

NORTHERN ITALY.

AN INTERESTING SKETCH CONTINUED.

VERONA, THAT ANCIENT CITY OF RELICS, AND ITS NUMEROUS INTERESTING EDIFICES—VENICE, "THE QUEEN OF THE ADRIATIC"—SOME OF THE LEADING ATTRACTIONS—THE SQUARE OF SAN MARCO—THE PALACE OF THE DOGES—THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

[WRITTEN FOR THE TRUE WITNESS, BY JOSEPH W. HECKMAN, C. E.]

After five days in Milan I left for Verona, about midway to Venice. Verona is a large city containing some sixty thousand inhabitants, situated on a rapid river, and strongly fortified. The sights especially studied were the following: the ancient Forum, named the Piazza Erbe, now a vegetable market, is very picturesque; the marble column bearing the lion of St. Mark; the old fountain, and the Tribune with its canopy borne by four columns, anciently the seat of judgment; the tower of the Municipio, some three hundred feet in height. Then again around this square are very old buildings, upon the walls of which are seen very old frescoes, wonderfully preserved. A short distance from this place is the Piazza dei Signori, around which are also some old beautiful buildings in whose centre is the statue of Dante. A few steps farther I came to the imposing tombs of the Scaligers with their different devices and enclosed by elaborate railings; adjoining is their old chapel. The churches found in this very ancient city are truly fine. Particularly may be mentioned St. Anastasia, a gothic church whose interior is very beautiful. The Cathedral, in which I assisted at a solemn Mass, is also a gothic structure of the 14th century. Its beautiful interior is very marked, especially the elaborate rood-screen with eight red marble pillars. The paintings found here cannot be passed without admiration. From here I crossed the river and got to the church of St. Giorgio in Braida. The interior is magnificent, containing some fine paintings by noted masters, with many other fine marks, such as the basins for holy water, of exquisite workmanship. For the church of St. Zeno Maggiore claimed me; this is one of the finest Romanesque churches of northern Italy, and of most noble proportions. The portal to this church is most interesting, with fine rude bronze reliefs. The interior is grand, and among the numerous treasures I particularly noticed an immense vase of great beauty. The large crypt, under the choir, contains the tomb of St. Zeno, and has many altars. Returning from here, I visited the very old and interesting monastery of St. Bernard, where cloisters are particularly fine. After seeing some other churches, and before leaving for Venice, I made a general survey of the city, which highly pleased me. The large old amphitheatre, built about A.D. 200, was particularly studied, it having pretty much the same appearance as the Roman Colosseum, its measurements being some five hundred by four hundred feet.

After leaving Verona, it took me two hours before I reached Venice. With regard to this city, I may here say it is difficult to do it any sort of justice in a general way, which will attempt herein to describe. In the first place, after I got there, I found a city which strikes the eye and impresses the fancy, as this peculiarly built one. Not only has nature lavished peculiar beauties here, but art has also adorned Venice with the choicest treasures, like an immense museum, where everything is original, tasteful and unique. Venice, as it has been styled, "the pearl of the sea," is situated in the Lagoon of the inner extremity of the Adriatic sea on one hundred and fifteen islands, connected by three hundred and sixty-seven bridges. Leaving the mainland, the railway crosses a bridge nearly three miles in length, before one lands in this peculiar labyrinth of islands. Your readers who have seen a plan of Venice will notice it is divided into two main parts by a canal, named the Grand, and which is the main artery of this beautiful city. Arriving in the city at night, one most noticeable feature was the great quietude experienced, which predominated not only at night, but during the day also, as vehicle traffic does not exist, and the only means to get about quickly and comfortably is to employ a gondola, which I had to do to get to my hotel, the other end of the grand canal, which is formed like the letter S, yet my gondolier hurried my boat through branch canals, which lessened the distance considerably. The following morning, after assisting at a Mass in the cathedral of St. Mark, I commenced my tour, which I will try briefly to describe in order, as visited. Of course, the first sight every tourist aims to see is the piazza of St. Mark, which is surrounded with edifices of rare beauty, and others near by. This square of St. Mark, one of the finest in the world, and certainly, for the remarkable buildings which surround it, the most unique, is some six hundred by two hundred feet in size. As I crossed this beautiful square the old story "of feeding the pigeons" was seen in reality. Hundreds of these tame birds are seen very often being fed, especially by the visitors, and which incessantly haunt this beautiful piazza, always thronged with crowds of people, which is the main rendezvous of the city. At the east end is the Basilica of St. Mark, founded in the 9th century. In successive ages this beautiful church was enriched with costly decorations in marble and mosaic, nearly all of which are seen at the present day. The facade, particularly, is attractive on entering this beautiful edifice, the costly mosaics, executed by the best Venetian masters, representing scenes from the Old Testament. Another point of interest here is seen on the gallery above the central entrance, the four bronze horses, said by some historians to be decorated Nero's or Trojan's arch in Rome, and removed by Constantine to Constantinople; while others say, to judge from their finish, they were done in Greece. These statues were removed once by Napoleon to Paris, but were replaced, where they are now, at the beginning of the present century. The ground plan of the Basilica is a Greek cross. The interior charm consists in the beauty of the main lines, the noble perspectives, and the gorgeous decorations, as the stone mosaic pavement. The rood screen consists of varie-

gated marbles with eight small columns, its cornice having fourteen marble statues of saints with a large silver crucifix in the centre. The sacristan took me to the High Altar, which stands under a canopy of Venetian antique, supported by four columns of Greek marble of unique effect and very remarkable for the extremely complicated nature and workmanship in them. Under this altar lie the remains of St. Mark. The Pala d'Oro, an enamelled work with jewels on plates of gold and silver, executed the beginning of the 12th century in Constantinople, forms the altar-piece. Behind this High Altar is another altar with four large spiral columns of alabaster, said to have belonged to the Temple of Solomon, two of which are translucent. There are many other points of interest found here, but time forbids their details. As one wanders about this gorgeous temple and views the rich mosaics seen everywhere, the sight is, indeed, appalling. I attended the services here on Ash Wednesday, at all of which immense throngs of people congregated. Opposite the cathedral rises the isolated square tower, founded in 888-322 feet in height, from which a fine view of Venice was had. The clock tower was also noticed upon which is a peculiar piece of mechanism, two giants in bronze, who strike the hours on a bell. The piazzetta, at right angles to the main piazza, running to the lagoon, divides the palace of the Doges from the library. The former, founded in 800, is a building of grand beauty; the two pointed arcades, one above the other, are of Gothic style, and remarkably rich, the columns having an architectural design of rare beauty. The court yard of the palace is magnificent, the facade of which is truly gorgeous. Everyone going to Venice of course makes the inspection of this palace one of his primary sights, as statuary and paintings of exquisite workmanship are found in this beautiful place. With regard to the library of St. Mark, I will only quote the words of Mr. Symonds: "The library of St. Mark remains the crowning triumph of Venetian art. It is impossible to contemplate its noble double row of open arches without echoing the judgment of Palladio, that nothing more sumptuous or beautiful had been invented since the age of ancient Rome." On the way to the lagoon, near by, is passed two immense granite columns bearing different devices, one of which is the winged lion of St. Mark. Before quitting the palace of the Doges, before mentioned, the high Bridge of Sighs over a canal is traversed, which connects the palace with the prison. Here can be seen the many gloomy dungeons, etc., used for political criminals. A good sight of this noted structure was had from a bridge near the lagoon, from which a photograph was taken.

(To be continued.)

NUNS FLEE FROM DEATH.

Convent in Ecuador Sacked—Fears for the Lives of a Bishop and Prelates.

New York, July 12.—Sisters of Mercy Genevieve, Josephine and Frances and Father A. M. Fesser, a missionary, arrived here yesterday from Colon on the Columbian Line steamship Alliance. The sisters proceeded to St. Wallburg's Convent at Elizabeth, N.J., which they left eight years ago to go to Ecuador and found mission schools under the management of Bishop Schumaker, who has established missions at Jipijapa, Bahia, Decaraguez, Rocafuerte and Caleta.

In the late revolution in Ecuador the Bishop, his priests and the nuns engaged in missionary work suffered very great indignities. Sisters Genevieve, Josephine and Frances and Sister Gertrude, a native of Ecuador, who afterwards remained at Bahia, barely escaped from the country with their lives, and they greatly fear that Bishop Schumaker has been assassinated.

Sister Genevieve, who is 33 years old, was the superior of the mission at Caleta, which was founded three years ago. Two months ago the revolution extended to Caleta, and frequent skirmishes occurred there. Bishop Schumaker, with six priests, was on his way to Quito, and stopped at the convent on June 20 to call on the Sisters and take dinner. The revolutionists, who bitterly hated the Bishop, determined to capture him and invaded the town with 400 men under command of a brother of Alford, the leader of the revolution.

They surrounded the convent and demanded admission, which was refused. On the next day, June 21, a second demand was made for the Bishop's surrender, and threats were made to burn the convent if the demand was not complied with. Bishop Schumaker, in order to protect the lives of the nuns, gave himself up to the soldiers, and with three of his priests was led away.

Three priests remained in the convent to protect the nuns, as the demonstrations were still threatening. That afternoon a detachment of 600 government soldiers entered Caleta and gave battle to the rebels. When the latter saw the troops coming part of them rushed back to the convent and began to batter in the doors. Sister Genevieve, who had locked the doors, opened a window and, displaying the American flag, called on the insurgents to desist. A volley of yells and curses was the reply of the mob.

"I warn you," cried the plucky nun, "that we are Americans, under the protection of the United States flag, and you will disgrace your country in the eyes of the civilized world by this violence towards defenceless, unoffending women."

"Down with the flag!" yelled the crowd, and it redoubled its efforts to break in the doors.

The Sisters, thinking their hour had come, made their way to the upper part of the convent, where they fell upon their knees and began to pray. The doors were broken and the mob swarmed up the stairs. The priests were knocked down and cruelly beaten with the butts of muskets, and one, Father Angel, a Capuchin friar, was stabbed twice in the back and sank to the floor. He was carried out unconscious. The other two were bound with ropes and one insurgent raised his machete to bring it down upon a priest's head when Sister Genevieve sprang forward, and, holding forth her hands to receive the blow, implored the insurgent not to kill him. The priests were dragged away and the nuns were ordered to leave. When they remonstrated they, too, were dragged down the stairs to the street, their clothing being badly torn and cut with knives. All the furniture and other contents of the convent were broken up and the building was fired.

By this time the fighting had become sharp in the streets between the insurgents and the soldiers. The unfortunate Sisters were exposed to a shower of bullets, and how they escaped being shot was nothing short of miraculous. They finally obtained refuge that night in a lady's house. The routed insurgents set fire to the town in their retreat and the four nuns were obliged with their host to abandon the house and fly to the country for safety. They got shelter in another house, where they were concealed for three days, the insurgents meanwhile searching for them.

When they got a favorable chance they entered a canoe at 5 o'clock on the morning of June 24 and paddled for twelve hours until they reached Bahia, Decaraguez, where they told their story to the captain of the British steamer Challa, which plies between Bahia and Panama. They had very little money, but the captain agreed to take them to Panama for what they had. In boarding the steamer at Bahia in a rowboat one of the oars broke and they were swept away by the current. The crew of the steamer gave them up for lost, but their boat was blown ashore by the wind and they were rescued and taken aboard in another boat. When they reached Panama they told their tale to the American Consul, who rendered them all the assistance in his power and gave them money enough to reach the United States. He even wanted to take up a collection for them in Panama, but they declined to permit him to do this. They have nothing but words of praise for the kind and generous manner in which they were treated by the officers of the Alliance.

Sister Genevieve expresses the fear that the Bishop and the six priests who were with him at Caleta have all been slain by the revolutionists. She added, after telling her story: "There are twenty-two other nuns in the three missions of our order in Ecuador and we fear for their safety also."

CHURCH MUSIC.

Archbishop O'Reilly, of Adelaide, Australia, writing on "Church Music in Australia," says: "That the writers of much of our Church music were men of genius, and had a profound knowledge of the resources of their art, is not to be denied. I cannot feel, however, that the greatness of a composer's fame puts me under constraint to believe that his church pieces will benefit the church. Few priests, I suppose would be bold enough to claim a command of English equal to that which Lord Salisbury possesses, or be willing to break a lance with Mr. Chamberlain in the arena of parliamentary debate. Yet, set Lord Salisbury—supposing him to have first studied for the business—to preach a mission to a Catholic congregation; or Mr. Chamberlain, after like preparation, to conduct a retreat for a body of priests. The result would be pure, unadorned Saxon and polished rhetoric most likely. But how far would the discourses be in accord, I shall not say with Catholic faith, but with Catholic taste? Somewhere in his writings, Thackeray tells the story of an Irish Protestant nobleman who, a hundred years or so ago, being desirous of having the chapel attached to his residence renovated, sent to France, the then recognized headquarters of fashion, for an artist to carry out his design. In due course Monsieur made his appearance, and setting colors and palette in order, began his task. With his talent he had brought with him some Catholic notions apparently, for the fact that the chaplain—an Anglican clergyman, of course, though Monsieur called him L'abbé—was a married man with a household of children came as a shock to his nerves. With his Catholic notions, however, other notions that were neither Catholic nor Christian were not a little mixed up. Monsieur's ideas of ecclesiastical decoration had been gathered in Parisian salons; and when under his deft brush the outlines of his proposed embellishments crept into view, sundry pagan gods and goddesses—and these by no means the least shady in reputation of the Olympian crew—were seen sporting themselves in all manner of attitudes over the chapel wall. The brilliant display was too much for the worthy chaplain's sense of decorum, and protest followed forthwith. Monsieur was again surprised, and the second time even more than the first. The sketches, were they not classic in the very best style of art? Were they not all the fashion in Paris, and where was taste more correct? How any gentleman with pretensions to education or culture could take exception to such exquisite designs was more than he, Monsieur, could at all understand.

Knowledge of musical rules no more suffices *per se* to make a good church musician than does knowledge of language to make a good preacher, or skill with the brush guarantee the production of truly religious scenes. Beethoven, Mozart, Bach—all three composed Masses. Beethoven was a poor Catholic; Mozart, I fear, a bad one; Bach, no Catholic at all. I think of the saying about the Danaï, even though they be *dona ferentes*, and ask myself whether a dubious friend is really more to be trusted than an avowed foe. But all musicians of the modern school, it will be urged, are not assignable to the same category as Bach and Beethoven and Mozart. Some at least, as Haydn and Gounod, must be reckoned amongst the loyal children of the Church. Granting fully the premise, I still question the conclusions that would be deduced. Geniuses, like ordinary talent and that mental calibre which is not talent at all, is unconsciously moulded by its training, by the nature of its ordinary occupations and by the associations under the influence of which it comes day after day. Take the prima donna of an operatic company or the first actress in a dramatic troupe (we shall suppose the lady a Catholic in either case); rob her in nun's habiliments, and set her to work

on the days she is free from her stage engagement, in orphanage, or refuge, or hospital, or school. Will she fare satisfactorily, and will her actions in all respects be in keeping with the sacred garb she wears? I should be slow to answer for the agreement. The cowl makes not the monk; nor is the mere fact that a composer, even a great composer, chooses to pose in the role of a writer of religious music, to me an infallible assurance that the music when finished will be religious in tone. The spirit of the theatre and concert hall and the spirit of the Church are utterly antagonistic; and when the master—no matter how orthodox a Catholic—who, engrossed with his new opera, has been busy all the week in finding musical expression for love, and jealousy, and pride, and hate, and every other miserable passion of our fallen nature, would profess to teach me on Sunday the accents in which I shall address my God, I take leave to doubt the ability of my would-be tutor to discharge satisfactorily his self-assumed task, and prefer to look for assistance to another, less musically gifted, perhaps, but more trustworthy guide.—*N. Y. Catholic Review.*

IRISH NEWS ITEMS.

At the Listowel Quarter Sessions, Judge Shaw congratulated the Grand Jury on the peaceful state of the district.

The Limerick bacon merchants are arranging for the opening of a large concern near the Limerick Junction Creamery, where experiments will be tried how separated milk may be used to advantage for pig feeding.

D. Horgan, of Banteer, won the championship of Ireland by slinging twenty-eight pounds with a throw of thirty-four feet, seven inches, at Banteer sports. C. Hickey, of Rathmore, won the 440-yards championship of Munster.

Ardglass herring fishery business, which is now being carried on briskly, is doing remarkably well, and not for some years past has such success attended the fishermen's labors. There are at the present time about fifty boats engaged on the station.

Sister Mary Francis Joseph Mulligan, eldest daughter of J. W. Mulligan, of Charlestown, and granddaughter to the late Edward Cannon, of Kilkenny Lodge, was professed on June 15 at the Convent of Mercy, Castletary, as was also Sister Mary Berchmans Joseph Egan, daughter of Thomas Egan, of Glenisland.

At Longford Quarter Sessions on June 17, before Judge John Adye Curran, an evicted tenant on the Edgeworth estate, named Nicholas Canning, from near Grumard, was charged with having taken forcible possession. The prisoner stated he would pay all rent due on the farm in a few weeks if he was allowed to return. He had no one but his sister, and he had been in jail for some weeks. Canning stated that he had not had anything to eat since five o'clock that morning. The judge ordered a warmer to procure food for the prisoner. After having eaten something, the tenant pleaded guilty, and said he had laid out over £1,000 on improving the land. Judge Curran let the prisoner out on his own recognizances.

NOW AS STRONG AS EVER.

"My wife and myself have used Hood's Sarsaparilla, and we have also given it to our children. It has strengthened us and has relieved me of lame back. I am now feeling as strong as I ever did."—DAVID McGEORGE, caretaker Colt Institute, Galt, Ont.

HOOD'S PILLS cure biliousness.

The A.P.A. organization captured the municipal offices of Omaha at the last election. Their conduct has been so scandalous, that the business men, regardless of party feeling, united in the publication of a proclamation, calling for the organization of a movement looking to the introduction of business methods in the city government.

Queen Victoria has given Bell Smith a sitting for her portrait, representing her in the act of placing a wreath upon the coffin of Sir John Thompson, the late Canadian premier.

In order to insure the adoption of the remaining political ecclesiastical bills, Emperor Francis will create additional peers of the realm.

Unless deepened the German canal from the Elbe to the Baltic is proving useless for ships of war and commerce.

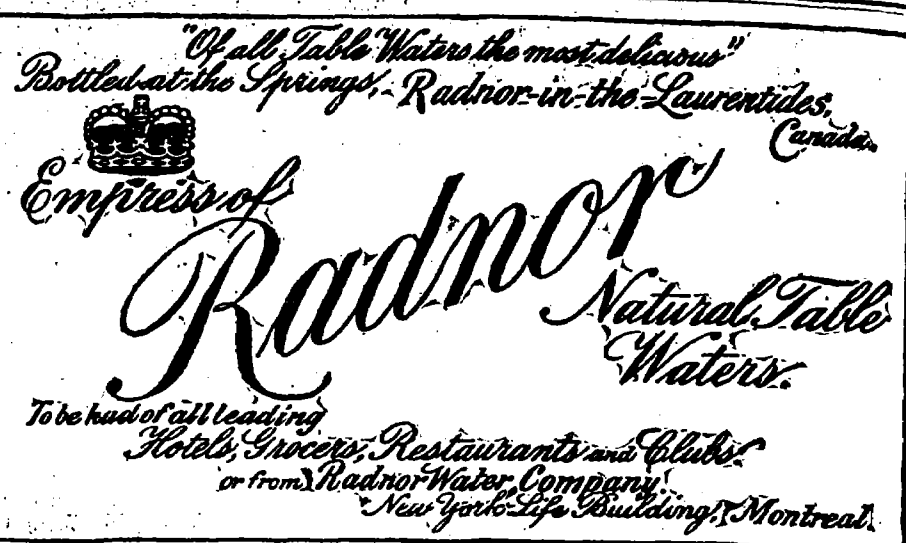
A cattle plague of an unknown type is destroying the herds in Oldham County, Ky.

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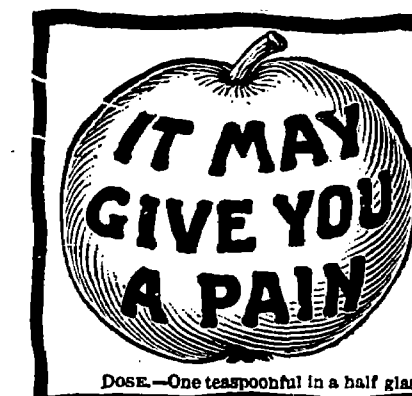
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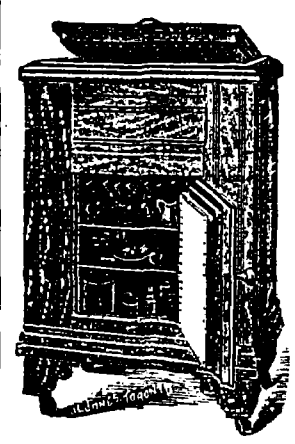
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