

VENICE

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Venice by Augustus J. C. Hare

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AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE

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V E N I C E

BY

AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE

AUTHOR OF "WALKS IN ROME," "DAYS NEAR ROME," ETC.

SECOND EDITION

GEORGE ALLEN

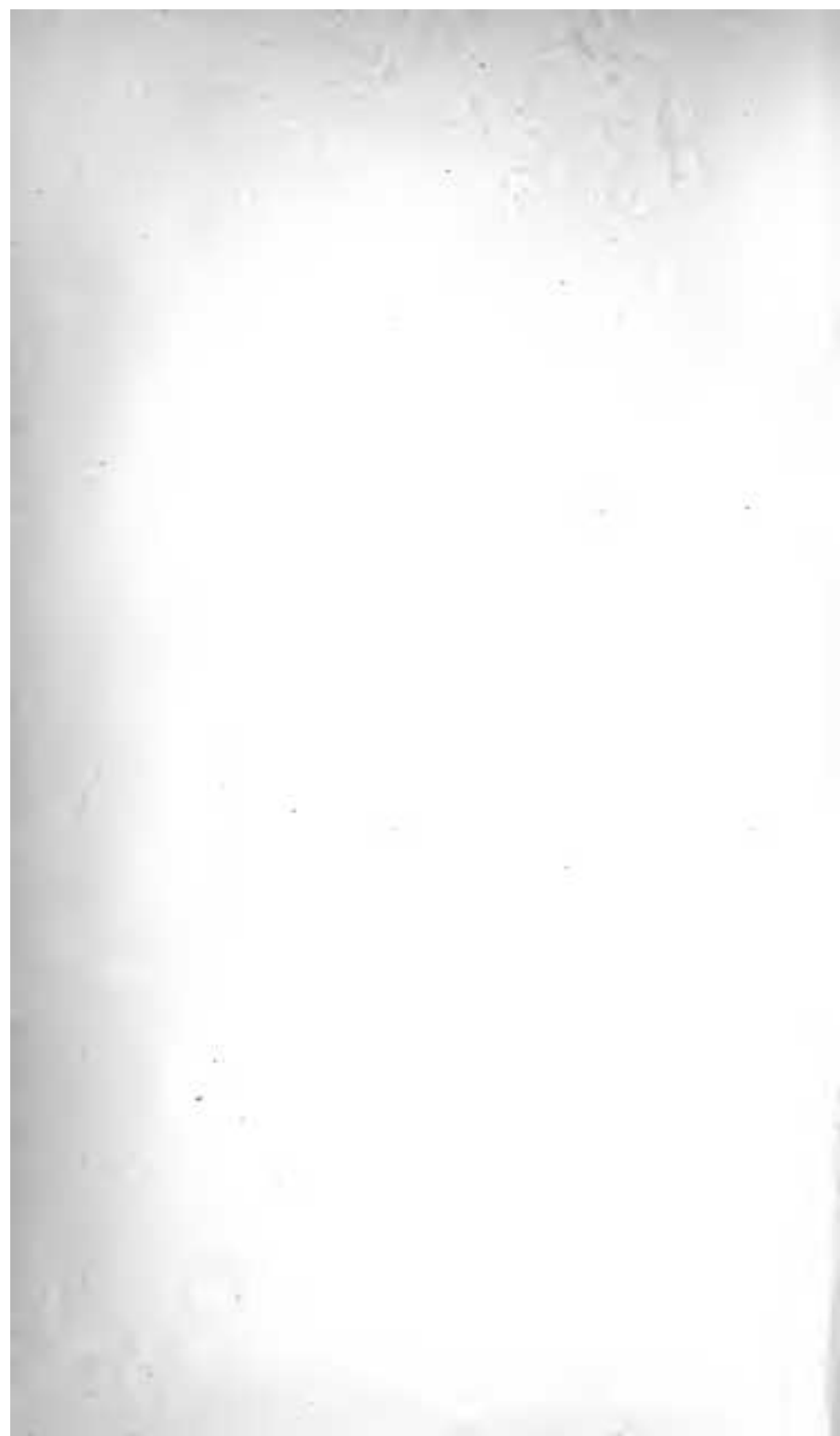
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VENICE.

CHAPTER I.

THE APPROACH.

[The *station* is about an hour in a gondola from the Piazza S. Marco, which is the centre of Venetian life. A gondola with one gondolier costs 1 fr., each piece of luggage 20 c. extra.

Hotels. *Grand Hotel*, a large new hotel; *Italia*, *Europa*, good; *Bretagna*, excellent for families, but with no good single rooms; *Pension Suisse*—all these are in the same admirable situation near the entrance of the Grand Canal, and close to the Piazza S. Marco. *Vittoria*, good, but situated on a side canal, subject to terrible smells. *Danieli*, Riva degli Schiavoni, old-fashioned. *Inghilterra*, Riva degli Schiavoni, a small but comfortable house, pleasant and sunny in winter and spring, hot in summer.

Restaurant. *Quadri*, Piazza S. Marco (right), excellent for luncheons if you are in an hotel, for everything if in lodgings. *Bauer Grünwald*, Via 22 Marzo. *S. Moisè*, opposite the church of that name.

Caffè. *Florian* (left), of world-wide reputation, Piazza S. Marco. *Quadri* (right).

Gondolas (the cabs of Venice) cost (with one gondolier and four passengers) 1 fr. the first hour, and $\frac{1}{2}$ fr. for each hour afterwards. For the whole day 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ frs.

English Church. On the second floor of Palazzo Contarini degli Scignì, close to the Accademia, on the right.

Photographer—celebrated for portraits—*Ant. Sorgato*, 4674 Campiello del Vin, S. Zaccaria, behind Hôtel d'Angleterre. For Venetian views, *Naya*, Piazza S. Marco.

Bookseller. *Munster*, Piazza S. Marco.

Curiosity Shops, once almost confined to the Ghetto, 'are now to be found everywhere in the city, and most of them are on the Grand Canal, where they heap together marvellous collections, and establish authenticities beyond cavil. "Is it an original?" asked a young lady

who was visiting one of their shops, as she paused before an attributive Veronese, or perhaps a Titian. "Sì, signora, originalissima!"—*Howells*.

Venetian Jewellery. The street near the Ponte di Rialto, left bank. It should be known that almost everything bought in the Piazza S. Marco costs treble the price *asked* in the Frezzaria and other less fashionable parts of the town.

Wood Sculpture. Travellers should visit the Atelier (2795 Canal Grande) of Valentino Besarel. It is only in Italy that you find this interesting type of the untaught artist of unerring taste, whose art is the sole object and interest of his life. Besarel is a native of Cadore, where his ancestors were carvers of wood in Titian's time.]

'This noble citie doth in a manner challenge this at my hands, that I should describe her also as well as the other cities I saw in my journey, partly because she gave me most loving and kinde entertainment for the sweetest time (I must needes confesse) that euer I spent in my life; and partly for that she ministered vnto me more variety of remarkable and delicious obiects then mine eyes euer suruayed in any citie before, or euer shall . . . the fairest Lady, yet the richest Paragon, and Queene of Christendome.'—*Coryal's Cruelities*, 1611.

'Les autres villes ont des admirateurs, Venise a des amoureux.'—*Saint-Victor*.

THE railway from Padua to Venice crosses a flat plain covered with vineyards, whose garlands reach almost to the edge of the lagoons. It is at *Mestre* that all the interest begins. There is 'a breath of Venice in the breeze.' Across the soft grey distances, the towers of Venice are seen on the horizon, repeating themselves in the water. Throughout the still expanse, poles rising at intervals mark the 'pathways in the sea.' In the nearer foreground boats with great red and yellow sails are finding their way out into the open water by narrow runlets through the tall reeds.

The traveller now hurries past *Mestre*; but till a few years ago it was important, as the place where, wearied with a long journey by diligence or carriage, he embarked for Venice, while gladdened by the first sight of the promised city.

'Not but that the aspect of the city itself was generally the source of some slight disappointment, for, seen in this direction, its buildings are far less characteristic than those of the other great towns of Italy; but this inferiority was partly disguised by distance, and more than atoned