

# Palaces, Churches and Other Buildings of Old Venice Disappearing

**R**OME, March 12.—Many long years will pass before the historic bells that sang the glories and mourned the sorrows of the Republic of Venice will be heard again echoing over the lagoon ablaze with the red glow of the setting sun. The fallen Campanile of St. Mark will take at least a century to rebuild.

Meanwhile the great piazza, the heart of Venice, remains desolate without the tower that constitutes its characteristic feature. Now that the Campanile's absence is felt by the new crowds of sightseers who visit Venice today, judging by the photographs specially taken to meet the demand of the hurried tourists, and from which every trace of the tower as well as the few stones left standing as its base has been carefully obliterated.

"But this is not the square of St. Mark as I have always seen it," some lover and old visitor of Venice may object.

"No, it is not, sir," answers the photographer. "It represents the square as it is. We sell no others."

The intending purchaser turns around, and looking at the square sees the site where the old Campanile once stood and where the new one is to rise. The spot is surrounded by a great wall, and he may hear the sound of the builders at work. Besides, his guide will hasten to assure him that the government is determined to rebuild the tower, and so the tourist, ignoring or forgetting how things are done in Italy and how many towers, churches and historical buildings destroyed by fire, floods, earthquakes or the hand of man are waiting to be rebuilt, puts off buying the photograph until his next visit to the queen of the Adriatic when, he is convinced, the square of St. Mark will again have its tower.

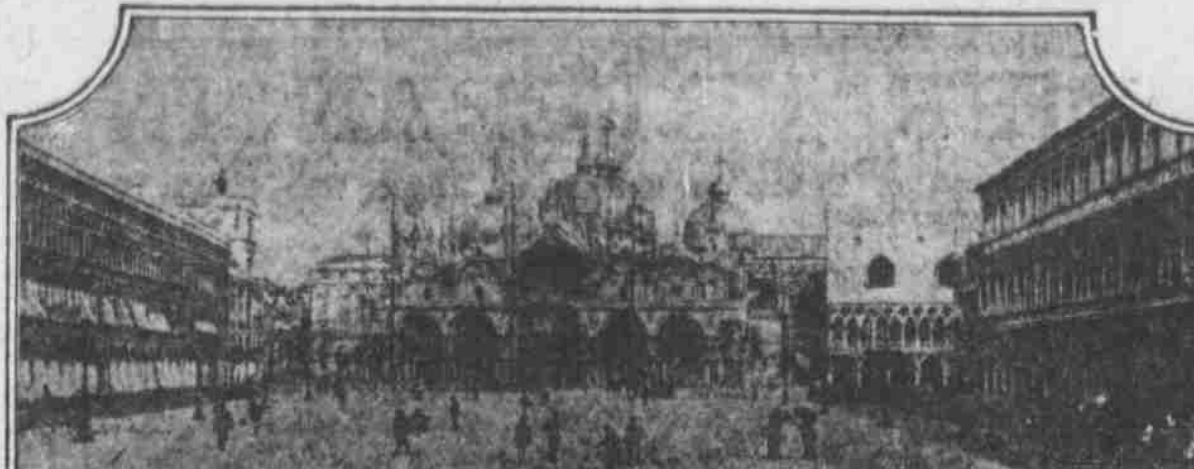
The loss of the Campanile is not irreparable; time demolished it, but man will rebuild it. Italians say with conviction, and there is nothing to do but to wait and hope that they are right. But the very men who appear determined to repair the injuries of time, are, unconsciously perhaps, causing a great deal of damage to Venice, as they are bent on improving by means of new buildings a city that is regarded throughout the entire world as unique and perfect.

There is a project about a bridge that is to join the lagoons with the mainland so as to enable carriages to drive to Venice, and there are plans for new tenement houses and hotels. A brand new pecheria or fish market has been built close to the Ponte di Rialto and a huge palace—it is called a palace because all the houses on the Grand canal are palaces, but this latest addition resembles more a barracks than a palatial residence—now rises close to the Church della Salute and hides its view from several points on the canal.

On Easter day, 1172, the Doge Vitale Michel II was murdered and the assassins after committing the crime found refuge in the houses and narrow alleys on the Riva

degli Schiavoni, close to the prisons. Some years passed before they could be found and arrested, and the government of the republic, suspecting that the houses that harbored them belonged to accomplices, ordered their demolition and decreed that in future only wooden houses could be built on the spot and that the new buildings should not exceed a certain height. The crime is now forgotten, but the houses built in the place of those demolished in 1172 are still mostly of wood and so low and modest that the great mass of the dual palace and prisons tower monumentally above them unmarred by comparisons and unfettered by nearby contrasts.

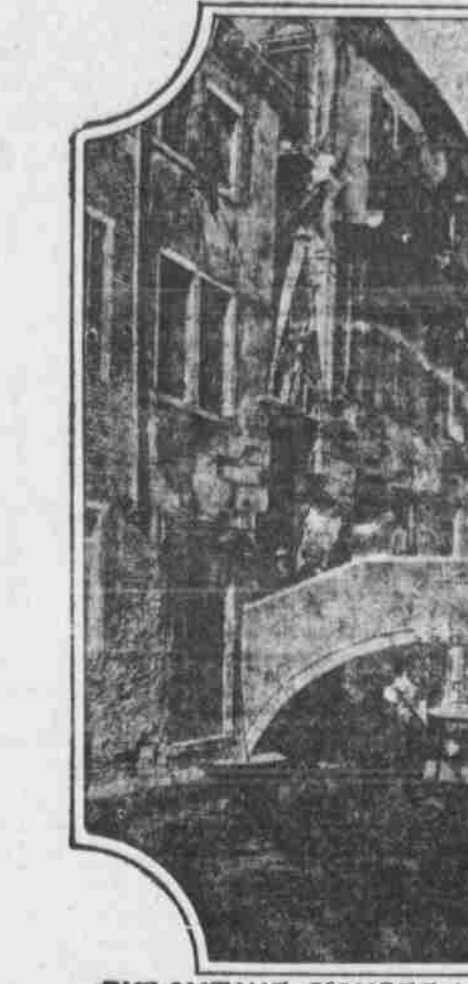
But a project has been presented and favorably received by the municipality to build a hotel larger than the neighboring Danieli and reproducing the architecture



SQUARE OF ST. MARK WITHOUT THE CAMPANILE



GRAND CANAL SHOWING THE CHIESA DELLA SALUTE PARTLY HIDDEN BEHIND NEW PALACE



BYZANTINE HOUSES IN THE RIO DEL PARADISO.

of the dual palace in place of the old wooden houses of the twelfth century. Still another hotel, large and several stories high, as the "Industria del forastiero" or foreigners' trade is highly remunerative in Venice, is to be built instead of the beautiful cloister of San Gregorio, which evidently is doomed to disappear.

All these new buildings and hotels are built very quietly, almost on the sly. One stone is placed on the other until a wall is raised; then the ancient or historical house behind it is removed; the wall rises higher and higher until some day the new takes the place of the old. A protest in one of the newspapers, a letter to the fine arts department, perhaps a few words of regret by a member of Parliament, and there the matter ends.

The cloister of the low wooden house of 1172 is not rebuilt, as they say the Campanile will be, because the old does not take

the place of the new. Italy is progressive and daily improving and disappearing old stones makes it look still more modern.

Besides it is a well known fact that "Le antichità san per i forastieri" and antiquities are for the foreigners, and there are so many of them, especially in Venice, that the removal of a few will not be missed, the more so as the new buildings that supplant the old are purposely dark in color, and modern architects strive to reproduce ancient architecture and to imitate marble by means of stucco, thus giving the building a deceptive appearance of age.

But the genuine specimens of the ancient Byzantine architecture known as "Lago," which formerly were to be seen in many side streets and which illustrated the early style of Venetian building, have almost all disappeared and their doors, windows, ironwork, painted beams and pavements have enriched dealers of antiques.

Another type of houses, those with jutting roofs supported on baticans, having only one story and a shop on the ground floor, houses similar to the one that Skylock is supposed to have inhabited, is also becoming very rare. There are still a few left, at Santa Giustina, St. Stae and San Filippo e Giacomo, but hidden by new constructions and oft repeated repairs and alterations, and scarcely to be recognized.

A short distance from Venice is the island of Torcello, one of the sights tourists are expected to see. Once it was a flourishing city rich in villas and churches; today it is only a ruin. There is still the public palace, the church of Santa Maria, built in 1008, and the temple of Santa Fosca, dating back to the ninth century, but all are in ruins, their walls cracked, their arches broken and their frescoes covered under white-wash. When the tide is high the whole island is under water. Nothing has been done to avert the entire collapse and disappearance of these monuments.

Funds are lacking and as Torcello is under the jurisdiction of the municipality of Burano, the proceeds of the entrance fees charged to visit the palace of the Doges, the only money that is ever applied toward the restoration and repair of national monuments, cannot be employed to save the island from ruin. Some day in the near future a wall will slowly rise around the island until every vestige of church and palace is hidden; then when the wall is roofed over a sign will be put up with "Hotel Torcello" written in large letters; windows, balconies and doors will be opened and gradually the island will become a hotel.

The tower of St. Mark is to be rebuilt, we are told, and perhaps it will be, but the old churches, palaces, cloisters and houses that have made place for new buildings are lost forever, and in the near future one will have to be satisfied to see Venice in the paintings of Bellini and Carpaccio, that is unless these too are doomed to disappear.

## When Clark Left Town

Few people know that Champ Clark, the celebrated congressman from Missouri, and also known as a lecturer, once practiced law, or tried to do so, in Wichita, Kan. But he did. In 1875, relates the Topeka Capital, Champ Clark opened an office where the Pacific Express company now is located. There was not a great deal of business for a lawyer in that town, and Champ Clark did the best he could to make a living, but he became discouraged and in time left the state and returned to Missouri, where he was afterward elected to congress. He met Kos Harris on the street one day and told him that he had decided to stand in Wichita until he had made some money, no matter how much

or how it was made. Several days later he was seen on the streets and he had a beautiful bronze on his hands and face. It was the dark brown color that tells of honest toil in the cornfield. "Where did you get that color?" asked one of his friends. "I got it from cutting corn up in the country," was the reply. "Got anything else?" asked the friend, who looked at the then attenuated form of the now fleshy and prominent statesman. "Sure," replied Clark. "I got this dollar for the day's work. And I want to tell you I am going to leave this town. I said I would not leave until I had made some money, and now that I have made it I am ready to leave." He left.



THE RIALTO BRIDGE WHERE THE NEW FISH MARKET HAS BEEN BUILT.

## The Ruling Passion

Don Marino Torlonia of the dual family of Torlonia of Rome said at a dinner party in New York that a certain American millionaire reminded him of the famous Roman miser, Arpagno. "Let me," said the tall young man, smiling, "show you what a tremendous miser Arpagno was. As he lay dying in his cold, dark, bare palace of stone on the Corso his one thought was that, since he was too ill to eat a full day he was being saved on the food bill. The doctor was announced. The doctor, after feeling Arpagno's pulse, looked grave. "Well," said the miser, "how much longer have I to live?" "Only half an hour," was the reply. "Arpagno's eyes flashed fire.

"You scoundrel!" he cried. "Why do you let things run on to the last minute like this? Do you want to ruin me? Send for the barber at once." "The barber arrived post haste. "You charge," said Arpagno, "20 centesimi for shaving?" "Yes, signor." "And for shaving a corpse 5 lire?" "Yes." "Arpagno glanced at the clock. Seven of the thirty minutes left him still remained. "Then shave me quickly," he gasped. "As the operation finished Arpagno died. But with his last breath, smiling happily, he murmured, while the barber dried his cold, pale cheeks: "How splendid! Four lire and 80 centesimi saved!"—Washington Star.

# An Odd Tribe of East African Savages of the Lake Victoria District

Copyright 1908 by Frank G. Carpenter. **F**ORT FLORENCE.—(Special Correspondent of the Bee.)—Unfurl your fans and take out your kerchiefs to hide your blushes. We are about to have a stroll among the Kavirondo, who inhabit the eastern shores of Lake Victoria on the western edge of British East Africa. These people are all more or less naked, and some of the sights we dare not describe. We have our cameras with us, but Postmaster General Meyer will not allow our films to go through the mails, and no newspaper would publish all the pictures we take.

We are in the heart of the continent, so near the equator that a day's march to the north would enable us to straddle it, but so high above the sea that the weather is by no means unpleasant. We are on the wide Gulf of Kavirondo and on the eastern edge of the greatest fresh water lake of the world. That inland-studded sea in front of us is Victoria Nyansa; and over there on foot and less than two days' march small steamers which ply on the lake, is Napoleon gulf, out of which flows the great river Nile. With the glass you may see the hippopotamuses swimming near the shore of Kavirondo bay, and behind us are plains covered with pastures and spotted with droves of cattle, antelope, and gnus, and also the queerly thatched huts of the stark-naked natives.

The plains have a sparse growth of tropical trees, and looking over them we can catch sight of the hills which steadily rise to the Mau Escarpment, beyond which is the great Rift valley, and still farther east are the level highlands of British East Africa, the whole extending on and on to Mombasa, a distance as great as that between New York and Cleveland to the Indian ocean. It was at that point that I entered the continent, and I have been traveling for days in coming the 254 miles which lie between us and the ocean.

**Future Metropolis.** Port Florence is the terminus of the Uganda railroad, and it is destined to be one of the great cities of East Central Africa. When the Cape of Cairo trunk line is completed there will probably be a branch running from here through Uganda to connect with it, and all the commerce of the vast region about Lake Victoria will flow by steamer to this point and down the Uganda railway to the sea. As it is now, the trade is greatly increasing, and ivory, hides, grain and rubber from German East Africa, the Upper Congo and the lands to the north of the lake are shipped through here to the coast. The cars come right down to a wooden wharf which extends well out into the Kavirondo gulf. On the lake are several small steamers, which have been brought up here in pieces and put together, and they are now bringing in freight from all parts of this big inland sea.

As to Port Florence itself, it is a little town with practically no accommodations for travelers. The only place to stop is a dark bungalow, or rest house, put up by the government, and the only stores are those of a few Hindoo traders. The Europeans consist of some soldiers be-

longing to the king's African Rifles, of the government officials and of some employes of the railroad.

The officials put on great airs. Among the passengers who came in with me yesterday was a judge, who will settle the disputes among these half-naked natives. He was met at the camp by some soldiers and a gang of convicts in chains. The latter had come to carry his baggage and other belongings to his tin house on the hill and each was dressed in a heavy iron collar with iron chains extending from it to his wrists and ankles. Nevertheless he was able to aid in lifting the boxes and in pushing them off on trucks, prodded up to his work all the while by the soldiers on guard.

**A Naked Nation.** But let us take our feet in our hands and tramp about through Port Florence. Later on we may march off into the country through which I traveled for about fifty miles on my way here. In Port Florence itself we may now and then see a man with a blanket wrapped around him and the men frequently wear waist cloths behind or in front. Outside of this they are stark naked, many of them wearing absolutely nothing except plugs in their ears, strings of beads about their waists and rough wire rings on their wrists and ankles. All have skins of a dark chocolate brown. They have rather intelligent features, wavy hair and lips and noses like those of a negro. They belong to the Bantu race family and are among the best formed of the peoples of Africa. Someone has said that traveling through their country is like walking through miles of living statuary, and I have seen thousands of such statues on my way here.

**Kavirondo Men.** Take these Kavirondo men who have gathered about me just now as I write. Their figures are ebony, and some of them look as though they might have been cut from black marble by the hand of a sculptor. Look at those three brown bucks at my left. They are as straight as Michaelangelo's famed statue of David and about as well formed. See how firmly they stand on their black feet. Their heads are thrown back and two have bare feet sticking out from black moccasins by the hand of a sculptor. Look at those three brown bucks at my left. They are as straight as Michaelangelo's famed statue of David and about as well formed. See how firmly they stand on their black feet. Their heads are thrown back and two have bare feet sticking out from black moccasins by the hand of a sculptor.

The man next him has two brass rings on each of his black thumbs, bands of telegraph wire around his wrists and two wide coils of wire above and below the biceps of his left arm. He has five wire bands about his neck, circles of wire under each knee and great anklets of twisted wire resting on each of his feet. As I look back as though they might have been cut from black marble by the hand of a sculptor, I can see the recessed places where the wire has worn into his integument, and this is worse on that third man, whose ankles are loaded with twisted wire. The latter must have several pounds on each leg, and the wire on the right leg extends from the foot

to the middle of the calf. Now look at their heads. The first man has short wool which hugs the scalp and the other two have twisted their hair so that it hangs down about the head like the snakes of the Medusa.

**Deerskin Aprons.** I stop for a moment and ask the men to turn around in order that I may get a view from the rear. They are not quite so naked as I had supposed. Each has an apron of deerskin as big as a woman's pocket handkerchief fastened to his waist-band behind. The aprons are tanned with the fur on and are tied to the belts with deerskin straps. As far as decency goes, they are of no value at all, and they seem to be used more for ornament than anything else.

Turning now to other men in the party about me, I see that almost all are similarly clad, although a few have skins thrown around their shoulders and some have more jewelry. One or two wear a piece of cotton cloth and a very few have waist cloths. I have no trouble in getting the men to pose. They have gone without clothes from time immemorial and think that the use of them is decidedly foolish.

**Where the Women Wear Tails.** Let us turn our cameras now on the women. They are by no means so fine looking as the men. They are shorter and not so well formed. Still they are all there. The younger girls are clad in bead

waist belts and the older ones have each a tassel of fiber tied to a girdle about the waist. This tassel is fastened just at the small of the back and it hangs down behind. At a short distance it looks like a cow's tail. I am told that it is an indispensable article of dress for every married woman, and that it is improper for a stranger to touch it. Sir Harry Johnston, who governed these people, says that even a husband dares not touch this caudal appendage when worn by his wife, and if, by mistake, it is touched, a goat must be sacrificed or the woman will die from the insult.

Some of the native women here in Port Florence wear little aprons of fiber about six inches long, extending down at the front. I can see dozens of them so clad all about me and for a penny can get any of them to pose for my camera. The young girls have no clothes at all and this is the custom throughout the country. Indeed, farther back in the interior the fringe aprons are removed and both sexes are clad chiefly in jewelry of wire of various kinds.

The strangest thing about the nudity of these savages is that they are absolutely unconscious of any wrong in it. Such of us as have not met Europeans do not know they are naked, and a married woman with her tail of palm fiber is fully dressed. A traveler tells how he tried to educate a gang of naked young women whom he met out in the country by cut-

ting up some American sheeting and giving each a piece. The girls looked at the cloths with interest, but evidently did not know what to do with them. Thereupon the white man took a strip and tied it about the waist of one of the party. Upon this the other girls wrapped their pieces about their waists, but a moment later they took them off, saying: "These are foreign customs and we do not want them."

**Queer Marriage Customs.** During my stay in the Kavirondo country I have gone out among the villages and have seen the natives in their homes and at work. The land is thickly populated and the people are good-natured and quiet. One can go anywhere without danger, and there is no trouble in getting photographs of whatever one wants.

I am surprised at the great number of married women. This rule as to married women wearing tails gives one a knowledge of the condition of every woman he meets. If the tail is on one knows the woman is married and if not that she is single. The Kavirondo girls marry very early. I am told they are often betrothed at the age of 6 years, but that in such cases the girl stays with her parents for five or six years after ward. All marriages are matters of bargain and sale. The parents sell their girls for a price, and a good wife can be purchased for forty hoes, twenty goats and a cow. In the early betrothal the suitors pay part of the fixed sum down and the rest in installments until all is paid. If

the father refuses to give up the girl when the time comes for marriage, the payments having been made, the suitor organizes a band of his friends and captures her and carries her home. A man usually takes his wife from a different village from that in which he lives and when he comes with his bride to the bride's village her gentlemen friends often resist the invasion and fight the suitor's party with sticks. At such times the girl screams, but I am told she usually allows herself to be captured.

I am told that old maids are not popular and that the average Kavirondo girl is just as anxious to be married as are our maidens at home. Indeed, she is usually very anxious; that if she does not get a bid in the ordinary way she will pick out a man for herself and arrange to have herself offered to him at a reduced rate. I understand there are plenty of plump maidens now on the barge counter.

Another queer marriage custom here is as to one's wife's sister. The man who gets the first girl in a family is supposed to have the say as to all the younger ones as they come to marriageable age. Polygamy is common here and a man may thus have several sisters among his wives.

**They Are Good Girls.** One would suppose that these Kavirondo girls might be rather loose in their morals. I am told that they are not so, and that they rank much higher in this regard than the rank of Uganda. The women are joining, nearly all of whom wear clothing. Virtue stands high here, and infractions of the law regarding it as severely punished. This is less so now than in the past. Divorces are not common, but a man can divorce his wives if he will. One curious custom is that if a husband and wife have a quarrel, and she leaves the hut and he shuts the door after her, that action alone is considered equivalent to a divorce and the woman goes back to her own people at once.

**Kavirondo Villages.** But let us go out into the country and look at some of the Kavirondo villages. I have visited many and have had no trouble whatever in going into the houses. There are many little settlements scattered over the plains between here and the hills, with footpaths running from village to village. The most of the settlements are small, a dozen huts or so forming a good-sized one. The houses have walls of mud with cone-shaped roofs, thatched with grass. The doors are so low that one has to crawl into them; and many a house is not more than seven feet high from the mud floor to the top of the cone.

The roof usually extends out beyond the walls of the hut, covering a sort of veranda, a part of which is enclosed and a part open. There are poles outside which support the roof of the veranda. The huts are usually built around an open space and are joined by the means of rough ladders and roofs, so that each collection of huts forms a stockade in which the animals belonging to the village can be kept at night. Sometimes a village may be made of a number of such circles, each collection of huts belonging to one family. One of the huts is for the polygamous

husband and one for each of his wives. But let us go inside one of the houses and see how it looks. We stoop low as we enter. The floor is of mud, with a few skins scattered over it. The skins are the sleeping places. Notice that little pen at the back, littered with dirt. That is where the goats sleep. The chickens are put in that tall basket over there in the corner and are covered up until morning. There is practically no furniture except a few pots. The cooking is done in clay vessels over that fire in the center of the hut and the food is served in small baskets, the men eating first and the women taking what is left.

Outside each hut, under the veranda, is the mill of the family. It consists of a great stone, with a hole chipped out of the center. The women grind Indian corn or sorghum seed in such mills, pounding or rubbing the grain with a second stone, just a little smaller than the hole. In the grinding bits of the stone come off and are mixed with the meal, causing diseases of chronic indigestion.

**Towns of the Dead.** I understand some of the older Kavirondo villages are nothing but cemeteries and that there are little towns each hut of which contains one or more dead bodies and nothing else. The people are superstitious and regard it as a crime to bury the dead in the same places in which they have lived. When a chief dies his body is interred in the center of his hut. He is placed in the grave in a sitting posture, just deep enough to allow his head and neck to be above ground. The head is then covered with an earthen pot and this is left there until the sun gets in and dries the body. After the skull is buried close to the hut or within it and the skeleton is taken out and reburied on some hilltop or other sacred place.

Ordinary people are buried in their own huts lying on their right sides with legs doubled up under the chin. Such a hut is then left and forms a monument to the dead departed. I understand that where there have been epidemic diseases one may sometimes find a whole village of such huts occupied only by the dead. The buildings are left until they fall to pieces.

**Kavirondo Cattle.** These Kavirondo are a stock-rearing people. I see their little flock of sheep and goats everywhere, and frequently pass droves of humped cattle. The animals are fat. They graze everywhere over the plain, being usually herded. Every drove has a flock of white birds about it. Some of the birds are on the ground, and some are perched on the backs of the cattle eating the insects and vermin they find there. They are the rhinoceros birds, which feed on the flies and other insects which attack those great beasts, and which by their flying warn them of the approach of danger. The cattle are driven into the villages at night or into small inclosures outside. The women do the milking, but I am told they are not allowed to drink the milk, although they may mix it with flour into a soup.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.



MARKET SCENE AT PORT FLORENCE.