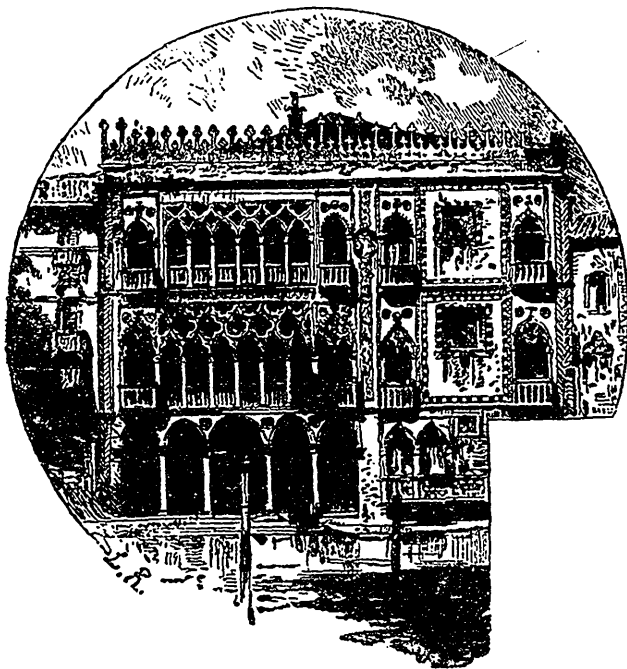


the children to swim. Little bits of things were sent off with a short board to rest on and a long cord around the body to keep them from drifting too far away. The doors open directly upon the water. One wonders that half the children do not get drowned.

The great centre and focus of Venetian life is the Piazza of St. Mark. It is a large stone-paved square, surrounded by the marble palaces of the ancient Republic. The only place in Venice large enough for a public promenade, it is crowded in the evening by a well-dressed throng of diverse nationalities, many of them in picturesque foreign costumes, listening to the military band,



THE GOLDEN HOUSE, VENICE.*

*The "Golden House," so called on account of the richness of its decorations of 14th century style. It is now much faded. See Byron's lines :

"City of palaces, Venice, once enthroned
Secure, a queen 'mid fence of flashing waters,
Whom East and West with rival homage owned
A wealthy mother with fair trooping daughters.
What art thou now ? Thy walls are gray and old :
In thy lone hall the spider weaves his woof,
A leprous crust creeps o'er the House of Gold,
And the cold rain drips through the pictured roof."