

The Tiber

BY MARIE VAN VORST

FOURTEEN hundred and odd metres above sea-level a peak of the Apennines, Monte Fumaiolo, gives birth to the Tiber. A bright, crystalline cascade springing from rock and earth and spreading into a little waterfall is the first appearance of the river, which seems expelled from the mountain and never loses its impetus and rush. For a mile the streamlet is unmarked by any eye save those of bird and eagle, when it encounters very early on its way a microscopic bridge of stone blackened by time. Surmounted by an iron cross, this bridge spans the mountain stream at Le Balse, a rude hamlet lost in the fastnesses of the Apennines.

Bold and sturdy between its banks of snow—for winter lies late in these high regions—the Tiber, a saffron band, tears through a savage gorge, and in a surprisingly short time the river has broadened to a wide green pool, and circles deep in the distant hollow. Its transitions of color, its chameleon quality, one of the originalities of the Tiber, is due to the deposits of the river and to some peculiarity in the sand. But the environing hills are no less interesting in color-tone, as they rise tier upon tier of russet patches stained with a wild heather growth red as blood, pale as daffodil, until, softening as the descent becomes rapid, they range in curious symmetry, once more tier upon tier of velvet green, classic in harmony and composition. There are no words to give at once the sense of desolation and the sense of beauty of this part of Tuscany.

On its course in the profound gorge the Tiber encounters what appears at first sight to be a rock jutting into the yet timid stream. The mass is the village of Savignone, its worn and aged front black in the sunlight, the single church lifting its belfry to the sky. Not more than a hundred inhabitants crowd

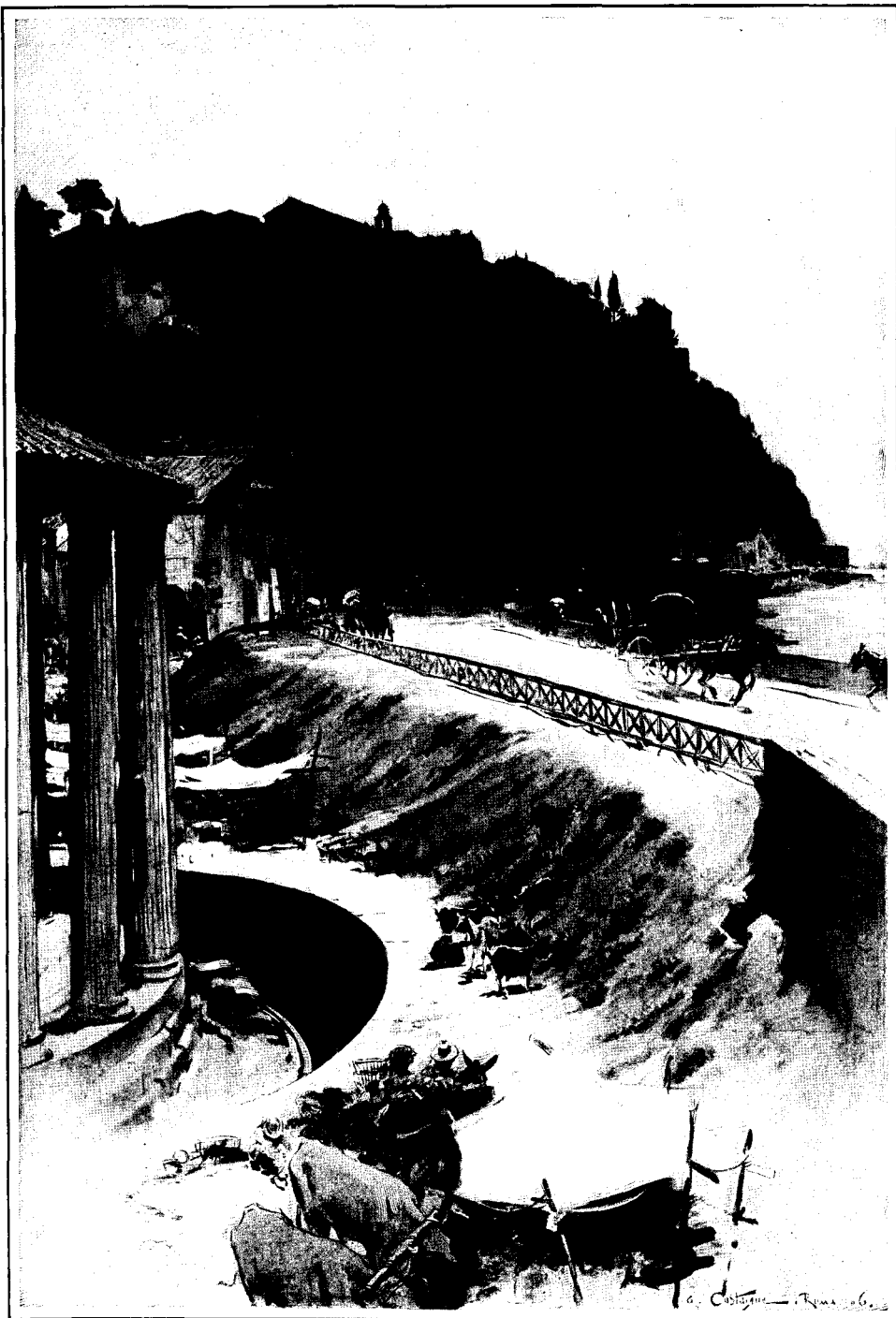
on the semi-island reached from shore by a bridge as picturesque as one in a fairy-tale.

The tranquillity of these cobbled lanes is never broken by traffic; only foot-passengers, or at most a donkey with its rider, may pass over the arch of the medieval bridge. Savignone here seems to divide the Tiber, which flows on between giant gullies and golden peaks whose sides are bare of vegetation. Over a pebbly bed the river runs in translucent green, the color of chrysoprase, or reflects the saffron hills until, under a sky blue as only Italian skies are blue, the landscape lies all of one tone.

The ancients called the Tiber "Albula"—white water. Although to the vulgar eye the Tiber is a yellow river—fawn-colored, indeed, at certain parts of its channel—yet it is preeminently white, with the milky mistiness seen in certain jewels, and it is at Rome that the "Lily River" is whitest. Here in upper Tuscany it undergoes a countless variety of charming essays, as though it tried all the alchemies of nature, and refuting every one, at length chose the beautiful monotony of a colorless existence.

To Pieve San Stefano the course is very lonely. Now and then a contadini, whom need to touch the civilization of the towns has driven from the mountains, ambles on his patient ass, or himself more patiently trudges on foot, thinking nothing of the twenty-four miles from far-off Le Balse to the township of Pieve. Save for the meeting of some such pilgrim and exchange of friendly greeting, the silence is broken only by the voice of the Tiber calling from the gorge, and the cries of the eagles that make the pine-covered heights of the Apennines their home.

The isolated tower on a peaked hill is the castle of a famous countess who built the graceful Ponte d'Assai that, still strong and perfect after 700 years,



Drawn by Andre Castaigne

THE BANKS OF THE TIBER AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT AVENTINE

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throws its shapely arch over the young river. The country's traditions have it that the countess had a son who loved a maiden on the other side of the bridge and nightly swam to her; but at last the swiftness of the current overcame his dauntless swimming, and the lover was drowned within sight of his mother's tower. That he might be the last lover so sacrificed, the countess built the little bridge, and when asked if it had been expensive, she answered that "it has cost me enough" (Assai).

The land begins to soften and to lose its stern mountain character, descents are more gradual, the valleys gently undulate, and the Apennine range forms a further background, its snow peaks melting in the blue. Pasture-lands irrigated and fed by the Tiber and its branches (Anscioue, Sinjerna e Sorara Libbia, Cestarola, etc.) lie along the foot of the hills. Ruder trees are replaced by beech, birch, and the spare poplar. The road is filled with contadini on their asses, red and yellow kerchiefs to the breeze, and straight away at the end of the road is an arched gateway through which can be seen the streets and towers of little Pieve San Stefano.

Twelve miles distant over the valley is Borgo San Sepulcro with its old walls and charming piazza. Piero della Francesca, one of the sweetest and rarest painters of the Umbrian school, was born here, and in the galleries and over the altar of the duomo some of the best examples of his works may be found.

Seen from Borgo, as it is familiarly called, the Tiber lies in plaques of argent against a dull purple landscape. In such an aspect as this—a little glimpse of winding river, a bit of farm-land, a distinctive cluster of trees—Piero conceived and remembered the country of his birthplace, and his canvases are filled with his recollections.

Spring is all along the river's way. A milky haze lies over the tree branches; here and there a fruit-tree flashes bright against the russet country, or a snow-white film of apple-blossoms fills the rare orchards; rare, for this is a vine country, and during the greater part of the year the vineyards stretch their sterile forests over the land. Italy trains her grapes on pruned and dwarfed trees that bear

the heavy burden of the vines, and during the unfriendly months the scene is that of a universe of smitten forests on which a plague has passed, condemning them to eternal desolation.

Down by the Tiber's banks flocks of snow-white lambs cluster uncertainly round their mothers, who graze along the bright river under the shelter of the hills.

Thus growing ever more pastoral in its character, the river country between Borgo and Citta de Castello lies level between mountains of inspiring beauty: in the great distance they are like countries of snow outlined against the north, whilst the lower hills give one the impression of a sea of undulating earth-waves, peaks, crests, and summits rising, falling, falling and rising, filling all the nearer foreground with their umber color. Umbertide, walled and small and pretty, has built its houses down into the very river itself, which washes the foundations of the yellow stones. There is a picture by Signorelli in the church, there is a quaint old medieval duomo, and the hamlet has ineffable charm, but it is only one town, and the road is long to Perugia, toward which the river dashes its passionate way.

With a new caprice it has turned to peacock-green, and at no point is more bewitching in character than just below Umbertide. Oak and chestnut groves break the fields' monotony, and closely lying in their encircling caress the river follows the hill-line, where the heights are ever more gentle in aspect. Little willows spread fragile waterfalls down by the banks; olive-orchards charm the eye that looks from castellated hill to hill, to pointed hillock, yellow-towered and cypress-crowned. The landscape is rendered distinctive and is sharpened by the isolated pines lifting their tufts of green and the bosky cedars with their velvet plumes.

Citta de Castello, second only in beauty to Perugia, commands the country on a height, and from the cathedral gardens that circle round the crest of the hill the Tiber valley is visible as far as San Sepulcro, and the river flowing down from the north over its pebbled bed appears no more than a fillet of water, until it sweeps and curves around the meadows



Drawn by Andre Castaigne

Half-tone plate engraved by L. C. Faber

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM
Rome and the Tiber from Via Sabina—Mount Aventine

at the foot of Citta de Castello, where it lies broad and serene.

At the town's end below the walls with their bastioned corners the Tiber finds a valley where miles of vineyards scar the hills. The belfries send their chiming out on the spring air; a gateway of the city, moss-grown and yellow in the last glimmering of the evening, rises along the Tiber banks as the current

passes the little walled town on its way to greater wonders. Rome is its apotheosis, but Perugia is the Tiber's love!

Below Perugia the Beautiful the Tiber reaches its perfection in a bold sweep. Thirty feet in width, it spreads out at the foot of the mountain, and although of a tender blue, nevertheless here and there a white and distinctive current forecasts the inevitable color that the

river shall assume miles farther on its course.

One of Italy's most precious treasures crowns the top of this fortresslike, heaven-kissing hill, whose difficult slope must be slowly ascended to where Perugia, dark brown and remote, queens it in the clouds.

The Tiber has found much of charm in the naïve hamlets along its journeying, but it loves Perugia above all. Has not the very ground on which the city stands been amassed and deposited by the great river?

A little farther away, across the valley, the city of St. Francis Assisi shines out against its resting-place at the foot of Monte Subasio, and sparkling away on one hand to the snow crests of the Apennines, the Tiber in the opposite direction takes its southern course to Rome and to the sea.

Countless flocks of sheep and lambs graze in their pastures, and the note of a shepherd's pipe mingles with the sound of San Pietro's vesper bells.

Shadow after shadow deepens and fades along the undulating hills piled azure upon azure until they are lost in the sky itself, and all along the steep ascent shimmers the frosty bloom of the olive vineyards with their trembling silver leaves.

There is no city all the way from Florence to Rome like this Umbrian beauty, brown-browed and passionate, who within her high walls broods over the tumults of her medieval barbaric past as she presents her towers to the dawn and to the vast sweep of her unlimited horizon! Perugia has known the shame of numerous surrenders since her early Etruscan history—surrenders to the emperors and to the popes; to the Orient, to the barbarian Lombards, and to the Christians. Strange and brilliant peoples have fought for her, wrestled for her, stormed her red-brown walls, and shed their blood in her hilly streets. She has been torn with inward dissension of nobles and parties; disputed for by the conquerors of the world; and she retains to-day the shade of that stormy, unyielding past in the cast of her fortresslike dominating position.

At a distance of thirty-six kilometres from Perugia, by way of valleys of oak

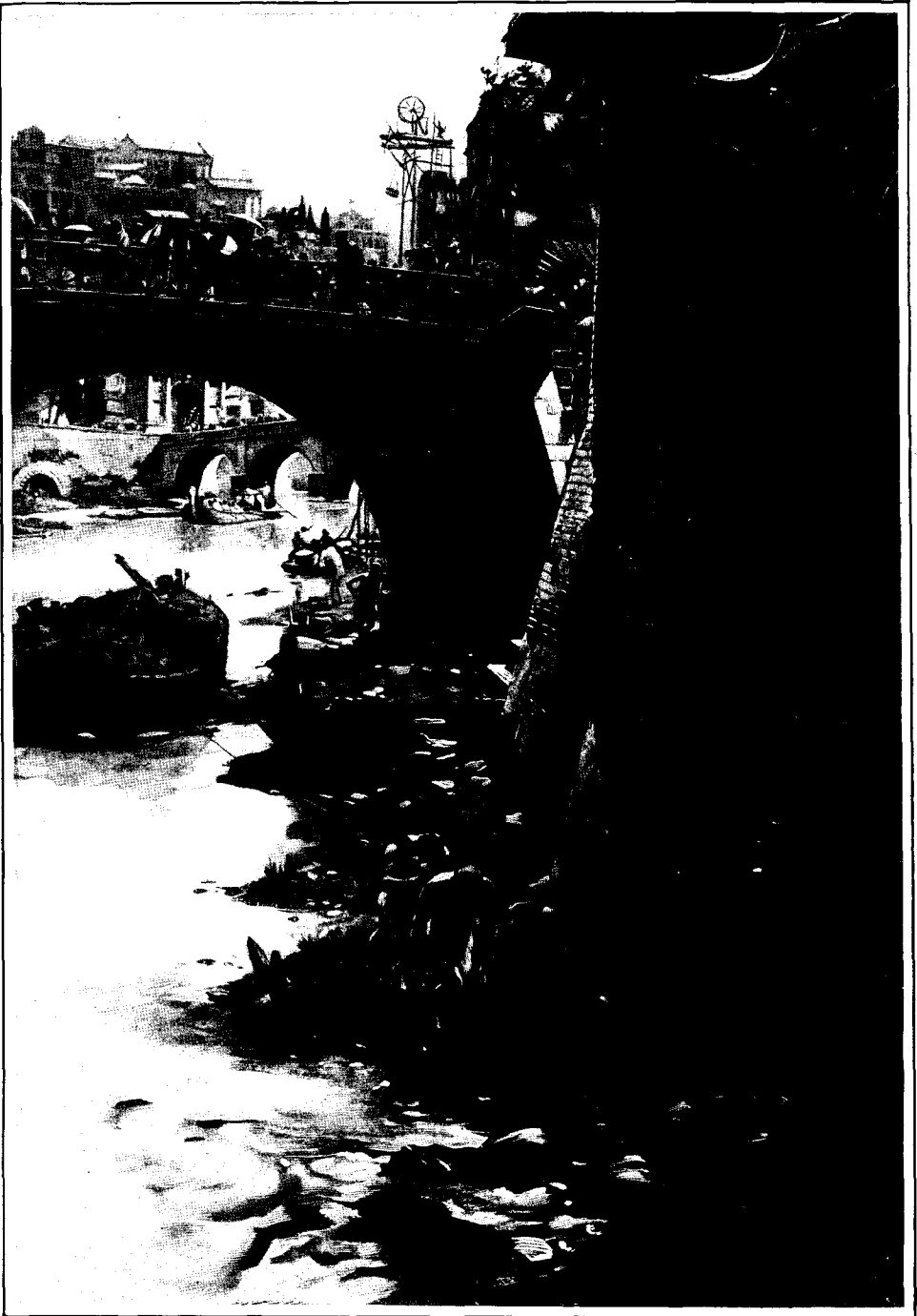
and beech and ilex, the road winds to quaint and forgotten Todi. Forgotten because it has been so long remembered and then forgotten, if such a paradox may be used! Todi is one of the oldest cities in Italy; more ancient than Rome, it is proud of its antiquity and proud to be ignored. "Only three strangers have been with us this year!" It hangs nestled between earth and heaven at the top of a great incline, and as free as only that which is untrammelled by custom and unhindered by modern need is free. No railroad within thirty miles disturbs its peace; automobiles pass it by unnoticed, and it exults and breathes serenely and at liberty—guarding its jewels of beauty, narrow streets, a wonderful piazza, and cathedral—undisturbed by the triumphs of time and embellished by its flight. Without the walls is the basilica, considered to be the most perfect in the world, Santa Maria della Consolazione, penetratingly white and perfect in harmony and proportion.

Sunsets and sunrises creep along the hills to find little Todi high up in its eagle's nest, sufficient unto itself, beautiful, and unknown! In the far north the snow peaks are visible still. Perugia guards a distant crest, and Orvieto is away over those mountains beyond, and all through the gentle valley at the base of Todi and along the rocky foot-hills the Tiber shines and gleams on its way to Rome.

Below Todi at the base of the mountains the river widens like a lake, and the thickly wooded hills are covered with towns whose names are not on any map that the tourist knows.

Mountain after mountain, summit and peak and spur, are crossed on the road to Orvieto. The Tiber is lost for a time in its inaccessible valley. The panorama is sternly majestic, the verdure sparse and bare, and the miles are utterly desolate, until at length the descent to the valley is finally made.

At a little distance from Orvieto the Paglia joins the river, and from Orvieto to Bagnorea—a distance of about ten miles—the course is through a serene and cultivated country with shepherds and the herder with his pigs and the beautiful slow oxen, now no longer the Umbrian breed, but gray and black.



Drawn by André Castaigne

Half-tone plate engraved by G. M. Lewis

THE BANKS OF THE TIBER UNDER THE CÆSARS

At Orte and Borghetto the river is met by its largest tributary, the Nar—a stream forty miles in extent—and it comes with a rush and a dash, bringing new strength and vigor to the river.

Between Borghetto and Civita Castellana the Tiber becomes like a country stream, scarcely rippling over the shallows. Under the low-hanging trees in autumn the grapes droop their rich purple over the water as it steals close to the hillsides.

Several miles from the stream, Civita Castellana guards the remains of Etruscan tombs, and beautiful fragments of Roman marbles, preserved in the houses of the city. It has its cathedral and fortress, its mellow history, and from Civita is to be seen in all its magnificence Soracte, the famous peak of which Horace wrote, the most important mountain of the Sabine range.

And from here to Rome the Tiber becomes again a deep, swift river, leaving its caprices and its pastoral languor to flow with swift, angry current, eddying from side to side.

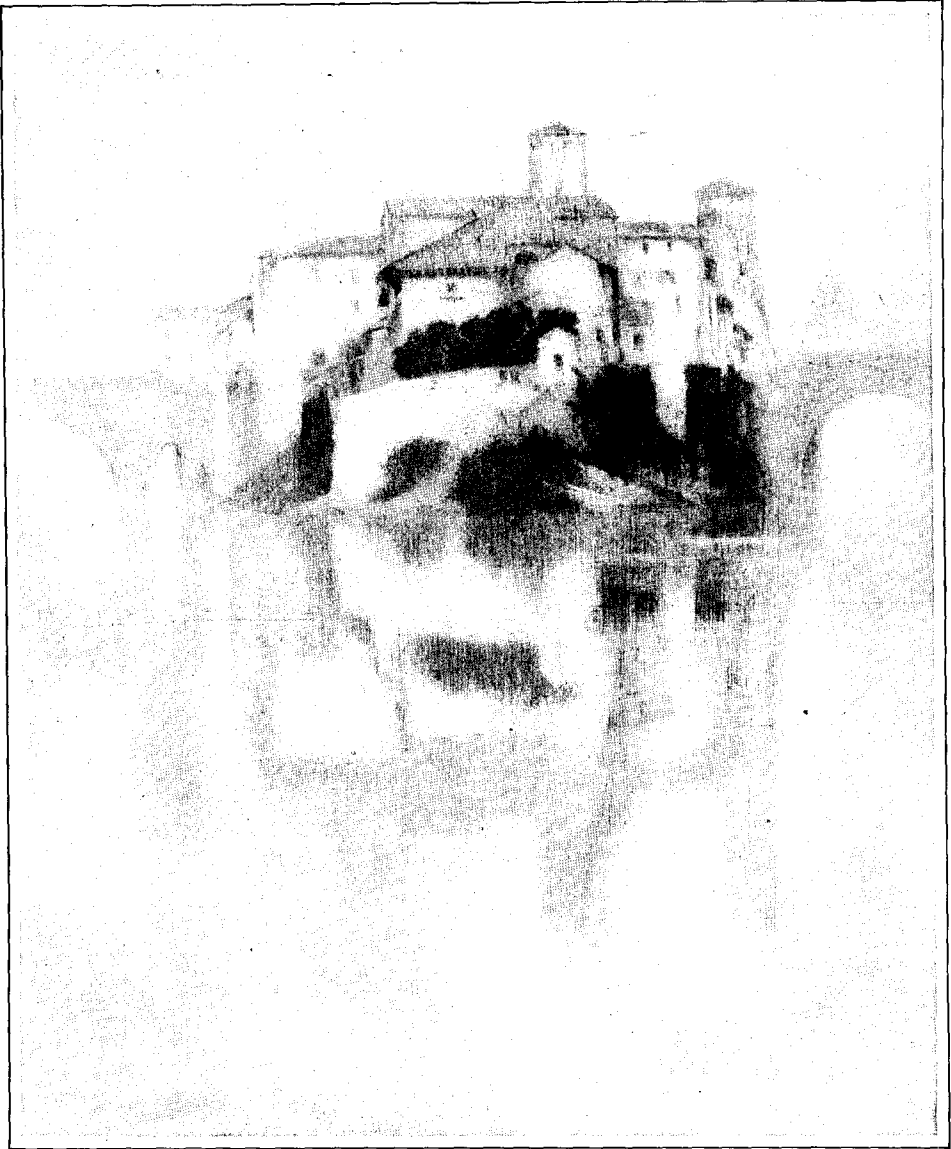
The river now enters the Campagna—a charmed word for the district whose beauty and desolation and monotone and mystery have made the outlying country about Rome synonymous for peculiar attraction and individual loveliness.

On both sides the Tiber is bounded by this sea—tideless except when in summer waves of *giroflée* sweep down to the banks of the water's edge, or tall mullein pours its flood of yellow *pêle-mêle* broadcast over the bosom of the tufa hillocks. The Campagna, too, has its phases and caprices. Barren and bare, it rolls away in desolation, an undulating plain of alluvial and marine deposit, eighty-five miles long and twenty-five miles wide, its stern desolation not without distinct beauty, for the atmosphere and the Italian lights clothe it from morning till night. It becomes purple in the sunsets of winter, and glows and warms to copper red. It mellow to gold in the spring. "The golden Campagna" has the same jewel-like quality that the river possesses; it is an amber country in whose hillock indentures, over whose pastures, a light seems to be held and to vibrate.

For a few months of the year it is

clothed with successive garments of colors and blossoms flung over it by the changing seasons—the pale misty veil of the anemones, the gray of the asphodel, the hot brilliance of the poppy, the sunshine of the mullein, the mystery of the purple iris; from the timid crocus and violet season to the late burning, scorching summer the Campagna receives its gifts of flowers, even in the most festal season, but its spirit of isolation, of loneliness, never changes.

On either side bare banks stretch away, and between them the Tiber wears the color of a young daffodil. This is Polverina, within sight of Rome! It has come suddenly upon the horizon as a curve is rounded by the stream. A row of velvet-tufted pines sentinel the crown of a hill on the left, and behind them hides the Villa Palestra. A row of pink cherry-trees, a flock of feeding sheep, whose bells are the first sound of Rome that the river hears; and the pastoral welcome might lead it to expect something more genial than the confining walls and utter insignificance it is soon to find! The far-off bells of the Villa Madama—a dark villa embowered in the hillside and flanked by ilex and cypress—the exquisite call of a thrush in the grass, and this is the interlude! A row of garish buildings of modern apartments on the right, the arch of a hideous modern bridge spanning the river whose waters hitherto have been crossed by no stones younger than 700 years . . . to the left factory buildings, scattered suburban houses, and beyond, something that mellow into the sky and becomes part of the atmosphere, and is in reality the shade of antiquity, and that which the poet and painter and artist, when they think of the Eternal City, call Rome. Thus the Tiber comes to the city of Æneas, and Virgil and Cæsar and the popes at length, and lies between its banks in a broad expanse of rippling silver. Above its shores spreads the Campagna, and on all sides lift themselves the sacred hills, Monte Mario and the Palatine and the Pincio made beautiful by the silhouettes of pine, cypress, and cedar, pink-trunked with plummy crests, or the slender loveliness of the lilylike cypress. The sky is full of rosy clouds; and stupendous above modern



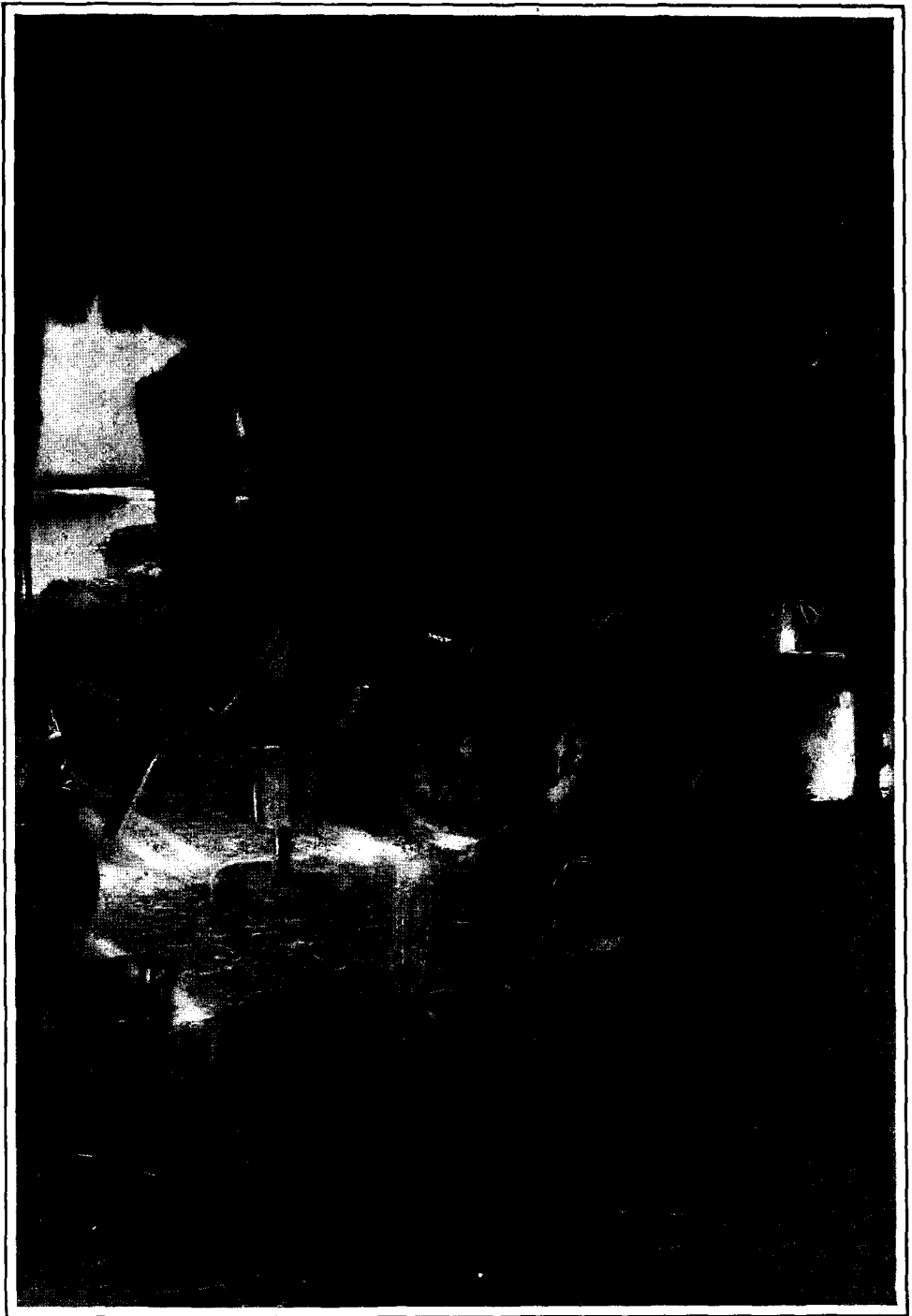
Drawn by Andre Castaigne

AT DAWN IN SUMMER-TIME
St. Bartholomeo stands on the Tiber at Rome

buildings, cruel transgressions against art and beauty, rises St. Peter's dome . . . the long, high bank and green mass of the Pincian with its pink walls: its obelisk the concord of the twin churches of Santa Maria del Popolo . . . the piazza del Popolo . . . and the *enceinte* of the city is passed, and along the Tiber Rome has built a line of high stone walls to hold, to menace, to control the river of

whose characteristics she only knows the stormy, tempestuous qualities, and that the Tiber can rise in months of storm and overflow and assert itself, and Rome the tyrant limits the river's power.

The first impression one receives as the Porto del Popolo is passed, and the city really expresses itself in outline and mass, is that Rome is new; but the blaze and brightness of the buildings are some-



Drawn by Andre Castaigne

EVENING IN A SHEPHERD'S HUT

what lost, as little by little vague lines of ancient ruins and dark or brilliant façades of Renaissance palaces reveal themselves and glow out, and it appears that more vigorous and greater than the substance of the present is the shadow of the past, and by the beauty-lover at least the blaze of modern Rome is unseen.

The gaze passes the overcharged vulgarity of the new Palace of Justice and rests on the vista the river here offers. A massive bell sounds its harmony through the air where beyond the overcrowded plain reaching to the Vatican—held between the sweep of the Janiculum and the feathery summit of Monte Mario—the dome of St. Peter's fills up the horizon, for near it no other thing exists.

As the boat slips between the walling stone banks the eye is enchanted anew by the nearer beauty of the Castello Sant' Angelo, with its molten color like warm brass, its verdure-crowned walls, its serrated, fretted towers, its generous symmetry, and the expressive gesture of the angel-guarded bridge, one of the few remaining arches of beauty amongst the twelve bridges of Rome.

One after another the breezy angels of Bernini, each holding an instrument of the passion of our Lord, guard the bridge, and their wings and their garments seem to flutter in the translucent light of the Italian afternoon, whilst the Tiber rushes its torrent through the four archways of the Ponte Sant' Angelo, whose foundations, firm as the rocks of time—stone eating into stone—are sunk below the river-bed.

Farther along, in strong contrast to the new white bridge of the Italian republic, are the remains of the Pons Triumphalis, whose arcs may be seen in a boat at low tide. These brown old stones, if stones have any vocal power, groaned under the magnificent burden of the Roman triumphs; for it was above the Tiber that, preceded by their conquered enemies, slaves, kings in chains, weeping children, chariots laden with spoils and slain generals borne on their shields—the victorious Cæsars and successful generals returned to Rome.

The left bank of the Tiber is a series of hospitals, asylums, and prisons for the needs of Rome's poor and destitute,

whilst on the other hand medieval palaces, crowded about by garish modern houses, give their stuccoed and stone fronts, their brown, red, and golden façades, with mighty barred windows to the river and challenge its memories; challenge its loyalty, and bid the Tiber remember midnight murders, old feuds, intrigues of the Borgia and the Cenci, the tears of Beatrice and the smiles of Lucretia. Bid it remember crimes of lust and greed; death for love and death for hate, and all the sounds of war—of passionate revenge and passionate desire—that marked the Middle Ages, where blood was hot and only art was holy, and tyrants and priests, princes and popes, connived, plotted, and sinned, and the Tiber kept many a secret in its bosom.

On the right bank, high in its lonely nest on the Janiculum hill, the cloistered Church of St. Onofrio, its walls bright with jewelled pictures of Pinturicchio, keeps in gentler record the perfumed memory of Tasso, who under the shade of the convent trees wrote his odes, and at last fell asleep forever within St. Onofrio's walls.

The course of the river is rapid and its stream never very wide. The boat goes swiftly down the current, and on the left bank the Farnese Palace rises directly opposite the Palazzo of the Farnesina. These twin perfections of the Renaissance keep guard across the stream; in the latter palace the young Raphael painted, and loved a woman of the people, and in commemoration of his passion he gave to art the Fornarina.

The river, sparkling with its memories, flows around the piers of the Ponte Sisto, built in the fifteenth century on the ruins of the old bridge, which was the means of access from the city to the gardens of Caracalla, whose groves and bosks were shrines for such revelries and licentiousness as to carry the name of the prince down into history with execration. Not a trace of these gardens remains.

Rome is picturesque from this medieval bridge, which, although it counts nearly five hundred years of age, seems new alongside of its ruined foundations. One lingers to see the mellow houses with their uneven roofs and balconies, the pink, brown, and yellow painting of their stuccoed fronts; and although only

a few years ago their walls were built into the Tiber, and in a mass of romantic picturesqueness these buildings huddled almost into the stream, now almost every stone of that frontage has been changed to make place for the high wall that confines the turbulent river within its bounds.

Opposite, on the Janiculum, San Pietro in Montorio lifts its low, slender spire in the light. This charming little hill crest, the key to Etruria, and also, so the ancients thought, the key to Rome, on the west bank of the Tiber, dominates all the city.

Numa Pompilius, the first of Roman rulers, was buried on the Janiculum, and from its bank the first bridge that ever crossed the Tiber was thrown. Some of its immemorial stones are still held as treasures in the river's embankments, and from the height of its summit Lars Porsenna looked down on the tempting glory of the city, and here, in sight of the Janiculum, Horatius kept the bridge!

The river's wanderings have brought it at length to all that remains along its borders of ancient Rome, and up the river like a galley of old seems to sail, to advance, the sacred isle (Isola Sacra). Formed like a boat, it cleaves the stream, which ripples around its sharp prow. This shiplike island, formed by legend and shaped by fable, was, according to tradition, created in the earliest periods of Roman history. At the time of the expulsion of Tarquin from Rome all the kingly treasures were confiscated, but it happened that season that the royal grain-fields were yellow to the harvest-moon, and the warm meadows had been consecrated to the holy gods. The Romans, not daring to lay claim to the possessions of divinity, bodily cast the ripened fields, the earth, all rich and yielding, the fair-headed and bursting corn, into the Tiber, where the river received the tribute, and its deposit added to the original mass of earth year by year. In a most exquisite and poetic sense Campagna brought its beauty to the Tiber, and has ever since been held upon the river's breast.

The physician Aesculapius had his temple on the Isola Tiberina; its remains still mingle with the red earth and with the fragments of other temples to greater gods, where roofless courts open to the

heavens besought the return of the holy fire to deserted altars.

Here in the early Roman epoch festivals were held, and in strange paradox to the temples erected on the island to healing and mercy, sick slaves and miserable children were left down by the river's brink, exposed to death.

When Pompey first brought Hebrews in captivity to Rome, their shelter was on the bank of the Tiber, and has here remained until to-day, when the tumble-down houses of the densely populated quarter, the overcrowded area, form a mass distinct and different from the rest of Rome, different as the creed practised is different from the Roman creed, and above the Ghetto the glaring metal dome of the new synagogue shines arrogantly out over the softer towers of the city's countless churches.

To the left of the island is the Trastevere, or "island across the Tiber." Only within the past twenty years has this district lost its medieval character. It is still picturesque, filled with buildings containing charming old Gothic windows and the remains of much singular decoration and quaint work. These houses circle the square where in all its pagan perfection the little temple of Vesta lifts its slender pillars, and where the miracle Church of Santa Maria in Cosmodin keeps its wonder-working Virgin enshrined in a corner hung with emblems of the grateful.

From the shores of the island two bridges connect the sacred territory with the mainland—Ponte Quattro Capi, the aforetime Pons Fabricinus, and the bridge which joins the Trastevere with the old Ponte Cestius, now Ponte Bartolomeo.

The Ponte Quattro Capi, the oldest bridge in Rome, bears the signet of great antiquity, and has its attendant dignity and authority. Its arches are black with time; the Latin inscription of the Curator Fabricius runs along the architrave. The monument has seen nearly two thousand years pass by, the Tiber washes and beats against its piers in vain, and around it centres the most charming part of Rome. Seen from the bridge, the newer city is lost in the shadow of venerable buildings, and the remnants of old Roman palaces, tem-

ples, and ruins surround the sacred island and the old bridges, as if tradition must here protect from devastation of modern progress the beauty which has endured so long.

The Tiber itself is marvellous at the end of the city where it prepares to take its leave of Rome. Its swift-rushing current is midstream, its waves dash up like the bright mane of a sea-creature, it keeps its extraordinary whiteness, and in the distance, as standing on the Ponte Quattro Capi one watches it sweep down from the new bridges, the Tiber appears to be of the same color as the snowy pillars and walls, and to pour itself down in a milk-white stream. Around the piers of Ponte Quattro Capi the water climbs like a mass of snow in broken circles, dimly reflecting the arches.

The lines of embedded ruins at this point come jutting out into the stream, and just below on the left bank is the round tower of the Circus of Marcellus, where 700 wild beasts were sacrificed to make one Roman holiday; and in the river bank itself the mouth of the Cloaca Maxima—a drain dating 2000 years back—is still left in the old wall. This most magnificent piece of Roman engineering is as secure as when it was constructed over five hundred years before Christ. The tower of Santa Maria in Cosmodin is seen distinctly, surrounded by slender spires and belfries and gabled roofs,—solitary monument of a forgotten art, desolate in its pagan loveliness, it rises meekly, a gentle protestation against garish times, and lifts its pillars above the Tiber line.

The high embankment ceases to confine the Tiber within imperious limits, and between banks picturesque with flowers and a crumbling wall it broadens into a restless sea around the base of the last of the Roman hills—the cone-like Aventine, dark with tufty cedars whose plumes paint the sky.

Between Rome and the ocean there are no more bridges, and delivered from the restraint civilization put upon it, shaking off the power which by bridge and wall harnessed it to the puissant city, the Tiber goes its rushing way. Behind it a mass of bronze-hued ruins, whose soft tones blend with the modern

glare—arched by a cloudless sky—Rome lies traversed by a lily river singing its way to the sea.

The Tiber's way is once more between the plains of the silent Campagna, again become well-nigh as desolate as a savage country. During the pilgrimage of four hours in a rowboat, from the Sacred Island to the seaport, the scene is nothing but a melancholy waste, the land spreads itself on either side the stream, and the low shores rise to the plain, whose monotony is broken only by the ruins of Magliana, a villa once the country-seat of the popes.

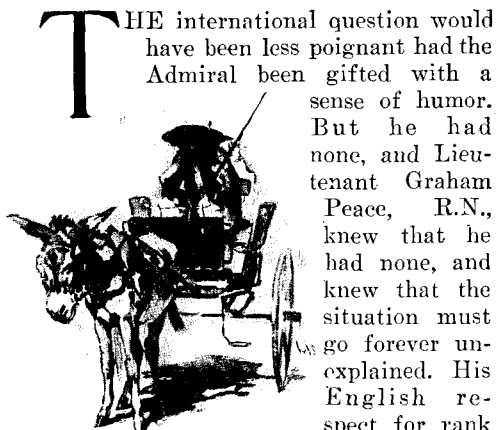
Between curves in the shore-line now and again the Tiber lies calm as a lake, opaque, dense, and milky, fading to light green close to the shores, where in the reedy banks along the edge of the marshes come the bird-calls of the thrush, the full, vibrant wonder of the meadow-lark's song, and an undertone of chorus from the bushes bordering the desolate land.

Live-oaks line the shores, where piles of ruined stones on the blank landscape mark the site of ancient villas when Fumicino and Ostia were the seaside resorts for the Roman populace. Another sacred island, the third country formed by this intrepid, creative stream, rises in mid-current, and the Tiber divides itself into two branches, one finding the sea at Ostia and the other at Fumicino, whose artificial channel was built by Trajan.

A row of gray houses lines the jetty at the old port of the little pestilential town (malaria stalks here like a giant), docks and quays edge the river, where anchor fishing-smacks and larger vessels with bright-painted poops and brown sails. A vista opens between the Sacred Island and the dark, ugly little harbor town, and at its end appear various craft—the masts of large ships, a white and widening horizon, and a sweep of blue. Just beyond the jetty the rush and torrent of the Tiber attain their goal. One sharp line—a line as golden as the sun—is drawn across the sea's face . . . there is no blending, no intermingling, no linking of waters when the Tiber abruptly meets the intense blue of the Mediterranean Sea.

What the Donkey Did

BY MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS



THE international question would have been less poignant had the Admiral been gifted with a sense of humor. But he had none, and Lieutenant Graham Peace, R.N., knew that he had none, and knew that the situation must go forever unexplained. His English respect for rank forbade him to consider, as Violet Eliot considered, that this fact was a witicism. The bump of reverence in Violet's head was a hollow.

Nevertheless—and none the less that her point of view dazed him afresh every hour—each hair of that golden head was dear to Graham Peace, and that their engagement should be broken was a black nightmare. Reflecting upon it night and day, he could not decide why it was broken, unless because he was an Englishman, and because all Englishmen were born—according to Violet—with a predisposition, amounting to a craving, to bully women. He certainly had been sore that the girl should have made a fool of him before the Admiral, and sorer perhaps that she should have seen fit to take it as a howling joke; he certainly was startled at the unconventionality of the scene—but Violet had startled him before. He certainly might have been judiciously regarded as a trifle cross, yet never for a second did he suspect her of lying, as she claimed; never for a second had he been “ashamed of her.” As his mind reviewed the catastrophe it resolved itself into three phases: Violet's note; his walk with the Admiral, climaxed with the beach scene; the interview next day wherein the world

ended. First was Violet's note, sent out to the ship:

“GRAHAM DEAR,—This isn't a letter, just a wave of the hand to tell you I'm thinking about you. I seldom do it, but I happen to, this minute. As you can't come ashore to-morrow and break the Sabbath with me, I'm going to run up a balance of piety for us both by going to church all day. Picture me morning and afternoon on my knees with that holy cast in my eye which you know so well. Can't you see how stained-glass I shall look? Pity you won't really have the vision. Good-by, you swash-buckling Britisher. Would you like me better if I were not stiff-starched with propriety, the way I am?”

Now Peace was a quiet, proper person, and Violet a scarcely redeemed barbarian. He smiled. The note was the first act of the play.

Next came his unexpected leave to go off the ship; his landing at the Princess Hotel, to find Miss Eliot gone; his decision to go up to Admiralty House and pay his respects to Sir Robert, just arrived, and Lady Barrows. Sir Robert, his father's old friend, suggested that the young man should take a walk with him. As they walked, the Admiral talked most kindly to him of his engagement, and Graham was moved to be expansive, and to tell his lord how uncommon was the prize which he had won. The great man listened with keen interest—it seemed—while in unused effusiveness Peace opened his soul, as never before he had opened it to man, concerning the gentleness of Violet, her straightforward honesty, her sweet reserve, her adaptability to English conventionalities. If he felt a bit shaky as he mentioned reserve and conventionality, he but insisted more on the qualities, knowing what the Admiral ap-