

place, the Genoese took and burned.* Thus they were engaged when word came that the Venetian fleet was in sight.

Venice, on first hearing of the Genoese armament, sent Andrea Dandolo with a large force to join and supersede Maffeo Quirini, who was already cruising with a squadron in the Ionian sea; and, on receiving further information of the strength of the hostile expedition, the Signory hastily equipped thirty-two more galleys in Chioggia and the ports of Dalmatia, and despatched them to join Dandolo, making the whole number under his command up to something like ninety-five. Recent drafts had apparently told heavily upon the Venetian sources of enlistment, and it is stated that many of the complements were made up of rustics swept in haste from the Euganean hills. To this the Genoese poet seems to allude, alleging that the Venetians, in spite of their haughty language, had to go begging for men and money up and down Lombardy. "Did *we* do like that, think you?" he adds:—

" Beat up for aliens? *We* indeed?
When lacked we homeborn Genoese?
Search all the seas, no salts like these,
For Courage, Seacraft, Wit at need." †

Of one of the Venetian galleys, probably in the fleet which sailed under Dandolo's immediate command, went Marco Polo as *Sopracomito* or Gentleman-Commander. ‡

* The island of Curzola now counts about 4000 inhabitants; the town half the number. It was probably reckoned a dependency of Venice at this time. The King of Hungary had renounced his claims on the Dalmatian coasts by treaty in 1244. (*Romanin*, ii. 235.) The gallant defence of the place against the Algerines in 1571 won for Curzola from the Venetian Senate the honourable title in all documents of *fedelissima*. (*Paton's Adriatic*, I. 47.)

† *Ma sè si gran colmo avea
Perchè andava mendigando

Per terra de Lombardia
Peccunia, gente a sodi?
Pone mente tu che l'odi
Se noi tegnamo questa via?*

*No, ma' più! ajamo omi nostrar
Destri, valenti, e avisti,
Che mai par de lor n' o visti
In tuti officj de mar.*

‡ In July 1294, a Council of Thirty decreed that galleys should be equipped by the richest families in proportion to their wealth. Among the families held to equip one galley each, or one galley among two or more, in this list, is the CA' POLO. But this was before the return of the travellers from the East, and just after the battle of Ayas. (*Romanin*, ii. 332; this author misdates Ayas, however.) When a levy was required in Venice for any expedition the heads of each *contrada* divided the male inhabitants, between the ages of twenty and sixty, into groups of twelve each, called *duodene*. The dice were thrown to decide who should go first on service. He who went received five *lire* a month from the State, and one *lira* from each of his colleagues in