

SECTION XIII

*The Rialto—S. Giacomo di Rialto—S. Giovanni Elemosinario—
S. Cassiano—S. Maria Mater Domini—Museo Civico*

WE cross the Rialto bridge, and in the campo on the farther side find the little church of S. Giacomo di Rialto, according to tradition (p. 6) the oldest in Venice. This spot, Shakespeare's Rialto, was the focus of the commercial life of the old Republic. The colonnade was covered with frescoes, and possessed the famous planisphere or *mappa mondo* showing the routes of Venetian commerce over the world. Here the patricians were wont to meet before noon to discourse together of private and public affairs. The church, rebuilt and altered more than once, no longer stands on its original site. It was re-



ELICT STONE, RIALTO.

moved in 1322, when the Rialto was enlarged and a loggia made, that the merchants might meet under cover. The beautiful relief of the Virgin and Child over the portico is fourteenth-century work. The six columns of the nave are the sole remains of the eleventh-century church, rebuilt by Doge Dom. Selvo. On the exterior of the apse will be found the (Latin) inscription whose discovery so delighted Ruskin: AROUND THIS TEMPLE LET THE MERCHANT'S LAW BE JUST, HIS WEIGHT TRUE, AND HIS COVENANTS FAITHFUL.¹

¹ "Hoc circa templum sit jus mercatoribus aequum: pondera ne vergant nec sit conventio prava."

On the farther side of the campo. opposite the W. front, is the Hunchback of the Rialto (Il Gobbo di Rialto), restored in 1892, whence in olden times the decrees of the Republic were promulgated. Beyond the market is the church of S. Giovanni Elemosinario, early sixteenth century, by Scarpagnino. The picturesque campanile has an interesting relief below the cella of the bells. The high altar painting is by Titian, the Patron Saint (St John the Almsgiver). In the chapel to the R. is an altar-piece by Pordenone, SS. Sebastian, Roch and Mary Magdalen. Above on the L. wall is a quaint relief, saved from the fire which destroyed the old eleventh-century church.

We follow the hand pointing to the Museo Civico, and soon reach S. Cassiano, containing three Tintoretto's. The Crucifixion, held by Ruskin to be one of the finest paintings in Europe by the master, is a most remarkable and original treatment of the subject—a great and solemn picture in excellent condition. The church has an altar-piece by Palma Vecchio, The Baptist and four saints, said to be the first painted by him at Venice, and three paintings by L. Bassano.

Following the indicator, we reach the little church of S. Maria Mater Domini by one of the Lombardi: the façade by Sansovino. It is situated in an interesting campo, where may be seen a few early Gothic houses with some beautiful Byzantine reliefs and crosses. The church possesses, second altar to the R., Catena's S. Cristina. The angel to the left holding the millstone is one of the most sweet and guileless of the master's creations (p. 201). In the R. transept is Tintoretto's Invention of the Cross. Opposite is a Last Supper attributed to Bonifazio.

We at length reach the Museo Civico in the restored Fondaco de' Turchi. The original palace, the Ca' Pesaro, was built for Giac. Palmieri, a rich Guelf refugee from Pesaro, about 1230. In 1861 it was an imposing and picturesque ruin, with a cherry tree growing and fruiting on one of the



BYZANTINE CROSSES—CAMPO S. MARIA MATER DOMINI

turrets. In 1869 it was wholly restored (*Guasto e profanato*, says Boni), all the beautiful capitals and columns were recut and scraped, and subsequently anointed with oil to bring out the veining.

In the court are some fine examples of Venetian well-heads. 2nd Floor, Room I. contains a collection of arms and banners, some of them captured from the Turks, and fine standards of the Republic. In Room II. are:—31, A late work by Carpaccio, The Visitation; 41, Lotto, The Virgin and Child with SS. George and Jerome and kneeling donor; and a number of characteristic scenes of Venetian life by Longhi and Guardi. Rooms III., IV., V., VI. are wholly dominated by Francesco Morosini and contain spoils of war, personal relics, among which are a book of hours (concealing a pistol), a bust, a portrait, costumes, pictures of his victories, models of galleys. Room VII. has an interesting and complete set of oselle,¹ beginning (2200) from Doge Ant. Grimani to (2716) Doge Ludovico Manin. Venetian coins, among which are cases of gold Zecchini with a unique Marin Falier, and medals of the Carraresi. Rooms VIII. and IX. display some beautiful Venetian lace and rich stuffs; costumes, fans, stilted shoes, and miniatures, a diagram showing the method of electing a Doge, and a remarkable fifteenth-century wooden staircase. Room X., besides some furniture, has, No. 14, a portrait of Goldoni, and some paintings by Longhi. Room XI. has a miscellaneous collection of reliefs from the burnt chapel of the Rosary at S. Zanipolo; bronze works and ornaments. Room XII. contains a fine collection of majolica ware and porcelain, and some glass, among which, 912, is a deep blue wedding goblet by

¹ It was the custom of the early Doges to make a coronation present of wild duck to each of the nobles in Venice. Owing to the difficulty of finding sufficient game in the lagoons Doge Celsi in 1361 gave a sum of money instead. In 1521 the number of recipients had so increased that the Grand Council permitted Doge Ant. Grimani to substitute a silver medal which was called an *osella*, the Venetian for bird. The custom survived till the end of the Republic.

the famous Berovieri of Murano. Room XIV. has a precious collection of illuminated MSS. No. 70 (fifteenth century), (*Leggenda dell' apparizione di S. Marco*) shows the pillar near St Clement's altar from which the hand of the saint is said to have protruded. Here are also a number of *Mariegole* or guild statutes, one of which (9) shows the Master of the Carpet-makers submitting the statutes to Doge Foscari. A specimen of the manufacture which has been presented to the Doge according to usage is hanging on the balcony; 166 is a portrait of Paolo Sarpi and the dagger with which he was stabbed. Room XV., 43, *Basaiti*, Virgin and Child with donor. 35, Jac. Bellini, Crucifixion. Room XVI., 2, *Alvise Vivarini*, St Anthony of Padua. 5, *Carpaccio*,¹ Two Courtezans with their pets: the stilted shoes then worn by ladies are seen in this picture.² Four early works by Giov. Bellini, (6) a Transfiguration, (3) a Pietà with a forged signature of Dürer; (8) a Crucifixion, and (11) Christ mourned by Three Angels. Portraits of Doge Giov. Mocenigo (16) by Gentile Bellini and (19) a Bellini school painting of Doge Franc. Foscari.

The curious old church of S. Giacomo dall' Orio stands S. of the Museo Civico. The timber coved roof dates from the fourteenth century. On the wall R. of the entrance is a fine picture (1511) SS. Sebastian, Lawrence and Roch by Giov. Buonconsiglio, a Vicenzian painter of the early sixteenth century, sometimes known as Marescalco. In the R. aisle is a richly carved and gilded vaulted frieze beneath which is Franc. Bassano's Preaching of the Baptist, one of his most beautiful works: opposite is an Ionic column of *verde antico* of wonderful size and beauty, one of the "jewel

¹ In the sixteenth century a catalogue was published *de tutte le principali più onorate cortigiane di Venetia*.

² How wayward are Ruskin's judgments at times may be illustrated by this poor work on which he lavishes the most ecstatic eulogy in the "Shrine of the Slaves," p. 38, where it is referred to as the finest picture in the world, superior even to the Bellinis in the Frari and in S. Zaccaria.

shafts;"¹ referred to by Ruskin. . In a chapel in the L. aisle is a Lorenzo Lotto, Coronation of the Virgin with SS. Andrew, James, Cosimo and Damian (1546). The picture, which has been much restored, brought the artist 130 gold ducats.

SECTION XIV

S. Sebastiano—S. M. del Carmine—S. Pantaleone—The Cobblers' Guildhall—S. Polo—S. Apollinare

WE follow the route (Section XI.) to the Campo Morosini and turn R. by the church of S. Vitale along the Campiello Loredan. After crossing two bridges and turning an angle to the L., we reach the Campo S. Samuele. The ferry across the Grand Canal will land us at the Calle del Traghetto, which we follow to the Campo S. Barnabà. Crossing the Campo obliquely we reach on the R. the Ponte dei Pugni, as its name implies, one of the bridges where the faction fights between the Castellani and Nicolotti used to take place. The former were distinguished by red, the latter by black caps and scarves. These contests were favoured by the Signory, in order, it is believed, to foster a warlike spirit among the people, and were continued until 1705, when a peculiarly bloody affray in which stones and knives were used, led to their abolition.² If the traveller will mount to the crown of the bridge he will see two footmarks in stone let into the paving on either side. Victory smiled on that faction which could thrust their adversaries beyond the line marked by the feet. The bridge then had no parapets and in the course of the struggle many a champion fell into the canal. We resume our way along the Fonda-

¹ From Franc. Sansovino's description of it as being reputed a jewel rather than a stone.

² The factions were formally reconciled in 1848. . .