

MEMORIES OF MILAN.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR FINLAYSON, AUTHOR OF "THE ETHICS OF ATHLETICS," ETC.



PIAZZA DEL DUOMO.

(From a Photograph by Messrs. F. Frith & Co., Reigate.)

THE word "milliner," which is the familiar superscription of many a shop in the United Kingdom, owes its origin to Milan. It takes us back to the fifteenth century, when Milan held the primacy in the world of dress and fashion, and gave to Europe the "modes," as Paris has done in more modern times. But although, in this respect, the centre of gravity has shifted, you have only to enter one of the handsome Milanese shops to be convinced that the milliner in Milan is by no means moribund. Words unintelligible to masculine ears, cabalistic words relating to the Arcana of female costume, flow forth, while the eye is invited to gaze on a bewildering vista of well-grouped robes, costumes, and *belles tournures*, until you are fain to confess, with the air of a *cognoscente*, that the specimens before you are "miracles of art." And as a barren confession unattended by a purchase would show such shocking inurbanity, you may probably cry "*Caviare* to the general," and become a personal subscriber to the prowess of the Milanese milliner. Perhaps in this case you may come to realise the force of the Italian proverb: *Dolce cose a vedere, e dolci inganni* ("Things sweet to see and sweet deceptions"). To subscribe to the former is easy; the latter, experience alone can decide.

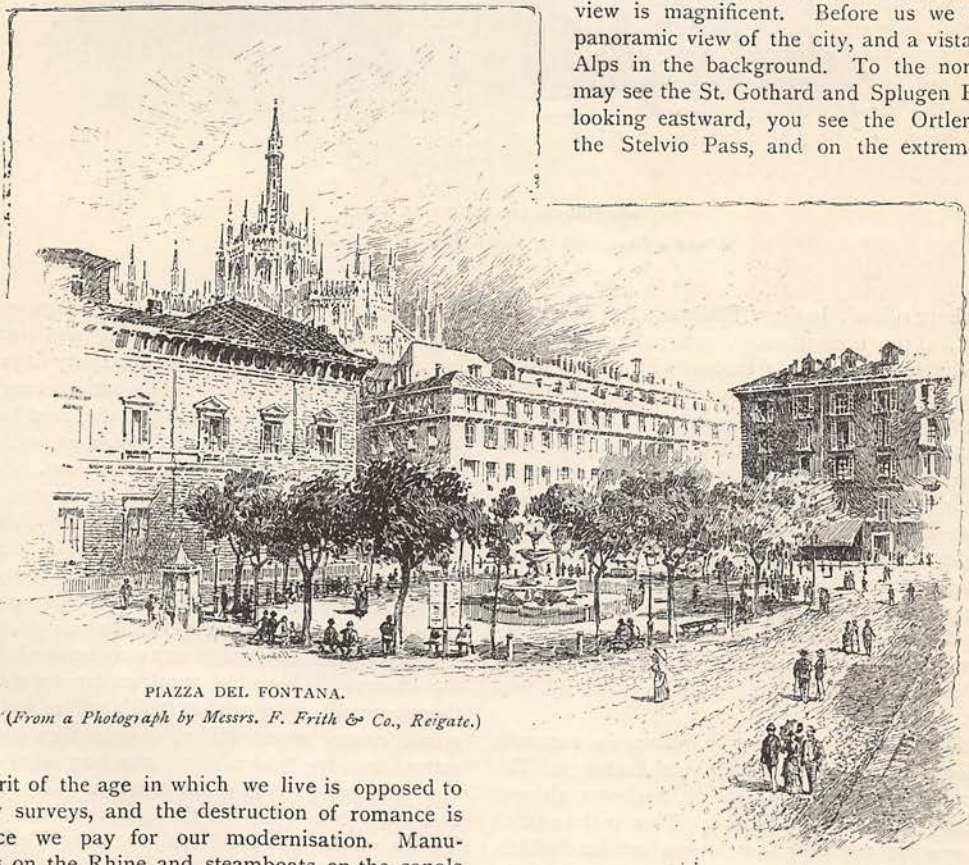
Milano "*la grande*" is a city of noble edifices and

splendid associations. The Italians are fond of characteristic or descriptive epithets in connection with their towns. Thus in popular parlance they designate Venice "*la bella*," Genoa "*la superba*" (or "proud"), Mantua "*la gloriosa*," Verona "*la degna*," Padua "*la forte*," or "*la dotta*" ("the learned"), Brescia "*l'armata*" (gun-manufacture), Vicenza "*l'antica*" (the Mecca of architects), and so forth. Milan is popularly designated as "*la grande*," and the epithet is correctly descriptive. You may spend months in Milan without exhausting all its treasures, but you may see much in a few days. For myself, I confess Milan is largely associated in my mind with great heat, great smells, and great prices. But these three characteristics are by no means a Milanese monopoly. And these inconveniences are capable of modification or adjustment. Heat is, apparently, popular in Milan. Cremation is there a recognised institution. You go into the city cemetery, and beside the "burning fiery furnace" you may see many a curious "cinerarium," white marble, Etruscan style, niches for mortuary urns of various sizes. The march of civilisation may, ere long, adopt the Milanese method as the best sanitary method for the disposal of the dead. You take a turn in the famous *Galleria Vittorio Emmanuele*, attracted by the handsome shops, and if the weather be close and sultry, and you survive the smells in this grand

arcade, you may probably moralise on the exorbitant prices asked by vendors for their articles. Albeit, Milan is the cleanest of Italian cities.

Mediæval magnificence was a mark of Milan ; and there are many such suggestions. But two of its most remarkable associations, to my mind, belong to the fourth century. Here Julian the Apostate was born. Here St. Ambrose was archbishop. And if the mind is disposed to travel further back, you may meditate on the time when the town was the ancient Mediolanum of the Romans, and review its chequered history in its successive devastations by Attila, by fire, and by Frederic Barbarossa. But comparatively few of those who flock to Milan pursue these reflections.

artistic magnificence of the structure, but in the sacristy they were evidently interested in the relics. Without relics there is no church in Italy. The chief relics of the Duomo are the alleged fingers of St. Peter and St. Paul; a bone of Judas Iscariot—black! a handkerchief impressed with the Saviour's face; part of Christ's purple robe and crown of thorns. A "nail" of the crucifixion is preserved in the roof over the high altar, for fear of being stolen. The ascent to the summit of the Duomo, with its "forest of white marble pinnacles, the most beautiful roof scenery in the world," may be made for a small fee and with very little trouble. On the Lanterna (the highest gallery ascended by visitors) we are 237 feet above the pavement. The top of all, measured from the statue, is 355 feet. In the early morning the view is magnificent. Before us we have a panoramic view of the city, and a vista of the Alps in the background. To the north you may see the St. Gothard and Splügen Passes ; looking eastward, you see the Ortler Spitz, the Stelvio Pass, and on the extreme right



PIAZZA DEL FONTANA.

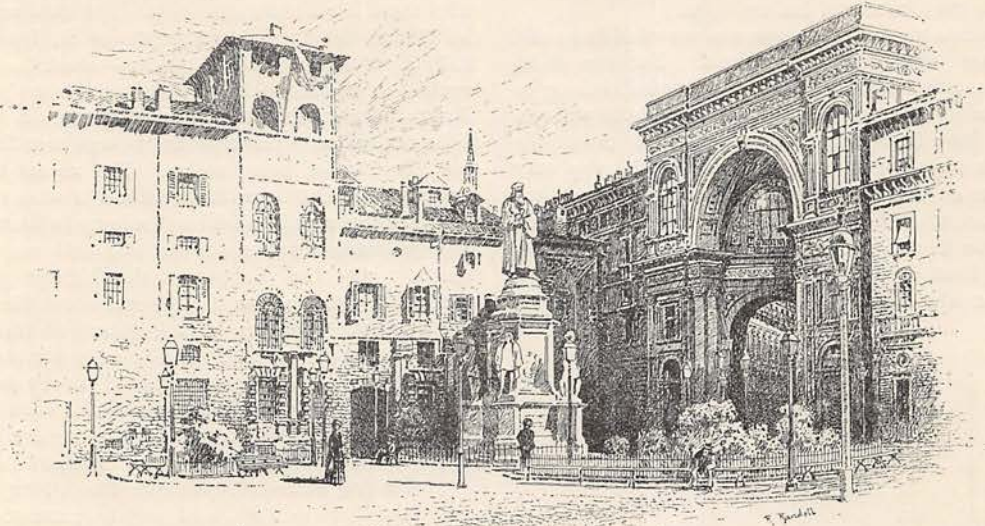
(From a Photograph by Messrs. F. Frith & Co., Reigate.)

The spirit of the age in which we live is opposed to leisurely surveys, and the destruction of romance is the price we pay for our modernisation. Manufactories on the Rhine and steamboats on the canals at Venice are eminently practical, but subversive of romantic association.

The Duomo, or Cathedral, is the chief attraction. It is the largest marble structure in the world, and is built entirely of white Simplon marble, richly decorated. After St. Peter's at Rome, it is the largest church in Italy, and as regards size, ranks third amongst the cathedrals of Europe. The most beautiful fresco on the roof *represents* open-work, but so perfect is the representation that "handbooks" make the mistake of thinking it, like the Bee of Quintin Matsys, actual. Two American ladies were observed to give only a cursory inspection to the mosaics, bas-reliefs, and

the route to Venice ; turning to the north-west, you get a glimpse of Monte Leone, the Simplon Pass, Bernese Alps, with the Lakes Maggiore and Como in front. Again looking south-west, you may see Monte Viso, Monte Cenis, Mont Blanc, the Great St. Bernard, and the Matterhorn, while the Monte Rosa stands out as the most striking. To obtain this view in the early morning, and again by moonlight, should be the aim of all who visit Milan.

In the refectory in the Convent of Sta. Maria delle Grazie is Leo da Vinci's world-discussed "Last Supper," "Cenacolo" fresco, which decomposition and



STATUE OF LEONARDO DA VINCI.

(From a Photograph by Messrs. F. Frith & Co., Reigate.)

daubers have ruined. In the "Biblioteca Ambrosiana" are MSS. of the utmost value, and palimpsests, *i.e.*, old parchments on which a second writing has overlaid the original, which is consequently invaluable when restored. The Palazzo Reale is modern, but the tower dates from the fourteenth century, and is interesting as having the first clock used at Milan, which was made by an Englishman (the monk Wallingford). Near the Ticinese Gate is the Colonne di San Lorenzo. The sight of sixteen mournful Corinthian columns of the third century, the principal remains of the city's ancient grandeur, is rendered the more striking from the popular bustle around, omnibuses plying to and fro every two minutes, and a constant stream of vehicles of every description attesting life in all its varied modern aspects.

Of the many fine churches in Milan, we naturally select for mention the Church of Sant' Ambrogio. The Basilica dates from 387. Here St. Ambrose abjured Paganism, and here he is buried. This is the church which was the scene of the famous incident which, ecclesiastical history relates, occurred between St. Ambrose and the Roman Emperor Theodosius. The story is well known, but it will bear repetition. The Roman Governor of Thessalonica imprisoned a popular actor. The mob accordingly slew the governor. The Emperor thereupon ordered all playgoers to be slain, and in three hours 7,000 perished in the theatre. When the Emperor subsequently approached this church, St. Ambrose reproved him and forbade his entry. Overawed by excommunication, the Emperor maintained a sullen attitude for eight months, then yielded, and laying aside his crown, royal robe, and embroidered buskins, did penance in a corner of this church, and was then reconciled to the Church by the

brave bishop. The results of this ecclesiastical incident were, of course, far-reaching and immediate. But the decree of Theodosius that thirty days should elapse between sentences and executions may fitly be mentioned here. Thus through the Archbishop of Milan's action the Roman Empire gained security from monarchical or official impulsiveness.

The city is rich in libraries, museums, elegant edifices, public squares or gardens, and there are charming suburbs and environs easily accessible. The famous Echo at Simonetta, with its thirty repetitions, gives to those who like to hear their own voice an opportunity of listening to Nature's phonograph. The advantages of a noble city may be combined with the charms of beautiful rural environments. It is therefore not surprising that Italy's nobles and wealthy scions cluster round Milan, whence they can beat a retreat from the heat to the enchanting lakes of Como and Maggiore, which can be reached in less than two hours by rail. Its position between the beautiful Venice on the one hand and the busy Turin on the other is another item in the long list of advantages which the city undoubtedly possesses as a place of residence.

A message from Milan was the moving cause which prompted this paper. As the visitor gazes at the façade of the Duomo, he may read on the splendid arches of the triple doorways three separate inscriptions which point a truth of some importance in the journey of life. Over one doorway is carved a beautiful wreath of roses, and underneath is the motto, "All that which pleases is but for a moment." Over the other the sculptor's chisel has cut a cross, and we read the words, "All that which troubles us is but for a moment." And as we turn from these twin truths we

are confronted under the great central entrance to the main aisle with the inscription, "That only is important which is Eternal." Many minds have many moods; but to thousands these doorways convey a triple truth. Pleasures pass. Troubles may become trivial. Eternity alone deepens. As we contemplate the first two inscriptions they seem to lessen, while the

third grows greater. Thus they may speak to hearts which no preacher's voice can penetrate.

"The bell strikes one.
We take no note of time,
But from its loss,
To give it then a tongue
Is wise in man."

THEIR MYSTERIOUS BUSINESS.

A STORY IN ONE CHAPTER BY THE AUTHOR OF "MRS. VAN KOERT'S TEAPOT," ETC. ETC.



SO tenderly touched in!" said Lady Wareham, who was an amateur painter.

"Such pearly shadows!" murmured Miss Humphreys, who wrote for all kinds of papers, on all sorts of subjects.

"That bit of scarlet makes one envious," observed Luke Hoskyn, whose praise was worth all the rest, as he was a master of the craft.

The stream of guests came, made their criticisms, scattered complimentary adjectives, and departed, and at length Godfrey Hickes and Laurence Whyte were left alone in their rooms. It was Show Saturday, and they were tired of the chatter and clatter, and as they faced each other at their dinner-table neither man seemed able to talk, but the departure of the servant with the last plate enabled them to turn their chairs to the fire and light their pipes.

"I am sick of it all," said Hickes, as he puffed little rings of smoke towards the ceiling.

Laurence Whyte laughed. "You think so now, my boy, when you are tired, but to-morrow will restore you to a reasonable mind!"

"If we were a couple of poor fellows with a bare studio in Westbourne Park, do you suppose we should have heard a word about 'tender touches' and 'pearly shadows?'" said Godfrey moodily.

"Of course not, but to the 'fools who mostly make the world,' the pearliness of shadows, and the tenderness of touch, only become apparent when the canvases are hung as ours are. You must own, Hickes, that the rooms were worth seeing to-day."

"Hang the rooms!" said Hickes.

"Oh, no!" laughed his companion; "only hang the pictures. By the way," he added, "another large order came this afternoon. It is your night, remember. You had better go at once."

Hickes groaned, but merely saying, "Where is it?" and receiving a packet from Whyte, walked from the room. Laurence Whyte was short and dark, with keen eyes and a small mouth; he was near-sighted and wore strong glasses. When Hickes left the room he took a letter from his pocket, laid down his pipe, and read the closely written pages. He smiled as he read, and his eyes lost their keen expression. Presently

he rose, and, going into the library, lighted a lamp and sat down to write. As his letter began with "My darling May," we will quietly withdraw.

"I cannot think how they do it!" said Lady Wareham to her friend, Miss Humphreys, a few days later, as they were driving in the Park, and exchanged bows with Hickes and Whyte. "They seem to go everywhere and do everything, and yet they must paint a great deal to be able to have such lovely rooms."

"Perhaps they have private means, and only paint for pleasure," said Miss Humphreys.

"Oh dear, no!" replied Lady Wareham. "Young Hickes paid Maude so much attention in Scotland last year, that I thought it right to try and find out something about him. He is the son of Sir Hildebrand Hickes—old Yorkshire people, you know, but very poor. Godfrey has nothing but his brush to depend on."

"Perhaps Mr. Whyte is wealthy," suggested Miss Humphreys.

"On the contrary, he has a mother and sister to support, and is, besides, engaged to one of the daughters of the vicar in the next parish to ours in the country—a large family."

"Their studio is certainly lovely," said Miss Humphreys. "I never saw such hangings and such chairs anywhere else."

"Yes, and they have beautiful china and enamels too," continued Lady Wareham; "and yet one only comes across an occasional picture by either of them at an exhibition."

"Mr. Hickes paints more than his friend, but I fancy Mr. Whyte commands high prices for his little gems," said Miss Humphreys.

"But yet," persisted Lady Wareham, "to live in Elvaston Gardens, and to have everything so perfectly appointed, means a great deal of money. Why, I should be glad of the teacups they were handing about yesterday for the shelves in my drawing-room."

"I do not understand it, certainly," acquiesced Miss Humphreys, as the carriage drew up in the Cromwell Road, and they alighted at Lady Wareham's and went in to have tea.

A few nights later Godfrey Hickes was standing at