

Floods  
Venice Milan

Milan, Nov. 3.  
1882

My dear Anna,

I had an intention of  
coming to this place, but on  
arriving at Venice found that  
the railways to Florence  
were all broken up, & as I  
have asked Arthur Crome to  
send my letters to Florence I  
must get there by some means.  
The route by Milan is nearly  
or quite twice as long as the  
direct one, but is the only available  
at present. I had seen in  
the newspapers I have here go  
that the floods had injured the  
North Italian railways, but had  
supposed that they would have got  
them into running order again,

However they seem to be wanting  
 to see whether they want get right  
 again of themselves. I left Rome  
 yesterday by a very slow train  
 yesterday at 7.45 P.M., & did  
 not get home till 1 A.M. only an  
 hour & a quarter late. When I say  
 the train was slow, I mean  
 its general average progress was  
 slow, but while going along at  
 a gentle slope - coach rate most  
 of the time & stopping at very little  
 stations, it occasionally took  
 desperate spurts at the rate of  
 four miles an hour or so for a  
 few miles. Today I have been  
 strolling about Milan, &  
 prepare leaving for Florence  
 tomorrow. From Verona  
 to Rome I intended to travel

direct, but when the train got to Pontafel on the frontier between Austria & Italy we were informed that the line was broken a few stations further on & that the train must stop. It was about 7 in the evening, quite dark & rainy in torrents, with occasional flashes of lightning. There was a young Austrian gentleman & his wife in the same compartment with me, who could speak a little French. They had no umbrella, so I offered them to share of mine, & under this imperfect shelter we went out in search of a hotel. It was quite a small stupid little village in an indescribable state of pluck with

a flooded mountain stream  
 running parallel to the street. The  
 first inn was full, but the tent  
 led us to a second, which was very  
 primitive, the only lights they  
 seemed to have in the building  
 large stable lanterns. Added to  
 this, the rooms, when they showed  
 them to us had such a bad  
 smell & appearance that we  
 decided to go in search of a  
 third inn. At last we found  
 quarters which though bare &  
 primitive looking were clean.  
 Next morning the railway people  
 took in complete ignorance  
 as to the possibility of getting  
 away, but at 2 P.M. we finally got

off from the station on the  
 Italian side of the frontier, &  
 crawled along to Venice, arriving  
 there at 10 P.M. In Venice I  
 spent a few days, & though I  
 did not see nearly all the  
 Churches & things which are  
 mentioned in the Guide Book  
 saw quite enough to satisfy  
 me. Churches became positively  
 nauseating after a time.  
 However in one of the Churches  
 there are a lot of pictures  
 by Tintoretto, which though of  
 Saints &c. or as usual actually  
 differ from <sup>the</sup> most of the old  
 masters in the fact that the Saints  
 are arrayed in garments of  
 ordinary decent colors, instead

exhibiting as usual all  
 the tints of the rainbow. Venice  
 differed in many respects from  
 my preconceived notions of it,  
 which I must confess were  
 rather vague. First I was prepared  
 to find it a very dead place  
 as to Commerce, but while this  
 is true as to all the more  
 remote parts of the City, which  
 look generally very quiet &  
 silent, the central parts about  
 St Mark's Square, & the main  
 arteries of traffic are quite thronged  
 during the business hours. There  
 are also a great many very  
 fine shops full of trinkets, gloves,  
 photographs &c. & there are  
 generally a lot of Country Venetians

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and one or two large steamers  
lying in the port, which is at  
one end of the Grand Canal.

Another true unexpected thing was  
the immense number of little  
low arched bridges which cross  
all the smaller canals, with  
just room for a gondola to  
pass under. By these all parts  
of the town are connected, & you  
can go anywhere on foot through  
an intricate network of little  
streets & alleys, many of them  
not more than 15 to 6 feet  
wide, but often lined with  
shops on both sides. The first  
day at Venice a drizzling rain  
fell without interruption & it  
was nearly as gloomy as possible

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in England, which was also  
unexpected. However the remaining  
days were very fine, with a  
pleasant temperature. I proved it  
very stupid, however, going about  
in Venice alone, & so concluded to  
strut out for Florence. There were  
about twenty English speaking people  
in the hotel I was staying at,  
but they were rather unnotable  
& as I felt the same I never  
so much as spoke to most of  
them. Having brought up the  
history I think to date, I shall  
say adieu for the present.  
Some specimens of the  
Genze

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