

ment that has stood the test of a thousand years; less of the spirit of anarchy which, like a plague spot, is infesting parts of the social order; and a less number of those, in polite as well as in vulgar circles in society, who, well within the military age and with no valid reason for exemption, moved neither hand nor foot in defence of the Empire in her crisis and are now willing to slip back into normal life as if nothing had happened or at least in the secret hope that their miserable defection has been overlooked or will soon be forgotten.

In Shakespeare's day the Army was in a transition stage; armour and the steel gauntlet were falling into disuse through the advance of modern device in ordnance and sword-hilt; and the skill of the archer was giving way before the compelling influence of the sixty pounder. In another sense than that of generally acknowledged precedence it was then the second arm in the Service; for the evolution of sea-power filled the National vision. Drake, Frobisher and Hawkins were the men of the hour, and the defeat of the "Invincible" Armada was the crucial point

that enabled the great British Navy of today. Though it does no harm to remind ourselves that that memorable victory was as much the result of storm as of naval skill and that the last round of Drake's game of bowls on Plymouth Hoe in the face of imminent peril was a conspicuous example of Folly glorified by Success, it remains true that the naval genius which budded in the days of Alfred flowered in the days of Elizabeth. English built ships were proved by statistics to be far more seaworthy than Spanish galleons, and English seamen had then, as now, the inherent skill bred and nurtured by the conditions of an island home. Shakespeare felt the spell and the pride of it; and, while the great traditions of the military arm will always retain an honoured name—never greater than in the World War—we have pregnant words in the fine lines in "Henry VI" that still apply to the far flung line of Empire:

"Let us be back'd with God and with the seas

Which He hath given for fence impregnable,

In them and in ourselves our safety lies."



An Impression of Venice. Hung in the Paris Salon, 1906. Owned by H.R.H. the Duchess of Connaught.—Painted by Mary Riter Hamilton.