

mansion ruined from the foundation" it passed into the hands of one Stefano Vecchia, who sold it in 1678 to Giovanni Carlo Grimani. He built on the site of the ruins a theatre which was in its day one of the largest in Italy, and was called the Theatre of S. Giovanni Grisostomo; afterwards the *Teatro Emeronitio*. When modernized in our own day the proprietors gave it the name of Malibran, in honour of that famous singer, and this it still bears.\*

[In 1881, the year of the Venice International Geographical Congress, a Tablet was put up on the Theatre with the following inscription:—

QVI FURONO LE CASE  
DI  
MARCO POLO  
CHE VIAGGIÒ LE PIÙ LONTANE REGIONI DELL' ASIA  
E LE DESCRISSE  

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PER DECRETO DEL COMUNE  
MDCCCLXXXI].

There is still to be seen on the north side of the Court an arched doorway in Italo-Byzantine style, richly sculptured with scrolls, disks, and symbolical animals, and on the wall above the doorway is a cross similarly ornamented.† The style and the decorations are those which were usual in Venice in the 13th century. The arch opens into a passage from which a similar doorway at the other end, also retaining some scantier relics of decoration, leads to the entrance of the Malibran Theatre. Over the archway in the Corte Sabbionera the building rises into a kind of tower. This, as well as the sculptured arches and cross, Signor Casoni, who gave a good deal of consideration to the subject, believed to be a relic of the old Polo House. But the tower (which Pauthier's view does show) is now entirely modernized.‡

Other remains of Byzantine sculpture, which are probably

\* See a paper by G. C. (the Engineer Giovanni Casoni) in *Teatro Emeronitio, Almanacco per l'Anno 1835*.

† This Cross is engraved by Mr. Ruskin in vol. ii. of the *Stones of Venice*: see p. 139, and Pl. xi. Fig. 4.

‡ Casoni's only doubt was whether the *Corte del Millioni* was what is now the Sabbionera, or the interior area of the theatre. The latter seems most probable.

One Illustration of this volume, p. 1, shows the archway in the Corte Sabbionera, and also the decorations of the soffit.