

How the Campanile Fell.

The fall of the Campanile must have been an exciting thing to witness. The huge mass crumbing to dust was like a mountain falling. There happened to be many witnesses of the catastrophe, and one of them, a young American girl who was in Venice with her family, has written a letter describing the event. It is printed in the "Century Magazine":—
 Yes, she writes, we are all safe. The tower did not fall on any of us, although I suppose we shall never be much nearer being buried alive than we were this morning.

It came without any warning. We were on our way to Cook's, which is on the side where the crack first appeared. As we came down from the hotel we noticed a small crowd of people watching the tower, and some of the piazza officials had placed a few boards round it to keep people from going up to it. But the crack was so slight that we asked where it was.

We walked to the other side, under the clock tower, and as we stood there bricks began to fall out of the crack, which grew wider every minute.

Some people thought that a corner of the tower might go, but really there was no one there excepting a few tourists and some shopkeepers. We went to Cook's, where we could see if anything did happen.

Cook's men smiled at the Americans who thought that a tower which had seen a thousand years could fall without any warning.

Suddenly, as we stood there, a huge gap appeared from top to bottom, and then the whole thing seemed to groan and tremble, and, with apparently no sound, sank in a heap where it stood. Only the top poised itself a minute in mid-air, tipped, and fell crashing toward St. Mark's. Pieces of the gilt angel were picked up on the church steps, otherwise nothing but a pile of bricks and mortar was to be seen.

We all stood in the doorway, too stunned to move. The people in the square fled panic-stricken in every direction. Instantly what appeared to be a solid wall of plaster and dirt rose from the mass as high as the tower had been, and spread in every direction.

I thought, of course, we should be suffocated, and a rush followed for the back of Cook's office. Every one screamed, "Shut the doors!" The dirt entered like a thick fog, and you could not distinguish your best friend. Fortunately it cleared away in a minute or so, enough to see where we were, and all were safe. Not even one woman fainted where we were, although the Italians were calling on heaven and earth.

The dust was about two inches deep; huge stones lay against Cook's building, and I picked up a piece of one of the bronze bells on the other side of the square.

Venice went wild, of course, and the square was soon crowded by hundreds of mourning people. It was a very sad sight. All shops closed at once, and every one waited.

Accessible to All.

It is no wonder the Emperor of Austria is loved by his people. Here is a pretty and democratic habit, to which Francis Joseph adheres, amid all the changes of fate and fortune: Twice a week he gives audience to any of his subjects who may wish to consult him. Their letters asking for an audience are sent in to the Emperor's private secretary. Inquiries are made as to the truth of their contents, and, if satisfactory, the writer, of whatever rank he may happen to be, is granted an interview with his sovereign alone. Nothing is done more to endear the Emperor to his subjects than these informal audiences, through which countless wrongs have been quickly redressed, troubles smoothed away, assistance rendered, as well as frank, soldierly advice, and more distress relieved than the world will ever hear of. There the patriarchal system shows itself at its kindest; there the sorrow-stricken monarch can for a while forget his griefs in the sympathy they have taught him. Perhaps, too, of all who come to him, and of all the poor whose feet he has washed each Eastertide, there is not one whom in his heart of hearts this hapless, wearied man does not envy.



CROP OF RHUBARB, "THE PRIZETAKER," grown by Mr. McPetridge, at Lake Takapuna. Many of the stalks measure 3ft in length, and from 10 to 12 inches in circumference. Some of the leaves measure from 8 to 9ft in circumference.



"WHILE THE BILLY BOILS."



CREEK SCENE, OREWA.