

partly traceable to the same sources. But Bunyan was the very reverse of a militant Puritan: he belongs not to the group of Hampden and Cromwell, but to that of Fox and Penn. Politically he is a Quietist, and Filmer would hardly have disclaimed his doctrine of the duty of submission to the magistrate, even when the magistrate was James II. Absolutism never committed a more gratuitous act of tyranny than it did in putting this man in prison. He was about the nearest counterpart that Puritanism could produce to Francis of Assisi. Mr. Brown probably identifies the Fair which suggested Vanity Fair, and has given us all that is to be recovered of the earthly frame on which the religious imagination of the inspired Tinker wove the marvellous web of the Pilgrim's Progress. A literary and religious duty, too long deferred, has at length been as well performed as the ravages of time permit.

LETTER FROM ITALY.

UNFORTUNATELY, it does not suffice to see a thing with our eyes, to hear it with our ears, nay, nor even to understand it; but we must *feel*, or rather have felt, its truth many times. Thus, in most cases, perhaps little beyond what is received during the first long impressionable years, ever becomes a very vital reality. These prejudices and fancies, these loves and hatreds, form more or less, even among the greatest, their principal stock-in-trade. It is not to be expected, therefore, that from any save the enlightened inhabitants of a country we can gain an account of very great worth of it or of its people. On the other hand, however, there are what may be termed "general effects," which a stranger is most capable of judging—a "final result" best criticised dispassionately,—the cold, worldly opinion frivolous enough, with no enquiry about cause, and little thought of the end, only not by any means untrue after all.

These affectionate Italians, with their pretty, genial manners. More agreeable travelling companions, at least, it would be difficult to find. Neither does their politeness begin and end in bowing, for it is rather the spontaneous outcome of a natural goodness of heart. According to the guide book, "an Englishman's hat is his own, and he may consequently do what he likes with it," of which privilege, be assured, he is not slow to take advantage. But truly, the staid British marionette, whose august head the strings of convention in his own land cause so seldom to incline, might stop in a "little jonny-high-in-air" gait, might stop, and for a moment open his soul to the suave influences of a southern sun.

To wander through Venice in gondola only is to see it but very imperfectly. Indeed, there is no city where one's limbs may be called upon to do more work. It is in the narrow streets, or rather lanes, that one can study the people; for in reality to most of these, travelling by water is a seldom indulged-in luxury. But here the quickly beating pulse of sister northern cities seems difficult to discover. As the crumbling palaces mirror themselves in the still, dark canals, so the past is reflected in the life of to-day. Only to the guides, like hungry hyenas, is the general decay a feast and harvest. Around St. Mark's they flock in greatest numbers, and before them Mark Twain's enthusiasm for "silk manufactories" simply pale.

To some, nay to all of true and great sensibility, solitude is a necessity during moments of deepest feeling. A sad but wise law, that supremest epochs in our existence must be passed alone. After all, do you not find the poet's silent companion *vêtu de noire*, and who bears to you a brother's resemblance, the most sympathetic, the most profitable of friends? It is this constant expression of admiration and sentiment which makes us like so many sieves. Truly, the highest achievements of art, the most gorgeous aspects of nature, have that to impart to us which needs no interpreter, nay, that a third dulls, if not deadens altogether.

To find oneself suddenly before St. Mark's, resplendent under the sunlight as a mighty jewel, is indeed to face one's heart's desire. Perhaps, besides that of Milan, no other cathedral in Italy so far surpasses our brightest dreams of beauty and the ideal. Its marble-lined walls, its wondrous mosaics, its marvellous workmanship, produce an effect such as can alone the warm, voluptuous art of the East. Within the church is the light subdued and soft—a place to pray and dream. Columns of marble and jewelled altars, gilding and exquisite colour, wrought by time into a perfect whole, make it a worthy gate of paradise. The old mosaic pavement, of the twelfth century, rises and falls in an odd, aimless way—trodden by feet different enough during these hundreds of past years, yet all impelled by like emotions, all governed in the end by—fear. Here, churches are very far from being the haunts only of women. Indeed, men seem not seldom in the majority. If the masculine mind follows more readily, and perhaps oftener, the unconventional paths of thought, you may remark, when the beaten track is its choice, it marches with equal, perchance

greater, ostentation, and truly few feminine mouths could be more eager for the dusty morsels than those of the strong-headed devotees.

In Italy there reigns a hero-worship very edifying. The homes of even the humblest aspirants to fame are marked with small marble tablets, on which the name and date of death of the deceased inhabitant of the house are inscribed. At the Accademia delle Belle Arti we find Canova's right hand preserved within an urn, and below it his chisel, and well may that hand be kept with sacred care, for to none other does the Italy of to-day owe so much. On every side the works of this exquisite genius meet us, embodying, as it were—giving a form to all our vague ideas, and to that grief and love which dies upon our lips. In this Academy hangs Titian's "Assumption." If you have not seen the original, still you doubtless know it well from a thousand copies, and yet not so. Every here and there in the world of art it would seem some dizzy mountain summit had been gained, and then forthwith the pathway to it shrouded in impenetrable mist, so as we mortals might but view from afar the sun-tipped peaks. The Madonna of the "Assumption," the "St. Barbara" of Palma Vecchio, an altar piece in the church of St. Maria Formosa, and the "St. Cecilia" of Raphael's exquisite work at Bologna, portray three aspects, and each in the highest degree, under which we are most wont to see the woman of our dreams. The first, a creature infinitely gentle, in whose sweet upturned face, strong, yet meek, it is not difficult to find the reason of the loving worship she inspires. The second, divinely tall and fair and proud, reflects in her regal figure and glance all we look for in a queen, and the third, the sensitive artist-soul, alive to every beauty in earth and heaven, whose fingers strike such harmonies that only the angels may echo—perhaps the dearest of all.

Over the doors of not a few Italian churches might be inscribed "Aux grands hommes la patrie reconnaissante." A pleasant thought, these great men sleep in a congenial atmosphere. S. Giovanni e Paolo and the Frari form together the Westminster Abbey of Venice. Both contain the tombs of several Doges, but of more special interest is the latter. Here is the gorgeous monument of the Doge Giovanni Pesaro (A.D. 1669), with figures of negroes as bearers; that of Titian; and, before all, the beautiful one of Canova, designed by him for the above mentioned artist, but executed by his pupils after his death, and erected to his own memory. A large pyramid rises against the wall, at the base of which is a small door, where a colossal lion keeps watch, while towards it walk a group of sorrowing figures. The whole displays in a marvellous degree all the weariness and despair of grief.

A sad loss, in truth, that caused by the burning of the lovely little Capella del Rosario, a chapel adjacent to S. Giovanni e Paolo. Founded in 1571, it was destroyed in 1867, and with it the valuable works it contained—"The Murder of St. Petrus Martyr," by Titian, and some exquisite reliefs in marble.

This is a strange land, where religion, crime, and ineffable beauty walk hand in hand. More than elsewhere, perhaps, does one remark such an incongruous alliance, in the Palace of the Doges. On a wall of the chamber of the "Great Council" is painted Tintoretto's "Paradise," the largest oil painting in the world. In the Sala della Bussola, or ante-room of the three Inquisitors of the Republic, the Doge Donato kneels before the Madonna. Here you find, also, the Bocca di Leone; for on the outside wall was once the lion's head, into the mouth of which papers containing secret information were thrown. The chamber of the terrible "Ten" is adorned with the "Adoration of the Magi," and the Stanza dei Tre Capi del Consiglio, the room of the "Three," reveals upon its ceiling an angel driving away the Vices, by Paolo Veronese. Over the throne of the senate chamber we have a "Descent from the Cross," and the "Doge Loredan imploring the aid of the Virgin," two works of G. Tintoretto. In the Sala delle Quattro Porte, or, of four doors, Titian has painted the Doge Grimain kneeling before Religion. Though these great artists have flattered such unhallowed walls with scenes rather unbefitting precincts so profane, at times a happier inspiration has depicted more appropriate subjects. Nothing, perhaps, in all the Palace is more delicious than Paolo Veronese's "Rape of Europa," where is so apparent all the warmth and voluptuous treatment of which this master is capable. Indeed, the whole of the magnificent Palace of the Doges, the gorgeous halls of which are in such perfect preservation, presents us with a very brilliant array of the works of the later Venetian artists—Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, Palma Giovani. In truth, paintings most sympathetic, where imagination and power labour for all that is humanly grand. Here we find in the highest degree the lavish richness and colour, the exuberance of spirit which makes the beauty of mere life, and for a moment alone the joy of living seems all in all sufficient.

Nowhere, they say, is the decline of Venice more apparent than in the