Inquisitors.

The Gambarà family was of Lombard origin, and had always been very influential in the neighbourhood

of Brescia. The race had produced fine specimens of all varieties — soldiers, bishops, cardinals, murderers, and one woman poet, besides several bandits, traitors, and highwaymen. In the late sixteenth century two brothers of the family, Niccolò and Lucrezio, had a near relative, Theodora, an orphan girl of fourteen years and an heiress, who was in charge of a guardian. On the twenty-second of January 1569 the two brothers went to the guardian and ordered him to give up the girl. On his refusal they threw him down his own stairs, wounded his people who tried to defend him, broke down the door of the girl's room, and carried her off.

I only quote this as an instance of the family's manners. The last scion of the race who lived under the Republic, and who outlived it, was Count Alemanno, a young monster of perversity. He was born after his father's death at the castle of Pralboino, on a feudal holding belonging to his house. His mother was soon married again to Count Martinengo Cesaresco, and she took the boy with her to her new home. He was naturally violent and unruly; at fifteen he was an accomplished swordsman, and was involved in every quarrel and evil adventure on the country side. When still a mere boy his conduct was such as to give the government real trouble, and the authorities imposed a guardian upon him in the person of a priest of his family, who was instructed to teach him the ordinary precepts of right and wrong; but the clergyman soon announced that he was not able to cope with his young

relative, and the Council of Ten learned that the boy's violent character showed no signs of improvement.

He was now arrested, brought to Venice, and confined in one of the Piombi, his property being administered under the direction of the government. The Inquisitors of State examined the record of the complaints laid against him, and concluded that his faults were due to his extreme youth; they therefore ordered him to reside within the fortress of Verona, but gave him control of his fortune.

The Captain of Verona, knowing the sort of prisoner he had to deal with, and being made responsible for him, sent for an engineer and asked his opinion as to the possibilities of escape for a prisoner who was not locked up in a cell. The engineer wrote out a careful criticism of the fortress, concluding with an extremely practical remark: 'With good means of escape,' he observed, 'a man may escape from any place, but without means it is not possible to escape at all.'

The Captain, only partially reassured, set to work to convert his prisoner, and sent him a good priest to teach him his Catechism and exhort him to the practices of Christianity; but the young Count would have neither exhortation nor religious instruction. The Council of Ten now sent him to the fortress of Palma for a change of air, and the commander of that place inherited the feverish anxiety about his charge which had tormented the Captain of Verona. He did not consult an engineer, however, and one morning the

prisoner was not in his room, nor in the fortress, nor anywhere in the neighbourhood of Palma.

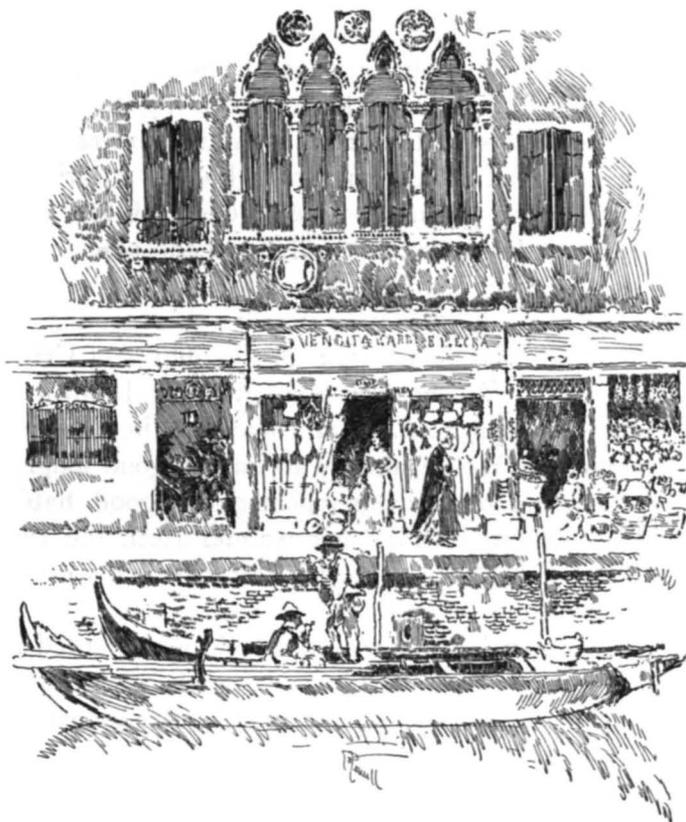
The Inquisitors now sent Sbirri in all directions throughout the Venetian territory. They could not catch Alemanno, but he wearied of eluding them, and judged that he could get better terms by submitting to the Inquisitors. He did so, using the offices of his aunt, Countess Giulia Gambara, who was married to a gentleman of Vicenza. The Podestà of the latter city sent an officer and six soldiers to the place designated by Alemanno, and he surrendered, and was taken first to Padua, and then to Venice. As soon as he landed at the Piazzetta he was put in charge of Cristofoli and the Sbirri, who took him before the Inquisitors.

They exiled him to Zara, and wrote to the Governor of Dalmatia: 'We desire him to have a good lodging. . . . See that he frequents persons of good habits, thanks to whom he may not wander from the right path on which he has entered, and in which we wish him to continue.'

The Inquisitors, good souls, so mildly concerned for the wild boy's moral welfare, were soon to learn what Alemanno considered the 'right path,' for the Governor of Dalmatia kept them well informed. Before long they learned that a certain fisherman, who had refused to let the Count's butler, Antonio Barach, have a fine fish which was already sold to another client, had been seized, taken into the Count's house, and severely beaten.

But the Inquisitors were inclined to be clement and

paid no attention to the accounts of his doings. In 1756 he was authorised to return to his domains of



VIA GARIBALDI

Pralboino and Corvione, and his real career began. His first care was to engage as many desperate Bravi as he could find. One of these having had a little

difficulty with the police, and having been killed during the argument, Alemanno captured a Sbirro, and so handled him that he sent him back to his post a cripple for life.

Scarcely a year after his return from Zara, he rode through the town of Calvisano, and without answering the Customs officer, whose duty it was to ascertain if he were carrying anything dutiable, he galloped on and escaped recognition. His servant, who followed him at a little distance, was stopped, and as he answered the Customs men very rudely he was locked up in jail. But when the officer in charge learned who the man was, his fright was such that he not only set him at liberty at once, but conversed with him and treated him in the most friendly manner.

The young Count was of course delighted to learn that his name spread terror amongst government officials, and by way of showing what he could do, he sent fifteen of his Bravi to Calvisano with orders to besiege the Customs men. In the fighting that followed, one of the latter was killed and their officer narrowly escaped.

The Council of Ten now interfered, and summoned Count Alemanno Gambara to appear before them, and if he refused, the local authorities were ordered to take him and send him by force. Instead of obeying, he fortified his two castles, increased the numbers of his band of Bravi, and defied the law. With his ruffians at his back he rode through the length and breadth of the Brescian territory as he pleased, and once even traversed

FROM SAN GEORGIO TO THE SALUTE







the city itself with his formidable escort. No one dared to meddle with him. His neighbours in the country were completely terrorised, and he and his head ruffian, Carlo Molinari, committed the wildest excesses.

Alemanno seems to have especially delighted to watch the effect of fright on his victims. One day his men chased a priest of Gottolengo and three friends, who had been shooting in the woods not far beyond the boundary of the estate of Corvione. The fugitives succeeded in reaching the church of Gottolengo, in which they took refuge, barricading the door against their pursuers. But the Bravi starved them out, and they were obliged to surrender unconditionally. They were then led out to a lonely field and were exhorted to commend their souls to God, as they were about to be killed and buried on the spot. Alemanno watched their agony with delight, concealed behind a hedge. When he was tired of the sport, he came out of concealment and ordered his men to beat and kick them back to Gottolengo.

A retired colonel lived quietly on a small estate near one of Gambara's. His servants accidentally killed one of the Count's dogs; he had them taken, cruelly beaten, and sent back to their master after suffering every indignity. The colonel thought of lodging a complaint with the Council of Ten, but on reflection he gave up the idea as not safe, for Gambara's vengeance would probably have been fatal to any one who ventured to give information of his doings. No one was safe

within his reach, neither man, nor woman, nor child. A volume might be filled with the list of his crimes.

At last, in 1762, the municipality of the town of Gambara, from which he took his title, resolved to petition the Council of Ten for help and protection against him. When he learned that this was their intention, he rode into the town with his escort, and halting in the market-place addressed the citizens; his threats of vengeance were so frightful, and he was so well able to carry them out, that the chief burghers fell upon their knees before him, weeping and imploring his forgiveness.

One day several Sbirri traversed some of his land in pursuit of a smuggler who sought his protection. He met them smiling, and cordially invited them to spend a night under his roof. With the childlike simplicity which is one of the most endearing characteristics of most Italians, they fell into the trap. On the next day, a cart loaded with greens entered Brescia, and stopped opposite the house of the Venetian Podestà. The horses were taken out and led away, without exciting any remark, and the cart remained where it had been left, till the foul smell it exhaled attracted attention. It was unloaded, and underneath the greens were found the bloody corpses of the Sbirri who had accepted Gambara's hospitality.

This time the Inquisitors of State took matters seriously, and sent a squadron of cuirassiers and a detachment of Sbirri, under the command of an officer called Rizzi, to arrest him and his henchman Molinari.

Rizzi came to Pralboino and broke down the gates, but the two men were already gone, and the expedition ended in the confiscation of a few insignificant letters found in Alemanno's desk.

He had understood that he must leave Venetian territory for a time, and riding down into the Duchy of Parma he sought the hospitality of his friend, the Marchese Casali, at Monticelli. He next visited Genoa, and judging that it was time to settle in life, he married the Marchesa Carbonare, whom he judged, with some reason, to be a woman worthy of his companionship.

They returned together to Monticelli, where they led a riotous existence for some time. Being one day short of money, Alemanno stopped the messengers who were conveying to Venice the taxes raised in Brescia, and sent them on after giving them a formal receipt for the large sum he had taken from them. But this was too much for the Duke of Parma, who now requested the couple to spend their time elsewhere than in his Duchy.

They consulted as to their chances of getting a free pardon for the crimes the Count had committed on Venetian territory and against the Republic, and the Countess addressed a petition to the Doge which begins as follows: 'Every penitent sinner who sincerely purposes to mend his life obtains of God mercy and forgiveness; shall I, Marianna Carbonare, the most afflicted wife of Count Alemanno Gambara, not feel thereby encouraged to fall upon my knees before the

august Throne of your Serenity? . . . ? And much more to the same effect.

Another petition signed by both was addressed to the Inquisitors, and a third, signed only by Alemanno, to the Doge and the Inquisitors together. In this precious document he calls them 'the most perfect image of God on earth, by their power.'

The object of these petitions was that the Count might be sent into exile, anywhere, so long as he were not shut up in a fortress, a sentence which would soon kill him, as he was in bad health.

He had certainly committed many murders and had killed several servants of the Republic in the performance of their duties; and he had stolen the taxes collected in Brescia. Amazing as it may seem, his petition was granted, and he was exiled to Zara for two years, after which he was allowed to come to Chioggia on the express condition that he should not set foot outside the castle, and should see no one but his wife and son. He remained in Chioggia just a year, from the twenty-fifth of September 1777, to the twenty-sixth of September 1778, after which the Inquisitors were kind enough to give him his liberty if he would present himself before their Secretary, which he did with alacrity.

My readers need not be led into a misapprehension by the touching unanimity which the loving couple exhibited in the petitions they signed. They never agreed except when their interests did, and were soon practically separated in their private life. The Countess took

Count Miniscalchi of Verona for her lover, while Alemanno showed himself everywhere with the Countess of San Secondo. In the end they separated altogether, and the son, Francesco, remained with his father, who educated him according to his own ideas.

So far as can be ascertained, the man never changed the manner of his life. After his pardon he returned to his estates in the province of Brescia, where he found his old friends, who were few, and the recollections of his youth, which were many. In a short time Pralboino and Corvione were once more dens of murderers and robbers as of old, and as in former days he had been helped in his blackest deeds by Carlo Molinari, his chief Bravo, so now he was seconded by his steward, Giacomo Barchi, who kept the reign of terror alive in the country when it pleased the Count to reside in Venice.

He was sleeping soundly in his apartment in the capital one morning towards the end of March 1782, after having spent most of the night at a gambling house by the Ponte dell' Angelo — he never slept more than four hours — when he was awakened by an unexpected visit from Cristofolo de' Cristofoli, who requested him to appear at once before the Secretary of the Inquisitors. An examination of conscience must have been a serious affair for Alemanno, and not to be undertaken except at leisure; and it appears that on this occasion he really did not know what he was to be accused of doing. The Secretary of the Inquisitors merely commanded him not to leave the city on pain

of the Tribunal's anger, and on the morrow he learned that his steward Barchi had also been arrested.

For some reason impossible to explain, nothing was done to either, and before long even the steward was set at liberty. The Inquisitors confined themselves to threatening the two with 'the public indignation' and their own severest measures, if the Count did not dismiss his Bravi and 'reform his conduct.'

After that, history is silent as to his exploits. He was no longer young, and even the zest of murder and rapine was probably beginning to pall on his weary taste. We know that he sincerely mourned the fall of the Republic which had been so consistently kind to him, and he never plotted against the government. He could not but feel that it would have been an exaggeration to accuse it of having been hard on him.

His son Francesco, on the contrary, turned out to be one of the most turbulent of revolutionaries, and helped to lead the insurrection at Bergamo. But for the intervention of Bonaparte himself, he would have been killed by the inhabitants of Salò, who remained faithful to the Republic, when they repulsed the insurgents. He was one of the five delegates whom the city of Brescia sent to Bonaparte, to name him president of the Cisalpine Republic. He died in 1848, after having written a life of his father, which was published eleven years later in Trieste. One cannot but feel that in composing a memoir of his parent, filial piety led him too far.

In concluding this chapter, which has dealt with

criminals, I shall take the opportunity of observing that the places in which criminals were confined in Venice shared in the general decay of everything connected with the government. In the seventeenth century and earlier all prisoners had been carefully kept separate according to their misdeeds; in the eighteenth, mere children were shut up with adult criminals, and debtors were confined with thieves. In the women's prisons lunatics were often imprisoned with the sane, a state of things that led to the most horrible scenes.

The gaolers of the Pozzi and the Piombi did not even keep the prisons clean, and the state of the cells was such that I do not care to disgust the reader by describing it. In the other prisons, or attached to them, a regular tavern was tolerated and perhaps authorised, as a place of gathering for the prisoners, and here games of chance were played, even such as were forbidden elsewhere in the *Mutinelli, Ult.* city. The archives of the Ten show how many crimes were committed in the very places where men were confined to expiate earlier offences. As for the gaolers, they were one and all corruptible. One of the Savi, the patrician Gritti, denounced to the Senate, in 1793, a gaoler who let the healthiest and most airy cells to the highest bidders.



THE PESARO PALACE, GRAND CANAL

## XIV

### THE LAST DOGES

BETWEEN the beginning of the eighteenth century and the end of the Republic eleven Doges occupied the throne. Of these the only one who might  
*1700-1797.* have saved the government or retarded its fall was the very one who reigned the shortest time. Let us say that if he had lived, he might have so far restored the strength of the ancient aristocracy as to admit of its perishing in a struggle instead of dying of old age.

This Doge was Marco Foscarini, who was elected

on the thirty-first of May 1762, and died on the thirty-first of the following March. He was a man whose integrity was never questioned, even by the revolutionaries, and he accepted the Dogeship with the greatest regret. He was a man of letters, and the endless empty ceremonial of the ducal existence obliged him to leave unfinished his noble work on Venetian literature. Even had the Doge's action not been hopelessly paralysed by the hedge of petty regulations that bristled round him, Foscarini's experience of affairs in the course of occupying many exalted posts had left him few illusions as to the future of his country. 'This century will be a terrible one for our children and grandchildren,' he wrote some time after his election.

Like many of the Doges he was a very old man when he was elected, and was over eighty-eight years of age when he died, apparently much surprised at finding himself at his end, though not unprepared for it. He complained that his physicians had not told him how ill he was, and he asked for a little Latin book, *De modo bene moriendi*, which had been given him by his friend Cardinal Passionei; presently he tried to dictate a few reflections to his doctor, but was too weak, and expired whispering, 'My poor servants!' He had apparently not provided for them as he would have done if he had not been taken unawares.

His successor was Aloise IV. Mocenigo, who had been Ambassador to Rome and to Paris. His election was celebrated in a manner that recalled the festivities

of the sixteenth century. A secretary was sent to the  
1763. Mocenigo palace to announce the news to  
his family, and the Dogess took four days  
in which to complete her preparations, after which she  
came to the ducal palace accompanied by her two  
married nieces, her sisters, her mother, all her own  
female cousins, and all those of her husband; and this  
battalion of noble women in their gondolas was followed  
down the Grand Canal by an innumerable fleet of  
gondolas and boats. All the male relations were wait-  
ing at the landing of the Piazzetta to escort the ladies  
to the palace, where the Dogess, seated on a throne,  
received the homage of the electors and of all the nobility.  
She did not wear the ducal insignia on that day. In  
the evening there was a ball, which she opened with one  
of the Procurators of Saint Mark.

A series of festivities began on the following day, at  
which she appeared in a memorably magnificent dress:  
a long mantle of cloth of gold, like the Doge's  
own, with wide sleeves lined with white lace, opened  
to show a skirt and body all of gold lace-work; a  
girdle of diamonds encircled her waist; her head-dress  
was a veil, arranged like a cap, but the two ends hung  
down to her shoulders, and were picked up and  
fastened to her back hair by two diamond clasps.

On three consecutive evenings there were balls at  
the palace, and at each the Dogess danced only one  
minuet, with a Procurator of Saint Mark,  
*Rom. viii. 148.* as etiquette required when there were no  
foreign princes in Venice.

This reminds one of old times; it is even true that in some ways the display at the ducal palace was greater than it had ever been. The *G. R. Michiel*,  
banquets especially took the importance of *i. 289.*  
public spectacles, and were always five in number, given at the feasts of Saint Mark, the Ascension, Saint Vitus, Saint Jerome, and Saint Stephen, after the last of which the distribution of the 'oselle' took place, representing the ducks of earlier days, as the reader will remember. At these great dinners there were generally a hundred guests; the Doge's counsellors, the Heads of the Ten, the Avogadors and the heads of all the other magistracies had a right to be invited, but the rest of the guests were chosen among the functionaries at the Doge's pleasure.

In the banquet-hall there were a number of side-boards on which was exhibited the silver, part of which belonged to the Doge and part to the State, and this was shown twenty-four hours before the feast. It was under the keeping of a special official. The glass service used on the table for flowers and for dessert was of the finest made in Murano. Each service, though this is hard to believe, is said to have been used in public only once, and was designed to recall some important event of contemporary history by trophies, victories, emblems, and allegories. I find this stated by Giustina Renier Michiel, who was a contemporary, was noble, and must have often seen these banquets.

The public was admitted to view the magnificent spectacle during the whole of the first course, and the

ladies of the aristocracy went in great numbers. It was their custom to walk round the tables, talking with those of their friends who sat among the guests, and accepting the fruits and sweetmeats which the Doge and the rest offered them, rising from their seats to do so. The Doge himself rose from his throne to salute those noble ladies whom he wished to distinguish especially. Sovereigns passing through Venice at such times did not disdain to appear as mere spectators at the banquets, which had acquired the importance of national anniversaries.

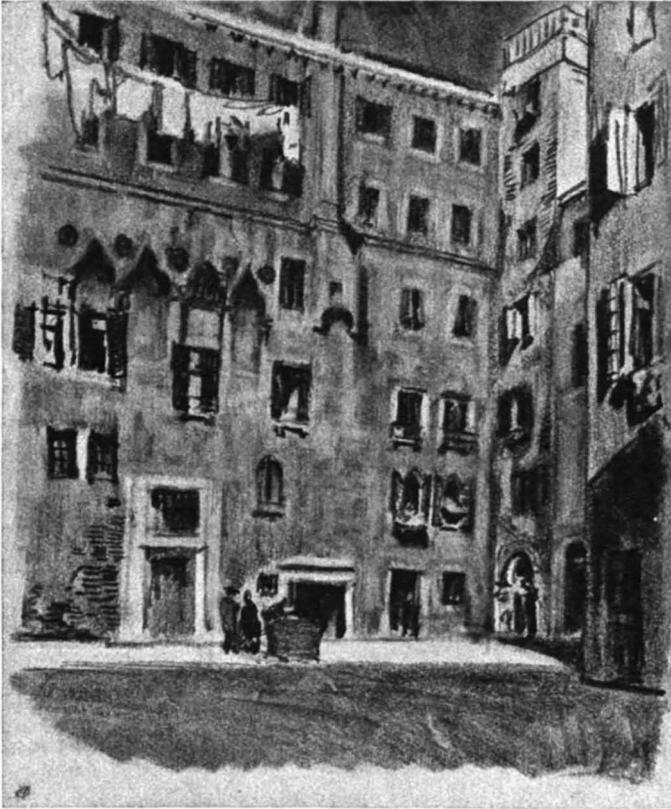
Between the first and the second courses, a majestic chamberlain shook a huge bunch of keys while he walked round the hall, and at this hint all visitors disappeared. The feast sometimes lasted several hours, after which the Doge's squires presented each of the guests with a great basket filled with sweetmeats, fruits, comfits, and the like, and adorned with the ducal arms. Every one rose to thank the Doge for these presents, and he took advantage of the general move to go back to his private apartments. The guests accompanied him to the threshold, where his Serenity bowed to them without speaking, and every one returned his salute in silence. He disappeared within, and all went home.

During this ceremony of leave-taking, the gondoliers of the guests entered the hall of the banquet and each

*G. R. Michiel,*  
*Origini i. 302.* carried the basket received by his master to some lady indicated by the latter.

'One may imagine,' cries the good Dame Michiel, 'what curiosity there was about the destination of the

baskets, but the faithful gondoliers regarded mystery as a point of honour, though the basket was of such



MARCO POLO'S COURT

dimensions that it was impossible to take it anywhere unobserved; happy were they who received these evidences of a regard which at once touched their

feelings and flattered their legitimate pride! The greatest misfortune was to have to share the prize with another.'

The reign of Aloise Mocenigo was the one in which the question of reforms was the most fully discussed, but many of the discussions turned on theories, and though a few led to the passage of measures which somewhat affected commerce and public instruction, no real result was produced. The Republic, I repeat, was dying of old age, which is the only ill that is universally admitted to be incurable.

At the death of Mocenigo, three candidates were proposed for the ducal throne, namely, Andrea Tron, Girolamo Venier, and Paolo Renier. If the people had been consulted, Venier would have been acclaimed, though I do not pretend to say that his election would have retarded the end. Nothing is easier than to speculate about what 'the people' might have done at any given point in history; nothing is harder than to guess what they are going to do; nothing, on the whole, is more certain than that the voice of the people never yet turned the scale at a great moment in a nation well out of its infancy. No one pretends nowadays that the French revolution was made by 'the people.'

The many in Venice were vastly surprised to hear of Paolo Renier's candidacy, for he had a very indifferent reputation; to be accurate, the trouble was that it was not indifferent, but bad. He was, indeed, a man of keen penetration, rarely eloquent, and a first-rate scholar.

He knew Homer by heart, and he had translated Plato's *Dialogues*, which latter piece of work might partly explain, without excusing, R. viii. 240, 241; Mutinelli, Ult. his deplorable morals; but it was neither from Plato nor from Homer that he had learned to plunder the government of his country. One of his contemporaries, Gratarol, described him as possessing 'the highest of talents, the most arrogant of characters, and the most deceptive of faces.'

It was commonly reported in Venice that when he had been Bailo at Constantinople he had taken advantage of the war between Turkey and Russia, under Catherine the Great, to enrich himself in a shameful manner, and the ninety thousand sequins he made on that occasion afterwards served him, according to popular report, for bribing the Barnabotti in the Great Council in order that the forty-one electors chosen might be favourable to him. He was certainly not the inventor of this plan, but he is generally said to have just outdone his predecessors in generosity, without overstepping the limits of strict economy. The general belief is that he bought three hundred votes at fifteen sequins each, which was certainly not an excessive price. It appears, too, that he distributed money to the people in order to soothe the irritation his candidacy caused. If all these accusations were not clearly proved, they were at least the subject of contemporary satire.

A certain priest in particular wrote biting verses on him, in Venetian dialect, describing the righteous anger

of the late Marco Foscarini's ghost at the election of such a successor. The shade of the honourable man tears off the ducal insignia in disgust, and bitterly reproaches Venice.

*Malamani.*

'Ah, foolish Venice!' it exclaims, 'a Renier is Doge of our country, one who with ribald heart and iniquitous words sought to undo that tribunal which defends our country from all evil! Ah, mad Venice! Now indeed I do repent me of having been Doge one year! Strike my name from the series of the Doges, for I disdain to stand among traitors.'

After his election Paolo Renier had his first 'osella' coined with a peculiarity in the superscription which irritated the public. The words ran: 'Paulus Reinerius principis munus,' his name being in the nominative case, a grammatical mistake which had always been regarded as the special privilege of kings and emperors.

He made money of everything, by selling posts, franchises, and licenses to beg at the door of the Basilica of Saint Mark. The Dogess was not a person likely to increase her husband's popularity, for she had been a rope-dancer, and never appeared at public ceremonies. As I have explained elsewhere, it was the Doge's niece who did the honours of the palace, Dame Giustina, who was beloved and esteemed by all Venetians, but 'the Delmaz,' as the Doge's wife was called, interfered in a hundred details of the administration.

*Mutinelli, Ull.*

It is told, for instance, that the priest of the church

of San Basso used to have the bell rung for mass very early in the morning, and that it had a peculiarly harsh and shrill tone which disturbed the Dogess's slumbers. She sent for him and promised to make him a canon of Saint Mark's if he would only have the bell moved, or not rung. The good man promised and went away delighted, but when, after a time, the canonry was not given to him, he began ringing again, and doubtless enjoyed the thought that every stroke set the faithless Dogess's teeth on edge.

*Tassini, under  
'San Basso';  
also Molmenti,  
Vecchie Storie.*

The people revenged themselves on the Renier family for its many misdeeds in scathing epigrams, and when at last the Doge lay dying in long agony, the gondoliers said that his soul refused to leave without being paid. The truth is that as his death took place in Carnival week, on February eighteenth, 1789, it was decided to keep his death a secret not only over Ash Wednesday, but until the first Monday in Lent, in order not to disturb the merry-making, nor the reaction which was supposed to follow it; and he was buried without much ceremony and with no display in the church of the Tolentini.

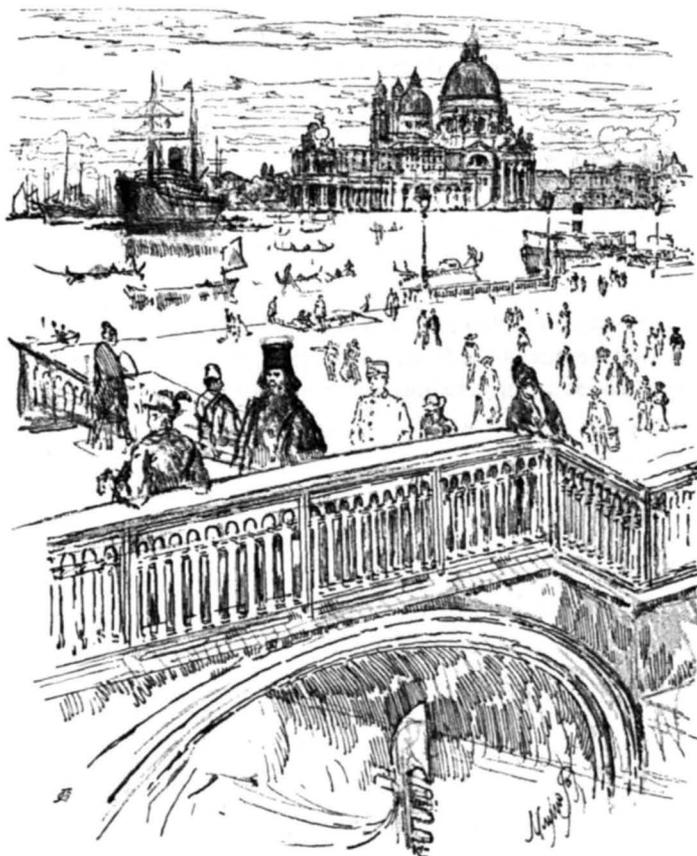
*Mutinelli, Ult.*

*Rom. viii. 300.*

The candidates proposed for election to succeed him were numerous, but not of good quality. One of them, Sebastiano Mocenigo, was such a bad character that when he had been in Vienna as Ambassador the Empress Maria Teresa had asked the Republic to recall him. The truth was that the

*Rom. viii. 301.*

few who were fit for the Dogeship would not accept it, or were opposed by the whole body of the corruptible.



PONTE DELLA PIETÀ

As a specimen of what went on during the election of the last Doge of Venice, I subjoin an official list

of what were considered the legitimate expenses of the electors. The figures are from Mutinelli and may be trusted. They are given in *Mutinelli, Ult.* Venetian 'lire,' one of which is considered to have been equal to half a modern Italian 'lira,' or French franc.

	Ven. Lire.
Bread, wine, oil, and vinegar . . . . .	29,421
Fish . . . . .	24,410
Meat, poultry, game . . . . .	20,370
Sausages, large and small . . . . .	3,980
Preserved fruits and candies . . . . .	47,670
Wines, liquors, coffee . . . . .	63,845
Spices, herbs, fruit, flowers . . . . .	6,314
Wood and charcoal . . . . .	31,851
Utensils hired, worn, and lost . . . . .	41,624
Small expenses . . . . .	45,327
Given to footmen and to workmen of the guilds . . . . .	63,583
Tobacco and snuff . . . . .	4,931
Poem 'La Scaramuccia' (The Skirmish) . . . . .	48
Almanacks . . . . .	8
Game of Rocambole (said to have been a kind of Ombre)	550
Nightcaps . . . . .	450
Felt caps . . . . .	56
Socks . . . . .	16
Black silk wig-bags . . . . .	48
French, German, and Spanish snuff-boxes . . . . .	3,077
Combs 'à la royale,' for wigs, and for caps . . . . .	2,150
Essence of rose, carnation, lavender, and vanilla ; olive gum and gold powder . . . . .	173
Rouge . . . . .	9
One rosary . . . . .	15
Total . . . . .	<u>389,926</u>

Romanin, probably with another copy of the account which he does not give in items, and writing earlier than Mutinelli, makes the sum a little smaller. In any case it is certainly one of the most extraordinary bills ever brought in by a Republic for electing its chief.

In view of modern methods it will interest some of my readers to see how the expenses of Venetian elections increased towards the end, according to Romanin:—

			Ven. Lire.
Election of Carlo Ruzzini	in 1732	. .	68,946
“ Aloise Pisani	“ 1734	. .	70,629
“ Pietro Grimani	“ 1741	. .	70,667
“ Francesco Loredan	“ 1752	. .	134,290
“ Marco Foscarini	“ 1762	. .	120,868
“ Aloise Mocenigo	“ 1763	. .	125,234
“ Paolo Renier	“ 1779	. .	222,410
“ Ludovico Manin	“ 1789	. .	378,387

Greatly increased expenditure for successive elections during half a century can only mean one of two things, the approach of a collapse, or the imminence of a tyranny. The greater the proportionate increase from one election to the next, the nearer is the catastrophe. The election of the last Doge of Venice cost five and a half times as much as that of Carlo Ruzzini. It would be interesting to know what proportion Julius Cæsar's enormous expenses, when he was elected Pontifex Maximus, bore to those of a predecessor in the same office fifty years earlier.

The Venetian electors who managed to consume, or make away with, nearly eight thousand pounds' worth

of food, drink, tobacco, and rose-water in nineteen days, chose an honest man, though a very incompetent one, and the public showed no enthusiasm for the new Doge, in spite of the great festivities held for his coronation. The Venetian people, too, preserved their aristocratic tendencies to the very last, and always preferred a Doge of ancient lineage to one who, like Manin, came of the 'New men.'

He was not fortunate in his choice of a motto for his first 'osella.' He, who was to dig the grave of Venetian liberty, chose the single word 'Libertas' for the superscription on his first coin; and on that which appeared in the last year but one of the independence of Venice were the words 'Pax in virtute tua,' which, as Mr. Horatio Brown has pointedly observed, 'reads like a mocking epitaph upon the dying Republic.'

Manin was a weak and vacillating man, though truthful, generous to a fault, and not a coward. As Doge, he was bound hand and foot, and only a man of great character could have broken through such bonds to strike out an original plan that might have prolonged his country's life. He gave his fortune without stint, but the idea of giving anything else did not occur to him. Before the tremendous storm of change that broke with the French revolution and raged throughout Europe for years, he bowed his head, and Venice went down. No man is to be blamed for not being born a hero; nor is the mother of heroes in fault when she is old and can bear them no more.



FROM THE PUBLIC GARDEN AT SUNSET

## XV

### THE LAST SOLDIERS

DURING the eighteenth century Venetian diplomacy succeeded in preserving the Republic's neutral position in spite of the great wars that agitated Europe. Her only war was with the Turks, and it was disastrous.

Early in the century the Turks attacked the Peloponnesus, and Venice lost her richest colonies in rapid succession. Her navy was no longer a power, and she was almost without allies, for the European powers were exhausted by the recent

1715.

war of the Spanish succession, and though Malta and the Pope befriended her, the help they could give was insignificant. It was not until the Turks attacked Hungary that she received any efficient assistance; by uniting her forces with those of the Empire she obtained some success, and the desperate courage of Marshal Count von Schulenburg, a Saxon general in the Venetian service, saved Corfu. The Turks, beaten at sea by the Venetians, and on the Danube by the Hungarians at Temesvar, made peace, and the treaty of Passarowitz put an end to the war.

But Venice had for ever lost the Pelopon-<sup>1718.</sup>  
 nesus, Crete, and other valuable possessions.

After this disastrous struggle, it was impossible to preserve any further illusions as to the future. Venice felt that she was in full decadence, and only endeavoured to hide its outward signs. Instead of trying to beat against the current, she allowed herself to drift; things went from bad to worse, and before long the army, the navy, and the Arsenal were completely disorganised, though their expenses had not in the least diminished. A contemporary says that a regiment looked like a company, and a *Mutinelli, Ult.*  
 company like a corporal's guard, whereas <sup>150 sqq.</sup>  
 the Republic was paying for regiments with their full complement of men.

The service of the hired troops was beneath contempt. In Padua the students of the *Mutinelli, Ult.*  
 University defied the garrison. On one <sup>176.</sup>  
 occasion, in a hideous orgy, they accidentally or in-

tionally did to death a pretty beggar girl; but when a detachment of Croatian soldiers attempted to arrest the culprits, the students treated them with such utter contempt that their commander was terrified, fled with his men to the safety of the barracks, and bolted and barred the doors.

If such things happened on Venetian territory one may fancy what the state of things was in the colonies. Corfu was supposed to be defended by a company of Venetian soldiers and two companies of Albanians. From 1724 to 1745 the latter were represented by two men, a major and a captain, whose sole business was to draw the pay of the whole force. The two officers embezzled the sums allowed for the men's food and uniforms, and the pay was sent to the soldiers, who lived in their own homes in the mountains. No trouble was taken even to identify them, and when one died it was customary for another to take his name and receive his pay. The two companies thus literally earned immortality, and the names on the rolls never changed. Several Albanians who drew their pay as Venetian mercenaries enrolled themselves also in the so-called 'Royal Macedonian' regiment, in the service of the King of Naples, and were never found out by the Republic. In twenty-one years these imaginary troops cost Venice 54,300 sequins, or over £40,000.

The colonial garrisons economised their gunpowder by abolishing all target practice, and consisted chiefly of utterly untrained old men who were absent most of the time. The fortresses were not more serviceable

than the troops that were supposed to defend them. On the mainland, the frontier fort of Peschiera was half dismantled, the drawbridges had long rusted in their positions and could not be raised, and the ramparts were so overgrown with trees and shrubs as to be impassable; at one time the fort did not even possess a flag to show its nationality. Ninety of its guns had no carriages; the gunners lived quietly at their homes in Venice, and if they ever remembered that they were supposed to be soldiers it was because the government dressed them up on great occasions as a guard of honour for the ducal palace. Their number was between four and five hundred.

*Mutinelli, Ult.  
and Tassini,  
under  
'Bombardiere.'*

As for the fort of Corfu, it was robbed by a common thief. In 1745, a certain Vizzo Manducchiollo promised the Turks two good guns, one of bronze and one of iron. With the help of his gang he scaled the wall of the Raimondo Fort one night, carried off the cannon, and sold them to the Turks for twenty-seven sequins.

*Mutinelli, Ult.  
169.*

The workmen of the Arsenal in Venice, who had formerly been the best-organised body of men in the Republic, had completely come to grief in the eighteenth century. The Arsenal was supposed to be governed by a voluminous code of laws, most of which were now either altogether disregarded, or were administered with culpable leniency. The disorder was incredible. Every son of a workman in the Arsenal had an hereditary right to be employed

there, but the officials who were in command did not take any means of checking the men's attendance; they paid so much a head for every workman on the payroll, according to his age, whether he ever appeared except on pay-days or not. In this way the State paid out vast sums to men who only entered the gates once a month to draw their wages for doing nothing. Many of them had other occupations, at which they worked regularly and industriously. Some were even actors, and one of the cleverest 'Pantaloons' was officially known as one of the best-paid Arsenal hands. The six hundred apprentices who were supposed to attend the technical schools attached to the different departments of the yard, only looked in now and then. When the time came for them to pass for the certificate of master workman they paid the sum of thirty-four Venetian lire, in consideration of which the Examiners pronounced them competent. In this way, as Mutinelli *Mutinelli, Ull.* truly says, ignorance became hereditary, *145, 153.* as employment in the Arsenal already was, and the yard became a mere monument of former generous initiative, very expensive to maintain.

At the fall of the Republic, Bonaparte seized and sent to France a large number of vessels. When *Rom. x. 162,* the Arsenal was sacked in 1797 it was *note 2, and 304.* found to contain 5293 pieces of artillery, of which 2518 were of bronze, and the rest of iron; and at the last there were brought from the docks ten ships of seventy guns, eleven of seventy-six, one of fifty-five, thirteen of forty-two, two of thirty-two,

twenty-three galleys, one floating howitzer battery, two 'cutters,' whatever the Italian writer may have meant,



BOAT-BUILDERS

twelve gunboats, three brigs of sixteen to eighteen guns, one fore-and-aft schooner, seven galleons and

as many 'zambecchi,' five feluccas, many boats armed with grenade mortars, ten floats with two guns, and one floating-battery of seven guns.

If these vessels were not all badly built, they were certainly badly fitted out and badly sailed when they went to sea. The Provveditori and Inquisitors Extraordinary, sent from time to time by the Senate to inspect the fleet, complained that they found neither good carpenters nor good sailors. One frigate, which had a nominal crew of one hundred and fifty-seven men, the *Concordia*, was found to have barely thirty, and not able seamen at that. As for the convicts who pulled the oars on the war-galleys, they were kept half-clothed and shelterless when ashore; but being only carelessly guarded they often ran away, and not unfrequently succeeded in finding employment, under assumed names, in the smaller ports of the Republic. Some are known to have become house-servants. Nevertheless the overseer of each gang regularly pocketed the money allowed for their food and clothing.

In 1784 it was proved that for a long time from sixty to seventy thousand fagots of wood and an immense number of barrel staves had disappeared yearly, no one knew how. The workmen of the Arsenal did not think it necessary to buy firewood when it could be had for nothing.

In 1730, the Provveditor Erizzo was ordered to one of the Eastern colonies on an important mission, with several large vessels. Almost at the moment of

starting, the officers of one of these galleys came and begged him to give them a captain not belonging to the



THE VEGETABLE MARKET

navy, as they should not otherwise feel safe to go to sea.

Yet at this very time Goldoni wrote that every one

sang in Venice: ‘They sing in the squares, in the streets, on the canals; the shopkeepers *Goldoni, i. chap. xxxv.* sing as they sell their wares; the workmen sing as they leave their work; the gondolier sings while he waits for his master. The characteristic of the nation is its gaiety.’

In the midst of this laughing decadence, in the very depth of this gay and careless disintegration of a country’s body and soul, we come across one devoted, energetic character, a fighting man of the better days, who reminds us of what Venice was in her greatness.

Angelo Emo was great, considering the littleness of Venice in his time. If we compare him with Vittor Pisani, Carlo Zeno, or Sebastian Venier, he seems small as a leader; but as a plain, brave man, he is not dwarfed by comparison with men who were colossal in an age of giants.

He was born in 1731, and was brought up by his father to dream of older and greater times, and to know more of his country’s history than most youths of his day. *Rom. viii. 289.* He travelled early and far, often employed on business of the State, and he was able to compare the condition of Venice with that of other European countries, especially England and France, in regard to military and naval matters.

He was not yet thirty years old when the government sent him to Portugal to study the means of reviving the commercial relations between that kingdom and Venice. Sailing down the Adriatic, he put into Corfu, probably for fresh provisions; but on learning

PONTE CANONICA







that many intrigues were already on foot to deprive



FONDAMENTA WEIDERMANN

him of his mission, he set sail again at once for the Mediterranean in order to be beyond reach of recall.

He passed the Straits of Gibraltar, but fell in with a gale of wind in the ocean which nearly put an end to his sailing for ever. The Venetian vessels were not remarkable for their seaworthiness at best, and ocean weather was almost too much for Emo's ship. He himself describes the frightful confusion in the storm, and the difficulty he had in managing his men. To make matters worse, the freshwater tanks were sprung and most of the supply was lost, so that water was served out in rations, while the food consisted principally of what the British sailor terms 'salt horse.' Then the vessel lost her rudder, and things looked badly; but the gale moderated and died out at last, and the ship brought to near a wooded coast, whence Emo was able before long to get a tree, which was rough hewn to serve as a rudder, and he got his vessel into port at last, 'with the admiration and applause of every one,' says Romanin, after describing the affair of the jury-rudder as only a landsman can describe an accident at sea.

His mission to Portugal was successful, and Emo returned to Venice; but when he tried to direct the attention of the government to reforms of which the army and navy stood in urgent need, he could obtain  
1784. no practical result, so that when he was placed in command of a fleet, with orders to punish the Bey of Tunis and the Algerian pirates, he was well aware that his force was by no means what it appeared to be to the inexperienced public. In the course of the campaign his largest ship, *La Forza*, ill-

equipped and worse officered, sank before his eyes off Trapani, and none of the other vessels could be relied on to do any better. Yet with such material and such men he sustained a conflict that lasted three years, and if he was unable to destroy the Bey of Tunis, he at least humbled him, brought him to terms, and obtained from him a formal treaty engaging to put down piracy on the African coast. France profited much by the result of this expedition, and one of the last documents signed by Louis XVI. before he fell was a letter to the Doge Manin, in which Angelo Emo was praised to the skies for the good work he had done.

The Admiral was rewarded with the title of Cavaliere, the only one the Republic ever conferred, and with the office of Procurator of Saint Mark's, but I cannot find that his advice as to reforms was ever listened to. A few years later, the Bey of Tunis broke his promise in regard to piracy, and Emo was again sent with a fleet to chastise him, but was suddenly taken ill in Malta, and died in a few days. He was poisoned, it is said, by Condulmer, his principal lieutenant, who at once succeeded him as admiral.

The last Venetian fighting man was of average height and lean, and stooped a little; he was pale, his forehead was broad, and he had blue eyes and black eyebrows, particularly thick and bushy. His mouth was strong, but the lips were thick and coarse.

*Statue of Emo,  
Canova;  
Arsenal.*

His remains were carefully embalmed in Malta and

were brought home to Venice on his flagship, the *Fama* — ‘fame’ — which came to anchor on the twenty-fourth of May 1792. The body was followed from the mole to Saint Mark’s by the clergy, the schools, the magistracies, and a vast concourse of people. The funeral mass was sung in the presence of the Doge, and the vast procession wended its way to the church of the Serviti. To the martial sound of drums and the solemn roar of the minute gun, Venice laid her last captain to rest beside his fathers.



THE SALUTE FROM S. GIORGIO

## XVI

### THE LAST DIPLOMATISTS

DURING the seventeenth century the Republic had no doubt of her own military strength, but nevertheless trusted much to her diplomacy; in the eighteenth the latter was the last good weapon left her of the many that had once been in her armoury, and skilled as her diplomatic agents were, their efforts could not prevent her from spoliation by the Turks, whose simple rule was to take first and to talk about rights afterwards.

In a measure, too, Venice's position as a neutral power was dearly bought, and more than once in the war of the Spanish succession her territory was the scene of fighting between French and Germans. The same skill kept her out of the field during the quarrels for the succession of Parma, of Tuscany, of Poland, and of Austria, and obtained for Venetian Ambassadors a place of honour in the congresses that resulted in the treaties of Utrecht, Vienna, and Aix-la-Chapelle.

During the American war of independence, there were constant diplomatic relations between the Republic and the American deputies who came to France for the congress of Versailles. The Venetian archives contain a letter signed by John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson, by which the Americans hoped to lay the foundations of a commercial treaty; but owing to the excessive caution of Venice the attempt had no result. The Republic of the Adriatic had almost always looked eastward for her trade, and distrusted the new world which she had declined to help to discover. The original letter, written in the English language, and addressed to the Venetian Ambassador in Paris, Daniele Dolfin, has not been published, I believe; and I shall not insult the memory of such writers by attempting to turn Romanin's translation back into their language. The letter explains that the three signers are fully empowered by their government to negotiate a friendly treaty of commerce, and will be glad to enter

*Rom. viii. 229,*  
*230.*

upon the negotiation as soon as the Venetian Ambassador is properly authorised to do so; in signing they use the form, 'your most obedient, humble servants.' For the benefit of any American who may wish to get at the original, I may add that Romanin found the letter in the Archives of the Senate, with the despatches from France of Daniele Dolfin, envelope 261.

A letter from another Venetian Ambassador in Paris, Cappello, prophetically dated July fourteenth, 1788, exactly one year before the destruction of the Bastille, to the very day, *Rom. ix. 153.* sounds the first warning alarm of the approaching revolution; few writers have better summed up the condition of the French monarchy when it was on the brink of the abyss, and no diplomatist could have given his own country better advice.

The Committee of the Savi, who concentrated all power into their own hands, did not even communicate this letter to the Senate. Cappello spoke still more clearly when he made his formal report in person, on returning from his mission and after leaving Paris just when the King was to be asked to sign the Constitution, a document for which the Ambassador confesses that he can find no name. 'It is not a monarchy,' he says, 'for it takes everything from the monarch; it is not a democracy, because the people are not the legislators; it is not that of an aristocracy, for the mere name is looked upon in France not as treason against the King, but as treason against the nation. . . . The National Assembly began by encroaching upon all powers, and

by confounding within itself all the attributes of sovereignty, usurping the administrative functions from the executive power, and from the judiciary the right of judging criminal cases.'

It is easy to understand the impression made by such a report, in the course of which the Ambassador narrated the scenes that took place in Versailles and at the Tuileries after the night of October sixth, 1789. The aristocratic Venetian Republic sympathised profoundly with the dying French monarchy; but it was impossible to believe that such a state of things would last long, and the government was painfully surprised by the letter in which Louis XVI. announced that he accepted the situation. That letter is in existence. In it the King declares that he has accepted the new form of government 'of his own free will; that the National Assembly is only a reform of the ancient States General, and will ensure the happiness of the nation and the monarchy.' The King adds, as if to hide his weakness from himself, that what is called a 'revolution' is mostly only the destruction of a mass of prejudices and abuses which endanger the public wealth, and that he was therefore proud to think that he should leave his son something better than the crown as he had inherited it from his ancestors, namely, a constitutional monarchy.

This letter, with its artificial enthusiasm, is dated March fourteenth, 1791, three months before the King's flight and his arrest at Varennes, and less than two years before his murder on the scaffold.



FROM THE FONTE DELLA PIETÀ

Cappello's successor as Ambassador in Paris, Alvise Pisani, continued to keep his government informed of what occurred. On the twenty-fifth of September 1791, Louis XVI. addressed another letter to his 'most dear friends, allies, and confederates,' the Venetians, in which he expresses the certainty that they will be rejoiced to hear of his having signed the Constitution, which had so greatly shocked Cappello. In spite of the painful impression produced by these documents, it was necessary to answer them, if only as a matter of etiquette.

The position of the Republic was a difficult one. Prudence required the strictest neutrality as to the affairs of other nations; but the mere fact that every one recognised this as Venice's only possible position exposed her to perfidious and secret attacks of all sorts. France maintained a vast number of secret agents to propagate revolutionary doctrines in the Venetian territory, and at the same time lost no opportunity of trying to pick a quarrel with the Republic, by insulting her flag. On the twenty-ninth of November 1792, the captain of a French man-of-war, bearing a Spanish name, the *Buenos Ayres*, asked permission to land with eight men on the Venetian shore, but refused to submit to the regulations of the Health Office. His request was refused. Thereupon he proceeded to abuse the Venetian government from the deck of his ship. He wound up by declaring that there was no such thing existing as a Sovereign Government, that all men were equal, and that he was a magistrate, as good as any

senator. He chose to land, and he would land if he chose. A Venetian galley hindered him from doing so, but as he made off he cried out: 'You will change your minds in a year!' *Rom. ix. 219.*

Poor France! She herself was to learn a century later that all men are equal — in the eyes of German Jews.

At that time Austria allied herself with Piedmont to oppose the French invasion which was imminent, and the Venetian Envoy at the court of Turin continually advised his government to join this league, which alone could save the Republic and the other Italian powers.

The Committee of the Savi who had absorbed the government of Venice simply by saving trouble to all the other officials, allowed the Senate to discuss this proposition, probably because they understood its vast importance. *Rom. ix. 195.* But the Senate declared for strict neutrality, and the Savi felt that after this they were free to do as they pleased, and from that time they decided according to their own judgment as to the question of showing any despatch to the Councils or of suppressing it in order to avoid public discussions.

Nevertheless, they felt the danger of the moment enough to recall the Venetian vessels stationed at Malta and Corfu, in order to defend the approaches to Venice, a measure which displeased France on the ground that it was a preparation for hostilities. Thus the success of the French army in Savoy obliged the

Savi to call in the Senate again, to discuss the public safety. The 'fathers of their country' were at that time mostly in their country places, thoroughly enjoying themselves; but they too must have felt that there was danger in the air, for they answered the summons of Francesco Pesaro, the presiding Savio for the week. A lively discussion took place, but once more neutrality was voted by a strong majority, and the government of the Savi now entered upon a course of half measures more dangerous in reality than any one mistake could have been. Permission was granted to the Imperial troops to transport provisions from Trieste to Goro, and with a last revival of the business spirit the Republic violated the neutrality she had voted by selling corn and oats to the Austrians. At this the Venetian Ambassador withdrew to London for safety, leaving his secretary in charge.

*Rom. ix. 203.* An incident now occurred in Venice which was calculated to bring matters to a crisis.

The French Ambassador, who had quitted Venice, had left in charge of the Embassy a certain Monsieur Henin, who had taken as his private secretary a priest called Alessandri. On the twenty-ninth of December 1792 this priest was sent for in haste by the Superior of the bare-footed Carmelites of the monastery of San Geremia, close to the palace occupied by the French Embassy. He was introduced with some mystery, but with no loss of time, and was conducted to the Superior's room, where he was warned that unless he

left Venice by the sixth of January, he would be assassinated. There was a plot to kill him, but one of the intended murderers had confessed to the Superior himself, and under the seal of confession had begged the monk to save Alessandri's life.

The priest, who does not seem to have been timid, was much surprised, but promised nothing as to leaving the city, though he appears to have at once considered



ON THE WAY TO FUSINA, FROM THE MOUTH OF THE BRENTA

the means of getting away. But on that same evening the Superior received an anonymous note with these words: 'Either the Abbé Alessandri will leave Venice to-morrow, and at once quit Venetian territory, or something serious will happen to him.' The Superior sent for Alessandri again. The note, strange to say, had been delivered together with fifteen gold sequins, which the unknown writer sent to help the priest's flight.

The priest now lost no time, but left at once for

Fusina on the mainland, and finding no means of getting on at once, pursued his journey on foot. He had left with the monk a written receipt for the money, which he had been forced to accept, and he had also informed his employer, Monsieur Henin, of the cause of his sudden departure.

Monsieur Henin was furious, and not without some reason. He wrote a violent letter to the Venetian Government, inquiring how an unknown person could dare anything so outrageous in a well-regulated community. Who was instigating the outrageous crime? What monster had paid fifteen sequins to have the murder committed? What was the meaning of the pretended confession? Why did the villainous author of the abominable plan drag a monk into the plot? This was the gist of Monsieur Henin's letter, and he ended by demanding the immediate arrest and condign punishment of the murderer, or murderers, and the recall of his fugitive secretary, who, he insisted, must be so well guarded by the government as not to be in fear of his life.

The Secretary of Embassy certainly had right on his side so far, but he followed up his letter in an interview with one of the Inquisitors, in which he declared his belief that it was the government itself that threatened Alessandri. The Inquisitors might have answered that they disposed of much simpler and surer means than the hand of a hired assassin whenever they wished to be rid of an obnoxious person. Henin suggested, too, that the outrage was instigated by

Austria in order to exasperate France, an idea which seems deficient in logic.

Henin appears to have been a violent sort of person, and anything but a diplomatist. Of course he had right on his side, but Alessandri, on inquiry, turned out to be a bad character, and anything but the 'mild, tranquil, reticent, and retiring' creature of fifty-six, whom the Frenchman represented him to be. He had been obliged to leave his native city, Trent, for debt and various misdemeanours; he was a violent revolutionary, and in his 'tranquil retirement' he dwelt with a disreputable woman of the people, whom he had enticed away from her family; from which facts it was easy to argue that he had made himself the object of some private vengeance.

Nevertheless, and although Henin had not at that time any proper credentials as *Chargé d'Affaires*, the Inquisitors thought it best to avoid disturbance, and Alessandri was brought back and properly protected. Almost immediately upon this Henin received credential letters from his government, and asked to present them to the Senate.

The Savi, who detested the man, were much disturbed; and as the Senate and the Great Council left the matter to them, they asked the assistance of those of their colleagues who had served Rom. ix. 207. their time and retired. As they wore black cloaks the people nicknamed them the 'Consulta Nera,' the 'Black Cabinet.'

Not to receive the official representative of the new

French government would have been contrary to the policy of strict neutrality adopted by the Venetian Republic; to receive him was to irritate Austria and to expose Venice to an attack from that side. She had pursued a policy of half measures, and the end of half measures is always a fall between two stools. The fall was precipitated by the soothing eloquence of one of the speakers, who assured his colleagues that all Europe would understand and forgive them for yielding to necessity.

The Senate accordingly voted with the Black Cabinet that Henin should be received, but instructed its ambassadors at the various European courts to convey information of the fact with all the circumspection possible, and in such a way as to palliate the action of the Venetian government in the eyes of the world.

While this was going on, the secretary whom the Venetian Ambassador Pisani had left in charge at Paris, wrote an eloquent letter describing the death of Louis XVI., and he sent at the same time a scrap of the cloak which the King had worn on his way to the scaffold. This caused the most profound emotion. In the Senate, Angelo Quirini loudly declared that all diplomatic relations with a government of hangmen and executioners must be instantly broken off.

The matter was still in discussion when Henin demanded, in the name of his government, the authorisation to place the arms of the French Republic over the door of his residence. As his credentials had been accepted it was impossible to refuse this request, but

the general indignation of the better sort of the people was unbounded.

There were now two parties in Venice. On the one hand, the secret emissaries of France preached revolutionary doctrines, and stirred up the criminal classes; on the other, a vast literature of pamphlets, articles, satires, and caricatures, all attacking the French, were openly circulated throughout the city. In the hope of diverting the attention of the whole population from political matters the Savi made frantic and extravagant efforts to amuse everybody. The very last carnival before the end was the most magnificent ever remembered.

In the year of the French King's murder, Bonaparte was a captain of artillery, and France was about to face the first coalition of the powers, after putting down the royalists in Vendée.

Henin continued to annoy the Signory in every possible way, and made the smallest incidents the subjects of official complaint and protest. He was at last recalled, but his successor was a man called Noël, who was such a notoriously bad character that the Venetian Senate put off receiving his credentials again and again on all sorts of grounds, doubtless believing, too, that the French revolutionary government was not going to last even so long as it did. To gain time was to save dignity, thought the Senators. But Noël grew tired of waiting, and abruptly returned to Paris in a very bad humour, to stir up against Venice the resentment of the Committee of Public Safety.

It was now no longer an easy matter to keep up



A LONELY CANAL

appearances of neutrality. England, especially, lost no opportunity of urging Venice to join the European

League, and Worsley, the last English Minister, was perpetually insisting on a rupture with France.

Another circumstance occurred to increase the difficulty of Venice's position. The Comte de Lille, afterwards Louis XVIII., who styled himself Regent of France during the captivity of his nephew, the unfortunate child Louis XVII., being obliged to leave Piedmont, asked permission to reside in Verona, and the Signory, anxiously hoping for a restoration in France, received him with the honours due to his rank and the welcome a friend might expect. At this the French Republic took umbrage and protested violently, but the Venetians answered that the presence of the Comte de Lille in Verona, where he led a retired life, was no violation of neutrality.

The Savi now had more on their hands than they could manage, for they were obliged at one and the same time to watch the movements of the revolutionary propaganda and to keep themselves informed of the doings of the royalist party who plotted in Venice to restore the French monarchy. And meanwhile, in spite of a nominal press censorship, the *Postiglione* newspaper satirised the French Republic in the bitterest manner, giving Robespierre constant cause of complaint.

Diplomatic relations were now strained almost to the breaking point. Pisani was still supposed to be the Venetian Ambassador in Paris, though Rom. ix, 231-239. he resided in London, and the French Envoy in Venice had left in disgust at not being

received. On the latter point the French yielded, and sent another and more respectable representative, a certain Lallement, whom the Signory consented to receive in spite of the objections of the English Minister.

The question now arose, who was to succeed Pisani in Paris, and how the new envoy was to be styled. Lallement had brought very simply worded credentials, and had agreed to assume any designation which the Signory desired. The Savi were much distressed about this matter, but they selected Aloise Quirini for the mission, and at last decided that he should be addressed neither as Ambassador nor Minister, but simply as 'the Noble Quirini.' They could hardly have chosen a title better calculated to irritate a government which held that nobility was a worse crime than forgery or assassination.

The Noble Quirini accordingly went to Paris with a very magnificent salary, and with instructions to keep up the splendid traditions of former Venetian representatives abroad.

But meanwhile the child Louis XVII. had disappeared from the scene, and the Comte de Lille, or the Comte de Provence as he was called *Rom. ix. 252.* when not travelling incognito, was a source of much anxiety to Venice. He was now undoubtedly the legitimate King of France, and his modest residence in Verona had become a court at which every point of etiquette was most rigorously observed. The European powers encouraged him in

his efforts to restore the monarchy in his own person, and England, Austria, and Russia sent envoys to him in Verona without in the least considering the difficulties which their action might cause the Venetian government.

At this juncture France invented another form of government, and Lallement appeared before the Senate with an entirely new set of credentials as the Envoy of the Directory, which, he <sup>1796.</sup> declared, was no less disposed than its predecessors in power to remain 'in perfect understanding and on the most friendly terms' with the Venetian Republic. The man who was to end the hideous and grotesque succession of butcheries and farces which had lasted seven years was in favour with this last-hatched and half-fledged government, and his dominating influence was beginning to be felt. Bonaparte was now twenty-six years old; he was grown up.

A few months earlier Lallement had read before the Venetian Senate a proclamation which the 'Representatives of the People' sent to the army <sup>1795.</sup> of the Alps, as a general warning against the Genoese, the Tuscans, and the Venetians, who, in spite of their protestations of friendship, allowed their ships to capture and plunder French vessels on the high seas. By the end of 1795 the French were masters of the Riviera, having beaten the Austrians very badly.

Venice was now accused of having violated her neutrality by allowing the passage of Austrian troops

through her dominions. She answered that she had acted in accordance with a very ancient treaty which accorded the Empire the use of the road to Gambara, and that she was as neutral as ever; but this the French found it hard to believe. When further accused of favouring royalist intrigues, the Signory made a show of punishing the authors of a few libels on the Directory.

As for Louis XVIII., as the Comte de Lille was now called by his adherents, Venice was reluctantly obliged to ask him to leave her territory, as the Directory threatened war if he remained.

He departed, shaking the dust from his feet. He demanded that the name of his family should be *Smedley, Sketches from Venetian History, ii. chap. xx. note.* erased from the Golden Book, and that the armour of his ancestor Henry IV. should be given back to him. This armour Smedley rightly conjectures to have been the sword worn by Henry IV. at the battle of Ivry, with which he had knighted the Venetian Ambassadors after his accession, and which he then presented to the Treasury of Saint Mark's.

The Signory entirely refused to accede to the Comte de Lille's demands. It could not deprive itself, it replied, of the satisfaction of counting the royal family of France amongst its nobility, and it could not bring itself to part with such a valuable gift as it had received from Henry IV.; and with this quiet answer to the Russian envoy who represented him the Comte de Lille had to be satisfied.

But France was not, and the Inquisitors received many private warnings to the effect that the French government would seize upon any pretext for attacking Venice. 'Arm, if you hope not to be trodden under foot!' Such was the burden of these fruitless messages.

Austria, Sardinia, Naples, and Pius VII. openly allied themselves together, and the Duchies of Parma and Modena secretly promised their help. Genoa was paralysed by the vicinity of the French army; Tuscany was playing the game of neutrality, like Venice.

The Signory had great confidence in the army of the allies and in its chief. Bonaparte was only a boy; the old general Beaulieu would easily beat him.

But the Signory was mistaken. The boy had grown up — 'Napoleon, Apollyon, destroyer of Cities, being a Lion roaming about,' as the barbarous Greek jest on his name has it.



EVENING

## XVII

### THE LAST HOUR

THE end was at hand when Bonaparte crossed the river Po. One is apt to forget that he had already showed  
*1796.* himself to be much more than a victorious  
*Rom. ix. 284.* general, and that throughout the campaign he displayed that marvellous skill in dealing with men which so often ensured him an enthusiastic reception in places where he could not have been expected to be welcome.

He had soon realised the horrible impression produced everywhere outside of France by the Revolution, the Terror, and the Committee of Public Safety, and he hastened, by his numberless agents, to exalt the virtues of the Directory. They were not a herd of bloodthirsty ruffians, he taught, but an assemblage of the future saviours of mankind, who were to emancipate the world from all those ancient political and social prejudices which had so long held it in bondage.

He could not unteach the scum of the Italian populace what the agents of the Revolution had taught it with such lavish expenditure in disreputable taverns and worse resorts, but he could control the teachers and gradually change the direction of the education. The Venetian gondoliers could be taught something, too, and the Venetian Barnabotti could be bribed to learn anything, and to impart what they learned.

‘No organisation,’ says Bonnal, ‘was ever superior to his (Bonaparte’s), no revolutionary organisation was ever more formidable. We mean “revolutionary” as regards the legitimate govern-  
Bonnal, *Chute d’une République*, 273-274.  
ments existing in Italy, with which we were not at war, and as regards the means used. . . . It was at Milan that his system became a definite official service, both political and military. Thence arose two principal offices exactly answering the aim he was pursuing, that is, the political propaganda and the military propaganda. By means of the political propaganda he sought to bring about either the substitution of one domination for another, or the modification of

the forms of government. . . . Lombardy is an example of the first case, the Italian Duchies of the second. By his military propoganda he roused the populations to arms, sometimes against the legitimate sovereign, as happened in Venice and Parma, sometimes against a foreign power, as at Milan.'

Once more, as in the war of the Spanish succession, the Venetian territory became a refuge and a provision market for two hostile armies. The fortresses, as has been seen, were really at the mercy of any one who chose to occupy them. On the ninth of May the Imperial troops, yielding to the request of Contarini the Governor of Crema, and supposing the place to be capable of defence, consented to pass by the city without entering it. If they had insisted no one could have hindered them, and the letter Contarini afterwards wrote to the Venetian government disturbed even the astounding optimism of the Savi. The latter were shocked when they thought of the risk they had run, and by way of getting rid of all further responsibility they appointed a Provveditor to watch over the safety of the Venetian territory. More than this their worst enemies could not have expected them to do. They selected a Foscarini for the office, and were particularly careful to admonish him that he must 'preserve intact the tranquillity of the Republic, and administer comfort and consolation to its subjects.' I translate literally the phrase, which sounds like the drivelling of an old man in second childhood.

The imperial troops were barely out of sight of

OUT IN THE LAGOON







Crema when the French appeared, and Contarini renewed his request that the city might not be entered. Berthier consented, but requisitioned provisions and forage. Soon afterwards came Bonaparte himself and he also consented to pass on, but not until he had squeezed every particle of available information out of the governor, whose letter narrating the interview gives a remarkably clear idea of the great young man's conversation.

The Senate wrote to the Commander of the fortress of Peschiera not to allow any foreign soldiers to enter under any circumstances. I have described the condition of the place elsewhere, and the unlucky colonel at once answered, inquiring what in the world he was to do in order to prevent the passage of the Imperial troops.

The Austrian general Liptay found it convenient to install himself in Peschiera for some time, and when the Republic protested, he answered with admirable coolness and much truth that the place was not a fortress at all, and that he was encamped there as the French were in the fields towards Brescia.

Even Bonaparte understood the absurdity of this case. 'The truth about the affair of Peschiera,' he wrote to the Directory, 'is that the Venetians have been duped by Beaulieu; he Rom. ix, 297-299. asked leave to pass with fifty men and then made himself master of the city.'

In spite of this conviction, Bonaparte took advantage of the incident to declare to the Provveditor Foscarini that he would burn Verona to punish the Venetians

for having favoured the Austrian troops; and Foscarini, obliged to act on the spur of the moment and without consulting the government, opened the gates of Verona to Masséna on receiving the latter's assurance that the city should not be burned. He probably fancied that he had obtained a great concession, and did not understand that Verona was absolutely necessary to the French as a base from which to advance on Mantua, held by the Imperial troops.

The news of the occupation of Verona produced the utmost alarm in Venice, yet the Great Council was not summoned, nor was there a regular sitting of the Senate. The days had gone by when the great bell of Saint Mark's was rung backward to call every fighting man to arms, and every aged Senator to the Council. The handful of scared and vacillating men who had steered Venice to her end met stealthily by night in the Casino Pesaro, more like conspirators than defenders of their country. Most of them fancied the French already in the lagoons, if not in the city; some, forgetting that they had neither troops nor captains, were for defence to the death; some, who had secretly adopted revolutionary ideas and principles, rejoiced at heart because the end was so near.

Such a meeting of such men could come to nothing; and nothing was decided except that Foscarini, the Provveditor, should be assisted by two other nobles, commissioned to negotiate with Bonaparte.

They went and found him apparently in the mildest and most friendly humour, but the report of their

interview with him reached the Senate together with a communication from the Inquisitors explaining Bonaparte's plan for taking possession of the fort of



THE SALUTE FROM THE LAGOON

Legnago, making sure of the free navigation of the Adige, and threatening to destroy Venice in order to extort a sum of five or six millions of francs.

So Venice, still theoretically neutral, was driven to collect such poor forces as she had by land and sea, in order to defend herself against the depredations of the combatants. She had not a single general to direct her men, or to plan a defence. Three nobles were in charge of her boundaries on the mainland; another was made responsible for the capital, and two were placed in charge of the lagoons. A war-tax was levied, too, and it is due to the citizens of the dying State to say that they were generous to their country to the last. Many citizens of all classes gave large sums of their own free will to help the defence, and not in Venice only; the cities of Friuli and Dalmatia, and even small communities at a great distance, made heavy sacrifices spontaneously for the public safety.

The historian Romanin was of opinion that even at that moment, if the government had found resolution  
*Rom. ix. 321.* enough to sacrifice all her possessions on the mainland, as at the time of the League of Cambrai, a clever diplomacy might yet have saved the State. But he was a Venetian and a most patriotic one, and he could not understand that it needed something more than skill to keep Venice alive, that it needed life itself, the life that was all spent, at last, after more than a thousand years.

The Provveditor for the lagoons, Giacomo Nani, wrote to the Doge the courageous words: 'A State has not the right to possess provinces which it cannot defend.' He, too, remembered the League of Cambrai. But the Doge was not to be roused; it was no longer

vacillation, it was paralysis of the will that made him follow the Senate. Yet Nani's letters determined the Savi to look about for some general into whose hands the whole defence might be given. It was the old tradition of employing the condottiero; but there was only one man alive just then who had the genius and the conviction that save a cause all but lost; he was a man who could have stopped a host with Falstaff's ragged company, and he was at the gates of Venice. The Savi hit upon the Prince of Nassau as a possible captain, but Austria stepped in and forbade that he should be called.

The King of Naples now signed an armistice with the French, and Bonaparte made himself at home on the Venetian mainland, quartering his troops at Bergamo, Brescia, and Crema without ceremony, and merely notifying the Venetian Senate that he did so, as if no excuse were needed. He took the Venetian guns he found at Legnago and used them at the siege of Mantua as if they were his own. Bonaparte was well aware of the truth of what Nani had written to the Doge, and he took full advantage of the axiom. If the governors of the cities in which he chose to stop did not please him, he wrote them notes like the following:—

. . . I beg you, Sir, to let me know what game we are playing, for I do not believe you will allow your brothers in arms [the French soldiers!] to die without help within the walls of Brescia, or to be murdered on the highroad. *Rom. ix. 341.* If you are not able to keep order in your country,

and to make the city of Brescia furnish what is needed for establishing hospitals and for the wants of the troops, I shall have to take more efficient measures. — Believe me, with feelings of esteem and consideration,

BONAPARTE.

Bonnal says of him that he avenged legitimate complaints with a host of accusations and denials, and with unmistakable threats; and the Venetians made excuses. Whereupon Bonaparte answered that he would 'beat the Austrians and make the Venetians pay for the war.' Which he did.

*Bonnal, 275.*

At the same time he was writing to the Directory: —

. . . I am obliged to be indignant with the Provveditor, to exaggerate the number of assassinations, etc., in order that he, to calm my fury, may furnish me everything I need; they will continue to give us what we want, willingly or by force, until Mantua is taken, after which I shall demand of them such contribution as you may order me, which will not be in the least difficult.

*Rom. ix. 351.*

If Bonaparte could find pretexts for accusing the Venetians of helping the Austrians, the latter had excellent reasons for complaining that Venice helped the French. Austria and France were the two stools between which half measures had led the Republic, and between which she fell.

The position of the French army was not enviable at that time and the alliance of Venice would really have been worth having, which was the reason why her obstinate efforts at neutrality exasperated Bonaparte to such a degree. At last his patience gave out and he

ordered General Baraguay d'Hilliers, the father of the marshal of that name who died in 1878, *Twenty-fifth of December 1796.* to occupy Bergamo, not as a guest but as master. The Austrians at once replied by seizing Palma and Osopo.

The peasants and the small communities were now driven to extremities; for the government had left them to their fate, and they were plundered alike by the French and the Austrians. Discontent spread rapidly, and the rural population may be supposed to have been in the best possible disposition to receive the revolutionary doctrines by which Bonaparte had already called into existence the Cispadane Republic. That short-lived affair was made up of the cities and territories of Ferrara, Bologna, Modena, and Reggio d'Emilia, and was momentarily the headquarters of republicanism. In spite of all that the remnant of government in Venice could do against it, its influence was felt on Venetian territory. Behind all, the propaganda of Milan worked steadily to carry out Bonaparte's plan *Rom. x. 12.* under General Landrieux, whom he had deputed to take charge of that end of it.

Bergamo was the first city to rise and drive out the Venetian governor, in order to join the Cispadane Republic; the city of Brescia followed, *Molmenti, Nuovi Studi, 356.* naturally enough. But the country people of the two provinces still remained faithful to the Republic, and the peasants about Brescia were so indignant with the city for its defection that they

would have marched upon it to burn it down if they had not been hindered by their Bishop, Dolfin. At Vallesabbia, certain emissaries of the republicans from the city were so ill received that they fled precipitately in fear of their lives.

Two days after the latter incident, the inhabitants of the villages of the valley met in a field near Nozze, and drew up the following declaration, which was approved with absolute unanimity.

*March 1797.*

VALLESABBIA,  
*March 27th, 1797.*

In order to record its own fidelity and obedience to its beloved Prince of Venice, and taking oath of perpetual loyalty and adherence to the said Prince, this body votes that if persons of any class or condition are found in this Valley having the cockade of rebels against the Prince of Venice, and actually having that cockade on their hats, any one shall be free to arrest them, and let him have a prize of three hundred lire piccole for each one, of [the funds of] the Valley.

And let this present vote be made known in every commune and put up in the usual and habitual places for public notices; and it is not to go into effect for three days, within which the parish priests in their parishes shall publicly give notice of it to the people. And if gangs of rebels against the Prince of Venice, or troops of theirs, enter the Valley, the communities comprising the Valley shall ring the bells with a hammer [meaning to ring them out, and not to 'chime' them only]; and whosoever is between sixteen and sixty years old, and whosoever else will volunteer, is to take arms in the name of the Valley to arrest them [rebels or troops], and may also kill them; and whoever refuses shall be punished by confiscation of all his goods.

The government might have done something to encourage people capable of such devotion; it might at least have ordered them to send deputations to the capital to give information of the state of the country. This the province of Verona asked to be allowed to do, through the Marchese Scipione Maffei, in a petition which the Savi suppressed, without even presenting it to the Great Council, because *Rom. x. 32.* they considered that it might lead to dangerous discussion. They confined themselves to recommending every subject of the most Serene Republic to act with the greatest circumspection towards all the French, as the Venetians had no means of defending themselves against the latter's pretensions.

In spite of the bad impression made by such weakness, more than thirty thousand men from the provinces volunteered to put down the republican rising, but they had to be sent home for lack of funds and weapons. One hundred young men of the burgher class offered to arm and support themselves at their own expense. From all this it is clear enough that, at the very last, the descendants of the nobles who had made Venice were responsible for her fall. Ippolito Nievo said pithily, that the Venetian aristocracy was a corpse that could not revive, while the Venetian people were a living race shut up with it in the tomb. *Nievo, Memorie d'un ottuagenario, 262.*

The republican revolution thus progressed almost without finding any resistance and practically aided and abetted by the French troops. Bonaparte was so sure

of his plan that he did not even make a mystery of it to the envoys of the Venetian Republic who met him at Goritz. He actually offered to pacify the Venetian provinces for the modest sum of a million of francs monthly for six months, which was generous, considering that he alone had caused all the disturbance. A Venetian noble of the fifteenth century would certainly have got the better of him in such a matter of business, but he was too much for the two nobles with whom he had to deal. The monthly million was granted, but on condition that he was not to interfere in the civil discord that distracted the Republic, and not to hinder the government in its efforts to reduce the rebellious cities to subordination.

Such an attempt was made, and the insurgents were beaten more than once, and some of the ringleaders were brought to Venice. In other times they would have been tried by the Council of Ten and hanged within twenty-four hours; now they were merely confined in the fort on the Lido, in charge of two nobles, Tommaso Soranzo and Domenico Tiepolo, who were recommended 'to treat them charitably.'

But these successes so greatly encouraged the reaction against the insurrection that Bonaparte feared lest he should lose some of the fruits of his industrious propaganda. Accordingly, by his instructions, General Landrieux accused the Venetian troops of threatening the French army in the valleys of Bergamo, and ordered the Venetian Governor,

*Rom. x. 56.*

*Molmenti, Nuovi*

*St. 356, 357.*

Battaglia, to be put in irons, and his 'accomplices' to be hanged. These were mere threats, of course, but after that the rebels were openly supported by the French. On the other hand, the communities that meant to remain faithful to the Republic invoked its help a last time before returning the weapons they had taken from the insurgents, and swore that if they were only given a leader they would die to a man in defence of Venice. Even after the French had occupied the whole Venetian territory the Senate still received loyal letters from Vallesabbia; one of these ended with these words: 'Our hearts will always be for Saint Mark, and we therefore swear to break any promise that may be before long got from us by force, at the first sight of the Venetian standard we love.'

The truce of Judenburg between France and Austria was destined in Bonaparte's opinion to decide the destinies of the Republic. Junot appeared suddenly in Venice on Good Friday, bringing a despatch from Bonaparte dated the ninth of April. A more violent and theatrical document can hardly be imagined. The general accuses the Venetians of rousing the country people to murder the French and ordering a perfect Massacre of the Innocents. His magnificent generosity has met with 'impious perfidy' on the part of the Senate. His adjutant offers peace or war, and war is declared if the authors of the massacres are not delivered. Observe, that as there had been no massacres, no authors of them could be given up, and therefore the declaration of war was made; Bonaparte was always logical.

He was 'not a Turk,' he adds; he was not even an enemy. These were 'not the days of Charles VIII.,' and he gave the Venetians twenty-four hours to realise the fact or perish. But he would not come like their 'assassins,' to 'lay waste the lands of an innocent and unhappy people.' He came to protect. The people would 'one day bless even the crimes which had obliged the French army to free them from the tyranny of Venice.'

Bonaparte's name is still execrated throughout Italy, and in a large part of the south 'French' means 'abominable.' Even the southern sailors call a dangerous storm 'French weather.'

Junot had been informed that the government could transact no business till after Holy Week, but he insisted on being received, and read the despatch before the Doge and the Signory in an imperious tone. Bonaparte possessed a marvellous dramatic sense, and he trained his men to act his comedies to perfection. In the part of the Avenging Angel, Junot was terribly impressive.

It may be supposed that even then Venice had a choice: she might submit, or perish bravely in self-defence. But such men as Ludovico Manin and the Savi were not free to choose. No weak man is when the strong man has him by the collar. The Signory was used to humiliation, and was past shame, and it followed to the end the path it had chosen.

The truce between France and Austria continued, but only the possession of Venice could be the basis of

a durable peace. Bonaparte's plan was to exasperate the Venetians till they really violated their neutrality, and then to seize the city. No one ever comments on the morality of conquerors nowadays. Virtue has nothing to do with the greatness of princes. Bonaparte's scheme was odious, of course, but it succeeded.

It had been part of the comedy to christen a ship of the French fleet 'the *Liberator of Italy*.' With this vessel a certain commander, Laugier, was despatched to carry out Bonaparte's stratagem. The ship sailed up towards the Lido, stopped a fishing-boat, and took an old fisherman for a pilot. The man protested that foreign war vessels were not allowed to enter the harbour. Laugier threatened to hang him, and set him to con the wheel, after asking him many questions as to the vessels of which Venice disposed.

*Rom. x. 112 sqq.*

*April twentieth,  
1797.*

When the ship was opposite the Lido she saluted, and the guns of the San Nicola Fort answered; as Laugier did not bring to, the commander of the fort, Domenico Pizzamano, sent two boats alongside him to warn him not to enter, yet the French captain took no notice. Other French vessels were following at a distance; Pizzamano fired two shots to warn them off, and they bore away. Laugier now said he was going to anchor, though he did not clew up his top-gallant sails nor otherwise shorten sail; it is clear that there was only a very light breeze on that day.

A Venetian galley lay at her moorings in the Lido harbour, and Laugier proceeded to foul her, inten-

tionally without doubt, for he evidently knew his business. This was enough. The two vessels were close alongside, and their crews were fighting one another in an instant. At the same time the cannon from Fort Sant' Andrea chimed in, and an indescribable confusion followed. Laugier was killed by a ball; the old fisherman who had steered him in was wounded, and died soon afterwards. The Venetians got the better of the fight, and plundered the French war vessel in spite of Pizzamano's desperate efforts to prevent it. The French officers and crew were handed over to the 'benevolent custody' of Tommaso Soranzo and Domenico Tiepolo.

The account of the affair sent by the Minister, Lallement, to the Directory was wholly untrue, of course; but Bonaparte had what he wanted.

He was so sure of it that by the preliminary treaty of Leoben, preceding the treaty of Campo-Formio, he *April eighteenth.* had already ceded to Austria all the *Rom. x. 121,* Venetian provinces that lay between the *and Document* Po, the Oglio, and the Adriatic; it was *at 377.* pretended that in compensation for these she was to receive the three legations of Romagna, Ferrara, and Bologna.

Much of this preliminary agreement had been kept secret; but the Venetian Ambassador in Vienna, Grimani, knew of the general tenor of the document, and warned the Senate that it was intended to dismember the Venetian territory.

The Senate was roused from its apathy when it was



FROM THE PONTE S. ROCCO

too late, and now sat permanently. Orders were given that no stranger was to be allowed to enter the city unless bearing official letters, and no ship was to pass into the lagoons that did not fly the Venetian flag. Some attempt was made to get more vessels ready for sea.

The French had not wasted time, and a general insurrection had broken out under their management in all the cities of the mainland. Within twenty-four hours the governors of Padua, Verona, and other important places came in for refuge, as also the Proveditors of the army, whose occupation was gone.

Meanwhile two nobles, Francesco Donà and Leonardo Giustiniani, had been sent in haste to Gratz, after Junot's appearance, and they were received by Bonaparte on the twenty-fifth of April. The interview that followed is highly characteristic of the man when it suited his ends to work himself into a fury. The political prisoners were to be liberated, or he would 'come and break down the Piombi; he would have no Inquisition, no antique barbarities.' He spoke of the imaginary massacre of his innocent troops. 'His army cried vengeance, and he could not refuse it.' 'If all the culprits were not punished, if the English Minister were not driven away, if the people were not disarmed, if all the prisoners were not set free, if Venice would not choose between France and England, he declared war.' 'He would have no Inquisition, no Senate, he would be an Attila to the Venetian State.' And much more to the same effect, all of which is on record.

The two Venetians answered sensibly, when they could get in a word, but Bonaparte meant war, and when he meant that he would listen to no one.

Having acted his scene, he asked the two to dinner and proceeded to extract information from them, after his manner. His inquiries chiefly concerned the horrors attributed to the aristocratic government by the very imaginative French democratic mind; for the lower classes, being nearer to nature, have always had much more imagination than their social betters, which explains their belief in ghost stories, hidden treasures, and the rights of man.

After dinner Bonaparte condescended to state his demands. He wanted twenty-two millions from the Venetian mint and all English drafts deposited in Venice. That was all. There was no mention of the Duke of Mantua's treasure, from which the envoys suspected that it was included in the secret treaty of Leoben, but I find no mention of it in that curious document, though it may have been tacitly included in Article VI. which provided for the restitution of Mantua and other places to Austria.

Having thus expressed himself, Bonaparte left the envoys to their reflections and went off to Bruck. Almost at the same time they received news of the fighting at the Lido, with instructions to inform Bonaparte of the death of Laugier, with all the caution possible; they did so by letter, and probably congratulated themselves on not being materially able to convey the news by word of mouth; but they nevertheless

really asked another audience. He answered in a fury, called Laugier's death an assassination, and spoke of them and the Venetian Senate as 'dripping with French blood.' If they had anything new to tell him, he would receive them, he said, after writing on the same page that he would not.

They went before him again, poor men, and listened once more to his furious language. 'Not a hundred millions of money, not all the gold of Peru, would now prevent him from avenging the blood of his men,' and so forth, and so on. This was the truth, as he had purposely risked shedding it for the very purpose of being revenged.

On the twenty-ninth of April, French troops occupied the Venetian frontiers, and General Baraguay d'Hilliers entered the capital with perfect assurance — and, it must be added, with perfect fearlessness — and installed himself in the best hotel. The Senate tried in vain to ascertain from him Bonaparte's intentions; the soldier answered that he was accustomed to obey his chiefs without question and that he knew nothing of their plans. He had been told to come to Venice and he had come.

On learning that Bonaparte so very particularly detested them, the Savi agreed that it was no longer safe to meet publicly, and they held their sittings in the Doge's private apartments in the presence of the Counsellors, and the 'Savi of the Mainland,' 'Savi of Orders,' 'Savi of Writings,' — Savi of every species. To all these were added the three Heads of the Ten.

This last assembly was a sort of amplification of the Black Cabinet already explained.

They have been described as the sextons of the Republic, met together to arrange the details of the funeral. Their acts and resolutions can only excite pity. The first question discussed on the night of April thirtieth was whether a supposed intimate friend of Bonaparte's (Haller, at one time French Minister of Finance) should be treated with in order to calm his master's anger. The next question was, whether this proposition might be discussed at once, or whether eight days must be allowed to pass before beginning the debate, according to the law. A third question asked what measures should be taken to inform the Great Council of what was happening.

Several hours had been consumed in these miserable quibbles, during which no attention was paid to the distant booming of guns from the direction of Fusina, when a messenger brought *Rom. x. 138.* a letter for the 'Savio on Writings.' He passed it on anxiously to the Savio of the week, who opened it with evident emotion. It was a message from Condulmer, in command of the flotilla of the lagoons, to say that the French had begun operations for improving the approaches to Venice, and that he was going to attempt to destroy what they did as fast as they worked. It was at this moment that the Assembly first noticed the sound of artillery. In the frightened silence the Doge walked up and down the room. 'To-night we are not safe even in our beds,' he said.

The Procurator, Pesaro, turned to the Secretary: 'I see that it is all over with my country,' he said, in broad Venetian dialect. 'I can certainly be of no assistance. To an honest man, every place is his country; one may easily occupy oneself in Switzerland.'

He rose as he finished this remarkable speech, apparently with the intention of proceeding to Switzerland at once, but his colleagues 'comforted' him, he took snuff, and sat down again to help Valeressi in framing a measure for calling the Great Council together on the morrow. These curious details can be trusted. Pesaro was afterwards, in fact, the first to make his escape to Istria and Vienna.

During the remainder of the meeting it was debated whether it might not be possible and advisable to give Venice a democratic form of government likely to please Bonaparte, and the majority adopted the idea of introducing any modifications which he might suggest.

It was hoped by this means that he would be moved to forgive the Inquisitors and the captain of the Lido, whose punishment he had demanded, and to excuse the Venetian banks from handing over the English drafts.

The next day was the first of May, the anniversary on which the Doge had always paid his annual visit to the Convent of the Vergini, since the days of Pier Candiano, a ceremony which was always the occasion of great festivities in the city. But to-day, instead, the bell of the Grand Council was ringing, and the nobles assembled anxiously. The Doge explained in broad

dialect the situation of the Republic with regard to France. Peace, he said, must be made with Bonaparte



CAMPO SS. GIOVANNI E PAOLO

at any price, and the best thing the members of the Council could do was to say their prayers and ask the help of Heaven in their supreme danger.

Heaven, as usual in such circumstances, did not help those who would not help themselves. The Council thought it had done wonders when it voted by 598 to 21 that two deputies should be sent to Bonaparte with power to discuss radical changes in the Venetian constitution. The envoys chosen were Angelo Giacomo Giustiniani, who had been Provveditor extraordinary in Treviso since the second of April, Alvise Mocenigo, the Governor of Udine, and Francesco Donà. They were given regular credentials, and were, as usual, exhorted to use the utmost caution in all they said.

On the same day Bonaparte declared war against Venice in his most furiously bombastic style. The document must be read, not to be believed, as most of the statements it contains were totally untrue, but to appreciate the marvellous gifts of the man of genius who composed it. It is long, and I have not space for it; I can only say that it altogether outdid the former letters and speeches I have referred to.

The deputation found Bonaparte in Treviso. To the eternal glory of the family that had lost an hundred of its name in one campaign, Giustiniani quietly faced Bonaparte on every point, reproached him with the shallowness of the pretexts under which he justified his acts of violence, swore to the sincerity of the Venetian government when it had protested that it had no intention of doing any injury to the French, and concluded by saying that if Bonaparte required a hostage or a victim he, Giustiniani, was there to give his life.

Bonaparte was everything except a coward. He was a conqueror and a comedian, a brutal dictator and a subtle diplomatist; he was a great commander and he was the Little Corporal. He was also as brave as the bravest man in any of his armies. Giustiniani's speech affected him strangely, for he well knew what terror he inspired in most people. His sudden admiration for the Venetian patriot was as boundless as everything else in his nature, and broke out in words of praise. He concluded by promising that even if he confiscated the property of every noble in Venice, whatsoever belonged to Giustiniani should be respected. There spoke the man of the middle class that Bonaparte always was. The gentleman answered proudly that he had not come to promote his own interests when those of his country were so desperately at stake.

A truce of four days was signed, within which time the three Inquisitors of State and the commander of the Lido fort were to be arrested and punished, and all political prisoners were to be set at liberty.

On the fourth of May the Doge had the courage, or the cowardice, to propose to the Great Council the arrest of the Inquisitors and their impeachment as required by Bonaparte. There *Rom. x. 159.* was no hope for Venice in any other course, he said.

This dastardly measure was voted by 704 votes to 27. The Inquisitors and the commander of the Lido were arrested and taken to San Giorgio Maggiore, and all the political prisoners were released from the Piombi, the Pozzi, and the other prisons of the city. On the

following day, two hundred and eighty-eight Frenchmen who had been taken with weapons in their hands during the insurrections in the provinces were handed over to Baraguay d'Hilliers in Venice.

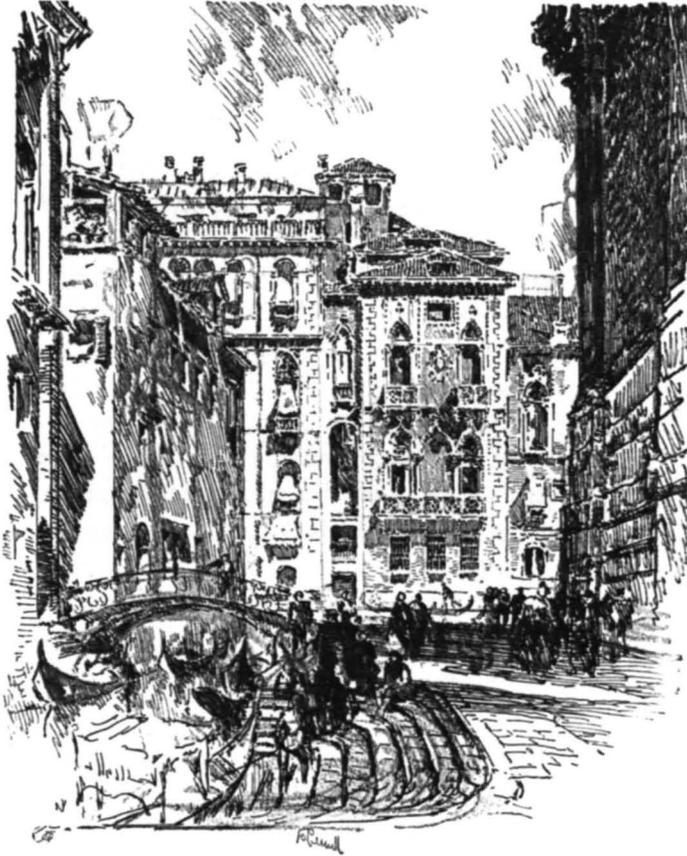
Bonaparte was now sure that he had only to show himself in order to be master of the city. The Venetians also made haste to present Bonaparte's 'friend,' Haller, with a little present of six thousand sequins in bullion, in the hope that he would use his kind offices with the great man.

'I beg you,' Bonaparte wrote about that time to the Directory, 'to order the citizen Haller, a scoundrel who *Bonnal, Chute, 287.* has come here to steal, to present his accounts to the head manager' ('ordonnateur en chef').

So much for Bonaparte's 'friend.' The Republic also offered the most profuse hospitality to Madame Baraguay d'Hilliers, in the hope that she would soften her husband's harsh temper.

By this time Bonaparte knew as well as Condulmer himself that the Venetian fleet was miserably manned, and that the city must yield at once if besieged, and he thought it quite useless to receive any more envoys. Besides, he knew that his propaganda had succeeded in the capital itself; his paid agents had done their work well, and it had been bravely seconded by the manifest incompetence of the government which had exasperated all classes. It is said that there were fifteen thousand republicans ready to answer the first signal as soon as it should be given by Villetard, the Secretary of the

French Legation. These were not by any means all of the people, for many ladies of the nobility had been



SO-CALLED HOUSE OF DESDEMONA

spending their time in making tricolour cockades, and the government knew it.

The French no longer took the trouble to conceal the preparations they were making for a revolution. A wholesale grocer who played a very suspicious part in the whole affair, Tommaso Zorzi, was dining with Villetard, and heard several Frenchmen speaking of the revolution that was arranged for the next day; it was intended to set up a tree of liberty in the Square of Saint Mark's and to declare the fall of the aristocratic government. When every one else was gone, Zorzi implored Villetard to put off firing the train, and explained that a large part of the populace would side with their old masters. The French Secretary would promise nothing, and on leaving him Zorzi hastened to the ducal palace and was received by the Doge in spite of the late hour.

He told what he had heard. The Doge sent at once for Pietro Donà, and the two bade Zorzi obtain from Villetard a written declaration of the conditions on which he would consent to give up the revolution. On the following day Zorzi and his friend Spada appeared before the Savi with a paper which they said they had drawn up in the presence of Villetard, who had refused to write anything himself.

The impression one gets in reading this document is that Zorzi and his shadow were in the trick with Villetard. The paper calls them 'mediators,' talks of 'pacifically changing the aristocratic forms of government,' 'leaving open to the sight of the public the prisons called the Piombi and Pozzi,' abolishing capital punishment, setting up a tree of

*Rom. x. 386  
for the text.*

liberty in the Square of Saint Mark's, publicly burning the insignia of the old government, a universal amnesty, and a Te Deum in Saint Mark's, where the image of the Virgin Mary was to be exhibited.

The paper also named the provisional government, in which the grocer and his shadow were to occupy high positions.

This stuff was not read by Zorzi before the assembly. The Doge deputed Pietro Donà and Francesco Battaglia to hear him in a neighbouring room. Donà dismissed him with the remark that the government would wait to discuss such propositions until they were officially laid before the Venetian envoys by Bonaparte himself.

Then Donà returned to the hall and communicated the contents of Zorzi's paper to the government. The effect was terrific. A few voices protested that no attention should be paid to such an informal proposition, but terror prevailed, and Donà and Battaglia were charged to go at once to Villetard to ask him to put off his revolution till the envoys should return from their interview with Bonaparte. Villetard, for reasons known to himself, granted the government a respite of four days.

Meanwhile it was thought wise to dismiss the Slavonic troops, yielding in this to one of the demands expressed in Zorzi's paper. Their presence 'irritated' Villetard. They were accordingly ordered home under the command of Niccolò Morosini, but they did not leave at once.

On the twelfth of May the Great Council met.

Early in the morning Villetard had informed Battaglia that the Venetian envoys sent to Bonaparte had refused to accept a democratic and representative government, but that the French meant to obtain it by force unless the aristocracy would resign its powers. It was Haller who had brought the news to Villetard after accepting a bribe of six thousand sequins a few days earlier. An American politician once defined a scoundrel as 'a man who will not stay bought.'

Donà came back with an official letter from Villetard to the Doge, which contained Bonaparte's ultimatum. The city was in a state of nervous excitement that must break into action before long; the members of the Council were already in terror of their lives while they stood waiting for the hour of meeting. Even then, everything had to be done according to tradition. The patricians were, no doubt, devising more concessions to be made to Bonaparte, as they moved towards the ducal palace, and most of them were ready to sacrifice everything, including their honour, in exchange for personal safety. The last of the Slavonic soldiers were embarking under the direction of the Arsenal men; there were republican conspirators everywhere, and they found their way even to the Doge's private apartments.

The Council met at the usual hour, and the roll was called. Only 537 members were present, whereas 600 constituted a quorum. It is possible that the many absent members had hoped to obstruct all proceedings by keeping away, for to the last the minutest

rules had been observed. But the members who had assembled decided that they had a right to act.

The Doge opened the sitting, pale and overcome. Painfully, and in his Venetian dialect, he recapitulated the acts of the Consulta of Savi and others, who had taken charge of affairs on the thirtieth of April. His miserable speech was followed by the reading of the report of Donà and Battagia, Haller's letter, and other documents.

The Secretary, Valentin Marin, then read the measure which was brought before the Council.

The Bill had the old sanctimonious tone. 'The principal purpose of preserving religion,' etc., were the first words; the measure was, that the Great Council should accept 'the proposed provisional representative government.'

The Secretary had finished reading the Bill, and was just beginning his comments on it, when the sound of a discharge of musketry rang sharply through the ancient hall. The patricians rushed to the doors. One voice called them back.

'Divide! Divide!' it cried, above the din.

To the last gasp formality bound them. Hastily, but not informally, they went through the form of voting. The Bill to accept the democratic government was passed by 512 yeas to 30 nays and 5 blanks.

Then, in the twinkling of an eye, the hall was silent and empty.

1797.  
*May twelfth.*

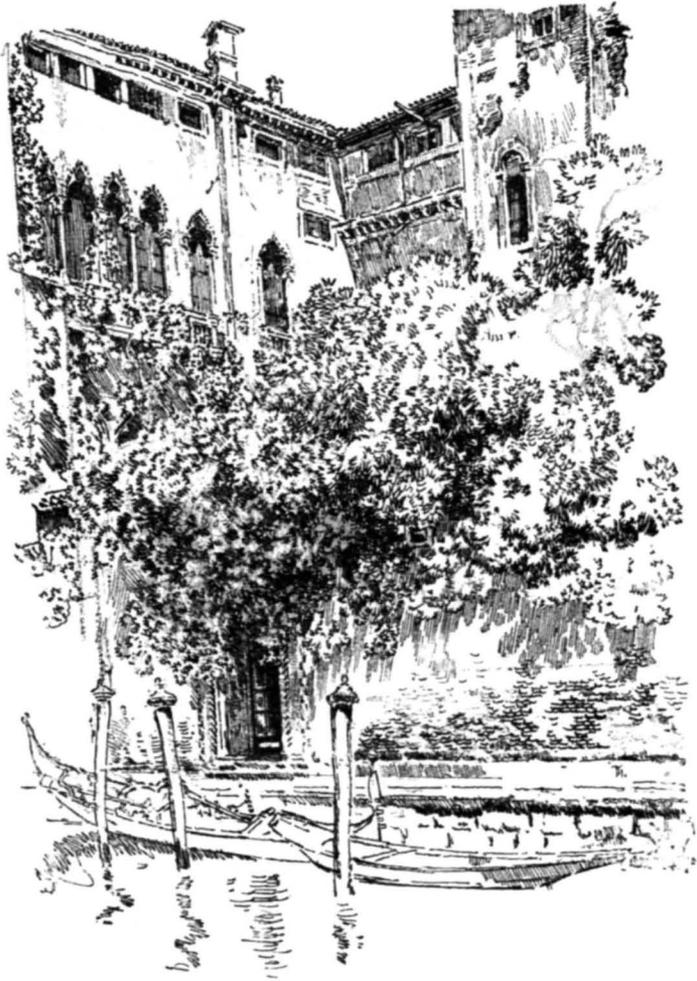


SAILS

## XVIII

### CONCLUSION

THE discharge of musketry which had frightened the Great Council out of its senses had been only the parting salute of the Slavonic soldiers as they sailed out of the harbour. It was the last mark of respect the Venetians of Venice received, and it was by a dramatic coincidence that it was offered at the very instant when the Republic ended. Every one has read how the Doge went back to his own room and



A GATEWAY

handed his ducal bonnet to his servant, saying that he should not need it again.

What has been less noticed by historians is that General Salimbeni, who knew that the crowd was waiting to know what had taken place, put his head out of a window and shouted 'Viva la Libertà'; and that when no one broke the silence that followed, he took breath again and shouted 'Viva San Marco,' whereupon the multitude took up the cry and cheered till they were hoarse, and the old flag of Saint Mark was hoisted everywhere, and the populace took it into its head to burn down the houses of Donà and Battaglia and the grocer Zorzi, and though they were hindered, they did plunder and burn the dwellings of a number of burgher families that had played a double game and had helped to bring on the final catastrophe.

In the midst of this confusion well-armed republican gangs appeared in all directions, and during the night between the twelfth and the thirteenth of May there was a hideous tumult. The last time that Venetian cannon was fired by Venetian orders, it was pointed at Venetians.

On the fifteenth, the French occupied the city as conquerors. On the sixteenth, two notices were put up in the Square of Saint Mark's. The first simply announced that the aristocratic government yielded up its powers to a provisional Municipality which would sit in the hall of the Great Council; and this was the last public document which

*Molmenti,*  
*Nuovi Studi.*

began with the words, 'The Most Serene Prince announces,' etc.

The other informed the public that the provisional Municipality of Venice declared the Great Council to have 'deserved well of the nation' because it had abdicated; it thanked particularly the members of the late government which had put down the riot on the night of the twelfth; and it went on to declare a 'solemn amnesty' for all political misdeeds, and so forth, and so on.

Then came the usual French nonsense about liberty, equality, brotherhood, peace, the rights of man, and the like; all of which might, perhaps, be excused on the ground of mistaken and foolish sentiment, if we did not know that Bonaparte was even then almost in the act of selling his newly found, free, and equal brothers into slavery to Austria, then the most really absolute despotism in Europe.

The whole affair was a horrible farce. The new Municipality decided to preserve the Lion of Saint Mark as the national symbol, but for the words 'Pax tibi Marce' inscribed on the book under the Lion's paw were substituted the words 'Rights and Duties of Man and Citizen.' The gondoliers observed that Saint Mark had at last turned over a new leaf.

The Lion, however, was soon thrown down from his column, and was broken into more than eighty pieces on the pavement. On the fourth of June the tree of liberty was raised in Rom. x. 219. the middle of the Square. Around it were grouped

emblems of the sciences and arts. Fagots were heaped up near by, to make a fire in which the Golden Book and the ducal insignia were solemnly burned between two statues representing Freedom and Equality. Inane verses were inscribed on the pedestals of these images. Lest I should be thought to exaggerate their atrociously bad literary quality I give the original Italian.

*Molmenti,  
Nuovi Studi.*

One ran:—

Depono la tirannide,  
Sollevo l'innocente,  
Ognor lieto e ridente  
Il popol mio sarà.

The other said:—

Il libro d' oro abbruciasi  
L'accende il reo delitto,  
All' uom resta il suo dritto  
La dolce libertà.

The Procuratie, both the old and the new, were renamed, according to the revolutionary dictionary, 'Gallery of Liberty,' 'Gallery of Equality.' In the course of the month of June began the trial of the three Inquisitors, Agostino Barbarigo, Angelo Maria Gabrieli, and Catterino Corner, and of Pizzamano, the commander of the Lido fort. Even Bonaparte was obliged to admit that there was nothing against them, but he would not allow them to be acquitted; he thought it better policy to pardon them 'in consideration of their advanced age.' His letter on the subject is dated the fourth of

*Mutinelli, Ult.  
218; also  
Tassini, 591.*

October. But Pizzamano, though declared free, was still kept in prison at Bonaparte's pleasure, and on the twenty-sixth of October sent a petition directly to the latter. Bonaparte sent it on to General Serrurier, in Venice, with an order for the man's liberation written in the margin.

Bonaparte had kept up his comedy to the very last. On the eighth of October, General Balland had given the Venetians, in his chief's name, the most ample assurances of attachment and devotion.

On the seventeenth, nine days later, by the treaty of Campo-Formio, Bonaparte sold Venice and the whole Venetian territory to the Emperor of Austria, including Dalmatia and Istria, in exchange for the Ionian Islands, the Cisalpine Republic, the Duchy of Modena, and the provinces of Lombardy as far as the Adige and Mantua.

Having got his price for the dead body, Bonaparte proceeded to strip it of everything valuable, so far as he could, before handing it over. The horses of Saint Mark's were taken down from the façade of the basilica, the most valuable pictures, parchments, and books were packed, and all was sent to Paris.

The farce of freedom was over, and the bitterness of reality came back, harder to bear, perhaps, but as much more honourable, as suffering is more dignified than drunken rioting. On the eighteenth of January 1798 the Austrian garrison took possession of Venice.

Before closing these pages, I shall go back a few months and shall translate Giustina Renier Michiel's

touching account of the scene which took place in Dalmatia, in the preceding month of August, when the Austrians came by sea to take possession of the country.

On the twenty-second of August, Rukavina [the Austrian general] arrived with a fleet and a thousand soldiers and landed at Pettana, a mile and a half from Perasto. The Dalmatians, taken by surprise, and seeing that they had nothing more to hope, resolved to render the last honours to the great standard of Saint Mark. To this end the people of Perasto, and of the neighbouring country, and others, assembled before the palace of the Captain in command; and he, with twelve soldiers armed with sabres, and two colour-sergeants, went to the hall where the standard was, and the colours carried in the field, which Venice had entrusted many centuries ago to the valour and loyalty of the brave Dalmatians. They were now to take away those dearly loved flags; but in the very moment of doing what it broke their hearts to do, their strength failed them, and they could only shed a flood of tears.

*G. R. Michiel,  
Origini. Com-  
pare also  
Rom. x. 249.*

The throng of people who waited in the Square, not seeing any one come out again, knew not what to think. So one of the judges of the town was sent up to ascertain the cause; but he, too, was so much moved that his presence [in the hall] only increased the grief of the others. At last the Captain, controlling himself of sheer necessity, made the painful effort; he took down the flags from the place where they were hung and attached them to two pikes; and he handed them to the two colour-sergeants, and they and the soldiers, led by the lieutenant, marched out of the hall; and after them the Captain, the Judge, and all the rest. As soon as the well-beloved standard was seen, the grief and tears of the multitude were universal. Men, women, and children all sobbed and their

tears rolled down ; and nothing was heard but the complaint of mourning, no doubtful proof of the hereditary devotion of that generous nation to its Republic.

When the sad procession reached the Square, the Captain unfastened the flags from the pikes and at the same time the ensign of Saint Mark on the fort was hauled down, and a salute of twenty guns was fired. Two armed vessels that guarded the port answered with eleven guns, and all the merchant vessels saluted also ; this was the last good-bye of sorrowing glory to the valour of a nation. The sacred colours were placed upon a metal salver and the lieutenant received them in the presence of the Judge, of the Captain, and of the people. Then all marched with slow and melancholy steps to the cathedral. There they were received by the clergy and its chief, to whom the sacred trust was delivered, and he placed it on the high altar. Then the Captain commanding spoke the following words, which were again and again interrupted by quick sobbing, and streaming tears that came from men's hearts more truly than from their eyes :—

‘ In this cruel moment,’ he said, ‘ that rends our hearts for the fatal destruction of the Most Serene Venetian Government, in this last expression of our love and faith, with which we do honour to the colours of the Republic, let us at least find some consolation, dear fellow-citizens, in the thought that neither our past deeds, nor those we have done in these recent times, have led to this sad office, which, for us, is now become a good deed. Our sons will know from us, and history will teach all Europe, that Perasto upheld to the last breath the glory of the Venetian flag, honouring it and bathing it in universal and most bitter tears. Fellow-citizens, let us freely pour out our grief ; but amidst the last solemn thoughts with which we seal the glorious career that has been ours under the Most Serene Government of Venice, let us turn to these well-loved colours and cry out to them, in our sorrow, “ Dear

flag that has been ours three hundred and seventy-seven years without a break, our faith and courage have ever kept you unstained both on the sea and wheresoever you were called to face your enemies, which were the enemies of the Church also. For three hundred and seventy-seven years our goods, our blood, and our lives have always been devoted to you, and since you have been with us, and we with you, we have ever been happy, and famous on the sea, and victorious on land. No man ever saw us put to flight with you; with you none were ever found to overcome us. If these most wretched times of rash action, of corrupt manners, of dissensions and of lawless opinions that offend nature and the law of nations had not ruined you in Italy, our goods, our blood, our lives should still be yours; and rather than have seen you overcome and dishonoured, our courage and our faith would have chosen to be buried with you. But since we can do nothing more for you than this, let your honoured grave be in our hearts, let our desolation be your highest praise.””

Then the Captain went up and took a corner of the flag and put it to his lips as if he could not let it leave them; and all thronged to kiss it most tenderly, washing it with their hot tears. But as the sad ceremony had to come to an end at last, these dear colours were laid in a chest, which the Rector placed in a reliquary beneath the high altar.

## THE DOGES OF VENICE

(ACCORDING TO ROMANIN)

*NOTE.* — *The Venetian year began on March first, whence the frequent discrepancies between the dates given by different writers. In this work every effort has been made to bring all dates under the usual reckoning.*

- |  |                |            |   |
|--|----------------|------------|---|
| I. Paolo Lucio Anafesto . . . . .                                | elected 697 d. | 717        | Seat in Heraclea.                       |
| II. Marcello Tegaliano . . . . .                                 | "              | 717 " 726  |   |
| III. Orso Ipato . . . . .  | "              | 726 " 737  | (murdered). Seat in Malamocco.          |
| (From 737 to 742, military governors called 'Magistri Militum.') |                |            |   |
| IV. Teodato Orso . . . . .                                       | elected 742 —  | 755        | (blinded and deposed).                  |
| V. Galla Gaulo . . . . .   | "              | 755 — 756  | (blinded and exiled).                   |
| VI. Domenico Monegario . . . . .                                 | "              | 756 — 764  | (blinded and deposed).                  |
| VII. Maurizio Galbaio . . . . .                                  | "              | 764 d. 787 |   |
| VIII. Giovanni Galbaio and his son Maurizio . . . . .            | "              | 787 — 804  | (both deposed).                         |
| IX. Obelerio with his sons Beato and Costantino . . . . .        | "              | 804 d. 811 | (the father put to death as a traitor). |
| X. Agnello Partecipazio . . . . .                                | "              | 811 " 827  | Seat henceforth in Rialto.              |
| XI. Giustiniano Partecipazio . . . . .                           | "              | 827 " 829  |   |
| XII. Giovanni Partecipazio I. . . . .                            | "              | 829 — 836  | (deposed).                              |
| XIII. Pietro Tradonico . . . . .                                 | "              | 836 d. 864 | (murdered).                             |
| XIV. Orso Partecipazio I. . . . .                                | "              | 864 " 881  |   |
| XV. Giovanni Partecipazio II. . . . .                            | "              | 881 — 888  | (abdicated).                            |
| XVI. Pietro Candiano I. . . . .                                  | "              | 888 d. 888 | (killed in battle with pirates).        |
| XVII. Pietro Tribuno . . . . .                                   | "              | 888 " 912  |   |
| XVIII. Orso Partecipazio II. (Badoer) . . . . .                  | "              | 912 — 932  | (abdicated and died a monk).            |

XIX.	Pietro Candiano II. . . . .	elected	932 d.	939	
XX.	Pietro Partecipazio (Badoer)	"	939	"	942
XXI.	Pietro Candiano III. . . . .	"	942	"	959
XXII.	Pietro Candiano IV. . . . .	"	959	"	976 (murdered).
XXIII.	Pietro Orseolo I. . . . .	"	976 —	978	(abdicated and died a monk, with the reputation of a saint).
XXIV.	Vital Candiano . . . . .	"	978 —	979	(abdicated and became a monk).
XXV.	Tribuno Memmo . . . . .	"	979 d.	991	
XXVI.	Pietro Orseolo II. . . . .	"	991	"	1008
XXVII.	Ottone Orseolo . . . . .	"	1008 —	1026	(exiled to Constantinople).
XXVIII.	Pietro Centranigo . . . . .	"	1026 —	1032	(driven out).
XXIX.	Domenico Flabianico . . . . .	"	1032 d.	1043	
XXX.	Domenico Contarini . . . . .	"	1043	"	1071
XXXI.	Domenico Selvo . . . . .	"	1071	"	1085
XXXII.	Vital Falier . . . . .	"	1085	"	1096
XXXIII.	Vital Michiel I. . . . .	"	1096	"	1102
XXXIV.	Ordelafo Falier . . . . .	"	1102	"	1118 (died in the Hungarian war).
XXXV.	Domenico Michiel . . . . .	"	1118	"	1130
XXXVI.	Pietro Polani . . . . .	"	1130	"	1148
XXXVII.	Domenico Morosini . . . . .	"	1148	"	1156
XXXVIII.	Vital Michiel II. . . . .	"	1156	"	1172 (killed).
XXXIX.	Sebastian Ziani . . . . .	"	1172	"	1178
XL.	Orio Mastropiero . . . . .	"	1178 —	1192	(abdicated and became a monk).
XLI.	Enrico Dandolo . . . . .	"	1192 d.	1205	(died in Constantinople).
XLII.	Pietro Ziani . . . . .	"	1205 —	1229	(abdicated).
XLIII.	Jacopo Tiepolo . . . . .	"	1229 —	1249	(abdicated).
XLIV.	Marin Morosini . . . . .	"	1249 d.	1253	
XLV.	Renier Zeno . . . . .	"	1253	"	1268
XLVI.	Lorenzo Tiepolo . . . . .	"	1268	"	1275
XLVII.	Jacopo Contarini . . . . .	"	1275 —	1280	(abdicated).
XLVIII.	Giovanni Dandolo . . . . .	"	1280 d.	1289	
XLIX.	Pietro Gradenigo . . . . .	"	1289	"	1311
	L. Marin Zorzi . . . . .	"	1311	"	1312
	LI. Giovanni Soranzo . . . . .	"	1312	"	1329
	LII. Francesco Dandolo . . . . .	"	1329	"	1339
	LIII. Bartolommeo Gradenigo . . . . .	"	1339	"	1343
	LIV. Andrea Dandolo . . . . .	"	1343	"	1354

LV. Marin Falier . . .	elected 1354 d. 1355	(beheaded April 17).
LVI. Giovanni Gradenigo . . .	“ 1355 “ 1356	
LVII. Giovanni Dolfin . . .	“ 1356 “ 1361	
LVIII. Lorenzo Celsi . . .	“ 1361 “ 1365	
LIX. Marco Corner . . .	“ 1365 “ 1368	
LX. Andrea Contarini . . .	“ 1368 “ 1383	
LXI. Michel Morosini . . .	“ 1383 “ 1384	
LXII. Antonio Venier . . .	“ 1384 “ 1400	
LXIII. Michel Steno . . .	“ 1400 “ 1413	
LXIV. Tommaso Mocenigo . . .	“ 1413 “ 1423	
LXV. Francesco Foscari . . .	“ 1423 — 1457	(deposed, and died a few days later).
LXVI. Pasquale Malipiero . . .	“ 1457 d. 1462	
LXVII. Cristoforo Moro . . .	“ 1462 “ 1471	
LXVIII. Niccolò Tron . . .	“ 1471 “ 1474	
LXIX. Niccolò Marcello . . .	“ 1474 “ 1474	
LXX. Pietro Mocenigo . . .	“ 1474 “ 1476	
LXXI. Andrea Vendramin . . .	“ 1476 “ 1478	
LXXII. Giovanni Mocenigo . . .	“ 1478 “ 1485	
LXXIII. Marco Barbarigo . . .	“ 1485 “ 1486	
LXXIV. Agostino Barbarigo . . .	“ 1486 “ 1501	
LXXV. Leonardo Loredan . . .	“ 1501 “ 1521	
LXXVI. Antonio Grimani . . .	“ 1521 “ 1523	
LXXVII. Andrea Gritti . . .	“ 1523 “ 1538	
LXXVIII. Pietro Lando . . .	“ 1538 “ 1545	
LXXIX. Francesco Donato . . .	“ 1545 “ 1553	
LXXX. Marcantonio Trevisan . . .	“ 1553 “ 1554	
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LXXXVI. Sebastian Venier . . .	“ 1577 “ 1578	
LXXXVII. Niccolò Da Ponte . . .	“ 1578 “ 1585	
LXXXVIII. Pasquale Cicogna . . .	“ 1585 “ 1595	
LXXXIX. Marin Grimani . . .	“ 1595 “ 1606	
XC. Leonardo Donà . . .	“ 1606 “ 1612	
XCI. Marcantonio Memmo . . .	“ 1612 “ 1615	
XCII. Giovanni Bembo . . .	“ 1615 “ 1618	
XCIII. Niccolò Donà . . .	“ 1618 “ 1618	
XCIV. Antonio Priuli . . .	“ 1618 “ 1623	
XCV. Francesco Contarini . . .	“ 1623 “ 1624	
XCVI. Giovanni Corner . . .	“ 1624 “ 1630	
XCVII. Niccolò Contarini . . .	“ 1630 “ 1631	

XCVIII.	Francesco Erizzo . . .	elected	1631	d.	1646
XCIX.	Francesco Molin . . .	"	1646	"	1655
	C. Carlo Contarini . . .	"	1655	"	1656
	CI. Francesco Corner . . .	"	1656	"	1656
	CII. Bertuccio Valier . . .	"	1656	"	1658
	CIII. Giovanni Pesaro . . .	"	1658	"	1659
	CIV. Domenico Contarini . . .	"	1659	"	1674
	CV. Niccolò Sagredo . . .	"	1674	"	1676
	CVI. Aloise Contarini . . .	"	1676	"	1683
	CVII. Marcantonio Giustiniani	"	1683	"	1688
	CVIII. Francesco Morosini . . .	"	1688	"	1694
	CIX. Silvestro Valier . . .	"	1694	"	1700
	CX. Aloise Mocenigo . . .	"	1700	"	1709
	CXI. Giovanni Corner . . .	"	1709	"	1722
	CXII. Aloise Sebastian Mocenigo	"	1722	"	1732
	CXIII. Carlo Ruzzini . . .	"	1732	"	1735
	CXIV. Luigi Pisani . . .	"	1735	"	1741
	CXV. Pietro Grimani . . .	"	1741	"	1752
	CXVI. Francesco Loredan . . .	"	1752	"	1762
	CXVII. Marco Foscarini . . .	"	1762	"	1763
	CXVIII. Aloise Mocenigo . . .	"	1763	"	1779
	CXIX. Paolo Renier . . .	"	1779	"	1788
	CXX. Ludovico Manin . . .	"	1788—	1797	(abdicated with the aristocratic government).

## TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL DATES IN VENETIAN HISTORY

- A.D.
- 421 (about) Venice founded by fugitives from Aquileia, Altinum, and Padua. (According to tradition on March 25, 421, at noon.)
- 697 . . Paulus Lucas Anafestus of Heraclea chosen as first Doge.
- 809 . . Pepin, son of Charlemagne, attempts to take Venice and is defeated.
- 828 (about) The body of Saint Mark is brought to Venice, and he is proclaimed protector of the Republic in place of Saint Theodore.
- 959 (about) The brides of Venice and their dowries are carried off by Istrian pirates.
- 975 . . . The first basilica of Saint Mark is destroyed by fire.
- 998 . . . Pietro Orseolo is acclaimed as Doge of Venice and Dalmatia.
- 998 . . . The Emperor Otho III. visits Venice secretly.
- 1009 . . . Venice is ravaged by the plague.
- 1099 . . . Venetians defeat the Pisans off Rhodes.
- 1123 . . . Defeat of the Turks at Jaffa.
- 1123 . . . The Doge Domenico Michiel takes Tyre.
- 1167 . . . Venice joins the Lombard League, with Verona, Padua, Milan, Bologna, and other cities.
- 1172 . . . Institution of the Great Council, in which membership is open and elective.
- 1177 . . . The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa makes submission to Pope Alexander III. at Venice.
- 1177 . . . The ceremony of the Espousal of the Sea by the Doge instituted.
- 1202 (Oct. 8) The Venetian fleet sets out for the Fourth Crusade under the Doge Enrico Dandolo.
- 1204 (April 12) Constantinople taken by the Venetian and French forces.

- A. D.
- 1277 . . Membership in the Great Council limited to those of legitimate birth.
- 1297 . . Closure of the Great Council, in which membership becomes a privilege of the nobles.
- 1300 . . Conspiracy of Marino Bocconio.
- 1310 . . Conspiracy of Marco Quirini and Bajamonte Tiepolo.
- 1335 . . Permanent institution of the Council of Ten.
- 1348 . . Venice loses half her population by the plague.
- 1354 . . Conspiracy of Marino Faliero.
- 1379-80 . . War of Chioggia.
- 1404-54 . . During this time Venice possesses herself, on the mainland, of Padua, Ravenna, Verona, Treviso, Vicenza, Brescia, Bergamo, Feltre, Belluno, Crema, and Friuli.
- 1405 . . Carlo Zeno takes Padua from Carrara.
- 1426 . . League with Florence concluded. Brescia surrenders to the allied forces, the Venetian troops being commanded by Carmagnola.
- 1428 . . Bergamo surrenders to Carmagnola.
- 1432 (May 5) Carmagnola executed as a traitor to the Republic.
- 1437 . . Erasmo da Narni, nicknamed Gattamelata, is made commander of the Venetian army.
- 1449 . . Bartolommeo Colleoni is commander of the Venetian forces.
- 1453 (May 29) Constantinople taken by the Turks. Many Venetians are massacred and much Venetian property destroyed.
- 1477 . . Scutari, besieged by the Turks, is successfully defended by Antonio da Lezze.
- 1489 . . Venice annexes Cyprus, leaving Catharine Cornaro the empty title of its Queen.
- 1508 . . League of Cambrai, between the Emperor Maximilian, Pope Julius II., Louis XII. of France, and Ferdinand of Aragon.
- 1571 (Oct. 7) Battle of Lepanto won by the allied fleets of Venice, Genoa, the Holy See, and Spain, commanded respectively by Sebastiano Venier, Andrea Doria, and Marcantonio Colonna, under Don John of Austria as commander-in-chief.
- 1574 . . Visit of Henry III. of France.
- 1575-7 . . Venice, swept by the plague, loses one-fourth of her population, Titian among them. Church of the Redentore built to commemorate its cessation.
- 1577 (Dec. 20) Fire destroys the Hall of the Great Council, with many magnificent works of art.
- 1630 . . Another visitation of the plague, commemorated by the Church of the Salute.

## TABLE OF PRINCIPAL DATES 427

- A.D.
- 1715-18 . . The Turks wrest from Venice Crete and the Peloponnesus.
- 1784 . . Angelo Emo, the last Venetian leader, humbles the Bey of Tunis.
- 1788 . . Election of the 120th and last Doge, Ludovico Manin.
- 1796 . . The ceremony of the Espousal of the Sea by the Doge takes place for the last time.
- 1797 (April 18) General Bonaparte, by the treaty of Campo-Formio, cedes to Austria the Venetian provinces between the Po, the Oglio, and the Adriatic, in exchange for Romagna, with Ferrara and Bologna.
- 1797 (May 12) The Doge Ludovico Manin abdicates, and the Great Council accepts the Provisional Government required by General Bonaparte.
- 1798 (Jan. 18) The Austrian garrison takes possession of Venice.
- 1866 (Oct. 19) Austria cedes Venice to Napoleon III., who transfers it to Victor Emanuel II., King of Italy.



## SOME EMINENT MEN AND WOMEN CONNECTED WITH VENICE

*The places where some of the principal works of Painters and Architects may be seen are given in this list, which, however, is by no means exhaustive.*

### ARCHITECTS

*(Many of these were also Sculptors.)*

- 1618-1684. GIUSEPPE BENONI.  
The Dogana.
- (Not known)-1529. BARTOLOMMEO BON.  
Ducal Palace, S. Maria dell' Orto, Scuola di San Rocco,  
Palazzo Foscari.
- (Not known)-about 1680. BALDASSARE LONGHENA.  
S. Maria degli Scalzi, S. Maria della Salute, Palazzo Giustini-  
ani Lolin, Palazzo Rezzonico, Palazzo Pesaro.
- 1518-1580. ANDREA PALLADIO.  
Ducal Palace, San Giorgio Maggiore, Il Redentore.
- 1512-1597. GIOVANNI ANTONIO DA PONTE.  
The Rialto.
- 1484-1549. MICHELE SAMMICHELE.  
Palazzo Grimani, Palazzo Corner Mocenigo, Castello di  
S. Andrea.
- 1479-1570. JACOPO SANSOVINO.  
Ducal Palace, Libreria Vecchia, Loggia, Procuratie Nuove,  
Zecca, S. Giuliano, S. Salvatore, S. M. Mater Domini,  
Palazzo Corner, Palazzo Manin.
- 1552-1616. VINCENZO SCAMOZZI.  
Ducal Palace, Libreria Vecchia, Procuratie Nuove, I Tolenti,  
Palazzo Contarini degli Scignini.

## CONDOTTIERI

- 1390-1432. CARMAGNOLA (FRANCESCO BUSSONE).  
 1400-1475. BARTOLOMMEO COLLEONE.  
 (Not known)-1443. GATTAMELATA (ERASMO DA NARNI).  
 His statue by Donatello is at Padua.  
 1401-1466. FRANCESCO SFORZA.

## MÈN AND WOMEN OF LETTERS

- 1492-1566. ARETINO (PIETRO BACCI), Essayist and Playwright.  
 (About) 1510-1571. ANDREA CALMO, Essayist and Poet.  
 1310-1354. ANDREA DANDOLO, Historian.  
 1554-(after 1591). VERONICA FRANCO, Poetess.  
 1707-1793. CARLO GOLDONI, Playwright.  
 1720-1806. CARLO GOZZI, Playwright and Satirist.  
 1449-1515. ALDUS MANUTIUS, Printer.  
 1512-1574. PAULUS MANUTIUS (son of ALDUS), Printer.  
 1547-1597. ALDUS MANUTIUS (son of PAULUS, and grandson of ALDUS I.),  
 Printer.  
 1755-1832. GIUSTINA RENIER MICHIEL, Historian.  
 1523-1554. GASPARA STAMPA, Poetess.

## PAINTERS

- 1556-1629. ALIENSE (ANTONIO VASILLACCHI).  
 Ducal Palace, Accademia delle Belle Arti.  
 1510-1592. BASSANO (JACOPO DA PONTE).  
 Ducal Palace, Accademia, Museo (Civico).  
 1548-1591. BASSANO (FRANCESCO DA PONTE, eldest son of JACOPO).  
 Ducal Palace, Accademia, San Giacomo dell' Orio.  
 1558-1623. BASSANO (LEANDRO DA PONTE, third son of JACOPO).  
 Ducal Palace, Accademia.  
 1400-1470. JACOPO BELLINI (father of GENTILE and GIOVANNI).  
 Accademia, Museo Civico.  
 1421-1501. GENTILE BELLINI (eldest son of JACOPO).  
 Ducal Palace, Accademia, Museo Civico, S. Giobbe.

- 1426-1516. GIOVANNI BELLINI (second son of JACOPO).  
Accademia, San Francesco della Vigna, Frari, SS. Giovanni e Paolo, S. Pietro Martire at Murano, Museo Correr.
- 1491-1553. BONIFAZIO (IL VENEZIANO).  
Ducal Palace, Accademia, S. Salvatore, S. Leo, S. Angelo Raffaele.
- 1513-1588. PARIS BORDONE.  
Ducal Palace, Accademia, S. Giovanni in Bragora, S. Giobbe, S. Maria dell' Orto.
- 1697-1768. CANALETTO (ANTONIO CANAL).  
Accademia, Museo Civico.
- (About) 1450-1522. VITTORE CARPACCIO.  
Ducal Palace, Accademia, S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni, S. Vitale, SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Museo Correr.
- 1675-1757. ROSALBA CARRIERA.  
Accademia, Museo Correr.
- 1549-1605. GIOVANNI CONTARINI.  
Ducal Palace.
- 1477-1511. GIORGIONE (GIORGIO BARBARELLI).  
Accademia, Palazzo Giovanelli.
- 1712-1793. FRANCESCO GUARDI.  
Accademia, Museo Civico.
- (Unknown)-1515 or 1529. PIETRO LOMBARDO.  
Ducal Palace.
- 1702-1762. PIETRO LONGHI.  
Museo Civico, Palazzo Grassi.
- 1480-1548. JACOPO PALMA (PALMA VECCHIO).  
Ducal Palace, Accademia, S. Maria dell' Orto, S. Maria Formosa, Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, S. Cassiano.
- 1544-1628. JACOPO PALMA (PALMA GIOVANE, great-nephew of PALMA VECCHIO).  
Ducal Palace, Accademia, Frari.
- 1566-1638. SANTE PERANDA.  
Ducal Palace.
- 1693-1769. GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO.  
La Fava, Gli Scalzi, I Gesuati, S. Martino, Palazzo Labia.
- 1512-1594. TINTORETTO (JACOPO ROBUSTI).  
Ducal Palace, Scuola di San Rocco, Accademia, S. Maria dell' Orto, S. Maria della Salute, Hospital of S. Marco, S. Cassiano.

## 432 GLEANINGS FROM HISTORY

- 1519-1594. DOMENICO TINTORETTO (son of JACOPO).  
Ducal Palace, Accademia.
- 1477-1576. TITIAN (TIZIANO VECELLIO).  
Ducal Palace, Accademia, Scuola di San Rocco, SS. Giovanni  
e Paolo, Frari, S. Maria della Salute.
- 1545-1611. MARCO VECELLIO (nephew of TITIAN).  
Ducal Palace.
- 1528-1588. PAUL VERONESE (PAOLO CALIARI).  
Ducal Palace, Accademia, S. Pantaleone, S. Catarina, S. Fran-  
cesco della Vigna.
- 1568-1637. GABRIELE CALIARI (eldest son of PAOLO).  
Ducal Palace.
- 1539-1614. ANDREA VICENTINO (DEI MICHELI).  
Ducal Palace.
- 1525-1608. ALESSANDRO VITTORIA.  
Palazzo Balbi, Decorations of the Scala d' Oro in the Ducal  
Palace.
- 1543-1616. FEDERIGO ZUCCARO.  
Ducal Palace.

### SCULPTORS

- 1757-1822. ANTONIO CANOVA.  
Accademia, Frari, Arsenal, Museo Cívico, Palazzo Trèves.
- 1435-1488. VERROCCHIO (ANDREA CIONI DI MICHELE).  
Square of SS. Giovanni e Paolo.

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