

CHAPTER III.

St. Mark's and its Wonders. — The Story of the Demon Ship. — The Great Barbarossa. — The Artist's Home. — The two mysterious Pictures.



AFTER taking lunch they all set forth to see the city, and first of all they went to the Piazza of St. Mark.

Here they saw a spacious square surrounded by magnificent edifices. The lofty tower of St. Mark arose three hundred and fifty feet in the air. The Ducal Palace, with its long front adorned with pillars and arches, displayed its noble dimensions, and opened before them those dread portals which in former ages were the avenue to so much mystery and iniquity. The three tall flag-staffs lifted to heaven, not the Lion of Venice, nor the Double Eagle of Austria, but the banner of regenerated Italy. But the pride and glory of the Piazza, and of all Venice, was the magnificent Cathedral of St. Mark, and it was to this that Vernon first conducted them.

They saw a splendid edifice built of white marble, and crowned with a cluster of swelling domes, which gave it an appearance rather of Aladdin's