

prison-like palace, with its slender tower rising like a mast three hundred feet in air, was the ancient seat of the government. Let us climb its marble stairs. We enter stately chambers, carved and frescoed by great masters, once the home of the senate and councils of the Republic. In the topmost story are the private apartments of the princely Medici, sumptuous with dark, carved antique furniture, frescoes, and tapestries, but small and mean in size. From these prison-like windows looked forth on the lovely landscape the fair faces and dark eyes of the proud dames of the mediæval court; and in one of these very chambers Cosmo de Medici, with his own hand, slew his son Garzia for the murder of his brother Giovanni.

Descending to the Piazza, we face the Loggia

dei Lanzi, a large open portico, of date 1376, fronting the square, and filled with masterpieces of sculpture, in bronze and marble, by Cellini and other Tuscan masters, which for three hundred years and more have entranced the gaze of successive generations.

Along a crowded street we proceed to the great Duomo. On the way we pass the Church of "St. Michael in the Garden,"—a



ITALIAN PIPER.