

six doges. Here is the largest painting in the world, the "Paradise" of Tintoretto, crowded with hundreds of figures. The halls of the Senate, the Council of Ten, and of the Inquisitors of the Republic, with their historic frescoes, their antique furniture and fine caryatides supporting the marble mantels, and their memories of glory and of tyranny, all exert a strange fascination over the mind.

Crossing the gloomy Bridge of Sighs, we entered the still more gloomy prison of the doges, haunted with the spectres of their murdered victims. There are two tiers of dungeons—one below the level of the canal, whose sullen waves could be heard by the prisoner lapping against the walls of his cell. The guide showed the instruments of torture, the hideous apparatus of murder, the channels made for the flowing blood, the secret openings by which bodies of the victims were conveyed to the canal, and the cell in which the Doge Marino Faliero was confined. In the latter, he said that Byron once spent forty-eight hours, that he might gain inspiration for his gloomy tragedy upon the subject. The guide took away his taper for a time, that we might realize the condition of the unhappy prisoner. The darkness was intense, and could almost be felt. A very few minutes was long enough for me.

Many of the other churches of Venice, as well as St. Mark's, are of great interest, especially those containing the sumptuous tombs of the doges and the monuments of Titian and Canova. In one epitaph I read the significant words: "The terror of the Greeks lies here."

The people whom we saw in the churches seemed very devout and very superstitious. I saw one woman rub and kiss the calico dress of an image of the Virgin with seven swords in her heart, as if in hope of deriving spiritual efficacy therefrom. I saw another exposing her sick child to the influence of a relic held in the hands of a priest, just as she would hold it to a fire to warm it. Near the Rialto, once the commercial exchange, "where merchants most do congregate," now lined on either side with small huckster shops, we purchased delicious fruit. We visited one of the private palaces on the Grand Canal, whose owner was summering in Switzerland or at some German spa. Everything was as the family left it, even to the carved chessmen set out upon the board. The antique furniture, rich tapestry, and stamped leather arras, the paintings and statuary, seemed relics of the golden time when the merchant kings of Venice were lords of all the seas.

The Venetian glass and mosaic work is of wonderful delicacy