

nel was the only sound as we threaded our way between the huge houses. But soon there was a corner to turn, and then what shouting and commotion! Another gondola, loaded with boxes and baskets, a sort of "delivery wagon" was coming towards us. The boats collided gently as each slowly turned the corner, and the gondoliers raved and shouted at each other as

or occasionally the colored clothes of the occupants. Sometimes one of the little ferry-boats, which take the place of street cars on this "main street", passed us, and a few, fortunately very few, launches skimmed quickly along, as if they felt the incongruity of their appearance in that city of the past.

Immediately in front of us the canal was spanned by a marble arch,



Church of Saint Mark.

only Italians can. A similar thing occurred at almost every one of the many abrupt turns, till finally near the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, a twelfth century palace now used as Post Office, we came out on the S-shaped Grand Canal.

The water was thickly dotted with gondolas, all black, and with no touch of color about them except perhaps the bright sash worn by the gondolier,

lined on both sides with little shops, and we recognized that we were near the centre of the ancient city. "Many a time and oft on the Rialto," flashed through our minds, and it seemed as if we really must catch sight of Shylock himself, amid the throng of people crossing back and forth.

As we glided on past the stately old marble palaces, some quite plain, others with Gothic windows and tiers