

upon the broad canal; an illuminated gondola, with a singing concert party, floated softly by—the tinkling of a light guitar, the throbbing of a tambourine, the rich baritone and contralto voices blending softly with the lapping of the wavelets against our prow and the drip of the water from the suspended oar. It was like a page from some tale of old romance. In the moonlight the faded old palaces seemed transmuted to alabaster, and on the opposite side of the canal deep mysterious shadows crouched, as if haunted with ancient mystery.

As we traversed the canals, the cries of the gondoliers to pass to the right or left—*premi*, or *stali*—were heard amid the darkness, and great skill was exhibited in avoiding collision. During the night, in the strange stillness of that silent city, without sound of horse or carriage, the distant strains of music, as some belated gondolier sang a snatch, perchance from Tasso or Ariosto, penetrated even the drowsy land of sleep, till we scarce knew whether our strange experience were real or the figment of a dream.

A PLEA.

BY FLORENCE A. JONES.

SUCH little, restless hands,
 So ready to reach out and grasp
 The newness 'round them. Life holds much, so much,
 And each day brings to light some new, strange thing
 That they are tempted hard to touch,
 Those little hands, be kind.

Such little, tireless feet,
 So eager to explore the world
 That lies beyond their threshold. Do not chide,
 If they, in wonder, go too fast and far,
 The years that meet them will do much to make
 Their steps both slow and careful. Then be kind
 If they o'erstep the bounds that we have set,
 Those little, tireless feet.

Such dear, fond, trusting eyes,
 How oft they judge us, and we know it not.
 No thought of guile dims their sweet innocence,
 In their clear depths are mirrored spotless souls
 Fresh from the hand of God. Oh, see to it,
 That no wrong word of ours, no hasty act,
 Shall leave such stains that all the years to come
 Cannot efface them.