

of balconies and porticos, others yet more ornate with frescoes, reliefs and delicate marble lace-work decorating the façades, we could picture the gaiety and luxuriance of life in the days "when the merchants were the kings,.....when the Doges used to wed the sea with rings". We could picture the merchant vessels come sailing up the lagune laden with the spoils of the East, or bringing news of victories over the islands and coast of the Adriatic. A shadow fell over the picture as we thought of the anxious days when the Genoese were contending for mastery, and for the possession even of the town itself; but brightness returned at news of the victory of Chioggia, emboldening the ambitious seamen to capture many of the inland towns, till in the fifteenth century Venice became the centre of the world's traffic and the city reveled in its power and magnificence.

But,

"Dust and ashes, dead and done with,
Venice spent what Venice earned."
"Here on earth they bore their fruitage,
Mirth and folly were the crop."

Now the palaces are all gloomy and grey, the frescoes by the great masters are most of them faded and gone, arches are broken, and there are gaps in the marble lace-work, even the buildings are crumbling and falling. Everything speaks now only of the Past, though of a gay and gorgeous Past, and it seems most appropriate that by order of the government the gondolas are painted the color of mourning.

On the left as he paddled under the Rialto, the gondolier pointed out to us the palace of the last doge Lodovico Manin; then in early Gothic style the Dandolo palace built on the site of the

residence of the famous Doge Enrico Dandolo, to whose might Constantinople had to yield in 1204; here a twelfth century palace in Roman style; there a sixteenth century one in Renaissance; then a fifteenth century Gothic mansion; and soon one after another came in sight, till we came to a group of three, the Palace Mocenigo, in the middle one of which, Lord Byron lived in 1818. Further on the right we came to the Rezzonico Palace, on the outer wall of which, a memorial tablet bears the inscription: "Erected by Venice to Robert Browning, who died in this Palace December 12th, 1889."

The Academy of Fine Arts near by contains masterpieces mainly by Venetian artists, Vivarini, Bellini, Giorgione, Tintoretto, P. Veronese, and among others by Titian, his "Assumption" and the picture he was working at when death overtook him in his ninety-ninth year. Across from the Academy arose a very highly ornamented palace built by Sansovino, and in a tiny garden beside it, lo! a touch of green, one of the few trees to be seen in Venice. A tall but narrow white building a little further on, the gondolier assured us, was the palace of Desdemona.

Passing the church of San Maria della Salute, a domed structure built after the terrible pestilence in 1630, we came out upon the broader part of the lagune, and looking to the right could see numbers of steamers and vessels of all sorts and sizes at anchor in the Canal della Giudecca.

We paddled over towards the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore and would fain have lingered floating listlessly around the harbor but our time was up, and we were in the vi-