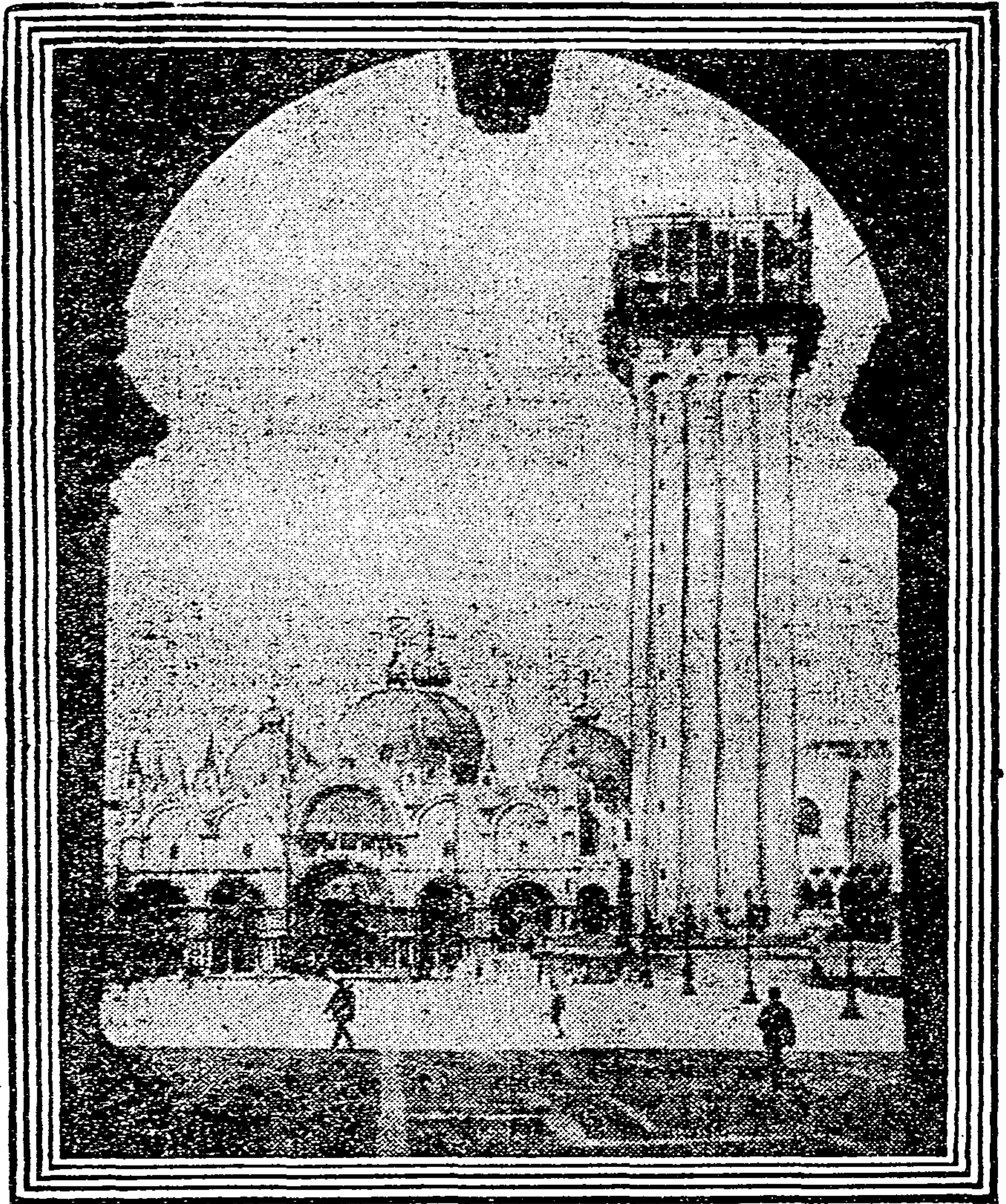


Completing the Campanile at Venice.



LONDON, Oct. 1.—The task of restoring the old Campanile or Bell Tower of St. Mark's at Venice is nearing completion, and it is confidently expected that the bells of San Marco will break their nine years' silence and again ring out on St. Mark's Day, next April 25.

The restoration of this famous tower—which collapsed suddenly on July 14, 1902, after an existence of 1,014 years—has proved a greater undertaking than anticipated, some of the details presenting technical difficulties. The intention was to reproduce the old tower as faithfully as possible, and with that object in view the bricks, of which there are over a million, were specially selected and laid. The bricks are each 12 inches long, 6 inches wide, and 3 inches deep, and the clay is twice mixed to obtain homogeneity.

These bricks, however, contained salt, which threatened to turn the tower white

and such an outcry was raised among the Venetians that the work was suspended while an inquiry was held. It was found that by prolonged soaking in water the salt was removed.

A correspondent of The Sketch writes that by kind permission of Edoardo Dott Placentini, Chief Superintendent of the reconstruction of the Campanile, he was permitted thoroughly to inspect the new tower. Passing through the palisading which keeps out the ordinary public from the base of the Campanile, one first observes the pans in which each brick, after being brought down from Treviso to the Giudecca, has been carefully washed in order to extract any destructive salts from its composition. In some cases the brick has been washed four or five times in order thoroughly to cleanse it. So careful has the committee been to secure the best materials that the first portion of the reconstructed brickwork was removed owing to suspicions as to the quality of the bricks supplied.

The brick shaft now rises completely clear of all scaffolding and impediments, and from certain points of view the old effect of the piazza is again coming to life.