

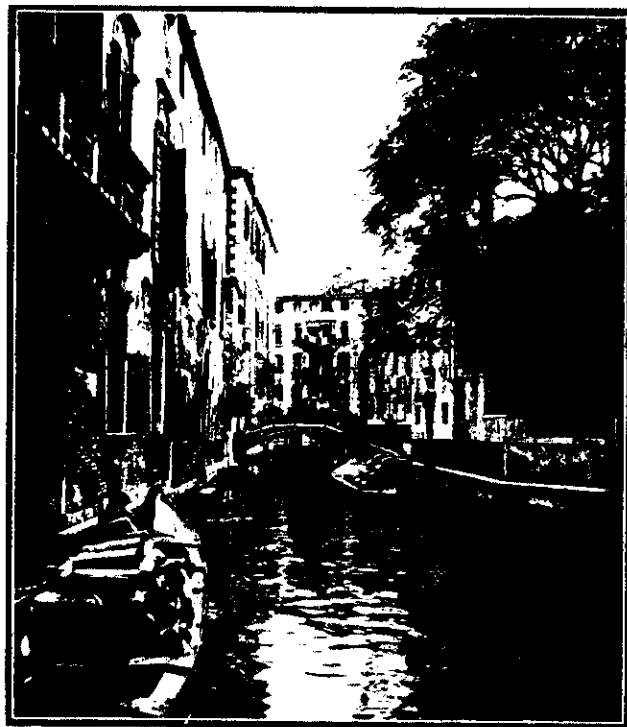
that must have consumed the Venetians of the 14th and 15th centuries.

No Ruskinian mind is needed to understand that it is easier, within the precincts of the old churches, to bridge that gulf of centuries which lies between the Venetians we see and the 14th century Venetians who built Doge Morosini's tomb. It is well nigh impossible to do it anywhere else. There is variety, too, in the pleasure given by the artistic excellence of many of the Venetian churches. Howells, in his "Venetian Life," says of the church of the Jesuits: "It has no richness of effect, but a poverty, a boldness, a harshness, indescribably 'tablecloth,' yet I met a cultured man traveling in Palestine who had visited Venice some months previously, and who was

by this method of receiving household goods.

To the wells in the campos I often saw women, with just a cup in hand, come to get a drink, and I gathered that in very few instances is water laid on in the houses. At first it puzzled me: much water the water in the wells came from. Was it from the springs or from the canals? The well seemed too plentiful for each one to be over a spring, and if the water came from the canals surely the health of the people must suffer. I found, however, that "it is derived from the rain that falls on the shelving surface of the campos, and soaks through a bed of sea-sand around the cisterns, into the cool depths below."

Much of the Venetian's life is spent out



A QUIET SIDE CANAL.

of doors, either on the balconies of their houses or in the streets. In the campos, in the streets, however narrow, on the miniature bridges, the Venetian women, none too tidy and none too clean, sit and sew and gossip, while near by the men sprawl on their backs in idle slumber. The Venetian is most often very poor, for he is notoriously idle. At their doors we saw women, cushion on knees and hobbits flying in formation of a complicated lace design, but the lace industry is best appreciated by a visit to one of the factories in the city or on the Island of Murano, where are to be seen delicate and filmy things that would make any woman's nerves thrill with the desire for possession.

One morning we made friends with little Aldo, a dark eyed Venetian baby boy, who was trundling along a canal pathway in the very queerest of cages that ran on wheels and enabled Aldo to use his fat little legs with no danger of a snap shot, and we focussed up upon him in pure delight. But from a doorway near by his mother pounced on him and carried him off, protesting we knew not what. In a few minutes, however, Aldo reappeared, resplendent in his best dress and bonnet, his mother bubbling with pleasure at our admiration of her baby.

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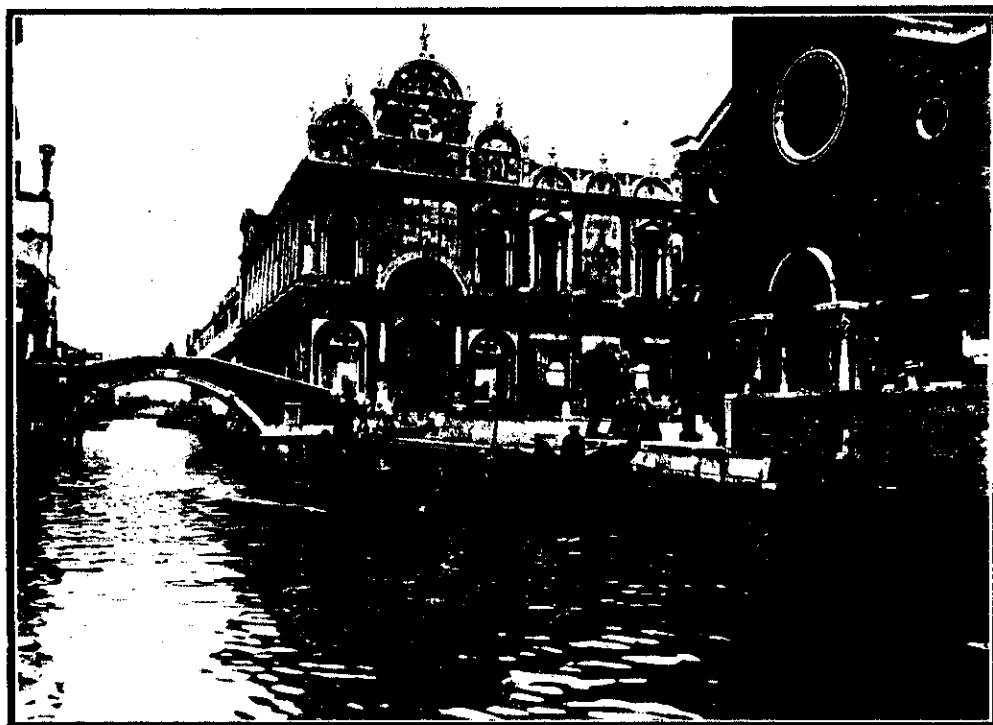


A BUSY STREET SCENE.

intending to rest there a day on his way to England merely to see again the golden glory of St. Mark's, and the heavy curtains of stone so amazingly realistic in their green and white stone-mosaic, that hang in this same church of the Jesuits. So, whatever may be one's habits in other cities, it is a grievous pity to pass by the doors of the churches of Venice.

Ideal as is the motion of a gondola, I found a greater amount of interest and pleasure to be gained from the queer little streets and busy squares (or campos). The mind becomes quite excited from the necessity to dodge round a corner every few yards and cross a canal bridge almost as often. In these dark little alleys you play a game of hide and seek - what you seek is always round the next corner, and you never know what it will be. Most of the streets are alarmingly narrow - though I know of at least one wide, tree-planted street in Venice - but they are surprisingly clean, for no beast of burden save man enters here - no horses, no bullocks, no donkeys, the gondolas and barett doing all the cartage for the city. Children swarm at every corner, and there is no dearth of grown-up beggars, whose cry of "soldi, soldi, Signore," echoed very often in my wake; but the cry is not so persistent as in other Italian cities, and the plump, dirty, black-eyed children would take our refusal with a good-natured laugh and go scampering on their way.

Not infrequently, while on our walks, something suddenly bumped one of us on the head, and on looking up we encountered the laughing eyes of a Venetian girl, who from a second or third story window, was lowering, by a string, a basket into which the tradesman puts his wares. Think how many tramps up and down the stairways must be avoided



SOME FINE BUILDINGS OF ANCIENT VENICE.