

35. The battle began early on Sunday and lasted till the afternoon. The Venetians had the wind in their favour, but the morning sun in their eyes. They made the attack, and with great impetuosity, capturing ten Genoese galleys; but they pressed on too wildly, and some of their vessels ran aground. One of their galleys too, being taken, was cleared of her crew and turned against the Venetians. These incidents caused confusion among the assailants; the Genoese, who had begun to give way, took fresh heart, formed a close column, and advanced boldly through the Venetian line, already in disorder. The sun had begun to decline when there appeared on the Venetian flank the fifteen or sixteen missing galleys of Doria's fleet, and fell upon it with fresh force. This decided the action. The Genoese gained a complete victory, capturing all but a few of the Venetian galleys, and including the flagship with Dandolo. The Genoese themselves lost heavily, especially in the early part of the action, and Lamba Doria's eldest son Octavian is said to have fallen on board his father's vessel.\* The number of prisoners taken was over 7000, and among these was Marco Polo.†

The prisoners, even of the highest rank, appear to have been chained. Dandolo, in despair at his defeat, and at the prospect of being carried captive into Genoa, refused food, and ended by dashing his head against a bench.‡ A Genoese account asserts

\* "Note here that the Genoese generally, commonly, and by nature, are the most covetous of Men, and the Love of Gain spurs them to every Crime. Yet are they deemed also the most valiant Men in the World. Such an one was Lampa, of that very Doria family, a man of an high Courage truly. For when he was engaged in a Sea-Fight against the Venetians, and was standing on the Poop of his Galley, his Son, fighting valiantly at the Forecastle, was shot by an Arrow in the Breast, and fell wounded to the Death; a Mishap whereat his Comrades were sorely shaken, and Fear came upon the whole Ship's Company. But Lampa, hot with the Spirit of Battle, and more mindful of his Country's Service and his own Glory than of his Son, ran forward to the spot, loftily rebuked the agitated Crowd, and ordered his Son's Body to be cast into the Deep, telling them for their Comfort that the Land could never have afforded his Boy a nobler Tomb. And then, renewing the Fight more fiercely than ever, he achieved the Victory." (*Benvenuto of Imola, in Comment. on Dante. in Muratori, Antiq. i. 1146.*)

("Yet like an English General will I die,  
And all the Ocean make my spacious Grave;  
Women and Cowards on the Land may lie,  
The Sea's the Tomb that's proper for the Brave!"—*Annus Mirabilis.*)

† The particulars of the battle are gathered from *Ferretus Vicentinus*, in *Murat.* ix. 985 *seqq.*; *And. Dandolo*, in xii. 407-408; *Navagiero*, in xxiii. 1009-1010; and the Genoese Poem as before.

‡ *Navagiero*, u. s. Dandolo says, "after a few days he died of grief"; *Ferretus*, that he was killed in the action and buried at Curzola.

The Venetians defeated, and Marco Polo a prisoner.