

established in 1315, in which were inscribed the names of those who had the right to enter the Council.

This was not accomplished without protest, but the vigorous action of the rulers in hanging the ringleaders quickly crushed the riots of 1300 and 1310. The second outbreak, the Bajamonte Conspiracy, resulted in the establishment of the celebrated Council of Ten, at first a temporary body designed to root out the conspiracy, but one found so useful that it became a permanent part of the constitution. Many tales are told about this Council, but most of them are false. Its quick and secret action was of great service at a time when treachery was the current coin of politics and contributed substantially to Venice's unique freedom from internal feud. It made few mistakes, and its courage and freedom from bias earned it a formidable reputation.

The Constitution, as now settled, consisted of the Great Council, a sprawling body of patrician electors, the Senate, or *Pregadi*, the true legislative body, the *Collegio* or Cabinet, and at the top the Doge and Council, the executive part of the Government. The great body of people were excluded from any share of the Government, but were kept happy by lavish pageants, by privileges extended to the Trade Guilds, and by the high and general level of prosperity.

The first test for the new government came in 1353 when Genoa again attacked and again defeated the Venetian fleet. But she herself had suffered, and peace was arranged by Visconti of Milan. It could only be a truce however. The roots of the struggle went too deep. Each state was fighting for her trade, which is to say fighting for life. Venice forced the Emperor John V Paleologus to grant her Tenedos, which controlled the Dardanelles. Genoa could not stomach this, and war again broke out. The

Genoese Admiral, Prince Doria, defeated the Venetian fleet and sailed to Chioggia to blockade Venice itself. Things looked black for the Republic. But Pisani, the Venetian Admiral, by a brilliant stroke, blocked the Chioggian channels so that Doria in his turn found himself blockaded. In 1380 he had to surrender unconditionally. This ended the century-long struggle, for Genoa never recovered from this defeat. Venice became supreme.

But rich men seldom long keep their house in peace. Supreme at sea, Venice now faced no less a danger on land where jealous rivals threatened to block the passes which were essential to her trade. She was compelled to turn her eyes to the Italian mainland, both to ensure her trade and to secure her food supply.

This actually proved her downfall. Hitherto blessed with no land to defend, she had had to man only her navy. Now she found herself cursed by the need of all land powers, continual expansion to secure the land already held, of which Germany has just given the last and finest example. In 1402 Venice began this fatal process. On the death of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Carrara of Padua, who had already irritated the Republic by imposing heavy transit taxes, tried to seize the nearby mainland towns. Venice crushed him and found herself the ruler of Padua, Treviso, Bassano, Vicenza, and Verona. In 1420 she acquired Friuli bringing her frontier up to the Carnic and Julian Alps, where, with minor variations, it stayed till the fall of the Republic.

These new territories soon brought her into further wars. The new Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti, tried to recover his father's lands, and three wars resulted in 1426, 1427, and 1429. Venice won them, and added Brescia and Bergamo, Crema, Rovigo and the Polesino to her territories. This rapid success naturally led the Powers of