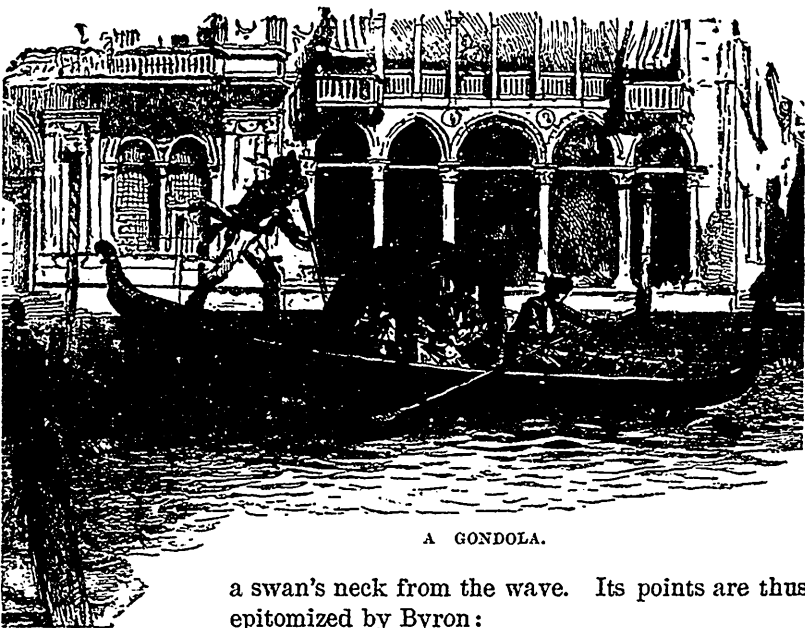


and beauty; and the flowers, portraits and other designs, which are spun by the yard and which appear on the surface of the cross section, are of almost incomprehensible ingenuity and skill. On a lonely island is the cemetery of Venice. How dreary must their funerals be—the sable bark like that which bore Elaine, “the lily maid of Astolat,” gliding with muffled oars across the sullen waves.

The gondola, in its best estate, is a sombre-funereal-looking bark, draped in solemn black, its steel-peaked prow curving like



A GONDOLA.

a swan's neck from the wave. Its points are thus epitomized by Byron:

“’Tis a long covered boat that’s common here,
Carved at the prow, built lightly but compactly,
Rowed by two rowers, each called a gondolier;
It glides along the water looking blackly,
Just like a coffin clapped in a canoe,
Where none can make out what you say or do.”

There are, of course, no wells in Venice, except an Artesian boring; but in each parish is a stone cistern, which is filled every night by a water-boat from the mainland. The iron cover over this is unlocked every morning by the priest of the neighbouring church; and one of the most picturesque sights of the city is to see the girls and women tripping to the wells, with two brass vessels supported by a yoke upon their shoulders, for the daily supply of water.