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The Leaning Tower, and the eleventh Century Cathedral, Pisa, Italy.

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V14656 T The Leaning Tower, and the Eleventh
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THE LEANING TOWER, AND CATHE- DRAL, PISA, ITALY

The group of buildings before us is one of the most celebrated in all Europe, partly for the beauty of the structures and partly for the fascinating eccentricity of the taller one.

The marble tower at which you are looking leans thirteen feet from the perpendicular. Even as you gaze on it, it seems in the act of falling. Standing upon the top and looking down, you feel that you are falling with the tower and you instinctively grasp the railing in front of you in a desperate effort to save yourself. The interior is hollow and one can look down into it as into a gigantic tube. The structure is 180 feet high and is crowned by a belfry which contains seven bells. You can see them from here. The heaviest weighs six tons and hangs on the side opposite the overhanging wall. There has been controversy as to the cause of this strange phenomenon

which has existed for 550 years. The best explanation is that the ground settled in the course of its construction and the upper stories were added in a curved line, the walls on the leaning side being strengthened to bear the strain.

The grand old cathedral, one of the finest in the world, was constructed after a great naval victory of the Pisans in the eleventh century. In this cathedral hangs the altar-lamp whose oscillations suggested to Galileo the idea of the pendulum. Our position here gives us a rear view of the building, but from every point of observation it is imposing. It, like the bell tower, is constructed entirely of marble. Over the roof we have a glimpse of the top of the Baptistry.