

and yet well proportioned and carefully built.”¹ Round the courtyard are the various warehouses, over the doors of which are the names of different saints. Above the end arch is the inscription :—

FALLERE NRA VETANT ET FALLI PONDERA MEQ.
PONDERO CVM MERCES PONDERAT IPSE DEVS.

The early work ends with the moulded stringcourse above the second story; the third story, which has plain square windows, bears the date 1520 and the monogram IHS, found on so many houses in Ragusa, to commemorate the earthquake of that year. The façade has a portico of five handsome round arches in the Renaissance style, the columns of which are adorned with elaborate capitals; many of these have been renewed. Above is a row of windows in the purest Venetian style of the fifteenth century. The central window is a three-light aperture, the two side ones are of a single light. The windows of the third story are square like those looking on the courtyard. In the centre is a niche with a statue of St. Blaize, while the row of pinnacles on the roof call to mind many a Venetian palazzo. In spite of all incongruities the Sponza is a very attractive building, full of quaint grace and good work.

It has many interesting associations with Ragusan history. It was here that the caravans about to start on their perilous journeys through the wild Balkan lands formed up, and those which arrived at Ragusa first stopped. Every bale of goods arriving at or departing from the city, by sea or land, had to be first examined at

¹ *Op. cit.*, ii. 360.