

you really are not quite what such a position demands.

II.

NARRATIVE OF DR. WATSON.

My wedding duly took place, and we moved into our cozy little home next door to Micah Clarke of the Firm of Girdlestone. Sherlock Holmes fulfilled his promise and sent a present, which made every one think of the great detective, who had unwound so many tangled skeins. It was an enormous ball of worsted, five feet in diameter, and red and black in colour. With it was a note.

MY DEAR WATSON: I send you this ball, which is like an interesting case, for there is a great deal of unravelling to do before one reaches the heart of the mystery. At irregular intervals you will find clues that will help a truly logical mind to deduce the final outcome.

This is the longest yarn I have ever been connected with. The present is worsted, but

I am not; for, long before the last piece shall have been unwound, the public will have forgotten I ever gave a present; and so they can not say "How commonplace!" Therefore, my reputation for wisdom is saved.

That all your fondest hopes may be realised, is the earnest wish of

SHERLOCK HOLMES.

P. S. All the wool must be knit as it is unwound, though part of it is already crow-shade.

S. H.

My wife began knitting. The first clue was the book *How to be Happy Though Married*. The second, a mouse-trap for—"matrimony is like a mouse-trap; those who are out want to get in; and those who are in want to get out." The third was—but she has not found it yet.

Perhaps Holmes's "public" would like to guess the ending of his wonderful yarn. If they would not, I will tell them—when I find out.

J. Alston Cooper.

VENICE IN RECENT FICTION

With the prevalent demand for historical novels, it is annoying to the feeble patriot that so little attention has been paid to the Venetian Republic. Surely sufficient material can be found in the lives and loves of the nobility of Venice to keep the book in hand, though its pages may not resound with war-whoops, nor the Continental Army march through its paragraphs. Much has been written of Venice, and graceful, interesting reading it is, but generally of a descriptive character; the romance is left to the imagination of the reader. Of the later novels, there are two from the literary workshops of American writers which faithfully present the Venetian character. The first is *Marietta: A Maid of Venice*, by F. Marion Crawford, and the second, *The Golden Book of Venice*, is from the pen of Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull. A collection of short stories written by Max Pemberton, and classed under the name of *Signors of the Night*, goes well with apples and cider, a clean hearth and wild rain on a shingle roof.

The story of *Marietta* deals with the glass-blowers of Murano, particularly with the Beroviero family and Zorzi Balarin, whose names can be found in every history of the Republic, the character of Zorzi shading from snow-white to blackest black, according to the individual opinion of the chronicler. It is of no great moment whether or no the Dalmatian, in question stole from his master, Beroviero, the secrets of his glass-making, and threatened the old gentleman with his knowledge until he delivered up his daughter. The fact remains that Zorzi got the girl, that she was a very nice sort of a girl, according to Mr. Crawford, with real red hair which did not need a daily sun-burning on the balcony, and that the two founded a dynasty of glass-blowers which made several departures in the glass line.

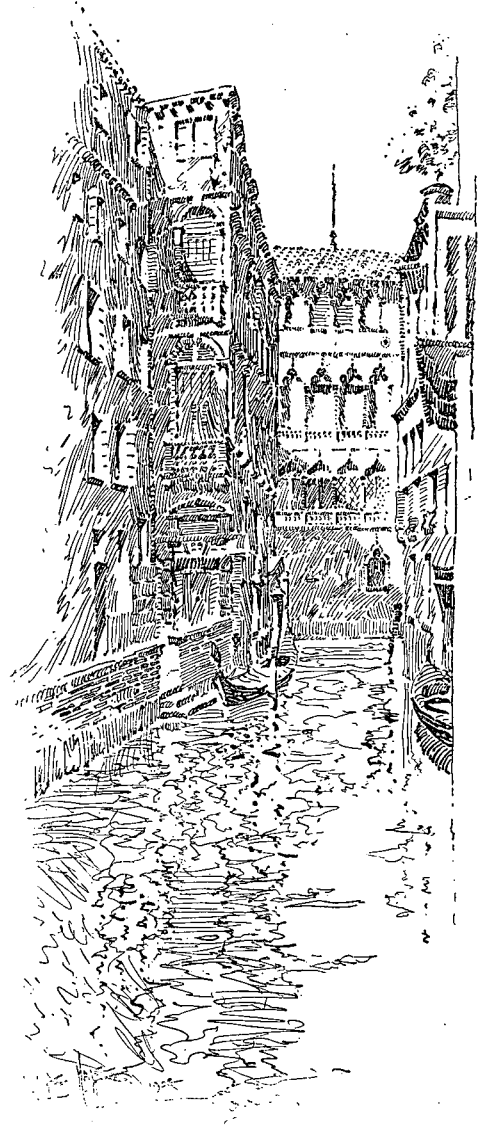
In the *Golden Book of Venice* there is another glass-maker of note, one Girolamo Magagnati, who was doing his best work at the beginning of the seventeenth century, about a hundred years after the

time of Angelo, father of Marietta. He had two daughters, at least in fiction, and here Mrs. Turnbull departs from history, marrying one of them to Marcantonio Giustiniani, a nobleman, after fierce opposition from the Senate. The young lover recalls to them a forgotten instance as far back as 1357, of a patrician who married a daughter of the house of Beroviero and whose marriage this august body approved. The Senate, who was a bit rusty on ancient law, scratched its head as one man and sent for the Golden Book, the *Libro d'Oro*, in which were inscribed the names of all the nobility. There among them was the husband of the glass-maker's daughter, and the wife of the husband of the glass-maker's daughter, and all their little ones, still nobly noble. That settled the question for Mrs. Turnbull. Her "love interest" married, and lived unhappily ever afterward. To him who is given to quibbling there is left a vague indecision, a vacillation between deep respect for Mrs. Turnbull as a graphic historian, and a profound faith in Mr. Crawford as a student of Italian history. Mr. Crawford states that a law was passed in 1357, allowing a patrician to marry a daughter of a glass-blower without affecting his rank, and old Beroviero went about in the attempt to wed the apple of his eye to young Contarini, without fear of the Ten whisking him off his doorstep and paddling away with him to the prison under the leads, which, being interpreted, is the attic of the Doge's palace—and a very warm spot.

In preference to feeding the *blasé* pigeons of St. Mark's, we ventured into the archives of Venice with a mist of interrogations to present to any of the gentlemen engaged by the government to dust the records and fight the moths. In our modest questioning we sought to know if a Beroviero had ever married a nobleman, and if so, was the nobleman a Contarini. We also wished to learn if a daughter of the house of Magagnati married a Giustiniani, and if not, whom and when had they all four married. The young man in waiting wore a striped tie, with hose to match. He did not seem a part of the five-foot volumes lying about, he did not appear to belong to old Teodoro and the winged lion, he could be more positively associated with chocolate in the Piazza; but he was excessively po-

lite, and if the enormity of the request staggered him, he showed no outward weakening. He asked us to wait, and we do, and will, and deserve to. If the Senate of the seventeenth century found itself hazy on events of 1357, the young clerk of to-day should be exempt from any date farther back than the Garibaldian period.

As much a part of Venetian life as the patrician and glass-blower, were the gon-



"Casa Contarini."—Marietta.

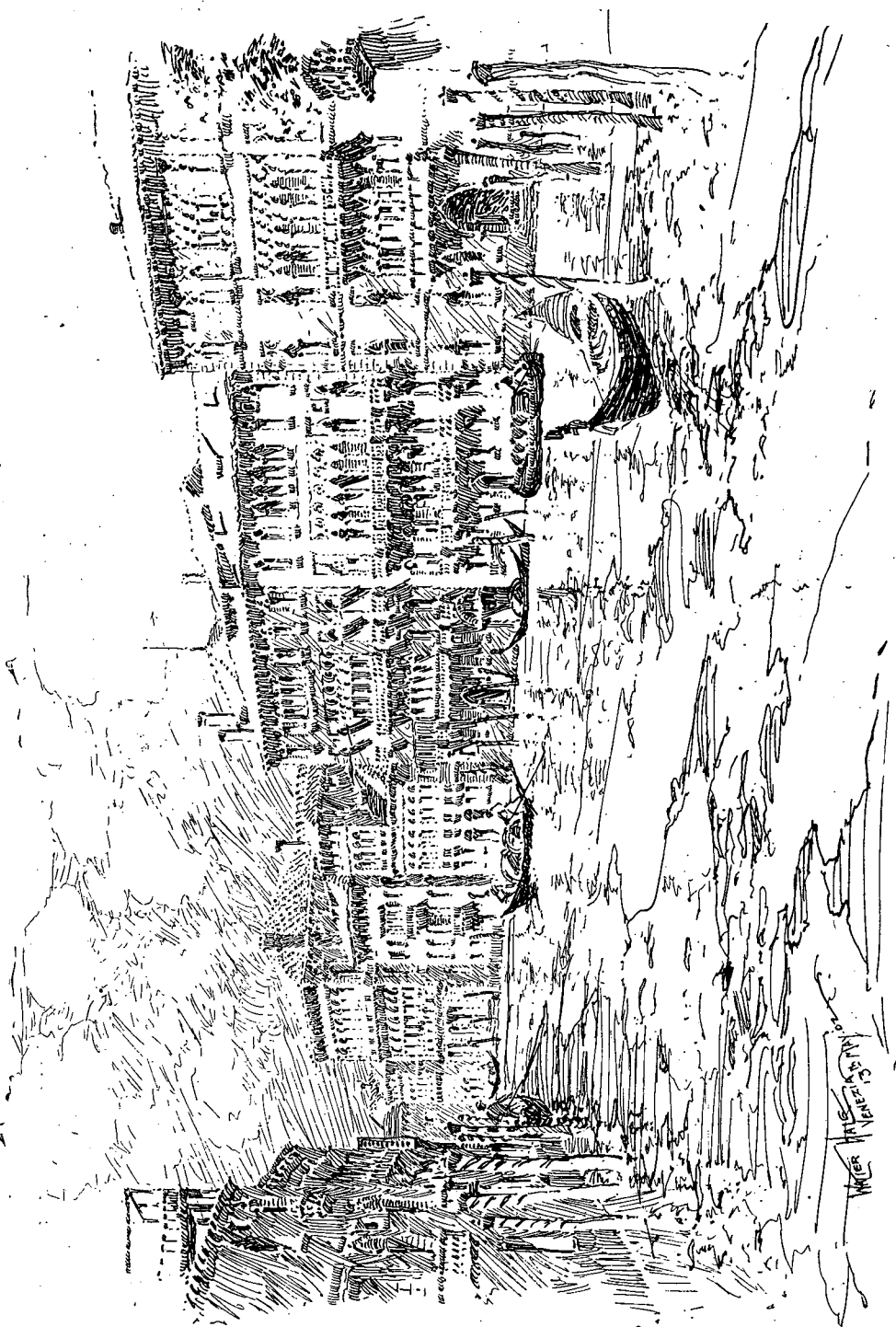
THE PALAZZO CONTARINI FROM THE PONTE
VERONA.

doliers, and of as distinct a type. Their associations might be compared to the unions of to-day, and organised labour could learn a lesson from their brother workmen of 1500. The gondoliers were, and are still, divided into various guilds whose headquarters are the ferries, *traghetto*, scattered along the waterways. Each *traghetto* has its corps of officers who sit in judgment on offending members, visit the sick, and bury the dead. Each has a patron saint stuck up on a long pole at the ferry-house, to whom the gondoliers pray vigorously for more custom than their rival ferries, and while the brotherly spirit of the guild has departed, the organisation has its uses—to the tourist at least—for the gondolier now is a numbered being like a poor jail bird, and any attempt at extortion can be reported to the presiding officer of his *traghetto*.

The desire to overcharge is not a modern development. Mr. Horatio Brown speaks of a gondolier of 1800 who "disgraced himself" by crowding twenty-nine people into his boat and refusing to land them until extra toll was paid, but for this, mark you, he was banished. In ancient times one fared even worse, for many of the watermen had a way of flashing knives when far from shore, followed by the prompt disgorgement of money and jewels on the part of the passenger; and to such lengths was this high-stream robbery carried that a number of fascinating tortures were invented as an incitement to keep the peace. The *barcariol toso*, the unsavoury name that long clung to Piero Salin, was the type of gondolier most given to extortion. He was a man of no ferry, and was probably called, in the language of the guild members, a scab. The poor worm of our country



"Not far from the House of the Agnus Dei, on the opposite side of the same canal, but beyond the Baker's Bridge."—*Marietta*.



"On the Grand Canal at Venice."—Maretta.

"The great palaces at the bend of the Canal Grande."—*The Palazzi Giustiniani*; *The Golden Book of Venice*.

(The Palazzo Rezzonico, in the distance, was Robert Browning's home, and in the second of the *Palazzi Giustiniani*, W. D. Howells wrote *Venetian Life*.)

who suffers under the stigma of that name lacks the dashing manner of the unfettered gondolier, who could steal a fare under the very nose of the *gastaldo*, the presiding officer of the *traghetto*. The Piero of Mrs. Turnbull's novel was still a wild rover when he won Toinetta, who, as one of the "brides of Venice," appeared at the festa of San Pietro in Castello, her dowry upon her back, in quest of a husband. It may have been a pretty custom, but "more honoured in the breach than the observance," and even



"The vine-covered pergola of the Traghetto San Maurizio."—*The Golden Book of Venice*.

in that day thought a trifle theatrical by the Magagnati family. There was an element of danger also in the adventure which may have appealed to the maidens of earlier centuries. In 932 the brides were set upon by Istrian pirates, dowries, white ribbons and all, and borne away to the open sea. The big bell of the Campanile (which, alas! will ring no more) clanged the alarm, all Venice turned out, captured the maids, and the ceremony was continued. Which may point no

moral unless it be that the course of true love seldom runs smooth.

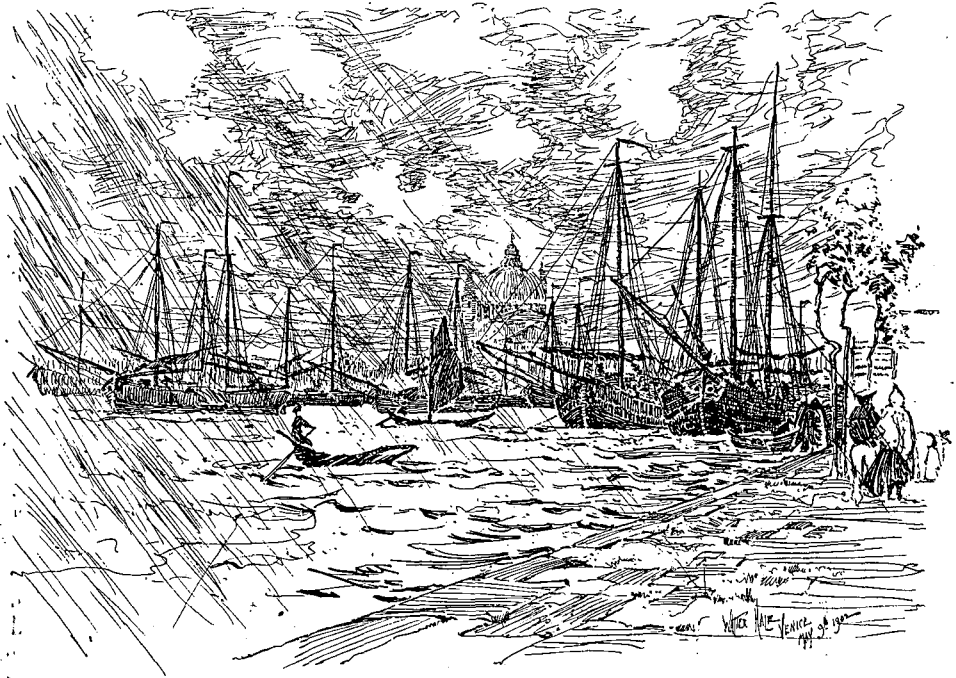
In the *Golden Book* and in Mr. Pemberton's collection of short stories the power of the one great religious character of Venice is strongly dwelt upon. Paolo Sarpi stands unique as a great priest and a greater statesman, whose sense of justice was unhampered by his duty to the Church, and while practically the ruler of the Republic during its excommunication, or, rather, its refusal to accept the interdict, continued to live as a simple Servite monk. When Rome claimed the right to try the erring ecclesiastics, Sarpi's opinion was the ultimatum of the state. "The dominion of the Church marches in the paths of Heaven," said the friar; "it cannot, therefore, clash with the dominion of princes, which marches on the paths of earth." And during the long two years from 1605 to 1607, Sarpi daily went to and from the Doge's palace, seemingly bearing a charmed life, for though set upon by hired assassins, he recovered, even, to quote a carping biographer, surviving the diabolic treatment of the surgeons.

Mrs. Turnbull's theme is interwoven closely with the remarkable attitude of Venice at this time, and with the true life story of Sarpi, but Mr. Pemberton suggests him only in that he depicts a monk of great influence perfectly in touch with the condition of the Republic. Many of the other types of the short tales are from characters of the city and the mysterious "Ten," the "Signors of the Night," glide in and out with a supernatural aptitude for the psychological moment. Men and women were borne away without a struggle; the word "Ten" seemed to render them devoid of all resistance, and we shall never know whether it was the number or the name that was so terrifying. Primarily the "Ten" were to be looked upon as a committee of safety; by degrees, however, the name was significant only in that none was safe but the "Ten." While in the face of that committee, there was a still more dreaded one called the "Three," who could easily do away with the "Ten" at one gulp, destroying forever the theory that there is strength in numbers. With all this vigilance, the Venetians went on plotting without rhyme or reason beyond the desire to plot. Theirs was a well-constructed Government, wisely, if

sternly, governed, and the public was heart and soul for the Republic. There is no instance of a plot that in the smallest way succeeded in developing itself. Possibly it was the awful curb that kept the city a unit. Unlike the Medici, which were at the same time the glory and menace of Florence, Venice stands without one family name more powerful than another. The arms of the Republic are everywhere; the arms of the patricians decorate only their palaces, and the lustre of their houses is enhanced when the

one seeing the front door and the back door on the same day, and if, by tireless industry, the front door is found before the setting of the sun, as a punishment the back door disappears forever. Hop o' my Thumb, with his bread crumbs, would have a chance possibly, but the tourist and his yard-square map is a dullard.

There is a compensation. If one does not find what one wants, one is sure to discover something just as good. The search for the Baker's Bridge ended up

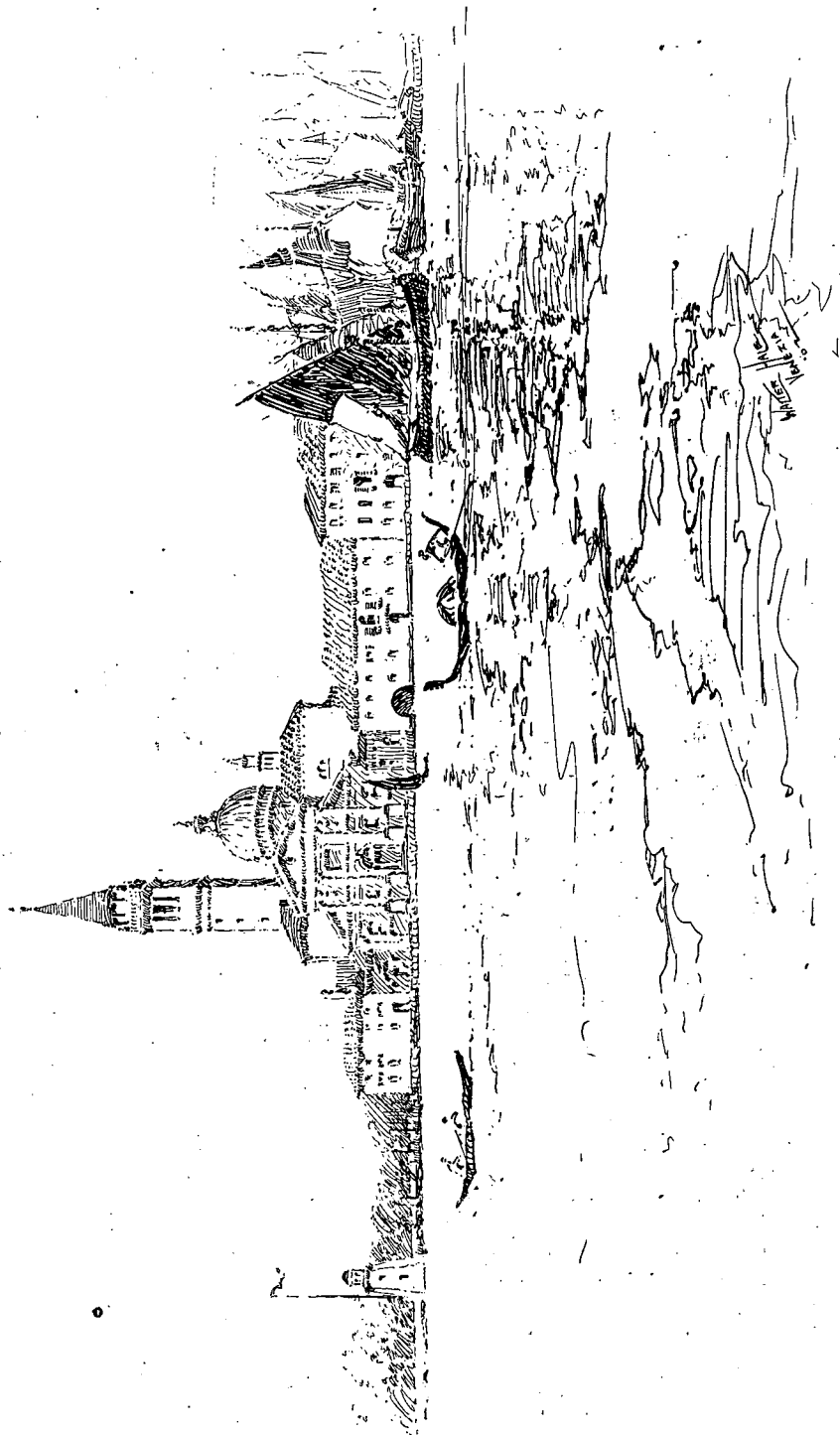


"Along the Giudecca."—*The Golden Book of Venice*.
 "The Giudecca, where the merchant vessels lay at anchor."—*Marietta*.

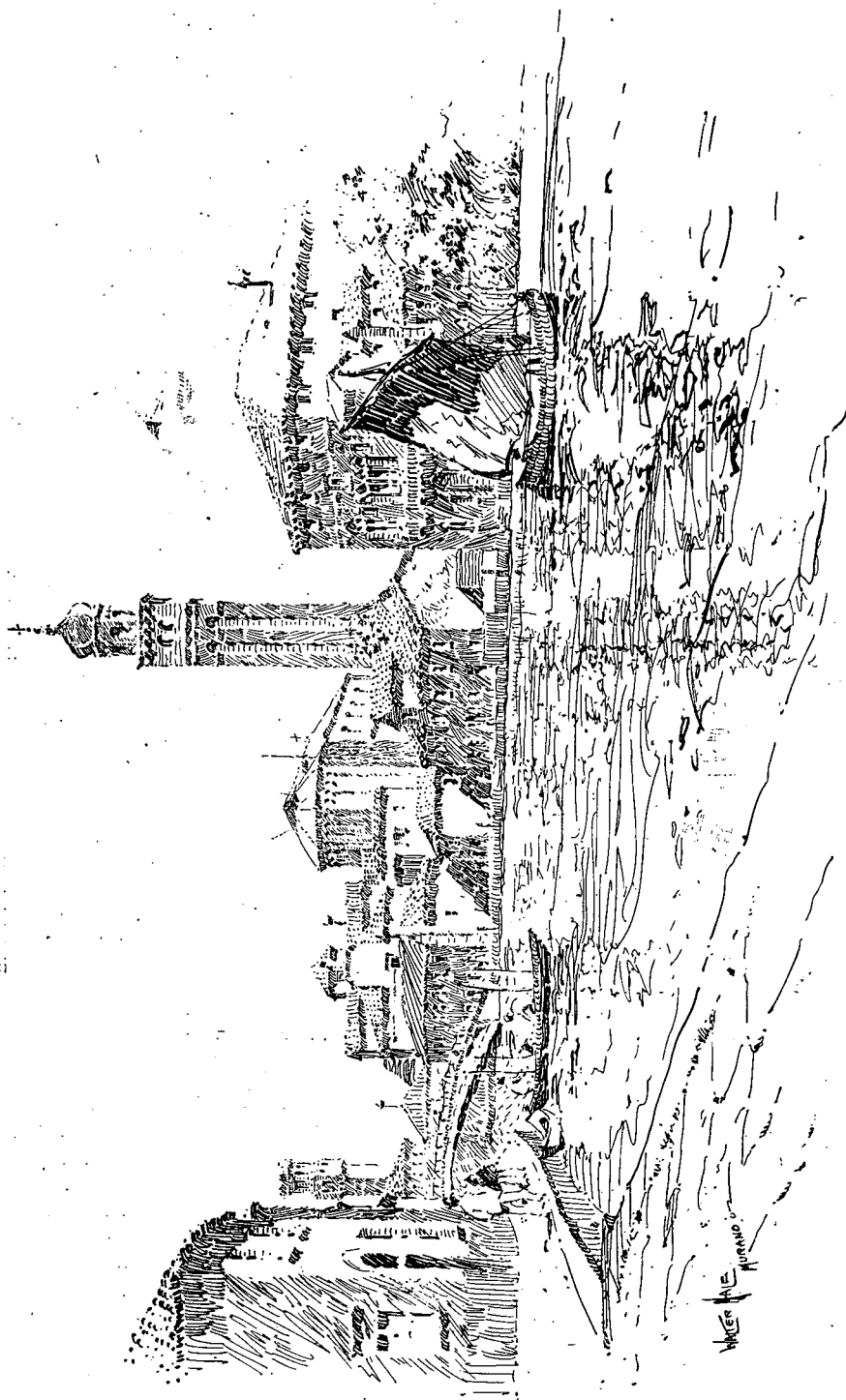
lion, the emblem of the Doge, is carved upon their façades.

Mr. Ruskin talks very delightfully of "Walks in Florence," indeed, talks more than he walks; and other writers of less lustre but equal charm, are given to meanderings, both physical and mental, over the garden spots of Italy. Little, however, has been said of walks in Venice, and it is a pastime not to be despised. One can walk further, see more, and cover less territory in Venice than in any other city that we cross the water to explore. There is a certain elusiveness about a place of interest which prevents

in the Ghetto, where small embryo Shylocks were learning to paddle their own canoes, or gondolas. Mothers sat along the edge of the canals guiding swimming babies tied to long ropes, some few were knitting, and all were gossiping. They were exceedingly cordial, and though they knew nothing of the Baker's Bridge, pointed out with great pride the Temple of Israel. The three hours' attempt to escape from the Ghetto was made worthy of record by a Hebrew who walked six blocks out of his way, assuring us that he could find the house of the Agnus Dei (where Mr. Crawford planted the Geor-



"The outlines of the old church and monastery on Saint George's Island were hard and clear against the cloudless sky."—*Maricetta*.



"The corner of San Piero."—*Marietta.*

"The Grand Canal of Murano."—*The Golden Book of Venice.*

gian slave girl), and who refused to accept the smallest—or the largest—coin for his services! He fetched up finally at the old walls of the Convent of the Servi with a triumphant “Ecco!” We could not dampen his enthusiasm, we vowed ourselves delighted with his supernatural knowledge of Venice, and abandoned the search for the mansion with the emblem of the Agnus Dei on the façade, until he quitted our presence. He

Italian street quarrel, and only the immediate bestowal of a penny apiece stopped the need of a hurry call for the patrol boat. In that remote part of Venice an artist is appreciated. A young girl came out of a house nearby and announced herself *simpatico* with all who paint, living, as she did, in the one-time home of Tintoretto—did the Signor know of him? It was a trying moment for the guardian of the artist who was fairly successful in



MURANO.

“ . . . the bridge with the Lion of St. Mark on archivolt and parapet.”
—*The Golden Book of Venice.*

had served his purpose, nevertheless. For three days the convent walls and the fine old gateway, all that is left of the home of Paolo Sarpi, had dodged us, though we had traced them to the Campo Santa Fosca, where is a statue of the great man, erected near the spot of his attempted assassination.

The Baker's Bridge, that same afternoon, was pointed out simultaneously by two ragged urchins in answer to our query. For a half minute blood came as near being shed as it ever had in an

luring away the crowd of dirty children to give him elbow room; in Venice this is achieved at some expense; with no clods to throw, it must be an unmixed rain of candy, mingled only with threats of the police. And we who are in the habit of terrorising children into almost correct deportment by the mention of brass buttons, are pained to see the lack of respect the Italian youngster entertains for “the force.” “Politzia!” they echo in derision. “Politzia!” It is not to be wondered at; the police of their

country are too courteous to be taken seriously—at least by Americans.

When one is hopelessly lost in Venice and no gondola in sight, a small boy, for a small bribe, will lead him gently to the Piazza of San Marco (it will probably be just around the corner), and he can make a fresh start at the fascinating game

those we had passed a few moments before; their ill-concealed laughter was unmistakable. It was mortifying, but we swallowed our pride, and having, by some strange accident of fate, stumbled upon the front of the Palazzo Contarini, we compromised with our guide on half a lira and begged that we might look upon



IN THE MERCERIA, VENICE.

"That labyrinth of narrow streets and winding alleys they call the Merceria."—*Signors of the Night*.

of hunting localities. The diminutive knave who escorted us from the Baker's Bridge arranged to work by the hour. He was quite fresh and merciless. After carrying us over the same ground three times we recognised a parcel of women leaning over the neighbourhood well as

his face no more. After the manner of boys, he refused to leave, escorting us one at a time to the rear of the palace to see the spiral staircase, whose beauty is greatly impaired by the tenements built close up to its lovely curves. Our going singly was a crafty device, for in this way

the façade could not escape us, and by means of weird cries as signals we eventually were reunited. Before we found ourselves in the Merceria, the youngster had earned another half lira, at the same time greatly adding to his own importance by fighting off the hordes of children who stopped to criticise the artist's pen-strokes. The degree of pleasure that is reached by these gamins when a familiar scene is recognised on canvas

haltingly revealed by a curtain which jerks back like that of an amateur dramatic performance. The sexton makes it so difficult a task that the tourists rain money upon him, and between the pictures inside and the shops outside, dare not go that way unless well provided with coin. It was in the shadow of San Salvatore that Mr. Pemberton's soldier friar terrorised the would-be assassin by the revealing of his identity. It is a mild



"The first long waterway of Murano."

"The buildings looked low and modest, if measured by the palaces of the Greater City."—*The Golden Book of Venice.*

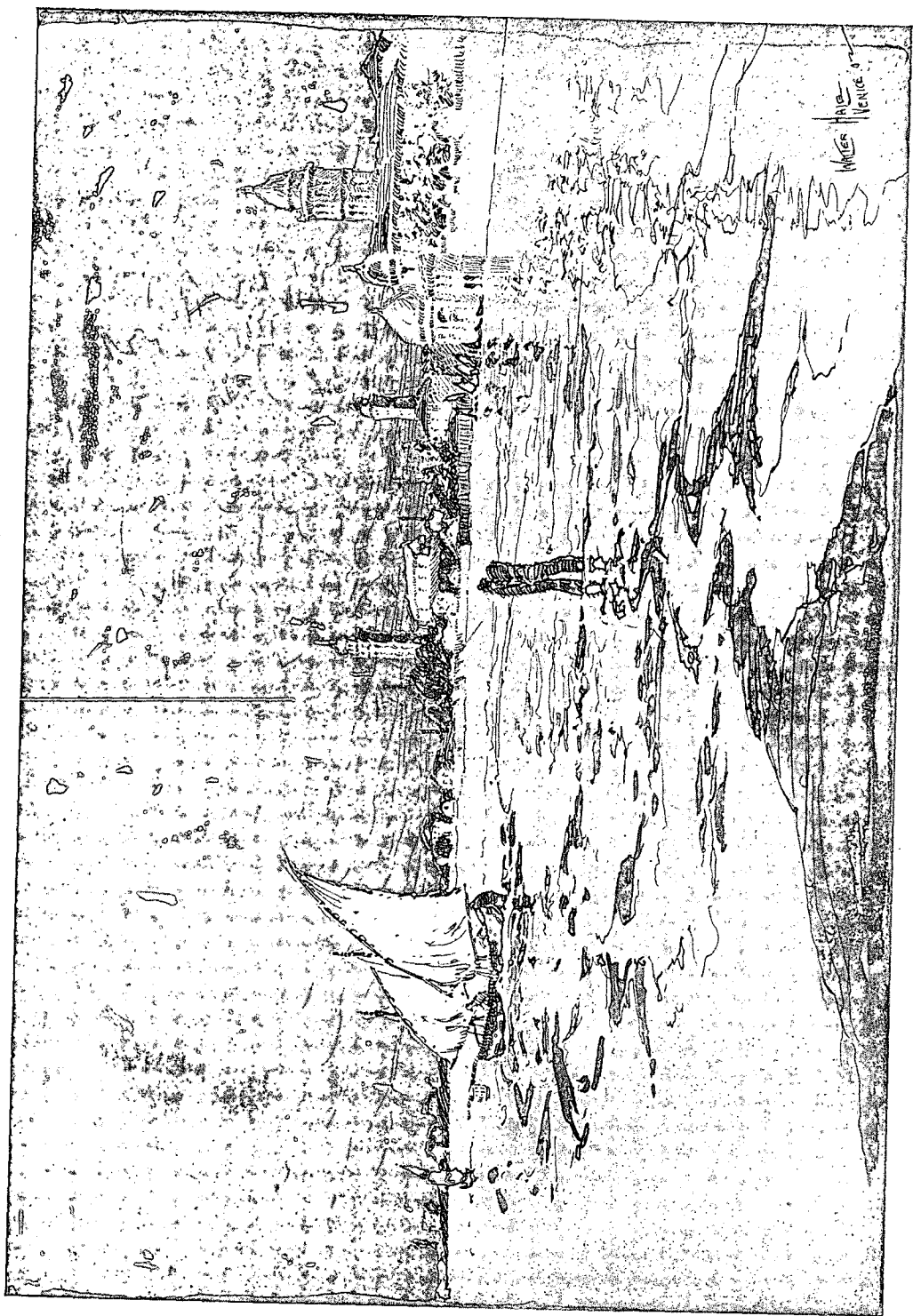
"The house of Angelo Beroviero hung over the paved way, above the edge of the water, the upper story being supported by the stone columns and massive wooden beams."

"The house was not far from the end of the canal of San Piero, which opens toward Venice."—*Marietta.*

is discouraging to all true lovers of impressionism. We fear that the artistic sensibilities of the children of the street are reared along the lines of coloured photographs, and that the introduction of the "purple cow" would receive a perplexed welcome at the best.

The Merceria eventually leads into the Piazza. On the way one can rest in the Church of San Salvatore and have another look at Titian's "Annunciation,"

enough place in the daytime, but at night all Venice becomes a land of mystery; the quiet, broken only by footfalls or the splash of oars, fills the pedestrian with the realisation of what the city could have been when every shadow may have screened a cutthroat, and any boat contain the silent messengers of the state. Once into the Piazza, it is hard to believe that danger had ever lurked there, even in the time of the Zanni, who, in



"The sun had been shining hotly on the Island of Murano."—*Signors of the Night*.
"The lagoon that separates Murano from Venice."—*Marietta*.
"The long low line of Murano."—*The Golden Book of Venice*.

grotesque contact with the executioner's block, tumbled or grimaced before their wooden booths—so great is the space, so pure is the air and so gay are the people. Mr. Pemberton tells us in pleasant fiction of the great esteem in which the public held the mummers of that day. Now the theatres are a small part of Venice, the only remaining evidence of old Italy being the Marionettes who still delight the people in the comedies of Goldoni.

On the water front of the Piazzetta are a hundred eager gondoliers ready to barter with you for the island of Murano, for Torcello, for America if you would pay the price. You would not walk to Murano even if you had the faith, so delightful is the ride over the smooth lagoon. You are respectfully invited to visit the island of San Michele *en route*, but cemeteries are too modern; you long for the glass-houses, and fancy yourself picking up wonderful bargains from the factories themselves. Alas! an obsequious clerk is stationed in front of each of the fifteen factories remaining. He speaks to you in your own tongue, and invites you to pay the foreign prices, or, at a slightly advanced rate, to make you something from the furnaces direct. Reading as we had of the secrecy of the glassmakers, we watched suspiciously to discover any surreptitious pouring in of molten liquids, but all seemed open and above board, and after the process was carefully explained we left, none the wiser—the glassmaker knows his man—and considerably the poorer. Opposite the principal factories is the house Mr. Crawford described as the home of Beroviero, and possibly used by Mrs. Turnbull as the Magagnati mansion, since few arcaded houses of imposing appearance are left in Murano. It is still a very comfortable-looking place with yellow silk curtains at the window, and wise suburbanites should have thought twice before sending daughters from that placid home to marble halls on the Grand Canal, teeming, as they did, with plots and family skeletons.

A Venetian palace up to date is a dream of comfort and luxury, even though a heating apparatus may be vulgar. After a few cold days, when the wind blows cruelly through the rattly windows of an unremodelled mansion,

when one's numb fingers fail to yield to the gentle warmth of four candles, when on rising one leaps from rug to rug like a chamois among the crags to escape the marble floor, there is a feeling akin to sympathy for the Ca' Giustiniani whose manner of living makes such gorgeous reading. At the *traghetto* of San Maurizio they still boast of the devout Lady Beata Tagliapietra (you may remember she half set her cap for Marcantonio), who walked across the canal to her prayers when her father forbade the waterman to ferry her over. Did she carry a *scaldino* of coals as the devotee does nowadays when entering the frigid churches? It would seem by the legend that even a gentlewoman patronised the water cabs, and we wonder if there were always enough gondolas to go around in each family. Did the lady of the house who sighed for shopping anathematise her lord who left the conveyance "teetering" on the waves at his club? did the younger son enjoy a bad quarter of an hour for keeping the gondola out late at night? were the gondoliers ever tardy in "picking up" on the night of a ball? and if so, could the nobleman possibly find the street door to his intricate abode? The palaces of the Giustiniani are the most beautiful on the canal. No minnikin lion adorns them, though a head of the house, but not of these palaces, was one of the last of the Doges. The Lady Marina entertained most lavishly; but were her evenings chilly affairs? Probably the women of that day were not tempted to put bath robes over their dinner dresses; and let us pray that the entire dinner party were never summoned to the water floor to bail out the high tide just as the roast came on. Were the glasses on the table really more lovely than the baubles of to-day?—and then the sun comes out and the air warms instantly under its rays, the water reflects the glory of the day, and we, in our tilting gondola, despise ourselves for a cavilling crew that dares lift an eyebrow over the perfection of Venice, past and present.

Old Magagnati discovered the secrets of colouring glass while leaving it transparent; Beroviero acquired the cunning of enamelling it; Zorzi Ballarin gave mirrors to the world. They left their gifts and made their exit bows, supposedly forever, but we are not yet through with

them. With the growing love of romance comes the search for material, and the glass-blowers serve posterity better than they knew. The gondolier of 1500 reckoned not on the figure he would play in the construction of a novel. The patrician would have inflicted the prettiest tortures in his collection had he caught a scribe of his day making merry with his family affairs. Chronicles are dull affairs, but the history of Venice is one vast fertile garden for the author and his literary tools. If he is indolent, he can choose his own lodging as an abode for his characters; doubtless a story will go with the house, and a fitting name found on the door-post. He can dress his men and women in the most reckless imaginings of one who knows not hooks and

eyes; he can attribute to them all the virtues that are found in fairy tales, or all the vices that he dare dictate to a wilting stenographer. He can do all this at five lire a day, and Venetian history will still outclass him. Historical romance is not a ruthless dissecting of a country's glory; like the pictures of to-day, it disregards the unnecessary, and brings into the white light the salient points of the story, grim or gay. There are painters in Venice by the score, ancient English ladies who sketch, millionaires who dabble, Italians who daub, some students, some workers, some artists. Under the weight of all this reproduction the beautiful city is crumbling away. May the *litterati* know her better ere she slips into the sea.

Louise Closser Hale.

MR. KIPLING: WHERE DOES HE STAND?

Mr. Kipling and the public have had a magnificent run together, and now there is a natural halt, and a mood of quiet and surmise. What of the future? That is to say, what of the past? Have we seen Mr. Kipling training or racing? Have we been to the rehearsal or the play? I do not imagine that I can begin to answer this question, but neither do I suppose that readers of *THE BOOKMAN* would wish me to deal with any other. It is the question of the hour in regard to Mr. Kipling; there is no other vital question; and the least and the most that can be done is to jot down such thoughts as seem helpful to discussion.

The main, perhaps the only, thing to seek out is the true nature of Mr. Kipling's achievement. And by his achievement must be understood his purely literary success as judged in the quiet of one's own mind, and in the company of one's own books and standards. This would go without saying in the case of any other living writer. In Mr. Kipling's case it is necessary to affirm that just as we do not judge of the real value of a victory by a "Mafficking" night, so one must not judge of Mr. Kipling's literary value by the noise and racket of his progress, nor by the prospects of the mineral water trade at Burwash. At the present time, as I have indicated, we hear little of

either, and a quiet pow-pow seems possible.

If there is one thing on which Mr. Kipling's ardent and less ardent admirers are agreed, it is that he has extraordinary power to observe and assimilate facts. But it is too much forgotten that literature does not live by facts alone, however new and strange and picturesquely woven, and that the important thing is not how many facts a writer can fling on our vision, but to what use he can put them. It is just here that a brain like Mr. Kipling's is at once great and disappointing. Mr. Kipling sees so much, and so clearly, that he has no space for himself or for us; it is all matter of vision, and the attention is held as by the surprises of a magnifying glass. The attention is held, but the mind rather rebounds from the picture than absorbs it. You may remember what Byron—who had all Kipling's intensity of vision and all his hunger for fact—said about Rome. He said, writing to Murray, "I am delighted with Rome—as I would be with a bandbox, that is, it is a fine thing to see, finer than Greece . . . but I can't describe, because my first impressions are always strong and confused, and my memory selects and reduces them to order, like distance in the landscape, and blends them better, although they