

34. It was on the afternoon of Saturday the 6th September that the Genoese saw the Venetian fleet approaching, but, as sunset was not far off, both sides tacitly agreed to defer the engagement.*

The Fleets
come in sight
of each other
at Curzola.

The Genoese would appear to have occupied a position near the eastern end of the Island of Curzola, with the Peninsula of Sabbioncello behind them, and Meleda on their left, whilst the Venetians advanced along the south side of Curzola. (See map on p. 50).

According to Venetian accounts the Genoese were staggered at the sight of the Venetian armaments, and sent more than once to seek terms, offering finally to surrender galleys and munitions of war, if the crews were allowed to depart. This is an improbable story, and that of the Genoese ballad seems more like truth. Doria, it says, held a council of his captains in the evening at which they all voted for attack, whilst the Venetians, with that overweening sense of superiority which at this time is reflected in their own annals as distinctly as in those of their enemies, kept scout-vessels out to watch that the Genoese fleet, which they looked on as already their own, did not steal away in the darkness. A vain imagination, says the poet:—

“Blind error of vainglorious men
To dream that we should seek to flee
After those weary leagues of sea
Crossed, but to hunt them in their den!”†

the *duodena*. Hence his pay was sixteen *lire* a month, about 2*s.* a day in silver value, if these were *lire ai grossi*, or 1*s.* 4*d.* if *lire dei piccoli*. (See *Romanin*, ii. 393-394.)

Money on such occasions was frequently raised by what was called an *Estimo* or *Facion*, which was a forced loan levied on the citizens in proportion to their estimated wealth; and for which they were entitled to interest from the State.

* Several of the Italian chroniclers, as Ferreto of Vicenza and Navagiero, whom Muratori has followed in his “Annals,” say the battle was fought on the 8th September, the so-called Birthday of the Madonna. But the inscription on the Church of St. Matthew at Genoa, cited further on, says the 7th, and with this agree both Stella and the Genoese poet. For the latter, though not specifying the day of the month, says it was on a Sunday:—

“Lo di de Domenga era
Passa prima en l'ora bona
Stormezam fin provo nona
Con bataio forte e fera.”

Now the 7th September, 1298, fell on a Sunday.

†

*Ma li pensavam grande error
Che in fuga se fussem tuti met:ui
Che de si lonzi eram vegnui
Per cerchali a casa lor.*