

foreshadowed above. Men are to be bounced and bullied and dragooned into a good many things, when circumstances are favourable to such modes of persuasion, but they are not to be compelled by any such means into a charitable frame of mind. "The quality of mercy is not strained," as the great poet tells us, and it will not stand the strain of angry, reproachful, or even of exacting pressure: if it is not allowed to drop "as the gentle rain from heaven," it is not to be had at all. If some of our habitual provokers to good works had a due appreciation of this psychological fact, we should not see the disheartening sights we sometimes see, or hear so many of the dreary complaints we sometimes hear. People go about their business in the wrong way, and then moan out their complaints because they have failed of the success they might have had by working in the right way. Conceive, if you can, a more doleful spectacle than a man in possession of pulpit or platform, and bent on squeezing charitable dole out of his audience by mere pressure of paragraphs. Like the "persistent fire poker" aforesaid, he never knows when to stop, and talks and talks, and piles up palaver on palaver, and the consequence is that he pokes out the fire of benevolence; that his audience, whom a few well-chosen words might have charmed into prompt philanthropic action, are first dinned to weariness, then to irritation, and then to resentfulness, and they button up their pockets with the feeling in their minds, that having undergone an uncalled-for scolding, they are not bound to pay for the infliction, and so they depart without giving. Dean Swift understood human nature too well to make a blunder of that kind. It is on record that having engaged to preach a charity sermon on behalf of the poor of a certain place, he took for his text the words of Solomon, "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord;" then, looking round on his congregation, he merely said, "My friends, you see what are the conditions of this transaction; therefore, if you like the security, down with your money." It was an irreverent speech, too sadly in keeping with his character, but the contributions which poured in in answer to that brief appeal were liberal beyond all previous experience in the place; and one may well believe it.

Another dean, no less witty and considerably more wise, reminds us that one result of attempts to stir up the fire of benevolence is generally to arouse a burning indignation in the breast of A because B will not put his hand in his pocket to relieve the necessities of C. This comical dictum of Sydney Smith's is tragically, frightfully true. That is the effect of the majority of appeals made to selfish humanity on behalf of their suffering fellows; so much easier is it to awaken sympathy than self-sacrifice, and so prone are all of us to slink from the obligations we should accept, and to shift them to the shoulders of others. Still it may be fairly questioned when such transferable sympathy is all that is excited, whether the exciting agent has been active in quite the right way. We are not quite sure, but we have a notion that there are ways, if we could but find them out, of enlisting not only the sympathy, but the personal assistance of most of our fellows. Perhaps the gentler methods of touching up the fire might succeed; at any rate, this seems the plan adopted by practical persons who manage benevolent institutions; they seem to go to work in a rather unsentimental way, and for the most part rely more on the influence of creature comforts than on the suggestions of duty or conscience. Thus when they want a lot of people to give generously, they get them round the

festal board and feed them first into a generous mood. We all know the results of this time-honoured method of proceeding: perhaps we are not all convinced that solid as such results frequently are, we have any great reason to be proud of them.

SAN MICHELE,

THE CAMPO SANTO OF VENICE.

THE island of St. Michele, in which is the cemetery of Venice, seems to be but little known to strangers, from the oft-repeated question, "Where do the Venetians bury their dead?" For it is pretty generally known that the nobles only, or with very rare exceptions, had their burial-places in the noted churches; whilst for the middle and lower classes, deep excavations were made in the churches of lesser note, which were called the "Tombi." To these "Tombi" the people conveyed their dead generally, each tomb being large enough to hold a hundred and more coffins, which were closely packed one on the other.

But by degrees, as the vaults in the churches became full, a talk arose as to the propriety of selecting ground for the burial of the Venetians; and as the company of the Camaldolesi monks had just at that time (1811) been suppressed, the senate took into consideration the turning of the beautiful gardens of the monastery in the island of St. Michele into the desired cemetery. The place meeting with the entire approbation of the government, the necessary works were begun, and soon the gardens which had served as a work of recreation for the monks, and were exceedingly beautiful, were demolished, and the earth levelled for the reception of the dead.

The island of St. Michele is situated at the end of the Laguna, and on it stands the church of the same name, which was built by Moro Lombardo, or Moretto, in the middle of the fifteenth century. It has an inscription to the memory of the Greek monk Eusebius, which is supposed to have been composed by Aldus Manutius.

The Camaldolesi, who occupied the monastery and church of St. Michele, were some of the most learned monks of the period, and bore great reputation for sanctity. After having held unlimited sway over the island for a period of three hundred years, the Camaldolesi were replaced by a colony of the Franciscans, whose business was to be "watchers of the dead," to see that no desecration was committed, and to wait on the funerals which arrived at the water gate of the island. This water gate is a high arched entrance from the Laguna, whence steps are cut in the sod to the second gate of the cemetery. The church of St. Michele stands nearly in the middle of the island, and is replete with interest for the antiquary in its interior decorations, and in its exterior to the lover of the picturesque. The portico of the church is supported by slight and elegant columns of white marble, and the monks have added to its beauty by causing the brightest coloured creeping plants to intermingle with roses and other sweet-smelling flowers, giving a charming grace to the old grey church. The nave is another object worthy of notice, from the delicately cut cornice of flowers which runs around it.

The Franciscans, not to be behind their predecessors, have spent a vast deal of time in making the Campo-Santo as beautiful as may be for so mournful a spot, for they have made the entrance to the church look more like the entrance of a conservatory than of a temple.

Round the portico are arranged large ornamental vases filled with some of Italy's choicest treasures in flowers. The entire entrance is screened by a fine oleander, whose rose-coloured flowers receive new beauty from contrast with the glistening whiteness of the marble pillars of the portico. These flowers form a sort of frieze-work right round the church, and the monks add to their store by selling slips of them to those who wish to purchase for planting on the grave of a friend. Indeed, so harmoniously are flowers and shrubs planted, that on entering the cemetery it is hard to suppose it a place for the dead, but rather for the living, until we look around and see the mounds of earth, the crosses, and other gentle remembrances placed by loving hands above the spot where repose the loved and lost. A favourite symbol is a statue with finger pointing upwards, telling that the hope of life and immortality beyond the grave was his who sleeps beneath.

The many beautiful pieces of sculpture which adorn the church of St. Michele are well worthy of remark. The tomb of Cardinal Dolfini, Bishop of Vicenza, is one of the most remarkable, chiefly for the two figures of Faith and Prudence, which stand on either side of it. This beautiful work of the chisel was executed by Bernini. On the left side of the nave is the world-renowned group of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness; and next to it the worship of the golden calf. The grand statue of the patron saint of the island, St. Michele, was the work of Gregorio Lazzarini.

There is no doubt that Venice, and those islands which spot her lagunes, possess some of the most rare gems of art to be found in Italy. This is easily accounted for when we call to mind that the price which many of the vessels paid for being allowed to anchor in her waters, was the bringing as offerings for the embellishment of the churches anything that was rare in sculpture or painting—including, indeed, everything which could add a beauty or a grace to the city.

The precious marbles, for which the public edifices in Venice are so celebrated, are not forgotten in the church of St. Michele. Over the door of the lesser chapel is a large cross of most beautiful design, in many coloured marbles. So rich is this cross in "rare colours," that it is generally designated "the cross of the precious marbles." Near to this cross is the decorated sepulchral slab which covered the grave of Fra Paolo Sarpi, formerly in the church of the Serviti, in Venice; but when that church was desecrated it was removed to St. Michele, in 1796. The friars, as usual, jealous of the superior sanctity of any who did not belong to their own order, effaced the inscription; but they were afterwards compelled, much against their will, to restore it, by special command.

The Capella Emiliana is so gracefully beautiful in its structure, that various imitations have been made of this or that part of it in many of the churches which were built afterwards in different parts of Italy, but none of them can compare with this architectural masterpiece of Bergamasco, who has the credit of its erection, in 1530.

When St. Michele was in the hands of the Camaldolesi, they had one among their number who, although he had been with them for a long period of years, kept himself aloof from his brethren, seeming as though he were always in a kind of dreamy trance, talking and muttering to himself as he strolled among the then charming gardens of the convent. None dared to question him, for some there were in that superstitious age who deemed him one who had business with the powers of darkness, whilst others, the most

charitable, considered him mad. Whatever their thoughts, it was at last quite plain to be seen that something of more than common import filled his thoughts. This was no other than the celebrated geographer, Frate Mauro, who delighted the schools of the continent by his "Mappe Monde," which work had filled his thoughts, for his whole time was taken up in making lines, and writing on small pieces of paper, of which his pockets seemed always full; but when the effect of all this writing and thinking was shown in the beautiful and correct map of the world which he put forth, all the ill-natured remarks of his brother monks were hushed, and no praise was found sufficient to express their appreciation of his merits. The map was executed for Alphonso v, King of Portugal, and embraced all that was known in the year of its construction. At the suppression of the convent this map was removed to the library of St. Mark. It has recently been published in facsimile by Viscount Santarem, the historian of early Portuguese geographical discoveries.

The funerals which take place at St. Michele have something mournfully picturesque in their appearance. On the day fixed for the interment the procession generally issues from the late dwelling of the deceased, about seven o'clock in summer, and five in winter. This is sometimes varied by its taking place before eight in the morning. The procession consists of a company of monks, who walk first, followed sometimes by a few friends of the deceased; next comes the coffin, borne, if of a female, and young, by six young women, all in white; if of a young man, by six young men. Then come the hired mourners, who are twelve women dressed in green, with black veils. These assist in the chanting of the monks. Priests and mourners all carry long wax tapers.

When the procession arrives at the church where the funeral service is to be performed, and where the subsequent masses for the repose of the soul of the dead are to be said, all enter, and according to the means of the family so is the grandeur of the service.

When all is over, the procession retires in the same order, singing, or rather groaning, the "Requiescat in pace," and the coffin is left before the high altar all night. In the early morning of the next day the closed gondolas receive the coffin at the nearest point to the church where it has been left all night, and they then take their mournful way to the island of the Campo Santo, where the monks receive the body in solemn silence.

Not only in Venice, but throughout all Italy, the dead remain in the church all the night of the funeral, under the charge of one of the inferior clergy, and are conveyed to the cemetery the morning afterwards.

The priests will not receive the remains at the gate of the cemetery, unless the service of a special mass has been said in a church. The presentation of an official certificate of death is a proper regulation, but for very different reasons than merely satisfying the demands of the clergy. The requirement of mass sometimes leads to cases of hardship, as in the following instance, which was witnessed by the writer of this paper. Some very poor people had the misfortune to lose the stay and support of their family, and not having the means of paying for the funeral mass to be said in a church, they made up their mind to carry the coffin themselves to the Campo Santo, which was some distance from Turin. When arrived there, the requisite certificate was of course wanting. The poor bereaved wife, her children, and friend who had helped in the woeful journey, had to return with their burden, resting every now and then

on the way, where they were seen, and where with many bitter tears the tale was recounted, when a subscription was made for the required service. The Campo Santo of St. Michele is visited twice every year by a sort of committee, who see that the proper regulations are carried out, and that the ground is kept in order.

The monks, notwithstanding their mournful employment, seem a happy set of men, and are great gardeners. Some of the rarest flowers in Italy are to be had in this solemn garden, and to see their dark-robed cowed figures sitting at evening among the flowers which surround the old grey church is a sight which would charm into action the pencil of the artist.

Among these quiet brothers, even in later days, there have been those whose names are well known. It was at St. Michele that Cardinal Turla, the historian of the Venetian navigators, found time to write his very valuable work; and here the late Pope Gregory XVI, under the name of Fra Mauro Cappellari, compiled his code of criminal law.

The churches and Tombs having been for some years shut up, rich and poor bury their dead at St. Michele, and as this is becoming full of the "mounds of mortality," the Venetians must ere long find another Campo Santo.

According to the population of Venice, the mortality is less than in most other cities of the continent. From a census taken in 1862, the population was 114,000, the deaths averaging fourteen per day, or about ninety-eight in a week, and 5,096 in a year. Of these deaths the causes were various, but not so much so as in other cities. Gastric fever is the most fatal to life. Other fevers prevail during the summer months, but not contagious or fatal ones. A remarkable fact is, that consumption is scarcely known in Venice, and in visiting other lands the first care of a Venetian is to guard against it. The deaths by drowning are not so numerous as might be supposed in a water city, fifty per year being the average; but the gondolas are so constructed that it is almost impossible for them to upset. The mortality of infants is less than in most parts of Italy. The longevity of the Venetians is remarkable, about twenty of the deaths being at the age of ninety, and some live even to a hundred years, worthy successors of Cornaro. On the whole, the bills of mortality will surprise those who imagine that this city must be an unhealthy one. The waters of the lagoon render the air pure, and effectually carry away all impurities.

THE LATE RICHARD HARRIS, M.P. FOR LEICESTER.

As the traveller enters Leicester from the north, he crosses a strip of land enclosed by the River Soar and the Union Canal, called "Frog Island," which contains a place appropriately designated the "World's End." A little to the west lie the "Dane Hills," which consist of several fields bearing Danish fortifications, while to the east rise the remains of Leicester Abbey, best known now as the place where Cardinal Wolsey, fallen from his high estate, retired to "leave his bones." On the banks of this River Soar (anciently Leir), the tradition of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the genius of Shakespeare, give local habitation to King Lear with his three daughters, there residing in rural simplicity,

"In shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads."

On this "Frog Island" there was born, in a humble cottage, in October, 1777, Richard Harris, one of those

men of the people who, by the force of great natural abilities, combined with unswerving integrity of character, raise themselves to high social position and leave their mark in the place in which they live. He was the eldest of a family of six children. His parents were respectable and industrious, but poor, and unable to procure for him the advantages of even a common English education. It happened at the very time that the Sunday-school system, which has conferred such signal benefits on the working classes, was introduced into Leicester by the Rev. Thomas Robinson, the vicar of St. Mary's, known not only for his benevolent and active spirit, but as the author of an excellent work entitled "Scripture Characters." Amongst the first scholars enrolled was Richard Harris. Thirsting for knowledge, he also sought and obtained admission into a night school, and there and in the Sunday-school he acquired the rudiments of a plain education.

At the age of fourteen, he was placed in the printing-office of Mr. Phillips (afterwards Sir Richard Phillips), who was a prominent politician of the time, as well as an author of some repute, and the editor of the "Leicester Herald." The "Herald" sympathised with the principles of the French Revolution which was then commencing. Soon after entering the office, he became the innocent occasion of a piece of mischief. One evening, just as the paper was going to press, a frolic occurred in which young Harris stumbled or was pushed against the frame in which the type was set, displacing and throwing into confusion two or three columns of it. All was dismay! What was to be done? There was no time to reset the type. The Nottingham coach was nearly due, which required a considerable number of copies. The master was called, and his ingenious mind at once hit upon the following expedient. The broken type he still further disarranged, and converted into a hopeless mess, technically called "pie." The whole received the title "The Dutch Mail," to which the following explanation was added: "Just as our paper was going to press the Dutch mail arrived, and as we have not time to make a translation we insert the original!" The "pie" thus served up to the numerous readers of the journal occasioned no little perplexity to the linguists, and to the village politicians of the Midland Counties. No one had ever seen such Dutch, nor any other language resembling it. It was fairly an instance of an "unknown tongue," and many were the letters received from "Constant Readers," asking for an explanation of the mysterious columns, which the editor, for "want of time" and other reasons, excused himself from giving.

An informer having purchased in the printing-office of Mr. Phillips a copy of "Paine's Rights of Man," the printer, for the offence of selling it, was thrown into prison for eighteen months. The master being removed, the youth passed out of his employ, and began stocking-weaving, an occupation which was then far more remunerative than it is now. In this art he speedily excelled. Having learned all he could of the stocking trade in his native town, he travelled to Nottingham, in order to make himself master of the machinery there in use. While residing there another change in his eventful life took place. England was at the time deluged with the works of the French infidel writers written in a style adapted to captivate the mind and heart of young men. Many of these he read with avidity, and his faith in the truth and verities of the Christian religion was unsettled. At the same time the great continental war was raging, and all the resources of England in men and money were called forth against "Bonaparte." Mr.