

of 1554. The rich were in favour of peace, but the masses insisted on resistance to the end. In the face of starvation, all useless mouths were driven outside the city and many children and infirm were killed by the besiegers. Three companies of women, numbering nearly a thousand apiece, were raised for the defence of the city which was prolonged until April 1555. Then the French troops left with the honours of war, accompanied by seven

hundred families who preferred exile to the terms of the peace.

Siena has so much of interest that it is recommended to start in il Campo, the scene of the famous annual Palio. The Palio was only initiated in its present form about 1655. Each of the 17 districts of the city is represented by its standard bearers, its contrada and its horse and rider. The Standards are hung in the Cathedral on the days preceding the Festivals, the greater of which is on July 2 followed by a second on August 16. No other city in Europe has a similar race.

The Palazzo Pubblico is the finest Gothic Palazzo in Tuscany. It was built between 1288 and 1309, with a few later additions. The Wolf and Twins is an original statue dating from about 1460. In the interior is a series of magnificent public rooms, a Chapel and vestibules which contain some of the finest murals and frescoes of the XIVth Century. Among the specially important works are the Good and Bad Government of Lorenzetti, the Ancona of Duccio dei Buoninsegna and the Maesta of Simone Martini whose mural of Guido Riccio riding outside the walls is also a masterpiece. Siena was the

