

THE
STATES OF ITALY
HISTORY OF VERONA

A. M. ALLEN

PREFACE

THERE is no need to explain the origin of this attempt to write the history of Verona, the inherent fascination of the subject speaks for itself. But I cannot let this volume appear without expressing my sincere thanks to all who have assisted me during its preparation. First and foremost I desire to thank the cavaliere Gaetano da Re, of the Biblioteca Comunale at Verona, who, during my two visits to Verona, in 1904 and 1906, placed at my disposal the treasures both of the library and of his learning with the most generous kindness, and since then has settled more than one difficult point. From the other officials of this library, and those of the other libraries I visited, the Biblioteca Capitolare at Verona, the Biblioteca Marciana and the Archivio di Stato (in the Frari) at Venice, and the Archivio Gonzaga at Mantua, I met with the same unfailing and courteous assistance. Among modern works I have found Count Carlo Cipolla's writings on Verona and his scholarly edition of the early Veronese chroniclers invaluable, while J. M. Gittermann's Ezzelino III. da Romano, E. Salzer's Ueber die Anfänge der Signorie in Oberitalien, and H. Spangenberg's Cangrande I are all of the first importance for various periods of Veronese history. My thanks are also due to Miss Croom-Brown, who constructed the three maps, the result of much careful research, and to my cousin, Mr. Alfred Jukes Allen, who read the proofs with minute accuracy. But most of all do I wish to express my gratitude to the editor of the whole series, Mr. Armstrong, to whose generous help, kindly encouragement, and wise counsel whatever there is of good in this book is due.

CHAPTERS

Early History

The Development of the Self-governing Commune

The Rise of Ezzelino da Romano

Ezzelino da Romano as an Independent Ruler

The Founding of the Scaligeri Dynasty under Mastino I.

Alberto I

Bartolomeo I and Alboino

Cangrande I. (1)

Cangrande I. (2)

Social and Economic Development under Cangrande I and His Successors

The Culminating Point of the Scaligeri

The Downfall of Alberto II and Mastino II.

Cangrande II and Cansignorio

The End of the Scaligeri

Verona under the Visconti and Carraresi

Later History

The Veronese School of Painting

Sculpture and Architecture

CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORY

THE origin of Verona is still an unsolved problem. It is known that the Romans found a town there when they first penetrated north of the Po, but no classical writer has anything certain to say of either the nationality of its inhabitants or the date of its foundation. It has been suggested that the original Veronese were Cimbrians, on the supposition that the Raudian plain, where Marius defeated the Cimbrians in 101 B.C., was near Verona, a supposition borne out by the existence of a settlement of so-called Cimbrians in the mountains north-east of the city, the German-speaking Thirteen Communes. But it is now held that the Raudian plain is near Vercelli, while Count Carlo Cipolla has shown, by the aid of a large mass of documentary evidence, that the region of the Thirteen Communes was uninhabited till late in the thirteenth century, when it was colonised by German immigrants.

In 89 B.C. Verona, in common with the other cities of Gallia Transpadana, received the Latin franchise. Forty years later the full franchise was conferred on the Transpadanes by Julius Caesar. Under the early Emperors Verona was raised to the position of a colony, and received the name of Colonia Augusta, though not, as the title might seem to imply, under Augustus, for the elder Pliny does not include the city in his list of Roman colonies.

During the early Empire many fine buildings sprang up in Verona, an amphitheatre, a theatre, a circus, a capitol, temples and baths. The site of the capitol is thought to have been on the hill now disfigured by the Castel di S. Pietro, and the statue forming part of the fountain in the Piazza Erbe is said to have been discovered there.¹ The splendid arch to Jupiter Ammon, which was still standing in the seventeenth century, has almost disappeared, and nothing is left of the many temples enumerated as still in existence in an eighth century metrical description of Verona, but the theatre and amphitheatre still exist, and a fine gateway known as the Porta dei Borsari. According to one theory the upper part of this gate is a century later than the rest, and dates from a decadent period, but even if this is so it must be owned that the double series of alternate windows and columns is singularly beautiful. The remnants of another gate, the Arco dei Leoni in the street leading to the Ponte delle Navi, is now held to be later than Roman times, probably of the sixth century.³ The first Roman walls included only a small part of the modern town. On the left bank of the Adige they took in only the hill of S. Pietro, and a small piece of level ground at its foot. On the right bank a wall cut off the northern end of the land lying in the loop of the river, starting from a point just West of the Church of S. Eufemia, and reaching the river again half-way between the Ponte Nuovo and the Ponte delle Navi. The amphitheatre was outside this wall, but Gallienus made an extension which included it. A Roman bridge stood where the Ponte di Pietra now stands—indeed the two Eastern arches of the present bridge are said to be of Roman masonry—another led from the theatre to the site now occupied by S. Anastasia, and some authorities hold that there was a third higher up the river, not far from the Ponte del Castelvecchio.

During the break-up of the Western Empire, Verona underwent more than one siege, and saw several decisive battles fought below her walls. Constantine defeated the troops of Maxentius there in 312, and Theodoric those of Odoacer in 489. Theodoric made Ravenna his capital, but Verona was always his favourite dwelling-place, and her name is united for ever with his in German legend as Dietrich's Bern. But Veronese mediaeval tradition was far from favourable to the great Ostrogoth. A rough twelfth century bas-relief on the façade of S. Zeno represents a crowned horseman chasing a stag, and a contemporary inscription below states that horse, hounds and stag had been sent by the devil to lure the royal hunter on to hell. Tradition identifies this horseman with Theodoric, and the whole bas-relief is riddled with little holes bored by the Veronese *gamins* in the hope of smelling the sulphur from the flames in which the great Goth is still popularly supposed to be burning. It is probable that the obloquy in which his favourite city held Theodoric's memory was owing to his Arianism, for the mediaeval Veronese, though later inclined to favour Emperor against Pope, were otherwise strictly orthodox. The destruction of the ancient Church of S. Stefano to make room for new fortifications is attributed to Theodoric, and would not have tended to ingratiate him with the orthodox party. Yet he did much both for the beauty and healthiness of the city. On the hill of S. Pietro he built a palace, the substructures of which can still be traced amongst the remains of the buildings, which have in succession occupied that site. He strengthened and enlarged the walls, repaired the aqueduct, and built arcades and public baths.

With the coming of the Lombards, Verona for a short time rose into prominence. Alboin, the Lombard king who led the invaders into Italy, took up his abode there, and there in 572 he was slain. His death has been the subject of countless poems and tales, from the old Lombard chroniclers to the present day. The longest and most circumstantial original account is that given by Paul the Deacon, who wrote a history of the Lombards in the eighth century. The main outlines of Paul's version are as follows:

Before entering Italy, Alboin had slain Cunimund, a chieftain of the Gepidi, and married his daughter Rosamund. One day at a banquet, Alboin commanded Rosamund to drink wine from a goblet which had been made from her father's skull. Rosamund obeyed, but her heart burnt within her for rage and shame. From that moment the one purpose of her life was to take vengeance on Alboin. An armour-bearer, named Helmichis, became her accomplice, and between them they persuaded an extraordinarily strong man named Peredeo to undertake to slay the King. On the day appointed, Rosamund sent every one out of the palace, on the plea that the King's midday siesta should be undisturbed. Then, when she had bound his sword fast to the head of the bed, and removed all his other weapons and armour, she led Peredeo to the royal chamber. Alboin, suddenly aroused from sleep, turned to seize his sword, found he could not draw it from the scabbard, and realized that he was betrayed. Snatching up a footstool he made a valiant attempt to defend his life, but all in vain. Rosamund and Helmichis fled to Ravenna, where they married, but Longinus, the prefect of Ravenna, fell in love with Rosamund and persuaded her to make away with Helmichis. Allured by the prospect of queening it over Ravenna, Rosamund gave Helmichis a cup of poison as he was returning from the bath, telling him that it was a cordial. Helmichis took one draught from the cup, and when he found it was poison, forced Rosamund to drink the rest, and so the guilty pair

perished together.

Thus Paul the Deacon. How much of this is legend, how much fact, it is hard to say. Paul wrote more than a hundred and fifty years after the event, so that we may be sure that the tale had been often re-told and lost nothing in the telling, but there was probably a considerable substratum of truth. Paul was a cautious writer and did what lay in his power to verify his statements. He notes that Giselbert, the governor of Verona in his day, had recently had Alboin's tomb opened, and drawn out the murdered man's sword and armour, and adds that he himself had seen the goblet said to have been made from Cunimund's skull, one day when Ratchis, the Lombard king of Paul's time, was showing his treasure to some guests.

After this terrible tragedy the capital of the Lombard kings was moved to Pavia, and Verona lost her pre-eminence, becoming again one of the thirty-six duchies into which the kingdom was divided. The new-comers, though they had met with little opposition, behaved as conquerors. They confiscated a great portion of the land, depressed the status of the inhabitants, substituted Germanic laws for the Roman code, and in a word imposed their own institutions and civilisation, such as it was, on the country. Nevertheless it was not possible that the original inhabitants, numerous and highly civilized as they were, should not exercise some influence on their conquerors, especially after the latter had been converted in the reign of King Agilulf (589-614), from their rude form of Christianity, a debased Arianism, to orthodox Catholicism. Roman law might be deposed for a time from its high estate, but it did not die out altogether. It survived at first as the personal law of the conquered. Then it began slowly to make headway till it was recognized as being on an equal footing with Germanic law. Finally it regained its former supremacy, ousting its rival, and becoming the territorial law of the whole country about the time when the nascent cities were drawing up their earliest codes of statutes.

The term "nascent" is used here deliberately, for one Roman institution was completely wiped out by the Lombard domination, and that was the *municipium*, the organisation for the local self-government of the cities. The disappearance of the *municipium* was doubtless only the completion of a movement which had begun as early as the fifth century, but it was certainly accelerated by the coming of the Lombards, who from the beginning governed the cities entirely from above through officials known as Duke. This system was continued by the successors of the Lombards, the Franks, and under it the cities lost their supremacy over the surrounding rural districts, and became of but little consequence. The basis of government from having been urban, became rural.

The conquests of Charlemagne ended the Lombard domination; all resistance collapsed after the capture of Verona in the summer of 774, and Charlemagne became King of Italy. The Veronese after one or two risings accommodated themselves to their Frankish rulers. Pavia remained the seat of government, but Pippin, Charlemagne's eldest son, preferred, like Theodoric, to live in Verona. Under his rule it became exceedingly flourishing. The eighth-century poem describing the city was written while he was living there. The opening lines praise his justice, piety and good government, under which Verona had grown and prospered. Then follows a picture of the city. It was built in the

form of a square, and surrounded by high walls, crowned with eight and forty towers, eight of which were exceeding high. It was full of fine buildings and streets. There was a castle, several splendid Roman temples, and a wondrous labyrinth. The bridges were of stone and the forum and other open spaces were paved. But the greatest glory of the city was the crown of nearly thirty churches which encircled and, as it were, guarded it on every side; for these churches were exceptionally rich in the treasure of the early mediaeval Church, the bodies of saints. Amongst the long list of names, there are three saints of local celebrity, S. Fermo, S. Rustico and S. Zeno. The first two had suffered martyrdom in Verona, but for many years their bodies had rested in a far-off island. Then, according to the poem, under the last King of the Lombards Desiderius, the bishop of Verona, a certain Hanno, had them dug up, embalmed in precious spices and brought back to Verona, where they were buried in the church bearing their name in a monument striped with purple, black and white, and adorned with gold.

S. Fermo and S. Rustico were the first Veronese martyrs, and are generally held to have suffered under Diocletian. It is claimed, however, that Christianity was introduced into Verona much earlier, indeed some authorities maintain that the bishopric was founded in the first century after Christ. This is exceedingly improbable, but it is now generally acknowledged that Verona is one of the few bishoprics of North Italy that can with justice boast of an origin prior to the fourth century. In the first instance the Veronese see was subject to the Archbishop of Milan, but in the fifth century it was transferred to the Patriarchate of Aquileia. Nothing is known of the first bishop, S. Euprepus, but his name. S. Zeno, who may be regarded as the patron saint of Verona, and to whom the greatest abbey in the city is dedicated, was the eighth bishop. He was born in North Africa (hence the popular belief that he was a negro), was a voluminous writer of sermons, and contributed largely by the saintliness and purity of his life to the spread of Christianity in Verona. Hardly any other facts are known concerning him, but after his death, which occurred about 380, a cycle of legends grew up, which represented him as working many miracles. The body of the saint was first buried in a small and poverty-stricken church, but according to a manuscript of the twelfth century, it was afterwards transferred by Pippin to a magnificent building, which he had specially erected for it, possibly on the site of the present abbey.

The court of Charlemagne had been celebrated for its culture, and this led to a general revival of learning throughout his Empire. In 825 his grandson Lotharius established schools in the principal cities of North Italy, one of which was placed at Verona, and served for the inhabitants of Trent and Mantua as well. In the decree founding these schools Lothair states that learning was completely extinct in Italy, but this assertion must not be taken too literally. For instance, in the first half of the ninth century Pacificus, the Archdeacon of Verona, was a Hebrew and Greek scholar, the inventor of a solar clock, and an indefatigable collector of manuscripts, which he left to the Veronese Cathedral, thus laying the foundation of the present *Biblioteca Capitolare*.

The Carolingians, like the Lombards, ruled their cities from above, delegating their Imperial authority, judicial and executive, to officials chosen by themselves, *Scabini* (judges) and Counts. This administrative system had become so firmly established that it

survived the extinction of the legitimate Carolingian line, and thus saved Italy from the complete anarchy which would otherwise have been its fate. For sixty years after Charles was deposed the Italian crown was constantly disputed, and no one succeeded in holding it for long together, far less in founding a dynasty. The first to win it was an Italian, Berengarius, Duke of Friuli, and grandson through his mother of the Carolingian Louis II.

Berengarius made Verona his capital, but in 901 he was driven from both capital and throne by Louis III, who in his turn settled at Verona, building a palace on the hill of S. Pietro. In 905, however, Berengarius bribed some guards to admit him and his army into Verona, surprised the palace, and captured Louis. For twenty years Berengarius now reigned over Italy. In 915 he was crowned Emperor at Rome. His glory was sung by a contemporary poet who was said to be a Veronese, and who, though but a poor artist, displays a considerable amount of learning, chiefly in the form of copious notes. A few years afterwards civil war broke out again, and Berengarius' foes, under Rudolf II of Burgundy, won a great victory over him at Piacenza. Berengarius took refuge in Verona, which he regarded as the most faithful of his cities, but even there he was not safe. He refused to listen to the warning of his most powerful vassal, Milo, and have his sleeping-place properly guarded. On the morning of 7th April, 924, he was roused from sleep by an armed mob, captured and slain. Milo at once took command of affairs, and in three days had caught and executed all the ringleaders of the plot. Six years later Milo was appointed Count of Verona, and from that year till his death in 962 is the leading figure in Veronese history.

Berengarius was succeeded by Rudolf II, and he in his turn by Hugo Count of Provence. Hugo, however, was unpopular, so that when in 935 Arnold of Bavaria entered Italy to try and win the crown he met with an enthusiastic reception. At Verona he was supported both by Count Milo and the bishop, Ratherius, one of the most remarkable personalities of the tenth century. Born at Louvain and educated at the Monastery of Lobbes in Flanders, Ratherius came to Italy soon after Berengarius' death, in the train of Hilduin, who, exiled from his own see of Liège, had been appointed to that of Verona. On Hilduin's death Ratherius succeeded him, but like his predecessor passed much of his life in exile. In 935, 949, and again in 973 he was driven out of Verona, the last time never to return. Versatile and restless, he played an active part in all the political turmoils of his day. He was deeply read in both sacred and profane literature, including the odes of Catullus, and such other classical writings as were known at the time. He delighted in writing interminable letters, in which he would rate his ecclesiastical brethren soundly for their degradation and immorality, or attack new heresies, especially a form of anthropomorphism then in vogue. When Milo again transferred his allegiance from Arnold to Hugo, Ratherius, remaining faithful to the former, was imprisoned first at Pavia, and then at Como, from which, however, he escaped to Lobbes.

Hugo was deposed in 949 in favour of Berengarius II (grandson of Berengarius I through his mother), who wished to marry Adelaide, widow of Hugo's son Lothair, to his own son Adalbert. But Adelaide fled to Garda, a little town with a strong castle on the eastern shores of Lake Garda, and held out there for some months, and eventually took refuge with Otto I, who solved her difficulties by marrying her himself. Otto had recently

come into Italy to enforce his rights as King of the Romans. His arrival introduced a new element into Italian politics, a close connexion with the Saxon Emperors, which was felt more at Verona than anywhere else. In 952 the compromise of Augsburg was made, by which Berengarius retained the crown of Italy in return for an annual tribute to Otto. The north-east portion of the Lombard plain, however, the Mark of Verona and Aquileia, was taken out of the Italian kingdom, and united to that of Germany, being held by Otto's brother, Henry Duke of Bavaria. But the effect of this upon Verona was but slight, indeed after Otto's final victory over Berengarius in 964 the only result was a purely technical one, *i.e.*, in judicial and administrative matters the city was under the control of the Imperial Chancellor for Germany, the Archbishop of Mainz, instead of the Archbishop of Cologne, who was Imperial Chancellor for Italy.

This transference, however, may have been one of the contributory causes of the exceptional development of the judicial and administrative system of the Veronese Mark. From 952 onwards the Mark was in theory governed by three officials, the Count, the Marquis, and the Duke, who formed an ascending scale of authority. In reality this arrangement never existed except in the ten years between the transference of the Mark to Germany and the death of Milo in 962. The highest judicial and administrative power passed very early into the hands of the lowest of the three officials, the Count. Doubtless when the Duke appeared in person in the Mark, the Count resumed his subordinate position, but since the Duke was almost invariably head of another and larger duchy his visits must have become less and less frequent, as time went on. Other causes contributed to weaken the Duke's authority in the Mark. He held no large landed estate there. Then, while elsewhere in North Italy the appointment of the Count lay with the Marquis or Duke, at Verona the Emperor kept it in his own hands. At Verona, too, another check was wanting to the Count's authority, in that the bishop, unlike the other Lombard prelates, never acquired any temporal power over the city. Small wonder, then, that by the end of the tenth century the Count of Verona had become again what he was in the earlier half, *viz.* the most important official in the Mark. The office was generally held by Veronese, from 930 to 950 A.D. by Milo, and then by his nephew Egelric. On the latter's death it passed to other families, to return later to his descendants, becoming practically hereditary in the family. In time, however, with the weakening of the Imperial authority in Italy, the title of Count of Verona ceased to carry with it any special powers, and a later generation took instead the title of Counts of S. Bonifacio, from the little town on the Alpone near which their estates lay. Under this name the family soon became one of the strongest elements of discord during the development of Verona into a self-governing city.

One urgent reason for the transference of the Veronese Mark from the kingdom of Italy to that of Germany was that it enabled the Emperors to keep a firmer hold on Verona, and through her on the Brenner Pass, at that time almost the only road between Germany and Italy which was practicable for an army. The Brenner Pass ascends the valley of the Sill from Innsbruck to the Brenner Lake, on the watershed between the Danube and the Po. From here it descends the Eisack to its confluence with the Adige at Botzen, and then follows the latter river to the plain of Lombardy. A few miles above the spot where the Adige emerges into the plain, it passes through the celebrated Chiusa, a narrow defile flanked by precipitous limestone cliffs, which at one point approach the

river so closely on both sides that there is barely room for the road, and here a large army could easily be held up by quite a small force. The Chiusa lies in Veronese territory, being not much more than ten miles from Verona. Hence any one holding Verona had almost complete control of the Brenner Pass, for though a road diverges at Trent, a good many miles north of the Chiusa, and goes off eastward down the Valsugana to Bassano, it was not practicable for an army during the Middle Ages, and the paths which led westwards to the shores of Lake Garda were still more difficult. For a century and a half after the accession of Otto I, then, it was the mission of Verona to act as an outpost of the Imperial authority in Italy, and to keep the road open for the passage of the Emperors and their armies, and faithfully did the city perform her charge.

It was at Verona that Otto I held the Imperial diet of 967, in which he inaugurated the policy of granting the temporal power over the towns of North Italy to the bishops. Singularly enough the bishop of Verona alone received no authority over the chief city of his diocese. Possibly Otto did not altogether trust the versatile Ratherius, who had been reinstated for the second time a few years before, possibly he felt that the exceptional development, both judicial and executive, of the Veronese Mark made it wiser not to risk any undue ecclesiastical interference.

Otto II held a still more important diet at Verona in 983, when he induced the assembled princes to elect his three-year-old son, Otto, King of Germany and Italy. Barely nineteen years later those escorting the dead body of Otto III from Paterno to Germany found themselves for the first time among friends when they reached Verona. So, too, the Veronese showed themselves loyal to Henry II and Conrad the Salic, while in the struggle over the Investitures they were almost always to be found on the Imperial side. This can hardly have been unconnected with the fact that in the eleventh century the Veronese bishops, to judge from their names, all came from Germany. Verona even produced one of the schismatic Popes of this period, a certain Cadolaus, who was elected by the Council of Bale in 1061, in opposition to Alexander II, and took the name of Honorius II, but retired from the struggle after three years.

The end of the dispute over the Investitures coincided with the first efforts of the Italian cities to win independence, to impose taxes, to build fortifications, to elect their own officials, in a word to manage their own affairs in their own way. The rise of the Communes, as it is generally called, is, however, a movement of such importance that the consideration of the way in which it affected Verona must be left to another chapter.

The word Commune is now generally employed, both in England and Italy, to signify a city that was self-governing, in contra-distinction to one ruled autocratically, whether by a hereditary dynasty or an isolated despot. But it may not be out of place to explain here that in mediaeval Lombardy the term possessed a different meaning, not signifying any special form of government of a city, but the body of citizens acting in their corporate capacity. The Commune did not include all the male inhabitants of a town, but only those possessing sufficient property or income to enable them to pay certain taxes, the due discharge of which alone gave the minimum of political rights, i.e. the capacity to hold office, and to vote in the largest public assembly. Only the possessors of

these rights were technically citizens, *cives*, *buoni uomini*. The lower classes, the *basso* or *minuto popolo*, were generally politically powerless, and nearly always outnumbered the citizens proper, for, though it is never expressly stated anywhere, it is clear that the property qualification was as a rule high enough to exclude the masses.

Now though the Communes were evolved as the Lombard cities were developing into independent states, and in every case the first form that the government of these states assumed was republican, the Communes continued to exist long after the cities had ceased to be self-governing. If a city became subject to a despot or to another state, whether autocracy or republic, the Commune, of course, lost many of its prerogatives. But even under the most tyrannical ruler it would continue to transact local business, and in more favourable circumstances might retain many of its original powers; the name of the Commune would appear as a party to treaties, and in important official documents, no new law would be valid unless proclaimed in the public assemblies, while in some autocracies the Commune long retained the right of electing the ruler. At Verona the rulers were elected by the Commune, though, it is true, often only as a matter of form, till the very end of the Scaligeri dynasty; and when the city came under the domination of other states, Milan, Padua and Venice, the Commune in every case negotiated the terms of the settlement with the new rulers and carried on the work of local government afterwards. At the same time it must be remembered that however large a subject city was, it was never admitted to any share in the central government. This was invariably reserved for the supreme authority, whether a despot, or another selfgoverning city; and of the two it may be noted that the latter nearly always proved the more tyrannical.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF-GOVERNING COMMUNE

THE origin of the mediaeval Italian Communes has been the subject of much controversy. The older view that they were developed from the survivals of the Roman municipality is now no longer tenable, attractive though it was, and supported by the use of the titles *Potestas* and Consul for the earliest magistrates of the new communities, and by the recurrence of such terms as *Senatus*, *Praetor*, *Plebs*, etc., in the works of writers who were influenced by the dawn of the classical revival. The theory which regarded the Communes as the continuation of the Carolingian institutions has also been disproved. Recent research tends rather to show that they were developed originally out of the *consorterie* (groups of families formed to cultivate land held in common) and that their subsequent growth was largely due to their gradual acquisition of the functions of the Imperial officials, the Counts, Viscounts, etc., and of the temporal powers of the bishops, which had risen to such heights during the tenth and eleventh centuries. Doubtless other circumstances helped on the expansion of the new communities. The walls that were built to repel the invasions of the Hungarians and other barbarians at the end of the ninth century, had already restored to the cities much of their former supremacy over the surrounding country. This was increased later by the growth of their commerce and the decay of feudalism. The probability is that the rise of the Communes was owing directly or indirectly to these and many other causes, some of which would act in one case, some in another. Still the fact that the decay of the temporal power of the bishops coincided with a century-long paralysis of the Imperial authority must have been one of the strongest and most general of these causes. By force, by prescription, by purchase, the cities acquired privilege after privilege, that had formerly belonged to bishop or Count. As they became richer and more populous they began to subdue the surrounding districts, to build castles at important strategical points, to make war on the nobles or one another, to negotiate treaties of peace or of commerce—in a word, to behave as independent states.

For a time the new movement continued without encountering any very active opposition, but it was inevitable that sooner or later the expansion of the rising Communes should bring them into collision with older established claims and interests. The first serious opposition came in the second half of the twelfth century, from a somewhat unexpected quarter, the Empire. The Imperial rights in Italy had gradually fallen into disuse during the eleventh century, and since then had remained almost entirely in abeyance; for instance, no Count had exercised authority in Verona as the Imperial representative after 1073. But in 1152 Frederic of Hohenstaufen, Duke of Swabia, was elected Emperor, and one of his earliest resolutions was to revive the Imperial rights in Italy. This was bound eventually to end in a breach between Frederic and the young and hot-blooded communities of the Lombard plain, but when he first appeared in Italy in 1154 many of the cities showed themselves not disinclined to consider his claims. The Veronese were amongst those who welcomed the Emperor most enthusiastically, and though he did not enter the city itself, he remained encamped for some time at Povegliano in the district. On Frederic's return to Germany in the following year, an untoward incident showed that a different feeling was

springing up among the Veronese. His army crossed the Adige just above Verona by a temporary bridge of boats, and directly afterwards the bridge broke. At once a rumour arose that treachery had been at work. The bridge was said to have been built badly on purpose, and large bundles of wood collected above it, to be floated down as the army was crossing, so that their weight might break the bridge when half of the troops were on one side of the river, half on the other. In the ensuing confusion an attack was to be made on the Imperial army. This tale rested on no trustworthy evidence, but it received a colouring of plausibility from an occurrence which happened immediately afterwards. On his way up the Brenner, Frederic found the fort of Rivole, which stands on an almost inaccessible rock on the western side of the defile of the Chiusa, in possession of a certain Veronese rebel named Alberico. Alberico allowed the Imperial vanguard to go by unmolested, then swooping down on the road, blocked it at the narrowest point with a considerable body of men, and demanded a large sum from Frederic as the price of the passage of the rest of his army. Frederic indignantly refused to parley with the foe, and by the aid of two loyal Veronese, named Garzapan and Isaac, a path was discovered over the cliffs and Alberico was dislodged from his position. This occurrence is only reported by German writers, and they give confused and mutually contradictory versions of the whole episode, which indeed reads more like the daring exploit of some robber chieftain than a serious attack on the Imperial army. But there must have been some suspicion that the Veronese as a whole were implicated in the matter, for in the following winter the assembled citizens deputed their bishop Tebaldo to visit the Imperial court and make their peace with Frederic. Tebaldo asseverated that the Veronese as a whole were faithful to the Imperial cause and that none of the leading citizens had been privy to any plot against the Emperor, but Frederic only consented to receive the city back into favour after the payment of a heavy fine.

On his second visit to Italy in 1158 Frederic was again welcomed at Verona, and Veronese troops took part in the Imperial attack on Milan. At the diet of Roncalia, in November, 1158, the Emperor induced the North Italian cities, Verona amongst them, to recognize his claim to appoint their chief magistrates, the Podestas, Consuls, etc. But in the next few years a complete change came over Veronese policy. The citizens openly threw off all allegiance to the Empire, and allied themselves with the Vicentines, Paduans and Venetians against Frederic. Their reasons for this change of attitude are not difficult to find. The schism of 1160 had resulted in the election of two rival Popes, Victor IV and Alexander III. Frederic espoused the cause of the former, but the new bishop of Verona, Ognibene (Tebaldo had died in 1157), had long been a firm friend of Alexander and carried the Veronese with him. The severe treatment meted out to Milan when that city submitted to Frederic in 1162 was not calculated to attract the other Lombard Communes to the Imperial cause, while the officials deputed by the Emperor to rule the cities of the Trevisan Mark had governed cruelly and tyrannically. The alliance between Verona, Vicenza, Padua and Venice, the *Societas Veronensis* as it was called, was formed early in 1164, and in June of that year Frederic led his army to ravage the Veronese district, intending doubtless to crush Verona as he had crushed Milan. But the Veronese by the help of their allies and of Venetian gold had collected a large body of troops. Frederic was encamped at Vaccaldo. The Veronese army moved out against him. The two forces were almost equal. Neither was strong enough to attack, neither wished to give way. For five days the two armies stood face to face without moving. At the end of that time Frederic, recognizing that he could effect nothing, led his troops off. This retreat was hailed with great joy as a victory for the Communes, and it was not long before they began to shake off the yoke which the Emperor had tried to rivet on their necks.

Verona now definitely threw in her lot with the opponents of the Empire. Some nobles who had plotted to betray the city to Frederic were executed in the September after his retreat. The Veronese did not join the alliance made in April, 1167, by Milan, Cremona, Brescia, Mantua, and Ferrara, but they subsequently assisted the allies to rebuild Milan, which had lain desolate ever since its destruction in 1162. On 1st December, 1167, a much wider alliance was formed which included, besides the cities already mentioned, Venice, Verona, Vicenza, Padua and Treviso. This confederation is known to history as the Lombard League. It was governed by Rectors elected by the cities who formed its members. Every individual citizen between the ages of fourteen and sixty was bound to take an oath to obey the Rectors, to work for the common good, and not to make war or peace without the consent of the League. The view that would see in the Lombard League the germ of the modern nation, is hardly supported by facts, for the principal object of the confederation was to resist the Imperial claims, and once this aim was achieved and the danger from the Empire removed the League speedily lost its universal character, and sank to the position of leader of one of the two great parties into which North Italy was nearly always divided. As an instrument for stemming the Imperial claims the League, however, proved eminently successful. In 1175 its army, led by the Milanese, Brescians, Piacentines and Veronese, forced Frederic to raise the siege of Alessandria. On 24th May, 1176, it inflicted a severe defeat on the Emperor at Legnago. When in 1177 Frederic and Alexander III. made peace, the League wrung from the Emperor a separate treaty containing very favourable terms for the cities. This treaty, which was to last six years, stipulated for the official recognition of the League by the Emperor, and secured to the cities the right to erect fortifications, to elect their own chief magistrates, the Consuls, against whose sentence no appeal was to lie, and to retain their ancient customs and tolls, many of which Frederic had succeeded in reclaiming at Roncalia, as Imperial *regalia*. Six years later, on 25th June, 1183, these provisions were made permanent by the celebrated Treaty of Constance. The Emperor, it is true, regained a few minor points which he had been compelled to yield before—the right to invest the Consuls with their Consulate every five years, and to exercise an appellate jurisdiction over their sentences in cases over twenty-five pounds in value,—but, to save the Italians the expense and trouble of a journey across the Alps, Frederic consented to appoint in every city an envoy to exercise the appellate jurisdiction when he himself was absent, and to invest the Consuls with their Consulate free of charge. The cities retained the rights of fortification and election of Consuls; the list of tolls and customs granted to them was slightly increased; the Emperor pardoned all injuries done to him, and in return for the right of free passage when on his journey to Rome, undertook not to remain longer than was necessary in any one place. Individual concessions were made to various towns, and the command of the Lower Brenner, which had been taken away after the episode of 1155, was restored once more to Verona. The Veronese representative, Cozo, a lawyer and one of the most influential men in the city, took the oath of allegiance to the Emperor in the name of all his fellow-citizens, and was then appointed Imperial envoy for Verona. In the following year Frederic marked his reconciliation with the Veronese by visiting the city in person, in order to hold an interview with the new Pope, Lucius III.

Lucius, who had succeeded Alexander III in 1181 and had been almost immediately driven out of Rome, passed the closing years of his life in Verona. He held a council there in which the future papal policy towards heresy was outlined, and died there in November, 1185, being buried in the cathedral, though not in the place now occupied by his tomb. His successor, Urban III, was elected at Verona, and spent nearly all his short pontificate there. The cathedral was finished during his sojourn in the city, and in 1187 he consecrated it, soon

afterwards going to Ferrara, where he died.

The prosperity of the young Commune during the twelfth century is strikingly shown by the fine buildings which date from this period. In addition to the cathedral, which has hardly been altered since, the great abbey of S. Zeno was completed by the erection of the tower, which was finished in 1178. Six years before, the tower now forming part of the municipal buildings was begun. Originally it was the property of a family called the Lamberti, but it was not long before the city took possession of it. In 1194 the Podesta, Guglielmo da Osa of Milan, began a palace by its side, for the use of the officials of the Commune. Tower and palace together form one of the noblest groups of municipal buildings in all Italy. They were not completed, however, as they now stand, till much later. The beautiful outer staircase of red marble was added in the thirteenth century, the exquisite doorway at its head somewhat later, while the highest stories of the tower were built between 1448 and 1464 by the Venetians. In 1447 a Renaissance arcading was placed over the staircase, but this has recently been removed.

Lamberti Tower



Under the Commune the area of the city was twice enlarged by the extension of the outer walls. Some time between 1134 and 1178 a new wall was built on the east bank of the Adige, considerably to the south of the one already existing. It started from the river below the Ponte delle Navi, and ran due east for some distance. It included the Church of S. Paolo di Campo Marzo, but that of S. Toscana was still left outside the city, for here the new wall turned north, ending at the first low hills. It was pierced by a gate known as the Porta del Vescovo, lying somewhat to the west of the present gate of that name; remains of it can still be seen in the garden of the priests' house belonging to S. Toscana. During the first fifteen years of the thirteenth century another new wall was built to the north of the Adige. This brought the very ancient church of S. Stefano within the city, and is thought to have followed much the same line that the present fortifications do from the Porta di S. Giorgio to the western slopes of the hill of S. Pietro.

By this time the Veronese had established their supremacy over the country round. The district now ruled by the city coincided roughly with the older bishopric, but differed in one or two important points from the modern province of Verona. Ostiglia and Gaiba, both on the Po, and Sermione on the long low peninsula thrust up like a knife into Lake Garda from the south, none of which are now in the province, were then included in the district. The boundary on the north extended a few miles farther up the Brenner than the Italian frontier of today (which stops just south of Borghetto) reaching as far as Ala on the east bank of the Adige, and Pilcante on the west. With these exceptions, however, the Veronese district at the end of the twelfth century was much the same as the present province, for Riva, at the head of the Lake of Garda, which is now Austrian, did not then form part of the Veronese territory, though it had belonged to her in the tenth century and was afterwards, together with some of the adjoining castles, conquered by the Scaligeri. The boundaries of the district at this time are shown by a very interesting list of the rural communes which were under the jurisdiction of the Commune of Verona in 1184. The frontier stretched along the south shore of Lake Garda to a point a little west of the peninsula of Sermione. It included Ponti and Monzambano on the right bank of the Mincio, and then crossed this river to Valeggio. From here it marched with the north-east boundary of Mantua as far as Ostiglia on the Po, following more or less closely the line of the small stream called the Tione. From Ostiglia it made a slight deviation northwards, touched the Po farther east at Gaiba, and then turned north again, crossing the Adige at Castelbaldo, and continuing in an almost unbroken line to Torre di Confino, which marked the boundary between Verona and Vicenza on the road skirting the foot-hills of the Alps. From Torre di Confino it passed along the east ridge of the valley of the Alpone to the high range of the Lessine Alps, which running east and west, formed a natural northern frontier for the Veronese district, almost as far as the Lower Brenner. Between the Lessine Alps and the Brenner the Veronese boundary followed a small stream to Ala, where it crossed the Adige and the high volcanic range of Monte Baldo to a point on the east shore of Lake Garda, some miles north of Malcesine. In 1184 the whole of the east shore of Garda below Malcesine belonged to the Veronese, with the one exception of the Castle of Garda, and this they purchased nine years later from the Emperor Henry VI for a thousand silver marks. This district, possessing as it did great variety of soil and climate, from mountains where the snow lies nearly all the year round, to hot and marshy but fertile plains, provided the growing city with supplies of all descriptions. The plains produced abundance of corn and vegetables, and great quantities of reeds, which were very valuable, being used for thatching houses and making fences. From the lower hills came oil and excellent wines, and the higher ranges yielded good pasturage, and wood both for building and fuel. A plentiful supply of fish came from the rivers and the lake, and from the

quarries of S. Ambrogio, just below the defile of the Chiusa, was brought the celebrated “peach-blossom” marble of which so much of the city itself is built. The site of Verona is an excellent one. It lies just where the hills sink into the plain, so that its climate, though variable and somewhat sharp in winter, is healthier than that of many other towns. In particular this situation enabled the Veronese to obtain an abundant supply of spring water. The purity of the water supply was, indeed, always felt to be of such vital importance by the Veronese that, from the very earliest times of the Commune, the protection of the streams and wells from contamination was the subject of repeated enactments which were duly entered among the statutes of the city.

The advantages which the Veronese gained from lying at the meeting-point of two of the great trade-routes, *i.e.*, that between East and West Italy and that to Germany over the Brenner, have already been alluded to. The possession of Legnago, the only other point where the Adige could be crossed, gave them complete control of more than half of the navigable portion of the river, which served as the great highway for their trade with Venice. In addition they controlled the upper waters of the Mincio through Peschiera, which stands where that stream flows out of Lake Garda. Commercially the Mincio was not of much importance, its higher reaches being too shallow and rapid for navigation, but strategically it was of great value, for it cut the Lombard plain in two from Garda to Po, and like the Adige could only be crossed at two points, Mantua and Peschiera. At Peschiera, accordingly, the Veronese built a strong castle, the “bello e forte arnese” referred to by Dante. Small wonder, then, that with these natural advantages of position, climate, and fertility of soil Verona should swiftly have won her way to the first rank among the cities of the Lombard plain. Indeed had it not been for the rapid deterioration of the later Scaligeri, she might possibly have been one of the great powers of Italy in the fifteenth century, rivalling Venice, Milan, Florence, Naples and Rome.

The internal development of the Veronese Commune was no less rapid than its outward expansion. Contemporary documents, the earliest collection of statutes, treaties with other states, law-suits, grants of lands, etc., display the gradual organisation of a central authority, and the evolution of a complicated system of justice and administration, while they throw many an interesting side-light on the social and economic conditions of the city, and the daily life of the inhabitants. The picture revealed is of a highly organised society, split up into few but strongly marked divisions, amongst which the commercial classes, both merchants and craftsmen, were daily gaining in importance, a society which adhered tenaciously to tradition and usage, but in which new needs and aspirations were constantly arising and necessitating the re-adjustment of the existing laws and customs.

The Veronese government was naturally evolved on very much the same lines as those prevailing in neighbouring cities. The new state took the form of a commonwealth or republic. The supreme power was originally, in theory at any rate, vested in all the citizens, who assembled in person to express their wishes on any matter; but as time went on this large and unwieldy assembly delegated part of its authority to less numerous bodies, and part to individual magistrates. The first occasion on record when Verona acted as an independent state was the conclusion of a treaty with Venice in 1107, when various disputed questions as to commerce and tolls were settled, and the Veronese pledged themselves to aid the Venetians in a war against Padua, Treviso and Ravenna. In this document, which the Doge of Venice signed for his city, the Veronese were not represented by any officials, Imperial or local, but a certain number of private citizens swore, in the name of all the rest, to keep the treaty. It is not till 1136, nearly thirty years later, that the names of local officials appear for

the first time in a public document. Then three men, Eleazaro, Odone and Corrado, are styled Consuls of Verona. Another document of 1140 makes mention of seven Consuls. The Consuls were the first judicial and executive officials thrown up by the evolution of local government in the North Italian cities. Their number and method of appointment varied from place to place, but their term of office seems always to have been quite short, and their functions everywhere identical. The earliest recorded instance of the appointment of Consuls is at Biandrate in 1093. In some cities they were chosen by the bishop, but by the middle of the twelfth century most cities elected their own Consuls, and this was doubtless the case at Verona, where the bishops had never possessed any temporal power. It will be remembered that at the diet of Roncalia in 1158 the Emperor Frederic established his claim to appoint the Consuls, but that in 1177 the cities regained the right to elect their own officials. Before this, however, it had been found that there were great difficulties attending the administration of affairs by several individuals all possessing equal powers, and there was a general movement throughout the North Italian cities in the second half of the twelfth century to concentrate the supreme authority, judicial and executive, in the hands of an official. In 1151 Bologna, Siena, and Ferrara all placed a single individual at the head of their government. It may safely be conjectured that a similar position was held at Verona by a certain Albertus Tenca, who is styled *Veronensium Rector* in a document of 1152. The functions exercised by these early Rectors are nowhere expressly defined, but it is clear that they possessed very wide powers, and that the cities looked to the shortness of their term of office rather than to any actual limitation of their authority to prevent the new magistrates from developing into permanent despots. Three years was an exceptionally long period for any one man to hold the supreme power, and the office was soon limited to a year, or even six months. These officials were the immediate forerunners of the Podestas. The first year in which this latter title is known to have been used alone to designate the supreme magistrate of a state is 1154, when both Reggio and Imola were ruled by Podestas. Two years later there was a Podesta at Modena. This disproves the theory that the Podesta was originally an Imperial official, and that the first Podestas were those appointed by Frederic I at Roncalia in 1158. At Verona one of these officials is said to have appeared as early as 1159 and again in 1163, but there seems to be no documentary evidence for the existence of a Veronese Podesta till 1169. From that year till 1196 the form of government varied, the state being now ruled by a Podesta, now by Consuls. In 1196 the Consuls appear as heads of the state for the last time; after that the position was held regularly for many years by a Podesta. Meanwhile, the Consuls became judges pure and simple, and not merely did they lose all their administrative and executive powers, but soon their higher judicial functions were transferred to the Podesta, including the supreme appellate jurisdiction in the state.

Simultaneously with the evolution of the chief magistracies a regular system of Councils had been developed. The oldest and largest of these, as already stated, embraced all the citizens, and met at irregular intervals, probably as a rule in the cathedral, as on the occasion when bishop Tebaldo was deputed to go and sue for pardon from the Emperor Frederic for the attack made on him in the Brenner in 1155. This Council was called the Concio or Arengo, and possessed the ultimate right of decision on all public affairs. It was, however, not possible that it should meet frequently, or that delicate questions or matters of detail should be decided in such a large and tumultuous assembly. A less numerous Council was accordingly formed, and to this body, known as the *Concilium Generale* (later as the Greater Council), the Concio delegated much of its legislative and executive authority, though it always continued even under the Scaligeri to be consulted on affairs of great moment. In addition, a number of smaller consultative and executive bodies gradually grew

up. The earliest of these were two Councils which acted as advisory committees for the Podesta, one composed of a limited number of men bound by oath to give wise counsel when called upon to do so, the other a somewhat less formal body comprising the *savi*, the wise men of the city, whether lawyers, soldiers or merchants.

The oldest code of statutes belonging to Verona dates from this period. The code was put into writing in 1228 by the notary Guglielmo Calvo, but the majority of the statutes are older, for it is expressly stated that twenty of the later statutes (Nos. 244-63) were added in 1225. Now many of the statutes, or *postae* as they are called, were not statutes at all, that is they were not legislative enactments, but the record of decisions taken on some special occasion by the Concio, or the Greater Council, such as the order for the discharge of a debt by the Commune. From the almost complete absence of any attempt at arrangement by subject, and the way in which temporary provisions are sandwiched among others of constitutional importance, it may safely be assumed that the new *postae* were added to those already existing in the order in which they were made, and hence that the statutes as a whole are arranged in chronological sequence. Of other arrangement, as already stated, there is little trace; there is no division into books; the earlier statutes, it is true, are occupied principally with the duties and oaths of the higher officials, but in some of the later parts an indescribable confusion reigns. Contracts with neighbouring Communes, primitive sanitary regulations, attempts to make peace between turbulent nobles crop up anywhere. The judges' oath is followed by a statute forbidding pigs to be kept in the city unless rings were put in their snouts, or (barbarous idea!) the snout itself cut off. Here is a list of a few consecutive *postae* (Nos. 223-38). The meshes of nets used for fishing in the river must not be less than a given size: the Podesta is to pay 500 *lire* to Daniele de' Guidoti; hawks and falcons are not to be captured when moulting; the envoys of the Commune may accept no gifts; no new tolls are to be imposed on foot-passengers; no appeals are to be allowed against the sentence of the Podesta of the House of Merchants or its Consuls in cases concerning trade; this last statute alone, it will be noted, having any constitutional importance.

The first statute is probably the oldest of all. It is the formula of the oath to be taken by the Podesta or Rector, as he is indifferently styled, on entering office. As it contains no reference to the Consuls as possible heads of the state it must have been drawn up after 1196, quite probably in 1197. The Podesta swore to serve the city, community and university of Verona faithfully, to preserve the public peace, the *treva Veronae*, to settle all quarrels, to rule the inhabitants with honesty and good faith, to listen to their complaints, and in all cases brought before his tribunal to judge justly and in accordance with the laws, customs and written statutes of the city. (The laws, *leges*, were the Roman Law, which by this time had ousted the rival personal laws, Frankish, Lombard and Salic. The customs, *boni mores*, were the unwritten laws of the city consecrated by immemorial usage. The statutes, *postae*, are the code actually contained in Calvo's manuscript.) Succeeding statutes define the duties, privileges, salary and retinue of the Podesta. If he were a native of Verona he received 2,000 *lire* a year, if a foreigner, *i.e.* the inhabitant of another Italian city, 4000. In either case, he and his followers were provided with free lodging, furniture and stabling. This remuneration was on a princely scale, but out of his salary the Podesta was bound to pay three judges, and to keep twelve soldiers for the service of the Commune, and a fitting number of squires. His term of office began on S. Peter's Day (29th June) and lasted a year, and he was bound to reside in Verona for the preceding month in order to render assistance to the outgoing Podesta. He had to swear, in both public assemblies—the Greater Council and the Concio, to keep the statutes of the Commune, before he had either read or heard them, and only after

taking this oath was he allowed to go to the dwelling provided for him by the city. If for any reason a Podesta could not complete his term of office he forfeited the whole of his salary, and was disqualified for all office in Verona during ten years. He was forbidden to bring wife or child, grandson or nephew with him, to receive gifts in money or in kind, or dine with any of the citizens. At the end of the year he had to remain at Verona for fifteen days to answer accusations against his personal conduct, or the execution of his official duties, as a set-off to which it must be remembered that no Podesta could be sued in a court of law during his term of office. Any actions brought against an out-going Podesta were heard by two judges called *cercatori*. This institution seems to have been borrowed direct from Roman Law. The chief function of the *cercatori* was to hold an inquiry into the conduct of outgoing officials. They possessed the power of life and death, and no appeal lay against their sentences. Instances are not unknown of the condemnation of a Podesta to death for violating the laws of a city, though in no case does the sentence seem to have been enforced. On the other hand more than one Podesta fell a victim to popular fury. Considering all these prohibitions and risks, one cannot but wonder that any one was ever found to act as Podesta. Yet the office was rarely refused. During its early development it was eagerly sought by the most powerful nobles, and later it became a regular profession among the lesser nobility, and the class immediately below them, from which lawyers and judges were drawn, who would pass their lives acting as Podesta now in one town, now another. It must be remembered that the salary was exceedingly high, even after all expenses had been deducted (50 to 100 *lire* a year was then considered a fair professional income). The honour attached to the office and the opportunities it provided for interesting activities must have been strong attractions, while it was probably easy to evade some of the harder prohibitions. For instance it is clear from the list of early Veronese Podestas, where the same name will appear two or three times running, that the regulation forbidding any man to act again for three years after he had held office was practically a dead letter.

The Veronese Podesta, as head of the state, was also the highest judicial authority. His chief function in this *role* was the hearing of appeals, for the Lombard Podestas very quickly regained the appellate jurisdiction which Frederic I had successfully claimed for the Imperial officials in 1183. To assist him in these duties the Podesta brought with him three judges, styled Judges of the Commune, who heard appeals in criminal cases, in civil cases concerning property worth ten *lire* and more, in cases where the sentence through some technicality had been declared null and void, and in those where it was claimed that an injustice had been done in the settlement of a dispute by arbitration. They also heard any other actions specially brought before their tribunal. They swore to give wise counsel to the best of their ability to the Podesta, not to betray any official secret entrusted to them, and to keep one good horse. They were appointed for a year, and received 100 *lire* apiece, paid by the Podesta from his own salary. Like the Podesta they, too, had to remain fifteen days in Verona after their year was up, and to render account of their office to the *cercatori*.

The ordinary jurisdiction of first instance remained in the hands of the native judges, the Consuls. These numbered thirty-two, all told. Twenty-four formed a tribunal for ordinary civil actions and were known as *Consules Rationis*. Eight of the twenty-four were always trained lawyers, who had studied jurisprudence for at least three years in some other city, the remaining sixteen might be citizens without any special legal training. All were bound to attend daily in the Palace of the Commune, which it will be remembered was begun by Guglielmo da Osa in 1194. The other eight Consuls, the *Consules Justitiae*, of whom two were trained lawyers, exercised the lower criminal jurisdiction, and acted, as well, as an advisory

Council for the Podesta, being bound to attend all meetings summoned by him, and supervise the elaborate voting arrangements. The twenty-four *Consules Rationis*, on the contrary, were sternly prohibited from being present at any assemblies but those of the Greater Council.

The number of statutes in the code relating to law, whether civil or criminal, are so comparatively few in number that it can only be assumed that the judges usually had recourse to unwritten law, either Roman or customary, to guide them in their decisions. It was left to the discretion (*arbitrium*) of the Podesta himself to fix the penalty for the majority of crimes. A certain number, however, had definite punishments prescribed. Any one committing assault or murder was at once outlawed, that is, put outside the protection of the public peace of Verona, and executed when taken, while his goods passed at once to his victim, if the latter were alive, to his heirs if he were dead. The fine for bigamy was 25 *lire*, for marrying a woman without the consent of her legal guardians 50 *lire*. In connexion with marriage and inheritance there are a few survivals of Germanic law; if a man died intestate the daughters did not inherit equally with the sons, but only received a sum held adequate for their dowry. Similarly beneficed clerks did not inherit as long as there were any sons who were laymen. In one statute the word *meta* is to be found, the term used in Lombard Law for the *dos* of the Romans, the dowry given by the husband to his bride. Nothing resembling the jury is to be found in Veronese law, but trial by battle, the *duellum* or *pugna*, an essentially Germanic institution, was still in vogue, and a system of substituting hired champions for the principals had apparently been recently introduced. Before the battle took place the Podesta was bound to equalize the champions as far as possible (though unfortunately no details are provided of what must have been a very curious proceeding) and then the defendant had first choice. He paid his champion 75 *lire*, while the plaintiff was only bound to give his two-thirds of that sum. The *duellum*, however, was only used on occasions when it was not possible to discover the facts by examining witnesses. Together with trial by ordeal, *judicium*, it served as a method for discovering the perpetrators of "hidden crimes," that is, crimes of which certain persons were suspected without there being any clear proof, and also as a test of the good faith of witnesses. In this latter case torture, *tormentum*, was permitted as another alternative, but this is the only reference in these statutes to this mode of procedure.

The question as to the respective spheres of jurisdiction of the lay and spiritual tribunals, which convulsed England and other parts of Europe in the twelfth century, does not ever seem to have become very acute at Verona. One statute (No. 109) directs that clerks guilty of a breach of the peace should either be fined by the Podesta, or deprived of their benefices by the bishop, leaving it apparently to circumstances to decide which. An earlier statute (No. 74) orders that a layman accused by a clerk must appear before the bishop, and a clerk accused by a layman before the Podesta and the Judges of the Commune, in causes of which the lay tribunal had cognizance. No attempt is made to decide the knotty question as to what these causes were, so it is clear that the matter must have been regulated by custom. Meanwhile the lay tribunal, at any rate at this time, seems to have managed to assert a certain supremacy over the spiritual courts. Appeals lay from the sentence of the bishop and other ecclesiastics to the Podesta, while no clerk was allowed to sue a layman for tithes except before the Podesta himself. Heresy was also under the control of the secular courts, at any rate as far as the enforcement of penalties went. According to one statute¹ it was the Podesta who was responsible for the expulsion of Patarenes and other heretics from the city, and the destruction of the houses they had inhabited, though the owners could save their

property by themselves expelling the heretics within eight days. This statute is the only one in the code of 1228 referring to heretics, so it may be assumed that in the early thirteenth century Verona was tolerably free from heresy. It is also the first mention in a Veronese document of the Patarenos, a peculiar sect who were afterwards to obtain a very firm footing in the city and district.

From the very first the exchequer of the little state was entirely removed from the control of the ordinary officials of the Commune, with the idea of preventing bribery and corruption. For the treasurer, the *massario*, was responsible for all payments out of the public funds, including all salaries, from that of the Podesta himself to the small sum paid to messengers. Hence it was most important that he should be above suspicion. The post was held by a layman, but the selection of that layman was entrusted not to any of the officials, or the public assemblies, but to the “spiritual and religious” men of the *city*. All moneys received by the Commune came eventually into the hands of the treasurer, though the actual work of collection was done by the official collectors of taxes and tolls, or the two *stimatori*, or valuers, whose business it was to sell the goods of the Commune’s debtors, estimate the value of lands, and enforce contracts made by clerks and minors.

Two other very important and very busy officials were the *procuratori*, or proctors. The proctors were responsible for all the local affairs now managed by urban and district Councils, and their duties were multifarious. They had to keep roads, waterways and bridges in repair. They supervised the Campo Marzo, the great tract of open land lying east of the Adige, and at that time still outside the city. They had to prevent the woods of the Commune of Verona (most of which lay in the higher range of the Lessine Alps), from being recklessly destroyed by woodcutters or charcoal-burners. They kept registers of all the contracts and payments made by the Commune, saw that none of the arcades on which most houses were then built projected beyond a certain distance into the street, and once a year superintended a great cleansing of the whole city, the refuse from which was spread out over the Campo Marzo. They regulated the sale of meat, which, with the exception of lamb, was sold by weight, and saw that pork was only sold by specially licensed butchers. And, as though all this were not enough, a special clause directed that the proctors must enforce any new orders passed by the Podesta and the Commune. This would probably include many of the sanitary and sumptuary regulations which are scattered throughout the code, without any statement as to who was to enforce them, such as the statute forbidding the casting of dirt into the streets or water-ways except at night, and into running water. It was doubtless the proctors who enforced the rules regulating taverns, which forbade tavern-keepers to sell anything besides wine to the citizens, or allow any but *bona-fide* travellers to eat and drink in their inns. Perhaps it was the proctors, too, who collected the heavy fines imposed for blasphemy and swearing, and prevented the playing of all games in the city. Games were always a terrible bugbear to the mediaeval Italian authorities on account of the gambling to which they led, and their extraordinary vitality, for no sooner was a game suppressed under one name, than it would reappear under another. The one game in favour of which an exception was made was chess, and later on even that was prohibited.

THE AMPHITHEATRE



Although the majority of the social and economic *postae* of the code of 1228 were concerned with the more material side of life, the intellectual side was not entirely neglected. No university in the modern sense of the word yet existed in Verona, but one statute ordered that a good master of medicine was to be engaged at the very respectable salary of 200 *lire* a year, to teach the principles of his art, and the Commune also retained the services (though what they were is not stated) of a certain Jacobo da Minerbe for an annual sum of 50 *lire*. Moreover another statute directed that every Podesta should spend 500 *lire* during his term of office on the upkeep of the amphitheatre, a considerable amount of money to be devoted every year by a small city to antiquarian purposes. It is hardly probable that this regulation was always carried out, but it is worthy of note that in spite of a good deal of injury caused by earthquake and flood the Veronese amphitheatre is one of the best preserved in the world. Later the care of it was handed over to the proctors.

Other statutes show how the Commune was gradually strengthening its hold over the surrounding territory, subduing the local nobility on one hand, and the peasantry and smaller towns on the other. It was a great step gained when the more important castles of the district, such as Ostiglia and Gaiba on the Po, Rivole in the Brenner, and Garda on the lake, were placed under the command of *castellani*, who were appointed annually by the Commune, and who took an oath to surrender the castles in their charge to the Podesta whenever called upon to do so. During the twelfth century the rural Communes had elected their own officials, but in the early part of the thirteenth century the Commune of Verona established its right to appoint the highest magistrate, whether a Podesta or Rector, in those towns and villages over which its jurisdiction extended. Any community desiring to have a new Podesta or Rector, applied to the Podesta of Verona. The Greater Council was then summoned, and three of its members chosen by lot to appoint to the office in question, the

only qualification being that the holder must be a native of Verona or its district. All the rural Communes in the district, however, were not subject to this statute, for many were still under the private jurisdiction of the nobles, and in these the lord retained the right to appoint the Podesta, and other officials. In truth the young community was only just beginning to measure its strength against the district nobility. Feudalism was by no means yet extinct. The code of 1228 makes frequent mention of lords, vassals and fiefs (*doming vassalli* and *feuda*) and land was still held by personal service, *pro servitio*. Everywhere, too, the nobles were freed from paying the hearth-tax, even when they were too poor to keep the horses and arms for the service of the Commune which alone secured exemption from that impost in other classes. But step by step the nobles were being brought into line. The districts under their jurisdiction were no longer allowed to remain entirely outside the judicial system of the Commune. An early statute (No. 30) decreed that nobles must expel all persons exiled by the Veronese authorities from Communes over which they exercised jurisdiction. The fief was ceasing to be regarded as the inalienable property of the lord. The creditors of a vassal could sell his fief, and take two-thirds of the price, the rest going to the lord, unless the fief had been held by personal service, or on any other special condition, when the lord took the larger share.

This regulation, it may confidently be assumed, was made not so much in the interest of private creditors, as of the Commune. Indeed feudalism was fast dying out at this time, especially as a system, of land-holding, the feudal tenures having already been replaced in many parts by the payment of rent, both in kind and in money. Simultaneously a great improvement had taken place in the status of the actual tillers of the soil, the majority of whom had won their way to some form of personal freedom, however limited. Several of the statutes of 1228, nevertheless, refer to serfdom, if not to actual slavery, as still existing. There were two distinct classes of unfree men, the *famulus* and the *servus* (though all unfree women were styled *ancilla*). Both the *famulus* and *servus* were rather serfs attached to the soil than domestic slaves, but the latter seems to have been bound to his master by closer ties than the former, and to have been regarded in some ways as personal property. A man was responsible for damage done by his *servus*, but not for the misdeeds of his *famulus*. On the other hand, if a *servus* was condemned to death for a crime, no other penalty was exacted from his master, the loss of the serf being evidently regarded as sufficient punishment in itself. If a free woman was married to an unfree man for five years or more the children were unfree. Similarly the children of an unfree man, and sometimes even his brother and sister, were regarded as the serfs of his master. It is doubtful, however, if the actual condition of the free peasant was preferable to that of the unfree. The country districts were at all times very insecure, and during war the fields were constantly exposed to plundering at the hands of friend and foe alike. The free peasant was liable to endless burdens, both personal and pecuniary, demanded now by the Commune of Verona, now by his own rural Commune, now by the party exercising jurisdiction over the latter, whether it were the central authorities, or a noble, or one of the great ecclesiastical bodies. Small wonder, then, that there was then as now a constant drift of population from the country into the towns, especially into Verona itself. More than one statute was passed with the object of repressing this tendency, and encouraging a contrary movement. Any inhabitant of a rural Commune who came to live in Verona, had to continue to pay the taxes of his own Commune as long as he held land there, nor could he rank as a citizen unless he and his wife dwelt in Verona for at least eight months in the year. But if a townsman migrated into the country he was exempted from all local taxes for five years. Indeed such was the desire to attract labour to the land that even greater privileges were continually offered to settlers by the rural

authorities and the large landowners.

In fact, from the very first it was not on agriculture that the prosperity of Verona was based, fertile though the surrounding district was, but on commerce and industry. Her commerce with other cities developed with astounding rapidity owing largely to her advantageous situation on the Adige and two great trade-routes. Still more astounding, however, was the rapid development of her native handicrafts and industries, especially of the manufacture of fine woollen cloths, which became famous throughout Italy very early and which was ultimately to survive the independence of the city. Long before the code of 1228 was drawn up, every trade and handicraft in Verona was organized into a close body known as an *Ars*, *Misterium*, or *Scola*, and ruled by a supreme official called a Gastaldo. In early times these Gastaldi were appointed from outside, some by private individuals, some by the Count, some even by the Emperor himself. But by the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Arts had won the privilege of electing their own Gastaldi, and all that the Commune insisted on was that no one should hold the office unless he exercised the trade or craft of the Art he governed, the Gastaldi of the millers and the dyers alone being excepted from this rule. The regulations in the code of 1228 concerning the Arts are, however, few in number and fragmentary in character. One statute forbade potters to export tiles or bricks from Verona. Another fixed the wages of master masons at four *soldi* a day in summer, and three in winter, when the hours of work were shorter. If food were provided, the workman received a *soldo* less a day, from which it may be concluded that in 1228 the *soldo* was about equivalent to the present shilling. A statute dating from 1209, prohibits all Arts from entering into any compact with the object of forcing prices up. Only one decree refers to the greatest of all the Arts, the Merchants, though it was apparently considered of sufficient moment to be repeated twice. This was the decree,¹ which forbade appeals from the sentences of the Podesta and Consuls of the Merchants in matters appertaining to commerce, and ordered the immediate enforcement of these sentences by the Podesta of the Commune. The statutes of 1228, then, give no idea of the important position which the Arts occupied in Verona at the end of the twelfth century, nor of the preponderating influence of the Merchants over the rest. To learn that we must turn to other contemporary documents. From very early times the House of Merchants seems to have established what can only be described as an autocracy over the other Arts, keeping them in the strictest subjection to itself, yet acting in many ways as their representative, and thus welding all the commercial and economic interests of the city into a coherent whole, which not merely succeeded in becoming almost completely independent of any other authority, but at one time seemed as though it might absorb the supreme power in the state into its own hands. The evolution of the Art of the Merchants coincided with the rise of the Commune, and both are well illustrated by various documents of the twelfth century connected with commerce, including the treaties made between Verona and neighbouring cities. The earliest of these, that concluded with Venice in 1107, regulated the dues to be paid by the merchants of one city on entering the territory of the other. The duty on nearly all merchandise was fixed at twelve pence (*denarii*) for every ten hundred weights, but leather paid twopence a bale, while cloth, gold, silver and coins were imported free. Every vessel, large or small, paid a fixed toll of twenty-four pence, called *ripaticum*. Curiously enough, there is no mention of salt, which was later to become so important, both commercially and politically.

The rapid growth of commerce led in the latter part of the twelfth century to an attempt to tabulate all duties on imports and exports entering the city of Verona, a task which, though actually carried out by the officials of the Commune, was doubtless instigated

by the Art of Merchants. The aim of this tabulation was not so much to simplify the very complicated system then obtaining, as to discover what the existing duties actually were, so as to prevent illegal exactions, and the imposition of new tolls. The resulting report is confused and involved beyond words, but the whole affair affords a striking example of how unwritten custom became written law. To begin with, in 1173 the Podesta of Verona, Giberto delle Carceri, collected sworn testimony as to the duties paid at the various gates of Verona. Three years later the result of this investigation was made public. It received the approval of the Concio, and though never included in the statutes, became law under the title of *Breve Recti Mercati Veronae*. The witnesses enter into minute detail, and it is not always possible to reconcile their statements, but a certain number of interesting facts can be gleaned from the document. The duties varied very much from gate to gate, and were paid to several different authorities, but apparently all merchandise, by whatever gate it entered, paid twopence a load to the officials of the Commune, with the exception of corn and wood, which only paid a penny. At the Porta S. Stefano the viscount and the bishop's advocate each exacted an additional halfpenny on every waggon. Franks bringing pots had to give one out of every load to the viscount, and if they sold all their pots, another to the bishop. Germans paid a toll of fivepence a load, and Italians from other cities twelvepence if they came in at the Porta S. Zenone. Pilgrims, however, might bring in garments and provisions free of duty, while the men from certain neighbouring villages, Belfiore, Calavena, Caldiero, had succeeded in securing exemption from all tolls. Every load of salt, however, beside the usual twopence to the city, paid one third of a sack to the Count and another third to a certain man named Aciri. In 1184 the regulations about salt were modified. Special clauses were added to prevent the exaction of more than the legal tolls, the officials of the Commune stating precisely the maximum that might be demanded from one cart, and offering to make good any loss which through this reform might fall upon hitherto privileged persons.

It has already been noted that the treaty of 1107 was not sworn to by any officials of the Commune, but by a certain number of private citizens as representatives of the rest. But the second treaty with Venice, which dates from 1175, and is concerned with the procedure to be followed in disputes between the merchants of the two cities, is stated to have been negotiated on the part of Verona by a Consul of the Merchants, a Consul of the Commune, and three merchants. The fact that the name of the Consul of the Merchants precedes that of the official of the Commune is, as Cipolla has pointed out, a remarkable proof of the important position occupied by their Art. In 1192 another commercial treaty was made with Venice, and though in this Verona was only represented by the Consuls of the Commune, it is expressly stated that the treaty had previously received the approval of the Consuls of the Merchants and their Council. This later treaty was based on that of 1107, the list of duties in which remained the foundation of future agreements for centuries to come, but many new clauses were added. The Veronese swore not to conspire in any way to injure Venetian trade, and never to refuse to pay the duty on salt. This is the earliest mention of this tax. The two cities agreed to keep the Adige open and safe for traffic, the Veronese being responsible as far as Cavarzere (though their territory stopped many miles short of this town) and pledging themselves to make good within twenty days any damage done above that point to the person or property of Venetians. A year later, the Podesta of Verona, Guglielmo da Osa, and the Doge of Venice, Enrico Dandolo, made another compact concerning legal procedure in disputes arising between Veronese and Venetians.² If any one was sued by a citizen of the other State and failed to appear when cited, the action went against him by default. If robbery had been committed and the fact was "notorious," *i.e.*, known beyond possibility of doubt, the injured man had only to take an oath to that effect, and his loss was made good at

once. If the robbery were not notorious, the man accused of having committed it had the option of clearing himself by oath. Venetian creditors were forbidden to seize pledges from their Veronese debtors without permission from the authorities; this prohibition of course applied equally to Veronese creditors, and must have put an end to a great deal of violence and injustice. The agreement also contains a clause embodying the first example of an extradition treaty between Verona and another city. It was decreed that all criminals and debtors taking refuge in the territory of the other state, and all fugitive slaves, were, on demand of their own government, to be arrested and handed over to the authorities of their native city.

In 1191 the Veronese made a commercial treaty with their nearest neighbours on the south-west, the Mantuans. The two cities swore to help one another in every possible way, especially if either should be at war with the Ferrarese. The citizens of either state were to be free to attend the annual fairs of the other without paying any tolls or imposts. The Veronese pledged themselves not to trade in salt on the Po above Mantua. A road was to be kept open and safe for traffic between the two cities, each of which was to be responsible for the part in its territory. In addition a waterway between the two cities was to be kept open. This was to go down the Adige and one of its branches, called the Adigetto, as far as Salvaterra, then by canal to the Tartaro, and so down that stream and up the Po to Mantua.

It may confidently be assumed that these treaties with Venice and Mantua were not isolated occurrences, but that the Veronese made similar arrangements with most of the other Lombard Communes. The normal relation between the Italian city-states at this period was one of passive hostility, that is, two cities were not regarded as being at peace with each other, unless the fact was definitely expressed in some way. This accounts for the great number of treaties, societies, concords, leagues, pacts, and other forms of alliance which date from the latter part of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth. The Lombard League, which had earlier included most of the North Italian cities, lost its universal character after the Treaty of Constance in 1183, and in its room a host of minor confederacies sprang up. The Veronese, though still nominally belonging to the Lombard League, had gradually ceased to take any active part in it, and towards the turn of the century joined several smaller confederacies. In April, 1198, they allied themselves for thirty years with Milan, Brescia, Mantua, Vercelli, Novara, Treviso and Como. In the following autumn the Veronese and Trevisans made a separate agreement to support and help each other, an agreement which it was stated was to last fifty years. In June, 1198, Verona, Mantua and Ferrara made peace, and settled all the questions at issue between the three states. It is true that next year there was a fresh outbreak of war between Verona and Mantua, but the Veronese troops won a decisive victory at the head of the bridge which crosses the Mantuan lagoon, and after this hostilities came to a standstill, and in 1202 the Veronese and Mantuans made another treaty, in which they swore to remain at peace with one another for ever. As a matter of fact this treaty inaugurated a close friendship between Veronese and Mantuans which lasted almost unbroken for more than a century, and survived the change from republic to *signoria* in both cities, and the substitution of the dynasty of the Gonzaghi for that of the Bonaccolsi at Mantua.

Two years later the Veronese came to an agreement with their neighbours in the upper valley of the Adige, Odorico, Lord of Arco, and Conrad, Bishop of Trent. Odorico's possessions lay at the northern end of Lake Garda, while the boundaries of Verona and of the Bishopric of Trent met at Ala. Lying thus on the borders of Germany and Italy, Trent was sometimes included in one country, sometimes in the other; was now under the German

Imperial Chancellor, now under the Italian. To this day the inhabitants show traces of these mingled influences, in language, appearance and manners, and their true nationality and the origin of the town are still vexed questions. Trent was always regarded by the Veronese rulers with covetous eyes, but only one ever succeeded in subduing her, and that for but a few years. With this one exception Trent continued to enjoy independence under the rule of her own Prince-Bishop till long after Verona had ceased to exist as a separate state.

In spite of their numerous alliances with other cities, the Veronese in the time of the Commune were almost always at war with one or other of their neighbours, more especially Vicenza, Ferrara and Padua. It would be tedious to recount all these petty wars (which only receive the briefest mention in the old chronicles) and the short-lived peaces and leagues which alternated with them. One more treaty of this period must, however, be mentioned, if only for the interesting light which it throws on the early treatment of prisoners of war. This is an agreement made in 1213 between Verona, Padua and Vicenza, with the object of mitigating the long imprisonments and other hardships which their citizens had so often to endure, owing to the constant prevalence of war at this epoch. The first clause prohibits the slaying and maiming of prisoners of war. Then follow a series of regulations which it was hoped would deprive imprisonment of its worst horrors. Suitable food and drink were to be provided, and facilities for dressing and undressing; every man was to have space to lie down, and the prison itself was to be kept clean. In return the prisoners had to pay a fixed charge, horsemen forty pence a day, and foot-soldiers fifteen. It was suggested, however, that when possible a man should be allowed to ransom himself. For this a horse-soldier was to pay eleven *lire* and a foot-soldier ten, but squires and pages were to be released at once without any conditions, and archers on giving up their weapons. It is to be feared that these were "counsels of perfection", fated never to be realised, but at any rate they show the growth of a more humane public opinion.

In a later clause of the same treaty the Veronese, Paduans and Vicentines agreed to unite to coerce any rebel whom his own authorities were powerless to subdue. They also decided that if any of the three states should drive out one party of its citizens the other two should combine to compel it to restore the exiles. The last clause was due to the recent development of factions in the North Italian cities, for the growth of party spirit at this period was most astoundingly rapid and astoundingly general. At the beginning of the thirteenth century the inhabitants of most Lombard towns are suddenly to be found ranged in rival parties which hated each other with a deadly hatred. These divisions must not be confounded with the great cleavage between the opponents and the partisans of the Empire, which for centuries turned North Italy into two armed camps. Naturally the local parties took opposite sides in the wider dispute, but this did not always happen, and in no case did the local quarrels originate in the struggle between Guelph and Ghibelline. They invariably arose from some temporary dispute, often of so puerile a nature that it can only be regarded as the pretext, and not the source, of the bitter enmity of the citizens. The real cause lay deeper, and is perhaps to be found in the exuberant vitality of the mediaeval Italian city-dweller. Once the more pressing dangers from without had been removed, especially the menace from the Imperial claims, once the cities had won their way to a certain pitch of prosperity and security, it seemed as though their inhabitants could find no vent for their energies save in making war on other towns, or their fellow citizens.

The earliest recorded example of party-strife at Verona occurred in the spring of 1206, when severe fighting took place between two rival factions, the party of the Montecchi and that of the Counts of S. Bonifacio. The Counts of S. Bonifacio were, it will be remembered,

descended from Egelric, nephew of the Milo who was Count of Verona in 930, and at this time they were the most powerful nobles in Verona and its district. The origin of the title of their opponents is unknown. Though Shakespeare has immortalized the name in "Romeo and Juliet" under the form of Montagu, no family called Montecchi ever lived at Verona. It is more probable that the leaders of the party came in the first instance from Montecchio, a hill-fortress in the Vicentine district. Once party-spirit had been introduced into Verona, it spread like wild-fire, and every citizen speedily enrolled himself under one or other of the opposing standards. Even the Podestaship, which had originally been instituted with the object of securing impartiality, was turned to party ends, being held by the leader of whichever faction happened to be in power, or given to one of his tools. The days of impartial government, and true patriotism, if they had ever existed, were over and done with. But the pulse of life beat higher than ever before. In the twelfth century all interest was centred on general movements, in constitutional and economic matters men seem to have acted, even to have thought collectively. In the thirteenth century the scene was dominated by individuals, not by principles ; full scope was given to play of character, and all eyes were drawn to those who outshone their fellows in any way, more especially those who could bend others to their own will.

But for some time neither of the Veronese parties produced a great leader. The two sides were so evenly matched that with one accord they both turned to seek help outside the city. The party of the Count of S. Bonifacio allied themselves with the lords of Este, a castle in Paduan territory. The Montecchi found a supporter in one of the chief Ferrarese nobles, Salinguerra Torelli. A little later they were to bring into Veronese politics the most remarkable and dramatic personality of the thirteenth century. In the smiling foot-hills below the deep gorge cut by the Brenta through the Alps lay a chain of gloomy castles, S. Zenone, Romano, and Bassano. These were the strongholds of a race of turbulent German nobles, who had come into Italy with Conrad the Salic and, fascinated by the soft climate and rich soil, had remained behind to become famous (or infamous) as the family of the da Romano. The greatest and most notorious of them all was Ezzelino III, whose cruelty and bloodthirstiness have made him the type *par excellence* of the tyrant. His military capacity and marvellous constructive genius enabled him to weld Verona and the other warring cities of the Trevisan Mark into one compact state, which for close on thirty years he held together by sheer force of will, crushing out rebellion and faction with iron ruthlessness, till in terror of sharing a like fate the rest of Lombardy combined and overthrew him.

CHAPTER III

THE RISE OF EZZELINO DA ROMANO (1194-1259)

THE dominion built up by Ezzelino III is a unique phenomenon in Italian history. Though his rule shared many of the characteristics of the mediaeval despotisms, it differed from them in several important particulars. To begin with, the later despots bolstered up their claim to the supreme authority with as many constitutional and legal sanctions as possible. But Ezzelino, though he began by governing through existing institutions, rapidly built up for himself a position which, while it made him absolute ruler in the state, was designated by no official title, and was outside of and unknown to the constitutions of the cities subject to his sway. Secondly, for many years he depended on the moral and material support of the Emperor to a degree that no other Italian ruler ever did, while he modelled the internal administration of his territories to a great extent on that of the Kingdom of Germany. Lastly, though the dominions of the later despots were often only a loose congeries of mutually independent cities, bound together by no other tie than the person of their ruler, yet the latter usually possessed one favourite dwelling-place, where the seat of government was permanently fixed, and which thus formed a capital of some sort for the whole State. But Ezzelino's dominions were completely decentralized. None of his cities, Verona, Vicenza, Padua, Feltre, Belluno, Trent or Brescia, ever obtained any permanent pre-eminence over the rest. His seat of government was moved at least three times. Originally it was fixed at Verona. After the conquest of Padua in 1237 this city became Ezzelino's favourite dwelling-place till 1256, when the loss of it drove him back to Verona for a couple of years. Finally in 1258 the annexation of Brescia shifted the centre of gravity of the state to the west of Lake Garda and the Mincio.

Ezzelino, then, is hardly to be reckoned among the mediaeval Italian despots, but in many respects he was their direct forerunner, and his dominion served to point out the path to power to many of the later tyrants. Most of all was this the case at Verona, where the Scaligeri would never have succeeded in establishing their dynasty so quickly, if Ezzelino's long reign had not smoothed the way for them by obliterating all habit of self-government. For with one or two short intervals Verona was subject to Ezzelino for over thirty years, from his first Podestaship in 1226 till his death in 1259. His rule may be divided into three periods. In the first, which lasted from 1226 to 1232, Verona was the only city of any importance subject to Ezzelino, and even there he did not hold the supreme power continuously; he governed through existing institutions, especially the Podestaship, and his sympathies were on the whole with the anti-Imperial party. The second period dates from Ezzelino's conversion to the Imperial side in 1232, and may be taken as ending in 1244, when he was first appointed Vicar of the Trevisan Mark. During these years he subjugated nearly the whole of the Mark, but he always remained subordinate to the Emperor and dependent on his support, both moral and material. In the third period, Ezzelino's power was at its zenith. His territories reached their widest extent, including Feltre and Belluno on the east, and Brescia on the west; his power in his own dominions was as absolute as that of the most tyrannical of the later despots, while first the concession of the right to appoint to the Vicariate of the Trevisan Mark, and later the death of Frederic II., freed him from the last vestige of subordination to the Empire, so that he was completely independent of any external power.

The ancestors of Ezzelino III are said by Rolandinus, to have entered Italy with the Emperor Conrad II and received from him the fief of Onara, which lay in the Paduan plain, to the south-east of Cittadella. For many years the family took their patronymic from Onara, but later they acquired lands in the hills to the east of Bassano, and lost their estates in the plain, whereupon they changed their name, calling themselves after Romano, the strongest of their hill-fortresses. After the loss of Onara the influence of the da Romano was confined for a time to their mountain possessions, but the father of Ezzelino III, Ezzelino II, was an ambitious man, and became embroiled in the intrigues and quarrels of the neighbouring cities. The elder Ezzelino's influence was greatest at Vicenza, where he became head of one of the rival factions. In 1207, however, his party was driven out of Vicenza, and he then made advances to the Montecchi party of Verona, who had been in exile since the year before. In the summer of 1207 the Montecchi and Ezzelino attacked the rival Veronese party, then headed by Bonifacio, Count of S. Bonifacio, and Azzo VI, Marquis of Este, and drove them out. In a few days, however, Azzo brought up fresh troops from Mantua, and after a month's hard fighting finally triumphed over his foes on 9th September. The Montecchi were expelled from the city, and remained in exile for more than six years. Ezzelino was amongst those taken prisoner, but he was handed over to the Marquis Guido Lupi, and speedily set free. From this year dates the permanent alliance between the Montecchi and the da Romano, and the latter's almost ceaseless feud with the Counts of S. Bonifacio and the Marquises of Este.

Ezzelino III took no share in all this fighting, though, as he was born in 1194, he must have been thirteen at the time, and at thirteen many a mediaeval Italian youth would take his place in battle. He does not seem to have fought his first action till some ten years later, when he defeated a body of Vicentine troops outside Vicenza. In the interval many changes had occurred. In 1209 Otto IV came into Italy to be crowned Emperor, received Ezzelino II into favour and placed him in power at Vicenza, where he was Podesta from 1211 to 1213. Azzo VI d'Este, and Bonifacio di S. Bonifacio, after ruling Verona together from Michaelmas 1207 onward, both died in 1212, the former leaving two sons, Aldovandrino and Azzo, the latter one, Rizardo. Next year the Montecchi were restored to Verona. Then in 1215, while Azzo VII was still a boy, his elder brother Aldovandrino died, and Ferrara, which had hitherto been under the influence of the Estensi, fell under that of Salinguerra Torelli, son-in-law and staunch supporter of Ezzelino II. The party to which the da Romano belonged had therefore gained by the general redistribution of power, though, as the da Romano themselves were again excluded from Vicenza, their individual position was weaker. Perhaps it was this which led them a few years later, in the winter of 1221, to consent to a reconciliation with the Counts of S. Bonifacio. Two marriages were arranged, the young Count Rizardo wedding Cunizza daughter of Ezzelino II, while Ezzelino III married Zilia Rizardo's sister. Shortly afterwards Ezzelino II retired from the world, and though he did not take the monastic vows, entered a monastery at Oliero, where he devoted the rest of his life to prayer and good works. In July, 1223, he gave up all his possessions, dividing them by lot between his two sons, Ezzelino and Alberico, the former receiving the eastern half of the da Romano territories, with the Castle of S. Zenone, while Alberico was given Bassano and the surrounding district.

The reconciliation between the da Romano and the Counts of S. Bonifacio did not last long. In 1222 and again in 1224 Azzo VII d'Este and Rizardo di S. Bonifacio made unsuccessful attacks on Ferrara, where Salinguerra was still supreme. Salinguerra appealed to Ezzelino III for help, and fighting once more became general. Ezzelino soon found an

opportunity for increasing his power at the expense of his rivals. In December, 1225, a revolution took place at Verona. The lower classes, who had hitherto been rigorously excluded from any share in the government, organized themselves and rose in revolt. The Montecchi at once exploited the movement for their own ends. They feigned to be on the side of the rebels, and directed the popular fury against the S. Bonifacio party. Rizardo was taken prisoner, and his followers driven out, amongst them the Podesta, a Milanese named Guifredo da Pirovale. Guifredo was replaced as head of the state by a Veronese noble, Leo delle Carceri, who assumed the title of Captain of Verona. This office was new, and its exact functions are not known, but as far as can be ascertained it implied the exercise of a discretionary power much wider than that of the Podesta, and more nearly akin to that of the Roman dictators. Simultaneously, a new party appeared on the scene; who styled themselves the Quattuorviginti. Various theories have been suggested as to their origin, the most probable of which is that they were some of the Counts party, who had been bribed by Ezzelino and Salinguerra to change sides. The view which would regard them as a democratic body receives absolutely no support from contemporary chroniclers; during the whole of their existence they acted in such close unison with the Montecchi that the two practically formed one party, and the Montecchi, however much they might profess to favour popular aspirations, were as determined as their rivals to keep the government in the hands of the upper classes. The name Quattuorviginti refers to the number of the new party, and is to be translated not twenty-four, but eighty, on the analogy of *quatre-vingts* and *quattroventi*.

Ezzelino was in Verona during this revolution, but seems to have remained inactive while fighting was going on. Once the new government, however, was established, he rapidly came to the fore. It was probably owing to his influence that Leo delle Carceri resigned the office of Captain for that of Podesta early in February, 1226, and it was certainly at his bidding that Leo was driven out on June 5th for having released the Count of S. Bonifacio, whereupon Ezzelino himself was elected Podesta. The most marked proof, however, of Ezzelino's supremacy at Verona in the early part of this year was the change in the attitude of the Veronese towards the Emperor. The view that Ezzelino was all his life a staunch Ghibelline has long been exploded, and it is now well known that till desire for personal vengeance on the Lombard League led him to change parties in the winter of 1231-32, he was one of the strongest opponents of the Imperial claims. The Veronese, on the other hand, had from the time of the election of Frederic II. shown marked sympathies for the Emperor, and had at once yielded to his demand for free passage through the Chiusa on his first visit to Italy in 1212. But when Frederic returned to Italy for a second time in the spring of 1226 the Veronese played a very different part. On April 11th they gave in their adhesion to the Lombard League, which had recently been renewed for twenty-five years, and was avowedly anti-Imperial. They sent no envoy to the meeting summoned by Frederic at Cremona on 24th June, and when Frederic's son, Henry, came down the Brenner to join his father, they blocked the Chiusa so effectually that Henry was obliged to turn northward again, after waiting six weeks at Trent. This display of hostility to the Emperor can only be attributed to Ezzelino's influence. Nor did Ezzelino swerve an inch from the course he had marked out for himself, though shortly after his election to be Podesta Verona fell under the condemnation of the two supreme powers of the mediaeval world, being banned by the Emperor and excommunicated by the Pope simultaneously on 11th July.

Ezzelino's rule at this period seems to have been both vigorous and beneficent. According to the contemporary Vicentine chronicler, Gerardus Maurisius, he won the hearts of all classes. A second reconciliation was patched up between him and Rizardo di S.

Bonifacio. Ezzelino did not hold the Podestaship for more than the customary year, but on retiring he engineered the appointment of one of his adherents, a Brescian named Bonifacio da Realdesco. But his hopes of retaining control of Veronese affairs through Bonifacio were fated to be disappointed. The populace found themselves no better off than they had been before the revolution of 1225, the concessions which had been made to them were illusory, and they were still excluded from all real share in the government. Early in September, 1227, therefore, they rose again, drove out Bonifacio and replaced him as Podesta by a candidate of their own. They then formed themselves into a regular organisation, which was known as the *Communanza*, and like the *Parte Guelfa* at Florence was a state within a state. Its members possessed the right of making their own statutes, and the still more important privilege of assembling in arms; they were withdrawn almost entirely from the control of the officials of the Commune, being governed by their own Rector and other officers, whom they probably elected. Under their first Rector, a certain Zuliano Osterio, the *Communanza* reached such a height of power that it was able to dictate several new statutes, and men of low birth were admitted to important positions in the government. Maurisius, indeed, goes so far as to assert that nothing was done in Verona at this time without Zuliano's permission. Had this extraordinary organisation survived, there is little doubt that the whole subsequent course of Veronese history would have been altered, and that the city would have remained a republic, but when the interests of the *Communanza* clashed with those of such a masterful character as Maurisius is the only one favourable to Ezzelino. He is in some respects an excellent authority, having been an eye-witness of many of the scenes he describes, but he does not relate events in strict chronological sequence, and it is impossible to regard his testimony as impartial because he hoped to receive money from Ezzelino and Alberico in return for his panegyric of their achievements. Ezzelino III. there was no doubt as to which would emerge triumphant. Ezzelino was forced to give way at first, but while feigning friendship for the popular organisation, he slowly but surely absorbed its powers till eventually it seems to have disappeared without a struggle.

For the three years after its rise, however, the *Communanza* was the leading power in Verona and Ezzelino's influence there sank to its lowest ebb. Meanwhile he employed his energies elsewhere. In 1227 he helped his brother Alberico to win the Podestaship of Vicenza. The following year found him at war with Padua. In 1229 the rustics of the Bassanese district, who belonged to the half-free, half-servile class known as *wiasnadi*, rebelled against Alberico, and Ezzelino helped him to crush the rising. The friars of the Trevisan Mark, both Franciscans and Dominicans, were suspected of having instigated this rebellion. There are no means of proving or disproving this accusation, but it is certain that the friars regarded the rebels with no unfavourable eye, and that from this year dates Ezzelino's implacable hatred for ecclesiastics in general, and the friars in particular.

In 1230 Ezzelino regained a foothold in Verona. The *Communanza*, even though aided by the Montecchi and Quattorviginti could not cope with the S. Bonifacio party, and in June of that year were only saved from a severe defeat by the timely arrival of Ezzelino. Rizardo di S. Bonifacio and several of the leaders were captured on this occasion, and the rest of the party driven into exile. Ezzelino did not accept any official position in Verona, and the Montecchi and the *Communanza* still nominally remained at the head of affairs, but at Ezzelino's instigation the Podestaship was given to Salinguerra Torelli, who was completely subservient to him. At first Ezzelino proposed to kill the Count and his other prisoners by slow starvation, but was dissuaded from this purpose by his father. But nothing would induce Ezzelino to release his prisoners, not his father's prayers, nor the eloquence of

the Franciscan Antonio of Padua, already revered as a saint throughout North Italy, nor the constant ravaging of the Veronese district by Paduans, Vicentines and Mantuans under Azzo d'Este.

In the spring of 1231, however, a new factor appeared in the situation. The powerful Lombard League, which even Ezzelino did not dare to defy, sent to demand the Count's release. After some discussion Ezzelino agreed to set free the prisoners in return for the Castle of S. Bonifacio, which was not only important because it was the centre of the Count's estates, but because it commanded the road between Verona and Vicenza. Till the castle was actually handed over the Count was to be guarded by the League in Piacenza. To Piacenza the Count was accordingly sent in July, and the rest of the prisoners set free. Ezzelino had fulfilled his share of the compact, it remained to be seen how the other side would carry out theirs. As a matter of fact the League had not the faintest intention of keeping their promises. It was not from disinterested motives that they had intervened on behalf of the Count. Their aim was to expel Ezzelino from Verona and hand the city over to some one who would ensure them the control of the Chiusa, and the Count and his party were to serve as their tools in the execution of this plan. It was essential, however, to proceed with the greatest caution. In August the League undermined Ezzelino's position, by getting a creature of their own appointed Podesta of Verona in place of Salinguerra. Ezzelino consented to this without realizing that it meant the end of his supremacy at Verona. But when in September Count Rizardo was set free, and the castle of S. Bonifacio handed over to him, Ezzelino recognized too late that he had been betrayed. His influence in Verona was destroyed and in October he was reduced to such extremities by an attack of the Paduans on his estates, that he was forced to swallow his pride, and beg for help from the League itself. The Rectors again deliberately betrayed Ezzelino. Thinking that if he were beaten to his knees he would be driven to submit to the League, they promised to aid him, and then purposely delayed action for some weeks till he was on the point of being crushed. Only then did they stop the Paduans, and order them to receive Ezzelino and Alberico into the confederation of peace, which had been formed in July by seven cities, Padua, Verona, Vicenza, Treviso, Ferrara, Brescia and Mantua.

The League, however, had overreached themselves. Their successive acts of treachery had determined Ezzelino to be revenged on his betrayers at any cost. It was this which led him to reverse his whole policy and drove him into the arms of his quondam enemy, the Emperor. For at this time Ezzelino was far too weak to attack the Lombard League single-handed. Yet in all North Italy he had no one on whom he could count, except his brother. In Verona and Vicenza he had lost all influence. Treviso and Padua were bitterly hostile. Even Salinguerra seems to have offered no help. The only power who could be relied on to attack the League was the Emperor. Bitter as the step must have been to Ezzelino, it was the only alternative to submitting to the League, and he therefore sent in the autumn of 1231 to offer to win over Verona to the Imperial cause, if Frederic would help him to take the city. The Emperor, allured by the prospect of getting control of the Chiusa, willingly forgave all Ezzelino's previous hostility, and the two former foes made an alliance in March, 1232, against Azzo d' Este, Rizardo di S. Bonifacio and the Lombard League. It was characteristic of Ezzelino's thoroughness and energy, that once he had decided to change sides, he made the change as complete as possible. It was not, however, so sudden as might appear. The final negotiations had taken many months, and no doubt the change itself had been facilitated by the hatred Ezzelino had felt for all ecclesiastics ever since the friars had supported the Bassanese rebels of 1229.

Ezzelino had little difficulty in recovering Verona, and inducing the citizens to join the Imperial party. With a few followers he surprised the palace of the Commune on 14th April, deposed the Podesta, and replaced him by the Emperor's nominee, a Cremonese. The Imperial envoy was then summoned from Ostiglia, where he had been waiting, and the Veronese took the oath of allegiance to Frederic. Some days later a body of Imperial troops entered the city, but they were too few to serve as anything but a guard against internal sedition. Meanwhile the defection of Verona was the signal for renewed attacks on the Imperial party. Rizardo di S. Bonifacio swooped down on Lonigo and destroyed a tower belonging to the da Romano. The Mantuans burst ravaging and burning into the Veronese district. In June Ezzelino had to go in person to protect Alberico from a savage onslaught by the combined Paduan and Mantuan troops. In the course of the summer Ezzelino's foes invoked the aid of the Church, and he was excommunicated by the Papal Legate. Frederic could do hardly anything to help his new ally. In December, at the urgent request of Maurisius, the Emperor issued letters declaring that the da Romano were under his protection and threatening to fine any one who dared to attack him, but the letters were received everywhere with contempt, as it was well known that Frederic could not enforce them.

All through the winter of 1232-33, hostilities went on without a break, but in the summer peace was made for a time, through the efforts of a remarkable personality, a Dominican friar, Giovanni da Schio. Fra Giovanni was not only very eloquent, but had a peculiar gift for reconciling enemies. In April, 1233, he had made peace between Florence and Siena, and from there went on to pacify the Trevisan Mark. He preached first in Padua with great success, and then in Treviso, Feltre, Belluno, Conegliano and Vicenza. Everywhere he was received by enthusiastic crowds who hailed him as a saint. He was said to have healed the sick and raised men from the dead. At his command captives were set free, and life-long foes exchanged the kiss of peace. In every city the statutes were brought to him to be revised. The Veronese alone, under Ezzelino's guidance, refused to have anything to do with him. But now the Lombard League again intervened, for they were still aiming at the restoration of the Count to Verona, in order to gain control of the Chiusa, and hoped to use the friar for their own purposes. They ordered Ezzelino to receive Fra Giovanni into Verona, and when Ezzelino refused, sent troops to harry the 58 district, Ezzelino was driven to submit and reluctantly admitted the friar, who speedily effected a reconciliation between the two parties. He induced Ezzelino himself, the Podesta, and fifteen of the Montecchi and Quattorviginti to swear to obey him, and then had Rizardo di S. Bonifacio restored to Verona. The citizens in gratitude placed Fra Giovanni at the head of every branch of the government, electing him *Dux*, Podesta of the Commune and Rector of the Communanza. Almost the first act of the new ruler was to display his zeal for orthodoxy by publicly burning sixty heretics of both sexes belonging to the oldest Veronese families, though this was contrary to the statutes of the Commune. On 5th August the excommunication was removed from Ezzelino and his followers. Meanwhile great preparations were being made to celebrate the reconciliation of the cities of the Mark by an assembly at Paquara, a little village on the Adige, some four miles below Verona.

On the appointed day, 28th August, immense crowds streamed to the meeting-place from the surrounding cities. The multitude is said to have numbered 400,000. They were of all ages and both sexes, and many came barefoot in imitation of the friar. Many cities sent their *carrocci*, the triumphal cars which bore the standards of the Communes in battle. A very high wooden pulpit had been erected, and from this Fra Giovanni preached a sermon of

great eloquence and force on the text: “My peace I give unto you”. At the end he announced that the da Romano and the Marquises of Este had been reconciled, and that in token of this Adelaita, the only and dearly beloved daughter of Alberico da Romano, was to be married to Rinaldo, son of the Marquis Azzo VII. Then, as it were, by an afterthought, the friar added that the Paduans had at last consented to confer their citizenship on Ezzelino. The immediate effect of this sermon was marvellous. Bearded men burst into tears, and the bitterest foes embraced. In a few days, however, this outburst of emotionalism passed away. Rumours began to arise that the partisans of the League had come to Paquara with arms concealed on their persons. It was openly said that the general peace was a mere ruse to restore the Count’s party to Verona, and to deprive the Emperor of any pretext for intervening in North Italian affairs. Fra Giovanni was intoxicated by his success, and became overweeningly arrogant. He induced the Vicentines to elect him their *Dux* and Rector. He insisted that the Castles of Illasi, S. Bonifacio and Ostiglia should be handed over to him, and garrisoned them with Bolognese troops. At the same time he alienated the Bolognese, who were his staunchest supporters, and the other members of the League, by displaying marked friendliness for Ezzelino. The result was that when he visited Vicenza early in September he was seized and thrown into prison by the Anti-Imperial party, at the instigation of the Paduans. He was released almost at once, but the incident dealt a fatal blow to his prestige. The garrisons of Illasi and Ostiglia refused to obey him any longer, Count Rizardo boldly demanded the Castle of S. Bonifacio, and Ezzelino and the Bolognese came to an agreement, and deposed Fra Giovanni from the rule of Verona, replacing him by two Podestas, one being Ezzelino’s nominee. In a last vain effort to regain his position, Fra Giovanni succeeded in November in getting a neutral Podesta appointed, but after this the friar disappeared for ever from Veronese politics. His power had melted away like snow in the sun, and soon it was as though the great peace-making of Paquara had never taken place.

By the spring of 1234 hostilities were being carried on everywhere with greater bitterness than before. Azzo d’ Este attacked the Veronese district from the east, and in May the Brescians and Mantuans ravaged to within a few miles of Paquara itself. The Paduans made a determined attack on the da Romano lands in the Trevisan district, hoping to draw Ezzelino away from Verona. But nothing could move Ezze-lino. Cost what it might he was resolved to hold Verona. He was gradually re-establishing his supremacy over the city. In the spring of 1234 he regained the control of the Podestaship. In June he assumed the supreme executive authority himself, under the title of Rector of the Commune. For a year and more the war went on with varying success, but both sides grew weary of a struggle which led to no decisive results, and at last, on 18th April, 1235, peace was made between the da Romano and Verona on one hand, and Vicenza, Treviso and Padua on the other. The Count and his party were restored to Verona, the Paduans paid Ezzelino a large sum of money, and the ill- starred marriage of Rinaldo d’ Este and Adelalta da Romano at last took place. It seemed as though after all Fra Giovanni’s labours were to bear fruit.

Ezzelino had saved Verona for the Imperial party, for in spite of the Count’s return the citizens refused to join the Lombard League. But his personal position had been much weakened, and for a time he had to resign himself to seeing the city fall under the influence of others. In the following winter the Count’s party plotted to expel Ezzelino and hand Verona over to Azzo d’ Este, who was then Podesta of Vicenza. The rising took place during a visit of Ezzelino to Bassano, and Azzo was stationed at Montebello on the road to Vicenza to cut off all possibility of his return, the tracks over the mountains being still impassable with snow. Ezzelino, however, was warned of the plot before reaching Bassano, and at once

turned back to Verona, leading his men across the mountains by a path which in places they had to hew out through snow and ice. He arrived at Verona to find the Montecchi and Quattorviginti in the act of fleeing, but with his famous cry of '*Za Za Cavaler Ecelin*' he charged the S. Bonifacio troops, and in a moment the situation was reversed. Panic-stricken by this unexpected attack, the Count and his party turned tail and fled in the wildest disorder. A few of the ringleaders were caught, but the majority got away and were afterwards exiled. The Podesta, Rainer Bulgarello, was tried for complicity in the plot, found guilty and deposed. Azzo d' Este meanwhile had returned to Vicenza without striking a blow.

The failure of this rising placed Verona at Ezzelino's feet. His power there became more absolute than ever, and the city never again shook off his yoke. Simultaneously his position in the larger field of politics, his attitude towards Pope and Emperor, became more clearly defined. In April, 1236, Gregory IX excommunicated him anew. Ezzelino's answer to this was to summon the Emperor into Italy. In May Frederic despatched a small body of troops, 500 knights and 100 crossbowmen, to Verona. But he himself did not enter Italy till mid-August, and then spent only one night in Verona on his way to West Lombardy, where his presence was urgently needed. For, with the exception of Cremona, Bergamo, Parma, Modena and Reggio, all the Lombard cities were strongly antiImperial, so that Frederic far from being able to help Ezzelino, looked to him to uphold the Imperial interests in the Trevisan Mark. In all the Mark, indeed, Verona was the only city on the Emperor's side. The Paduans and Vicentines under the influence of Azzo d'Este, and the Trevisans led by the da Camino were all Guelph. In October the Paduans, Vicentines and Trevisans laid siege to Rivalta, one of the most important of the Veronese castles. The garrison made a gallant stand, but Ezzelino was unable to drive off the besiegers, and by the end of the month the castle was on the point of surrendering when Ezzelino at last sent an urgent summons to the Emperor at Cremona. Frederic received the message on 30th October, and at once started with the greater part of his army for Verona. All that day and night he led his men on, with none but the shortest intervals for food, till on the 31st he reached Aicardo, a village close to S. Bonifacio and distant fully sixty miles from Cremona as the crow flies, an almost incredible feat of endurance in those days of heavy armour and slow-moving horses. At Aicardo, Frederic gave his troops some hours' rest, and here he was joined by Ezzelino and the Veronese levies. There was no need to relieve Rivalta by force. The mere news of the Emperor's arrival in the neighbourhood was enough; Vicentines, Paduans and Trevisans all hastened home in terror that their own cities would be attacked. On 1st November, Frederic and Ezzelino went on to Vicenza. The Emperor summoned the citizens to admit him peacefully. The only reply of the Vicentines was to keep their gates firmly closed. Then at Ezzelino's advice Frederic ordered the troops to storm the walls. The attack succeeded at once. Azzo d'Este had fled to Padua at the first hint of danger, and the leaderless citizens offered no resistance. The town was given over to the troops. The most appalling scenes of robbery and violence ensued, and the greater part of the city was burnt. The sack of Vicenza was remembered with horror for many years, and it was generally reckoned in the long list of Ezzelino's crimes. But in this case he seems to have been unjustly blamed. It was one of his rare virtues that he did not permit the towns he conquered to be pillaged, and the responsibility for the deed therefore more probably belongs to Frederic and his German troops.

Frederic stayed but a short while in Vicenza. He left behind him a German garrison under Gebhard of Arnstein but gave the supreme authority to Ezzelino, though without any official title. Frederic and Ezzelino both had the same aim; they wished to break the power

of the Communes. But their methods for achieving their object differed. Ezzelino wished to work through existing institutions, especially the Podestaship, which he tended more and more as time went on to give to his relatives or personal friends. Frederic, on the other hand, desired to supersede the local officials, and rule, as in Germany, by a bureaucracy appointed by and responsible only to himself. The Emperor, however, was not strong enough to hold the Trevisan Mark without the aid of the local Imperial party, of which Ezzelino was the head, hence in the Mark he modified his plans and conferred the right of appointing the officials of the Commune of Vicenza on Ezzelino. The latter, however, also modified his plans to some extent, appointing not a Podesta, but a Captain, the official who in Frederic's bureaucracy came immediately below the Vicar-General.

The conquest of Vicenza was followed by the submission of Ferrara under Salinguerra. But Padua and Treviso remained obdurate, and when Frederic returned to Germany in December to crush a rising headed by the Duke of Austria, he left at least half of the Mark unsubdued. The task of winning Padua and Treviso the Emperor therefore entrusted to Ezzelino. During the winter of 1236-37 Ezzelino remained at Vicenza, planning day and night with Gebhard of Arnstein how to take Padua. The city was very populous and very rich, and was protected by such a network of waterways, especially on the west, that properly defended it was almost impregnable. The only hope lay in inducing some of the inmates to betray it. The loyalty of the nobles, especially of those of the district, was not above suspicion. With the object of attaching the nobles more closely to the city, the Paduans gave the supreme authority to a committee of sixteen, nearly all of whom belonged to the country nobility. But the suspicions of treachery were only too well founded. Fifteen out of the sixteen were found almost at once to have been plotting to betray the city to Ezzelino. Most of them fled and the others were banished. In despair the Paduans entrusted the defence of the city to Azzo d' Este, in spite of his recent desertion of Vicenza. At last Ezzelino's preparations were complete, and on 19th February he occupied Monselice, which lay south of Padua, and was regarded as its key. Azzo forsook the Paduans still more promptly than he had forsaken the Vicentines and at once made favourable terms with the enemy. On the 24th Ezzelino left Monselice, spent the day roaming round the walls of Padua, and finally attacked one of the gates. The inhabitants beat him off, but, despairing of holding out for any time, sent in their submission that very evening. Next day Ezzelino made a triumphal entry into the city, and Rolandinus, who was among the large crowd who watched him ride in, notes that as he entered he suddenly flung his helmet back, and bent over to imprint a kiss on the gate, one of the very rare instances of the display of any emotion on his part. An informal meeting of the nobles and leading citizens offered to hand the city over to Ezzelino, but he, either through loyalty or policy, insisted that the submission must be made to the Emperor's representative Gebhard. He also refused the Podestaship, appointing instead one of Frederic's Apulian followers, Count Simon of Chieti, whom the Emperor raised at the same time to be Vicar of the Trevisan Mark. This office was new, but it was probably rather a change of title than an extension of authority for Simon, for he was already Imperial Legate for North Italy, and though the Vicars were as a rule more powerful than the Legates, the Vicar of the Mark did not receive full powers for another two years. The Vicariate of the Mark and the Podestaship of Padua were for many years always held together. Ultimately the right of appointing was given to Ezzelino, but for the present the Emperor retained it in his own hands, as some sort of a check on his ambitious follower.

On 3rd March Treviso also gave in its adhesion to the Imperial cause. Gebhard was then despatched to Frederic to report progress, leaving Ezzelino to all intents and purposes

the independent ruler of the Mark. Verona, Vicenza and Padua he ruled directly, Treviso he controlled through his brother Alberico, who now held the supreme power there. In theory these cities obeyed the Empire, in practice they obeyed Ezzelino, though he still held no official position in any of them. At Padua he began his rule at the point which it had taken him years to reach at Verona. His policy was to crush the nobles, and rely on the goodwill of the people. The Commune was completely subservient to him. It is true that most of the officials and councils still survived, but it was Ezzelino who appointed the former, and his consent was necessary before a decree of the latter could become law. Ezzelino spent some time in Padua, carrying on friendly intercourse with all classes of the citizens, and deliberately laying himself out to win the hearts of his new subjects. But when an attack on Montagnone, one of the Estensi castles in the Euganean hills, failed, he attributed it to treachery amongst the Paduan levies, and completely changed his attitude, treating the Paduans with the utmost harshness. Twenty of the leading nobles were seized as hostages and sent to distant fortresses. In June Fra Giordano, the Prior of the Benedictine monastery, was sent into exile. This roused the most furious indignation, for the Paduans revered and loved the Prior as a father. The bishop of Padua rebuked Ezzelino to his face for this deed, but Ezzelino, who never allowed any man to reproach him, least of all an ecclesiastic, fined the bishop 2000 marks and imposed silence upon him. In consequence most of the Paduan clergy fled from the city, including Arnaldo, the saintly Abbot of S. Giustina. In justice to Ezzelino it must, however, be owned that Fra Giordano was accused of plotting to betray Padua to Azzo d'Este. At this time many of the crimes laid to Ezzelino's charge were in reality excessively severe penalties for wrongdoing. At this period of his life he only occasionally displayed that savage delight in cruelty for its own sake which was to increase with his increasing years till it became mania.

In July, 1236, Ezzelino again took the field. His objective was the Castle of S. Bonifacio. It was too strong to storm, so Ezzelino set down to blockade it, and for some months carried on the siege, in spite of its evident hopelessness. Rizardo di S. Bonifacio and Azzo d' Este meanwhile did all they could to drive Ezzelino off, but nothing would move him. When, however, Frederic again entered Italy in September Rizardo and Azzo, rather than see S. Bonifacio fall into the hands of their hated foe, made their submission to the Emperor, whereupon Frederic ordered Ezzelino to raise the siege. Ezzelino obeyed, but with the utmost reluctance. The sullenness which he displayed on this occasion betrayed his real attitude towards the Emperor. Here and everywhere Ezzelino's first motive was his own interest. In Frederic's absence no one was a more fervent Ghibelline than Ezzelino. But the presence of the Emperor in the Mark led not infrequently to the clashing of his and Ezzelino's interests, and though Ezzelino usually yielded in the end, it was not always with the best grace in the world, nor indeed was it always the Emperor who proved victorious in these contests of will.

For the present, however, the breach was not serious. In November Ezzelino assisted Frederic to besiege Brescia, and was present at the brilliant victory of the Imperial Army at Cortenuova, which drove the Pope into the arms of the Lombard League, and thus defined once for all the points at issue between Guelph and Ghibelline. Frederic, however, was beginning to fear that Ezzelino might grow too powerful and throw off the Imperial control, and at the same time he still hoped to retain the Count and Marquis on his side. So he appointed new Podestas at Padua and Verona, replacing Simon of Chieti, who had fallen entirely under Ezzelino's influence, by a Tuscan, and sending one of his personal followers to Verona. Lest, however, Ezzelino, should be angered by these changes, and break away

from the Imperial cause, Frederic gave him to wife Selvaggia, his own illegitimate but tenderly loved daughter. The wedding took place at Verona on 23rd May, 1238, with great pomp and ceremony, in the open space in front of S. Zeno, and the whole city was feasted for six days by the Emperor. In June Frederic effected a formal reconciliation between Ezzelino and Azzo d' Este, but in the following month, when the Emperor had left, Azzo, aided by Jacobo da Carrara, one of the leading nobles of Padua, attempted to surprise the city. Ezzelino easily repulsed the attack, and took Jacobo prisoner, but Azzo escaped to Este, and from there waged war on Padua all the summer.

BASILICA OF S. ZENO



Ezzelino's position in Padua was only strengthened by this unsuccessful attempt to drive him out. He was so powerful that he was now invariably referred to in Padua simply as *Dominus* without any name, as though it were impossible for any one else to rule the city. Jacobo da Carrara was reconciled to him, and gave up his castles as pledges of his good

faith, and the rest of Azzo's partisans fled. Yet against Azzo's attacks Ezzelino made so little progress that at last he had again to apply to Frederic for help. The Emperor was then in West Lombardy, fighting the Milanese, but he left as soon as he received Ezzelino's appeal, and reached Padua on 25 th January, 1239. Here he took up his abode in the Abbey of S. Giustina, to which he had already restored the exiled Arnaldo, and gave himself up to a round of festivities and pleasures, wearing his crown in public, feasting and hunting. But for all its apparent gaiety this visit of Frederic to Padua was of far-reaching consequence. It was a turning-point in Ezzelino's career. It furnished him with the legal and political principles for his administration of the Mark. It taught him . to identify his private foes with those of the Empire, and thus strengthen his own penalties with the thunders of the Imperial condemnation. At the same time Frederic first fully realized how indispensable Ezzelino was to his own schemes. It became clear, too, that the struggle between Pope and Emperor would centre round Verona and the Mark. Events followed each other swiftly. On 22nd February Frederic issued a severe ordinance against treason, which Ezzelino took as a model in his future dealings with rebels, adding the ban of the Empire to that of the Commune. In a last vain effort to propitiate the Church, Frederic issued an edict against heretics. But Gregory IX. was not to be touched, and on 24th March excommunicated the Emperor. Early in April Frederic reconstituted the Vicariate of the Trevisan Mark, increasing the Vicar's powers, and placing Padua, Verona, Vicenza, Treviso, Feltre, Belluno, Trent and Mantua under him. The Vicariate was therefore considerably larger than the region subject to Ezzelino, for in 1239 the latter held neither Feltre, Belluno, Trent nor Mantua, indeed the latter he never won. The first Vicar-General of the Mark was an Apulian, Tibaldo Francesco, whom Frederic had appointed simultaneously to that office and the Podestaship of Padua the previous February. But though after April Tibaldo ruled over a much larger region than Ezzelino, yet in everything he was subordinated to the latter. Frederic was gradually relying more and more on Ezzelino, who was now given the right of appointing all the lower officials in the Mark, the Podestas, Captains and Vicars. The appointment of the Vicar-General the Emperor still retained in his own hands, but in a few years' time even that passed to Ezzelino.

Soon after Frederic's arrival at Padua, Azzo d'Este submitted to him, maintaining that he had never attacked the Imperial authority, but only Ezzelino. Another reconciliation was therefore patched up between Azzo and Ezzelino, and the former was restored to Padua. Ezzelino, however, had no confidence in the Marquis, and set spies to mark who welcomed him on his return. Moreover he persuaded Frederic to seize Rinaldo d' Este and his wife Adelaita as hostages for Azzo's good behaviour. This was a most maladroit move, for Alberico da Romano idolized his daughter. He at once decided to take a step he had been hesitating about for several months, and on 14th May he publicly declared his adhesion to the party of the Church, and drove the Imperial garrison out of Treviso. Frederic and Ezzelino attacked Alberico, laying siege to Castelfranco, but on 3rd June the Emperor took advantage of a panic caused by an eclipse of the sun to withdraw to Padua. By a stroke of genius he granted Treviso, Castelfranco and all the Imperial rights in the Trevisan district to the Paduans, thus ensuring their loyalty, and inducing them to undertake an enterprise for which he had neither time nor inclination.

The defection of Treviso seriously weakened Ezzelino's position. Haunted by the fear that Azzo was aiming at his expulsion, he gave free play to his suspicions. Azzo himself he did not venture to touch, but he banished Jacobo da Carrara and all those who had welcomed the Marquis back to Padua. Azzo went in terror of his life. As he was accompanying the Emperor to Verona, one of the Imperial retainers, with a meaning look at him, drew his hand

across his throat. The hint was enough. Azzo fled to Count Rizardo at S. Bonifacio. Frederic accepted the situation. Henceforth it was to be war to the death in the Mark between the supporters of the Empire, headed by Ezzelino, and the party of the Count and Marquis. The Emperor strengthened the garrisons of the Chiusa fortresses, Rinaldo and Adelaïta were sent to a distant prison in Apulia, and on 13th June the Count and Marquis and their followers were placed under the ban of the Empire. The war which now began lasted twenty years, though, as was usual in Italy, the fighting was very intermittent and did not often rise above the level of guerilla warfare. The balance of success in the first year lay with Azzo and Rizardo, who in the summer of 1239 captured all the castles which Azzo, when he was restored to Padua, had been constrained to hand over to the Emperor. In September a plot to kill Ezzelino was discovered in Padua. It was followed by ruthless reprisals. Eighteen citizens were executed for having been in communication with Jacobo da Carrara, and a knight was beheaded on the mere suspicion of having sent a letter to a rebel. This vindictiveness marks a fresh stage in the development of Ezzelino's ferocity, and to some extent justifies those who hold that he underwent a sudden change of character in 1239.

During the winter of 1239-40 Ezzelino remained strictly on the defensive, being unable to trust the Paduans. On 1st June Ferrara, after a heroic defence of four months, surrendered to the combined forces of Azzo, Rizardo di S. Bonifacio, the Legate, the Mantuans and Venetians, and Salinguerra Torelli, despite his eighty years, was carried off to Venice and kept in prison till the end of his life. In the absence of all support from the Emperor, Ezzelino had never once ventured forth to help Ferrara, and now wrath and mortification heightened his cruelty to frenzy. If the original offenders were out of his reach he wreaked his vengeance on their friends and relations. In the same month that Ferrara fell Ezzelino's cousins, the da Camposampiero, rebelled at Treviso. Ezzelino seized their kinsfolk in Padua, the di Vado, and thrust four of them into prison at Cornuta. Four years later the door of their dungeon was walled up. For a few days those without heard with horror imploring cries for bread, and howls of anguish and despair. Then silence fell. When the door was opened four skeletons covered with nothing but dry, black skin were found within. In August Jacobo da Carrara and a cousin of his were arrested, clad in the black robe that signified that the wearer had been taken in arms against the Emperor, and beheaded in public. All men must learn that Ezzelino's foes were also those of the Empire.

The war gradually declined into a struggle for the district castles, whose value lay in their command of main roads. For a while the victories were fairly evenly divided between the two parties, but Ezzelino's conquest of S. Bonifacio in September, 1243, and of Illasi in October, gave him the command of the whole of the road between Verona and Vicenza, and ensured his possession of the northern part of the district. The capture of Ostiglia by the Mantuans in the following January, somewhat shifted the centre of gravity of the war, and Ezzelino in consequence moved his head-quarters from Padua to Verona for a while. In so far as Ezzelino could be said to have a favourite city it was undoubtedly Verona. It was the first town over which he had established his supremacy, the kernel of his future domain. The Veronese levies were the only troops who never failed him in his hour of need, the Veronese populace alone never conspired against him. From them alone Ezzelino, possibly owing to his support of the popular cause at the time of the *Comunanza*, seems to have won genuine affection, Verona being the only one of his cities where all classes celebrated his victories with spontaneous rejoicing.

CHAPTER IV

EZZELINO DA ROMANO AS AN INDEPENDENT RULER



AFTER leaving Padua in the summer of 1239 the Emperor did not enter the Trevisan Mark again for six years, indeed in that time he only once appeared north of the Apennines. During this period Ezzelino set himself to consolidate his personal authority till at the end of the six years he no longer ruled as a deputy, however powerful, of the Emperor, but as an independent sovereign, who could treat his territories as his private possessions. One of Ezzelino's main methods of extending his power was to appoint his own friends and relatives to the higher offices of the Mark, which had hitherto been filled chiefly from the Emperor's personal following. So in 1241 at Verona he substituted Enrico da Egna, his sister's son, for the Podesta appointed by Frederic. At Vicenza, in 1242, the Apulian who had ruled the city for two years was replaced by a Trevisan. The Vicar-General of the Mark Ezzelino did not yet venture to appoint, but in 1242 Frederic recalled Tibaldo Francesco, replacing him by Galvano Lancia, whose sister Ezzelino had recently married, and it is quite possible that this change was made at Ezzelino's request. Finally in February, 1244, Ezzelino took the step which marked his complete independence of the Emperor. Galvano was accused of peculation, tried, found guilty, and forced to disgorge his ill-gotten gains. Ezzelino then on his own responsibility deposed him from the Vicariate, and appointed instead one of his own personal adherents. In the future Ezzelino always appointed to the Vicariate, which still continued to be united with the Podestaship of Padua. In 1247 he gave the combined offices to a relative, Guccello da Prata, and two years later to one of his sisters sons, Ansedisio de' Guidoti, who held them till the fall of Padua, in 1256, when he lost both city and office together.

In the summer of 1245 Frederic paid what proved to be his last visit to the Mark, and held an assembly of the German princes and magnates at Verona, and Ezzelino's attitude towards the Emperor on this occasion showed clearly the change that had taken place in his position since Frederic's last appearance in the Mark. No longer Frederic's son-in-law, no longer in need of his help against the Count and his party, Ezzelino was none too pleased at the Emperor's presence in his dominions. As an independent ruler it irked him to have to receive one who could justly lay claim to his homage. Indeed he never again admitted Frederic into his territory, though he was always ready to go to his aid in other parts of Lombardy, and continued to use the ban of the Empire against his own personal enemies. Frederic could not but be aware of this change, and the relations between him and Ezzelino became very strained. A dispute arose between the Veronese and the followers of the Duke of Austria, and ended in the death of an Austrian noble. The Podesta was either unwilling or unable to punish those responsible for the noble's death, and the Duke went off in dudgeon. The quarrel was said to have been instigated by Frederic, and a rumour spread that he was seeking for a pretext to depose Ezzelino from the rule of Verona. Ezzelino fully believed in the report; he manned the walls and gates with troops whose fidelity he had proved, and brought up a large number of horse from his other towns, introducing them in small bodies of ten or twenty at a time, so that it should escape notice. It must have been a great relief when Frederic departed on 8th July, before an open breach had taken place. For the rest of Ezzelino's life no Emperor visited his dominions, and only one claimant for the Imperial throne, Conrad, Frederic the Second's son, who passed through the Mark in 1252 on his way to attempt the recovery of Apulia.

The remainder of 1245 and the first half of the following year, Ezzelino spent in intermittent warfare with his brother, Alberico, who still professed to be on the side of the Church. Again the war resolved itself into a contest for the district castles. Success lay with Ezzelino, who took Mestre, Noale, and Mussolente from Alberico, and gained possession of

the two important fortresses of Treville and Castelfranco, through the voluntary submission of his rebellious cousin Guglielmo da Camposampiero. In the autumn of 1246 another plot was discovered at Padua to slay Ezzelino while he was sitting at dinner. The discovery was followed by the usual executions and imprisonments. Most of the conspirators were beheaded, but two, Alberico and Nicolo da Lendinara, “shining roses of the chivalry of the Mark”, one chronicler calls them, were slowly tortured to death. Three days later, Arnaldo, Abbot of S. Giustina, and his brother were clapped into prison as traitors to the Empire. The annalist of the Abbey in recounting this bursts forth into a torrent of violent abuse against Ezzelino, reviling him as “the instrument of Satan, the devil’s executioner, a drinker of human blood, the insatiable foe of the Church, the refuge of heretics, and the untiring inventor of slanders”. But there seems to be little doubt that the Abbot and his brother had shared in the plot, in which case their punishment was comparatively mild. A few years later Ezzelino would have burnt them alive.

The coolness that had recently grown up between Frederic and Ezzelino did not prevent the latter from going to help the Emperor in the celebrated siege of Parma in 1247-48. For many months the whole of North Italy concentrated its energies on the defence or attack of this city. Ezzelino, however, took no very active part in the siege, and in December, when the Imperial army went into winter-quarters, he led his troops, who were nearly all Veronese, back to the Mark, and so escaped being involved in the Emperor’s downfall on 18th February, 1248.

Curiously enough, Frederic’s defeat did not weaken Ezzelino’s position at all. Similarly Frederic’s departure to South Italy in the spring of 1249, and his death in 1250, rather helped than hindered Ezzelino, for they freed him from all possibility of being called upon to fulfil certain onerous duties to the Empire, for which there were now no compensating advantages. For Ezzelino no longer stood in need of outside support. He was well able to cope with his foes by himself. Every year saw his territories and wealth increase. In 1248 he took Feltre and in the following spring Belluno. As Rolandinus puts it, “Ezzelino ... seeing that he had been victorious on many occasions, partly because the Emperor had gone to Apulia, partly because he was now sole ruler of Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Feltre and Belluno ... felt that henceforth he was safe and began to think of greater deeds”.

In the autumn of 1249 Ezzelino took to himself another wife, the young and lovely daughter of Bontraversio de’ Maltraversi of Padua, who till a few years before had been one of Ezzelino’s bitterest foes. In spite of the disparity of age— Ezzelino was fifty-five, and fifty-five in those days was equivalent to at least seventy now—it was said to be a love-match. Nevertheless Ezzelino left his bride on the evening of the betrothal (September 17th), to start on an expedition against Azzo d’Este. He took Este itself on 1st October, and in the course of the next year won all Azzo’s castles.

With the disappearance of the last restraint on his power, Ezzelino lost what little self-control he ever had. The years following 1249 saw the culmination of that fiendish cruelty which he had shown to some extent in quite early years, and which had grown with his growth, and strengthened with his increase of power. The annalist of S. Giustina may exaggerate when he says that Ezzelino’s victims numbered 50,000, but from all his cities came the same tale of imprisonment, torture, executions, robbery of churches and violence of all descriptions. Hardly a single family in the Mark escaped without the loss of one or more members, and many were entirely rooted out. No length of faithful service availed to shield any one on whom Ezzelino’s suspicions fell, nor did Ezzelino’s own relatives escape.

His natural brother Ziramonte, his nephew Ezzelino da Egna, his cousin Guglielmo da Camposampiero, his father-in-law Bontraversio de' Maltraversi all came to untimely ends. The ordinary methods of execution no longer sufficed. Men were beheaded, hung, burnt, torn asunder, hewn in pieces, tortured or starved to death. For the smallest offences they were blinded or had hands or feet cut off. Women lost their breasts, noses and upper lips. The sons of turbulent nobles would be summoned to one of Ezzelino's castles to emerge later sightless and horribly mutilated. Very few of those who entered his dungeons ever came out alive. For Ezzelino's prisons were horrible beyond description, pitch-dark, absolutely unventilated, and unspeakably filthy—often the inmates were so tightly packed that they could not lie or even sit, even when their weak limbs could no longer support them. Yearly the list of imprisonments and executions grew longer. It was never known who might go next, nor who could be trusted, for Ezzelino kept an immense body of spies and informers, and as the one sure path to his favour was to accuse others, friend would denounce friend, brother brother, father son. But at last it became impossible to endure any longer, and his victims rose in revolt. The first city to regain its freedom was Trent, which rose in 1255, and drove his officials out. Encouraged by this success, the Paduans resolved to make a bid for liberty. Padua had suffered most of all from Ezzelino's tyranny. Few of the nobles or wealthier citizens remained in the town. Those who were neither dead nor in prison had fled to other states, whence they plotted to overthrow Ezzelino. The middle and lower classes were in a state of continual ferment, ready to hand the city over to any one who should come to set them free. The Podesta, Ansedisio de' Guidoti, a man of no insight at all, went on with his old policy of repression, slaying and torturing, quite unaware that any change was about to occur. Ezzelino, however, began to take precautions against rebellion. He placed a captain over each quarter of the city who was responsible only to himself, and was ordered to win the confidence of the citizens and discover their plans. To prevent communication with the exiles, towers were erected at every point where the surrounding waterways could be crossed, and these measures were so far successful that the liberation of Padua was effected from without and not from within.

After the excommunication of 1248 Innocent IV had never ceased to persecute Ezzelino in every possible way, and on 24th July, 1254, proclaimed a crusade against heretics which was in reality directed against Ezzelino. Innocent's death in the following December delayed matters for a while. But at the end of 1255 Alexander IV. appointed Philip, Archbishop of Ravenna, to act as Legate against Ezzelino, and in March Philip went to Venice to organize the crusade. Here he found many willing listeners, Azzo d' Este, Tiso da Camposampiero, burning to avenge his cousin Guglielmo, exiles from Vicenza and other cities, above all the Paduan fugitives, so confident of success that they had already elected their Podesta. The Venetians, the Ferrarese and the Bolognese were all eager to join. The first object of the crusade was the delivery of Padua, and by 1st June, the preparations for the attack were complete. Ezzelino was occupied in harassing Mantua, and even when he learnt that the Legate's army had actually left Venice, he remained in the Mantuan district, relying on Ansedisio to conduct the defence of the city. This was a grave error on Ezzelino's part, for Ansedisio was hated and feared by the citizens, had little military skill, and was liable to lose his head in an emergency. However he began well. An enemy from Venice was bound to enter the Paduan district from the East. Ansedisio therefore concentrated his troops in Pieve di Sacco and Bovolenta, the two most important strategic points on that side of Padua, himself undertaking the command at Pieve. The Legate brought his heterogeneous army, including a large and bellicose body of clergy, to the South-Eastern corner of the Paduan boundary. Now it was that Ansedisio committed his first and most fatal blunder. The

crusaders had come to the frontier by boat. In order to stop them Ansedisio had the water cut off from the canals in that part of the district. This of course prevented the vessels from coming any farther, but deprived Padua of its strongest defence, the waterways, and enabled the Legate to lead his army wherever he wished. His advance indeed was more like a triumphal march than an invasion. The rustics welcomed the crusaders as friends and deliverers. The small garrisons in the outlying castles did not dare to resist. When the invaders reached Bovolenta the castle made a show of resistance, but quickly surrendered after the town had been burnt. Panic-stricken, Ansedisio entrusted the command of Pieve to other hands and hurriedly returned to Padua, on the pretext of providing for the defence of the city. All he did, however, was to exact large sums of money from the citizens, till the popular discontent rose almost to boiling point. Then, in terror of a general rising, Ansedisio committed a second irretrievable blunder. On 16th June, he recalled the garrison from Pieve, which was immediately occupied by the Legate. Nothing now lay between the invaders and Padua.

On the morning of the 19th the crusaders moved out of Pieve. They were more like an ecclesiastical procession than an army, for at their head marched the Legate supported by his numerous clerical brethren, chanting the ancient hymn:—

Vexilla regis prodeunt

Fulget crucis misterium

A small body of troops came out from Padua in a vain attempt to stop the Legate's advance, but on perceiving the immense superiority of the enemy's numbers they fled without striking a blow. On reaching the outskirts of the city the crusaders halted, and consulted as to the advisability of burning the suburbs. Eventually they decided not to do so, whereupon the inhabitants received them with open arms. Early on the following morning the Legate ordered a general assault to be made on the city, hoping to storm it without much difficulty. Ansedisio, however, was prepared for the attack, and under his guidance the garrison fought with dogged fury. The battle raged all day, and at one time it seemed as though the invaders would be beaten off. But towards evening some of the clergy, who had taken an exceedingly active part in the fighting, suggested the construction of a "tortoise" and by this device the walls were scaled close to the Porta di Ponte Altinate, on the east side of the city. No sooner had the enemy entered than Ansedisio fled out of the western gate, knowing well that the populace lusted for his blood, and with his flight all attempt at resistance ended.

The citizens hailed the Legate with joy as a deliverer. Their first act was to rush to the dungeons, break them open, and drag the prisoners out. It was a pitiable sight. Men and women alike were worn to skin and bone, covered with vermin and other filth, unable, after the long darkness, to endure the light of heaven. They were tended with the utmost care, but the majority died in a few days. Meanwhile the soldiers roamed through the city. There was little or no bloodshed, for the crusaders had come as friends, but the Legate made no effort to stop plundering, and for eight days the troops pillaged as they pleased. At the end of that time, the city, which had been one of the most prosperous in the Mark, was ruined.

Ezzelino, on hearing of the continued advance of the enemy, had at last resolved to leave Mantuan territory, and had reached the Mincio on his way to relieve Padua, when news arrived of the loss of the city. His wrath was indescribable. Determined to conceal the ill-

tidings as long as possible, he hung the messenger who had brought the news, and hurried his troops on to Verona, doing two days' march in one. At Verona the disaster could no longer be kept secret. The consternation and dismay were universal. Those who had relatives in Padua lamented their misfortunes, all unaware of the terrible fate about to overwhelm themselves. For Ezzelino, unable to touch the real culprits, vented his wrath on their innocent fellow-countrymen. On one day he had all the Paduans in his army, numbering between ten and twelve thousand, thrust into prison. Three years later, on Ezzelino's death, the survivors were released. They numbered two hundred. The rest had perished. Such of the garrison of Padua as Ezzelino could lay hands on he burnt alive. Ansedisio's life was spared, but he was loaded with heavy fetters and sentenced to imprisonment for life.

By the end of June the whole of the Paduan district and its castles, with the exception of Monselice, had gone over to the Legate, and Azzo d'Este had retaken all his fortresses but Cerro and Calaone. Ezzelino, however, did not despair of recovering Padua. He first made an attempt to hamper the city by cutting off its water-supply, which was principally drawn from the Bacchiglione. This stream, after passing Vicenza, divides at Longare into two arms, one of which flows south-east to Padua, while the other runs at first almost due south through low-lying ground, then turns east, rounds the south-west end of the Euganean hills, and so passes by various channels into the lagoons. Just at the fork, which was in Vicentine territory, the Vicentines had erected a weir by means of which they could divert the whole body of water into either arm, and, as may be imagined, this had led to frequent disputes between them and the Paduans. Ezzelino now blocked up the stream flowing to Padua, but the Legate and Azzo d' Este moved out and cut the weir.

Ezzelino, however, did not move yet. His intention was to collect an overwhelmingly large force and storm Padua and crush the Legate at one blow. So all July and August he remained in Verona, organizing the local levies, and hiring mercenaries from every possible source. This delay was a great mistake, as it gave the Paduans time to put the city into a proper state of defence. They brought up reinforcements from Mantua and Ferrara. They repaired the breaches in the walls. They deepened the moat on the south-eastern side of the city, where it was shallow, and strengthened it with a new rampart. Three hundred paces from the western wall they dug a deep trench, three miles long, and backed it with a strong palisade. One by one all the Guelph leaders collected in the city, the Legate, Azzo d'Este, Ludovico di S. Bonifacio (whose father Rizardo had lately died), and Gregory, Patriarch of Aquileia. To inspire his followers with courage the Legate took up his quarters in the Abbey of S. Benedetto between the city walls and the new trench.

In two months Ezzelino's preparations were at last finished, and a few days before the end of August he led a large army out of Verona. On his way he despatched a force of Vicentines to seize Montegalda and so cut off the Paduan retreat in that direction. The castle surrendered almost at once, but Ezzelino had the whole of the garrison blinded, for their insolence in offering any resistance, however short.

This act of cruelty was meant to intimidate the Paduans, but only strengthened their determination to hold out to the very last. On reaching Padua, Ezzelino found his road blocked by the new trench and palisade. He spent two days in a vain attempt to storm the barrier. Then by taunts and jeers at their cowardice he tried to sting the Paduans into coming out to meet him in the open field. The Paduans, however, refused to stir, so Ezzelino next made a *detour* to the south-east side of the city, where he had been told that the moat was fordable, and tried to scale the walls close to the Porta S. Croce, but it was just here that the

Paduans had deepened the moat and erected the new rampart, and so the assault was a failure. Finding that he could not carry the city by storm, and not being prepared to blockade it, Ezzelino determined to go and relieve Monselice, which still held out for him. But between Padua and Monselice flows the Canale di Battaglia, and Monselice lay on the western side, while Ezzelino was on the eastern bank. No sooner, therefore, did he march off to look for a ford than the Legate led his men down the other bank ready to fall upon the enemy directly they should attempt to cross. Not daring to pass the canal in the face of the Paduan troops, Ezzelino went back to Vicenza. Here his hand fell heavily on the Vicentines, whom he suspected, and not without reason, of conspiring, with the help of the Paduans, to throw off his yoke in their turn. He garrisoned the city with Veronese levies and German mercenaries, and forced all the more prominent citizens to move out into the suburbs, where they would have had to bear the brunt of any attack from Padua.

After this Ezzelino never made any attempt to regain Padua, and the surrender of Monselice early in 1257 and the recovery by Azzo d' Este of Cerro and Calaone left him without an inch of ground in Paduan territory. The loss of Padua led, however, to a reconciliation between him and Alberico. For some time Alberico's devotion to the Guelph cause had been cooling. Finally in the summer of 1256 he received a humiliating rebuff from the Paduans, who refused his proposal to undertake the defence of the city against Ezzelino. In consequence Alberico opened negotiations with his brother, who, for his part, was glad enough of the opportunity of making an alliance, which would, to some extent, counterbalance the loss of Padua. On 8th May, the two brothers met at Castelfranco and exchanged the kiss of peace, after which Alberico surrendered Treviso to Ezzelino, but only as a matter of form. The reconciliation was at first kept secret. Alberico, however, now adopted his brother's methods of keeping a city in subjection, increasing the taxes, robbing widows and churches, banishing, burning and beheading his foes. It was noticed that his hand fell most heavily on the Guelphs, so men began to suspect that he had once more changed sides, and eventually the whole truth leaked out. In March, 1258, the Vicentine, Veronese and Trevisan exiles made a desperate but unavailing attempt to drive him out of Treviso, and this was followed in the summer by a war between him and the Paduans, which was carried on by both sides with great savagery.

Ezzelino sent troops to Alberico, but did not go to his aid in person, because at the time he was engaged in an undertaking which demanded all his energies, the conquest of Brescia. This city had for many years been ruled by the Guelphs, but in March, 1256, their rivals had risen and expelled them. Ezzelino, who, in the absence of any successful claimant to the Imperial throne, was generally regarded as the head of the North Italian Ghibellines, at once hastened to Montechiaro, confidently expecting that the city would be handed over to him. But the Brescians knew too much of his methods of governing. So they elected one of their own citizens, a certain Griffolino de' Griffi, to be Podesta, and placed the supreme power in his hands, and Griffolino sent such cunningly worded messages to Ezzelino that the latter was persuaded to return quietly home, and relinquished all idea of getting hold of Brescia, at any rate for the time. But in the next two years the situation at Brescia underwent a complete change. In the summer of 1257 an eloquent Dominican friar came to the city, and induced the authorities to recall the Guelph exiles. Later, Philip of Ravenna, who was still Legate for North Italy, persuaded the Brescians to renew their adhesion to the cause of the Church. Finally on 19th April, 1258, the Guelphs rose, imprisoned Griffolino and drove the Ghibellines out

Now all this was only the preliminary to a general attack on Ezzelino by the party of

the Church. On 28th April, Alexander IV. ordered a crusade to be preached against him throughout North Italy. On 3rd July, the Pope released all his serfs from their allegiance, and on the 31st of the month the bishop of Treviso solemnly excommunicated all his followers. But these high-sounding fulminations were little more than empty threats. None of them were allowed to be published in Ezzelino's dominions, and though the bishop of Treviso proclaimed the crusade at Venice on 16th June, no one could be found to lead it. The Venetians, having established Padua as a buffer state, no longer felt Ezzelino's power a menace, the Paduans had enough on their hands in their war with Alberico, and the Brescians and Mantuans, even in combination, were not strong enough to take the offensive. Ezzelino, therefore, far from having to defend himself against a host of foes, was able to answer the Pope's challenge by carrying the war into the enemy's country.

Before opening the campaign Ezzelino, powerful though he was, thought it well to get some support from outside. In the disputed condition of the Empire at the time no help was to be looked for from either of the rival claimants. In the western valley of the Po, however, the celebrated Marquis Uberto Pelavicino, had been slowly building up round Cremona a dominion very similar to that of Ezzelino in the Mark. Uberto was professedly a Ghibelline, and he and Ezzelino had already taken common action more than once. In the summer of 1258, they made a formal alliance, agreeing to attack Brescia, and if the city fell to rule it together, though it was not at all likely that Ezzelino would carry out this latter condition if it did not happen to suit his convenience.

Uberto was the first in the field. He laid siege to Torricella and Volongo, two Brescian fortresses close to the Oglio. The Legate had already thrown himself into Brescia, and at once brought the Brescian levies up to the relief of the threatened castles. The rival forces were so evenly matched that neither could gain any material advantage, and thus they lay face to face for some weeks. But towards the end of August the situation was altered by the arrival of Ezzelino. The morning afterwards, before the Brescians had discovered that he was there, the combined Ghibelline forces crossed the Oglio, and fell upon the Legate's camp. The surprise was complete, and the Brescians fled without striking a blow. When the news of this defeat reached Brescia a panic ensued. The majority of the Guelph party and many of the clergy left the city at once. The remaining inhabitants dragged Griffolino from the dungeon where he had been kept ever since the rising of the previous April, and re-elected him Podesta, in hopes that he might once again persuade Ezzelino to leave the city its independence. But Griffolino's first act was to open the gates to Ezzelino and resign the rule into his hands. Ezzelino kept the compact he had made with Uberto, and handed half the city over to him. Each ruler appointed a Podesta, and for a time the two governments subsisted side by side.

From the first, however, Ezzelino took the lead. He instituted a reign of terror, which far surpassed the gloomiest anticipation of the Brescians. Some of the prisoners taken in battle were slain, or tortured, the rest were heavily fettered and confined in horrible dungeons. Nobles were beheaded, priests burnt alive, women mutilated, children and infants slain. Churches and monasteries were robbed, and nuns and monks tortured to force them to reveal where their treasures were buried. So many of the towers and palaces of the nobles were razed to the ground that it was said that Ezzelino had wrought more havoc than the great earthquake of 1222. Then in the centre of the wealthier quarters, on the east and the west of the city, Ezzelino built two castles, which were, says the old Brescian chronicler, Malvecius, like "two swords thrust into the hearts of the nobles". The Brescians were to have no chance of rebelling. It was not long, however, before Ezzelino began to plot to get rid of

Uberto. Partly by intimidation, partly by argument, he prevailed on the Marquis to return to Cremona, while he himself remained behind as sole ruler of Brescia. This treacherous deed was to prove Ezzelino's undoing. Uberto soon realized that he had been fooled, and that he would never be allowed to set foot in Brescia again. When, therefore, in the spring of 1259, the leaders of the Guelph party opened negotiations with him, he was in the mood to listen. On nth June a league was formed against the da Romano by Uberto, Boso da Dovara, Azzo d' Este, Ludovico di S. Bonifacio, Mantua, Ferrara and Padua, the allies swearing a solemn oath to carry on war with fire and sword against Ezzelino and Alberico till both were slain or crushed.

At the time Ezzelino was not in Brescia. In May the Paduans had taken a small town called Friola, belonging to Bassano. Friola itself was of no importance, but Ezzelino was goaded to frenzy by the thought that the Paduans should dare to touch any part of the Bassanese district, the very heart and core of the hereditary da Romano estates. He marched swiftly to Friola, recovered it at once, and then took vengeance on the inhabitants for submitting to the Paduans. Every individual in the town was mutilated in some way, some lost hand or foot, some an eye, some their noses, and there was not a single man, woman, or child who did not bear a permanent mark of what it meant to offend the tyrant. Then, as swiftly as he had come, Ezzelino returned to Brescia, little thinking that he was never to enter the Mark again. Intoxicated by his own cruelty and power, and all unaware of the alliance just formed against him, he began to form fresh schemes of aggrandizement, and to dream of founding an Empire that should surpass that of Charlemagne. Once again he had no ally excepting Alberico, but from his own cities he could draw a very considerable army, and he had, moreover, in his permanent pay a large body of well-seasoned German mercenaries, who served to stiffen the somewhat unreliable citizen levies, and whose fidelity was beyond all doubt. Nothing, love of money, dread of excommunication or death itself would induce these men to leave Ezzelino's service, though they were so hated by the Italians that when taken they were slaughtered at once like wild beasts.

Ezzelino determined to begin by the conquest of Milan, which was fast taking rank as the first city of Lombardy. At the time the city was in the hands of the popular party, led by Martino della Torre, the nobles being entirely excluded from the government. Under Martino's rule the feud which had long existed between Milan and Cremona had recently been brought to an end, chiefly through the influence of Boso da Dovara, so that though the Milanese had not actually joined the league of nth June, they were ready to support the allies in every possible way. On the other hand the nobles disapproved of this policy, and Ezzelino, by means of judiciously distributed bribes and promises, had no difficulty in forming a party amongst them. At the end of August, while still apparently ignorant of the league of nth June, Ezzelino opened the campaign by attacking Orzi, the one Brescian fortress which had not yet submitted to him. In spite of his threat to kill the garrison, if they should offer any resistance, the castle made a stubborn defence, and in a few days the allies moved out to its relief. Uberto Pelavicino led the Cremonese up to Soncino, on the west bank of the Oglio, almost directly opposite Orzi, while the Mantuans and Ferrarese under Ludovico di S. Bonifacio and Azzo d'Este occupied Marcara, also on the Oglio, though much lower down. Ezzelino seems now to have begun to suspect the existence of a league against him, though even yet he did not realize its full extent and significance. Had he only attacked the two forces of the allies before they combined he could easily have beaten them one after the other. Instead of doing this, however, he decided to make a dash for Milan, for he had learnt that the Milanese levies under Martino were coming up to Soncino, and he

hoped that in their absence the nobles would deliver the city to him. Therefore taking only his cavalry, who numbered 8,000, 3,000 of these being picked troops, Ezzelino gave the Cremonese the slip, went north to Palazzolo, crossed the Oglio by the bridge there, forded the Adda, and swooped down on Milan—to find the walls manned and the gates closed. For Martino had been told by some Bergamese of Ezzelino's movements, and had at once turned back to Milan, hurrying his troops on by forced marches; and as he was moving on interior lines he won the race. In Martino's presence the nobles did not venture to stir, so Ezzelino, having neither artillery, machines, supplies, or any other of the necessities for a siege, was forced to withdraw. His next scheme was to capture the castles of the district, but here again he failed, being repulsed first from Monza and then from Trezzo. From Trezzo he fell back upon Vimercate, where he gave his men a rest. But meanwhile the allies were slowly closing in upon him. The Cremonese had joined the Mantuans and Ferrarese, and seized the fords over the Adda, so that Ezzelino's retreat eastwards was cut off, while Martino again led the Milanese up to attack him from the west. Ezzelino did not dare to run the risk of being besieged in Vimercate, as there were not enough provisions in the town to feed his large army for even a few days; so he marched down to Cassano, a few miles to the south-east, where there was a bridge over the Adda. He seized the bridge, but made the mistake of not crossing at once, keeping the main body of his army encamped at Cassano, which was on the west bank of the river, while he himself went off every night to sleep at Vimercate, because many years ago he had been told that in Cassano he would one day meet with an overwhelming disaster.

On the night of 26th-27th September the bridge at Cassano was surprised from the east by the Cremonese and Mantuans, while the Milanese made ready to attack Ezzelino's camp from the west. Roused from sleep by news of the loss of the bridge, Ezzelino came spurring up to find his men almost surrounded. Turning to bay like an old boar hard pressed by the hunters, he made a fierce onslaught on the west end of the bridge. But almost immediately he was hit in the foot by an arrow, and the wound was so serious—the arrow had penetrated into the bone—that he was obliged to withdraw to have it dressed. His temporary disappearance disheartened the troops, and when he returned he was in such pain that his usual decision and grip of the situation failed him. After some hesitation he resolved not to renew the attack on the bridge, but to retreat across the Adda by a ford close by, which the allies had overlooked. Still there was no hurrying, no appearance of flight. Ezzelino was the first across the river, and then took up his station on the farther bank, sitting motionless like a king on his richly caparisoned charger, with contemptuous back to the foe till the last of his men was safely over. Then with banners flying, and a deliberation that was almost insolent, he led his men off along the road to Bergamo. Some grandeur in the old warrior, some air of lofty indifference to pain and danger and disaster had overawed the allies and kept them strangely inactive all this time. But once the crossing of the Adda was accomplished the pursuit began. There was no regular battle. When the two forces came into touch, Ezzelino again hesitated, doubting whether to fly, or turn and cut his way through the enemy. This time his hesitation was fatal. A wave of discouragement swept through the whole army. The Brescian levies were the first to break their ranks. In a moment the panic became universal. Some of the troops pressed close round Ezzelino, as though his presence were in itself a shield and defence, but the greater part scattered in all directions. Ezzelino, seeing this, made no attempt to rally his men, but rode off northwards, though still only at a foot's pace. He was pursued by the great mass of the enemy, surrounded and taken, his actual captor being Boso da Dovara. From all sides the victors gathered to gaze upon the famous tyrant, till the earth trembled with the thunder of galloping horses. Captive and

wounded, Ezzelino still inspired awe. He stood there, grimly silent, and none dared to lay hand upon him, till an unknown man struck him, crying out that he was avenging the mutilations Ezzelino had inflicted on his brother. But the blow roused as much indignation in the bystanders as if it were a dead man that had been struck. Azzo d' Este and Boso da Dovara escorted their captive to Boso's tent with all honour. His wounds were dressed and he was sent to Soncino, where he was tended with the utmost care. But though his body might have been healed, nothing could heal his wounded spirit, and on 1st October, 1259, five days after his defeat, he died of a broken heart, unrepentant to the last, refusing to receive the sacraments, or confess his sins. The victors buried his body in unconsecrated ground, under the steps of the castle at Soncino, and today not a stone remains to mark the grave of "the enemy of God and mankind".

CHAPTER V

THE FOUNDING OF THE SCALIGERI DYNASTY

THE news of Ezzelino's downfall was received with wild rejoicings in all his cities. Everywhere prisons were broken open, officials dismissed, exiles restored. The Veronese recalled Ludovico di S. Bonifacio and made peace with the Mantuans and Azzo d'Este. The Vicentines, without even waiting to hear of Ezzelino's death, decreed that the date of his capture should be a festival for ever. Men thought that a golden age of liberty and peace had dawned. For the factions of the cities of the Mark were generally ascribed to Ezzelino's machinations; and though in reality they had been checked rather than repressed by his stern rule, and burst forth with redoubled fury shortly after his death, for the moment all differences were forgotten in the general joy.

The effect on Ezzelino's single ally, his brother Alberico, was very different. Panic-stricken, he took refuge at once with wife and children in S. Zenone, his strongest fortress. During the winter he was unmolested, but in March, 1260, the Trevisans placed him under the ban of their Commune, and decreed that, if taken, he and his sons were to be dragged at a horse's tail through the city and hung, and his wife and daughters burnt alive. In May, Azzo d' Este and Boso da Dovara led the levies of Treviso, Vicenza and Padua out against S. Zenone. For four months the castle held out, but towards the end of August the besiegers rushed the outer works. The garrison took refuge in the citadel, but were driven to surrender in three days for want of water. According to one account Alberico gave himself up voluntarily to save his followers, according to another it was they who betrayed him. The victors were beside themselves with delight. Fate had delivered their oppressor into their hands, and they were determined to take full vengeance. A council of war was held. Some wished to spare the children, but the majority insisted that no one should be allowed to live who might continue the hated race. Thereupon a grisly tragedy was enacted. Alberico, bound and gagged, was paraded in triumph through the camp. His young and lovely wife and his two daughters were burnt before his eyes, and he was forced to look on while his six sons, the youngest of whom was not a year old, were slain and their bodies quartered and distributed among the victors. Then he himself, after being ungagged for a short time that he might confess his sins, was delivered over to the fury of the soldiers, who cut him to pieces. Thus the male line of the da Romano was completely rooted out, a fitting revenge, as the chroniclers note, on those who had tried to extirpate mankind.

As was only natural, Ezzelino's heterogeneous dominions at once fell to pieces on his death. The various cities proclaimed their independence, and returned to their former condition of self-governing Communes. This was easy enough in Brescia and other cities where Ezzelino had only ruled for a short time, but at Verona the citizens, enervated by nearly thirty years of acquiescence in tyranny, had lost the habit of managing their own affairs. An attempt was made to establish a purely democratic government, but, as before, the populace found it impossible to cope with the turbulent nobles, especially the Count of S. Bonifacio, and his followers. Under these circumstances the control of affairs was bound to pass to some individual who was strong enough to enforce law and order, and this individual was found in the person of the Podesta of Verona in the year of Ezzelino's death, Mastino

della Scala.

The *de Scalis*, *de Scala*, *della Scala*, or *Scaligeri*, as they were variously called, were not of noble origin. The family, however, is known to have dwelt in Verona from the end of the eleventh century and belonged to the upper middle classes, many of its members being lawyers, and others holding high office in the government. The first mention of the name occurs in a document of 1096, where Martino, Adam and Guido de Scala appear as witnesses to a deed of gift. According to Antonio Turrissano, who drew up a family tree of the Scaligeri in the seventeenth century, Alessandro Canobbio, who wrote a valuable history of Verona, now unfortunately lost, found the name of Martino della Scala in a document of 1101 belonging to the Monastery of S. Maria in Organo, and that of his son Balduino in a list of the Consuls of Verona for the year 1147. In a document of 1192 Alberto della Scala appears as one of the Consuls of the city. In 1234 Ongarello della Scala was Rector or Podesta for a few months, while the dwelling of his sons was of sufficient importance to be mentioned as a landmark in the statutes of 1228. Two brothers of the same family, Federico and Bonifacio, who were executed in 1257 for plotting to betray the city to Azzo d'Este, were both men of mark. Bonifacio was a lawyer, and in 1252 joined Ezzelino in an oath to assist Uberto Pelavicino in his support of Conrad IV., while Federico acted as Podesta of Cerea in 1248, led the Veronese troops to the defence of Lodi in 1251, and three years later was employed as envoy by Ezzelino. Finally, when Ezzelino, after ruling Verona for many years through Vicars, revived the Podestaship in 1259, it was Mastino della Scala whom he selected to hold the office.

Mastino I della Scala is one of the most impressive, and at the same time one of the most shadowy figures in Veronese history. Founder of the Scaligeri dynasty, he was yet never lord of the city himself, nor did any son of his hold any position of authority there. He must have possessed a commanding character and many statesmanlike qualities, for it was he who laid down the lines which the subsequent development of the state was to follow, yet hardly anything is known of his personality. His ancestry cannot be traced beyond his father Jacobo, and Jacobo himself is hardly more than a name. He was probably of the middle class, possibly a respectable tradesman. Marzagaia calls him a weaver, and Giovanni Villani says he made and sold ladders, but these assertions rest on nothing but hearsay, probably arising from the name of the family, and the fact that they used a five-runged ladder as their crest.

Almost the only incident that is known of Mastino's career before 1259 is that he held the Podestaship of Cerea in 1258. He must, however, have early shown qualities which won him popularity, for as soon as the news of the battle of Cassano reached Verona, he was re-elected Podesta by the whole city. To emphasize the difference between his position as official of Ezzelino, and as head of the new government, he took the title of Podesta of the People. He did not, however, hold the office beyond the new year (which according to the Veronese system of reckoning began on Christmas Day), but on retiring he secured the election of a nominee of his own, Andrea Zeno of Venice. After this the Podestaship of Verona was never again held by a Veronese, nor was the title "of the People" preserved. On the other hand these words are to be found attached to another office, the Captainate, to which Mastino was elected in 1262, again by the will of the whole people. This office was apparently then newly instituted at Verona, and in the original instance was intended to be more democratic in nature than that of the Podesta. It conferred, however, very wide powers on the holder, and though Mastino did not apparently hold it for more than a year at this time, it was ultimately from a combination of the Captainate and the Podestaship of the

Merchants that the *signoria* of Verona developed.

In the following year an event occurred which greatly strengthened Mastino's position in Verona. The Count of S. Bonifacio and his party had, it will be remembered, been recalled after Ezzelino's death. In September, 1260, however, the Podesta, Andrea Zeno, had again driven them out. After some months of hard fighting, peace was made, and the Count was once more re-instated. But in the autumn of 1263, his party made an attempt to overthrow the supremacy of the Scaligeri (for Mastino did not aim at ruling alone, but was always most loyally supported by his brothers Alberto and Bocca). The rising failed and the S. Bonifacio and their supporters were driven into exile, an exile which this time was to last more than a hundred years. It is to this speedy and final expulsion of one of the two rival parties that the comparative tranquillity of Veronese history and the swift and easy establishment of the Scaligeri dynasty are to be ascribed. Rebellions were not unknown subsequently, but they were the work of isolated bodies of malcontents, who lacked the support of a strong party organisation, and hence were never successful.

From 1263 onwards till his death in 1277, Mastino was the chief force in Veronese politics. With the expulsion of his foes, the city lay at his feet, and for fourteen years, as one chronicler says, he "ruled and reigned in Verona, as the lord of the city". Yet lord of Verona in the technical sense of the word Mastino never was. Often he held no official position in the government. Probably he did not hold the Captainate beyond 1262, as in a document dated 3rd June, 1263, his name appears without any distinguishing title. Certainly he did not hold it in 1269, since in a letter written by Richard of Cornwall, which reached Verona on 20th March of that year, a certain Uberto della Tavola-Maggiore is addressed as Captain of the People. In documents, with a few exceptions, Mastino's name is followed by no other title than that of plain citizen of Verona, *civis Veronae*. In 1268 he was absent from Verona for a year, acting as Podesta of Pavia, and in 1272, when it was found necessary to give the wide discretionary powers known as *arbitrium* to one man, in order that the war with Mantua might be carried on more vigorously, the individual selected was not Mastino, but the newly elected Podesta, Andalo de' Andali.

In many other ways, too, Mastino's position differed from that of the rest of the Scaligeri rulers. There is no sign of his having aimed at founding a dynasty, nor does he seem to have attempted to name a successor. He did not appoint the Podesta, the Greater Council, or any of the officials of the Commune. The soldiers, whether mercenaries or citizen levies, took no oath to obey him. He did not control the finances of the state. In so far as he exercised the supreme authority, he did so without any legal right, for it was on his death that the additions were made to the statutes which placed the control of the Commune in matters judicial, legislative, and financial in the hands of one man, his brother Alberto.

Still, that during the later years of his life Mastino did exercise the supreme authority *de facto*, if not *de jure*, there is not much reason to doubt. We have already seen that he was Podesta of the people in 1259 and Captain in 1262. In 1265 and 1269 he was Podesta of the Merchants. This office alone was sufficient to give him a preponderating influence in the state, and the probabilities are that he held it during the greater part of his ascendancy. He not infrequently led the army in time of war. In 1271 the statute forbidding private citizens to build castles was relaxed in favour of him and his brother Alberto. In the war with Mantua the district castles regained from the enemy were handed over to Mastino to hold. When the war was over he is found shaping the Veronese foreign policy, and making treaties of peace and commerce. When in 1276 a large batch of heretics were taken at Sermione it was

Mastino who decided that they should be imprisoned at Verona, instead of being burnt alive, according to Canon Law. From all this it is surely not unreasonable to conclude that the election of Alberto to be lord of Verona on the day succeeding Mastino's death was no innovation, but merely the legal recognition of a state of affairs which had already existed for some time, or, to put it differently, the shock caused by Mastino's murder crystallized tendencies which till then had been held in solution.

The expulsion of the S. Bonifacio in 1263 decided for many years the part which Verona was to play in North Italian politics. Henceforth the Count's friends were her foes, his foes her friends. The Count and the Mantuans being Guelphs, Mastino and the Veronese took the Ghibelline side. The centre of the struggle between Pope and Emperor was now South Italy, One of Frederic II's natural sons, Manfred, had established himself in the kingdom of Apulia, and in 1263 Urban V. summoned Charles of Anjou to Italy to oppose Manfred. Charles did not arrive in Rome till May, 1265, when Urban V was dead, but in June Urban's successor, Clement IV, invested him with the kingdom. The Lombard cities eagerly flung themselves into the fray. On August 6th Ludovico di S. Bonifacio, then supreme at Mantua, and Obizzo II. d' Este, who had succeeded his father Azzo VII. as lord of Ferrara in 1264, allied themselves with Charles against Manfred, Uberto Pelavicino and Boso da Dovara. After the death of Manfred at Benevento, in 1266, Padua, Treviso, Brescia, Bologna and Milan all joined this league. The Veronese, however, were occupied this year in a war with Vicenza, and so for a while took no part in the larger struggle. They were the aggressors on this occasion, supporting some Vicentine rebels who had seized the Castles of Lonigo and Montebello, close to the Veronese frontier. The Vicentines, however, got help from Padua, in return for acknowledging the Paduan supremacy, and as Padua and Vicenza together were too strong a combination for the Veronese, the latter gave up the attack and made peace in September, the only result of the war, as far as they were concerned, being that they now had a powerful, instead of a weak neighbour, on their eastern frontier.

Next year the Veronese definitely declared themselves on the Imperial side, and on 20th June, Mastino, who was leading some troops to the aid of Boso da Dovara, won a victory over the Piacentines at Calvatone. The Veronese raised the cry of "Rex Conradus Conrad, better known as Conradin, to distinguish him from his father Conrad IV, had, on Manfred's death, determined to wrest the kingdom of Apulia from Charles of Anjou. In the autumn of 1267 he brought an army of 12,000 men across the Brenner, reaching Verona on 21st October, where he stayed three months. Conradin is one of the most pathetic figures in history; the last of his race, of great stature, and strikingly handsome, he won all hearts, but he was not experienced enough to grapple with the difficulties in his path, and the high hopes with which he set out ended in the defeat of Tagliacozzo in August, 1268, and an ignominious death in captivity in the following October. While he was still at Verona, his army dwindled to half its numbers, for his uncles, the Dukes of Austria and Bavaria, and Meinhard of Tirol, after vainly urging him to give up the expedition, had led their men home. Undismayed by this desertion, Conradin on 17th January, 1268, left Verona for the south. He was accompanied by Mastino della Scala as far as Pavia, one of the few Lombard cities which welcomed him and consented to receive a Podesta from him. Conradin's choice fell on Mastino, who therefore spent the whole of 1268 at Pavia, leaving the government of Verona to his brothers Alberto and Bocca.

In Mastino's absence an attempt was made to overthrow the Scaligeri. The rising was promptly crushed, but it was the prelude to the most serious war in which the Veronese were engaged during Mastino's lifetime, for the rebels took refuge with the Count of S. Bonifacio,

and incited him to attack Verona. For the next four years the little state had to fight for her life. She was attacked not only by her own rebels, but by several neighbouring cities, Mantua, Ferrara and Padua. At first the fortune of war was all against the Veronese. The enemy began by capturing nearly all the outer ring of the castles of the district, Legnago on the south-east, Villafranca and other places on the south-west, Soave, Illasi and Vestena in the hills to the north-east. The Veronese could only reply ineffectually by banning the Count and his followers to countless generations.

In 1269 Bocca della Scala lost his life in an unsuccessful attempt to recover Villafranca. But after this matters began to improve. During the early part of 1270 there was peace for a few months with Mantua, where for a time one of the leading citizens, Pinamonte Bonaccolsi, had succeeded in driving out Ludovico di S. Bonifacio, and seizing the supreme authority himself. With Ludovico's return later in the year, Mantua again became hostile, but meanwhile the Veronese were beginning to recover their castles. Legnago was the first to return to its allegiance. In 1270 Illasi was surrendered by Uberto della Tavola-Maggiore, he who had been Captain in the early part of 1269; next year Soave, which was held by the Abbot of S. Zeno, was stormed. Encouraged by these successes the Veronese, in January, 1272, determined to make a vigorous effort to end the war. They conferred the *arbitrium* on the Podesta, Andalo de' Andali, freed him entirely from all responsibility to the Greater Council, and appointed two committees of eight to help him, the *Otto di Guerra* and the *Otto Savi di Credenza*. By the end of the summer Andalo had regained all the castles but Villafranca and a few neighbouring places, which were still in the hands of the Mantuans, and reduced the Count and his supporters to such conditions that they were glad to make peace. A treaty was signed on 5th September with Mantua, by which Villafranca, Ponte Molino and S. Pietro in Valle were returned to Verona. While the Count and his party agreed to submit all questions at issue between them and the Veronese to the arbitration of Mastino della Scala and Pinamonte Bonaccolsi, the latter of whom had re-established his supremacy over Mantua, on 28th July. It is doubtful, indeed, if the Veronese would have emerged so successfully from the struggle, if it had not been for this change of rulers at Mantua. As it was they had held superior numbers at bay for four years, had resisted all attempts to make them reinstate their exiles, and had lost not an inch of territory. The constant danger from without had taught them the necessity of union, and the advantage of having one guiding will at the head of the state, and so undoubtedly did much to strengthen the position of the Scaligeri.

Another lesson taught by the war was the danger of isolation—nor was there much difficulty in finding an ally. The Mantuans under their new ruler, Pinamonte, who was a Ghibelline, were also anxious to obtain support against their Guelph neighbours. Apart from this, the mutual benefits of an agreement between the two states were obvious. It gave each protection on its most exposed frontier. It secured to the Veronese undisturbed possession of their foothold on the Po, Ostiglia. It ensured to the Mantuan merchants the undisputed passage of the Lower Brenner on their way to the north. The two states, if united, commanded all four points of the Quadrilateral, Peschiera and Mantua, Verona and Legnago. Moreover Pinamonte was developing his power on very much the same lines as Mastino. It is interesting in this connection to note that in a document connected with the peace of September, 1272, both are described simply as citizens of their respective towns. Unlike Mastino, however, Pinamonte lived to become lord of Mantua in name as well as in fact. The actual date of the change is unknown, but it had certainly been accomplished before 1280, and it is not improbable that it was connected with the election of Alberto della Scala to be

lord of Verona in 1277.

The friendship now begun between Verona and Mantua was to last nearly sixty years, and to survive not merely the change from republic to *signoria* in both cities, but two changes of dynasty in Mantua. It was signalized in the first few years after the alliance by a frequent exchange of Podestas. At Verona the office was held no less than seven times by Giovanni Bonaccolsi, son of Pinamonte, between the years 1274 and 1288, when Giovanni died in harness, worn out prematurely by vice. Another son of Pinamonte, Tagino, was Podesta in 1283, but made himself unpopular with the Veronese by his avarice. In 1276 Nicolo degli Arloti of Mantua held the Podestaship of Verona, while that of Mantua was held in 1275 and 1277 by Alberto della Scala.

The appointment of Mastino and Pinamonte to arbitrate between the Count's party and Verona was soon followed by the erection of a permanent tribunal to try cases brought by the Commune or a private individual of Verona or Mantua, against the Commune or a citizen of the other state. The Podestas of the two cities elected two judges, one for each town, to hear suits brought by the inhabitants of the other, and if the accusation was proved, the authorities of the offender's city brought him to justice. This was an excellent innovation, for as a rule at this time disputes between the natives of neighbouring cities were settled by the clumsy system known as "reprisals". If, for instance, a Veronese had been injured by a Venetian his only legal means of redress was to lodge a complaint before the Podesta of Verona, who in the event of the accusation proving true, could seize goods to the value of the damage done from any Venetian, however innocent, then happening to be in Verona, who, in his turn, could claim compensation from his own government. Comment is superfluous. It is probable that the Veronese made similar arrangements with other cities than Mantua, but no record of any other is preserved.

After the war with Mantua the external history of Verona remained uneventful for several years. In international politics the issues of this period are very confused. The struggle between the Popes and the descendants of Frederic II was dying out. New problems led to new combinations. After Conradin's death Charles of Anjou remained in undisturbed possession of the kingdom of Apulia. The unanimous election of Rudolf of Habsburg in 1273 changed the whole situation. Pope and Emperor were now on the same side, and the old divisions lost their meaning. The Guelphs, especially the Angevins, were forced for a time into opposition to the Church, the Ghibellines were anxious to show themselves her loyal sons. In 1276 Rudolf's chancellor came into Italy, and Verona and Mantua were amongst the many cities who swore allegiance to him. In February, 1277, Piacenza, Cremona, Parma, Reggio, Modena and Brescia made a league which they invited both Charles of Anjou and the Pope to join. Charles accepted, but the Pope refused, and in the following March the curious spectacle was to be seen of a wide alliance of Ghibelline cities, Verona, Mantua, Milan, Pavia, Bergamo, Genoa, Turin, with the object of defending both Emperor and Pope.

CASTLE OF THE SCALIGERI AT SERMIONE



The Veronese had lain under an interdict ever since 18th November, 1267, when Clement IV had excommunicated Conradin and all his supporters. Now that they were on the same side as the Church, the Scaligeri resolved to do something to prove their orthodoxy, in hopes of getting the interdict removed. The singular form of heresy known as Patarenism had, under the sheltering wing of Ezzelino's hatred for the Church, won a very strong foothold in Verona and its district during the last fifty years. The most numerous branch of the Patarnes—for there were several divisions among them—held tenets very much like those of the oldest sect of the Albigenses. They were reputed to be Manichaeans, believing in two original principles, one good and one evil, to deny transubstantiation and a future life, to regard all oaths as sinful, and to permit the taking of usury. They possessed a regular hierarchy and their own rites. One of their bishops, Balesinanza, who flourished about 1250, was a Veronese. There were not very many Patarnes in Verona itself, but at Sirmione, which by its position seemed to promise exceptional security, there was a large colony. On 12th November, 1276, Alberto della Scala, the bishop of Verona, Fra Timideo, and Filippo, son of Pinamonte Bonaccorsi, Inquisitor of heresy in the Trevisan Mark, raided Sirmione with an armed force, and caught 166 Patarnes, both men and women. The victims were brought to Verona, and there imprisoned by Mastino's orders. This was not in accordance with Canon Law, which ordered that heretics should be burnt, and the result was that while Mastino lived Verona remained under the interdict.

This, however, was not for long, for on 26th October, 1277, Mastino met with a sudden and tragic death. As he was riding through the Piazza dei Signori he was attacked by a band of armed men, and slain, together with his companion, Antonio da Nogarola, before

help could reach him, though he was near his own palace, and that of the Commune. The actual assassins, who all escaped at the time, were four brothers named da Pigozzo, but they were merely the tools of others. The tale goes that the real criminals were the degli Scaramelli, who were furious with Mastino because he had refused to avenge an insult offered to one of the women of the family. It is true that a certain Isnardo degli Scaramelli was amongst those who were banned for being privy to the crime, but the number of those exiled or beheaded for the same cause is so large that it points to some more general reason for discontent than a private grievance. It is quite probable that the murder was part of a last desperate attempt to prevent the utter destruction of the old Veronese liberty by the growing ascendancy of one family. This view is borne out by the fact that a fortnight later a very similar plot against the Bonaccolsi was discovered at Mantua, which may easily have been connected with that at Verona, as one of the ringleaders was Nicolo degli Arloti, who had been Podesta at Verona the previous year.

Mastino's wife was named Gilia, but nothing else is known of her except that in 1278 she gave a hundred pounds to be distributed among certain Ferrarese, from whom Mastino was said to have extorted money wrongfully. Mastino was at one time held to have left six sons, Guido, Bartolomeo, Pietro, Francesco, Ardito and Nicolo, but as a matter of fact Nicolo is the only one of whose existence there is any real proof. It is more than doubtful if Francesco and Ardito ever lived at all, and though at the close of the thirteenth century the bishopric of Verona was held in succession by Guido, Bartolomeo and Pietro della Scala, there is nothing to show that they were Mastino's sons, indeed it is now known that Guido was his brother. Nicolo was born in 1268, the year that Mastino was Podesta of Pavia. As he was only nine at the time of his father's death, there was no question of his succeeding him, for even in an old-established *signoria* if the sons of the late ruler were minors the succession generally went from brother to brother, or uncle to nephew. In 1295 Nicolo was banished from Verona for conspiring against his uncle Alberto, and a year later he died.

The massive block of buildings in the Piazza dei Signori close to the tombs of the Scaligeri is said by tradition to have been Mastino's palace. Unfortunately all traces of the original building have vanished in frequent restorations. Vanished, too, are the frescoes, if ever they existed, with which Giotto is said to have decorated the walls, and which would have been invaluable from the historical point of view for their portraits of Mastino and others of the earlier Scaligeri. As it is, no record of Mastino's outer man has been preserved. No picture or statue, no image on coin or seal, no word even of the chroniclers shows what the founder of the Scaligeri dynasty looked like. His tomb in the churchyard of S. Maria Antica is a block of almost unadorned marble, its simplicity rendered more impressive by the elaborate monuments that surround it. The chroniclers are equally silent regarding his personality. The main lines of his character can be judged from the influence he wielded in the state, but of the subtle shades, of the little traits that go to make up individuality, nothing is known. It is clear, however, that the mass of the citizens honoured and loved him, and after all no greater praise can be given to any ruler than that given him by Fra Salimbene, the only contemporary who comments at all on his rule, and who says of him and Alberto that they "judged justly and cared for the poor".

The constitutional and economic development of Verona under the supremacy of Mastino I is far more striking than its political history. This development found its fullest expression in the re-codification of the statutes of the Commune, which took place within the first ten years after Ezzelino's death. An attempt had originally been made to revive the constitution as it existed before Ezzelino's time, but this was impossible. The conditions of

life had become so much more complicated that the statutes of 1228 were no longer adequate for the needs of the growing community. The duties and conditions of tenure of the officials had changed, new offices had been created, the judicial procedure needed amplifying, new regulations had to be made to meet the social and economic changes which had occurred during the thirty odd years of Ezzelino's rule. So, soon after his death the new codification was begun, not so much with the object of introducing reforms, as of bringing the written law into correspondence with the existing state of affairs. It was an immense labour, for the new code, though based on that of 1228, contained at least three times as many statutes; it probably took many years to complete, though not more than ten, as it is known to have been finished by 1270. Moreover, so many additions and alterations were made in the next few years that late in 1276 or early in 1277 it was found necessary to draw up a fresh copy of the statutes, in which the additions were incorporated in the text. This manuscript was finished just before Mastino's death, and though receiving many subsequent additions, remained the standard version for over fifty years. It is now in the *Biblioteca Comunale* at Verona.

The new code was divided into five books, treating of the following subjects; the constitution and higher officials of the Commune, civil law, criminal law, local government, including commercial and sanitary regulations, and, lastly, the military forces of the city. It must be owned that this arrangement is not very strictly adhered to, the first and the fourth books overlap to a great extent, there are great gaps in the criminal and civil codes, and much irrelevant matter is introduced, for instance the last book concludes inconsequently with regulations concerning the management of rafts on the Adige. Still when the code of 1277 compared with that of 1228, the progress in system and comprehensiveness is found to be very great.

Book I gives a tolerably complete picture of the Veronese constitution, both on its legislative and administrative sides, in the latter half of the thirteenth century. There are, however, two marked omissions. In the manuscript as it stood at the time of Mastino's death the Podesta of the Merchants is only referred to once, while the Captain of the People is never mentioned at all. This is the more striking when it is remembered that it was precisely from the combination of these two offices that the *signoria* at Verona was developed. The most probable explanation is that the Captain ate, being recently established, and democratic in origin, took some time to win full recognition, while the functions of the Podesta of the Merchants were already set forth in the statutes of that Art.

The head of the newly organized community was the Podesta. In theory this official was now much more powerful than in the early days of the Commune. He formed the apex of the pyramid of the State in matters legislative, judicial, administrative and military. He alone could summon the Concio and the Greater Councils. He it was who presided over their meetings, and those of most of the lesser councils. The ultimate appeal in both civil and criminal cases lay to him. He alone could coin money, build fortifications and erect castles. The only two departments of State which he did not control were the Treasury and commerce. As a matter of fact this condition of affairs lasted only a few years. With the growth of the Scaligeri ascendancy the Podesta lost more and more of his powers, till he became nothing but the deputy of the lord in judicial and executive affairs. This change was not completed till Alberto's reign, but it must have begun as early as 1262, when Mastino became Captain of the People. The restrictions laid on the Podesta are much the same in the code of 1277 that they are in that of 1228. Certain new regulations, however, were added. The salary was fixed at 3,000 *lire*. The change of office occurred at the New Year (Christmas Day) instead of at Midsummer. It is stated that the Podesta was elected by the

Gastaldi of the Arts. The Veronese were prohibited from acting, and no one was allowed to serve again till three years after his term of office had been completed. That this last regulation was practically never enforced is shown by the list of the Podestas for the years 1260 to 1306 in the *Syllabus Potestatum*, where more than one man is to be found acting for two or even three years in succession. In attempting to reconstruct the life of a past period from a code of statutes, no principle must more constantly be borne in mind than the axiom that the laws portray the ideal which was aimed at and not the existing state of affairs. Hence the frequent prohibition of an abuse is the surest sign of its prevalence.

Immediately below the Podesta in the constitutional pyramid came the Anziani. No mention is made of this office in the code of 1228, and as its origin was democratic it may safely be assumed that it was not instituted till after Ezzelino's death. The Anziani at Verona numbered thirteen, and were drawn from the middle classes, eight from the Gastaldi of the Arts, while the other five each represented one of the five quarters of the city. The method of their election was also democratic, for they were chosen in the Greater Council *per brevia*. This complicated system was as follows. Slips equal in number to the Councillors were placed in a vase, the majority being blank, but a certain number bearing the name of the offices to be filled. The names of the Councillors were then read out, and as each name was called a boy drew one of the slips from the vase, and when one with the name of an office was drawn, the Councillor whose turn it was became one of the electors to that office. The number of electors varied in different cases, *e.g.*, the Anziani who represented a quarter of the city had each five, while those who were Gastaldi had only three. The Anziani were intended to act as a check on the Podesta. They held one set of the keys of the city while he held the other, so that it was impossible for him to betray the city. They formed, too, a Council through which all legislation had to pass before being presented to the Greater Council.

Below the Anziani came the Council of Eighty. Little is known of either the powers or constitution of this body, but it appears to have been a survival of a more oligarchic form of government. These two bodies sometimes united with the Council of the Gastaldi (of which more hereafter) when they were known as the Anziani and Gastaldi, and the Eighty and Gastaldi, but these were rather temporary combinations than permanent Councils.

The *Concilium Generale* of the early statutes and documents, or as it was called later, the Greater Council, was the principal legislative body of the Commune. It was presided over by the Podesta, elected most of the officials in the way already described, and possessed, at any rate in theory, the ultimate power in legislation, taxation and foreign policy. At this period it numbered 500 members, exclusive of the Anziani, Gastaldi and Eighty, who were all entitled to sit *ex officio*. The elections to it took place every year in the middle of January under the supervision of the Podesta, but nothing is said in the statutes as to the methods of election, or of the qualifications of either electors or elected. The probabilities are that both electors and elected were the *buoni uomini*, the "legal men" of the city, the equivalent of the rate-payers of the modern municipality (only we may be sure that at Verona there were no women voters). Failure to pay the taxes of the Commune would of course act at once as a disqualification.

The base of this pyramid of Councils was the Concio. Though by the end of the thirteenth century the Concio had lost most of its powers, it still met in the Piazza Erbe on exceptionally important occasions to ratify decrees passed by the Greater Council. On the death of a ruler it was always summoned to take part in the election of his successor; and

though this was often a mere matter of form, no one was ever regarded as being legally lord of Verona till the ceremony had been carried out, and in more than one instance the Concio exercised a real decision in the choice of a new ruler.

Besides these various Councils there was another, outside the regular organisation of the State, and yet possessing very great power. This was the Council of the Gastaldi of the Arts, which seems to have come into being subsequently to the code of 1228, as it is never mentioned there, and which may have inherited some of its functions from the expiring Communanza. The Gastaldi, according to the statutes of 1277, possessed, in fact, almost sovereign power. They elected the Podesta and the judges of the Commune. They were entitled to meet and discuss public affairs without waiting, like the other Councils, to be summoned by the Podesta, and they could call upon that official to propose in the Greater Council any decree they had already proposed in theirs. No record exists, however, of any interference by the Gastaldi in the government of the city, and with the change from self-governing Commune to *signoria* they lost some of their most important powers, *e.g.*, the appointment of the Podesta and the judges became the prerogative of the lord. As early as 1283, when the Gastaldi met in Council special reference was made to the statute of 1277 which ensured to them the right of free assembly, and this looks as though the custom were already falling into disuse.

The Podesta's position as supreme head of the judicial system, with the exception of the cases reserved for the Podesta and Consuls of the Merchants, had undergone little change in the interval between the two codifications. His staff of lawyers and judges had, however, been considerably altered. There were four judges of the Commune instead of three, while the number of the Consuls had fallen to twelve. There were in addition judges who tried civil cases up to ten pounds in value, a judge for criminal cases of first instance, and three other officials whose duties are not clearly defined, a *sindico*, an advocate of the Commune, and a *judex pauperum*, a lawyer for the poor, who was paid by the State, and presumably defended those who could not afford the regular fees.

The civil and criminal codes contained in books II. and III., though still far from complete, are much fuller than anything to be found in the code of 1228, as was only natural at a time when written law was fast superseding unwritten custom. Fewer punishments are left to the discretion of the Podesta, the majority of crimes being provided with definite penalties, usually fines or imprisonment. In some respects the law had become more severe. A murderer, instead of being outlawed, was beheaded, a murderess burnt alive. False witnesses, forgers, and clippers of coins lost their right hand. The use of sworn witnesses as a method of discovering guilt was becoming general. Trial by battle, by ordeal and by torture could still be used in specified cases, but whereas judicial procedure as a whole is treated in much greater detail, the statutes concerning these three modes of trial are copied almost word for word (including the tariff for hired champions) from the code of 1228, and when the third codification took place fifty years later, they were entirely omitted, from which it may safely be assumed that they had long before fallen into disuse. Some alleviations in the terrible conditions of mediaeval imprisonment are beginning to appear; women are ordered to be confined apart from men, while any one accused of a crime not punishable by death or mutilation was allowed to offer bail instead of going to prison.

The relations between the civil authorities and the local clergy at Verona were generally excellent, however hostile the attitude the city might adopt at times towards the Papacy and its claims. It is true that no office except that of treasurer might be held by a

clerk, but this custom was universal throughout North Italy. Special enactments were passed for the protection of the property and privileges of all the greater monasteries, while the lands of the Templars and of the Knights of S. John were exempted from all taxation. Heresy is only referred to twice in the code of 1277. In the first instance the statute of 1228 is repeated almost word for word, the Podesta being ordered to expel heretics and destroy their houses when called upon to do so by the bishop. The second statute, which is of later date, directs that heretics shall be examined by the bishop and Podesta, and, if found obdurate, shall be punished according to law. No further explanation is offered of what the punishment is, but it would not be the mere expulsion of the code of 1228. Probably, as Cipolla points out, it would mean being burnt alive, in accordance with the edict issued in February, 1239, by Frederic II, or the constitutions of Innocent IV, though the Veronese do not seem to have adopted the Canon Law concerning heresy for another twenty years.

The treasury was now placed under the direction of two *massarii* instead of one as formerly, who were selected from amongst the Frati Umiliati, and held office for a year, with a salary of 50 *lire*. These *massarii* were responsible for all payments from the treasury, and into their hands came ultimately all the revenues of the Commune, whether arising from taxes, fines, tolls, rent for the communal woods and pastures, or the sale of the goods of debtors, exiles, etc. They did not, of course, possess the power of taxation. That lay with various authorities. The Greater Council at this time, and later the lord, imposed the taxes that were needed from time to time to meet special expenditure. A certain proportion of the tolls on exports and imports were under the control of the Podesta of the Merchants. But the greater part of the ordinary taxation was purely customary, and consisted of tolls and dues of all descriptions dating from immemorial antiquity, which were supplemented by personal services called *scuffae* and *dationes*, such as attendance at the general muster of all the citizens in arms, or working at the repairs of fortifications and bridges. The principal function of the *cercatori* remained, as before, the examination of out-going officials, but in addition they acted as public prosecutors, and enforced the payment of all legacies to the poor and the Church. Those much-enduring officials, the two proctors, had their duties still further increased—for instance, the amphitheatre was now put under their care. They were given, however, a large staff of assistants, indeed the number of minor officials employed by the Commune was so great that it seems as though every citizen must at one time or other have served in this way. There were notaries and scribes, messengers (*viatori*) and valuers (*stimatori* and *ragionieri*) and countless inspectors (*fannitori*), inspectors of bridges and roads, of waggons and carts, of streams and wells and of the market. The market was held in the Piazza Erbe, and was the subject of hundreds of enactments, almost every article of merchandise having its price and conditions of sale regulated by statute. Eight inspectors supervised the sale of meat, another eight the pork-butcher's stalls (the ordinary butcher might not sell pork) four the bakers, while others were responsible for keeping order and preventing gambling.

It is by no means always possible to discover who enforced the various regulations. Clearly there was much overlapping between the different authorities. The Podesta, for instance, was responsible for the paving of the streets and public spaces, while it was the business of the proctors to see that no bridge, balcony, or any other projection from a house was less than eight feet above the ground. They and their subordinates had to keep the city clear of pigs, and superintend the great annual cleansing, when the mud and other refuse was carried out to the Campo Marzo (and a fearful business this must have been), but a smaller cleansing was ordered now to take place once a week, and entrusted to the body known as

the *giurati delle contrade*. These *giurati*, four of whom were selected in each *contrada*, were bound to inform the Podesta at once of any breach of the peace occurring in their district, and together with the *custodi della notte* formed a sort of police who doubtless assisted the followers of the Podesta, and the inspectors who were under the command of the proctors, to keep order in the streets, markets, taverns and other public places. This indeed can have been no light task to judge from the number of acts, harmless or the reverse, which were prohibited as breaches of the peace. No one might bear arms in public except a knife or a short lance, and these only by day. No man might stir forth after sunset without a light. (This was an unusually lenient regulation, in most Italian towns at this period no one was allowed to go out after dark under any circumstances, and under Alberto I the Veronese law was altered to this effect.) No arrow might be shot, no stone thrown in the city. If any one shot from a house at the Palace of the Commune, or at one of the Anziani or Gastaldi, that house was ordered to be pulled down. No banners but those of the Arts might be borne through the streets, even when the big bell of the Commune had rung to arms. No games except chess or draughts were allowed indoors or out. No one might raise the cry of *Pax, Pax*, even in his own house, for this meant peace with the exiled party of the Count of S. Bonifacio, and was a crime subject to the severest penalties.

The University of Verona never acquired the world-wide fame of those of Bologna, Padua and Pavia, nor is it possible to find any documentary proof of its existence before 1339, when Benedict XII issued a Bull establishing a *perpetuum studium generale* at Verona. But in the statutes of 1277 provision is made for the endowment of five chairs; Canon Law, founded by Guido della Scala, brother of Mastino and Bishop of Verona from 1268 to 1273, Civil Law, Logic, Medicine and Grammar. The chair of Logic was worth fifty *lire* a year, and was held at this time by a certain Artemisio said to be the best logician to be found in all Italy Giovanni da Cremona was the teacher of grammar with a salary of twenty-five *lire*, while the professor of medicine received twice that amount and was bound for that sum to doctor for nothing any citizens who, while doing military service for the Commune, were, according to the quaint phrasing of the statute, “twisted in their nerves, or broken in their bones”. Learning was further encouraged by the exemption of doctors, teachers and scholars from taxes and personal services to the Commune, an immunity extended also to the strolling players, who supplied the mediaeval town with its music and drama.

The fifth book is devoted to an attempt to introduce some sort of order into the very irregular fighting-forces of the Commune. The main body of these forces consisted of the general muster of the citizens under arms. They were divided into the *militia*, the nobles and knights, who formed an undisciplined and tempestuous cavalry, and the *popolo*, the middle and lower classes, who fought on foot, ranged under the banners of the Arts. The knight (*miles* or *berroiero*), was expected to provide himself with iron cuirass, armpieces, gauntlets, greaves, an iron helmet or collar, lance, shield and sword. Those who could afford it were bound to keep horses which the authorities could commandeer in time of need. Besides the *militia* and the *popolo* the fighting forces included a body of crossbowmen. Three hundred and two, each with his crossbow and supply of bolts, were distributed amongst the five quarters of the city, where they lived at the citizens’ expense, while more crossbowmen and a body of light archers were quartered amongst the towns and villages of the district. ⁴ The inhabitants of the district, in addition to supporting these archers and attending the general muster, had to provide garrisons for their own towns, and supply the army in war-time with sappers and masons. It had not yet become the custom for the citizens to pay substitutes to do their military service, but the unruliness of the knights, the inefficiency of the footmen,

and their reluctance to keep the field for more than a few weeks, or even days, made it necessary for the Commune to have some more permanent body of troops, which should serve to stiffen the citizen levies. Ezzelino had set the example with his force of dreaded German mercenaries, and after his death *soldati* or *soldaerii*, as they were called, are to be found fighting alongside the Veronese citizens, though they are barely mentioned in the code of 1277. Neither is anything said in the fifth book as to the appointment of one supreme commander for the whole of the army, if the word may be used of these very heterogeneous forces, but from the oath of the Podesta it appears that he was expected to lead the troops in war. As a matter of fact the custom varied, sometimes it was the Podesta, sometimes the Captain of the People, sometimes a prominent citizen who acted as general for the Commune; after the establishment of the *signoria*, the lord either led his army in person, or appointed a substitute.

The statutes of 1277 make little reference to the district. Much more is to be learnt of the condition of the surrounding country from such statutes of the rural Communes as have been preserved. It has already been noted that however democratic the constitution of an Italian city might be, none of the inhabitants of the district, or of other cities it had subjugated, were allowed any voice in public affairs. On the other hand, though the district towns were completely powerless with regard to the form of the central government, taxation, legislation and foreign policy, they retained a considerable amount of autonomy, regulating the incidence of taxation if not its amount, electing their own officials, and making regulations for the management of the lands belonging to the Commune, and the punishment of minor civil offences, which were often embodied in regular codes. Every town and village, however small, formed a Commune, with its own officials, and its own public assembly of "legal men," that of the larger towns being dignified with the name of Council, while the smaller communities only possessed a *vicinia*, or neighbourhood, the informal meeting of all the inhabitants, who usually assembled in the open. Every Commune, too, was ruled in imitation of the larger cities by a chief official called a Podesta or Rector. Originally the rural Communes seem to have possessed the right of electing their own Podesta, e.g., in 1189 the "legal men" of Bionde di Porcile, being unable to agree about the election of a Podesta, delegated the right to five of their number, who in their turn resigned it to Adriano, Archpriest of the Cathedral of Verona. But this right seems to have been lost in early times by many of the Communes. For as in England under the Saxons, so in Italy in the thirteenth century, dependent and independent villages are to be found existing side by side, and while the latter were selfgoverning, the former were under the control of a lord, who might be a noble, an ecclesiastical prince, one of the monasteries, or even another village, but, whoever or whatever he was, appointed the Podesta and other officials, exercised jurisdiction, and issued statutes.

As the Commune of Verona increased in importance it extended its sway more firmly over the surrounding district. It has already been seen that the statutes of 1228 directed that the Podestas of the rural Communes that were self-governing, or under the jurisdiction of another village, should be elected in the Greater Council. Fifty years later the Commune was strong enough to extend this principle to all the towns and villages of the district, including those under the jurisdiction of the nobles, or the great ecclesiastical proprietors, and in 1271 a decree to this effect was added to the statutes, while to make the rural Communes more uniform in size, it was enacted that no village should have a Podesta unless it contained twenty-five hearths, smaller hamlets being added to some larger Commune or grouped together till they reached the required number. The Veronese seem, however, at first to have

had some difficulty in enforcing the new regulation, for in 1273 the canons of the cathedral successfully vindicated their claim to appoint the Podesta of Calmasino, a village over which they exercised jurisdiction.

The lordship over a Commune, variously known as *jurisdictio*, *comitatus* or *marigancia*, differed very much from place to place, usually in direct ratio with the rank and wealth of the person exercising it. The height to which it might rise is well illustrated by a document of 1260 in which the bishop of Vicenza invests Beroardo, Count of Vicenza, and Marcio da Montemerlo with fiefs in the district of Bassano, formerly belonging to Ezzelino III. Beroardo and Marcio were given the right of issuing statutes, exercising both civil and criminal jurisdiction, and appointing all officials. They were to receive the tithes usually paid to the Church. They could impose tolls of every description, exact every form of personal service, and quarter their followers in the villages and hamlets. They alone could erect mills, and to them belonged all hunting, fishing and grazing rights. So great indeed was their power, that the document refers to them as kings, *reges*. This was an exceptional case (its exceptional character was doubtless connected with the fact that Ezzelino had been the previous holder of the estates), but the rights of exercising jurisdiction and appointing officials were almost invariably the prerogative of the lord, and that of issuing statutes is not uncommon. Often, too, the lord of a village was regarded as the owner of the soil, for which he would exact rent, in money or kind.

The self-governing rural Communes did not enjoy all these rights, but with the exception of the Podesta they elected all their own officials; the *massario*, who was responsible to the central authorities for preserving order, the *saltuarii*, who managed the lands belonging to the Commune, the *decani* and *giurati*, who acted as police. Usually, too, the Commune held the hunting and fishing rights, and received the profits arising from the lower jurisdiction. Part of these were retained, sometimes even by a dependent village, *e.g.*, in a settlement made at Rovere di Velo in the Lower Lessine Alps by German immigrants in 1287 it was stipulated that the profits of jurisdiction should be divided equally between the lord, his steward and the Commune.

It must be remembered that the status of the actual tillers of the soil was hardly affected by the dependence or independence of the village. The *marigancia* in itself contained nothing derogatory to personal freedom, and though emancipation perhaps came later in the Mark than elsewhere in North Italy, by the second half of the thirteenth century the great body of the peasants were free. It is true that the *masnadi* who rebelled against Alberico da Romano in 1228, were servile or semi-free labourers, and that thirty years later the peasants on the da Romano estates must still have been serfs, as Alexander IV in 1258, in order to harass Ezzelino, issued a bull declaring them to be free, but the tendency of the century was to liberation. In 1265 Cunizza da Romano emancipated all the serfs she had inherited from her father and brothers, granting them complete liberty to own property, sell, buy, bear witness and make wills. Nothing is said of *servi* in the deed conferring the *marigancia* of the da Romano fiefs on Beroardo da Vicenza and Marcio da Montemerlo in 1260. In the German settlement at Rovere di Velo there is no sign of servile status, or even of servile tenure. Here and elsewhere there is no trace of compulsory labour on the demesne lands of the lord. Indeed, throughout the thirteenth century the peasants in the Lessine Alps had been accustomed to pay rent in money and kind to the various ecclesiastical authorities who owned the greater part of these mountains, and the payment of rent, especially in money, is generally accepted as one mark of freedom of tenure.

The statutes of the rural Communes are of course mainly concerned with the cultivation of the soil, and the management of the common woods and pastures. Some minor offences, such as gambling and blasphemy, are prohibited, but the majority of the penalties and fines are imposed for robbery and other damage to crops, flocks, trees, fences, etc. Many of the statutes regulate such purely agricultural matters as pasturage, wood-cutting, hay-making, the vintage, and rights of way. Cultivation in severalty, *i.e.*, on an individual basis, was the rule, but traces of common cultivation remain. Every community possessed some land in absolute ownership. In some instances this land was used in common by all the members of the Commune. Elsewhere it was divided up at regular intervals, and let out to individuals, the Commune receiving the rent, and sometimes regulating the cultivation. The technical term for land thus divided was *terra designata*, while the actual partition was styled *designatio*.

An excellent example of the *designatio* is to be found at Baldaria, where in 1221 certain woods belonging to the Commune were ordered to be divided every eight years into shares of varying sizes. The holders of these shares were bound by very stringent conditions. They might only cut wood at certain times fixed beforehand by the majority, and they might not sell any when cut except to the inhabitants of the town of Cologne, or for the purpose of making carts or ploughs. They paid no rent, but were bound to pay taxes and perform the personal services due to the Commune in proportion to the size of their holding, which was not alienable, except to an inhabitant of the same village. Other woods belonging to Baldaria were divided up every four years, others again were retained for common use by the Commune. Here none but the village officials were allowed to cut wood, and they only for such public purposes as the repair of the church and the bridges, or to satisfy demands made by the Commune of Verona. At Cerea the Podesta was ordered to divide a wood annually into holdings for the surrounding peasants, and here traces of common pasturage remain, for it was necessary for any one wishing to graze his own fields to ask the permission of the Podesta, a relic of the time when all arable land was pastured in common after the harvest. At Cerea and Castelnuovo dell' Abate it was also enacted that no one should begin the vintage or the olive-harvest till the day fixed by the Podesta.

The tendency of the *designation* however, was to become permanent, while the prevalence of cultivation in severalty is proved by the large number of regulations concerning hedges and fences, injuries to crops and trees, and rights of way to holdings to which there was no public road. It apparently took forty years to acquire a right of way by prescription, but if a man had no other means of reaching his land he could apply to the Podesta of Verona to compel his neighbours to sell him a path. The variety of crops and vegetables mentioned in the rural statutes is remarkable, considering the earliness of the period. Besides wheat and hay, mention is made of rye, millet, garlic, onions, turnips, cauliflowers and cabbages, pumpkins and melons. The live stock included cows, sheep, goats, pigs, hens, ducks and geese.

The unit of cultivation was the *campo*, the size of which probably varied from place to place, according to the fertility of the soil, and other circumstances, but cannot have been very large, as the holding for a household, the *manso* contained on an average 25 *campi*. Early in the century it would appear that arable land was scarce, and that the rural Communes often pursued a selfish policy, preventing land from being tilled on the plea that it was *designate* marked out for division. The statutes of 1228 prohibit this practice, and elsewhere order the Podesta of Verona to compel the rural Communes to cultivate their waste land, and if they had not enough inhabitants to do so, to provide the labourers himself.

Later, possibly as the result of Ezzelino's constant wars and massacres, population seems to have decreased, and vigorous efforts were made to attract labour to the land. A statute of 1277 offered immunity for fifteen years from all taxes and services exacted by the Commune of Verona to any one settling in the district. The Germans at Rovere di Velo were granted their land free of rent for the first two years and were exempted from all burdens imposed by the Veronese Commune, except that of attending the general muster. Similar exemptions from dues to the Commune were often obtained by the nobles for the peasants on their estates, while the tenants of the Scaligeri occupied much the same privileged position in the Veronese district as the tenants in ancient demesne did in England.

Nor is it strange that men had to be lured by special privileges to settle on the land. The burdens the actual tiller of the soil had to bear were endless. To the owner of his holding he paid rent, to the church tithe, to his lord or his Commune tolls innumerable, whenever he used road, bridge or ford, if he travelled on foot, on horseback, or by waggon, when he took boat and when he landed, if he sold his crops in the local market, or sent them elsewhere, if he took his corn to be ground, fished in the river, or caught wild animals or birds. Both his lord and his Commune might call upon him at any time to perform such personal services as mending roads and bridges, or providing waggons for transport. Then came the Commune of the mother-city with its constant demands for money, claiming duties on the produce of the country before it could enter the city, and on merchandise bought within before it could be taken out, contributions to the upkeep of the local force of archers, or the garrison of the nearest castle, the price for the quantity of salt which every householder was bound to buy annually from the state, whether or no he wanted it all, and at irregular intervals the hearth-tax, the form in which extraordinary taxation was usually collected for such purposes as the payment of the expenses of a prolonged war, the erection of fortifications or public buildings in the mother-city, etc. In war the rural districts were bound to supply the army with sappers and masons, while they themselves were left defenceless, exposed to the brunt of the burning and plundering which were the recognized methods of fighting at the time. Under such conditions, however much mitigated by remission of taxes and other burdens, it is wonderful that any one could have managed to make a living out of the land. That the rural districts escaped entire desolation at this period can only have been due to the most rigid frugality and ceaseless industry on the part of the peasantry, coupled with the exceptional fertility of the soil.

If the agricultural classes, however, were overburdened, the commercial and artisan classes were exceedingly flourishing in the second half of the thirteenth century, having won their way to a position of almost complete independence in the state. The early rise of the Arts and the formation of the Council of the Gastaldi has already been related. But amongst all the Arts that of the Merchants had developed the most extraordinary powers. They had accumulated vast stores of wealth and acted as bankers to the Commune. They were responsible for the safety of the main roads, and garrisoned the castles erected where these roads crossed the frontier. They had long ago established their supremacy over the rest of the Arts, and by now possessed a highly organized governing body, including a Podesta, a Council, Consuls, a treasurer and many lesser officials. Their Podesta and Consuls formed a tribunal before which all suits between members of the Art, and cases concerning commerce were tried, and from whose sentences no appeal lay to any of the officials of the Commune. The Podesta of the Merchants regulated most of the duties on imports and exports, and could call upon the Podesta of the Commune to coin money whenever he thought it necessary. The Merchants, however, derived their greatest power from a statute of the code of 1277 which

enacted that all resolutions passed in their Council at once acquired the force of law, without having to be approved by any of the Councils of the Commune. Even with the limitation (which, though not expressed, must of course be understood) that the Merchants could only legislate about matters connected with trade and industry, it is clear that this statute gave them a position which must have threatened the supremacy of the Commune and the unity of the state, had not the Scaligeri made the Podestaship of the Art into an apanage of their family. Indeed it was chiefly through this office that they developed their ascendancy. Mastino I. was Podesta of the Merchants in 1265 and 1269 and possibly longer, and Alberto was elected to the office several years before he became lord, and retained it till his death. It was held regularly by his successors, indeed no member of the dynasty was considered to have obtained the full *signoria* till he had been elected Podesta of the Merchants, and in negotiating the commercial treaties which were such a marked feature of their foreign policy the Scaligeri always described themselves by this title.

Even in the interval between Ezzelino's death and the establishment of the *signoria* the Veronese made several commercial treaties. The earliest dates from 1261, and is an agreement with Vicenza concerning the protection of traffic on the main road between the two cities. In 1274, the Veronese made a commercial treaty with Venice, the chief object of which was the safety of navigation on the Adige, the *strata athesis*, as it is called in the document. The Veronese were responsible for the prevention of robbery as far as a point three miles below Legnago, from there to Badia the Venetians. Both parties had to keep up a fleet of vessels to police the river, and the Venetians undertook to build and garrison a tower where the Adige left Veronese territory. To recover the cost of this they were permitted to exact tolls from all traffic, while the Veronese might only put an export duty on horses and provisions, but in turn stipulated for the right to dwell where they pleased at Venice, so long as they did not engage in trade.¹ In the peace concluded with Mantua in 1272 elaborate arrangements were made for the safety of merchants going from one city to the other. The road to be guarded was that running through Isola della Scala, and Castel d' Ario, where it crossed the boundary at the Tione. Each city was responsible for the security of the road in its own territory and was bound to compensate any traveller robbed between sunrise and sunset. Those travelling at night or by any other route did so at their own risk. It is not expressly stated that the road was to be kept in repair, but we may be sure that this was understood, for North Italy was far ahead of the rest of Europe in this respect. A Paduan document of 1277, affords an interesting example of the method of road making in use at the time. The contract for renewing a certain road near Limena was put up to public auction and very detailed instructions are given as to the construction of the new road. The contractor was to dig a ditch the whole length of the road, and with the earth extracted to make a foundation twenty-four feet wide and at least two feet deep. On the top of this a second layer of gravel or small stones, twelve feet wide and one foot deep, was to be placed. This, when bound, would make an excellent road for wheeled traffic, with a softer track on each side for riders and foot passengers. If the ditch did not furnish sufficient earth for the foundation the contractor was empowered to take as much as he wanted from the neighbouring fields, as long as he did not injure crops or buildings. At one point a bridge had to be constructed, and it was ordered that this should be made of stone, and the exact copy of another bridge in the neighbourhood.

CHAPTER VI

ALBERTO I

ON 27th October, 1277, the day after Mastino had been murdered, a still more momentous event occurred at Verona. The great bell of the Commune was solemnly tolled, and heralds were sent through the streets to summon the inhabitants with blare of trumpets to the Concio, to decide what form the government of the city should take for the future. The assembly met in the Piazza Erbe. Beneath the Tribuna, the little building consisting of a small stone roof supported by four squat pillars, which was the centre of the city's corporate life, sat the Podesta of the year, Giovanni Bonaccolsi of Mantua, and the Anziani and Gastaldi. Immediately around them were ranged the members of the Greater Council, and the nobles and other magnates, amongst them Alberto della Scala, who, on hearing of Mastino's death, had hastened home from Mantua where he had been acting as Podesta. Beyond the nobles stood the great mass of the citizens, the "legal men", drawn up in order under the banners of the Arts, and on the outer fringe of all, the politically powerless classes, the very poor, the idle, the inefficient, thronged and jostled each other. The opening formalities over, the Podesta asked if it were the will of the citizens that Alberto della Scala should be appointed Captain General for life. This meant nothing less than the establishment of a *signoria*, though, it must be noted, not an hereditary one. Revolutionary as the proposal was, the Veronese were evidently fully prepared for it. The Anziani, Gastaldi, councillors and nobles recorded their votes separately, and when the results were examined, it was found that every one without exception had voted in favour of the resolution. The rest of the citizens were then invited to express their approval or disapproval by acclamation, and the whole rowd at once burst into a storm of applause, crying out "Scala, Scala", waving their arms on high, and showing by every possible means how delighted they were. Thus in one hour the Veronese willed away their liberty. The result of the conspiracy to overthrow the Scaligeri ascendancy was that the head of the family had become lord of Verona.

The full title assumed by the new ruler was "Captain and Rector of the Gastaldi of the Arts and of all the People of Verona". On the day following the meeting, a formal instrument of election was drawn up, enumerating his prerogatives. According to this document Alberto was given, firstly, power to govern the city according to his good will and pleasure ; secondly, the right of making, altering, and abolishing statutes, an additional clause giving any decree issued by him the force of law at once without its having to pass the Greater Council; thirdly, the complete control, including the power of alienation, of the Commune's property, whether money or land; and fourthly, the right of confirming, altering or quashing all sentences passed by the Podesta and judges of the Commune. Alberto was thus made the supreme authority in administration, legislation, finance and jurisdiction, while, as Podesta of the Merchants, he continued to control, as he had for some years past, all industry and commerce. The military forces of the Commune were placed under him by the addition of several new statutes to the first book of the code of 1277, ordering that the banners of the Arts and the Standard of the People should be given into his charge, that the Gastaldi and the captains of the mercenary troops should appear in arms at his summons, and that he alone might appoint the commanders of the district castles. It was further enjoined that the Podesta and all other officials must swear to obey the new rules and support his authority, while an

earlier statute was altered so as to give him the power of increasing or diminishing the Greater Council. Alberto's first public act was to avenge Mastino's death. Between 28th October and 2nd November a large number of arrests were made, and those who were found in any way to be implicated were beheaded. The plot must have been very widespread, for, according to one authority, as many as sixty executions took place in the five days. The actual murderers had escaped, but a reward of 300 *lire* was placed on their heads. Three years later two, named Galvano and Melio da Pigozzo, were slain in a street at Padua by some Paduans and Veronese. Their assailants were taken and brought to justice. They were undoubtedly acting under orders from Alberto, but as Verona had only just emerged from an exhausting war with Padua, he did not venture to interfere in the matter and abandoned his tools to their fate. The Paduans were banished to their estates, and the Veronese hung. One of them, however, a certain Nascimbene, managed to escape, and later in the year was rewarded with a gift of lands for his share in the deed.

It will be remembered that at the time of Mastino's death Verona still lay under an interdict. To Alberto, who was by nature devout, and inclined to a somewhat conventional orthodoxy, the position was intolerable, and soon after his election he determined to propitiate the Papacy by sacrificing the Patarenes who had been caught at Sermione in 1276, and who, contrary to Canon Law, were still living. Accordingly on 13th February, 1278, the heretics, numbering nearly two hundred between men and women, were brought out of their dungeons into the amphitheatre, and there burnt alive, under the direction of Filippo Bonaccolsi, the inquisitor for heresy in the Mark. This act of piety did not fail of its reward. Negotiations were opened with the Papacy, and after the Veronese had bound themselves to acknowledge no one as Emperor save at the Pope's bidding, and to build a monastery and church for the Franciscans at Sermione, the interdict was at last removed in October, 1278, and in the following June Nicholas III. presented his "well-beloved son" Alberto della Scala, and his nephews Nicolo, Federigo and Alberto, with the castle of Illasi in return for their zeal in suppressing heresy.

After this Alberto always remained on the best of terms with both the Papal Curia and the local clergy. He was so generous to the canons of the Veronese cathedral that in March, 1289, they spontaneously elected his second son Alboino to a vacant canonry. In July, 1290, Nicholas IV. wrote to praise his care for the well-being of the clergy, and recommend the Abbey of S. Maria in Vangadizza (close to Legnago) to his protection. Alberto rebuilt the Church of S. Maria Maddalena, and in his will left 1,000 *lire* apiece to the Dominicans, Franciscans, and *Eremitani*, and 10,000 *lire* to be divided in smaller sums amongst the other churches and hospices of Verona and the poor. On the other hand he did the monks of S. Zeno a grievous wrong by compelling them against their will to accept his natural son Giuseppe as their Abbot. In 1292 Dante inveighs vehemently against this appointment, and it would seem to have distorted his whole conception of Alberto, for the only time he refers to him is in connection with this episode:—

E tale ha già l' un pie dentro la fossa,

Che tosto piangerà quel monastero,

E tristo fia d' averne avuto possa ;

Perche suo figlio, mal del corpo intero,

E della mente peggio, e che mal nacque,

Ha posto in loco di suo pastor vero.

If this description of Giuseppe is a true one, and especially if the words “worse in mind” are to be taken, as seems probable, as meaning moral rather than mental depravity, it is not to be wondered at that the monks objected. Yet whatever Giuseppe’s personal defects, his appointment contributed greatly to the material wealth and power of S. Zeno, for Alberto took the monastery under his special protection, and issued, and, what was more, enforced a decree that any one occupying its lands without due title must restore them at once.

Alberto’s foreign policy was unambitious and non-aggressive. Unlike the majority of the Italian nobles of this period, he had a strong distaste for fighting, and rarely led his troops in person. His position at home was not sufficiently secure to warrant his attacking other cities, while Verona, though daily becoming more flourishing, was still inferior to most of her neighbours, both in population and material resources. Hence Alberto made no conquests of any importance, only rounding off his territories here and there by the addition of an isolated castle, or a remote mountain valley. Much as he would have preferred, however, to remain constantly at peace, it was impossible for him to escape altogether from being dragged into other men’s quarrels, and the first part of his reign was spent in repelling a combined attack made upon Verona by several other states.

The occasion of this war seems to have been the voluntary submission of Trent to Padua in July, 1278, in order to obtain help against Meinhard, Duke of Carinthia and Count of Tirol. As Vicenza was already under Paduan supremacy, the submission of Trent was a serious menace to the Veronese, who were now hemmed in both on the north and east by Padua. Alberto therefore retaliated by an alliance with Meinhard. On 28th November, the Paduans in return allied themselves with Brescia, Cremona, Parma, Modena and Ferrara, “for the exaltation of the Holy Roman Church ... and the destruction of Verona” (this in spite of Alberto’s recent reconciliation with the Papacy), and proceeded to attack Cologne, one of the most important fortresses on the Eastern Veronese frontier. Far from being crushed by this formidable array of foes, the Veronese carried the war on with great spirit, and even when Cologne fell on 21 st December, wrote to Meinhard that they were more eager than ever to continue the struggle. During the following year the situation improved. An attempt to surprise Vicenza failed, but in the spring the inhabitants of Trent, exasperated by the cruelty and tyranny of the governor sent by Padua, rose and drove him out, and in the summer made peace with Verona. In September the Brescians withdrew from the war, and were admitted into the alliance between Verona and Mantua. The Veronese were therefore now free from attack on all sides but the east, but even so it was all they could do to hold their own against the Paduans and Ferrarese. Fighting, as usual, ceased in the winter, but in May, 1280, the Paduans and Obizzo II d’Este brought their troops to Villanova, on the Alpone, in the centre of the S. Bonifacio country. Here they encamped, and for a fortnight proceeded to burn and plunder the surrounding villages, once penetrating to within five miles of Verona. Alberto was not strong enough to march out against the enemy, and in his extremity appealed to Venice and Treviso for help. Meanwhile he sued for a truce, which the Paduans granted on 29th May, and eventually on 2nd September a permanent peace was arranged. The Veronese regained all their territory, but swore never to rebuild the castle at Cologne.

A few years after this war the Scaligeri were set free from one danger by the death of

Ludovico di S. Bonifacio at Reggio in April, 1283. Ludovico's only son Vinciguerra was still a minor, and was entrusted by his father's will to the care of several Guelph cities, Padua, Vicenza, Parma and Ferrara. After Ludovico's death the bitterness between the Scaligeri, and the rulers of Ferrara, the Estensi, began to die down. The Estensi had always been among the most faithful adherents of the Church, and therefore, as a matter of course, enemies of Ghibelline Verona. For the time, however, the struggle between Pope and Emperor had ceased, and since Alberto had shown such marked submissiveness to the Papacy, a friendly understanding between the two families was no longer outside the range of practical politics. The reconciliation was cemented, in July, 1289, by the marriage of Alberto's eldest daughter, Costanza, to Obizzo II d' Este. The match was purely political, for Costanza was a young girl, and Obizzo an elderly widower with grown-up sons. But it was a wise one, for the Estensi had been lords of Ferrara in fact, if not in name, for close on a century, and it was of the utmost importance for a rising family like the Scaligeri to strengthen their position by intermarriage with old-established dynasties. It helped to confirm their authority over their own subjects, provided them with natural allies amongst the constant turmoil of North Italian politics, and admitted them to the princely caste which was being speedily formed from and above the ordinary nobles. All through his reign Alberto steadily pursued this policy of marrying his children into other reigning houses. In September, 1291, his eldest son Bartolomeo wedded Costanza, daughter of Conrad of Antioch, grandson of the Emperor Frederic II. His second son Alboino was married in 1298 to Caterina, daughter of Maffeo Visconti, then ruler of Milan, and after Obizzo d' Este's death his widow Costanza was again the means of cementing an alliance, being married this time into the younger branch of the ruling family of Mantua, the Bonaccolsi.

It was probably on the occasion of his marriage that Bartolomeo was made Captain General of Verona, for he is to be found using the title early in January, 1292, though if the involved chronology of Ferreto de' Ferreti, the panegyrist of the early Scaligeri, is to be trusted, he cannot have been more than fourteen at the time. From henceforward Bartolomeo took an active share in the work of government, though he did not take equal rank with his father, his title being frequently followed in documents by the words *apud* or *penes eum*, always a sign of subordination to the actual ruler, while to the end of his reign Alberto continued at intervals to issue decrees and sign treaties in his own name alone. The fact was that the raising of the heir of a ruler to the Captainate was intended not so much to confer authority or honour upon him, as to ensure the succession. It was the only method of keeping the supreme authority in the family where the dynasty was not hereditary. Where it was, it was still the most convenient way of avoiding a disputed succession, for in those troubled times no state could afford to risk the dangers of a long minority, and so the succession often passed not from father to son, but from uncle to nephew, or brother to brother. Hence this custom was one of the principal means of establishing an hereditary dynasty.

On 13th February, 1293, Obizzo II d'Este died, and this brought about a complete change in the general political situation. In his will Obizzo had appointed his three sons, Azzo VIII, Francesco, and Aldovandrino, rulers in common of his territories. But Azzo, the eldest, was ambitious, and schemed to oust his brothers and rule alone, and afterwards subjugate the other cities of Romagna, and even of Lombardy. He began by combining with Francesco and driving out Aldovandrino. The latter fled to Padua and persuaded the citizens to declare war on Ferrara. Azzo replied by an alliance, offensive and defensive, with Verona, on 10th October, 1293. But Alberto had no intention of fighting Azzo's battles for him, and seeing that the Paduans had taken several castles, he first made peace with them in February,

1294, and then in April allied himself with them against Azzo and Francesco. Before the Veronese troops had taken any active part in the war the Estensi sued for peace, and in May a treaty was concluded by which they ceded to Padua several castles in the marshy but fertile strip of land between the Po and the Adige. The Veronese did not receive any territory, but as, in the same month that peace was made, Alberto began to rebuild the castle of Ostiglia, which was forbidden by an ancient treaty with the Paduans, it may be inferred that they had released him from this compact as the price of his desertion of Azzo.

Alberto regarded the victory of the Paduans so much as his own that in the following November he celebrated it with the first Curia recorded as having been held at Verona. A Curia, or Corte Bandita, might be held by a Republic, by Florence or Padua, for instance, but it was more commonly associated with the greater Lombard dynasties, to whom a marriage or birth, or some great political event, gave frequent opportunities for this form of public rejoicing. The Curia was the outward sign of dynastic splendour, and the first one was a memorable moment in the development of a dynasty. The noble strangers from all parts of Italy, and the thousands of actors, jugglers, mountebanks and street-singers who followed them to Verona must realize that the Scaliger was the personal host, the munificent patron. Now indeed he had shown himself a dynast among dynasts, and the news would spread to every Italian town. The Curia of 1294 is not to be compared with those held by the Scaligeri in the fourteenth century, but it was celebrated with a magnificence unsurpassed at the time. Alberto showered gifts upon his guests, distributing amongst other things no fewer than 1500 cloaks of the finest Flemish cloth, scarlet, purple, blue, green or white, and lined with lambs wool or fur. He made twelve knights, including his sons Bartolomeo and Cangrande, his nephew Nicolo, Mastino's son, and two great-nephews Federigo and Alberto, grandsons of his other brother Bocca. Amongst the nobles knighted were some of the important family of the da Castelbarco, and Antonio and Bailardino, sons of the Antonio da Nogarola who was murdered at the same time as Mastino I. Bailardino married Alberto's daughter Caterina, and devoted the whole of his life to the Scaligeri service.

That Cangrande should have been knighted on this occasion is somewhat surprising, since he can hardly have been more than three and a half at the time. No other example is known of a child receiving knighthood at this period, and the first absolutely authenticated instance did not occur till over forty years later, when Mastino II della Scala knighted his son Can Francesco (afterwards Cangrande II) at the age of five. Indeed the fact that Cangrande received knighthood in 1294 has been used as an argument for placing his birth in 1280, or 1281, some ten years earlier than the usually accepted date. But though no contemporary document gives any data as to his age, and the testimony of the various chroniclers on the subject is more than usually conflicting, the weight of evidence is undoubtedly in favour of his having been born in March, 1291. The explanation of the early knighthood is to be found in Cangrande's extraordinary precocity and his father's almost doting affection for him. Ferreto has drawn a charming picture of Cangrande's childhood. Even as a baby he was remarkable for his ruddy cheeks, his well-formed limbs, and rapid growth. He began to speak quite early, and that with the greatest distinctness. By three he had ceased to notice women's dress and ornaments, and all his delight was in the sight of plumed helmets, shining swords and foaming steeds, in the clash of arms, the blowing of trumpets, the beating of drums. He adored his father. When Alberto was in the palace, the child would follow him about everywhere, never taking his eyes off him, and the moment he sat down would climb on to his knee to cover his face with kisses. In return Alberto idolized his little son, and whenever he could would steal away from his councillors and courtiers to play at

ball with the boy. While still small Cangrande gave a presage of his future high-mindedness and contempt for money, by turning aside with scornful gesture when he was taken to see a great treasure. At seven he was as strong as his brothers, though they were several years older, and would accompany them on their visits of inspection to rampart, fortress, or field. As he grew up he was taught to ride, to shoot, to speak eloquently and to control his high temper. Originally christened Can Francesco, his great qualities of mind and body earned him the name of Cangrande, Cane the Great. Something of all this must doubtless be discounted, but when every allowance has been made for poetic licence and Ferreto's desire to magnify his hero, enough remains to explain Alberto's action in conferring so unusual an honour on the child of his old age.

In 1297 Alberto made the first addition of any consequence to his territories. The opportunity was given him by a quarrel between two branches of the da Castelbarco family, some almost independent nobles whose estates lay up the Brenner Pass, just beyond the Veronese frontier. One brother, Bonifacio, held Rovereto in the valley and Prada, Baldo and Mori in the mountains to the west of the Adige, while the other, Guglielmo, owned two castles rather higher up the pass in the hills to the east of Trent. On Bonifacio's death his sons attacked their uncle Guglielmo, who, having acted twice as Podesta of Verona, appealed to Alberto for help. In February, 1297, Bartolomeo arrived on the scene with some Veronese horse, and, though the ground was deep with snow, beat the sons of Bonifacio to their knees in less than three weeks, and drove them to surrender their castles to him. This was no small gain to the Scaligeri, for Rovereto gave them the control of the Adige valley up to Trent, and Mori the command of the one practicable pass between the Brenner and the north end of Lake Garda.

It was in the following year that the marriage of Alboino della Scala and Caterina Visconti took place. The wedding was celebrated at Milan, and in September the bride made a triumphant entry into Verona, and Alberto held the second great Curia of his reign, knighting the bridegroom and eleven other nobles. The marriage strengthened the ties between the two families, and there was constant interchange of friendly acts. Scaligeri troops went to aid Maffeo Visconti in his struggle against Guglielmo di Monteferrato, and in 1299 Alberto and Maffeo acted together as arbitrators between the Bolognese and their exiles. But the friendship never developed into a regular alliance, owing to the attitude of Bartolomeo, who for some unexplained reason disliked the Visconti intensely and did all he could to undermine their influence with his father. When after Alberto's death, Maffeo was in exile, Bartolomeo gave him refuge in his dominions, but refused to let him enter Verona itself, confining him to a small town not far from the frontier.

On the whole, the history of Verona under Alberto was tranquil, not to say monotonous, the little state developing its constitution and material resources undisturbed by any stirring events or sudden shocks, either from without or within. The year 1299, however, was memorable for three striking episodes, the formal condemnation of Alberto to death by the Paduans, a widespread rebellion amongst the Veronese, and a revolution at Mantua, which was to a great extent engineered by the Scaligeri. The first of these is an almost unprecedented occurrence, and the chronicle which records it offers no explanation, merely stating that Alberto was condemned to death at the request of Tiso da Camposampiero, nor does it appear that the Paduans ever attempted to carry out the sentence. There is some reason to think, however, that the Paduans again suspected Alberto of intriguing to oust them from Vicenza, for during the Carnival of 1299 he had sent some fine war-horses as a gift to Nicolo da Lozzo, who was then Podesta of Vicenza. The family of the da Lozzo belonged to

the Paduan district nobility, over whom the Commune had always found great difficulty in vindicating its supremacy, and henceforth the Paduan authorities kept a watchful eye on Nicolo. But it was not till many years later, when the struggle between Cangrande and Padua was at its height, that Nicolo, after long intriguing with the enemy, at last threw off all disguise, and declared himself on the side of Verona.

The rebellion of 1299 was not the first which had occurred in Alberto's reign. In 1286 and again in 1295, plots had been discovered to slay him, but they had been easily crushed. The second of these was a dynastic quarrel, being an attempt on the part of Nicolo della Scala, Mastino's son, to make himself lord of Verona, but he and his followers were at once driven out, and nothing more came of the matter, for Nicolo had no powerful friends either in the city or without, and in the following year he died. The rising of 1299, however, was much more serious. Its aim was to overthrow the Scaligeri dynasty, and drive the whole Ghibelline party out of Verona. It was engineered from outside by the heads of the two leading Guelph families of the Mark, Vinciguerra di S. Bonifacio and Azzo VIII d' Este, and it found widespread support both in the city and district. Indeed it may almost be said to have been a combined revolt of the intellectual classes and the populace against the autocracy, for amongst the ringleaders are to be found a priest, two doctors, a grammarian, a lawyer, a notary, a baker, and the son of a smith, while the names of the nobles are conspicuous by their absence. The signal for the rising was to be the assassination of Alberto, his sons and the higher officials, but at the end of May, before the preparations were complete, news of what was on foot somehow or other reached the authorities. An immense number of arrests were made, and exceedingly severe sentences passed on all found to be implicated in any way. Three of the ringleaders, one a Brescian priest, were dragged through the streets at a horse's tail and hung. The doctors and the grammarian Alberto, "out of his mercy" an old chronicler says, refused to slay, but they were sentenced to a worse fate, lifelong imprisonment in the underground dungeons of the Palace of the Commune. Many others shared their fate, and all who had made good their escape were, as a matter of course, put under the ban of the Commune. Ferreto accuses Alberto of developing savage cruelty in his later years, but if, as seems probable, he is referring to the repression of this conspiracy, he has overstated the case. The Scaligeri had only just escaped annihilation, the whole city was honeycombed with treason, and the hereditary foes of the Veronese Ghibellines were only waiting the signal to attack from without. If ever severity was justified, it was on this occasion. Two years later, in consequence, Bartolomeo succeeded his father without the slightest disturbance.

THE STAIRCASE IN COURTYARD OF THE PALACE OF THE COMMUNE



The alliance with Mantua had continued unbroken ever since Alberto's accession, and had been strengthened by the conclusion of a commercial treaty in 1279, and again in 1297 by an agreement concerning the extradition of criminals. Alberto and Pinamonte Bonaccolsi were on terms of personal friendship. It has already been noted that there was probably a close connexion between their elections to the *signoria*. They were accustomed to lead their troops out together, and more than once acted as arbitrators in the same cause. In 1283 Alberto forced the Abbot of S. Zeno, notwithstanding the latter's vigorous protests, to grant valuable lands to Pinamonte. But after Pinamonte had been overthrown in 1291 by his son Bardellone, the relations between the Scaligeri and the Bonaccolsi became somewhat strained. When Alberto, after thrusting his bastard Giuseppe upon the monks of S. Zeno, ordered all the lands of the monastery occupied without legal title to be returned to it, Giuseppe claimed that some lands held by Bardellone at Castel d' Ario came under this category. Bardellone stoutly refused to give up the fiefs in question, asserting that they had been left to him by his father, Pinamonte (who had died soon after his downfall). After some heated discussion, Giuseppe was persuaded in May, 1293, to allow Bardellone to continue to hold the estates, but the matter left a soreness, and in June, 1299, Bardellone is to be found complaining that Giuseppe was again interfering with his Castel d' Ario fiefs. By this time, indeed, Bardellone was on the verge of an open rupture with the Scaligeri. In May he had sent to remonstrate with Alberto about certain constructions in the Po at Ostiglia, which he chose to consider as the foundations of a bridge, and therefore a menace to Mantuan navigation. Alberto replied that the works could not be a menace to anyone, as they were not intended for a bridge, but only to preserve the bank of the river from crumbling away. He offered to meet Bardellone and discuss this and other questions at issue between Verona and Mantua, but Bardellone refused to come to a personal interview until the obnoxious

erections had been removed. When matters were at this pass, Bardellone suddenly bethought him of renewing the old alliance between the Bonaccolsi and Estensi, and wrote to tell Alberto of his intention. As it was not a month since Alberto had very nearly been assassinated by the partisans of Azzo d' Este, he was not unnaturally indignant at the proposal, but finding opposition useless, he eventually gave his consent, and the alliance was concluded on 24th June.

Alberto's compliance, however, was only a ruse to gain time, and prevent Bardellone from guessing his real intentions. He had long found Bardellone too independent, and now determined to replace him by a younger branch of the same family, over whom he hoped to exercise more influence. His preparations were made with the utmost secrecy, and Bardellone seems to have been entirely unsuspecting that Alberto was playing him false till the morning of 1st July, when a large body of cavalry under Alberto's sons, Bartolomeo and Alboino, suddenly appeared in the Piazza at Mantua. With the Veronese were three sons of Bardellone's younger brother Giovanni, Guido called Botticella, Butirone, and Rainaldo, afterwards famous as Passerino. Bardellone played the coward. He fled at once, and next day of his own will resigned the *signoria* formally. Guido was elected Captain General of Mantua in his stead, and on 6th July renewed the alliance with Verona. A few days later he married Costanza della Scala. Alberto was now sure of controlling Mantuan policy. Guido would hardly venture to thwart the man who had made him lord of Mantua, and given him his daughter to wife.

Two years later, in the spring of 1301, Veronese and Mantuan troops marched together up the Brenner, to defend Filippo Bonaccolsi, now Prince-Bishop of Trent, against the attacks of some marauding nobles. This gave Alberto another opportunity of extending his dominions in the same direction as in 1297. This time he got the north end of Lake Garda, taking Riva on the lake, Tenno in the mountains behind, and Stenico, Dreno and Castellano in the upper part of the deep Vai di Sarca.

During the whole of his reign Alberto displayed considerable legislative activity. The alterations made in the constitution at the time of his election were of course inspired by him, and afterwards, notably in the years 1279, 1295, 1297, and 1299 he made a great number of additions to the statutes, the most important of which were those intended to round off the *signoria*. The statute concerning the election of the Podesta by the Gastaldi received the significant addition that the election was to take place in the presence of Alberto, and according to his good will and pleasure. In 1295 the numbers of the Greater Council were fixed at 600, to be selected by the Podesta and the Captain General. Many minor alterations are to be found scattered throughout the margin of the statutes, concentrating the prerogatives of the Podesta and other officials in the hands of the lord, e.g., the right of appointing new officials in the place of any who were banished was transferred from the Podesta to the Captain in 1279. After the rebellion of 1299 Alberto issued a decree ordering every citizen to take the oath of fidelity to himself, as well as to the Podesta.¹ When in 1302 Bartolomeo commanded that the Podesta should take his oath to the Captain, instead of to the Commune as heretofore, the authority of the *signore* was complete at every point.

Orthodox himself, Alberto did his best to ensure the orthodoxy of his subjects by adopting the bull of Alexander IV. concerning heresy, *Contra Haereticam Pravitatem*, as the law of the land. He seems to have done this in 1296, as the bull is inserted in the code of 1277 in the same handwriting as that of some statutes stated to have been made in that year. Henceforth all heretics found in Verona were to be burnt, instead of being merely expelled,

as the older statute directed. They were given one last chance of escape, however, for a decree issued at the same time ordered heretics to leave the city and its district at once. Nineteen kinds of heretics are mentioned in this decree, including Cathari, Patarenese, Albigenses and other more obscure sects, such as those of the Black Water. Another statute of 1296 forbade all work on Sundays and the greater festivals in order, it is stated, that the country might no longer be plagued by storms of rain and wind. The first attempt was made at sumptuary legislation. Women were forbidden to appear in the streets wearing crowns of silver, gold or gems, and elaborate regulations were made concerning display at funerals. Sanitary matters received some attention. All the pig-sties in the city were ordered to be destroyed; cripples, lepers and persons with infectious diseases were ordered to be banished like criminals; householders were to see that their gutters and drains did not overflow on to the paths, and to collect their refuse in front of their houses, whence it was to be cleared away by the *giurati delle contrade*. Provision was also made for a primitive species of fire brigade. A bell was to be hung in the Scaligeri palace and tolled whenever an alarm of fire was reported. All the citizens were then to collect with axes and buckets, and when it was discovered in which *contrada* the fire was, all the inhabitants of that *contrada* were to go with the Podesta, the judge of Criminal Law, and the messengers of the Commune to put it out.

In consolidating the *signoria* Alberto destroyed the last remnants of the old Veronese freedom. But if he deprived the citizens of self-government he ensured to them the Italian ideal of *Liberta*, e.g., complete independence of all other states, and he gave them justice and order, two of the most crying needs of the age. The *Syllabus Potestatum* says that he was high-minded, virtuous, prudent, merciful and wise, that he governed Verona in the fear of God, suppressed tumults and quarrels, and protected the poor and weak from the rich and powerful, whereby he won the love of his people. Ferreto laments that he performed no great deeds of valour and made no great conquest, but praises his impartiality and piety. Fra Salimbene notes his justice and care for the poor. Unambitious, and of simple tastes, Alberto did not squander the money of his subjects in wars of aggrandizement, or luxurious display. He took a keen interest in the material welfare of his people, though he did not always set about promoting it in the best way, as for instance, when he stopped the exportation of all provisions, corn, wine, oil, fruit, vegetables, and meat, from the city and district. Commerce he did his utmost to foster. In 1278 and again in 1292 he renewed the treaty with Venice concerning the navigation of the Adige. In the peace of 1279 with Mantua and Brescia articles were inserted directing that the main roads should be kept open for commerce, and guarded by a body of horse selected by the Podestas and Councils of the Merchants of the three cities. In 1297 a fresh step was made in the maintenance of security by one of the earliest examples of an extradition treaty. The Mantuans and Veronese agreed that any criminal guilty of arson, robbery, or violence, fleeing from one state to the other, should be arrested by the Podesta of the town where he took refuge, and sent back to his own city to be tried. A similar arrangement was made with Brescia in the following year.

Alberto was a mighty builder. He it was who gave the first impulse to the wondrous transformation which replaced wood or brick by the famous “peach-blossom” marble from the quarries of S. Ambrogio, till palaces, churches, bridges and the very paving stones of the streets were of this exquisite material, and Verona was known as the *Urbs marmorea*. In 1287 Alberto constructed new fortifications on the east side of the Adige, enclosing the Campo Marzo. He covered in the Ponte di Pietra, and erected a tower at its western end, and also at the Porta Rofiola, and the Porta Morbii. In 1295 he built himself a palace, an

impressive square block in the Via Mazzanti with a fine outer stairway, now, alas! very dilapidated, with only a ramshackle balustrade of planks. Close to this Alberto had a well dug to which a beautiful well-head was added two centuries later. In the market-place shops were built for the butchers, and, to prevent the floods which so frequently did damage in the lower parts of the city, embankments were made on both sides of the Adige. In 1300 the Church of Santa Maria Maddalena was rebuilt by Alberto. His last and greatest undertaking was to begin a palace of red marble for the Art of the Merchants, instead of the wooden house they had hitherto been content with. This palace, the Casa dei Mercanti, stood at the corner of the Piazza Erbe and the Via Pelliciai. The greater part of it was unfortunately destroyed in a fire, but the bottom story, with its fine arcade of severely simple pillars and round arches, still remains, and the rest has been recently restored in accordance with the original design. Beyond the arcade indeed the palace can hardly have risen in Alberto's life, for the first stone was laid on 1st April, 1301, and on 3rd September of the same year he died of an illness which had lasted nine months.

Alberto's tomb stands in the churchyard of Santa Maria Antica. Though smaller and less elaborate than others of the monuments, it is very lovely, being of red marble and covered with carvings in high relief, somewhat naive, it is true, but full of spirit and exquisite line. Alberto himself appears twice, once kneeling before the Virgin, and again, sword in hand, bestriding a finely modelled horse. The execution is too rough for either of the heads to be regarded as an exact portrait, but they show that Alberto wore no beard, and had the full round chin of the Scaligeri. The date of Alberto's birth is unknown, but he must have been an old man when he died. By his wife, Verde di Saluzzo, who outlived him four years, he had three sons, Bartolomeo, Alboino, and Cangrande, and two daughters, Caterina and Costanza. In his will, dated 6th January, 1301, after legacies to charity and his daughters (Verde must have had a large dowry, for she received only three silver basins, two ewers, two beds and her dresses and jewels) Alberto left the mass of his property equally between his three sons, and appointed Bartolomeo guardian of Cangrande.

CHAPTER VII

BARTOLOMEO I AND ALBOINO

ANOTHER crucial moment had now been reached in Veronese history. Was the Scaligeri dynasty to become hereditary or not? There had been no mention of the succession at the time of Alberto's election, or in any of his later legislation. There could, of course, be no question of his settling the matter in his will. It was not till much later that the dominion of Verona came to be regarded as the property of the lord in the sense that he could dispose of it by testament. The Veronese, however, hardly seem to have realized the importance of the issue before them. Bartolomeo had already been Captain General for ten years. All that was needed to give him the full *signoria* was the Podestaship of the Merchants. Opposition was out of the question. The democratic party had been stamped out by the executions and imprisonments of 1299. There was no rival claimant amongst the Scaligeri. Alboino was unambitious, Cangrande a minor, Mastino's only son long dead, the grandsons of Bocca thoroughly loyal. So on the day after Alberto's death Bartolomeo was quietly elected Podesta of the Merchants, and the principle of hereditary succession established, as it were, automatically.

Bartolomeo only reigned two years and a half, dying on 7th March, 1304, at the age of twenty-seven. He was twice married, first to Costanza of Antioch, who died in 1302, and by whom he had one son, Francesco, and secondly to Agnese, daughter of Vitaliano Dente of Padua, who bore him no children. Neither warrior, legislator nor builder, Bartolomeo was yet the best ruler Verona ever knew, for his one aim was to promote the well-being of his subjects. The nameless writer who continued the chronicle of Parisius de Cereta, says that the populace loved him well. The *Syllabus Potestatum* praises his wisdom, benevolence, and love of justice, and relates that all his thoughts were directed to governing his people in peace, so that under his rule the Veronese prospered and grew famous, and at his death the whole city mourned. The external history of his reign was uneventful. In the late autumn of 1301 he was obliged, as the friend and ally of the Bonaccolsi, to send help to Filippo, bishop of Trent, then hard pressed by Guglielmo da Castelbarco, and Louis, Otto and Henry, the sons of Meinhard of Carinthia, who had died in 1295. In September, 1302, possibly because of his aversion to the Visconti, Bartolomeo made an offensive and defensive alliance with the Mantuans and Alberto Scotto of Piacenza, who had recently helped the Torrigiani to get possession of Milan. This, however, does not seem to have involved the Veronese in any fighting. Only when Scotto, not finding the Torrigiani sufficiently compliant, tried in 1303 to reinstate the Visconti, did a body of Veronese troops move down to the south-west corner of the Mantuan district to hold the Cremonese in check.

The most enduring title to fame of the Scaligeri rests on their hospitality to exiles and men of genius. Their court attracted artists, poets, scholars and warriors from all parts of Italy and all alike received unfailing welcome. To Bartolomeo was granted the greatest honour of all, that of being the first to give a home to Dante in his exile. Strangely enough no Veronese chronicle mentions any visit of the Florentine poet to Verona, but Dante himself has placed the matter beyond all doubt in the celebrated account of his wanderings which he puts in the mouth of his ancestor Cacciaguida. The lines:—

Lo primo tuo rifugio e il primo ostello

Sara la cortesia del gran Lombardo,

Che in sulla Scala porta il santo uccello.

can only be interpreted as meaning that when Dante heard of the decree of 27th January, 1302, banishing him from Florence, he went to Verona. The identification of the Great Lombard with one particular Scaligeri ruler is, however, not without difficulties. The four who reigned during Dante's lifetime— Alberto, Bartolomeo, Alboino and Cangrande— have all been suggested in turn by various commentators. Alberto, of course, it could not be, in spite of Boccaccio's assertion that he entertained Dante during his exile, seeing that he had died in the previous September. Cangrande is equally out of the question. Not merely would it make an interval of nine years elapse between the decree of banishment and the "first refuge", but Cangrande is the subject of a separate eulogy a few lines further on, beginning with the words—

“ Con lui vedrai colui.”

There remain then Bartolomeo and Alboino. Against the former, who fits in naturally with the sequence of events, two serious objections have been raised; first, that he was not sufficiently renowned to be described as the Great Lombard; secondly, that the Scaligeri could not have displayed the eagle on the top of the ladder till after the grant of the Imperial Vicariate to Alboino and Cangrande on 7th March, 1311. But the chronological difficulty, the interval of nine years between the decree of exile and the "first refuge" at once puts Alboino out of court, for to interpret *il primo tuo rifugio*, as "thy chief," instead of "thy first refuge" is to strain language beyond what it will bear. Moreover, Dante only once mentions Alboino by name, and then to use him as an example of false, as compared with true greatness. In the *Convito* he says :—

“There are, indeed, some fools who think that by this word “noble” is meant that which is known and talked of by many; and they say that it comes from a word that means “to know,” that is, *nosco*; and this is most false; because if it were so, the things which of their kind were most known and talked of would be the most noble of that kind; *and* thus the obelisk of S. Peter's would be the most noble stone in the world ; and Asdente, the cobbler of Parma, would be more noble than any of his fellowcitizens, and Alboino della Scala would be more noble than Guido da Castello di Reggio; whereas all these things are most false” (*Convito*). Is it likely that Dante would have elsewhere given the title of Great Lombard to one for whom he felt such contempt?

The objections to Bartolomeo are assuredly much less insuperable. To begin with he was actually reigning when the decree of January, 1302, was issued, so that there is no chronological difficulty to evade. Then there is no reason why Dante should not have called him the Great Lombard. Small though his dominions were compared to those of Cangrande, they were no smaller than those of Alboino, under whom Verona ranked as one of the first six cities of North Italy for wealth and renown, and it was doubtless in no small measure owing to Bartolomeo's wise government that the city reached this position. His reign, it is true, was short, but for at least ten years before his father's death he had led the Veronese troops in war, and shared in the work of government in peace. His contemporaries, as we have seen, regarded him as an example of all that a ruler should be. As for the eagle on the ladder, there was nothing to hinder the Scaligeri from displaying it before they received the Vicariate. Indeed, the contemporary Paduan historian, Albertino Mussato, represents the

Veronese envoys who were sent to welcome Henry VII in 1310 as asserting that the Scaligeri had long borne the Imperial arms. Moreover, if the Scaligeri did not display the eagle on the ladder before 1311, they rarely did so afterwards. Eagles and ladders are to be found in plenty on the monuments of Cangrande and his successors, but never in this particular combination. Only one tomb in the churchyard of Santa Maria Antica displays it, and that, curiously enough, is a nameless one which local tradition asserts to be Bartolomeo's. It may then confidently be assumed that some time in 1302 Dante came to Verona, and was welcomed by Bartolomeo, receiving at his hands all that he could desire, before he even had time to ask for it.

For this generous hospitality, and the benefits he received later from Cangrande, Dante made the highest return in his power. His gratitude did not blind him to the faults of other members of the family, as witness his contemptuous reference to Alboino, his fearless rebukes of Alberto and Giuseppe. But of Bartolomeo and Cangrande he wrote the eulogy in the seventeenth canto of the *Paradiso*, which stands unrivalled for loftiness of thought and freedom from all taint of flattery or servility. For things temporal he gave his hosts things eternal; in return for shelter and sustenance for the body, immortal fame.

Bartolomeo's early death left Verona not merely without a ruler, but without either Captain General or Podesta of the Merchants, for Alboino had not been promoted to either office, and in fact seems to have taken little or no part in the government while his father and brother were alive. Had Bartolomeo lived longer he would doubtless have arranged that his son Francesco should succeed him, but in 1304 Francesco was a child, and though the Scaligeri dynasty was now established at Verona, the principle of primogeniture was not so firmly settled as to make men willing to incur the risks of a minority. Therefore on 8th March, 1304, Alboino was elected Captain General by the citizens, and three days later the Council of the Merchants elected him their Podesta for life.

The new ruler was not of strong character. He was faithful to his friends, spent his money freely, and does not seem to have possessed more vices than the lax morality of the age could condone in a prince, but he was easily led, retiring and lethargic by temperament, fitted rather for a scholar's or monk's life than for the active work of government. He initiated no legislation, founded no great buildings, and was indifferent to the well-being of his subjects. Circumstances forced him to spend the greater part of his reign in war, but he had no military talent and made no conquests.

In foreign affairs Alboino reverted to a definitely Ghibelline policy. The alliance with Piacenza came to an end in December, 1304, when Alberto Scotto was driven out, but the friendship with the Bonaccolsi remained closer than ever, the Veronese and Mantuan troops acting almost as one army. In 1305 Alboino allied himself with the Ghibellines of Brescia, who under their warlike bishop, Bernardo de' Maggii, had won the command of the city, and were exposed to constant attacks from their own exiles and other Lombard Guelphs. The keynote of Veronese foreign policy, however, during the first half of Alboino's reign was hostility to Azzo VIII d'Este.

After his defeat by the Paduans in 1294, Azzo had remained quiescent for some years, but with time his ambitions began to revive, and early in 1305 he married Beatrice, daughter of Charles II of Naples, and presented her with the two cities of Modena and Reggio, which Obizzo II had added to his dominions in 1288 and 1291 respectively. This at once aroused the old jealousy of Azzo, for in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Modena and Reggio

were the debatable land between Ferrara, Parma and Bologna, as later between Ferrara, Milan and the Papacy. A rumour spread that Azzo was planning to establish his supremacy over the whole of Lombardy and Romagna, and when in the following summer the Guelphs of Parma, headed by the Rossi and Lupi, tried to drive out Giberto da Correggio (who was ruler of the city in fact if not in name), Azzo was suspected of having instigated the rising, in hopes of winning Parma for himself in the following autumn.

Without any formal agreement, the chief Ghibelline States suddenly made a combined attack on Ferrara. Giberto da Correggio, who had suppressed the rising at Parma and driven out the Rossi and Lupi, attempted to surprise Reggio in October. Simultaneously the Bolognese (who were then on the Ghibelline side) made an attack on Modena, while the Mantuans and Veronese occupied Reggio in the north-east of the Reggian district. On 8th November, Parma, Mantua and Verona made a league against Azzo, binding themselves not to rest till he had been driven out of Ferrara, Modena and Reggio, and on 15th January, 1306, this league was joined by Bologna and Azzo's brother Francesco, who had never been admitted to any share in the government, in spite of the assistance he had rendered in driving out Aldovandrino. The contracting parties bound themselves to make Francesco lord of Ferrara; Reggio and Modena, on the other hand, were to be restored to their former condition of independent Communes. The alliance was celebrated by three marriages. Alboino, who had recently lost his first wife Caterina Visconti, married Beatrice, daughter of Giberto da Correggio, her sister Vannina was given to Francesco, son of Passerino Bonaccolsi, and Bailardino da Nogarola, whose first wife Caterina della Scala was dead, married a niece of Giberto's, belonging to the family of the da Fogliano. The brides left Parma on 24th January and were escorted with great triumph to Verona, where all three weddings took place. Before the festivities were over Modena and Reggio fell before the arms of the allies, on 26th and 27th January. They were at once proclaimed independent, and on 11th February gave in their adhesion to the league. But it was not long before both cities found that they were independent only in name, in reality they were controlled by the older members of the league. The right of appointing the Podesta of Modena was given to Giberto da Correggio, who sent his brother Matteo to rule the city. The Reggians were allowed to elect their own officials, but with the proviso that their Podesta must be a Bolognese, and their Captain either a Veronese or a Mantuan. Under these circumstances the Reggians could not hope for much liberty, and in fact, notwithstanding their remonstrances, the Veronese and Mantuan troops continued to hold Reggio.

After this energetic beginning the war dragged on very slowly. In the spring of 1306 the Bolognese Guelphs succeeded in driving out the Ghibellines, and Bologna in consequence went over to Azzo's side. In the following July Alboino and Guido Bonaccolsi led their troops down to an attack on Ferrara. They marched down the north bank of the Po, taking Ficcarolo and other castles, then crossed the river, and encamped a few miles to the north-west of Ferrara. From here a detachment led by two Ferrarese exiles, Salinguerra Torelli, and Ramberto de' Ramberti, was sent down to the city itself, in the hope that some of Francesco d' Este's sympathizers might open a gate. But though Salinguerra and Ramberto marched all round the walls, blowing their trumpets with all their might, no one in the city stirred, and they reluctantly withdrew. This put an end to the whole expedition, for neither Alboino nor Guido was prepared to undertake the siege of so strong a city as Ferrara. During the winter fighting ceased altogether. On 14th March, 1307, the league was formally renewed, and on 14th April the da Polenta, lords of Cervia and Ravenna, were received into it. But during the first half of the year the war was carried on in the most dilatory manner.

The truth was that the league was too large and its aims too vague. What was wanted was one supreme commander, with a vigorous and well-defined policy.

In September, however, the whole aspect of the war was changed. Azzo, who hitherto had acted almost entirely on the defensive, took the field with a large force, and attacked, the Veronese and Mantuan districts. He first fell on Ostiglia, which was garrisoned by the Ferrarese exiles, drove the garrison out and burnt the town, under the very noses of Alboino and Cangrande, who were encamped only a mile or two off, with an army numbering 1,400 horse and 10,000 foot. The Scaligeri seem to have been paralysed by the swiftness of the attack, for they did not attempt to rescue Ostiglia or interfere with Azzo's subsequent movements. From Ostiglia he turned west, burnt Serravalle, in the Mantuan district, and then captured the whole of the Veronese fleet, which Alboino with infinite trouble had brought down the Mincio to the Po.

Azzo had been fully prepared to go on and lay siege to Mantua, but he was suddenly struck down by illness. He was unable to shake it off, and on 31st January, 1308, as he was on his way to some baths, he died. With his death Ferrara ceased to be a menace to the liberty of her neighbours, for Azzo had left his territories to a minor, his grandson Fresco, son of one of his bastards, Folco, whom he appointed Fresco's guardian. The succession was disputed by Azzo's brothers, Francesco and Aldovandrino, who produced some tale of a death-bed reconciliation, with the result that Folco and the Ferrarese who remained faithful to him were obliged to purchase help from Venice by acknowledging her supremacy. Under these circumstances most of the members of the league made peace with Ferrara on their own account, and among the first to do so were the Veronese, the treaty between them and Fresco being signed on 3rd March, 1308. The alliance between Alboino and Giberto da Correggio continued for some years longer, and involved the Veronese troops in intermittent fighting with the Lombard Guelphs during the years 1308-10, but without any definite results, for at this time there was a constant see-saw between the two parties in most of the Lombard cities, first Guelphs, then Ghibellines, gaining the upper hand.

It is in documents connected with the treaty of 1308 that Cangrande first appears officially as Captain of Verona. There is some doubt about his being designated thus in the treaty itself, as the word only appears in an abbreviated form after his and Alboino's names in conjunction, and it is uncertain whether it is to be interpreted in the singular or the plural, but he is given the title in full in the proxy of Fresco d' Este, which is dated 29th February. Cangrande is known to have been married some time in this year to Giovanna of Antioch, sister of Bartolomeo's first wife, and it is probable that the wedding took place before the peace with Ferrara, as it would have been the natural occasion for his promotion to high office. In spite, however, of his being seventeen at this time, an age which in the fourteenth century was equal to at least twenty-five today, Cangrande does not seem to have taken much share in the government, nor to have given any proof of his military genius for another three years. This is the more striking when his extraordinary precocity as a child is remembered, but it is, nevertheless, a fact that for some unexplained reason his early manhood did not fulfil this promise. Later Veronese historians loved to represent Cangrande as performing wonderful feats of prowess while still quite a boy, but the contemporary chronicles give no support to these tales, which, where they are not the result of confusing him with his brothers, must be regarded as pure legend.

The commercial treaty with Venice was twice renewed by Alboino, in 1306 and 1310, and each time new conditions were added to the former agreement. In 1306 the Venetians

arranged for the appointment of a consul to Verona, to look after the interests of their merchants and other fellow-citizens residing there. Merchandise coming from Venice to Verona was to pay no tolls except twelve pence on the waggon-load to the bishop and four pence to a certain Alessandro de' Bencii, who, it may be presumed, farmed the tolls of the Commune. The principal items of merchandise were timber, iron, wax, stone, leather, pitch, and, of course, salt. This last the Veronese now bound themselves to purchase from no one except the Venetians, on the understanding that the latter would supply them with as much as they wanted at eighteen *lire* the hundredweight. In 1310 the price was reduced to sixteen *lire* and in return Alboino undertook to make a canal broad enough to allow of two vessels passing between the Adige and the Po. This canal would greatly have facilitated trade between Venice and West Lombardy, but it does not appear ever to have been made.

In the year of this second treaty, an event occurred which for a time threw all ordinary interests and local quarrels into the shade,—the re-appearance of an Emperor in Italy after an interval of sixty years. Rudolf of Habsburg had, it is true, made more than one attempt to revive the Imperial rights in Italy, but neither he nor his son and successor Albert had ever crossed the Alps. Albert, indeed, had displayed for Italy and Italian interests an indifference which to the more earnest of the Ghibellines seemed nothing short of criminal, and called forth from Dante one of his most impassioned invectives. On Albert's death, however, the Imperial Crown passed from the Habsburgs to the Luxemburgs, a family French by extraction, and possessing all the French culture. Henry of Luxemburg, who was elected King of the Romans on 28th October, 1308, felt to the full the fascination of Italy and the world empire, and from the very beginning of his reign was determined to come to Rome and receive the Imperial crown. Circumstances detained him north of the Alps for a couple of years, but in 1309 he sent envoys to Lombardy to announce his intention of being crowned both in Milan and Rome, and of reviving the Imperial *regalia*, which had in Italy almost fallen into disuse. The envoys were further empowered to say that the new Emperor, who abhorred the very names of Guelph and Ghibelline, intended to insist everywhere on the recall of exiles, and that his inflexible resolve was to establish an all-embracing Empire, which should be high enough above all local enmities and jealousies to rule with the strictest impartiality and justice. It seemed as though Henry were really about to fulfil the great ideal embodied now or later by Dante in the *De Monarchia*. Very different, however, was the end of this expedition to be from the high hopes which accompanied its beginning. Henry was, it is true, crowned both at Milan and Rome, but little more than a year after the latter event he died, at war with all the Guelph party, with hardly any adherents even among the Ghibellines, and leaving Italy more than ever a prey to faction and discord.

But in 1309 who could foresee this? The mere mention of the name of Emperor was enough to stir men's imaginations, inflame their passions to white heat, and dignify with a wider issue the petty local squabbles to which the struggle between Guelph and Ghibelline had everywhere degenerated. The middle classes and the poor, weary of the constant fighting of the nobles, hailed the news of Henry's coming with joy. As to Dante, so to the down-trodden and oppressed on both sides, it seemed as though a new and splendid day were about to dawn after long darkness. Those who were in possession of power, on the other hand, were for the most part filled with alarm at the prospect, for above everything they dreaded the recall of the exiles, which would mean the endangering of their own supremacy. Only a few, therefore, of the rulers responded with any warmth to Henry's message, amongst the most enthusiastic being Alboino and Cangrande, who looked to the presence of an Emperor to strengthen their hands, and at once sent to urge him to hasten his coming.

It was not, however, till the autumn of 1310 that Henry was able to start. Then he crossed the Alps from the northwest, arriving on 10th November at Asti, where he found envoys awaiting him from most of the Lombard cities. From Verona came Bailardino da Nogarola, and Bonmesio de' Paganoti, empowered to take the oath of allegiance to Henry and acknowledge that the Scaligeri held their domains from the Empire. They were also commissioned to remind Henry that Alboino and Cangrande had risked their lives in defence of the Imperial cause, to offer him Verona as his dwelling-place, and to present him with a considerable sum, collected with some difficulty from the reluctant citizens of Verona, who were thus early taught that the main result of the Emperor's coming, however high-sounding his professions, was to add to the burdens of the middle and lower classes.

From Asti Henry went on to Novara, and after some little hesitation was admitted by the Torrigiani into Milan, where, as is well known, he received the iron crown on 6th January, 1311. It is somewhat curious that neither Alboino nor Cangrande were present in person on this occasion, but they sent several envoys, headed by the bishop of Verona, Tebaldo. The Emperor, says Mussato, who was present as Paduan envoy, was slender and of middle height, with hair and complexion both inclining to red ; he had arched eyebrows, an exceedingly pointed nose, a good mouth and a well-cut chin. He wore his hair in the French fashion, that is, with part of the back of the head shaved. He spoke French only, but could understand Latin. Of Italian he was completely ignorant, but this was not of much moment, as all cultivated Italians could both speak and read Latin at this period.

After the coronation was over, Henry held a general council in which he arranged for the organisation of the Imperial Government in Italy. Lombardy was placed under the control of a President who was to act as Henry's representative in his absence and command the Imperial forces, consisting of 1,500 horse, 600 crossbowmen, and a body of infantry. The upkeep of these troops was to be provided by the Lombard cities, the contributions varying according to their size and wealth. That of the Scaligeri was fixed at 13,740 florins a year to be paid in quarterly instalments. It is interesting to note as a sign of the increasing prosperity of Verona, that she came sixth on the list, larger sums being demanded from only five other cities, Genoa, Milan, Venice, Padua and Brescia. Henry then proceeded to appoint Imperial Vicars to the Lombard towns. The appointment of these Vicars must not be confused with the sale of the Vicariates to the ruling families later in the year. The earlier Vicars were not meant to supersede the Captains, but occupied a position more similar to that of the Podesta; they were drawn from the same classes as these officials, and were selected on the same principle of never appointing a native. They only held office for a short time, and it is improbable that they ever succeeded in exercising much authority. How, for instance, could Vanni Zeno of Pisa, who was sent to Verona, have done anything contrary to the will of the Scaligeri?

The Imperial Court was thronged by exiles, both Guelph and Ghibelline, who had been attracted by Henry's declaration that he should insist on all the cities re-admitting those who had been banished. Among them was Vinciguerra di S. Bonifacio, full of hopes of being recalled to Verona, and of recovering possession of his hereditary estates. The Scaligeri, however, were determined never to allow Vinciguerra to enter their dominions, and by representing that his ancestors had been banned by the Emperor Frederic II, they induced Henry to drop the question of his restoration, and eventually even succeeded in getting the Count driven from Court. Vinciguerra, nevertheless, continued to urge his claims to his estates with such pertinacity that at last Cangrande was glad to compromise the matter and pay him 100,000 *lire* for the lands in question.

Verona was by no means the only city that managed on one plea or another to evade recalling its exiles. It soon became clear that Henry could not hope to put his ideal of absolute impartiality into practice. In order to assert his authority he was driven to rely more and more on the Ghibellines. An attempt to collect a contribution to the Imperial treasury at Milan resulted in a serious rising. Thereupon Henry, with the aid of the Visconti, drove out the Torrigiani, whose loyalty to himself was more than doubtful, and made Maffeo Visconti ruler of the city. The Guelphs all over Italy took alarm at this, and Bologna, Florence, Lucca, Siena, the Torrigiani and Robert of Naples formed a league with the avowed object of preventing Henry from being crowned at Rome. Under these circumstances it became imperative for the Emperor to raise more money, and the expedient he adopted was that of selling the Imperial Vicariates of the loyal cities to their ruling families, to the Visconti at Milan, to Rizardo da Camino at Treviso, to Giberto da Coreggio at Parma, to the Scaligeri at Verona, and at Mantua, though only with reluctance, and after pressure brought to bear by Alboino and Cangrande, to Passerino Bonaccolsi. This of course meant the superseding of the Vicars appointed in January, but they had never, as already stated, possessed much authority, even in the Ghibelline cities, while most of the Guelph states had already driven them out. The Scaligeri had been pledging themselves more and more to the Imperial cause even before the sale of the Vicariates. On 4th February, they swore to pay all dues claimed by the Imperial exchequer, to do service to Henry every year, to impose no new taxes on their subjects without his consent, and even to remove any he thought unjust or excessive. This last clause shows that Henry really made some efforts to act as the champion of the people against their rulers, but it is very doubtful if he ever actually succeeded in obtaining any remission of taxation, at any rate no such instance is recorded at Verona. On 10th February, if Boninsegna de Miticolis is to be trusted, Alboino and Cangrande went so far as to resign the Captainate, in hopes of further ingratiating themselves with the Emperor, though the resignation was kept secret at Verona, for fear it might weaken their authority. At last on 7th March, in return for a large but unspecified sum, Henry conferred the Vicariate on Alboino and Cangrande. Henceforth the title of Imperial Vicar became one of the proudest distinctions of the Scaligeri, they invariably placed it in front of all their other titles, often using it alone, though it was still as Captains that they were elected by the citizens to the lordship of Verona. The later Scaligeri continued to style themselves Imperial Vicars, even when they had not been directly appointed by an Emperor.

The Scaligeri were among the few Lombard rulers who took their obligations to the Empire seriously, paying their contributions to the Imperial treasury quite regularly, even after Henry's death. The relations between Padua and Henry, on the other hand, very early became strained. Padua was at this time one of the most powerful of the North Italian states. Still a republic, she ruled Vicenza on the west, and Bassano on the north, while on the south her territories stretched to the Po. The city itself was exceedingly rich and populous, well supplied with horses and arms, full of fine towers and public buildings, and so healthy both as regards climate and sanitary conditions that strangers flocked to it from all parts. The Paduans had sent envoys to Este to make their submission to Henry. These envoys arranged with the Emperor that in return for a lump sum of 60,000 *lire*, and an annual tribute of 35,000, he would confirm the Paduans' supremacy over Vicenza, preserve their statutes intact, and allow them to elect their own officials, except the Podesta, whom Henry was to appoint with the title of Imperial Vicar, from a list of four names submitted to him by the Paduans. On their return, in the spring, however, the envoys found that the citizens had completely changed their attitude. Alarmed by the expulsion of Vinciguerra di S. Bonifacio from the Imperial Court, and a rumour that the Vicariate of Vicenza had been conferred on

Cangrande, they entirely refused to ratify the agreement. They tried to bribe the Vicentines into loyalty by yielding certain long-demanded concessions, put both Vicenza and Padua into a state of defence, and defied Henry to do his worst. It was, however, too late to propitiate the Vicentines. The latter had already planned to throw off the Paduan tyranny, and were carrying on negotiations with the Emperor through the Scaligeri, and Tebaldo, bishop of Verona. On 18th April, Tebaldo brought back to Verona 300 Imperial horse and Aymo, bishop of Geneva, whom Henry had appointed to receive the submission of the Vicentines. Three days later Aymo, Cangrande and Vanni Zeno led these troops and the Veronese and Mantuan levies down to Vicenza, and were admitted by the Ghibellines into the city. The Paduan garrison was taken by surprise, and fled almost at once. Their retreat, however, was cut off by the Bacchi- glione, then swollen by the melting snows, and many were drowned, while the rest, including Giovanni da Vigonza, the Podesta, were taken prisoners. Cangrande gave the first signs of his future military greatness on this occasion, distinguishing himself by grip of the situation and indomitable resolution. Vicenza became once more a self-governing Commune, but the citizens all took the oath of allegiance to Aymo as the representative of the Emperor, and consented to receive Vanni Zeno as Imperial Vicar. The mass of the populace were full of joy at their deliverance from the Paduans, but the farsighted doubted how long the city would be able to maintain its independence between two such ambitious and powerful neighbours as Padua and Verona. For the time, however, the Paduans were humbled to the dust. They begged Henry to receive them back into favour, and after long negotiations he consented to do so, on condition of the Paduans paying 100,000 *lire* down, and a tribute of 20,000 a year, and submitting to an Imperial Vicar instead of a Podesta.

This agreement was signed on 9th June in the Imperial camp before Brescia. The Brescians had rebelled in April under Tebaldo de' Brusati, the leader of the Guelph party, and ever since the middle of May, Henry had been besieging the city with an immense army, which included his brother Valeran, Leopold of Austria, the Dauphin of Vienne, the Count of Flanders, Amedeo of Savoy, who was President of Lombardy, the Marquis of Monteferrato, Stefano and Agapito Colonna, Alboino and Cangrande della Scala, and contingents from nearly every Lombard city. The Scaligeri were specially signalled out by the Emperor. Their camp was pitched next to his, and the command of the Italian levies was given to Cangrande— though he must have been one of the youngest leaders present —in reward for his achievements at Vicenza. When Valeran, Henry's brother, died of an arrow wound, the body was sent to Verona, and buried with all due pomp by Alboino in a marble tomb in S. Anastasia.

In spite of the death of Tebaldo de' Brusati in June, the Brescians continued their stubborn resistance all through the summer. This was partly due to the fact that pestilence broke out in the Imperial camp in August. According to some accounts three-quarters of the besiegers were stricken down, though the greater part apparently recovered. It differed from plague in that it attacked the well-fed rather than the ill-nourished, and hence, Mussato says, it spread first among the French, then among the Germans, and finally among the more abstemious Italians. Alboino della Scala was one of the victims, and though he recovered, remained so weak that he was forced to retire to Verona. Cangrande escorted him home, and his departure, occurring, as it did, at the time when the pestilence was at its worst, seems to have reduced the Emperor to such depths of despondency that he almost abandoned the siege. He and the whole army were soon, however, cheered by the return of Cangrande, who brought with him badly-needed reinforcements, and put fresh heart into the attack by

organizing daily assaults on the city. Meanwhile the Brescians were in sore straits. Their supplies were running low, the pestilence had spread from besiegers to besieged, and the garrison were harassed and discouraged by Cangrande's ceaseless onslaughts. Early in September the authorities decided to sue for peace. Negotiations were opened on the 8th September through Cardinal Luca de' Fieschi, and on the 16th the formal surrender took place. The Emperor, however, did not set foot in the city for another fortnight. The tale goes that he had sworn to enter Brescia through a breach in the walls, and had to wait till one was prepared.

It was during this siege that Cangrande at last began to enter into his heritage. He had covered himself with glory in the field, displaying not merely personal valour, but great powers of leadership. As time went on the Emperor placed more and more reliance on him, till he came to be regarded as one of his principal supporters. He was selected to ride at the head of three hundred knights before Henry, at the triumphal entry into Brescia. After the siege was over he returned for a while to Verona, but when the Emperor summoned the Lombard magnates to attend him on his coronation journey to Rome, Cangrande was one of the first to obey, hastening to Genoa with a large body of troops. Beyond Genoa, however, he did not go. Soon after his arrival news came that Alboino, who had never regained his full strength after the pestilence, was dangerously ill. Cangrande at once started back, for he was afraid that if Alboino should die in his absence, the Guelphs, especially the Paduans, would attack his dominions. He left Genoa on 22nd November, and travelling with all speed reached Verona in five days' time, to find Alboino still alive, but unconscious. Two days later, on 29th November, 1311, Alboino died, and Cangrande, at the age of twenty, found himself sole ruler of Verona.

CHAPTER VIII

CANGRANDE I

ALBOINO had had no children by his first wife, Caterina Visconti, but by his second, Beatrice da Correggio, he left five, two sons, Alberto and Mastino, and three daughters, Albuina, Verde, and Caterina. Since the elder son, Alberto, was only five in the autumn of 1311, there was no question of his succeeding his father, and Cangrande seems to have assumed the rule as a matter of course. It was not necessary that he should be elected to the Captainate as he had held that office since 1308, but it is probable that he was now elected Podesta of the Merchants, though no account of the election has been preserved.

Cangrande was now one of the most promising of the younger Italian leaders. His military genius was not yet fully developed, nor the qualities which later made him so famous, the boundless generosity, the pity for fallen foes, the keen delight in literature and art, but he had already shown high courage, resolution, and the power of inspiring heroism in others. Impetuous, quick-tempered and impatient of opposition, he was full of the joy of living, and fascinated every one who met him face to face. He was still impulsive, but already he had begun to be dominated by two master-passions, devotion to the Imperial cause, and thirst for glory. A born fighter, he despised riches and luxury, but to take a city, or beat a rival to the dust, was the very breath of his nostrils.

Ere the year was out Cangrande was again to be found at Brescia, helping the Ghibellines to drive out the Guelphs. His territorial ambitions, however, lay in another direction. He had already set his heart on winning the cities to the east of his borders, Vicenza, Padua and Treviso. The first he was to obtain in a very short time, but the subjugation of the others was to occupy the whole of his reign, so that the tale of his exploits, as told by Ferreto, Mussato and Cortusius, reads like a great epic of the struggle with these two cities, a struggle in which he finally remained victor, but only at the price of his own life.

Within three months of his accession, however, Cangrande won Vicenza. His methods were peaceful, but not strictly honourable. Ever since they had become independent, the Vicentines had been constantly at variance with the Paduans. There were no active hostilities, but in the winter of 1311-12 the Vicentines brought matters to a crisis by rebuilding the dam at Longare across the south-eastern branch of the Bacchiglione, and so cutting off the principal source of the Paduan water supply. The Paduans appealed to the Emperor, and in January, 1312, he appointed delegates to settle all the questions at issue between the two cities. The Vicentines, however, suspected that the Imperial envoys were prejudiced against them, and therefore gladly accepted an offer from Cangrande to take them under his protection, and plead their cause with Henry. Cangrande's motive, however, in making this offer was to seize the opportunity of adding Vicenza to his dominions without having recourse to force. He at once asked Henry to appoint him Imperial Vicar of the city, and according to one account, even produced in support of his request a forged document purporting to be a petition from the Vicentines. Ferreto, however, who reports the tale, refuses to vouch for its truth. However this may be, Cangrande was made Imperial Vicar of Vicenza, and on 11th February, appeared in the city, and informed the authorities of the fact. The announcement was not at first well received by the Vicentines, and some of the bolder

spirits even talked of organizing armed opposition, but next day Cangrande summoned a meeting of influential citizens, and by honied words and lavish promises, for he was an eloquent and plausible speaker, persuaded them to accept his rule. The former Imperial Vicar, Aldrighetto da Castelbarco, having resigned in favour of Cangrande, Vicenza became part of the Scaligeri dominions, and the eastern Veronese frontier once more marched with that of Padua.

As may be imagined, the Paduans were furious with both the Emperor and Cangrande. The latter, indeed, was held to be much the more formidable foe, for Henry's prestige had been steadily sinking all through the winter. His army had dwindled till he was said to have barely two hundred knights in his train, and the only way he could raise money was by the most unblushing sale of offices. All sorts of tales spread about. It was rumoured that Cangrande was about to receive the Vicariates of Feltre, of Belluno, even of Padua itself. Men recalled that he had been brought up from the cradle to hate the Paduans, while in bloodthirstiness and cruelty he was said to have been surpassed only by Ezzelino. The Greater Council met, and voted by a majority of two-thirds for rebellion against the Emperor, and war with Verona. The Vicar, Gerardo da Inzola, resigned office, and was at once re-elected as Podesta. The Imperial arms were torn down throughout the city, and troops were despatched to harry the Vicentine district.

No formal declaration of war had been sent to Cangrande, but the smoke from the burning villages told its tale only too plainly. From the Vicentine district the enemy went on to the south-eastern part of the Veronese territory, and plundered many of the towns, including Cologna and even Legnago. Cangrande put Vicenza into a state of defence, strengthened the garrisons of the district castles, and built a tower to defend the dam at Longare, but his army was not strong enough to enable him to defend the open country. More than forty years had passed since Vicenza and its district had seen any fighting, and the city-dwellers, ever eager for change, welcomed the prospect of war with joy. But it was very different for the peasants. They experienced all the horrors of war without any of its compensating glory and excitement. The mercenaries of both sides seized their cattle and crops, the enemy set fire to their houses, and often slew the inmates, or carried them off captive. Those who escaped fled to the walled towns, so that the country quickly became depopulated, none being left to plough the fields or tend the vines. Ferre to was only a boy when the war broke out, but he never forgot the sight of the peasants crowding into Vicenza for refuge. Long strings of waggons, laden with household goods, filed in at the gates, the men leading their beasts, the women carrying their children in their arms or on their backs. The crowds were so great that lodging could not be found for all, and many were driven to encamp as best they could under the arcades of the houses.

In April Cangrande returned to Verona for a short time. The moment his back was turned, the Paduans, hoping that the Guelphs in the city would rise in their favour, made an attempt to surprise Vicenza. The bridge at Quartersolo, where the direct road between the two towns crosses the Astico, was too strongly guarded for them to force, but they forded the river a little higher up, and defeated a body of Vicentine levies who were coming up to defend the bridge. Before, however, the Paduans reached Vicenza news came that Cangrande had returned, whereupon they withdrew, for they knew that when he was there, no one would venture to stir. Cangrande attributed the Paduan victory to treachery among the Vicentine troops. He had many of the leading Guelphs arrested and examined under torture, with the result that some were condemned to be beheaded, others to be hung, and others to pay heavy fines.

From this time the relations between Cangrande and the Vicentines were completely changed. In the beginning he had ruled as a constitutional monarch, governing according to the statutes, and respecting the liberties of the citizens. He now began to behave as a despot, substituting his own personal caprice for law, and exacting large sums of money by force from the rich. The Vicentines, in return, regarded him with sullen aversion. Many fled to Padua. Those who remained never stirred forth from their houses, so that Vicenza became like a city of the dead, and it was difficult to find men to fill the public offices.

For a time both sides carried on the war by plundering expeditions. This, however, did not advance matters much, and presently the Paduans began to prepare for an attack on Vicenza. More levies were raised in the city and district, and contingents were collected from other Guelph states, Ferrara, Cremona, and Treviso, till an army was formed numbering 3,500 horse, and 14,000 or 15,000 foot. This force, however, was unwieldy and inefficient, for the mass of the foot-soldiers were untrained peasants. More serious still, instead of one supreme commander, there were a number of leaders of equal authority, the Podesta, Gerardo da Inzola, Tiso da Camposampiero, Bernabò and Macharuffo de' Macharuffi, Jacobo da Carrara and his kinsman Nicolo, the historian Mussato, Nicolo da Lozzo, the Veronese exile, Vinciguerra di San Bonifacio, and others.

On 1st June, 1312, this army moved out to Quartesolo, and encamped in a wood near the Astico. From here Mussato and others of the leaders went on to reconnoitre. They brought back word that a new rampart and moat had recently been made right round the suburbs of Vicenza, and that this, combined with its naturally strong position, made it hopeless to attempt to storm the city. Three days were then spent in the discussion of further plans. Meanwhile, a body of peasants, who had been enrolled to ravage the country-side, and armed with nothing but axes and spades, took upon themselves to attack the tower and dam at Longare. Cangrande, hearing of this, sallied forth with some troops from Vicenza, and fell upon the peasants, who at once fled headlong, crying out "Scala, Scala", in the hopes of saving their lives. Gerardo da Inzola, however, despatched a body of horse to rally the fugitives, and Cangrande on meeting this force, immediately stopped the pursuit, and retired to Vicenza. The Veronese claimed this action as a great victory, for they had hardly lost a man, while the Paduan slain numbered 400, but in truth it was rather a massacre of unarmed peasants than a regular battle. It had the effect, however, of completely checking the Paduan advance. The camp was moved to Longare, and here dissensions broke out among the leaders, some wishing with the Carraresi to cross the Bacchiglione, and carry on the attack, others, headed by the Macharuffi, being in favour of a waiting policy. Eventually the latter won, and the whole army marched down the southern branch of the river, and encamped on the east bank, opposite Castagnera. They did not remain there long, however, for Cangrande had the dykes on that side of the Bacchiglione cut, and flooded the low-lying fields beyond. They then moved off to Montegalda, and after a little more aimless wandering and marauding, the Paduan levies, weary of the hardships of camp life, insisted on being led back to Padua, which they reached on 29th June, having been nearly a month in the field, and achieved nothing.

In the following month Cangrande, with Passerino Bonacolsi, made an expedition to Modena to help the Ghibellines, who had recently suffered a severe defeat at the hands of their Guelph exiles. Hardly had he reached Modena, however, before news came that the Paduans were again devastating the country round Cologna, and he at once hastened back to Vicenza, not in the hope of being able to protect the rural districts, but because his presence was absolutely necessary to prevent the Vicentines from going over to the enemy.

Meanwhile, owing to the numerical inferiority of his army, he had to look on helpless while the Paduans made one successful raid after another.

Cangrande, indeed, found it very difficult to maintain a “policy of masterly inactivity” under the provocation he received. More than once he would have fallen on the invaders in person, if he had not been restrained by older and more experienced counsellors. This waiting policy, however, was justified by events. Throughout the year the Ghibelline party continued to gain strength. In August the Modenese declared for the Emperor, and in October elected Passerino Bonaccolsi their ruler. Guecello da Camino, lord of Treviso, changed sides in the autumn, and allied himself with Cangrande. The alliance was clinched by the betrothal of a daughter of Guecello to Cecchino, son of Bartolomeo della Scala, and of Verde, Alboino’s daughter, to Rizardo, Guecello’s son. Cangrande, however, gained little from this alliance, for the Trevisans, far from changing sides with their ruler, rose and drove him out, and on 15th December, 1312, proclaimed themselves a republic once more.

Guecello’s conversion was rapidly followed by that of a Paduan noble, Nicolo da Lozzo, who, it will be recalled, had aroused suspicions as long ago as 1299 by accepting some warhorses from Alberto I.

Nicolo was valiant, shrewd and eloquent, but ambitious, restless, and consumed with a passion for intrigue. For some time he had been in touch with the Scaligeri, he was suspected of having helped Cangrande to get Vicenza, and in the autumn of 1312 he decided to give in his adhesion to him. He surrendered his own castle of Lozzo to Cangrande, and a plan was formed for surprising Este and Monselice, the latter being the key of the Piovado di Sacco, the fertile district south-east of Padua, from which that city drew most of its supplies. There was some delay in the preparations, however, the Paduans heard a rumour of what was on foot, and when Cangrande did at last start it was to find both Este and Monselice in a state of defence. He was unable to draw the Paduans into the open, and was forced to retire without achieving anything, even such a small frontier castle as Montegalda being able to repulse his attack. In March, 1313, he razed Lozzo to the ground, as its isolated position on an outlying spur of the Euganean hills made it difficult to defend. Meanwhile the Imperial party in North Italy was again losing ground. Many of those who had formerly regarded the Emperor as the centre of all the rights and duties of mankind were alienated by Henry’s failure to maintain his ideal of impartiality. Giberto da Coreggio changed sides, and placed Parma at the disposal of Robert of Naples, who was now the official head of the Guelph party. Ferrara had definitely declared against the Emperor. Henry himself was in such straits that not merely could he not help his supporters, but he had been obliged to demand reinforcements from Cangrande and Passerino. In May Henry and Cangrande were obliged to seek help outside Italy, and allied themselves with Henry of Bohemia, Henry of Gorz and the bishop of Trent, and on the 16th of the month the Emperor at last issued the long-delayed condemnation of Padua. The Paduans were proclaimed rebels to the Empire, ordered to pay a fine of 10,000 *lire*, and deprived of all their rights as free men, including the election of officials. It was ordered that the university should be abolished, the fortifications pulled down, and the ground where they had stood ploughed up

SOAVE: CASTLE OF CANGRANDE I



The Imperial fulminations sounded extremely terrifying, but the Paduans took heart when they remembered that Cangrande was the only man who was likely to try to enforce them, and that though he now had a legal justification for any injury he might inflict upon Padua, his material resources had not been increased in any way. Accordingly they were only stimulated to fresh efforts. On 21st June the Podesta, Bormio de Samaritani, brought a large force into the southern part of the Veronese district, and so up the Adige and Alpone to Arcole, which surrendered on the 23rd. Arcole was in the S. Bonifacio country, and Count Vinciguerra, who was taking part in the expedition, was moved to such wrath by the sight of the lands that had belonged to his forefathers that he persuaded Bormio to try and surprise Verona itself. On the 24th, therefore, the army bore down from the east on the city. The Veronese were quite unprepared for an attack, and the inhabitants of the parts on the eastern bank of the Adige fled across the bridges at the first rumour of the enemy's approach, leaving the walls unguarded. Fortunately the command of the city in Cangrande's absence had been entrusted to Federigo della Scala, grandson of Bocca, a man of great courage and resource. He at once had the gates closed, stationed a few troops outside to ward off the first onslaught of the Paduans, and then erected barricades of waggons, beams and anything else he could lay hands on. All the rest of the day the enemy made continual assaults on the gates and walls, but every time were repulsed by the Veronese, and towards evening Bormio withdrew his troops, to the intense disgust of Vinciguerra and the younger and more hot-blooded among the Paduan nobles, who for a whole hour and more continued to blow their trumpets in the vain hope that they would taunt the garrison into sallying forth to a hand-to-hand fight. Next morning Bormio, not having either the machines or supplies necessary for a siege, led his army off eastwards again, and spent three days harrying the country between Verona and Vicenza, burning the palaces Cangrande had built for his hunting at Montorio, Caldiero, Soave and Illasi, and destroying many villages both in the hills and the plains. Never before or since in Cangrande's lifetime was Verona in such danger. The whole of the

Scaligeri dominions lay at the mercy of the enemy, excepting the cities of Verona and Vicenza, and the country to the west of the Adige, which was then so full as to be impassable. Cangrande, though fearing that some sympathizer with the Count might open one of the gates of Verona to the enemy, did not dare to leave Vicenza, for he knew that it was only his presence which kept the citizens from going over to the Paduans. Indeed it would have gone hard with the Veronese if Cangrande had not got Henry of Gorz to create a diversion by entering Italy early in July. Henry meant to attack Padua, but he never penetrated west of the Sile, for the Trevisans developed an unexpected hostility, and refused to let him pass through their territory, and so he left Italy again at the end of the month. His expedition, however, had served its purpose, for the Paduan army returned home as soon as they received news of his coming.

In this summer the fortunes of the Ghibelline party in Lombardy fell to their lowest ebb. Almost the only supporters of the Emperor, besides Cangrande and Passerino Bonaccolsi, were Guecello da Camino, who had now neither dominions nor influence, and Maffeo Visconti, who had all he could do to hold his own against an attack led by Robert of Naples. The Emperor himself, discredited and penniless, was engaged in a hopeless struggle with the Guelphs of Tuscany, and on 24th August, 1313, died at Buonconvento near Siena, of a short and violent fever, which led to the report that he had been given poison in the holy wafer. Henry's death, however, came rather as a relief than a misfortune to Cangrande. If it deprived him of a certain amount of legal and moral support, it stopped the ceaseless drain of men and money to the Imperial camp, released him from much serious responsibility, and left him free to act on his own initiative.

Cangrande was now getting weary of the struggle. On 1st November, a peaceful revolution took place at Padua. The extreme Guelphs had succeeded by a *coup de main* in seizing the supreme authority, and formed a new council of their own partisans, which established a right of veto over the decrees of the Greater Council, and appointed all officials. Cangrande opened negotiations with the new government in hopes that it might prove more inclined to peace, but as neither side would abandon its claims to Vicenza no settlement was arrived at. In January, 1314, Henry of Carinthia made an attempt to mediate between the two enemies, but this was also unsuccessful. Nothing remained, therefore, but for the war to drag on its weary course again.

This time it was Cangrande who took the offensive. All the winter he had been husbanding his resources with a view to attacking Padua in the spring. He had disbanded most of his mercenaries early in the autumn, and cut down expenses in every possible way. He now began to hire troops again. He re-engaged 400 of his old soldiers, got others from Henry of Carinthia, from Lodi, Milan, Piacenza, Modena and Mantua, till by the end of March there were 3,000 horse and 13,000 foot collected in Verona. Never before had Cangrande had such a force at his disposal.

On 1st April he led this army out of Verona, entered the Paduan territory on the south-west, marched plundering and destroying through the Euganean hills, and burnt Abano, which lies only seven or eight miles away from Padua. From here Cangrande meant to go on and attack Padua itself, or else draw the enemy out into the open, when he hoped to inflict an overwhelming defeat upon them. But to get to Padua he had to cross the stream known as the Canale di Battaglia, and he found the further bank held by a strong body of Paduan troops, under Vanni Scornigiani of Pisa. The stream itself was fordable in several places, but to cross in the face of the enemy would have been madness. Both sides, however, tried to

induce the other to make the passage. Cangrande, himself, flinging back his helmet, rode forward and exchanged half-serious, half-jesting taunts with Vanni across the narrow strip of water. Vanni then withdrew his men from the banks and offered to let Cangrande cross unmolested, but the Veronese leader was afraid of a trap, and remained on the western side of the river. Next day he went off to Montegalda, stormed the castle, and then retired to Vicenza.

To have captured a minor fortress, burnt a small town, and devastated one of the poorer parts of the enemy's territory were but small achievements after all the preparations that had been made for this expedition. Nevertheless the moral effects on the Paduans were by no means inconsiderable. Cangrande had shown that he could collect a force as large as theirs, and that he could play the enemy's game of systematic ravaging. In consequence another revolution took place at Padua. The citizens, angered with the government for failing to protect the rural districts, rose under the Carraresi, overthrew the Guelph Council, and restored the constitution as it had been before the previous November. The supreme power was again vested in the Anziani and Gastaldi, and the Podesta who had been elected by the new Council replaced by a Cremonese of some reputation as a military leader, Ponzino de' Ponzoni.

The new Podesta carried on the war with great energy. Early in July he marched up to the very gates of Vicenza, hoping to get into one of the suburbs. In this he failed, but before the end of the month he was out again with the whole Paduan army, ravaging the country round Orso and Schio, to the north-east of Vicenza. Cangrande set out on 25th July, with a large force to drive the enemy off, but on the way changed his mind, and decided to make a dash for Padua in Ponzino's absence. His sudden appearance outside the city caused a panic, the inhabitants hardly knowing how to defend themselves while all the regular troops were away. Fortunately for the Paduans their bishop, Pagano della Torre, was a man of great military talent and force of character. Pagano at once took command of affairs, and ably seconded by Gualperto Mussato, Abbot of S. Giustina, and brother of the historian, defended the city as well as any professional soldier could have done. These warlike ecclesiastics refused to listen to any talk of surrender, but had the gates closed, and sent all the able-bodied citizens, laymen and clerks alike, to man the walls. Cangrande found himself checkmated, and not being prepared for a siege, retired.

Weary of the constant struggle over the dam at Longare, which the Vicentines rebuilt as often as it was destroyed, the Paduans, during the summer of 1314, cut a canal from Limena on the Brenta to a point on the Bacchiglione a couple of miles above Padua. No sooner, however, had they secured a constant supply of good water than they began to suffer from dearth of provisions. During the last two years the rural districts had been so continuously burnt and plundered that the land had gone completely out of cultivation. The peasants had all taken refuge in the walled towns, and if any one ventured forth to till his farm, or gather in a belated crop, he was almost certain to fall a victim to some band of raiders, or one of the large flocks of wolves which had sprung up all over the country. The fields were overgrown with long grass and thick bushes, and the woods had become impenetrable, so that the wild beasts multiplied apace. At last even plundering expeditions came to an end because there was nothing left to take. The Paduans, therefore, finding that they were within measurable distance of famine, determined to make a supreme effort to end the war by attacking Vicenza in overwhelming force.

All through August Ponzino collected troops and supplies till by September he had got

together 22,000 men, and enough provisions to feed them for twenty days. Directly opportunity offered an attempt was to be made to surprise Vicenza. Towards the middle of September Cangrande went off to Verona for a few days, and as the Podesta, Bailardino da Nogarola, had recently been despatched to ask for help from Henry of Carinthia, leaving only his brother Antonio in command, it seemed as though the Paduans' chance had come. Everything depended on taking the Veronese garrison completely unawares, so the destination of the expedition was kept a profound secret, while all the roads by which the news might be brought to Vicenza were carefully guarded. At sunset on 16th September, as the evening star was beginning to shine, Ponzino led his army out of Padua. All night the Paduans marched on in as complete silence as was possible for such a vast host. Before dawn Quartesolo was reached. Here the main body halted while scouts were sent on to reconnoitre. They soon brought back the welcome news that the suburb of S. Pietro (where the direct road from Padua enters the city) was almost entirely unguarded, only a few sentinels being in an inner room of the tower by the gate, and they mostly asleep. Ponzino then led out a picked body of men, scaled the wall, slew the guards in the tower, and found himself in possession of the suburb. The inhabitants, at first doubtful whether to receive the newcomers as friends or foes, were reassured by discovering that Ponzino had strictly forbidden plundering, and soon came crowding round with offers of food and drink for the soldiers. The gate was now opened and the main body of the Paduan army came pouring in.

But in the meantime the authorities had been warned. Antonio da Nogarola had at once sent a messenger off to Can-grande at Verona, ordered the inner walls between the town and the suburbs to be manned, occupied the Piazza himself with 200 troops, and set fire to the houses in the suburb of S. Pietro in order to deprive the Paduans of cover. At this unexpected check Ponzino completely lost his head, and went wandering about aimlessly for some time like one distraught. At last he summoned a council of the other leaders, and it was decided not to attempt to hold the suburb, but to make a wide breach in the wall and pitch the camp just outside. The soldiers, intensely annoyed at having to relinquish what they had just conquered, got out of hand, and began to plunder, robbing the inhabitants, sacking a convent and violating the nuns. At last the leaders got them out of the suburb, but all discipline was at an end. No guards were set, and only a few nobles retained their armour. The rank and file, weary with their night journey, cast their weapons away, and disported themselves at ease in the gardens surrounding the wall, some feasting, others busying themselves with their booty, others sleeping under the trees.

Suddenly on this scene Cangrande himself appeared. Antonio's message had arrived as he was in the act of washing his hands before dinner. Taking nothing but a hasty draught of wine, he snatched up his bow and quiver, leapt into the saddle, and galloped off for Vicenza, with only one companion. Near Montebello he felt his horse begin to tire, so seized a peasant's mare, that happened to be at hand, and finished his journey on that, covering the distance of thirty miles in four hours. On arriving at Vicenza he was not recognized at once, because of his rustic mount, but when he opened his helmet and showed his face the joy of the Veronese was great, while the Vicentines who had begun to waver hastily returned to their allegiance. Without waiting to rest Cangrande drank from the wine-skin of a woman standing by, mounted a great war-horse, which was brought out from the stable of Bailardino da Nogarola, offered up a short prayer to the Virgin, and was off to find the foe. He had not troubled to collect any following, but as he rode man after man fell in behind him till his train numbered more than eighty.

In the suburb Cangrande happened upon Ponzino and Vanni Scornigiani, and some

sixty of the Paduan troops, who were still lingering over the work of evacuation. Making the sign of the cross on his forehead, Cangrande gave his horse its head, and charged the enemy at full speed, driving them before him through the gate and over the bridge of the moat. A few of the nobles, amongst them Jacobo da Carrara and his nephew Marsilio, tried to make a stand, but were borne down by the flood of pursued and pursuers, and made prisoners. The panic at once spread to the mass of the Paduans, who flung away their booty, and fled headlong down the road to Padua, being prevented from scattering by the broad ditches which bordered it on both sides. The Vicentine riders now came up, and Cangrande standing up in his stirrups called on them to slay the cowardly foe, and then, mace in hand, carried destruction through the crowd of fugitives as fire fanned by the wind devours stubble. At Quartesolo, however, he stopped the pursuit, for he was always ready to show mercy to the vanquished. Of actual bloodshed there had been little, only seven nobles and thirty foot-soldiers being killed. The number of the prisoners, on the other hand, was very great. Seven hundred were made on the 17th itself, and in the course of the next few days as many more were taken, for many of the fugitives hid in the briers and brakes of the surrounding country and were hunted down with dogs by the troops and the Vicentines, even women taking part in the cruel sport. The nobles Cangrande treated as honoured guests rather than foes, entertaining some of them, including Jacobo and Marsilio da Carrara, in his own palace. The rank and file, however, were too numerous to be retained at Vicenza, and were sent off to Verona roped together in long strings, their misery aggravated by the heavy rain and deep mud through which they had to trudge. Amongst the prisoners was Albertino Mussato, suffering from eleven wounds. He had been in the suburb when Cangrande arrived, and as he fled over the bridge his horse had put its foot into a hole in the planks and fallen, and Mussato had only escaped being trampled to death by flinging himself into the moat. The greater part of the baggage fell into the victor's hands. Such luxuries were found in the camp, goblets and dishes of gold and silver, beds with exquisite coverings and soft pillows, baskets full of medicine and delicacies of all kinds, that it might have been thought that the Paduan army had been on its way to a wedding or some other festival.

The terror caused at Padua by the news of this disaster was indescribable. It was said that the whole army including Ponzino and the other leaders had been taken prisoner or killed. Every moment the citizens expected Cangrande to appear outside the walls. The bishop and the Abbot of S. Giustina again, however, came to the fore, had the walls manned, and themselves patrolled the city all night. With the morning, too, relief came, for the fugitives began to straggle in. One of the first to arrive was Ponzino, who had escaped unrecognized by throwing off his armour. All that day and the next, bands of refugees kept on arriving at Padua, while many found their way to other fortresses, Este, Cittadella and Monselice, so that it was not long before there was some sort of an army again. Ponzino, too, at once set the citizens to work to strengthen the fortifications, and sent to Bologna, Ferrara and Treviso to ask for reinforcements.

Still it is possible that if Cangrande had followed up his victory and attacked at once, he would have taken Padua. He himself was anxious for immediate action, but he had to wait while more troops were brought up from Verona, and no sooner had they arrived than heavy rain set in and fell for three days on end, so that the whole country was flooded and it was impossible to move. Meanwhile those on whose counsel he relied most, Passerino Bonaccolsi, Guglielmo da Castelbarco and Nicolo da Lozzo, were all of opinion that he would never succeed in taking Padua, and urged him to secure the fruits of his victory by making peace while the Paduans were sufficiently humbled to acknowledge his supremacy.

over Vicenza. The captive Paduans gave the same advice. Indeed, according to Mussato, it was from Jacobo da Carrara that the first suggestions for peace came. It was Jacobo, too, who was chosen to act as intermediary. The Paduans made but little opposition to the terms proposed by Cangrande excepting that they entirely refused to listen to any talk of the restoration of their exiles, a point which Cangrande eventually dropped. Peace was signed on 4th October, 1314, eighteen days after the battle. The Paduans acknowledged Cangrande's supremacy over Vicenza. All captives were ordered to be set free. Vicentines and Paduans were both to retain their estates in the territory of the other city. Whichever side broke the peace first was to be mulcted of 20,000 *lire*, and this fine was to be exacted by the Venetians, who undertook to enforce the treaty.

Throughout this war Cangrande had nearly always acted on the defensive, yet he had gained his chief aim, the undisturbed possession of Vicenza, and had much enhanced his reputation as a warrior. His success was almost entirely due to his final victory, which, though no great exploit from either a tactical or strategical point of view, was a brilliant and picturesque feat of arms, just of the kind to appeal to his contemporaries. In the course of the next few years the Ghibelline party all over North Italy came to look upon him as their natural leader, for the peace with Padua left him free to take an active part in the affairs of West Lombardy. For a time he and Passerino Bonaccorsi are to be found almost always acting in concert. In 1315 they formed vast schemes of aggrandizement, planning to take Parma, Cremona and Reggio, and rule them in common. Cremona, which was in the hands of the Cavalcabo, a staunch Guelph family, was selected for the first point of attack, because its district was easy to enter, and most of the subject towns were unwallled. Early in October Cangrande and Passerino appeared on Cremonese territory and took Ponte di Dossolo, Viadana, and Sabbionetta, where the Cavalcabo had sent their women and treasure for safety. Before the month was out Piadena and Calvatone fell too. The latter town offered a desperate resistance. Cangrande, who led the assault in person, was more than once thrust back into the moat just as he was on the point of scaling the walls. At last the garrison offered to yield, on condition of having their lives spared, and Cangrande swore that they should not be touched. For once, however, he failed to keep his word. The German mercenaries, maddened by the stubborn opposition they had encountered, got quite out of hand, at once put the garrison to the sword, and then slew every inhabitant of the town, man, woman, and child, on whom they could lay hands.

Many of the smaller towns, terrified by the slaughter at Calvatone, now sent in their submission. For some months, however, Cangrande and Passerino took no further action against Cremona, but in June, 1316, Jacobo Cavalcabo, the lord of the city, resigned the rule in favour of Giberto da Correggio, whereupon they besieged Cremona itself by land and water. After a fortnight, however, finding that they could effect nothing by force, they abandoned the siege and had recourse to intrigue. They first incited the Ghibellines of Parma to rebel, with the result that on 25th July Giberto da Correggio was driven out of that city. The Cremonese were less easy to move, but after long effort Cangrande and Passerino succeeded in persuading both Guelphs and Ghibellines to unite, and expel Giberto in September. With the fall of Giberto the supremacy of the Ghibellines in West Lombardy was assured, and Cangrande once more turned his attention to the Mark. Padua he could not attack, because of the treaty of 1314, but he formed a plan for surprising Treviso, and on 25th November, 1316, led a large force to Serravalle in the north-east of the district. The Trevisans, however, were warned in time, and made such extensive preparations for defence that Cangrande turned homewards again.

During the winter of 1316-17 Cangrande came to a momentous decision. In his theory of the universe a supreme overlord, to whom he could offer his devotion and loyalty, was quite as essential a part of the whole scheme of things as the unwavering fidelity of his own subjects. Since the death of Henry VII, however, the Empire had had no generally acknowledged head. In October, 1314, there had been a divided election, one party voting for Frederic the Handsome of Austria, the other for Louis the Bavarian. Neither of the two rivals would retire, but neither had as yet succeeded in establishing his authority, and meanwhile the Imperial rights in Italy were fast falling into abeyance. The Ghibelline party felt the ill effects of having no official head, all the more that the Guelphs possessed a very capable leader in the person of Robert of Naples. Under these circumstances Cangrande felt it would be wise to declare definitely for one or other of the candidates for the Imperial throne. After careful consideration he decided that Frederic's claims were the stronger, and on 16th March, 1317, took the oath of allegiance to him and in return received the confirmation of the Vicariates of Verona and Vicenza. The presence of the great Tuscan Ghibelline, Ugucione della Faggiuola, at Verona at this time probably had no small share in influencing Cangrande to take this step. Ugucione had formerly been lord of Pisa, but had been driven out by his subjects and entered the Scaligeri service in 1316. Cangrande's action was not followed, as he had hoped, by other Ghibelline leaders. On the contrary its main result was to stir the Guelphs up to renewed hostility. On 30th March, John XXII, by a most unwarrantable assumption of the electoral prerogative, issued a bull declaring the Imperial throne vacant, and threatening with excommunication any one who should dare to receive the title of Imperial Vicar without his leave. Cangrande, in spite of his genuine piety, was quite unmoved by the Papal threats, and proceeded to show his loyalty to the Ghibelline cause by harrying the district of Brescia (which city had been in the hands of the Guelphs since February, 1316), and was just preparing to lay siege to the town, when he suddenly heard that Vicenza was on the point of being betrayed.

Some of the Paduan and Veronese malcontents, led by Vinciguerra di S. Bonifacio, had bribed one of the garrison, named Muzio, to admit them on 22nd May, through the gate of the southern suburb. At the last moment Muzio's heart failed him, and he revealed everything to Bailardino da Nogarola, who was then Podesta of Vicenza. Cangrande was delighted at the news, for he saw that he could now accuse the Paduans of being the first to break the peace of 1314, and so would be free to attack Padua. He therefore kept the affair secret, and told Bailardino to let matters take their course. On the evening of 21st May, he came to Vicenza with a large force under Ugucione della Faggiuola, whom he posted just outside the city. He himself entered Vicenza, but his coming was kept secret, his intention being to let the enemy enter the southern suburb, and then attack them at once in the front and the rear. He saw to the posting of the guards himself, and then spent the night in prayer. At dawn word was brought that the Veronese exiles under Vinciguerra were already in the suburb, and were scaling the city wall. Disguising himself as a Vicentine Guelph, Cangrande hastened to the place and urged the exiles on. Meanwhile the Paduan troops came up, and marched straight to the inner gate, expecting the exiles to open it to them. In a few minutes the doors were, indeed, flung wide apart, but it was to reveal Cangrande standing in the entrance. The Paduans, however, at first suspected nothing, for not merely was Cangrande still in disguise, but to complete the surprise one of his men had been clad in armour resembling that worn by the Count of S. Bonifacio. Not till Cangrande charged down upon them with his terrible war-cry did they realize that they had been betrayed. Even then they stood their ground, and Cangrande was like to have paid dear for his rashness, for he had only forty followers with him, when Ugucione arrived in the nick of time in the Paduan

rear, and by superhuman efforts cut his way through to Cangrande's side. This turned the scale. Paduans and exiles alike fled. The Veronese chased them as far as Montegalda, but here Cangrande stopped the pursuit, refusing to allow a single one of his men to cross the frontier lest he should be accused of violating the peace. Not many were slain, but a great number of prisoners were taken, amongst them Vinciguerra di S. Bonifacio, who was severely wounded in the leg. Cangrande treated his hereditary foe with great generosity and courtesy. He had him carefully nursed in his own palace, and when he died three weeks later gave him a magnificent funeral. In July a strict inquisition was held into the conduct of the Vicentines. The whole town was in terror as to what the effect of Cangrande's wrath would be. Those who were proved to have taken a leading part in the plot were hung, or exiled if they had made good their escape; but there Cangrande stayed his hand, and inflicted no punishment on the citizens as a body. Uguccone della Faggiuola replaced Bailardino as Podesta, but this was not done to humiliate Bailardino, but in order that the Paduans might be cowed by the near proximity of the much-dreaded Tuscan.

It must not be supposed that Cangrande spent the whole summer of 1317 at Vicenza. His energy at this time was almost superhuman. Early in June he was back again besieging Brescia, superbly indifferent to the anathemas hurled at him by the Papal envoys inside. He and Passerino kept up their connexion with the Ghibellines of Parma, and in June Veronese and Mantuan troops went to suppress a Guelph rising there. In May the right to appoint the Podesta had been conferred on Cangrande and Passerino, and in November Cangrande sent Pietro dal Verme, so famous afterwards as a general under Mastino II., to hold the office. In August Modena, after a series of revolutions, fell under Veronese influence, and Federigo della Scala was appointed Podesta. Finally on 28th September, Cangrande and Passerino came down to Cremona, where the Guelphs had again got the upper hand, and besieged it for a month on end.

But the real business of the year was the punishment of Padua. Directly after the attack on Vicenza Cangrande had sent to Venice to protest that the Paduans had broken the peace, and to claim the fine of 20,000 *lire*. The money, of course, he neither wanted nor expected to get, but he gained what was much more important, freedom to attack Padua again. For the Paduans refused to pay the fine, on the ground that the Veronese had broken the peace before the attack on Vicenza by raiding part of the Paduan territory, and after long deliberations the Venetians finally notified Cangrande that, as the Paduans would not pay up, the clause concerning the enforcement of the treaty had become null and void. Cangrande's preparations had long been made, and almost as soon as the decision was given he began the attack. The envoys reached Verona on 7th December, 1317, and on the 20th he led a large army down to surprise Monselice. This fortress stood on the summit of a steep rock on the eastern slopes of the Euganean hills, and was practically impregnable. A Veronese exile had therefore been bribed to admit the Scaligeri troops by the gate on the west of the town. On the night of the 20th the Veronese army crossed the Western Bacchiglione, and then made its way by unfrequented tracks through the Euganean hills, finally approaching Monselice by a path so narrow that the men had to march in single file. The plan was executed so successfully, however, that when Cangrande arrived with the main body of the army on the morning of the 21st it was to find the vanguard under Uguccone della Faggiuola already inside, and the Scaligeri banner floating from the walls of the town. A few of the garrison tried to hold the castle, but surrendered on 27th December.

Monselice was regarded as the key of the whole southern half of the Paduan district, of Este, Montagnana, the Piovado di Sacco, and even of Padua itself. The Paduans, therefore,

were dismayed by its loss, and at once prepared for a serious war. They appointed a Committee of Defence, set to work to strengthen the fortifications of the city, and sent envoys posthaste in all directions, to Treviso, Bologna, Florence and even Siena, to ask for help. Meanwhile Cangrande went on to attack Este. The first assault was unsuccessful, but next day he returned, completely encircled the town with his troops, and called on it to surrender. The sole reply he received was a storm of arrows and bolts. He himself was struck, but plucking the bolt from his wound he dismounted, plunged into the moat, and led his foot on to storm the walls. The cavalry, spurred on by his example, dismounted too, and joined in the assault, and in a few minutes the ramparts were scaled. The garrison fled, and the city, which was exceedingly rich, was given over to the troops to sack and afterwards burnt. Terrified by the treatment meted out to Este, Montagnana sent in its submission, and then town after town surrendered till over thirty were in the hands of the Veronese.

After Christmas Cangrande advanced on Padua itself. On the 29th he was at Terradura, only five miles from the city. Here he was met by envoys asking for three days' truce, in order that negotiations for peace might be opened. The negotiations, however, came to nothing, for it was nothing but a device of the Paduans to gain time, and they employed the three days in finishing the repairs to their walls, and fetching up the reinforcements from Bologna and Treviso. When Cangrande heard this, and learnt, moreover, that the Venetians had sent to offer money to the Paduans, he realized that Padua would not be so easily crushed as he had hoped, and retired to Monselice to make preparations for a long siege. He put on fresh taxes, brought sappers and masons up from Verona, and sent to ask for troops from Henry of Bohemia, Henry of Carinthia, Milan, Piacenza and other Ghibelline cities.

On 25th January, 1318, Cangrande took the field again. This time he decided to approach Padua from the south-east through the Piovado. The Piovado is bounded on the west by the Bacchiglione and on the south by the Canale di Pontelongo, and all the fords and bridges were well guarded. However, the Veronese found a ford at Roncajette, where only a small body of troops had been posted, because the banks of the stream were so steep that the Paduans thought that not even a cat could climb up them, much less a horse with an armed man on its back. Bringing up his great arbalists, Cangrande drove the enemy back by a well-directed fire, and then finding his troops hesitate, dismounted, and was the first to cross the ford and clamber up the opposite bank. The German mercenaries followed quickly, and so, after an interval, did the Veronese and Vicentine levies, the whole army having to cross on foot, while the horses were brought round afterwards by another way. Once inside the Piovado the Veronese met with no opposition, and marched straight on to S. Nicolo, six miles from Padua, where they encamped. Cangrande at once began preparations for a protracted siege, filling up ditches, building bridges, and cutting down trees.

The Paduans, however, refused, for the present, to listen to any suggestion of surrender, for their hopes had been raised by an alliance which they had just concluded with Treviso, the Patriarch of Aquileia, and some towns in the Friuli. Their new allies, however, sent them no help, and meanwhile the Veronese were pressing them hard. On 28th January Cangrande and Uguccione got into the suburb of S. Giovanni to the west of the town, and burnt it, and a few days later they appeared at the Porta di Ponte Corbo and penetrated the outer ring of fortifications. On 3rd February reinforcements arrived in the Veronese camp from the Visconti, and on the 9th the Paduans heard with dismay that Henry of Carinthia had sent Cangrande 500 horse, and as many more had come from Guglielmo da Castelbarco. Further resistance seemed to be hopeless, and on the 10th, therefore, Jacobo da Carrara was sent to find out on what terms, short of the surrender of Padua, Cangrande would make

peace. Cangrande demanded that Monselice, Este, Castelbaldo and Montagnana should be given to him for life, and that all the Paduan exiles should be restored. Hard though these terms were—they meant practically the cession of all the south-west of the district to Verona—they were not too much to pay for the independence of Padua, and the Greater Council accepted them on the 1st, though they refused to send a delegate to swear the peace till the following day. Cangrande, remembering how he had been fooled at Terradura, suspected the Paduans of not being in earnest again, and bluntly told the envoys who brought him the message that if the peace were not signed by nine o'clock next morning he would at once begin the siege again. He determined to overawe the Paduans into accepting his conditions by a display of overwhelming force. At dawn next day he collected his whole army, which numbered at least 3,000 horse and 15,000 foot, and drew them up four lines deep in full battle array. Then amidst loud cries of “To Padua, Padua”, he led his men up to the city. The noise caused by the approach of this multitude, the trampling of the horses, the shouts of the soldiers, the clashing of armour, was soon heard within the walls, and struck terror into the hearts of the citizens. The Greater Council met hurriedly, and tremblingly implored the Venetian envoys, who happened to be in the city at the time, to go forth and stop Cangrande’s advance. The Venetians consented to do their best, and, meeting the Scaliger just as he reached the Porta di Ponte Corbo, succeeded in persuading him to return to the camp at S. Nicolo. There, however, Cangrande, refused to disband his troops, swearing that he would keep his men drawn up in their ranks till the peace had been signed with all due formalities. At one time in the day it did indeed seem as though the negotiations might again fall through, for there was still some opposition in the town, and a party, headed by the Macharuffi, raised a tumult and tried to coerce the authorities into refusing Cangrande’s terms. Eventually, however, the Greater Council decided to accept them, and Jacobo da Carrara was deputed as the accredited representative of the city to sign the peace, which he did in the Veronese camp on the evening of 12th February, 1318.

CHAPTER IX

CANGRANDE I (2)

IN less than two months after the conclusion of peace with Padua the Papal condemnation at last fell on Cangrande. In justice to John XXII. it must be owned that he had put off this extreme step as long as possible, and had tried by milder means to bring Cangrande to see the error of his ways. In June, 1317, he had sent envoys to expostulate with him in person. Cangrande had shown himself inclined to be amenable. He had consented to several of the Papal requests, had promised to treat his Paduan prisoners well, and to refrain from fostering strife in Parma and Cremona. But on the question of the Vicariate he was adamant. Passing over his recent appointment by Frederic of Austria, he rested his claim on the fact that Henry VII had made him Imperial Vicar of Verona and Vicenza for life. Nothing would induce him to abandon the title, or acknowledge that the Pope could have any authority in the matter. Under these circumstances a breach was inevitable, and on 6th April, 1318, he was excommunicated, together with Maffeo Visconti and Passerino Bonaccolsi, for having violated the bull of 30th March, 1317.

Cangrande, however, does not seem to have been in any way affected by this sentence, which he regarded as nothing but a party move. His position was now much stronger than it had been before the second war with Padua. He had shown that he was superior to the republic both in the field and in diplomacy. He had won a large tract of territory and several first-class fortresses. The Ghibellines of Lombardy and Romagna all looked to him for leading and support. During the war he had continued to act as the head of the Brescian Ghibellines, who only negotiated with the Guelphs in the city through him. In the summer of 1318 the Bolognese Ghibellines constantly intrigued with him, in hopes that he would get them reinstated. When in July he went down to help the Modenese exiles he set all the Guelph dovescots in Romagna aflutter, though as there was no sign that there was a party within willing to co-operate with those without, he did not so much as shoot an arrow. These alarms were quite unnecessary. Cangrande might occasionally make a flying expedition to the south of the Po, but he had no permanent ambitions there. It was on expansion to the eastward that his heart was set.

At the moment Cangrande had no shadow of an excuse for attacking Padua. Not merely had he just concluded peace with her, but for once in his life he was on terms of personal friendship with her rulers. While the Paduan nobles were in captivity at Vicenza in the autumn of 1314 Cangrande had become very intimate with Jacobo and Marsilio da Carrara, and the friendship had continued ever since. Even the war does not seem to have interrupted it, for Jacobo was chosen to act as the mouthpiece of the Paduans in all negotiations with the Veronese, and it was he who finally signed the treaty of peace in February. For some time the Carraresi had been the guiding spirits in Padua, and on 25th July, 1318, Jacobo was elected Captain General for life. Even if this step was not taken at Cangrande's express bidding, as one authority asserts, there can be no doubt that he must have exerted all his influence in support of it. For Jacobo's election meant the exclusion of the Macharuffi and the extremest Guelphs from power, afforded Cangrande the chance of shaping Paduan policy through Jacobo, and gave him an autocracy instead of a republic for neighbour, a change always welcome to a despot. So for the rest of the year Cangrande maintained an informal alliance with Padua, and on 7th December betrothed his twelve-year-

old nephew Mastino, to Taddea, Jacobo's baby daughter.

With Treviso, however, matters stood very differently. On 17th April that city had been admitted to the peace between Verona and Padua, it is true. But the citizens were not united, the party cleavage at Treviso following class lines exceedingly closely, the people being Guelph, and the nobles, with hardly an exception, Ghibelline. The latter had opposed the establishment of the republic, and having been excluded since from all share in the government, were ready for any change. In September, 1318, their leaders, Astico Tempesta, Guecello da Monfumo and Antonio da Rovere, offered to give Cangrande their castles, and admit his troops into the city, if he would restore them to power. Cangrande eagerly closed with the offer, not merely for the sake of winning Treviso, but also because he was violently in love with Malgherita, the beautiful wife of Astico Tempesta. Asolo, Montebelluna, and other district castles were handed over to Cangrande at once, and it was arranged that the Veronese troops under Ugucione della Faggiuola should be admitted by the western gate of the city, the Porta dei Quaranta Santi, on the early morning of 2nd October.

By dawn on the appointed day the preparations of the plotters were all complete; the drawbridge of the gate was down, and the portcullis wedged up firmly with beams. But Ugucione had lost his way in the night owing to mists and heavy rains, and did not arrive till later in the morning. He was still half a mile or more away when a Guelph citizen happened to pass by the gate, noticed its unusual appearance, and called the guard up. When Ugucione reached the gate, he found it closed, and at once retired in dudgeon, thinking he had been betrayed. All chance of surprising the city was lost. Cangrande, therefore, prepared for a regular siege, and on 10th October arrived to take command in person. The Trevisans induced both the Venetians and Paduans to intercede in their behalf, but Cangrande refused to listen to any proposals for peace short of the submission of the city. The Greater Council hereupon met and voted unanimously to fight to the death rather than yield, for the walls of the town were stout, the moats in excellent repair, and the troops, foot, horse and bowmen, numerous and well equipped. During the next six weeks Treviso was hard pressed. Cangrande called Guecello da Camino to his aid, and together their troops overran all the land between the Piave and the Sile. The dykes of the Piave were cut, and serious floods followed. Cangrande himself continually led assaults on the city, and three times got through the outer ring of fortifications, and burnt the suburbs. The Trevisans were at the end of their resources and at last appealed to Frederic of Austria. Frederic promised to take them under his protection if they would acknowledge him as Emperor, and receive his Vicar. Cangrande was actually in one of the suburbs when the envoy from Frederic arrived with this offer, and the Trevisans at once accepted it and sent the messenger on to Cangrande, to order him in Frederic's name to cease attacking the city, and give up the castles he had usurped. Cangrande did not dare to go on besieging a town that was under the direct protection of the man whom he had acknowledged as Emperor, so he withdrew to Vicenza on 2nd December. The castles, however, he still retained.

It was in the course of this month that Cangrande was formally elected Captain and Rector of the League of the Imperial party in Lombardy, with a salary of 1,000 *lire* a month, and the command of a body of 1,000 men-at-arms, to be kept up by the League. The office, however, was not so important as its high-sounding title might imply. It was purely military, and the chief privilege it conferred on its holder was that of deciding when to give battle. The appointment of Cangrande, in fact, was an attempt on the part of the Lombard Ghibellines to entice him into helping them. In the previous July Robert of Naples had occupied Genoa in support of the Guelphs and driven the rival party out. This alarmed the

neighbouring Ghibelline rulers, especially Maffeo Visconti, who feared that if Genoa became a great Guelph power, his supremacy over Milan would be threatened. The West Lombard Ghibellines made a combined attack on Genoa, but without much success, so on 16th December Maffeo summoned a meeting of the leaders at Soncino. It was decided that to infuse more vigour into the war, a supreme commander should be appointed, and, amidst great applause, Cangrande, though absent, was elected to the office. Gratified as Cangrande must have been by this distinction, he was not to be lured by it from his schemes of personal aggrandizement. He never appeared in the camp outside Genoa, and though in the following summer he sent some troops, his contingent was the smallest there. Similarly, when he was elected Captain of the Ghibellines of Parma in January, 1319, he accepted the salary and title without fulfilling any of the duties, as the Parmesans discovered to their cost when they were attacked later in the year by Giberto da Correggio.

The Trevisans were not long in discovering that there was not much to be gained from Frederic's protection. He sent neither troops nor money. He did not even send any one to represent him, but appointed the Podesta of the city his Vicar. He did, indeed, induce Cangrande to consent to a truce for January and February, 1319, but he could not prevent hostilities beginning again in March. The Veronese pressed the siege harder than ever, and though Cangrande himself went off to Reggiolo in April, to harass the Bolognese, his troops defeated the Trevisans severely on 26th April. The Trevisans sent again to implore help from Frederic, but the only answer they received was that he had entrusted the defence of the city to his uncle, Henry, Count of Gorz. Now the Count was not merely treacherous and unscrupulous, but he had long been a bitter foe of Treviso. The citizens, therefore, offered to make peace with Cangrande on any terms short of submission of the city. Cangrande, however, refused, and to his own discomfiture; for on 20th June Henry entered Treviso, and was received with every appearance of joy, and Cangrande, not being strong enough to fight both him and the Trevisans, raised the siege.

Cangrande, however, was not much concerned at his failure to win Treviso. He was already flying at higher game. His former friendship with Jacobo da Carrara had suddenly turned to enmity, probably because he had found the latter less submissive than he had hoped as lord of Padua. Ever since the turn of the year Cangrande had been preparing for another attack on that city, and in April he began hostilities, though not on any extended scale. The pretext he gave was that the exiles had not been restored in accordance with the treaty of February, 1318. Jacobo acknowledged this, but offered to recall them at once. Cangrande, however, was bent on picking a quarrel, and changing his ground, asserted that the peace was only a truce and had expired. Jacobo again tried to avert a breach, but Cangrande declared that he would fight unless Jacobo himself were deposed. Jacobo on this appealed to the loyalty of the citizens and prepared for war. No shadow of an excuse can be found for Cangrande's conduct on this occasion. He was actuated solely by lust of territory. He was well punished, however; the ensuing war lasted over a year, and ended in the most humiliating defeat he ever suffered.

At first, however, the Veronese had everything their own way. On 5th August Cangrande established a permanent camp to the south of Padua, and proceeded to fortify it strongly, surrounding it with a moat, and building a wooden citadel with a high tower. He seized the neighbouring town of Bassanello, only four miles from the city. He affected to be the legal ruler of Padua already, and gave one of his knights, named Ribaldo, the title of Podesta, and, indeed, all the surrounding villages acknowledged Ribaldo's authority, submitting to his jurisdiction, and systematically victualling the camp. Moreover, Cangrande

had a dam built in the Bacchiglione just above Padua, and thus cut off the supply of water brought from the Brenta down the new canal. There was ample water in the wells for drinking and all ordinary purposes, but the blocking up of the river meant amongst other inconveniences that all the mills in the city were brought to a standstill, and so corn had to be ground by hand. At present, however, the Paduans were in no danger of dearth. The harvest had been an exceptionally good one, and the authorities had begun to collect supplies as soon as there had been any talk of war. Mercenaries, too, had been hired from Treviso and Tuscany. When war became inevitable Jacobo tried to get help from Henry of Gorz by offering him Bassano and Cittadella and a large sum of money. But Gorz, as usual, played a double part. He pretended to consider the matter, and meanwhile sent to find out on what terms Cangrande would buy his assistance. Cangrande gave him two of the castles he held in the Trevisan district, Asolo and Montebelluna, whereupon Gorz wrote to Jacobo that he had been ordered by Frederic to help the Veronese. The Paduans then persuaded the Venetians to intervene on their behalf, but Cangrande still insisted on the restoration of the exiles and the deposition of Jacobo as the conditions of peace.

War now began in earnest. Bailardino da Nogarola laid siege to Cittadella and Bassano. The Estensi, who were still allied with Cangrande, moved out and attacked Rovigo, Badia and Lendinara. On 1st November the Veronese suffered a severe blow through the death of Ugucione della Faggiuola, but on the same day Cittadella surrendered, and Bassano to escape a similar fate gave itself to Henry of Gorz. The Paduans at once made overtures to him again. But Henry refused to stir unless they would submit to him as Frederic's representative. In this case he assured them that he would win back Monselice and Rovigo and all that they had lost. The Paduans were most reluctant to submit to Henry, but they had no other alternative. There was no prospect of help from elsewhere. The whole of the district was at the mercy of the enemy. Gorz, now that he held Bassano and Treviso, could make or mar Padua at his pleasure. On 4th November, therefore, the Greater Council accepted him as Imperial Vicar.

It was some time before Gorz moved. Through November and December he collected an immense army, the cavalry alone numbering eight or ten thousand. But the greater part were light horse, semi-barbarian hordes of Slavs and Hungarians, and so not of much use in battle. Meanwhile, Cangrande drew the blockade ever closer. He seized the bridges over the Brenta at Vigo d'Arzere and Peraga, and so cut the communication between Padua and Treviso. The fortifications of Padua had been strengthened recently, but this only helped the besiegers to shut up the inhabitants in a cage of their own making. The whole district was ravaged by the enemy, and hardly any supplies could enter the city.

At last Gorz sent a representative to Padua, who on 5th January, 1320, received the submission of the city, Jacobo da Carrara resigning the Captainate the same day. Cangrande was thus deprived of his chief pretext for war, and reluctantly agreed to a truce till mid-Lent. He retired to Vicenza, but he still held all the district except Bassano, and he gave the commander of the camp at Bassanello, Simone Filippone, the title of Podesta of Padua, and Simone appointed the Rectors of the district towns and did justice to the inhabitants, just as though he really held the office. Moreover, he kept so strict a watch over the roads that no supplies could enter the city, and the Paduans protested in vain against this as a breach of the truce.

At mid-Lent Frederic made an effort to prolong the truce till Easter, but Cangrande refused to consent except on quite impossible terms, viz., that the Paduans should dismiss

their mercenaries, and acknowledge Simone as Podesta. So war began again, and the Veronese took Asolo and Montebelluna from Gorz. Towards the end of May news arrived that Frederic was sending troops to Padua. Cangrande, who of late had not been making so much progress as he could have wished, decided to try and surprise the city before they arrived. In one of his frequent rides of inspection round the walls he had noticed that in the stream, which on the south-east served as a moat to the outer ring of fortifications, were the remains of an old weir, just behind the gardens of the Abbey of S. Giustina, where the rampart was lower than elsewhere. On the evening of 3rd June this weir was transformed into a temporary bridge by the addition of beams and planks. Some of the Paduan exiles were sent on ahead, scaled the wall and slew the guards. Cangrande then followed with a small body of picked troops, who at once began as silently as possible to breach the wall, the nobles in their enthusiasm working as hard as the common soldiers. Everything was going on well, an opening practicable for cavalry had already been made, and about three hundred men had got into the gardens of the Abbey, when a Parmesan mercenary caught sight of the Veronese, and gave the alarm. The big bell of the Commune was rung and in a few minutes the streets were alive with hastily arming citizens. The enemy, meanwhile, had already been charged by Nicolo da Carrara and a small body of horse, and when the infantry came up were already in full retreat. The retreat swiftly became a rout, the bridge suddenly gave way under the weight of the thronging fugitives, and many of them were thrown into the moat and drowned. The Paduans were intensely elated by this victory and ascribed it to miraculous intervention. A great thanksgiving service was held in the Abbey of S. Giustina, and tales spread that the church-bells had been rung by invisible hands to give the alarm, and that S. Prodocimo, one of the patron saints of Padua, had appeared on the scene of danger on a milk-white steed. The part played in the attack by the exiles, however, gave rise to great bitterness of feeling, and the bodies of those who had been drowned in the moat were fished up, stripped of their armour, and exposed naked on the walls or in the Piazza.

After this Cangrande gave up all idea of either surprising or storming the city, and fell back on his earlier plan of starving it into surrender. He had a broad ditch dug up the eastern side, from Bassanello to the Canale di Piovego, which flows from the north of the city to the Brenta. This cut the Paduans off from the Piovado, their principal source of supplies. Just outside the Porta di Ponte Corbo an immense mound began to rise, which was to be crowned by a fort and dominate all that part of the city. Before this mound was finished, however, the Paduans sallied forth one night, and completely destroyed it. They had taken advantage of a temporary absence of Cangrande from the camp, and though Simone Filippone, who had been left in command, at once brought up a body of 500 troops to drive the enemy off, and the Paduan foot yielded at the first shock, the Podesta, Altenerio degli Azzoni, quickly rallied his men and put the Veronese to flight. Simone's horse fell and, rolling on him, pinned him to the ground, and he was taken. The soldiers wished to slay him, and it was only with great difficulty that he was rescued from their fury, and brought alive into Padua. For the war was now carried on with much ferocity—possibly owing to the prominent part taken in it by the Paduan exiles—and very little quarter was given by either side. On this occasion over two hundred corpses were afterwards counted on the field, the greater part of the slain being French horse-soldiers, belonging to a fine body which had originally entered Italy with Henry VII., and then taken service under Simone with Cangrande. Fourteen of the Scaligeri banners were taken, and armour was collected in such quantities from the dead and wounded that it sold for next to nothing, a helmet fetching only a halfpenny.

This affray took place on the night of 12th July, and was the second serious check that

the Veronese had suffered in less than six weeks. Cangrande, though much depressed by it, especially by the loss of his French soldiers, whom he regarded as the flower of his army, nevertheless adhered tenaciously to the blockade. It was known that the Paduans were beginning to suffer from dearth. They had not been able to gather in the harvest that year, and in the previous autumn the vintage had been destroyed by the enemy, so that there was now no wine in the city. The richer classes used a fermented drink made from young vine shoots, green grapes and honey, but the mass of the citizens could get nothing but water. The town, too, was threatened with inundations, for Cangrande had dammed up the lower Bacchiglione, and then diverted the Canale di Battaglia into it just below the city, so that the water began to flow back to Padua, instead of to the lagoons. The Paduans, however, were every whit as determined as Cangrande, and made up their minds to endure anything rather than give in. Their military position, too, was improving. In June some Austrian troops had arrived, and Gorz sent word in August that he was coming to their help in person, and, in fact, on 25th August he entered the city with 800 lances. Cangrande happened to be absent at Vicenza on that day, and knew nothing of Henry's arrival till the following morning, when he saw him marching down on the camp. The enemy's archers opened the attack with a flight of arrows, by one of which Cangrande himself was wounded, though only slightly. The Veronese were quite unprepared for a pitched battle, and the majority of the leaders urged Cangrande to stand on the defensive, but he, thinking only of how he could win eternal glory, decided to attack before the enemy could reach the camp, and charged them at once with his finest cavalry, about a thousand strong. The Paduan vanguard, consisting of the citizen foot, broke at once, but the main body under Gorz stood its ground, and Cangrande, seeing that he was hopelessly outnumbered, began to fall back in good order. But before he could reach shelter, the enemy's horse were upon him, and a fierce hand-to-hand fight began, which ended in the capture of the Scaligeri banner and the complete rout of the Veronese. Cangrande was again struck by an arrow, this time in the leg, and would have been taken had not his nephew Cecchino come to his aid. The Scaliger now lost all his nerve, turned tail and fled headlong like the veriest coward. Unable to get into the camp, because the drawbridges were all up, he started off across country for Monselice, hotly pursued by some Paduans. Once more he only just escaped capture, for his horse fell at the ditch he himself had made, and, wounded as he was, he could not mount alone. But his followers came up in the nick of time, lifted him into the saddle, a peasant pointed out a bridge which led to the Monselice road, and he was off again. Meanwhile, the peasant stopped the pursuit by breaking down the bridge, and so Cangrande was able to spare his tired horse, and jog along at ease, with helmet flung back that he might get the air. It seemed doubtful, however, if his horse could carry him to Monselice, but presently another peasant, noting its condition, offered him his own mare, and at last he reached the town in safety, though worn out with fatigue, and with the arrow still sticking in his leg. In all his life Cangrande had never been so disgraced, and he was never again the same man. It was more than two years before he appeared in the field, nor did he ever again display the dare-devil recklessness of his earlier days.

When their invincible leader had set them such an example, it was small wonder that the rank and file of the Veronese army made no stand. After a short attempt to hold the camp they fled in all directions. The Paduans gave chase and cut down all they could reach, but at last, sated with blood, stopped the pursuit and returned to sack the abandoned camp. The booty was immense, for the Veronese had brought all sorts of luxuries. Amongst Cangrande's personal belongings were found robes richly embroidered with gold thread, and belts and bosses of pure gold.

The Paduans followed up their victory to the best of their ability. On 29th August they moved down to Este, and from there went on to besiege Monselice. Monselice, however, showed no signs of surrendering, and in less than three weeks' time Gorz suddenly returned to Padua, having, it was said, been bribed by the Veronese. Hereupon the Paduan troops also retired, and in such confusion that they left all their siege-machines behind. Both sides now longed for peace. The Paduans did not trust Gorz, whose unruly troops burnt and robbed as though they were in an enemy's country. Cangrande had returned, the day after his flight, to Verona, where he was still nursing the wound in his leg, and the worse wound to his pride. His army was hopelessly demoralized. His supplies and machines had all been lost with the camp. The works he had constructed for the siege had been destroyed. So negotiations were opened, and on 26th October peace was proclaimed. On the whole the terms were not so unfavourable to Verona as might have been expected. Cittadella, which was all that Cangrande still held of his recent conquests, was to be restored to Padua. Frederic of Austria was to arbitrate about the exiles and the four castles held by the Veronese since 1318, Este, Monselice, Castelbaldo and Montagnana; while, by some additional clauses kept secret at the time, it was arranged that Asolo and Montebelluna should be ceded to Henry of Gorz, but that Cangrande should be compensated for their loss by receiving Bassano.

Though Cangrande abstained from war for two years and more after his disastrous defeat in 1320, he managed to extend his territory still farther eastwards during this time. By judicious intervention in other men's quarrels he won Feltre in February, 1321, and Belluno in October, 1322. The possession of Bassano had already given him command of the Vai Brenta, through which the road that leaves the Brenner at Trent by the Valsugana, debouches into the plain. Feltre and Belluno combined enabled him to control the direct route from the Pusterthal to Treviso and Venice, which issues from the mountains to the south of Feltre through an exceptionally narrow gorge, called the Chiusa di Quero. He thus held the lower end not merely of the Brenner itself, but of all the passes issuing from it on the east side, right up to Innsbruck.

In September, 1322, Cangrande at last took the field again, though in an affair of little importance, an expedition to Reggio in company with Passerino Bonaccolsi to attempt to restore the Ghibelline exiles. There was much burning of suburbs—between them, the two sides destroyed five—but before any decisive action took place, letters came to Cangrande which caused him to hurry home. It is thought that they contained rumours of a threatened attack on Verona by Gorz and Henry of Carinthia, though nothing certain was ever known. It was, however, certain that Cangrande had never been on good terms with either Gorz or Henry of Carinthia since peace was made. He had managed on one pretext or another to avoid restoring Cittadella to Padua till February, 1321. He still held the other four castles. He constantly demanded the Vicariate of Padua for himself, even offering to buy it from Frederic, so that Gorz resigned the office, and no one could be found to accept it for fear of Cangrande's wrath till September, 1321, when Henry of Carinthia undertook the post. Frederic still delayed giving sentence about the questions at issue between Verona and Padua, and in March, 1322, appointed Carinthia arbitrator in his stead; but nothing was settled when, on 23rd April, 1323, the air was cleared by the sudden death of Gorz at the wedding of his daughter. Gorz was said, though without any proof, to have been poisoned by Cangrande's orders. However this may be, the prospects of peace were much improved by his death, for no one could ever count upon him for two months together. The Paduans and Henry of Carinthia had constantly suspected him of plotting to seize Padua with the help of the exiles, and this was the main reason why Henry of Carinthia had deferred giving

sentence concerning the latter. Now that there was no longer any cause for delay, Henry decreed on 19th May that the mass of the exiles were to be re-admitted at once, but that certain of the leaders were to be excluded another year, that they might settle their quarrels before returning.

For the rest of the year, therefore, the Mark enjoyed continuous tranquillity, which was scarcely broken by the annexation of Conegliano by Cangrande in October. But, meanwhile, the antagonism between the Papacy and the Empire flared up anew. The three-cornered struggle between Frederic, Louis and John XXII. had been reduced to the old duel between Pope and Emperor by the battle of Muhldorf, on 28th September, 1322, when Louis captured his rival. This destroyed what little prestige Frederic still had left, and most of his supporters, Cangrande amongst them, transferred their allegiance to Louis, who, now he had established his claims north of the Alps, could turn his attention to Italy, and even plan his coronation at Rome. Louis revived the Vicariate-General of Lombardy, and in March, 1323, appointed Berthold of Marstetten to the office. In April the Pope made an attempt to detach Cangrande from Louis, by removing the excommunication of 1318. But Cangrande, who had cared little for the Papal condemnation, cared still less for its removal. In June he made an alliance with Louis, the Estensi and Passerino Bonaccolsi, and relieved Maffeo Visconti, whom the Legate was blockading in Milan. The Ghibellines maintained their preponderance during the autumn, but in the continued absence of the Emperor they began to suffer as usual from the want of definite aims. At a widely representative meeting of the leaders at Palazzolo in January, 1324, the subject of most importance seems to have been the destruction of the bridge at Piacenza, built by John XXII, and said to hamper traffic.

It is probable, however, that other subjects were discussed, amongst them possibly the defence of Verona, for it was known the Paduans were meditating an attack on that city, in order to recover the four castles of theirs which Cangrande still held. All through the spring of 1324 Cangrande was occupied with preparations to meet this attack. Rendered over-cautious by the defeat of 1320, he decided to act entirely on the defensive. In April he began to strengthen the walls of the city on their weakest side, the north, collected troops from Ferrara, Mantua and Modena, and then sat down to await events. The Paduans did not move till June, for Henry of Carinthia took some months to collect his army. On 3rd June he appeared at Treviso with an immense host, including a large body of half-naked Hungarian horse. His wild troops overran the district, robbing every one, even women and children, till the country was left as bare as if a swarm of locusts had passed over it. And when Henry, on the 11th, entered Paduan territory, his men treated those they had come to help in exactly the same way. Cangrande's course was now as clear as daylight. All he had to do was to concentrate his troops and supplies in the walled towns, and let the enemy overrun the open country till they had consumed everything and were forced to withdraw or starve.¹ So well did Henry play Cangrande's game, that at last the Paduans were driven into giving him 30,000 florins to attack Monselice. Nor would they allow their general and his terrible army to spend more than one night at Padua, on their way down. Henry besieged Monselice from 22nd June to 13th July, and during this time his men committed every imaginable form of excess. They slew, they burnt, they insulted women, they robbed not only the peasants but those who were conveying supplies to the camp, and even the Paduan soldiers. The wretched Paduans began to think that Henry must be in league with Cangrande, for they suffered far worse things than the enemy did at the hands of their so-called allies. Eventually matters came to such a pass that Henry was obliged to grant permission to the peasants to kill his German troops in self-defence. Soon he began to find himself in difficulties. Supplies ran

short, pestilence broke out in the camp, and carried off many of his soldiers, while many were slain by the rustics. So when Cangrande made proposals for peace and backed them up with the offer of a large sum, Henry was willing to consider the matter. At the end of July a truce was arranged till Christmas between Padua, Verona and Treviso. Then to the unspeakable relief of the Paduans, who, so long as the Germans were near, dreaded that they would sack the city, Henry went off to Carinthia, only halting on his way north at Bassano to wait for the money promised him by Cangrande.

In August, 1324, Guecello da Camino died and was succeeded by his son Rizardo, the husband of Verde della Scala. In spite of this close connexion with Cangrande, and the smallness of his territories—Serravalle was the only town of any size belonging to him—Rizardo at first seemed inclined to join the enemies of the Scaligeri. Cangrande, however, promptly seized Serravalle. Rizardo fled, but realizing his powerlessness, on second thoughts returned, and submitted to Cangrande. On 22nd November an event occurred which might have been expected to cause a great deal of consternation at Padua, the death of Jacobo da Carrara. Curiously enough, however, none of the chroniclers express any sorrow at his loss, though in earlier years no praise had been too great for him. It may be that he had never recovered the loss of prestige incurred by the renunciation of the Captainate. His death, however, removed the last drag on the turbulence and ambition of the younger Carraresi, for though his nephew Marsilio succeeded him as head of the family, he was not nearly so strong a man as Jacobo, and was unable to exercise any control over his relations, whose quarrels and excesses kept the whole city in a constant ferment and eventually led to its overthrow.

No sooner had the truce expired than the Veronese army took the field. Now that Henry of Carinthia had gone, Cangrande no longer felt unequal to attacking the Paduans. Early in 1325 he entered the southern part of the Paduan district, and encamped at Conselve, half-way between Monselice and the Piovado. From here he carried on a campaign of systematic destruction, burning Conselve itself, and Pieve di Sacco, and devastating all the country-side right up to the walls of Padua. Only the Euganean hills were spared, because the inhabitants had already submitted to him. The Paduans, in spite of their experience of last year, again sent to ask for help from Henry of Carinthia. Henry took no notice of their appeal, but Louis, to whom they also applied, sent envoys to Cangrande and arranged for another truce to last from 6th June till Martinmas (nth November), with the condition that till the truce was over each side was to keep what it held. The Paduans, however, objected very much to this condition, as it gave the Euganean hills to Cangrande. They continued to send envoys to the Imperial Court to state their case, with the result that it was first settled that all questions at issue between the two states should be referred to the arbitration of Louis, Henry of Carinthia, and Frederic of Austria, who were to be allowed a year's interval before giving sentence, and that on 4th September Louis issued a preliminary decision ordering Cangrande to give up the Euganean hills and whatever else he had taken from Padua since the peace of 1320.

Almost before hostilities with Padua had come to an end, Cangrande's overflowing energy found vent for itself elsewhere. In the summer of 1325, the Lombard Guelphs were attacking the Ghibellines at two points, at Modena and at Borgo S. Donino, which had recently been annexed by Azzo Visconti. Cangrande, the Estensi, and Passerino Bonaccolsi collected a joint army of 1,500 horse, and a large number of vessels, and went off to help the Visconti in June. The allies' fleet was defeated by that of the Legate, but on land their troops were more successful, and on the 17th Cangrande and Passerino took Fiorano, and on 2nd

July Sassuolo, both lying in the mountains south of Modena. Cangrande, however, was prevented from following up these successes by receiving news that a great fire had broken out at Vicenza, which had burnt for three days and destroyed a fourth part of the city. Dreading that the Paduans, in spite of the truce, would not be able to resist such a golden opportunity for surprising Vicenza, Cangrande started at once for the scene of the disaster. On the way he was suddenly taken ill, and obliged to return to Verona, where for a time his life was despaired of. The Guelphs all over Italy openly rejoiced at the prospect of his death. At one time a report got about in Verona that he was dying, whereupon Federigo della Scala and Mastino and Alberto attempted to seize the supreme power. No other member of the family opposed them, the faithful Cecchino would have done so, if alive, but he had died in February. Cangrande's mercenaries, however, of their own accord, took up arms in their master's defence, and Federigo was taken prisoner, tried and banished on 14th September. Mastino and Alberto do not seem to have been punished, possibly they were regarded as Federigo's tools. Federigo's defection must have been a serious blow to Cangrande, for the latter had relied implicitly on him ever since his successful defence of Verona in the critical days of June, 1314.

About this time the Ghibelline party was much strengthened by two great victories, that of Castruccio Castracane over the Florentines at Altopascio, on 23rd September, and that of Passerino Bonaccolsi, who had shortly before married Ailisa, sister of Rainaldo and Obizzo III. d' Este, over the Bolognese at Monteveglio on 15th November. Cangrande should have been present at the latter battle, as the Visconti and Estensi were, but a few days beforehand he took himself off from Modena, where the troops were collecting, alleging that he did not wish to meet Azzo Visconti, whose father Galeazzo had been no friend of his. Galeazzo Visconti had, it is true, displayed marked Guelph leanings, but Azzo was one of the staunchest of Ghibellines, so that this was no explanation of Cangrande's strange conduct. It is more probable that he had taken offence because Passerino, wishing to please his brother-in-law, Rainaldo d'Este, had entrusted the Imperial standards to his charge, instead of to Cangrande, as was fitting, since the latter was the official head of the Lombard Ghibellines. It was perhaps on this occasion that the estrangement arose between Cangrande and Passerino, which was to culminate in the latter's overthrow and death.

The whole of this winter and the year of 1326 Cangrande spent very quietly, hardly ever leaving Verona. He was husbanding his resources for a renewed attack on Padua and Treviso.

In spite of the recent Ghibelline successes at Altopascio and Monteveglio, the Guelphs occupied a very strong position at the beginning of 1326, partly because Florence had submitted to Charles of Calabria (son of Robert of Naples) in December, and partly because the energetic Cardinal, Bertrand de Poyet, had been appointed Papal Legate in Lombardy. As the year went on the Guelphs became more and more aggressive, and John XXII and Robert of Naples sent envoys to Verona to attempt to detach Cangrande from his allegiance to Louis. Cangrande, however, was not to be moved, and on 9th July, the very day that he had received the Papal envoys, he went down to a great meeting of the Ghibelline leaders at S. Zenone in Mozzo, a little place in the south-west of the Veronese district. It was decided here that in order to counterbalance the Guelph preponderance Louis should be urged to carry out his long announced journey to Italy to be crowned, and in the autumn a formal invitation to this effect, backed with generous offers of money and help, was sent to him in the names of Cangrande, Passerino Bonaccolsi, Rainaldo and Obizzo d' Este, Castruccio Castracane, and three of the Visconti, Galeazzo, Luchino and Marco.

Louis did not require much pressing. He made peace with Frederic, put affairs in his duchy in order, and started in midwinter. On 4th January, 1327, he was at Innsbruck, and a few days later reached Trent. Here he made a stay of two months, in order that he might meet his Italian adherents, and make arrangements for his further journey. Cangrande came to the Imperial Court on 15th January, and did homage to the Emperor. But ere long he began to behave with great arrogance. Louis had a very small personal following, not more than a hundred knights, and Cangrande, who was conscious of possessing much greater power and wealth than his overlord, thought that he ought to be able to do with him what he would. He demanded the Vicariate of Padua as of right, and when Louis refused to grant it to him, even at the price of 200,000 florins, threatened to go over to the Guelphs and retired in a huff to Verona. But Louis was not to be cowed, and allied himself with Henry of Carinthia against “Der Hunt”, as Cangrande’s name was contemptuously translated in the German version of the treaty. The permanent defection from the Imperial cause of the only Ghibelline ruler in the Mark, however, was not to be endured, and so at the beginning of March Obizzo d’ Este was despatched to Verona as peacemaker, and on the 5th Cangrande, who probably had not intended his threats to be taken too seriously, returned to Trent, and made his peace with Louis.

By this time the Ghibelline leaders had all either come in person to the Imperial Court, or sent representatives. Frequent meetings were held, and it was settled that Louis should be crowned both in Milan and Rome, and receive 150,000 ducats from his Italian partisans on reaching the former place. The Pope was denounced as a heretic. Marco Visconti was appointed commander of the whole Imperial army. The Estensi took the oath of allegiance to Louis and in return were appointed Imperial Vicars of Ferrara. Passerino Bonaccolsi and Franceschino Rusca were confirmed in their possessions. Cangrande was declared to be Vicar of seven cities, Verona, Vicenza, Feltre, Belluno, Monselice, Bassano and Conegliano, and on 13th March Louis made peace between him and Henry of Carinthia, and promised to send delegates at Whitsuntide to define the boundary between Verona and Padua. The recent quarrel, however, had left a certain soreness behind, and when, two days later, Louis left Trent for Milan he avoided the obvious route down the Brenner to Verona, and crossed the mountains direct to Bergamo.

On Whitsunday (31st May) Louis was crowned at Milan by two deposed prelates, Guido de’ Tarlati of Arezzo and the bishop of Brescia. Amongst the Italian rulers who flocked to the ceremony the lord of Verona was by far the most prominent. He lived in truly regal state. His following of knights numbered over a thousand according to the lowest computation. He kept open court every day, which even the Visconti did not dare to do. One day he tried to buy up all the game, meat and fish in the city, but found the supply too great even for his long purse. His aim seems to have been to impress Louis with the fact that he was wealthier and more powerful than any of the other Lombards. But the Visconti suspected that he was intriguing both with Louis and the Milanese nobles to get the Vicariate of Milan in their stead. And there may have been some truth in this suspicion, for Cangrande was lodged in S. Ambrogio and presently demanded to have his own exit from the city, re-opening an old postern gate in the wall close to S. Ambrogio, and throwing a bridge over the moat. Galeazzo Visconti, however, destroyed the bridge by night, and, when Cangrande had it rebuilt, pulled it down a second time, and hereupon Cangrande thought it wiser to leave Milan and return to Verona. All that he had gained from the Emperor by his ostentation was permission to throw a bridge across the Po at Ostiglia and exact tolls from passengers. This bridge however, was never built.

The relations between the Emperor and the Visconti very soon became strained, and in July Louis threw the three brothers into prison. In August he held a meeting at Orzi, and sentenced Galeazzo Visconti to lifelong imprisonment, after which he went off to Rome, and left the Lombards to their own devices. The meeting at Orzi is almost the last occasion when Cangrande and Passerino are to be found acting in concert. For some time the latter's power had been on the wane. In June, 1327, he had lost Modena. More serious still, the Gonzaghi were rising into prominence in Mantua, were ingratiating themselves with the people, and were more than suspected of aiming to supplant the Bonaccolsi in the *signoria*. They won Cangrande to their side by promising him a guiding voice in Mantuan affairs, if he would lend them troops. In August, 1328, matters were brought to a head by a quarrel between Passerino's son Francesco and Filippino Gonzaga. On the 15th Filippino's brother, Guido, was despatched to Verona, and returned that night with a body of troops under Guglielmo da Castelbarco, the Younger. Early next morning the Gonzaghi followers and the Veronese seized the Piazzas. Passerino and Francesco were slain on the spot. Two of Passerino's other sons were taken, sent to Castel d' Ario and killed there. The citizens seem to have accepted the change of dynasty without any reluctance. Ludovico Gonzaga was elected Captain, and the Bonaccolsi estates fell to their successful rivals. Cangrande is said by a Modenese chronicler to have received 100,000 florins as his share of the spoil.

It is impossible to exonerate Cangrande's treatment of the Bonaccolsi, and almost equally impossible to find any adequate motive for it. The one contemporary authority who attempts any explanation is Pietro Azario, who says that after 1325 Cangrande aimed at Passerino's death because in that year the latter had prevented him from seizing Mantua. But apart from the fact that this attempt to seize Mantua would itself require explanation, Azario's narrative is too full of inaccuracies for much reliance to be placed on it; for instance, he relates that Cangrande left Passerino's army before the battle of Monteveglio (Nov., 1325), because of the quarrel with Galeazzo Visconti over the bridge at Milan, which took place in 1327. Later historians suggest different motives. Saraina asserts that Passerino had sent troops to help Henry of Gorz at Padua a few days before Cangrande's great defeat Antonio Possevino, the seventeenthcentury historian of the Gonzaghi, states that Passerino had slandered Cangrande to Henry of Carinthia. But as Spangenberg points out, so much poetic and legendary matter was woven into the later accounts of the episode that it seems impossible to discover what really took place. The two things that are certain are that in the autumn of 1325 a coolness had already begun to make itself felt between Cangrande and his lifelong friend, and that three years later the former connived at Passerino's overthrow. It is not unreasonable, however, to attribute the estrangement to Cangrande's jealousy of the friendship which had recently grown up between the Estensi and the Bonaccolsi, and which had found expression in the marriage of Passerino to Ailisa d' Este, and the entrusting of the Imperial standards to Rainaldo's care.

Barely a month after the Mantuan revolution Cangrande became lord of Padua. Strangely enough, after his many years of warfare with the Paduans he won the city by peaceful means, the citizens professedly electing him their ruler of their own free will, though in reality starved and terrorized into it. To show how this came about, it is necessary to give a sketch of the internal history of Padua from 1324. The nominal ruler of the city was Henry of Carinthia, but as he was always absent, and governed through a Vicar, the real power passed into the hands of the Carraresi. Since Jacobo's death his nephew Marsilio had been the recognized head of the family, but he was not strong enough to control his younger and more lawless relations, and they ran riot through the city.

In September, 1325, the Ghibellines made an attempt to overthrow the Carraresi, but the rising failed, and the ringleaders, including Albertino Mussato, were banished. Next February the exiles rebelled and seized one of the district castles. They had hoped that Cangrande and the Estensi would send them help. But none came, the exiles were defeated, and for the time the rebellion was stamped out.

Now began a veritable reign of terror in Padua, the worst offenders being the younger Carraresi. Wayfarers were robbed both in town and country. Often as he walked along the streets a man would suddenly find a sack thrown over his head, and would be carried off to the Carraresi strongholds, only to emerge thence after paying a heavy ransom. Nearly every morning three or four corpses would be found lying in the streets or piazzas, but the murderers were never discovered. The convent of S. Agata was sacked, and the nuns violated, but though it was common talk that the Carraresi had committed the crime the Podesta only ventured to bring a few of their more insignificant followers to justice.

Presently, however, dissensions broke out among the Carraresi themselves. It was said that Nicolo, a distant cousin of Marsilio's, was plotting to slay the latter, and make himself lord of the city. In December, 1326, Marsilio had Nicolo's principal supporters banished. Nicolo, in revenge, began to intrigue with Cangrande, and when this became known in July, fled to Venice, and then persuaded Cangrande to ally himself definitely with the exiles against Marsilio. It must be noted, however, that Verona was not technically at war with Padua. There was no formal declaration of war, commercial relations do not seem to have been interrupted, and though Cangrande lent the exiles troops, commanded by his nephew Mastino, and directed the campaign, he never took, the field in person.

In September, 1327, Nicolo da Carrara and Mastino della Scala led a considerable force down to Bovolenta in the Piovado. They tried at first to win the peasants over to their side by paying for all they took, but, finding that the rustics remained hostile, began the usual pillaging and burning. After failing twice to surprise one of the gates of Padua, they moved, by Cangrande's advice, down to Este, still in the hands of the Veronese. The Paduans, meanwhile, were growing discontented. No attempt was made by the authorities to drive the exiles off, the outer ring of fortifications had been allowed to fall out of repair, so that the suburbs were defenceless, and yet the taxes were exceedingly heavy. In November the discontent reached such a pitch that Henry's Vicar, Conrad of Aufenstein, was driven into making some show of activity. He therefore led an army down to attack Este; but a panic arose, and the whole force, citizen levies and regular troops, common soldiers and commanders, fled headlong back to Padua. This made Conrad's position untenable, for he was already very unpopular on account of his avarice; and on 15th December, having feathered his nest well, he returned to Germ any, leaving Engelmario di Villandres to govern Padua as his representative. This meant the complete supremacy of the dominant branch of the Carraresi, for Engelmario was weak, and soon became entirely subservient to Marsilio. During the first half of 1328 the condition of the city went from bad to worse. The nobles grew more and more lawless. The officials themselves were foremost among the evildoers. The exiles devastated all the country round. Famine began to threaten. There was no prospect of any help. Henry of Carinthia, in spite of his promises, sent neither provisions, men nor money. Frederic of Austria, the Legate, Charles of Calabria, the Gonzaghi, the Estensi, the Emperor, even the Pope, had all been applied to, and all in vain. Cruellest cut of all, the Trevisans, who hitherto had made common cause with the Paduans against Cangrande, now turned a deaf ear to their appeals. It was clear the city could not hold out much longer. The only question was, would it be better to surrender direct to Cangrande or

to come to terms with the exiles behind his back.

The burden of making this momentous decision fell upon Marsilio da Carrara. Not unnaturally, perhaps, he preferred to submit to a foreign ruler, rather than to a rival party of his relations and fellow-citizens. He made the mistake, however, of acting on his own responsibility, taking none but a few intimate friends into his confidence till after everything was settled. Mussato reproaches him bitterly with caring nothing for the citizens at large, and providing for his own enrichment, but confesses elsewhere that he obtained better terms than anyone else could have done because of the high esteem in which Cangrande held him.

The conditions of the surrender were arranged at a meeting between the two rulers. What exactly happened on this occasion was never known, for no documents were drawn up, and those present, few in number, were all sworn to secrecy. As far as could be judged, however, from after events, the principal articles of the agreement were as follows. Cangrande was to become lord of Padua, but the citizens were to be governed according to their own laws, and no one was to be punished for any act done during the war. Marsilio was to decide the fate of the exiles, and be rewarded for his share in arranging the surrender with lands confiscated from those banished in 1325, and the marriage between Jacobo da Carrara's daughter, Taddea, and Mastino della Scala was to take place at once.

By Cangrande's advice it was also decided that before anything was made known Marsilio should be formally elected Captain of Padua. Marsilio prepared the ground by getting his followers to say as of their own accord about the city, first that a supreme ruler was needed, and then that it could be no one but Marsilio. When, therefore, the Greater Council was summoned on 3rd September, and one of Marsilio's supporters proposed that he should be made Captain General, the docile Councillors at once elected him. Two days later it was given out that Mastino della Scala had been privately betrothed to Taddea at Venice, and that in consequence Cangrande had ordered his troops to cease operations, and was sending large quantities of wine, grapes and other fruits to the citizens. The populace were delighted by these gifts, and when Mastino himself arrived on the 6th with a detachment of lances, Marsilio felt that the time was ripe for a revelation of his compact with Cangrande. He explained the situation first to the Greater Council, and asked them to ratify the surrender of the city. After a little hesitation this was done by the Councillors, and the news spread rapidly through the city. It was received with great discontent at first, the citizens complaining that they had been bought and sold like sheep. But Marsilio made a public oration, in which he recounted the reasons for his action, and quickly convinced the majority of his audience. Indeed the middle and lower classes did not take long to realize that it was only the nobles who had anything to fear from the change, and that they themselves would enjoy more freedom and security under Cangrande than they had under a number of masters. On 8th September Marsilio and other nobles went to Vicenza, and Padua was formally surrendered to Cangrande. Thus, says Cortusius, ended this war, which had lasted seventeen years, four months and twenty-five days, and which by famine, sword, cold, imprisonment, exile and other hardships had cost a hundred thousand lives.

Cangrande made his triumphal entry into his new possession on 10th September. It must have been one of the proudest moments of his life, and his joy was all the greater that he was genuinely welcomed by his new subjects, especially the populace. Many of the nobles preceded him, Marsilio da Carrara rode at his side, the clergy walked behind him, bearing crosses and chanting litanies and *Te Deums*, and in the rear surged an immense crowd. On the way to the bishop's Palace, where Cangrande was to have his lodging, the

procession was met by a company of boys ranged in order under a banner bearing the Scaligeri ladder, who cried out, "Long live Cangrande! Death to those who ground us down with heavy taxes!" Cangrande was delighted at this incident, reined his horse in, asked Marsilio all about it, and then ordered largess to be scattered among the crowd.

Next day the Concio met in the Palazzo della Ragione, that extraordinary hall which a few years previously the Augustinian architect, Fra Giovanni, had covered with a roof said to be the largest in the world unsupported by pillars. Here the standard of the Commune and the keys of the city were given over to Cangrande, who then handed the standard on to Marsilio, proclaiming that he was to govern the city as his representative with the title of Vicar, while another Paduan was appointed Podesta. On 14th September Mastino della Scala was publicly betrothed to Taddeada Carrara, and a daughter of Rolando Rossi was affianced to Franceschino, Cangrande's natural son. This match was of great importance, for the Rossi were relatives of the Carraresi, and Rolando had recently become lord of Parma. All the exiles were recalled except Nicolo da Carrara, who, by Cangrande's express wish, remained at Venice, and Mussato, who was kept in banishment at Chioggia, in spite of all his remonstrances, till his death a year or two later.

The news of Cangrande's success was received by the Ghibellines all through North Italy with great joy, for the conversion of such an important city as Padua from the Guelph to the Ghibelline side was of the utmost consequence to the whole party, and was looked upon as counterbalancing the blow which they had recently suffered in the death of Castruccio Castracane. In Cangrande's own dominions men held high carnival, and at Verona the members of the Arts clad themselves in silk and linen of all the colours of the rainbow, and danced up and down the streets. More than ever did the network of Ghibelline interests find its centre in Cangrande. Even those who were not Ghibellines were impressed by his success. The Florentines, those keenest of Guelphs, actually wrote to congratulate him on becoming lord of Padua, and in March, 1329, the Venetians conferred on him the greatest honour they ever bestowed on strangers, by admitting him to their citizenship. Cangrande was the first of the Scaligeri to receive this distinction, which was given much more rarely at this time than in later centuries.

At the end of November Cangrande held a great Curia at Verona to celebrate his triumph, and the marriages of his son Franceschino and his nephew Mastino. Franceschino's little five-year-old bride was escorted from her home at Parma in great state by Mastino and Alberto, and reached Verona on 20th November. A few days later Taddea da Carrara arrived from Padua, and was enthusiastically welcomed by the citizens. On the 27th the double wedding took place in the cathedral, and afterwards Cangrande with his own hand created thirty-nine knights. This is almost the greatest number made at one time in Italy, being probably only surpassed by the fifty-two created at Ferrara in 1294 by Azzo and Francesco d' Este. The lists of names in the various authorities vary considerably, but they are all headed by Nicolo Foscari of Venice. Ten Paduan nobles received knighthood on this occasion, including five of the Carraresi, Marsilio, Ubertino, Marsilietto, Obizzo and Jacobo. Amongst the Veronese were the two bridegrooms and Alberto della Scala, two sons of Bailardino da Nogarola, Nicolo and Cagnola, Guglielmo da Castelbarco, and Jacobo and Pietro dal Verme.

In the early spring of 1329 news came to Lombardy that the Emperor, having been crowned at Rome in January, was coming north again, and intended to lay siege to Milan. Louis, however, could not expect much help from the Lombards. He had alienated his

supporters one by one till only Cangrande, the Gonzaghi and the Rossi still professed allegiance to him, and none of them were willing to spend blood or treasure in his cause, or to admit him into their cities. Cangrande, however, for reasons of his own, was very anxious to have a personal interview with Louis, and, as he did not wish to receive him in Verona, met him at Marcaria in the Mantuan district, where the Emperor had already summoned his supporters to appear before him on 26th April, to arrange for the siege of Milan. The meeting, however, was a very small one; of the Ghibelline leaders only Cangrande and Ludovico Gonzaga came in person, while only two cities, Como and Cremona, sent envoys. Cangrande insisted on a private meeting with Louis, for he was engaged in plotting the overthrow of the Gonzaghi, whom he had not found as compliant as he had hoped. What actually took place at the interview was never revealed, but three days later, on 29th April, Louis issued a document appointing Cangrande Imperial Vicar of Mantua. This title, however, Cangrande never assumed. He wanted it in order that he might have a legal pretext for quarrelling with the Gonzaghi, but, before he had time to think of making his claims good, a more pressing matter claimed his attention, and the attack on Mantua was postponed to a more convenient moment, which never arrived. For now Cangrande was to reach the summit of his ambition and win the whole Trevisan Mark—only to die after holding it three days, in accordance with an old prophecy attributed to the Wizard Merlin.

While Cangrande was still at Marcaria, and before he had actually been appointed Vicar of Mantua, envoys arrived from the Trevisan exiles offering to surrender the city to him if he would help to reinstate them. In January, 1327, Treviso had once more changed its form of government and become an autocracy, one of the nobles, Guecello Tempesta, having seized the supreme power, and driven out those who tried to oppose him. Ever since, Cangrande had lost no opportunity of harassing the Trevisans. In 1328, in fear of a direct attack from Verona, they had put all their fortresses in a state of defence, but, notwithstanding, the Scaligeri captain at Serravalle had seized two of their castles, Ceneda and Cavolano. On receiving the exiles' proposal in April, 1329, Cangrande gave up the attack on the Gonzaghi, and began preparations for subjugating Treviso. This time he was determined not to fail, and devoted two months to collecting a well-organized force, and supplies which should enable him to undertake a regular blockade. Before starting he wished to make sure that the Ghibellines would not lose ground elsewhere during his absence. Rolando Rossi had for some time past been subject to constant attacks from the Legate, and at the end of May the latter began to besiege Parma, in hopes of coercing the Parmesans into receiving back the da Correggio and their other exiles. If Parma fell, the Ghibellines would have no foothold left on the southern bank of the Po, and so the Guelph supremacy in Lombardy and Romagna would be assured. Cangrande, on the other hand, did not wish to dissipate his strength by sending any of his troops down south, so instead he sent Marsilio da Carrara to try and make peace. Marsilio, as a faithful son of the Church and a relation of the Rossi, was a *persona grata* with both parties, and, being very eloquent, soon induced the combatants to consent to a compromise. Rolando Rossi continued to rule Parma, but the Legate was given a certain authority in the city, and the exiles were restored.

The affairs of Parma thus satisfactorily settled, nothing now hindered Cangrande from marching on Treviso. On 2nd July he left Verona—never to return alive—and went to Padua, where his army had already assembled. It was one of the finest forces Cangrande ever had at his disposal. Marsilio da Carrara commanded the levies from Verona, Padua and Feltre. The Vicentines were under Bailardino da Nogarola. Rizardo da Camino had brought 2,000 horse and a large body of infantry. Other contingents were brought by the da

Castelbarco, Otto of Burgundy and Guido Gonzaga of Mantua. On 4th July Cangrande led the main body out of Padua, a small detachment under Otto of Burgundy being sent on ahead to reconnoitre. This advance guard found a party of Trevisans collecting supplies near the city and at once gave chase, but unfortunately Otto in his ardour went too close to the walls, and was slain by a stone hurled from an engine. Cangrande was much distressed by the death of Otto, whom he held to be one of his most brilliant officers, and, to prevent the sacrifice of more valuable lives, gave up all idea of storming the city, and sat down to blockade it instead. He divided his army into two, and sent one half under Bailardino to encamp to the north-east of the town, while he himself and the rest of the troops established themselves half a mile from the western gate, close to the monastery of the Quaranta Santi. Treviso being rectangular in shape, the Veronese were able thus to watch all the entrances and keep supplies out. In less than a fortnight the citizens began to suffer from dearth. There was no prospect of help coming from any external source, for the Scaligeri domains encircled the greater part of the Trevisan district, and the only roads out of it which did not pass through Veronese territory were those on the south and east leading to Venice and Carinthia, and neither Henry of Carinthia nor the Venetians were willing to quarrel with Cangrande. Moreover, treachery was at work in the town itself. First the younger branch of the da Camino, who had hitherto always been hostile to the Scaligeri, came over to Cangrande, and then Gherardaccio da Collalto, one of the most powerful of the nobles. At last Guecello Tempesta himself began to waver. He feared that if he did not quickly come to terms with Cangrande, he would lose not merely the city, but his own estates. So on 17th July he sent an envoy to the Veronese camp and offered to surrender on the following conditions. He himself was to retain his castle at Noale and be appointed Governor of Treviso, with the title of Captain, the unusually high salary of 1,000 *lire* a month, and the right to select the Podesta. The arrears owing to the German mercenaries were to be paid by Cangrande, and though most of the exiles were to be restored, Guecello's personal enemies were to remain in perpetual banishment. Cangrande seems to have accepted these exceedingly lenient conditions at once. The swiftness of his consent must be regarded as the measure of the intensity of his desire to win Treviso. It is more surprising that the Trevisans should have ratified this compact, in which Guecello obtained all that he wished, and they themselves nothing, without any demur. Yet on the very same day the treaty passed all their three Councils by large majorities, that of the An- ziani by eleven to one, the Forty by twenty-two to one, and the Greater Council by three hundred and five to thirty-nine.

On 18th July Cangrande made his state entry into Treviso. At last the whole of the Mark lay at his feet. But on his crowning triumph fell the cold shadow of death. As he rode in the bystanders were struck by the ominous absence of his usual gay smile. He was, in fact, seriously ill. A few days before, when hot and thirsty, he had drunk long draughts of ice-cold water from a spring. The result was a fever, which grew rapidly worse because he neglected it and went about as usual. Only the strongest effort of will kept him erect on his horse during the state entry, and once arrived at the bishop's palace, where he was to lodge, he took to his bed. From the very first all hope was given up. On the 20th he was still able to attend to business, and signed the document confirming Guecello Tempesta's possession of Noale, but then, feeling he could not live much longer, he sent for Marsilio da Carrara and Bailardino da Nogarola to settle his worldly affairs. As he left no legitimate sons, for his wife Giovanna of Antioch had borne him no children, he appointed his nephews, Alberto and Mastino, co-heirs both to his private estates and his dominions, with the exception of Padua. His natural sons, to whom he was passionately devoted, he recommended to the care of Bailardino and Marsilio. Then, beckoning to the latter, he praised his loyalty and

faithfulness, in a voice broken with tears, and, placing his own standard in his hands, declared him lord of Padua. Marsilio at first refused the gift, protesting that Padua formed part of the Scaligeri domains, and that he himself would always remain the loyal subject of Alberto, but then, fearing to distress the sick man, he made a feint of accepting. After this Cangrande turned all his thoughts to the other world. He confessed his sins with great humility and received the host and extreme unction, and after lingering two days longer, died on 22nd July. His death was kept secret all that day, lest the Trevisans should rise. At nightfall the body was taken out of the city without any ceremony, placed on a bier drawn by four horses, and despatched to Verona. All that night and the following day the sad little procession journeyed on and at evening arrived outside the city walls. The coffin was taken for the night into a little country church, where it was covered with a silken pall, and surrounded with burning candles. Next morning the Veronese nobles came out and escorted the body of their beloved ruler in state into the city. The bier was preceded by twelve mounted knights, one of whom was clad in the dead man's armour and bore his naked sword. The coffin was buried temporarily in the church of S. Maria Antica. A few months later it was reverently moved into the beautiful monument outside, which shows the greatest of the Scaligeri in twofold guise, below, in the robes of state in which he executed justice, or presided over his councils, above, erect on his warhorse, ready to lead his troops to victory.

STATUE OF CANGRANDE I



CHAPTER X

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNDER CANGRANDE I AND HIS SUCCESSORS

IN however many respects Cangrande fails to satisfy modern standards of morals, whatever may be thought now of his ambition, land-hunger, ostentation and imperious temper, to his contemporaries he appeared little short of perfect. To them he was the flower of knighthood, the fount of justice and courtesy, the dynast of dynasts. His daring, his magnificence and his generosity compelled universal admiration. His zest of life and his *allegria*—his smile was renowned throughout North Italy—won all hearts. A relentless foe, he was loyalty itself to his friends, and is said, with the possible exception of the massacre at Calvatone, never to have broken his word. Even his swift anger and overbearing ways were merits in a prince. His morality was above the average of his class; he left several bastards, but he was not uxorious, and was free from the baser forms of vice. He was genuinely religious, as men counted religion in those days. The Virgin was the special object of his adoration, it was her name he invoked in difficulties, to her he dedicated the church he built, and in her honour he fasted twice a week throughout the year.

The two blots on Cangrande's fair fame are the massacre at Calvatone, and his treatment of Passerino Bonaccolsi. In the latter case he cannot be acquitted of treachery. That he was implicated in the overthrow and murder of Passerino was established beyond all doubt, and here contemporary morality condemned him, for self-interest had not yet been exalted into a rule of conduct that could excuse even the betrayal of a friend. With regard to the massacre, it must be noted that the principal authority is Mussato, a not altogether unprejudiced witness. It is true that he accuses Cangrande directly of connivance, but he also suggests, as an alternative explanation, that for once the great leader had lost control of his men. Unheard of as this is, it is not so contrary to all that is known of Cangrande as to suppose that after swearing to spare the lives of the townsmen he should have allowed them to be slaughtered like sheep.

Cangrande is now chiefly celebrated as the friend and patron of Dante, but in his own day he was most famous as the victorious warrior. No strategist, he was more than once outgeneralled in a campaign, but he was rarely beaten in battle. He had two of the greatest gifts a leader can possess, the power of inspiring devotion, and an unerring instinct for the weak point in the enemy's position, on which he would fling his whole force with a rush that carried everything before it. There is a fascinating gaiety about Cangrande's victories. He hated needless bloodshed, and would stop the chase of a flying foe out of sheer magnanimity, but he delighted in fighting and danger for their own sakes. He generally led the charges himself, and was always one of the first to cross a stream or scale a wall. In early life his bravery often degenerated into foolhardiness, but his flight from Padua in 1320 taught him caution.

Conquered cities Cangrande treated with generosity. He ruled them justly, allowed them to retain their own laws and customs, and kept taxation within reasonable bounds. The only city that ever had cause to complain of his severity was Vicenza, and that was when, soon after its annexation, the Guelphs were suspected of plotting a revolt. The Paduans, on the

other hand, found in him rather a father than a conqueror. When he first appointed the Podesta and the Captain of the troops, he bade them be strictly impartial, and, when the Podesta's term of office came to an end, appointed him for another year, because he had governed so justly. Marsilio da Carrara, as Vicar of Padua, thought to ingratiate himself with Cangrande by extorting large sums from the citizens to pay for the expenses of the court's sojourn there, but Cangrande was extremely wrathful, and ordered him to restore the money at once. He won golden opinions from all classes by his condescension and liberality. He talked freely with any one from the highest to the lowest, he showered gifts on the nobles, and made many personal friends among them, and every day 600 citizens of all ranks were entertained to dinner at his expense.

When not fighting Cangrande worked off his superabundant energy in hunting and hawking, to which he was passionately devoted. He is said to have owned as many as 300 falcons at one time, and his horses, dogs, weapons, saddles, and accoutrements of all sorts were without number. Mussato has described a day out of the great man's life in peace-time. Before dawn his followers, some of whom had once been independent rulers themselves, would collect on horseback in front of his palace, waiting for him to appear, often dozing in the saddle as they waited. When Cangrande came forth he would mount a great charger, and the whole company would ride full tilt across country after his hawks or hounds. Cangrande did not know what fatigue meant, and often set the pace so fast that many of the courtiers were left behind, and had to straggle back later to the palace as best they could. The rest of the day would be passed in games or conversation, for Cangrande loved talking to the distinguished men who thronged to his court. Some of these, as the Carraresi and Mussato in 1314, came there first as captives, but Cangrande treated his prisoners of rank as honoured guests, allowing them to roam at will in the palace, and perhaps even in the city. While Mussato was nursing the wounds received when he was taken outside Vicenza, Cangrande used to visit him and challenge him to an encounter of wits, listening half-amused, half-annoyed, to the fiery Paduan's boasts that he had been wounded in a just cause, and was ready to give his life for his country. High matters of state were sometimes discussed informally on those occasions; for instance, the settlement of 1314 between Padua and Verona originated in a friendly talk between Passerino Bonaccolsi, Jacobo da Carrara and Guglielmo da Castelbarco over a game of dice.

Affairs of state, war and sport, however, by no means exhausted Cangrande's activities. It was hardly possible to find a subject in which he did not take an interest. One of his first thoughts after the conclusion of peace with Padua in 1318 was to obtain some of the horses and cattle, for which the Piovado di Sacco was famous, in order to improve the Veronese breeds. Unfortunately, through change of climate or food, or some unknown cause, the experiment was a failure. In learning, poetry, and art of all descriptions, Cangrande took great delight. An eloquent speaker himself, he added a professorship of Rhetoric to the six chairs already founded by the statutes (a chair of Arithmetic had been instituted in 1284), and ordered all the professors to hold a public disputation once a month during the winter. Among the scholars and artists who flocked to Verona in his reign were the historians Sagacio della Gazata, Ferreto de' Ferreti and Albertino Mussato, the grammarians Nicolo and Pencio, the astrologer Benentendi, Giotto possibly, and almost certainly Dante. So many legends and traditions have, however, collected round the poet's exile that it is almost impossible to discover any authentic facts about his relations with the Scaligeri, especially with Cangrande. Did Dante come to Verona in Cangrande's reign, and, if so, when and for how long? Did he receive a regular pension, or only occasional gifts from the Scaligeri? Was the *Paradiso*

dedicated to Cangrande? Is the letter to him genuine or a late forgery? Are the *Veltro* of the *Inferno* and the *Dux* of the *Paradiso* to be identified with him, or with some other great leader? These are but a few of the questions to which at present no definite answer can be given.

The traditional view of Dante's visit to Verona is that he lived many years at court there, occupying a dubious position between honoured guest and flouted hanger-on, receiving ample provision for the wants of the body, but jeered at by the nobles and even by Cangrande himself, whose coarse jibes he would answer with biting sarcasm. But there is no irrefutable evidence that Dante ever visited Cangrande's court at all. No document dating from Verona bears his signature. Not a single Veronese chronicler so much as mentions his name, proof in itself that he took no active part in the life of the city. The only biographer of Dante near enough to him in time to be counted as a contemporary authority is Boccaccio, and, though he represents the poet as going to Verona in Cangrande's reign, he makes him visit so many and such distant places in his wanderings, that it is clear he could not have spent much time in Verona. Moreover, though for tone and general atmosphere Boccaccio may safely be trusted, for specific events, especially chronological sequence, he is quite unreliable,—for instance, he places Dante's first visit in exile to Verona under Alberto I, who died before Dante was banished.

The principal authority for Dante's sojourns in Verona, therefore, must remain his own writings. From them, unfortunately, very little evidence as to definite dates and seasons is to be gained, but the references to Verona show that he knew both the city and the surrounding country well. In the fifteenth canto of the *Inferno* he alludes to the Veronese *Palio*, the foot-race for a piece of cloth, which took place every year on the first Sunday in Lent. In the twentieth he describes Lake Garda and the Mincio at some length.

The lines—

. . . quella ruina che nel fianco

Di qua da Trento l'Adice percosse

most probably refer to the extraordinary rock-fall, called the Slavini di San Marco, which scars the eastern side of the upper Adige Valley, just above Mori. The whole arrangement of the *Inferno*, too, in constantly narrowing and descending circles, is strongly reminiscent of the Veronese amphitheatre. Now it will be noticed that all these references to Verona occur in the *Inferno*, so that Dante must have gained his knowledge of the town early in his exile, and this, taken in conjunction with the passage about the "first refuge," and the absence of any evidence for a prolonged stay at Cangrande's court, would seem to prove that Dante spent some time in Verona under Bartolomeo, but that afterwards he only paid one, or at most two, short visits to the city. (The alleged public reading there of the *De Aqua et de Terra* in 1320 seems to have no foundation in fact.) This is borne out by the letter to Cangrande, which, if it be genuine, establishes it beyond doubt that Dante had visited Verona for the first time in Cangrande's reign shortly before the letter was written, which is generally taken to be in 1317 or 1318. Into the question of the authenticity of the letter it is impossible to enter in any detail here, the decision turning on such refinements of textual criticism as the use of the third person for the first. There is still a large school which regards it as a late forgery, but, on the whole, modern opinion is inclining to its authenticity, and I myself can find nothing to disprove it either in the history of the time or the adulatory tone of the letter, on which so

much stress is laid by its opponents. In considering this, the relative positions of Dante and Cangrande must be taken into account, the former, it is true, the greatest genius of his age, but not recognized as such, and, as far as outward circumstances went, an exile and a dependent on other men's bounty; the latter one of the greatest warriors and rulers of the day, probably fresh from a triumph over the Paduans, possibly already marked out for the leadership of the Ghibelline party. It must also be remembered that many expressions that now appear excessively flattering were ordinary civilities at the time, and that, intensely proud though Dante was, he held the lord of Verona in deep admiration and reverence. Moreover, the relations indicated by the letter as existing between the poet and Cangrande tally closely; both with the celebrated passage in the *Paradiso* and the account given by Boccaccio, who represents Dante, not as living at Verona, or in receipt of a regular pension, but as keeping up friendly intercourse with Cangrande from a distance, sending him the *Paradiso* to read, five or six cantos at a time, as he wrote it, and receiving in return munificent gifts.

Granted the genuineness of the letter, the dedication of the *Paradiso* to Cangrande would follow as a matter of course. Until the former point is settled, however, the latter must remain an open question. But it is curious to note that Giovanni Quirini, contemporary and ardent admirer of both Cangrande and Dante, asks the former in a sonnet to show him...

la gloria santa

Del Paradiso, che 'l poeta canta,

which surely can refer to nothing but the Divine Comedy, and shows that there was generally held to be some unusually close connexion between the third cantica of the poem and the great Scaliger.

The interpretation of the *Veltro* and the *Dux* are much too complicated subjects to be discussed here. It may, however, be stated that the majority of the commentators of every century and country identify the *Veltro* with Cangrande, and that the best of the moderns, with one or two notable exceptions such as Fraticelli and Witte, hold that the *Dux* also refers to him.

Nothing shows better the position which Cangrande held than the number of fourteenth-century poets who sang of his magnificence and great deeds. Some of the principal authorities for his life are in verse. Ferreto de' Ferreti's epic has often been referred to already. Mussato bursts into poetry when he describes the heroic struggle between Verona and Padua in 1319-20. The *Resa di Treviso* gives the fullest account of Cangrande's death. A nameless poet, writing soon after this event, is loud in his praises, extolling his loyalty, valour, chivalry, his joyous mien, and his devotion to the Virgin. In some Latin verses on the death of Henry VII, Cangrande is described as—

Ornatum, virum bellicum,

Veracem, fidum, mellicum,

Verbisque seriusum.

Even his enemies bore witness to his greatness. A Trevisan poet, Nicolo de' Rossi, writing about 1326, when the Trevisans lived in constant dread of Veronese aggression, says

that Can-grande's appearance on the scene with only ten followers was enough to make every one fly to their strongholds, for at his belt, as Nicolo quaintly puts it, he wore a sack into which he popped all who would not ring their bells according to his orders.

Curiously enough, not a single Veronese poet joins in this chorus of praise. It is a singular fact that literature did not flourish at Verona. The early chronicles are of the scantiest. The Renaissance produced a fair number of humanists, but even the greatest of these, Guglielmo da Pastrengo, Guarino, Saraina, Panvinio, do not rise above the second rank. There was never any Veronese school of poetry, far less any Veronese poet of genius. The few fourteenth-century poems that remain possess no distinctive characteristics, and are written in a rough and inartistic style, the best being the work of Gidino da Sommacampagna. As far as is known, only one Veronese poem dates from Cangrande's reign, an indifferent sonnet addressed to the Guelphs of Bologna, which is, however, of some interest, because tradition asserts that it is the work of the great Scaliger himself.

A contemporary poem, the *Bisbidis* of Manoello Guideo, gives an extremely vivacious description of what Verona was like under Cangrande. The streets, says Manoello, are full of jostling crowds, war-horses, coursers and armed men. The whole city rings with the measured tread of foot-soldiers and the trampling of horses, with the strains of countless instruments, guitars, lutes, flutes, viols, and the songs of minstrels and troubadours, till the din is perfectly maddening. Germans, Italians, Frenchmen, Flemings, Englishmen are to be heard talking in their own tongues. Astrology, philosophy and theology are discussed. Hawks scream, hounds whimper to be let loose for the chase. Falconers, grooms, boys, messengers scurry past. Every moment travellers arrive from distant lands, pilgrims, palmers, Jews, and Saracens. Rare beasts are on show, ostriches, wild bulls, monkeys, parrots and lions. In the palaces lovely dames and maidens dance. Below, youths fight till faces are scarred and eyes torn out. Rams are pitted together, and, strange sight, men eat against each other for wagers, while all laugh till it seems as though they must burst. Such are the valour and honour of the great lord, whose fame flies over land and sea.

If this was Verona under everyday conditions, what can it have been like when Cangrande held one of his great Curiae? The most magnificent was that in celebration of the annexation of Padua, and the marriage of Mastino to Taddea da Carrara. The festivities lasted a whole month, jousts, tournaments, banquets and pageants succeeding one another without intermission. Every one of the thirty-nine knights created on this occasion was lodged, at Cangrande's expense, in an establishment of his own, presided over by a notary and two stewards. Every one received a war-horse, a palfrey, a complete outfit of armour and weapons, two fur-lined cloaks, two suits of purple and gold, and all things necessary for his daily needs down to wax candles. Some of the knights, such as Ludovico Gonzaga and Ravizza Rusca of Como, came of ruling families, and in addition Cangrande entertained other dynasts, Obizzo III. of Este, Rizardo da Camino, and the Rossi of Parma. The guests brought their own retainers, and it is said that there were 5,000 foreign horse in the city at once. Indeed, the crowds were so great that many had to encamp under the arcades of the houses or in the piazzas.

Cangrande was not one of the building rulers. The only building founded by him in Verona itself is the small church of S. Maria della Scala, which he erected in gratitude for his recovery from severe illness in 1325. All that now remains of the original church is the east end, but that suffices to show that it was built in much the same style as S. Maria Antica with thick walls, small, round-headed windows and a rounded apse. In Padua Cangrande intended

to build himself a magnificent palace on the site of the houses of the exiled Scrovegni, but the plan was put an end to by his death, as was the projected bridge over the Po at Ostiglia. In the district Cangrande re-built the castles at Montorio, Soave, Caldiero and Illasi, which the Paduans had burnt in 1313. Moreover, he accomplished the re-fortification of Verona, a work which cost vast sums and took almost two years to complete. In 1324 the northern side of the city was strengthened by a great fosse running outside the walls from the Porta del Vescovo to S. Giorgio in Braida, and the walls themselves were re-built as far as the little church of S. Zenone in Monte. As the city rises steeply here the fosse was of necessity dry, but its unusual depth and breadth made it as efficient a protection as the ordinary water-filled moat. In the following January Cangrande began new fortifications on the south-west of the city, about half a mile outside the former walls, and, like them, with both ends resting on the river. The Abbey of S. Zeno and three suburbs were thus included in the city, which, however, has never grown up to its new limits. These walls took ten months to build and cost 24,000 florins, perhaps not so much as might be expected, seeing that the line taken was at least two and a half miles long. The architect was a certain Calzaro, and the middle one of the three gates which pierced the new walls was called after him, the other two being named the Porta S. Massimo and the Porta S. Croce. Nothing is now to be seen of either walls or gates, for the latter were blocked up, and the former entirely re-built about 1520 for the Venetians, by the famous architect Michele Sammicheli, but a quaint fifteenth-century view of Verona¹ shows that they had the forked battlements characteristic of the Scaligeri fortifications, and were strengthened at regular intervals by square towers with pointed roofs.

Just as in war Cangrande was a master of tactics rather than of strategy, so in civil affairs his genius showed itself in administration rather than in legislation, in ordering and enforcing the existing social and political systems rather than in originating or applying new ideas. He initiated no great reforms, made few treaties, and issued no laws of any importance. During his reign, however, the statutes both of the Commune and of the Art of Merchants were thoroughly revised, a new manuscript was made of the former code and probably of the latter, and while no material changes were made in either, their contents were amplified and rearranged, with the result that many a gap was filled, and many an obscure place became clear.

The new manuscript of the Commune's statutes was finished only a year before Cangrande's death, being deposited in the Archives on 21st July, 1328. It was probably begun in the second half of 1323, as the latest addition to the previous manuscript dates from May of that year, nor is it wonderful that it should have taken some years to complete, for it is an immense folio volume and the writing is large, clear and strikingly uniform. It is divided into six books instead of five, the ordinances concerning the *regula* (associations for the common cultivation of land) which were formerly in the fourth book, being re-ordered and considerably improved, and placed in a book by themselves, the fifth. Indeed, the improvement in the arrangement of the whole code is most marked, but at the same time it is surprising to find how very few innovations of real moment were made by Cangrande. The most important is the restriction of the Greater Council to 500 members, its size having gradually increased till it was almost impossible to transact business. The minimum age was fixed at seventeen, and no family was allowed to send more than one member. The right to nominate the Podesta was conferred on the ruler, but this was only the formal recognition of what had long been the custom, for the election to the Podestaship had been held in his presence ever since the reign of Alberto I, and we may be sure, therefore, that no one was ever chosen of whom he did not approve. The Anziani were increased from thirteen to fifteen, nine

being Gastaldi of the Arts. The codes of justice were altered considerably in detail, but hardly at all in principle. The earlier statutes referring to trial by battle and by ordeal are omitted, so it is evident that these methods of procedure had dropped out of use, but torment is prescribed as a mode of discovering the guilty person in several cases, in homicide, robbery, adultery, arson, and the production of false witnesses or forged documents.

The statutes of the Merchants were revised some years earlier, by a commission of ten chosen from among the more important Arts, and on 18th July, 1319, the new code received Cangrande's ratification. This is the oldest version in existence of these statutes; it was printed in 1498 at Venice, not, however, from the original manuscript, which was unfortunately partially destroyed by fire about 1440, but from a copy reconstructed by the Venetians. Hence some of the text is hopelessly corrupt. On the other hand many of the statutes evidently escaped all injury, and were copied word for word. Several speak of Cangrande as though he were still alive. Others clearly date from the ante-Scaligeri period, *e.g.*, those making mention of Rectors of Verona, of *vassalli* or *coloni*, and of the Podestas Guelfo and Roberto, who held office in 1197 and 1233 respectively, and the greater part of those referring to the Podesta's duties, which are cast in the archaic form of an oath in the first person singular. The inclusion of so many early statutes shows that the constitution of the Art of Merchants remained under both the Scaligeri and the Venetians very much what it had been during the Commune. Such alterations as are known to have been made by Cangrande were directed to magnifying the power of the Podesta and hence that of the ruler, since the two offices were now always held by the same person. One new statute gives the Podesta the right to make, repeal and alter laws, another empowers him to appoint to the Council, a third commands all councillors and officials to take the oath of obedience to him. Except in these three statutes Cangrande's name only appears in the preface, and in the record of his election as Podesta, so it would seem that he made but few changes in the code, though probably the division into four books is to be attributed to him.

The first book treats of the officials, beginning naturally with the Podesta. By Cangrande's time he had become an absolute autocrat, though a few traces of his former subordination to the Council still remain, *e.g.*, his oath to obey the Council's decree, which, of course, must have been a dead letter in 1319. The Podesta was head of the Tribunal of the Merchants, whose field of jurisdiction was very wide, including all cases connected in any way with trade, contract, debt and pledges, whatever the status of the parties, whether nobles or commoners, laymen or ecclesiastics, natives or strangers. This tribunal was a Court of Record, for no appeal lay from the sentence of the Podesta or Consuls to any judge or official of the Commune. But the power of the Podesta was much greater than this. He ruled as absolute despot over a kingdom of his own, which included the members of all the Arts and every foreign merchant in Verona. He settled all disputes among his subjects, the penalty in most cases being left to his discretion. He made or repealed statutes on his own responsibility. He could imprison or distrain for debt, remit fines, recall from exile, and appoint councillors and officials at his pleasure, regardless of the statute which forbade any but members of an Art to hold office for the Merchants. The Gastaldi of the other Arts all rendered him an account of their office, and no Art could make statutes for itself without submitting them to his approval. His salary was small, only 100 *lire*, a year, but in compensation he was allowed to appoint a Vicar to perform his duties, and to this Vicar the Scaligeri delegated most of the judicial and administrative work. The most important of the Podesta's duties was to render justice to every one bringing an action in the Court of the Merchants, except gamblers or usurers, who could not sue for recovery of debt. He was also ultimately responsible for keep-

ing the peace among merchants and members of the Arts, and for the safety of the principal roads and waterways throughout the district. For this purpose the Merchants kept a body of horse in their pay, though they were saved the expense of a police-force in the city, by the statute which decreed that the sentences of their Podesta and officials must be enforced by the officials of the Commune. Nevertheless the Podesta had a considerable staff. Beside the Vicar and Consuls there were six notaries, a treasurer, twelve inspectors and as many messengers, and two officials known as the *staerator* and the *bullator marcharum*, all of whom held office for six months, and were elected *per brevia* in the Council. Of the councillors we are told nothing, neither their numbers nor how they were appointed. The Consuls were bound to attend daily six hours in the Palace of the Merchants to administer justice and witness contracts, which were not valid unless made in the presence of at least two of their number. Similarly two had to be present at every fair, whether in the city or district. The *staerator marcharum* and the *bullator* inspected all private weights and measures, the former those for oil, linen, cloth and rope, the latter those for coal, wine, grain, salt, wood, etc. Another set of officials superintended the steelyard of the Art, where all merchandise entering the city was brought to be weighed.

The second book treats of the administration of justice, though somewhat scantily. Most of the ordinances deal with procedure, recovery for debt, or enforcement of contract. The civil and criminal codes are quite fragmentary, the majority of penalties being left to the discretion of the Podesta, who probably was guided in his decisions by custom and the laws of the city. The fourth book is exceedingly short, and nearly all the ordinances are archaic. It is in the twelfth that the Podestas of 1197 and 1233 are mentioned, while those that treat of the alienation of fiefs, much the most numerous, seem to have been copied from the earliest code of the Commune.

The great body of regulations about commerce and industry are to be found in the third book, though a few are included in the first. Those referring to cloth-making and its allied trades are the most numerous, but owing to the highly technical terms many are now quite unintelligible. All looms had to be made after a standard pattern. Foreign cloth might only be imported in bales of a prescribed length, which varied, however, according as the place of origin was Como, Milan, Rouen, Lille, Cambrai, Ypres, or England. The shape, size and price of all earthenware articles was fixed by statute. Every ship and boat was bound to display a line, below which it might not be laden, not, however, for fear that the crew might be drowned, but to prevent the loss of the cargo. In those days merchandise was more precious than men's lives. One statute prohibits the imposition of new tolls on merchants, whether natives or foreigners, for in theory both were taxed alike. In reality foreigners almost always had to pay extra duties. Hence another statute orders a book to be drawn up of the regulations of other cities, with a view to retaliating on those who took toll of the Veronese. Foreign merchants, indeed, are treated in the statutes with a strange mixture of friendliness and hostility. They were not merely invited but almost compelled to come to the city by an ordinance which forbade any one to ferry a foreigner across the Adige, so that as there was no bridge over the river outside Verona except at Legnago, far to the south of the main routes, most of the traffic between Venice and Lombardy and Germany was bound to go through Verona. Special inns were provided for foreigners, each nation having its own, and interpreters were kept there at the expense of the Art of Merchants, four being appointed for the Germans alone. On the other hand, a foreign merchant was not allowed to put up except at the inn reserved for his nationality, he was forbidden to sell goods retail, act as money-changer, enter into partnership with a Veronese, or indeed do anything that could bring him

into competition with the home trade. He was subject to the supervision of the innkeeper, who was responsible to the authorities for his guests' behaviour, and even the genuineness of their wares.

Other regulations showed the pride and interest which the Art took in their new and sumptuous palace, whose foundationstone had been laid by Alberto I shortly before his death. The building was ordered to be cleansed regularly, and it was specially decreed that any one eating fruit there must see to it that the skin and other refuse were not left lying about. No dice-playing, tables or even seats were allowed under the arcades, and the benches outside were to be kept free from *impedimenta*. In addition to the palace, the merchants kept up a hospital for sick members of the Art, but no mention is made of any provision for poverty or old age.

The number of the Veronese Arts was very great, for not only every trade, but apparently every craft, was possessed of some sort of a corporate organisation, though the less numerous ones were probably only formed into the looser unions, known as *Sortes*, *Regulae*, or *Convivia*. The distinguishing mark of an Art was the right to elect a Gastaldo, draw up statutes, and own a banner, under which the members marched in war, or stood ranged on occasions of ceremony. Every body numbering thirty or more elected its Gastaldo from among its own members *per brevia*. The Gastaldo held office for six months, and tried cases between members of his Art up to 40 *lire*. He swore to obey the Podesta of the Merchants, and on resigning rendered an account of his office to him, nor could he levy an impost from the members of the Art without the Podesta's consent. At Verona there was no such sharp division between Major and Minor Arts as there was at Florence, but some enjoyed a certain pre-eminence, notably the innkeepers, carpenters, and those employed in the great woollen trade, the cloth-dressers dyers, and the weavers of the ordinary cloth, which was known as *pecii pignolati*. Many others are mentioned in the statutes, money-changers, brokers (*messati*), notaries, scribes, sailors, potters, tanners, millers, smiths, fullers, spinners, *pezzaroli*, who dealt in cast-off clothes, and *scavazatori* and *garzatori* who were employed in certain processess connected with weaving or dressing cloth. This, however, by no means exhausts the list, for though they are not mentioned, such important trades as the butchers and bakers cannot have remained unorganized. It is interesting to note that the law forbade anything in the nature of a strike, no Art being allowed to stop work as a body for more than three consecutive working days.

From all this it will be seen that Cangrande, or at any rate his Vicar, exercised autocratic power over the great body of the Veronese citizens. But the despotism was a benevolent one. Cangrande's strong hand ensured safety to travellers throughout his dominions, and when he died the merchants far and near bewailed his loss. Sometimes his power made itself felt beyond his own frontiers. In 1317 he made a compact with the Venetians concerning the safety of traffic between Venice and Bergamo. East of Verona the Venetians were responsible, but on the west Cangrande was pledged to protect merchants right across the Brescian district to Palazzolo on the Bergamese boundary. An armed escort started every fortnight from either end of this stage of the road, if enough merchandise had collected, ten loads of French cloth, twenty-five of Italian, or eighty waggons of salt, spice, cheese, wool, etc., being reckoned sufficient. From every waggon Cangrande took toll, four florins from cloth and spice, one and a half from salt, two from all other wares.

The annexation of Padua inaugurated a period of such astoundingly rapid expansion that in eight years the Scaligeri territories were more than doubled. At its greatest their

empire, for it is well worthy of the name, took in half the Eastern Po valley, and in one place stretched across the Apennines, including, besides Verona, seven cities, Vicenza, Padua, Treviso, Feltre, Belluno, Parma and Lucca, all of which had recently been independent states. Both Cangrande and his successor, Mastino II, were suspected of plotting to erect a kingdom, and Mastino, rumour said, kept a shining throne and jewelled diadem ready for his coronation. Indeed, if Mastino and his brother Alberto could have held their vast dominions together, a Scaligeri king might not have been outside the range of practical politics, but as it was, their empire fell to pieces even more rapidly than it had arisen, and Verona failed to become one of the great Italian powers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The methods by which Cangrande, and his nephews after him, administered their territories are an excellent example of the internal machinery of an Italian despotism. To begin with, it must never be forgotten that the sole link between the various members of the state was the purely personal one of the ruler. In a certain sense Verona may be called the mother-city; she formed the original nucleus of the state, her name headed the list of towns which followed the ruler's title in documents, the Scaligeri made her their principal residence, her citizens were often exempted from extraordinary taxation. But she exercised no sort of supremacy over the cities outside her own district, and though she was usually the first to elect the new ruler, he was not legally lord of any other of his chief towns till he had been elected by its council. The Scaligeri empire was in fact a confederacy of equal units, and every member retained its own constitution, its councils and officials, its statutes and customs, as far as was compatible with the change from republic to autocracy, or from one dynasty to another, as the case might be. Every city that had formerly been a separate state continued to exercise jurisdiction over its own district and the towns therein, though the policy of Mastino II was, when possible, to break up the larger units, and hence Conegliano and Ceneda were removed from the jurisdiction of Treviso, and placed in direct dependence on the central government. These "immediate" cities, as they may be called, kept paid representatives at court in peace, or at the head-quarters of the army in war, to look after their interests. Twice it even seemed as though a central council might have been formed of their representatives. In July, 1331, Mastino II. summoned all his chief cities to send envoys to Verona to consult with him as to the welfare of the Communes, and three years later, when the heavy taxation aroused general discontent, he again ordered the cities to elect representatives, who should lay before him their rights and complaints. The functions of these two assemblies were purely advisory, and the results of their consultations are unrecorded, but they are of interest as being almost the only attempt to form a representative council in an Italian despotism in the fourteenth century.

However much autonomy the Scaligeri allowed their subject cities, they always kept firm hold of the reins. This they did by retaining the appointment of the higher officials, both civil and military, in their own hands. The chief civil official was called by various titles; in Vicenza, Treviso, and most cities he was the Podesta, but at Padua and Parma he was called Vicar, at Feltre and Serravalle Captain, and at Conegliano Rector, while in one instance mention is made of the *Vicecomes Circum Breniam*, who apparently held much the same position in a rural district. These governors were almost as powerful as independent princes. They exercised the supreme authority, judicial and executive. Together with the city councils they imposed the local taxes, and arranged the incidence of central taxation. They appointed the governors (usually styled Captains) of the towns in their districts, and formed the only official channel of approach to the Scaligeri. They communicated directly with one another on such subjects as duties on merchandise, tolls on passengers, the delimitations of boundaries

and the arrest of criminals, and not merely with one another, but with cities and states outside the Scaligeri domain, and sometimes even on questions of war or peace; so, when the Countess of Gorz and the Patriarch of Aquileia were collecting troops in July, 1334, they wrote direct to the Trevisan authorities to explain that it was for purposes of self-defence and not of aggression. These governors must have often needed much diplomacy and tact owing to the prevailing uncertainty as to whether annexation annulled former treaties. On the whole the consensus of opinion was that it did not, so that every extension of territory made it necessary to readjust relations between the Scaligeri domain and other states. It was, indeed, the constant friction with Venice after the absorption by Verona of the buffer-states of Padua and Treviso that finally led to the break-up of the Scaligeri empire.

Local taxation, as already stated, was in the hands of the governors of the cities and their councils. Every town had to pay the expenses of its government, and for this purpose could impose export and import duties, tolls on passengers, a tax on salt, and another on property, known as a *dazio*, and usually reserved for some special occasion. These taxes were collected every month, but even when supplemented by other sources of revenue, such as fines from jurisdiction, rent for the communal lands, etc., by no means always sufficed for the ordinary expenditure. In 1334, for instance, we find the Trevisans complaining that while their outgoings were 18,000 *lire* a month they were only able to collect 13,000 *lire*, because so much of the district had been removed from their jurisdiction. Another local impost was the repair of castles and fortifications. This was parcelled out by rods among the various classes of taxpayers, nobles, citizens, and rustics, and was so unpopular that the local councils had constantly to pass decrees ordering those responsible, especially the nobles, to perform their share. The Scaligeri hardly ever intervened in local taxation, and then only to prevent one town injuring the trade of another by excessive duties. Often the mere threat to appeal to them was enough, as when in 1330, Pietro dal Verme, then Podesta of Treviso, wrote to the authorities at Serravalle to complain of the monstrous toll of twelvecence on each waggon, sixpence on each horseman and fourpence on each foot-passenger, which had suddenly been imposed on travellers from Ceneda.

Central taxation was, of course, imposed by the Scaligeri. They possessed a constant revenue from other sources, rent from their private estates, the products of mines, fees from the higher jurisdiction, large sums from the sale of salt, which they always retained in their own hands, but these barely provided for the outgoings in time of peace, the salaries of the officials, the wages of the mercenaries, the upkeep of the Court, and the pensions to exiles, artists, poets, astrologers, which formed no inconsiderable part of the budget of an Italian mediaeval despot. In war-time, or when the Emperor demanded a contribution, or some other state an indemnity for damages to its subjects, if the ruler wished to build himself a palace, fortify a town, or hold a great Curia, the money could only be raised by extra imposts on the cities. Hence central taxation was irregular both as to amount and time of collection, and so was always felt as a heavy burden and sometimes keenly resented. The method of its collection was as follows. The ruler would demand a certain proportion of the sum total from the governor of each of his cities, and the governor, aided by the council, would then apportion the incidence among the three classes of tax-payers, the nobles, the citizens, and the rustics, the last-named having usually to pay more *per capita*. As a rule, the whole sum was raised at once by loan from the richer citizens, or professional money-lenders, and either paid off as the ordinary taxes came in, or when, as was generally the case, these did not suffice, by an extraordinary impost, which might take the form of a tax on property, an import duty, as those of 1323, and 1330 on salt, salted meat and cheese, a hearth-tax, which in December,

1331, rose to four *lire* or even a poll-tax on foreigners.

In a similar way the cities had both to provide a local militia for their own defence, and contribute in war-time to the central army. The Scaligeri would demand from the governor a contingent of troops, whose numbers varied in accordance with the size of the town, leaving it to the citizens to arrange for their pay, outfit and food. The troops most frequently in demand were footmen, crossbowmen and sappers; cavalry were summoned more rarely, and then were often employed only for garrison duty, and sent home before the other levies. Besides the fighting-men, however, all sorts of subsidiaries had to be provided, masons and carpenters, saddlers, butchers, bakers and grooms, and each town was expected to send a surgeon with its contingent. Corn, wine, salt, and oats for the horses were invariably supplied, but many other things were often demanded. In May, 1334, the Trevisans were ordered to despatch to the head-quarters of the army 100 waggons of corn and as many of wine, 5,000 arrows, 1,000 bolts, fifteen mattocks, fifteen picks, ten axes, 150 yards of rope in three thicknesses, twelve pounds of cord for cross-bows, 4,000 nails of various kinds and prices, thirty lanterns, ten hooks, four *palfferri* (instruments for breaking down walls), two pounds of wax, and two of glue.

As the despotisms developed, and war was carried on for longer periods than it had been under the republics, the old arrangement by which the cities supplied their quota of troops from their own inhabitants became more and more burdensome. It had long been the custom for the Scaligeri to hire mercenaries, chiefly Germans, to form a permanent nucleus for the less disciplined Veronese levies, or to act as garrisons in towns whose loyalty was not above suspicion, and now the cities began to adopt the practice, sending hired soldiers instead of citizens to the main army, for instance in April, 1334, Ottaviano da Asolo, the Trevisan representative at Mastino's camp, is to be found hiring archers and infantry elsewhere, to act as the Trevisan contingent. On other occasions the cities would send money instead of men. This arrangement was advantageous for every one. It saved the citizens from constant interruptions in their business, and provided the rulers with a trained mobile force, which could be kept in the field as long as was necessary. The wages of the ordinary foot-soldiers, though varying, of course, from time to time and place to place, were approximately six *lire* a month. Engineers, miners and carpenters received ten *lire*, crossbowmen double that amount if they were horsemen, only three florins if they were foot. The cavalry were paid eight *soldi* a day, and received as well eight *soldi* for every horse they kept, the number varying from two to four.

By the middle of the fourteenth century, then, the Veronese military system had thrown off the last traces of feudalism. The same process was going on in land-tenure, and agriculture, though more slowly. Serfdom had completely disappeared, but, while the payment of rent was becoming almost universal, the cultivators of the soil were still often bound to take up arms in defence of their lord. A document of 1333 about the settlement of land belonging to the monastery of SS. Pietro e Vito at Badia Calavena gives an excellent illustration of the transitional condition of the peasant at this time. The settlers are styled *liberi homines* they were not required to work on the lord's demesne, and they paid a money rent, three or four *lire* a year for each *manso*, and a tithe of their flocks and crops, even on land not belonging to the monastery. But they took the oath of fealty to the Abbot, were bound to appear under arms at his summons and were supervised by a steward (*villicus gastaldus* or *rector*) appointed by him. They could seek justice nowhere but in the Court of the Abbot, and, short of death, he could inflict any penalty, fines, imprisonment, corporal punishment, and even apparently exile. In return he was bound to maintain the settlers in their

land against every one else. Indeed a species of tenant-right seems to have been developed, for subject to the Abbot's consent the peasants were able to sell, or otherwise alienate their possessions (*jus*).

The monasteries were among the largest landholders everywhere in Italy, but with the growth of the dynasty the Scaligeri got more and more of the soil into their own hands. A list of 1355 gives the names of sixty-six towns, villages and hamlets as belonging to them in the Veronese district alone. The peasants on their estates occupied much the same privileged position as the tenants of Ancient Domesne in England. In 1343 and 1349 Alberto and Mastino exempted their tenants in the Lessine Alps from all services and money payments to the Commune of Verona, except those of buying a fixed amount of salt in the year, and attending the general muster. The burdensome duties of providing carts and labour, keeping up the Campo Marzo, and repairing the moats at Villafranca were expressly abolished, but in return the rustics were expected to furnish the Scaligeri shepherds with crooks and other implements, and to supply the court at Verona with ice in summer. The Scaligeri would sometimes grant similar privileges to peasants outside their own estates, *e.g.*, in 1339 the inhabitants of the Seven Communes (villages in the high table-land north of Vicenza) were freed for ever from all dues claimed by the Commune of Vicenza, as a reward for the active assistance they had given to the Veronese troops in the recent war. So much had the conditions of tenancy improved by the middle of the fourteenth century that nobles and even the Scaligeri are to be found in the position of tenants. Thus in 1343 Spineta Malaspina made an agreement to hold lands from the Commune of Verona for twenty years at an annual rent of 113 *lire*. Alberto and Mastino rented large estates from the Abbey of S. Zeno, certain fields paying in money, others in pepper, others in the best Lessine cheese. These and similar arrangements mark the final stage in the emancipation of the soil from feudalism. The *signore* would not submit to owe suit in another man's court, and henceforth the right to demand rent replaces the exercise of jurisdiction and the exaction of homage, as the distinguishing mark of ownership of land.

CHAPTER XI

THE CULMINATING POINT OF THE SCALIGERI

CANGRANDE I, had no legal right to dispose of the succession, as the *Resa di Treviso* pictures his doing on his death-bed, but it was well known that, as he had no legitimate sons, he had intended to raise his nephews Alberto and Mastino to the Captainate, so on 23rd July, 1329, all the Councils of the city, from the Anziani to the Concio, elected them Captains, Rectors, and Lords of Verona, and on the 27th they were both chosen to be Podesta of the Merchants. This election was purely formal, but there was some anxiety as to what other cities might do, especially Treviso, only just won, and Padua, where no mention had been made in the settlement of any successors to Cangrande. Everything, however, passed off smoothly. At Padua, Marsilio da Carrara, without a word as to any possible claim of his own, summoned the Greater Council, and Alberto and Mastino were unanimously elected lords of the city, whereupon every one, nobles, commoners and even foreigners, took the oath of fidelity to Marsilio as representative of the Scaligeri. The Trevisans can hardly be said to have exercised a free choice, for the victorious Veronese army was still immediately outside the walls, nor were all the usual formalities observed, but Pietro dal Verme read an account of the election at Verona to the Anziani, who declared Alberto and Mastino lords of Treviso. The other Councils were not consulted, but could have had no alternative but to acquiesce, and in a few days Feltre, Belluno, Conegliano and Bassano followed the example of the larger cities. Later in the year two plots were formed against Alberto and Mastino, but both were easily suppressed. One took place in Verona, and was led by two natural sons of Cangrande, Ziliberto, and Bartolomeo; the other was an attempt by the Trevisans to drive the Veronese out; so, though they occurred almost simultaneously, it is very improbable that they were connected.

At the time of their election Alberto was twenty-three and Mastino twenty-one. Alberto was the more popular, being genial, easy-going, and lavish with his money, but he was indolent, self-indulgent and weak, so that the control of affairs very soon passed into the hands of the resolute and ambitious Mastino. For instance, soon after the election Alberto made a tour of the principal cities. He was received everywhere, especially in Treviso, with the greatest enthusiasm, but he seems to have transacted no business of any importance, apart from the appointment of Pietro dal Verme to be Podesta of Treviso. In September Mastino, in his turn, made a very similar tour, but with very different results. He inspected the administrative machinery with the utmost thoroughness, received petitions and complaints, arranged for the return of the Trevisan exiles, and revised the lists of officials, confirming or changing them as he thought fit. Marsilio da Carrara was now rewarded for his loyalty with the Podestaship of Vicenza, and speedily grew so powerful that he became known as the third ruler of the Mark (*Alter Dominus Marchiae*).

The new lords of Verona found themselves on excellent terms with most of their neighbours. The Visconti at Milan, the Estensi at Ferrara, were both friendly. The Gonzaghi could not afford to quarrel with the successors of the great dynast who only a year before had installed them as rulers of Mantua. At Parma the dominant nobles were Azzo and Guido da Correggio, brothers of Alberto's and Mastino's mother, and though they were driven out in

December by their rivals, the Rossi, the good relations between Parma and Verona continued, and in 1331 the da Correggio were re-admitted into the city. Even the coolness with Henry of Carinthia caused by the conquest of Treviso was only temporary, for Henry had found the city more burden than profit, and in 1330 he consented to ally himself with Alberto and Mastino, while the departure of Louis the Bavarian from Italy in December, 1329, had removed another possible source of discord. There was, however, one danger-point. Every extension of the Scaligeri dominions to the eastward had roused the jealousy of the Venetians; even before the annexation of Padua and Treviso there was constant friction between the two States, and now that the Venetians were hemmed in by Veronese territory from the Alps to the lagoons it increased tenfold. One dispute was inherited by the Scaligeri with their conquest of Treviso. Both Treviso and Venice claimed jurisdiction over the lands of the da Camino, and soon after Cangrande's death the Venetians incited Gerardo da Camino to rebel against Alberto and Mastino. Marsilio da Carrara, however, persuaded Gerardo to surrender in April, 1330, the Venetians agreed to submit the question of jurisdiction to arbitration, and so for a while a breach was averted. Difficulties, however, were continually arising about commercial matters. Hardly had Alberto and Mastino been elected when the Venetians sent to complain that the Paduan officials were exacting dues on merchandise, in contravention of the treaties between Padua and Venice. The young rulers seem to have been overawed. Not merely did they own that their officials were in the wrong, but on the 14th October, 1329, they ordered the immediate restitution of all money exacted illegally. But the Venetians were not yet satisfied. They next demanded that their former treaties with Padua and Treviso should be ratified just as they stood, and that, in addition, the Scaligeri should pay large sums for damage done to the property of Venetians during the last Trevisan war. If, however, the Venetians were anxious to pick a quarrel they were disappointed. Alberto and Mastino again gave way. In September, 1330, they signed a treaty in which they swore to remove all illegal tolls, to keep the treaties between Padua, Treviso and Venice, and to pay 30,000 for damages, which was collected by the Venetians by means of a duty on merchandise going to Verona, Venetian salt paying thirty *soldi* the bushel, the finer salt from Chioggia four *lire* the hundredweight, cheese and salted meat ten *soldi*. For the time Venetian jealousy seemed to be appeased.

If Alberto had been sole ruler it is probable that he would never have added an inch to his territories, but Mastino soon showed that he was every whit as ambitious as Cangrande had been. In the summer of 1330 he was given a pretext for attacking Brescia, by an appeal for help from the Ghibellines of that city, who had recently been driven out. On the plea of restoring the exiles he seized several Brescian castles on the south-west shore of Lake Garda. In September he returned with a larger force, and detaching Marsilio da Carrara to attack Brescia itself, occupied the whole Vai di Sabbia. Marsilio failed, but Mastino claimed that the expedition was a great victory. His success, however, was fleeting. In November, the Brescians, finding that their nominal protector, Robert of Naples, could send no help, offered themselves to John of Bohemia (son of the Emperor Henry VII.) who had recently come to Tirol, in connexion with the marriage of his son, John Henry, to Margaret Maultasch, Henry of Carinthia's daughter. Brescia was given to John for his life, but it was specially stipulated that the city was not to go to his heirs, nor the Ghibellines be re-admitted without the consent of the Greater Council. John "povero di moneta e cupido di signoria", as Villani describes him, was delighted at the prospect of getting a foothold in Italy, despatched two hundred horse at once to Brescia, and warned Mastino not to attack the city, as it was now his. Hereupon Mastino, who did not wish to fight John, and possibly Henry of Carinthia as well, withdrew his troops. On the last day of 1330 John entered his new possession, and received an enthusiastic welcome. He called upon Mastino to surrender the castles and the Vai di Sabbia,

and here again Mastino had to yield, though he induced John to restore the exiles.

The occupation of Brescia was the first step in that extraordinary phenomenon, the erection of a kingdom in Italy by a foreigner, who had no legal claim to the allegiance of a single Italian, and whose army would have been ludicrously inadequate had he attempted to support his pretensions by force. Yet city after city sent in its submission to John, some of the most powerful despots humbly acknowledged his supremacy, and in the beginning he encountered no active opposition anywhere; it was as though the whole country had been hypnotized.

The truth was that John had arrived at the psychological moment. An extraordinary lull had set in in the constant party warfare, every one was weary of strife, there was no great leader on either side, the official head of the Guelphs, Robert of Naples, was practically powerless, no one had yet succeeded Cangrande as head of the Ghibellines, and with the departure of Louis the Imperial claims had fallen into abeyance. At this juncture John appeared in Italy, like his father before him, as the universal peacemaker, the one man who stood above party. Less than a fortnight after he entered Brescia, the Colleoni placed Bergamo under his protection, before January was out Crema sent to offer her allegiance. In February, Como and Lucca submitted, and early in March the Parmesan Council of Four Thousand elected him lord of the city without one dissentient voice. One after another Reggio, Modena, Cremona, Piacenza, Pavia, Vercelli, and Novara followed suit, and even the great Visconti acknowledged John's supremacy. North of the Apennines only Venice, Verona, Mantua, and Ferrara held aloof, and they did not venture to offer active opposition. John might well feel that his empire was firmly established.

But in June, 1331, he was called back across the Alps to suppress a rebellion in Bohemia, and though he left his eldest son, Charles, behind in Parma to act as his Vicar, directly the spell of his personal magnetism was removed his enemies began to stir. The instigator and leader of the whole movement was Mastino. Already he had found an ally in Pagano della Torre, the valiant prelate who, as bishop of Padua, had more than once guarded the city against Cangrande, and was now Patriarch of Aquileia. On 8th August, 1331, Mastino, the Estensi, and the Gonzaghi swore to help each other defend their territories from the attacks of certain enemies, whose names are not mentioned, but who, there can be little doubt, were John and Charles. Mere self-defence, however, did not content Mastino. He was determined to get hold of Brescia, and as he was not strong enough to attack John alone he continued his intrigues with other States. In the summer of 1332 his opportunity came, and from a somewhat unexpected quarter. The Guelphs of Brescia were discontented with John's rule; they had never forgiven him for restoring the Ghibellines, and they were further irritated because he had removed a great part of the district from the jurisdiction of the city, and was building a castle with the avowed object of keeping the citizens in subjection. Knowing Mastino's hatred for John, they sent to offer the former the dominion of Brescia, if he would help them to get rid of the foreign tyrants. An alliance with Guelphs was contrary to all Veronese traditions, but Mastino was careless of this if he could gain his ends no other way, and so he despatched an army under Alberto and Marsilio da Carrara to help his erstwhile enemies. The Veronese were admitted into the city on 15th June, and amidst the incongruous cries of "Scala, Scala", and "down with the Ghibellines and King John", attacked and defeated the Ghibellines. The foreign troops escaped by fleeing to the castle, but the Ghibellines, as a party, were extirpated. For three days on end the Guelphs slew and robbed unchecked. Afterwards it was said that it was one condition of the compact with Mastino, that the Guelphs might do what they would with their foes for three days. On the 19th, the arrival

of Mastino restored order. Mastino at once laid siege to the castle, and took it in mid-July. The Podestaship of Brescia, now the highest post in the Scaligeri service, was given to Marsilio da Carrara, who razed the obnoxious castle to the ground, but divided the upper from the lower part of the city by a strong wall, to prevent rebellion in the future.

Mastino's general unpopularity dates from the annexation of Brescia. His subjects suffered from the heavy taxation which it involved. His neighbours felt the size of his domains a serious menace. The Ghibellines throughout Italy never forgot the three days' slaughter, which, rightly or wrongly, they laid to his charge. But, at the time, the greater danger still appeared to come from John, and the immediate result of Mastino's success was a league of most of the Italian powers, Guelph and Ghibelline alike, against the intruder. On 23rd September, 1332, Robert of Naples, the Estensi, Gonzaghi, Scaligeri, Visconti and Florentines bound themselves never to rest till John should be driven out of Italy, and to divide his territory as follows: Parma was to go to the Scaligeri, Bergamo and Crema to Azzo Visconti, Modena to the Estensi, Reggio to the Gonzaghi, Lucca to Florence. A force of three thousand cavalry was to be kept up by the allies, the Veronese contributing the largest contingent, eight hundred. This league of Guelphs and Ghibellines is one of the strangest occurrences in Italian history, and shows strikingly how widespread and how intense was the fear John inspired. Before the documents were actually signed Azzo Visconti and Mastino were in the field, pressing Bergamo hard, and four days afterwards the city fell. The whole of the allies then laid siege to Modena, but met with such determined resistance that at the end of October they withdrew. They next attacked S. Felice, but here dissensions broke out, and at a critical moment Alberto della Scala led off all the Veronese troops, and so prevented the capture of the castle. Soon afterwards Charles of Bohemia issued forth from Parma, inflicted a crushing defeat on the allies on 25th November, and raised the siege of S. Felice. For a time everything went against the league. In January, 1334, the Legate, Bertrand de Poyet, began to bestir himself in favour of John, and sent an army on to Ferrarese territory. Early in February his troops won a victory at Conselve, and when John returned to Italy in the same month with two thousand men, and much money borrowed from the Pope and the French king, it seemed as though he must triumph everywhere. But then the tide turned. The allies, calculating that once John had exhausted his present supplies he would be unable to collect more, played a waiting game, and refused to meet him in a pitched battle. John, in fact, could effect nothing. He failed to relieve the Castle of Pavia, which Azzo Visconti was besieging, and spent his time in aimless ravagings in the Milanese district. Meanwhile elsewhere the allies were winning victory after victory. On 14th April, the Visconti, Estensi, and Mastino caught the Legate's forces in a network of waterways near Ferrara, and practically annihilated them, every man being either taken or slain. When the indefatigable Cardinal at once scraped another army together, that was defeated too. In June the castle of Pavia fell to the Veronese and Milanese arms. Still, however, the allies refused to be drawn into battle with John, who having come to an end of his resources, was driven to support himself by plunder, thus alienating the majority of his Italian adherents. At last in July he owned himself beaten, and sent envoys to meet Mastino and representatives from the Estensi and Visconti. Both sides were anxious to have a rest, and on 23rd July agreed to a truce, that was to last till nth November. Now that he had to fight for it, John wearied of his Italian Empire. While still remaining the nominal head he sold what was left of his territories to his supporters, Modena to Manfredo de' Pii, Reggio to the da Fogliano, Cremona to Ponzino de' Ponzoni, Parma and Lucca to Rolando and Marsilio Rossi. Then, appointing Pietro Rossi to the command of his troops, John started home early in October. His way lay up the Brenner Pass, and he made a stay of two nights at Verona, where he was entertained with ostentatious hospitality by

Mastino.

The truce had been prolonged till 1st January, 1334. As soon as it was over the allies held a meeting. The majority were in favour of peace, but Mastino had set his heart on Parma, and the Florentines were equally determined to have Lucca, and between them they overruled the rest. So the league was renewed, and several other towns, Ravenna, Forlì, Rimini, and even Arezzo, admitted to it. For the present no common army was formed, but attacks were made on several points at once by the various members of the league, Azzo Visconti laid siege to Piacenza, the Estensi to Argenta, where the Legate still held out, the Florentines attacked Lucca, and the Veronese and Mantuans Parma.

In March the Pope endeavoured to make peace, but while negotiations were still going on Argenta fell to the Ferrarese, and the Bolognese turned against the Legate, and though they did not join the league, their defection weakened the other side and emboldened Mastino to go on with the war. In the spring Mastino took over the command of his troops in person. He did not, however, effect much. He helped Azzo Visconti to take Cremona, but a combined attack on Reggio failed, and early in June, the discovery of a plot to slay Mastino and other of the leaders led to the break-up of the army.

It was high time for Mastino to return to Verona. Quite recently a fire had broken out on the island (now joined to the eastern bank of the Adige by the filling in of one branch of the river) and had raged for two days, destroying all the buildings on the island, and the Ponte Nuovo, the bridge connecting it with the mainland. It was suspected that this fire was due to treachery. Indeed discontent was rife everywhere. Taxation had been going up by leaps and bounds. The subject cities were loud in their complaints, and not without cause. The Trevisans, for instance, in addition to supplying men, weapons, and provisions for the army, were expected to pay 19,000 *lire* a month to the Scaligeri treasury, though the ordinary income of the Commune was only two-thirds of that sum. In September Mastino was driven into holding an inquiry into recent taxation and promising to redress any cases of real injustice. To recoup himself for possible losses under this head he made his principal officials give an account of their office, especially the factors, one of whom looked after the Scaligeri interests in every important city. The proceedings were very summary. The officials were examined under torture in Mastino's presence and any found guilty of peculation were forced to restore what they had taken, and thrown into prison. Some died of the treatment they received, amongst them an old man who for forty years had been a judge of Criminal Law at Verona.

In August Mastino recommenced hostilities. His objective was Parma. On 25 th October he took the district castle of Colorno, which was generally regarded as the key of the city, and during the following winter and spring he continued to harass Parma itself in every possible way short of a regular siege. The position of the Rossi grew daily more hopeless. It was in vain that Marsilio went in person to implore John of Bohemia and the new Pope, Benedict XII, for help. John told him curtly that he was too busy to do anything for his Italian kingdom. At Avignon Marsilio found that the Scaligeri envoys had been before him, and had won Benedict over to Mastino's side, by urging that the Rossi had always been the enemies of Holy Church. Meanwhile the allies ravaged the country round Parma till supplies ran so short that the citizens could barely make a living, and great numbers fled. In despair the Rossi offered Parma and Lucca to Azzo Visconti, feeling that any ruler was better than the hated Scaligeri, and hoping, perhaps, to sow dissension among the allies. Azzo, however, refused the offer, partly from a genuine desire not to violate the terms of the league, partly through

pressure put upon him by the Florentines, who did not want the powerful Visconti for neighbours, and still believed that if Mastino got Lucca he would keep his promise and hand it over to them. So at last the Rossi, “finding faith neither in friend nor foe”, decided to yield, and early in June, 1335, Marsilio went to Verona to arrange the surrender. He obtained very favourable conditions for himself and his family. In return for handing over Parma and Lucca (Pietro Rossi still held Lucca for John, but his brothers pledged their word that he should give it up) the Rossi were to be allowed to keep Pontremoli and their private estates, receive a pension of 50,000 florins a year, and have a guiding voice in the affairs of Parma. The citizens were to retain their own laws and customs, but the Scaligeri were to appoint the higher officials. On these conditions the city was handed over on 21 st June to Alberto, Mastino being too ill to be present.

Alberto received an enthusiastic welcome at first, but ere long the Parmesans began to suspect that they had been sold like sheep. The Rossi’s enemy, Guido da Correggio, was appointed Vicar. The fortifications of the district castles were pulled down. The statutes were sent to Verona to be revised. The city itself was treated like a conquered town, and guarded day and night by the Scaligeri troops. No stranger was admitted without a written permit from the authorities. At night the big bell of the Commune was tolled thrice, and after that no one might leave or enter the city till sunrise. The Anziani and notaries were driven from the Palace of the Commune to make room for the Captain and his followers, and could obtain no redress though they appealed to Mastino. Small wonder that later the Scaligeri met with nothing but disloyalty at Parma.

After a few days’ stay at Parma, Alberto went on to attack Reggio. Here he encountered little resistance; no sooner had a couple of district castles fallen than the Reggians offered to submit, and on 29th June, Giberto da Fogliano, who with his brother Guido ruled the city, went to Verona to see if he could get as favourable terms as the Rossi. It was quickly settled that in return for surrendering Reggio the da Fogliano should receive 400 florins a month for life and retain five of the district castles. This arrangement, in truth, brought but little gain to the Scaligeri, for they had to pay the pension, and Reggio by the terms of the league was to go to the Gonzaghi. “Dove, Mastino afferra, tardi lascia,” said the Florentine, Fazio degli Uberti; but even Mastino did not dare to violate a pledge which he had solemnly renewed only two months before, and in less than a week he handed Reggio over to the lords of Mantua. But Mastino made one fatal mistake. He insisted that the Gonzaghi should hold Reggio from him, doing homage for it, and presenting him every year with a peregrine falcon. The whole arrangement was purely formal, and Mastino did not attempt to exercise any control over either the Reggians or the Gonzaghi; but the latter felt it a bitter humiliation, and so, when the day of reckoning came for the Scaligeri, the Gonzaghi were to be found fighting amongst their foes.

In October, Mastino paid a visit of ten days to Parma. He entered the city in great state, a baldaquin of rich silk being borne above his head as though he were a king or emperor. His object in coming to Parma was twofold, to see that his rule there was firmly established, and to be near Lucca, which Pietro Rossi, in spite of his brothers’ promises, had not yet handed over to the Scaligeri. Pietro, who is one of the most chivalrous and heroic figures of the time, was determined to hold this last remnant of John of Bohemia’s possessions for his master as long as it was humanly possible. But circumstances were too much for him. John was indifferent to all this devotion, and would not stir a finger to save Lucca, the Pope would send no help, and there was no hope of any support in Italy itself. Lucca could not attempt single-handed to fight the Scaligeri backed up by the forces of the league. So on 1st November, 1335,

Pietro reluctantly yielded to the entreaties of his brothers and gave the city up.

Mastino was now at the very zenith of his power, and if he had only known it, at the most critical moment of his life. Everything depended on his action with regard to Lucca, on whether he handed it over to the Florentines, or kept it for himself. Honour and prudence both urged the former course, ambition the latter, for with Lucca as a foothold the Scaligeri rule might be extended first over Pisa, then over Arezzo, and finally perhaps over Florence herself. The prospect was too alluring, and after several months of hesitation, Mastino eventually succumbed. Meanwhile, a few days after the surrender of Lucca, it seemed as though a lucky stroke of fortune might place Pisa in Mastino's hands without a siege. A party, headed by the Gualandi and Lanfranchi, was plotting to overthrow the government, and offered the dominion of the city to Mastino in return for his help against their rivals. But on 11th November the rising broke out prematurely, before the Scaligeri troops had come up from Lucca, and the rebels were defeated. For the time, therefore, Mastino gave up his designs on Pisa itself; but early in December, some Veronese horse under Spineta Malaspina, surprised Sarzana, a castle commanding the southern end of the road from Pisa to Parma.

When the Florentines learnt of these events their consternation was great. They had already begun to doubt Mastino's good faith, because he would give no answer to the envoys sent to demand the cession of Lucca. They now appointed a new embassy of six, all men of standing, and empowered them to offer a large sum for the city, though by right they should have received it free. The new envoys reached Verona on 11th December, and the negotiations dragged on for a couple of months, when they were broken off without anything being settled. Mastino changed his mind every few days. At one time he was on the point of accepting the Florentines' offer, and then was over-persuaded by Spineta Malaspina, who represented that Lucca was an excellent *point d'appui* for attacking not only Tuscany, but Bologna. This introduced a new element into Mastino's calculations, and a little later he made a counter-proposal to the Florentines. He declared that nothing should induce him to barter Lucca for gold, but that he would give the city to them if they would help him to take Bologna, or at any rate engage not to oppose him. The Florentines, however, rather than see Bologna in the hands of the Scaligeri, would have given up all claim to Lucca. So, considering that Mastino was proposing impossible terms in order to throw the blame of the breach on them, they recalled their envoys on 12th February, 1336.

Mastino now finally decided to keep Lucca. He salved his conscience by two subterfuges, one that the town had not been taken by force, and so did not come under the article of the league arranging for the divisions of John's empire, since that referred only to conquests made in war, the other that Pietro Rossi had given him the city as a pledge, and therefore he was bound eventually to restore it to him, and meanwhile to give it to no one else. These two excuses can have deceived no one, least of all Mastino himself. But his recent successes, coupled with his surrender of Reggio to the Gonzaghi, had whetted his land-hunger almost to the point of frenzy. Quite apart from the question of honour, it would have been better policy to have yielded Lucca up. Its retention stretched the Veronese lines of communications almost to breaking-point, for the nearest Scaligeri city was Parma (itself separated from Verona by Reggio and Mantua), and the road between lay through a long and dangerous pass across the Apennines, the southern half of which, with the exception of Sarzana, was in the hands of other states. If the Scaligeri could not endure to give up both Reggio and Lucca, it would have been infinitely wiser to retain the former. This would have compacted their dominions, and alienated no one but the Gonzaghi, whereas by keeping Lucca they roused the jealousy of all Tuscany, and, indeed, of the greater part of Italy.

Already there were many reasons why they should walk warily. The friction with Venice had increased immensely of late years. The homage exacted for Reggio rankled more and more with the Gonzaghi. The three days' massacre at Brescia was not yet forgotten. The Rossi found that they were being ousted at Parma by the da Correggio. Not a state but felt itself menaced by the expansion of Verona. There seemed to be no limits to the Scaligeri ambitions, and no rumour was too wild to find credence. The tale of the jewelled crown was revived. It was said that Mastino had boasted that by May he would be at the gates of Florence with four thousand horse to crush her pride. Florence taken, the turn of Venice would come next, and then, with Tuscany and the greater part of Lombardy at his feet, Mastino would not fear to cross swords with Robert of Naples and try and wrest the kingdom of Apulia from him.

As it was, Mastino and Alberto were the wealthiest and most powerful dynasts that there had been in Italy for a century. They ruled at least thirteen "immediate" cities. Their empire stretched from the Friuli and the lagoons on the east to the Oglio and the Taro on the west; the Alps formed its northern frontier, and on the south it extended across the Apennines into Tuscany. They held the Italian end of the Alpine passes from the Vai Camonica by Brescia, to the Vai di Piave. Nearly the whole of Lake Garda lay in their territory. They commanded the greater part of the Piave, Brenta, Bacchiglione and Adige, and the upper waters of the Mincio, Chiese and Oglio. The Po bounded the district of Parma on the north, and lower down touched that of Verona at Ostiglia and Gaiba. The Paduan district was bordered on the east by lagoons where salt could be made. The only thing lacking was a seaport, and that was a want which Alberto and Mastino did not feel, for they took no interest in general European politics, and had no ambition for an over-sea trade. Their yearly income was, Villani says, 700,000 florins, which was more than that of any sovereign except the French King. They had amassed a vast treasure of gold and jewels. They kept 5,000 horse permanently in their pay. Their Court was full of celebrities from all parts of Italy, but rather of soldiers and men of action than artists and scholars. The Paduan historian, Cortusius, who was sent to Verona in February, 1336, to lay his countrymen's grievances before the Scaligeri, has left a list of the distinguished men he saw there. Many had formerly been independent rulers themselves, as Marsilio and Ubertino da Carrara, the three Rossi, Guido and Azzo da Correggio, Guecello Tempesta of Treviso, Giberto and Guido da Fogliano. Others, like Spineta Malaspina, whose family estates lay in the Lunigiana, had left their own country to enter the Scaligeri service. Others, such as Guglielmo da Castelbarco and Vivario da Vivario, were powerful nobles from the remoter parts of the Scaligeri domains. Others again, like the three sons of Castruccio Castracane, were exiles who found Verona a pleasant refuge. Then there were envoys from other states who had come on business, from Louis the Bavarian, from Arezzo, from Florence. Small wonder that to the Paduan it seemed as though the power of the Scaligeri reached to heaven itself.

And during the next few months their power was still to increase. A quarrel between the two branches of the da Castelbarco gave Alberto and Mastino an opportunity of pushing their frontier still higher up the Brenner Pass. In April they bought Pietrasanta, and in May Massa di Carrara, and so got control of another stage of the road from Parma to Lucca. But already there were ominous signs. In April the Rossi, no longer able to endure their subordinate position, and accused, it was said, by the da Correggio of plotting to slay Mastino, fled secretly from Verona, Pietro to Pontremoli, Marsilio and Rolando to Venice. Here the Rossi found a ready hearing. The Venetians had been nursing their resentment against the Scaligeri for many years. Their complaints were numerous, and only too well founded. Venetian proprietors in the Paduan and Trevisan districts were not allowed to take their

produce to Venice. The lands of the monasteries were taxed in contravention of all their privileges. Mastino had thrown a chain across the Po at Ostiglia and demanded illegal toll from merchandise travelling by water. The old dispute about the da Camino lands had broken out again. Worse still, the Scaligeri had violated all the compacts about salt. Alleging that the Venetians would not send them enough, they had begun three years previously to import it from Germany and recently had taken to making it themselves in the lagoons near Padua, and this not merely for their own use, but for export to other states. This was indeed the culminating offence, for to touch the monopoly of salt was to wound Venice in her most vital point. Mastino was well aware of this, and was quite prepared for an attempt to stop his salt-making by force. So on 4th May, 1336, he gave orders for the erection of a castle at Pettadibo, a place on the lagoons in the debatable land between Padua and Venice. Long ago there had been a Paduan castle there, but it had been pulled down after a war between the Paduans and Venetians, one of the clauses of the peace being that it must never be rebuilt. Enough was left, however, to form a foundation for the Veronese building. When the Venetians learnt what was going on they at once sent to Verona to protest, and forwarded a copy of the treaty with Padua. But Mastino made answer that he did not hold himself bound by any treaties previous to the annexation of Padua and sent to hasten on the works. A little later he offered to submit the whole question to arbitration, but the Venetians looked upon this as a device to gain time, and replied that they could not consent to arbitration as long as the castle was standing. Then, as building went on faster than ever, they sent an envoy to the place, who claimed it as Venetian territory by the formality of throwing a pebble on to it three times, and on 1st June the Doge solemnly condemned and banned Alberto and Mastino. After this, war was inevitable.

In the course of the month some Florentine envoys arrived most opportunely at Venice, with proposals for a league against the Scaligeri, for the Florentines had at last given up all hope of recovering Lucca by peaceful means. The treaty between the two powers was signed on 22nd June. It was to last till Michaelmas, 1337, and its avowed aim was the overthrow of the Scaligeri. The allies were to share expenses and keep up an army of 3,000 horse and 2,000 foot. Venice was to attack Treviso, and Florence Lucca. The league was kept secret till the allies had completed their preparations, and then announced simultaneously at Florence and Venice on 14th July.

Next day Gerardo da Camino occupied Oderzo, just inside the Trevisan frontier, in the name of Venice. The Scaligeri, however, were not taken unawares. They had already called out their citizen levies, and obtained reinforcements from the Visconti, Estensi and Gonzaghi, all of whom were still professedly their friends and allies. Alberto and Spineta Malaspina led the Veronese and Milanese troops up to Oderzo and on 25th July captured both the castle and Gerardo. The Scaligeri, however, had not yet grasped the situation. They still hoped to avert war, and in August sent Marsilio da Carrara to open negotiations with the Doge. It is on this occasion that the banquet is supposed to have taken place at which, according to tradition, Marsilio and the Doge both stooped at the same moment to pick up a napkin, and in that moment arranged for the betrayal of Padua. The tale, however, is a late fabrication. It first appears, only with a knife instead of a napkin, in the chronicle of a certain Andreas Redusius of Quero, who wrote about 1428, and incorporated the history of Cortusius into his own work without a word of acknowledgment, but with a great number of unreliable additions. The actual facts were very different. There was no question of banquets or other public functions. On entering the city Marsilio was greeted with loud cries of "Death, death", and had to be taken by back ways to the lodging prepared for him. The popular fury was so great that he

could not appear in public at all, and the Doge was only able to visit him once by night. What passed at this interview was never revealed, but it was, of course, out of the question to start negotiations for peace in the inflamed state of public feeling, and Marsilio was thankful to escape from Venice with a whole skin. Whether or no anything was said now as to his changing sides, it was not till many months later that the Scaligeri had any reason to doubt his fidelity.

Alberto and Mastino now continued their preparations for war. The chain of fortresses on the eastern frontier were supplied and strengthened. Pietro dal Verme was sent to hurry on the works at Petta-di-bo as fast as he could, with the few men and scanty materials that were all the authorities would give him. Alberto took command of the main Veronese army (a great mistake, for he was no general), and established his head-quarters at Padua. A detachment was sent to besiege Pietro Rossi in Pontremoli. Pietro, however, succeeded in getting through the enemies' lines, and on 22nd August was made commander of the Florentine forces, which were already pressing Lucca. Meanwhile the Venetians had been slowly collecting a huge army at Motta, in the Friuli, under Marsilio Rossi. Marsilio was prudent and wary, but had little initiative, and as it became evident that nothing would be achieved as long as he was in command, the Venetians resolved to replace him by Pietro. This caused some delay, for the ordinary routes were closed owing to the unsettled state of affairs, and Pietro was obliged to come round by Ravenna, and did not reach Venice till the end of September. The whole city came out to meet him, and escorted him, blushing with pleasure at the unexpected honour, to S. Mark's, where, after spending some time in prayer, he knelt with bared head before the Doge and offered himself, soul and body, to the service of the Venetians and Florentines. On 5th October he went out to the camp at Motta, but it was another fortnight still before he was ready to move. In the interval Alberto entrapped some Venetian troops in Mestre. He had hoped to capture several of the chief Italian leaders, and was intensely disappointed to find that his prisoners were all foreign mercenaries and principally foot.

This was almost the last success gained by the Scaligeri. Henceforward failure dogged their footsteps to the bitter end. Yet to begin with they were superior to their enemies both in men and wealth. Afterwards the positions were reversed, but they owed their final defeat, not so much to the overwhelming number of the foe, as to their own obstinacy and incompetence. They were over-cautious, guarding against imaginary dangers, and frequently delaying action till too late. Unable to grasp the essential facts in a situation, they were liable to lose their heads in an emergency, and cannot always be acquitted of cowardice. Mastino had little military capacity, Alberto none at all. Yet they often led their troops in battle, and Mastino acted as commander-in-chief all through the war, in spite of his constant want of success.

CHAPTER XII

THE DOWNFALL OF ALBERTO II AND MASTINO II

ON 23rd October, 1336, Pietro Rossi led the Venetian army across the Piave, and war began in earnest. The Veronese fell back before the invaders, burning villages and destroying supplies as they went, to prevent the enemy from wintering near Treviso. Pietro, however, did not intend to remain so far north; Padua was his goal. He pushed on at once to the Brenta, where to his surprise he found the fords unguarded. The omission to make a stand at the Brenta was one of the worst blunders made by the Scaligeri during this war. The Brenta was easy to hold, and completely protected Padua from attacks from the north. But should an enemy once get across it, the eastern half of the district, and the city itself lay open to them. The fact was, that after much consideration Alberto and Mastino had decided to adopt a plan of campaign that was absolutely futile under the circumstances, viz., to shut up their army in Padua and the larger fortresses, and abandon the open country to the enemy, in hopes that the cold and lack of supplies would eventually force them to retire. Now this is often the best course when a small force has to repel a larger one, especially if the latter is a long way from its base, but here the positions were reversed. The Scaligeri army was almost double that of the invaders, indeed it was so large that it was difficult to feed it adequately when it was shut up in Padua, while the Venetians, as long as they were in the Paduan district, were able to draw abundance of supplies from Venice, with which they could communicate perfectly easily both by land and water.

Pietro Rossi marched down to Bovolenta, and established a permanent camp there, close to the Canale di Pontelongo, up which boats could come direct from Venice. His first step was to send a detachment down to the salt-works at Petta-di-bo. The castle here was so far completed that the garrison were able to make a stand for a time, but as they were hopelessly outnumbered and the Scaligeri turned a deaf ear to their constant appeals for help, they surrendered on 22nd November. The Venetians at once pulled the castle down, and with the materials erected another near by, in their own territory. Petta-di-bo itself was of no strategic value, but it stood for the most flagrant example of Scaligeri presumption, and the Venetians celebrated its capture with great rejoicings; nor was the moral effect of this first victory destroyed by the news, which arrived a few days later, that Pontremoli, Pietro Rossi's castle in the Lunigiana, had been taken by the Veronese.

The Venetians pressed Padua hard all through the winter of 1336-7. There was no regular blockade, but the country was systematically ravaged, frequent assaults were made on the gates of the city, and more than once Pietro got over the outer circle of walls and burnt the suburbs. He carried on intrigues with the inhabitants, till Mastino became suspicious, and on one pretext and another removed most of the leading citizens from the town, and replaced the Paduan troops by Germans. These Germans, however, were a constant source of trouble. They numbered four thousand, and prolonged inaction had made them impossible to control. They behaved as though they were in a conquered city, robbing, wounding and even slaying the inhabitants with perfect impunity, for their own officers would not, and the civil authorities could not bring the culprits to justice. To relieve the situation Mastino at one time sent fifteen hundred of them down to Este, which the Venetians were then besieging, but he recalled them

almost immediately, so fearful was he of treachery among the Paduans.

Early in the new year Mastino sent to ask reinforcements from Louis of Bavaria, and the Visconti, Estensi, and Gonzaghi. Not a single soldier, however, was despatched in response to his appeals. The Emperor was indifferent, and the Italian rulers did not wish to embroil themselves with Venice and Florence. Obizzo III. d' Este did, indeed, make an effort to intervene on behalf of the Scaligeri, by summoning a conference of Lombard rulers to discuss if it was possible to stop the war. The result, however, was very different from what he had intended. The Venetians refused to consider the question of peace, except on terms that it was quite impossible for the Scaligeri with their large and undefeated army to accept, *viz.*, that Treviso should go to Venice, Lucca to Florence, and Parma and Padua become independent. Meanwhile, the Doge had been doing his utmost to persuade the Lombard lords to join the league. It had, indeed, grown clear that they could not hold aloof any longer from the struggle. They must fight either for or against the Scaligeri. The Doge had a wily tongue. He reminded Obizzo of the many benefits Ferrara had received of old from Venice. Obizzo let himself be persuaded, Azzo Visconti and Ludovico Gonzaga soon followed suit, and on 10th March, 1337, they all three joined the league of Venice and Florence against Verona. The alliance was to last till the Scaligeri power was annihilated. All conquests were to be held in common, excepting Lucca, which was to go to Florence, and the lands between the lower Po and Adige, which had formerly belonged to the Estensi, and were to return to them. Florence was to have a free hand in Tuscany, Venice and the Lombard lords in the Po valley. A common army was to be formed, and one-third of the expenses paid by Florence, another by Venice, and the remainder divided equally among the Lombard lords. None of the allies might make peace without the consent of the rest. By the wish of the Lombards this alliance was kept secret for two months, while they were completing their preparations.

In March the Venetians shifted their main attack from Padua to Treviso, without, however, breaking up the camp at Bovolenta. Treviso itself made a firm stand, but, one after the other, the district castles surrendered, and by June all except Mestre and Castelfranco were in the hands of the enemy. Meanwhile the Lombards were collecting an immense army at Mantua under Luchino Visconti. The plan was that Luchino should join Marsilio Rossi and a picked body of Venetian troops and surprise Verona, which was garrisoned by quite a small force, as hitherto it had been in no danger of attack. Luchino's preparations, however, proceeded so slowly that May was over before he left Mantua, and when after further delays he and Marsilio finally encamped towards the end of June at Vigasio, six miles south of Verona, it was to find Mastino and the larger part of his army in the city.

The alliance of loth March had become generally known some time in May, and the Scaligeri had very soon realized that they must change their plan of campaign. Hitherto they had concentrated all their energies on the defence of their eastern possessions, but the admission of the Lombard lords to the league laid the very heart of their empire open to attack, and that on its most vulnerable side, the boundary between Verona and Mantua. Verona itself had to be guarded at all costs, so Mastino led off the mass of his troops there, though this meant leaving a very small garrison in Padua under the command of Alberto. The first panic over, Mastino came to the conclusion that it would be well to take the offensive, and prepared to move out and meet the enemy in the open. Now, however, an extraordinary episode occurred. On 27th June, a rumour reached the camp at Vigasio that Mastino was about to attack. That very evening Luchino Visconti, in spite of Marsilio's protests, led his troops away. Marsilio was now hopelessly outnumbered by the Veronese, so next day he, too, retired, but in good order, and with all his supplies. Doubtless much to his surprise, his retreat

was entirely unmolested. Mastino's inaction is inexplicable. He lost the best chance he ever had of a decisive victory. Had he attacked Marsilio, he could easily have annihilated his small force, and then might have caught and defeated Luchino, thus destroying half the enemy's army at one blow. He cannot have been unaware of what was going on at Vigasio, so short a distance from Verona. Indeed one of the Milanese chroniclers tries to excuse Luchino's flight on the ground that many of his German mercenaries had deserted to Mastino. One theory is that Mastino, terrified by the proximity of so large a force, had bribed Luchino to depart, and bound himself not to attack him as he retired, but this would argue an almost inconceivable combination of folly and pusillanimity. The matter must remain a mystery.

Six days later Mastino at last led his large but untried army out of Verona. It was none too soon. The allies were winning all along the line. The Paduan and Trevisan districts were overrun by the Venetians. In Tuscany Arezzo had cast in her lot with the Florentines. The castles on the Brescian shores of Lake Garda had gone over to the enemy. Should the Lombard lords effect a junction with the Venetians there was no knowing what might happen. Mastino's immediate objective was the camp at Bovolenta, which he hoped to reach before Marsilio Rossi could return. This he did without much difficulty, as he was moving on interior lines, while the Venetians were forced to take a very circuitous route. Mastino encamped by the Canale di Pontelongo, in a position commanding both the road to Venice and that by which Marsilio would return, captured a fleet of boats that was bringing supplies to the enemy, and did his utmost to lure Pietro Rossi into the open, where with his infinitely superior force he would easily have crushed him. Pietro, however, was not to be drawn out of his lines. He had recently provisioned his camp for a month, and had discovered that Mastino had not enough supplies to feed his large army for half that time. To expedite matters Pietro had hemlock and the refuse of the camp thrown into the streams from which the Veronese got their water. On 13th July therefore, Mastino moved away, without having achieved anything. Marsilio Rossi at once joined Pietro, and together they hung on Mastino's retreat, harassing him in every possible way, but evading all his attempts to force them into a pitched battle. Baffled and mortified, Mastino after some aimless wanderings fell back on Padua, but, finding that there were not enough provisions in the city for his army, he dispersed his men among his various cities and castles, and himself returned, bitterly humiliated, to Verona. The failure of this expedition is to be attributed partly to Mastino's bad generalship, but still more to his omission to collect adequate supplies beforehand.

The enemy was encouraged by Mastino's fiasco to further aggression. The Venetians prepared for another attempt on Padua. Everything was in their favour. The garrison that had been left in the city in May—five hundred Germans and some Veronese levies—was barely enough to man the walls, and could not hope to repel a regular assault. Alberto, therefore, had been driven, willy-nilly, to appeal to the loyalty of the citizens to defend the town. Marsilio da Carrara was put in command of the garrison, into which the Paduan levies were now once more admitted, taxation was lightened as much as possible, and money raised instead by loans, 30,000 *lire* being borrowed from Marsilio on the security of Padua itself, in hopes of ensuring his fidelity.

Thirty thousand *lire*, however, was nothing compared to what the Venetians were prepared to give Marsilio for his assistance. They had been intriguing with him for some months, and on 14th July a definite compact was signed. If Padua was taken, Marsilio was to be made ruler of the city and district, excepting the part claimed by the Estensi, in compensation for which he was to receive Bassano. If he died without a son, his kinsman Ubertino was to succeed him. If peace was made before Padua fell, the Venetians promised to get a

clause inserted to the effect that Marsilio should retain his private estates and be repaid his loan to the Scaligeri. The mass of the Paduans do not seem to have been informed of this agreement, but they were ready for any change. The country had been ravaged by both sides till it was perfectly bare, and famine threatened. Many of the leading citizens were in exile, those who remained went in daily fear of a like fate or worse. The authorities were incapable of keeping order. Robbery and violence were rife. No woman was safe from outrage. Bands of half-naked boys roamed the streets, scourging themselves and crying out “Peace, peace”. It was clear enough on which side the citizens’ sympathies lay.

On the 24th July, therefore, Pietro Rossi left the camp and moved up to Noventa, a few miles east of Padua. Here he halted to make arrangements with Marsilio da Carrara for his admission into the city. It was settled that on 3rd August the Porta di Ponte Corbo should be left with hardly any guards. On the morning of that day some of the Venetians made a feint on the next gate, the Porta di Santa Croce, and while the Germans and Veronese were engaged in repelling this, Pietro led the horse round to the Porta di Ponte Corbo, was admitted, and marched without any opposition to the Piazza, where he was joined by the Carraresi, who now threw off all disguise. On hearing the commotion, Alberto came out of his palace, but was too bewildered by the unexpected turn affairs had taken to do anything, and was at once taken prisoner. Hereupon the Scaligeri troops surrendered and Padua was once more independent. The Venetians sacked Alberto’s palace, but Pietro allowed no other plundering, and no one was injured save a certain lawyer, who was killed through some misapprehension. The Paduans hailed the Venetians with joy as deliverers, and flocked to the churches to offer up thanks for their arrival. True to their word, the Venetians at once handed the city over to Marsilio, and he was elected Lord and Captain by the Greater Council.

Outside the Scaligeri territories the liberation of Padua was hailed everywhere with great joy. As Cortusius succinctly puts it, all Italy sang. The festivities, however, were cut short by ill-tidings. Pietro Rossi had gone on at once to attack Monselice. On 6th August the garrison made a sally. The besiegers were taken quite unawares and hesitated. Pietro rushed out of his tent to rally his men. He was at once struck in the side by a lance, but, paying no heed to his wound, flung himself into the moat, and drove the enemy back. The wound was probably poisoned by the dirt in the water, for on the following day inflammation set in and the day after (the 8th) Pietro died. His death was a serious misfortune for the allies, for though only thirty-four, he was one of the most brilliant generals of the day. Such was the charm of his character that he was mourned as much by foes as friends. Tall and of great strength, he was indifferent to pain, and did not know what fear or fatigue meant. Yet he was modest, deeply religious, and—most wonderful of all at that time—pure as Galahad. He was the soul of honour, and so generous that he gave away all he received, keeping barely enough horses and armour for his daily needs. He was the strictest disciplinarian, none of his men dared insult a woman, or plunder, or do bodily hurt to any, save in battle, and yet his troops worshipped him. He was buried in S. Antonio at Padua, but his helmet and banner were sent to Venice to be hung in St. Mark’s. A few days after his death his elder brother, Marsilio, also died, of an illness brought on by over-fatigue. Marsilio lacked Pietro’s genius, but was noted for prudence and common-sense. The Venetians could ill afford to lose two such leaders at once. Out of respect for their memory the third brother, Rolando, was appointed commander-in-chief, but he was of coarser clay, and a poor general, and under him the Venetian army made little progress.

Towards the end of August Marsilio da Carrara paid a visit to Venice, taking Alberto with him. Alberto had presented a pitiable spectacle of inefficiency at the surprise of Padua,

and captivity had completely crushed what little spirit he ever had. When he heard that he was to be handed over to the Venetians he begged for an interview with Marsilio, and falling on his knees implored him with sobs and cries to save him. Marsilio replied that he would do what he could, but that he owed too much to the Venetians to oppose them, and that the surest way for Alberto to regain his freedom was to induce Mastino to make peace. Neither Marsilio nor Mastino, however, made any attempt to get Alberto released, and he remained in prison in Venice till the end of the war. He was treated with the greatest consideration, being allowed the company of a favourite player, and pages and servants to attend on him, not to speak of a large collection of pets—falcons, dogs, monkeys and songbirds.

The fall of Padua was only the first of a series of misfortunes for the Scaligeri. About the same time Charles of Bohemia, who with his brother John of Moravia had joined the league on 28th July, took Belluno, and on 1st September Feltre surrendered to him. On 9th October the Guelphs of Brescia admitted Azzo Visconti and the Gonzaghi into the city. The Veronese commander, Guido da Correggio, fled at once, but his troops held out in the castle for another five weeks, when, receiving no assistance from the Scaligeri, they surrendered. The capture of Brescia, however, led to the first open dissension among the allies, for Azzo Visconti kept the city for himself, in flagrant violation of the clause which ordered that all conquests must be ruled in common, and this produced a coolness between himself and the Gonzaghi.

Encouraged by this breach in the ranks of his foes, Mastino now approached the Venetians, and proposed to make peace with them alone, offering to give them Treviso, Monselice and Bassano, and sell them Lucca for 75,000 florins. He hoped thus to embroil Venice with Florence, and also with Marsilio da Carrara, to whom Monselice and Bassano were assigned in the compact of 14th July. But the Venetians were too wary to be caught. They refused to consider the question of making peace alone, and in December summoned the rest of the allies to discuss Mastino's proposals. No basis for negotiations, however, could be arrived at, for the Florentines declined to give up their claims to Lucca. Mastino, moreover, was emboldened to continue the struggle by at last receiving, not help, but the promise of it, from Louis of Bavaria, who in December swore to the Scaligeri envoys that in six weeks' time he would be in Italy at the head of a large army. In spite of previous experience Mastino believed the Emperor's word, agreed to hold all his dominions from Louis as Imperial fiefs, surrendered three of his strongest castles, Peschiera, Corvara and the fort in the Chiusa, to the Emperor's representatives, and sent his eldest son Canfrancesco, a boy of five, to Peschiera as hostage for his good faith. Louis, needless to say, never came into Italy, nor sent a single soldier to Verona. All that he did was to take over the three castles, and send to warn the Doge to cease molesting the Scaligeri, since they were now under Imperial protection. In the early months of 1338, therefore, Mastino opened negotiations with two of the Emperor's foes, Robert of Naples and the Pope. In both cases the negotiations were a complete failure, but those with Benedict showed that Mastino had now given up all hope of retaining Lucca, and was only desirous of preventing the Florentines from getting it, for he offered to yield Parma, Treviso, and Lucca to Benedict on condition that the last should never under any circumstances be given to the Florentines.

In March, 1338, Marsilio da Carrara died of illness, at the age of forty-three. The Veronese held high revel, for they looked upon Marsilio as the worst of traitors. If, however, they had hoped that his death would lead to some slackening of hostilities, they were disappointed. Ubertino da Carrara, who now became lord of Padua, carried on the war more relentlessly than ever. He subjected Monselice to the closest possible blockade, hanging any

man out of hand who was caught trying to enter or leave the town, and slitting up the nostrils of any woman. At the same time the Venetians under Rolando Rossi began to make daily raids in the Veronese district. On 19th April they penetrated to Verona itself, and proceeded to run a *palio* just out of arrowshot. To complete the insult they invited the Veronese to run for a sack of salt worth fifty florins, guaranteeing the safety of any one who should come out. No one ventured forth, but Mastino is said to have climbed a hillock close to the walls, and watched the race. Humiliated as he must have been, he was powerless to do anything, for the city was almost empty of troops. Lack of money had compelled him to disband most of his mercenaries in the winter. Those he retained were on the verge of mutiny because their pay was several months in arrears. The troops that he could trust, such as the Veronese levies, were away besieging Peschiera, which, after replacing his son Canfrancesco as hostage by Azzo da Correggio, on the plea that the child's health was suffering from the confinement, Mastino was trying to recover from the Emperor. Fortunately for the Veronese, the Venetians were unaware of their defenceless condition, so they made no assault on the city, but burnt a few villages, and then went off to attack Montecchio.

Montecchio surrendered on 10th May, but as it commanded the road between Verona and Vicenza, it was too important to give up without a struggle. So Mastino set to work to form another army, though with great difficulty, owing to his poverty. However, by pledging his jewels, which were enormously valuable, he raised money enough to pay half the arrears due to his own troops, and to bribe 500 of the enemy's mercenaries to desert to him. He ordered up all the cavalry that could be spared from Lucca and Parma, and one way and another got together 2,000 horse and double the number of foot. This force he despatched to besiege Montecchio, he himself remaining in Verona, but riding out almost daily to direct operations. Montecchio, though very strongly fortified, was after all nothing but a castle, and could not long resist such overwhelming numbers. It was actually on the point of surrendering, when on 17th July, two hours before sunset, the Venetian army suddenly appeared on the scene. The besiegers were taken absolutely by surprise, and without striking a blow fled headlong, abandoning their camp and all their supplies.

The allies were jubilant over their easy victory, but in the end it proved to be a piece of ill-fortune for them. As was customary, their German mercenaries had been promised a month's extra pay if they relieved Montecchio, but since there had been no actual fighting the Venetian authorities refused to give them the money. Hereupon the Germans, in their turn, refused for several weeks to take the field, and this gave a much-needed respite to the Veronese, who, for one thing, were able to gather in the harvest, and so avert the famine that was threatening. The dispute was at last referred to the Emperor, and pending his decision the Germans consented to fight again. This episode, however, considerably cooled the Venetians' fervour, giving them an uneasy sense that their mercenaries could not be relied on. For one reason or another all the allies were now inclining to peace. The Florentines found the constant drain on their resources more than they could afford, and when presently the Emperor gave sentence in favour of the Germans, and the money had to be paid, were intensely irritated by the additional expense, and could only with some difficulty be got to pay their share, while the Venetians were equally irritated by what they considered a fresh example of Florentine parsimony. The Lombard lords, too, had had enough of the war. They did not wish to see one who was, after all, a brother dynast, entirely crushed by two republics, nor the balance of power upset in Tuscany by the subjugation of Ghibelline Lucca to a Guelph state. Obizzo d' Este had never had his heart in the war. The Gonzaghi were jealous of the Visconti. The latter had won all they could hope to get, Brescia, while Monselice had fallen in

August, and so Ubertino da Carrara now held the whole of the Paduan district.

Nevertheless the war dragged on during the autumn. Negotiations had been opened both in July and September, but, as usual, had shipwrecked on the question of Lucca. On the latter occasion Mastino made a proposal which eventually made a lasting settlement possible, *viz.*, that he should give Florence four of the Lucchese castles instead of Lucca; but at the time nothing was arranged, for, though the Florentines accepted the principle, they insisted that Cerruglio (now Monte Carlo), which was held to be the key of Lucca, must be one of the four, and Mastino naturally refused to hear of yielding it.

Meanwhile the usual tale of Veronese disasters continued. In September Marostica went over to the Venetians. Spineta Malaspina was caught in an ambush, and, though he himself escaped, he lost 200 Italian troops, and twenty companies of Germans. In October the Venetians took Quartesolo, and a few days later were admitted by some Vicentines into one of the suburbs of Vicenza. Here they established a permanent camp, and though unable to get into the city itself, were a constant harassment to the garrison, all the more that the Vicentines themselves were no longer to be trusted, and would undoubtedly have betrayed the town if Mastino had not taken the precaution of deporting the leaders of the disaffection.

Mastino, however, was now at the end of his resources. Of the cities he still held, only two, Verona and Lucca, continued to pay any taxes. His jewels were pledged up to the hilt. The rest of his vast treasure had long ago been swallowed up. No one would lend him a penny. No one would send him troops. So when, in November, the Doge on his own responsibility proposed to him that hostilities should cease, and that as a pledge of good faith he should give Treviso to Venice to hold during the negotiations, he consented gladly. On 2nd December the Venetian representative entered Treviso, and Jon the 3rd Spineta Malaspina, Azzo da Correggio, and Ugolino Gonzaga arrived at Venice with full powers to make peace in the name of the Scaligeri. The negotiations took several weeks, chiefly owing to the Florentines' obstinacy about Cerruglio, but pressure being brought to bear upon them by the other allies, they at last yielded the point, and on 24th January, 1339, peace was signed.

The principal terms were:—

1. Treviso and Castelfranco were to go to Venice.
2. Bassano and Monselice to the Carraresi.
3. The Florentines were to have four Lucchese castles, Colle, Altopascio, Pescia and Buggiano.

Nothing was said in the treaty about either Padua or Brescia, but it was understood, of course, that they remained in the hands of the Carraresi and Visconti. Every one seems to have been satisfied except the Florentines, who, quite oblivious of the fact that the war had been prolonged several months purely through their obstinacy about Lucca, were loud in their complaints of Venetian treachery. Nor would they allow peace to be proclaimed, nor any of the prisoners to leave Venice till the four castles had been delivered over to them. News that this had occurred reached Venice on 12th February, whereupon the public proclamation of peace was made, and the prisoners, who had been set free from their dungeons on 14th January, were at last allowed to leave the city. Mastino came half-way to Venice to receive Alberto, and the meeting between the brothers is said to have been most affectionate. The

Scaligeri army had already been disbanded, most of the German mercenaries going to Milan, where, under Loderiso Visconti, they formed the first of the great foreign companies, becoming famous later as the Company of S. George.

No sooner had Mastino come to terms with his secular foes, than he turned all his energies to making his peace with the Church, for ever since the preceding September he had been excommunicate. The reason of this was as follows. As disaster followed disaster Mastino sank into hopeless dejection. He became a prey to the wildest suspicions, trusting no one, not even his most devoted adherents, and at times he was subject to violent outbreaks of rage. On the evening of 28th August, 1338, as he was riding through Verona with the bishop, Bartolomeo della Scala, a distant cousin of his, he suddenly drew his sword, turned on the unfortunate prelate, and slew him with his own hand. Bartolomeo had been one of Mastino's most trusted counsellors, but recently he had been accused by Azzo da Correggio and others of plotting with the Venetians and Florentines to slay Mastino. Even were this true the accused man had been given no chance to clear himself, and his death was therefore murder. No one, of course, stirred a finger in Verona, but on 24th September, Benedict XII ordered Mastino to be excommunicated.

Mastino, in truth, was overwhelmed with remorse at his deed. He is said never to have appeared in public afterwards without a veil over his face, and he did his utmost by unremitting penitence to earn the Pope's forgiveness. A fortnight after peace had been proclaimed he sent the foremost Veronese humanist of the time, Guglielmo da Pastrengo, to Avignon, to assure Benedict that he was deeply penitent, and to ask for absolution on the ground that Bartolomeo had been guilty of treason. To soften the Pope's heart, Guglielmo was further instructed to ask him to confirm the Scaligeri in the Vicariates of Verona, Vicenza, and Parma. This was a momentous step, for it meant the definite abandonment of Louis the Bavarian, and the acknowledgment of Benedict's claims to exercise the Imperial rights during the vacancy of the Imperial throne, and it probably did more than anything else to earn Mastino's pardon. After some months' consideration Benedict, on 1st September, 1339, conferred the three Vicariates on Alberto and Mastino, on condition that they should pay him a tribute of 5,000 florins, and keep 200 horse and as many foot at the disposal of the Legate in Italy. The excommunication was not yet removed, but after further examination of the evidence for Bartolomeo's alleged treason, Benedict, finally, on 27th September, ordered Mastino to be absolved, on the ground that he had been informed by persons who were worthy of credence that the bishop was plotting to slay him. No definite pronouncement was made as to the dead man's guilt, and Mastino was condemned to undergo a severe penance. He, the quondam ruler of half Lombardy, was ordered to humble himself, and walk bare-headed, lighted taper in hand, through the streets of his capital to the cathedral, there to receive absolution for his crime in sight of all the people. He was further commanded to give a silver image of the Virgin and ten silver lamps to the cathedral, to fast six times a year as long as he lived, clothe twenty-four poor men on every anniversary of the murder, and endow six priests with an income of twenty florins each, that masses might he said perpetually for Bartolomeo's soul. A few days later, to mark the completion of the reconciliation, Benedict founded a University, a *perpetuum studium generate*, at Verona and granted the authorities the right of conferring the degree of *magister*. It has been thought that the Veronese University is of much older date than this, some even connecting it with the schools founded by the Emperor Lotharius in 825. But this last theory is quite untenable, and though provision was made in all the statutes of the Commune, from the very earliest, for the teaching of the Liberal Arts, there are no signs that any one at Verona possessed the right of conferring

degrees before the bull of 1339.

For eighteen months after the end of the war the Scaligeri abstained from all hostilities, and devoted themselves to nursing their resources, consolidating what was left of their empire, and establishing good relations with other states. If their recent defeat had taught the Scaligeri nothing else, it had at least shown them the dangers of isolation. Henceforth they made a point of maintaining friendly understandings, if not definite alliances, with one or more of their neighbours. The first state with whom they entered into a closer connexion was Mantua, and in the summer of 1340, Ludovico Gonzaga accompanied Mastino on his first serious expedition since peace was made, an attack on Bologna, now the object of Mastino's ambition. This expedition was a complete failure, nor did the friendship between Verona and Mantua long survive it. The Gonzaghi had never forgotten their old grudges against the Scaligeri, and burned to see them humiliated still further. They had acquired a very strong influence over Azzo da Correggio through his second wife, a daughter of Ludovico Gonzaga, and began to incite him to seize Parma for himself. It was easy enough to arouse Azzo's jealousy. The da Correggio no longer held the position they did, the two Rectors of Parma having gradually absorbed many of their privileges. The citizens, too, were ripe for revolt. Taxation was excessive. The governors showed great partiality. A couple of strong towers were rising whose object was clearly not to defend the city, but to overawe the citizens. So, at the suggestion of the Gonzaghi, in the spring of 1341, Azzo allied himself with Robert of Naples against the Scaligeri, and by holding out hopes of the recovery of Lucca, persuaded the Florentines to join the alliance. Then he won over Luchino Visconti by promising, if Parma became independent once more, to sell him the city in four years' time. The Gonzaghi took no very active part in the movement, but they lent the da Correggio troops, and allowed them to use their territory as the base of attack.

On the evening of 21st May, 1341, Guido and Simone da Correggio led their forces to Parma, seized the eastern gate of the city, and began the attack. The Veronese garrison, ably led by the Podesta, offered a stubborn resistance, and the fight raged up and down the streets all night without either party gaining the advantage. But at dawn a rumour spread that Azzo himself was bringing up reinforcements, and at this the Podesta fled, and his troops surrendered at discretion.

Parma lost, it was hopeless for the Scaligeri to try and hold Lucca. Mastino therefore resolved to sell the city to the highest bidder, and offered it simultaneously to Florence and Pisa. The negotiations were intolerably long and tedious. The Florentines took the affair the most seriously, and both they and the Veronese sent a large number of hostages as a pledge of good faith to Obizzo d' Este, who was acting as intermediary, among the Florentines being the historian Giovanni Villani. Mastino began by demanding the most extravagant terms, and is said to have refused as much as 250,000 florins for the city. But in August matters assumed a different complexion. The Pisans, recognizing that Mastino was only using them to raise the price against Florence, broke off negotiations and began to besiege Lucca. Mastino, alarmed lest the city might fall before he could sell it, at once reduced his terms, offering to let the Florentines have it for 180,000 florins, and in addition to keep 500 horse at their disposal till the siege was raised. The Florentines closed with the offer, and on 21st September, 1341, during a temporary absence of the Pisan army, the Veronese garrison marched out and the Florentines marched in. They soon found, however, that they had made a very poor bargain. After enduring for some months one of the severest blockades ever known in Italy (it was currently said that not even a bird could find its way in or out of the city) Lucca surrendered in July, 1342, to the Pisans. Mastino, on the other hand, never got all his money. The

Florentines paid five instalments of 10,000 florins each, and then refused to pay more. Mastino seized their hostages and for a time matters looked serious, but eventually the matter was compromised by the Florentines paying 65,000 florins, half of what was still owing, in a lump sum.

The loss of Lucca reduced the Scaligeri dominions to what they had been in 1312. With the one exception of Vicenza, all Cangrande's and Mastino's conquests had been torn away. Henceforth, Verona ranked as a second-class power, and the Scaligeri ceased to play a dominant part in North Italian politics. But what was their loss was their subjects' gain. The cities were no longer ceaselessly drained of men and money. The rural districts had breathing-space to repair the constant ravages of the war, and gradually recovered their former prosperity. Trade and commerce revived. Mastino's successors were not altogether model rulers, but at any rate they did not spend their own money and that of their subjects in grandiose schemes of aggression. They beautified and improved their cities, making them pleasanter and healthier places to dwell in, and took more thought for the well-being of their people than did either of the conquering Scaligeri. The private citizens, in fact, were happiest and most prosperous, not when their rulers were heads of an unwieldy empire, but when they were lords of Verona alone. Not that Mastino ever altered his ways. Even the loss of Lucca did not bring home to him the change in his position. He should now have given up all attempts at aggrandizement, and devoted himself to the development of what territory was still left to him. Instead, he spent the remaining ten years of his life in futile intrigue and petty warfare, in the vain hope of recovering his lost glory. In the tangled web of his later policy it is useless to look for any permanent aim, and only the friendship with Obizzo d'Este, and the hatred for the Gonzaghi, remain fixed amongst his constantly shifting alliances and enmities.

Alberto and Mastino never forgave the Gonzaghi's share in the loss of Parma. They were almost always at war with Mantua, indeed 1347 was the only year before Mastino's death when the peace was not broken. The war, however, rarely rose above the level of plundering forays, its dull annals unmarked by pitched battles, by conquests, hardly even by a siege. It left, however, one permanent result in the *Serraglio*, a strong wall and fosse, which Mastino constructed from Valeggio on the Mincio to Villafranca, and thence to Nogarola, a distance of fifteen miles in all. This effectively stopped Mantuan raids in the West Veronese district, and once, when 400 Mantuans succeeded in scaling the wall near Valeggio, Alberto surrounded them and slew or captured every man.

In 1343 a general peace-making took place all over Lombardy as the result of a new danger, which threatened Guelph and Ghibelline alike. In 1342 Ubertino da Carrara, the Visconti, and Gonzaghi, hired the Great Company, commanded by the German Werner, or Guarniero, as the Italians called him, to harry the Bolognese district. The Great Company was exceptionally large and powerful, and whether it were insolence on Werner's part, or lack of capacity to control his men, they soon began to ravage all the Eastern Po Valley, including the territories of their nominal masters. So serious did the situation become that the bitterest foes sank their differences for the time, and united to get rid of the incubus. In March, 1343, Mastino made a truce with both the Gonzaghi and Visconti, and in May he was formally reconciled to his arch-enemy, Ubertino da Carrara. At Mastino's suggestion a large sum was collected from the various Lombard powers, and with this Guarniero was bribed to lead his company away. The common danger thus removed, the Scaligeri were soon at war again with Milan and Mantua, but the peace with Padua became permanent. This was partly because the Venetians, not wishing for any fighting on their borders while they were consolidating their mainland empire, were always ready to act as mediators in any dispute, partly because there

were so many different rulers in Padua in the next few years, that none of them ever felt sufficiently secure at home to risk a war with his neighbours.

The peace with Venice was never broken again after the treaty of January, 1339. In the following June the Venetians gave a proof of their genuine good-will to Alberto and Mastino by admitting them to the citizenship of the Republic. Next year affairs looked threatening for a time, for Mastino was accused of being implicated in a plot to poison Ubertino da Carrara, and was more than suspected of having instigated the murder of two of the Vicentine rebels, who had admitted the Venetians into the suburbs of the city just before the end of the war. Nothing positive was ever proved, however, and the Venetians contented themselves with a strong protest. It is quite probable that Mastino was guilty in both cases, for he did not scruple to use assassination to further his ends, and Pietro Rossi himself once barely escaped being killed by some ruffians in the Scaligeri pay. More than once, later, the Venetians had to warn the Scaligeri to keep the treaties, but as time went on matters improved, for the loss of Treviso and the erection of Padua into a buffer state had removed most of the causes of friction between the two powers.

In 1349 Luchino Visconti died, and was succeeded by his brother the Cardinal-Archbishop Giovanni, already famed for restless ambition and military genius. Milan at once became the danger-point. By straining every nerve, Clement VI, who had become Pope in 1342, succeeded in imposing peace on Italy for a few months, in order that pilgrims might be able to journey safely to Rome to attend the Jubilee he had planned for 1350. But long before the year of Jubilee was out Giovanni was intriguing to overthrow the Pope's authority in Romagna. In April Faenza, in May Bertinoro rebelled, and soon the whole countryside was aflame. Mastino had already persuaded the Florentines to ally themselves with him against the Archbishop, and during the summer he kept a body of troops in the service of the Papal Legate, the notorious Count of Romagna, Astorgio di Duraforte. In October Giovanni Visconti took possession of Bologna, which by one means or another he had driven the de' Pepoli to sell to him. This made the preponderance of Milan overwhelming, and resulted in a league of half Lombardy and all Tuscany against the Archbishop. Mastino was the heart and soul of this league, as long ago he had been of that against John of Bohemia. He wrote to urge the various members to send their quota of troops, and pay their contributions. He went in person to consult first with Obizzo d' Este and then with Astorgio di Duraforte as to the plan of campaign. In March, 1351, he began to collect troops on a large scale, and took both the Count of Landen and the formidable Werner into his pay. It seemed as though the old days of Veronese glory were on the point of returning, when on 3rd June, 1351, after a short illness, Mastino died, and with his death all chance that the Scaligeri might win back their pre-eminence disappeared for ever.

Mastino was forty-three when he died. By his wife Taddea da Carrara, who survived him twenty-four years, he left three sons, Canfrancesco (after his father's death known always as Cangrande) Cansignorio and Paolo Alboino, and three daughters, Beatrice, Altaluna, and Verde. Cangrande and Beatrice were both married in the autumn before Mastino's death, the former to Elisabeth, daughter of Louis the Bavarian, the latter to Bernabo Visconti, nephew of the Archbishop Giovanni, but not then on the best of terms with him. Beatrice, usually called Regina on account of her stateliness and imperious will, made a truly queenly wife to Bernabo. She bore him five sons and ten daughters. When the legitimate male line of the Scaligeri died out in 1375 she at once asserted her claims to Verona, and attempted to carry them out by force, even, it is said, leading her army in person. Through her, Scaligeri blood flows in the veins of Habsburg Emperors, Bavarian Dukes, and perhaps of English squires.

For her ten daughters all married into reigning families. One became Queen of Cyprus, one the Duchess of Leopold of Austria, three married into the Wittelsbach dynasty, another wedded Gian Galeazzo Visconti, and the youngest of all, Lucia, came to England as the bride of Edmund Holland, son of Thomas, Earl of Kent, half-brother to Richard II. Lucia had no children by Edmund, but after his death she married Henry Mortimer “a goodly yong Esquier and a bewtifull Bacheleer”, and had three daughters, Anne, Mari, and Luce.

Mastino was buried in the churchyard of S. Maria Antica, and over his body was erected one of the most beautiful tombs in the world. Like Cangrande he appears on it in two guises, on the summit in full armour on horseback, and on the sarcophagus lying at full length in civil costume. The latter figure represents him as wearing a beard, contrary to the usual Scaligeri custom. This beard, which, the tale goes, he began to grow after the murder of Bartolomeo della Scala to conceal his features, appears in both the existing paintings of him which can in any sense claim to be authentic. One is in the Uffizi, and, though of much later date, may possibly have been copied from the medallions of the Scaligeri painted in Cansignorio's palace by Altichiero da Zevio, who was twenty-one when Mastino died. Mastino's beard is shown as black, and this is confirmed by the other portrait of him, in a painting of the Madonna and Child in the Capella del Rosario in S. Anastasia, a poor work of art, it is true, but of great interest as the one indisputably contemporary portrait of any of the Scaligeri. Mastino and his wife are kneeling one on each side of the Virgin in the usual position of donors. He wears a dull greenish-grey doublet, striped with gold, and his beard is longer and more pointed than it is in his statue. Taddea is in dark flowing garments with a coif and a transparent veil. Both faces are ashen pale, but this is doubtless the result of time, for the whole picture is faded, the only vivid points in it being the gold stripes on Mastino's doublet. Another Madonna in S. Maria della Scala, is said to contain portraits of Mastino and Alberto, but an altar erected later now conceals everything but the stiffly-swaddled *bambino* and the head and hands of the Virgin. An old print of this painting shows Alberto and Mastino as beardless youths kneeling at the feet of the Virgin, but the original figures were small, and in the reproduction what they ever possessed of individuality has been lost.

Very little remains of Mastino's and Alberto's building. They were probably responsible for Cangrande I.'s tomb, and Alberto may have had some voice in the erection of Mastino's, but, apart from these, all that survives of their works is the round tower at Riva, and the picturesque ruined castle on its overhanging crag at Arco, which Mastino built after receiving these two towns in 1349, in return for a loan to the bishop of Trent. In the early part of their reign Alberto and Mastino built themselves palaces at Verona, Padua and Treviso, but in their later years they only erected military works, such as the castles at Petta-di-bo and Vicenza, the towers at Parma, the *Serraglio* of Valeggio, and the fortifications at Riva and Arco. They either lacked the means or the will to beautify their cities, and for ecclesiastical architecture they cared nothing. During their reign the church of SS. Fermo and Rustico was rising slowly, but neither Alberto nor Mastino contributed a penny to its cost, while the building of the church of S. Anastasia came to a complete standstill for want of funds, and yet they did nothing to help.

In truth neither Mastino nor Alberto took much interest in intellectual matters. It is significant that the list of the famous men whom Cortusius saw at their court in 1336 does not include a single poet, scholar or artist. Hardly less significant is it that very few poems were written in their honour, not even when they were at the height of their glory. It is not strange that Dante never mentions them, since they were mere lads when he died, but it is surprising that Petrarch should apparently never have visited their court, and only once refers to either of

them, and then to castigate Mastino vigorously. Yet Petrarch was in Verona more than once in Mastino's reign and was employed at least once by the Scaligeri, it being chiefly his eloquence that in 1335 persuaded Benedict XII to favour their claims to Parma against those of John of Bohemia and the Rossi. But it was this very occasion that eventually led to the enmity between Petrarch and the Scaligeri. For Azzo da Correggio was also one of the Veronese envoys, and a close friendship sprang up between him and Petrarch, and when the breach between the da Correggio and the Scaligeri came, Petrarch remained faithful to the former. He entered Parma with them, and wrote a poem on their victory in which Azzo figures as the champion of liberty, and Mastino is compared, and not favourably, with the worst tyrants from Roman times onwards.

Petrarch, however, in spite of his aversion for the Scaligeri found their dominions a pleasant enough place to live in. He spent a good deal of time between 1345 and 1351 in Verona and Vicenza, and made many friends among the *litterati* of both cities. It was at Verona that he discovered the lost letters of Cicero *Ad familiares*, and he was staying there at the time of the great earthquake of 25th January, 1348. He was sitting in his library when the first shock came, and his books were hurled from their places, but he himself was not hurt. He held a canonry of the cathedral for his natural son Giovanni, and entrusted the boy's upbringing to a Veronese poet and grammarian, Rinaldo da Villafranca. But his chief Veronese friend was Guglielmo da Pastrengo, a scholar of very wide culture, and author of one of the earliest encyclopaedias. Guglielmo was frequently employed by Alberto and Mastino on diplomatic missions, and it was when he was pleading at Avignon for the removal of the excommunication from Mastino that he and Petrarch first met. They soon became fast friends and wrote to each other frequently when apart. Several of Petrarch's letters to Guglielmo have been preserved, and one of Guglielmo's, which is written in a graceful and unaffected style. He recalls their last parting on the Western Veronese boundary, whither he had accompanied Petrarch on his journey to France, gives a graphic picture of the discomforts and dangers of the passage of the Alps, but consoles himself with the thought that the poet's strength will carry him safely through everything, and ends up with a playful description of life at the pleasant and priestly court of Avignon. Altogether a very human letter, full of genuine pathos and humour. The description of the country round Peschiera contains many felicitous touches, and shows that Guglielmo's appreciation of natural beauty was far ahead of his age. Indeed this was probably one of the closest ties between him and Petrarch, the lover of nature even in its wildest moods, and the pioneer of mountain-climbing for its own sake.

TOMB OF MASTINO II



CHAPTER XIII

CANGRANDE II AND CANSIGNORIO

THEORETICALLY there was no need for the election of a new ruler on Mastino's death, as Alberto was still alive, but since his captivity he had taken so little part in the government—the majority of state documents after 1339 are issued in Mastino's name alone—that the Concio assembled as usual in the Piazza Erbe on 4th June, 1351, and by the will of the whole people, and, it is expressly stated, of Alberto, Mastino's three sons were all elected lords of Verona. *De jure* the Veronese now had four rulers, *de facto* they had only one, Can-grande II, for Alberto had practically abdicated, Cansignorio was a boy of eleven, and Paolo Alboino was an infant. The actual state of things was officially recognized a little later, power to rule the city at his pleasure being conferred on Cangrande alone, on 23rd June, and Alberto thereupon retired into private life altogether. He survived Mastino only a little over a year, dying on 24th September, 1352, to the great grief of all the Veronese, especially of the lower classes, whose hearts he had won by his easy good-nature, accessibility, and open-handedness, qualities lamentably rare among the later Scaligeri.

Cangrande II, having been born in 1332, was barely twenty when he succeeded to the rule, but he was already married to Elisabeth, daughter of Louis of Bavaria, and had occupied responsible positions during his father's lifetime, had led the Veronese army more than once, and in 1350 seems to have acted with authority fully equal to Alberto's on the occasion of a street riot in Verona. He began his reign with great show of vigour with a series of economic reforms. He dismissed most of his father's courtiers and counsellors, replacing them by his own personal friends, put an end to the custom of keeping open court every day, and discontinued what few pensions Mastino had given to exiles and men of learning. Economically these reforms were doubtless wise, but they did not tend to make the new government popular. Nor was taxation correspondingly lightened, for what Cangrande saved in one direction he spent in another. He loved personal comfort and luxury, and pleasure of all descriptions. Instead of spending his time in fighting, or affairs of state, or even in hunting, he gave himself up entirely to dissipation, to tourneys, feastings, visits to neighbouring courts, and general debauchery. By entering the lists in person at the magnificent tournaments which he frequently held, he earned the contempt of his subjects, who considered this public exhibition of himself derogatory to their ruler's dignity. Moreover they soon began to suspect that he preferred these bloodless victories to the sterner glories of war. War, indeed, Cangrande detested, partly on account of its expense, but chiefly because he was indolent and cowardly, and disliked peril and hardship. Another factor in his growing unpopularity was his extreme partiality for his wife's brothers, the sons of Louis the Bavarian. The Veronese always strongly resented any Germanizing tendencies, and, rightly or wrongly, they attributed Cangrande's increasing effeminacy and dissoluteness to the influence of his brothers-in-law, who made a regular cult of pleasure and luxurious living.

But it was in foreign policy that the weakness of Cangrande's character showed itself most. All through his reign he drifted from one alliance to another, without any guiding principle but that of following the line of least resistance. The power that brought most pressure to bear could always gain him as an ally. The first to grasp this fact, and take advantage of it, was Giovanni Visconti. Mere tyro in statecraft as Cangrande was, he was no match for the wiles of the astute Archbishop, who partly by playing on his fears, partly by

dwelling on the close connexion between the two families through Bernabo Visconti's marriage to Beatrice della Scala, first detached Cangrande from the league against Milan, and then persuaded him to form a definite alliance with himself. The result of this was that for a time the league against the Visconti fell to pieces, in spite of the valiant efforts made by the Florentines to keep it together. Notwithstanding his alliance with the Archbishop, however, Cangrande remained on the best of terms with Venice and Ferrara, and after Obizzo III's death transferred his friendship to Obizzo's son and successor Aldovandrino, who, like his father, was one of the most enlightened rulers of the time, just, generous, gracious and cultured.

But in the autumn of this year an event occurred which revived ten-fold the general dread of Giovanni Visconti, roused even Cangrande from his pursuit of pleasure, and drove him into concerted action with his neighbours. This was the voluntary submission of Genoa to Milan, after the destruction of the Genoese fleet by the Venetians off Calvi on 29th August, 1353. The Venetians, furious at being baulked of their prey, but not strong enough to attack both Genoa and Milan at once, moved heaven and earth to get the league renewed, and in December succeeded in inducing Cangrande, the Estensi, the Carraresi, and the Manfredi (lords of Faenza) to make an offensive alliance with them against the Visconti. Even so they did not yet feel strong enough to move, and so Charles of Bohemia, who it was well known was prevented by the Archbishop's hostility from being crowned in Milan and Rome, was invited to join the league, and signed the necessary documents on 19th March, 1354.

Meanwhile Cangrande had been within an ace of losing Verona. On 14th February, he started up the Brenner to visit his brother-in-law Louis, Elector of Brandenburg, at Botzen, and obtain, if possible, German troops from him for the league. He took Cansignorio with him, and several of the Veronese magnates, and left Azzo da Correggio (with whom the Scaligeri were now again reconciled) in command of the city in his absence. Three days later the Government was overthrown and Verona was in the hands of rebels.

It came about on this wise. Mastino had left several natural sons, the most gifted of whom was a youth named Fregnano. Eloquent, daring, and talented, Fregnano was his father's favourite, and so long as the latter was alive held a position seldom attained by illegitimate children. He was knighted in 1345 by Francesco d'Este, frequently led the Veronese troops, and in 1350 commanded the army of the Church in Romagna. But with Mastino's death a change occurred. Cangrande drove his half-brother from court, and heaped every sort of contumely upon him, even to erecting a gallows every year in front of his house. Fregnano was much too high-spirited to endure such treatment long, and knowing that the common people worshipped him, only waited a favourable moment to overthrow Cangrande and seize the rule himself. He had supporters in plenty, both within and without Verona. The Gonzaghi, urged on by the Archbishop of Milan, had promised to send him troops whenever he should ask for them, and he had succeeded in winning over many of the officials on whom Cangrande relied most, including Pietro dal Verme, and Azzo da Correggio. The appointment of the latter to the control of affairs during Cangrande's absence gave Fregnano his longed-for chance, nor was he slow to use it.

Directly Cangrande had started, Fregnano sent all the mercenaries out of the city on the plea that Bernabo Visconti was about to invade the district. Bernabo was in fact hovering on the Veronese frontier with 800 men, though what his exact object was in being there was never discovered. On the morning of 17th February, Fregnano announced publicly that Cangrande had been slain on his way to Botzen, and in support of this statement produced

letters sealed with the Scaligeri seal. These letters were, of course, forged, and it was said later that Azzo da Correggio had had a copy of the seal made for this very purpose. An informal meeting of the citizens was hastily summoned, and at the suggestion of a notary the rule was offered to Fregnano. Fregnano accepted without any hesitation, but explained that he did so in the names of the absent Cansignorio and of Paolo Alboino, who was still a child. The populace hailed the change of government with delight, but Fregnano was unable to keep any sort of order, and for a couple of days the city was at the mercy of the mob. Large crowds collected and demanded the abolition of all taxes, broke the prisons open, stormed the public offices, and burnt the list of debtors to the Commune and other records. With the arrival of some Mantuan troops, however, under three of the Gonzaghi, order was restored, and on the 20th Fregnano was elected Captain of Verona and Podesta of the Merchants with all due formalities. He at once took up his residence in the Palace of the Commune, appointed a Podesta and other officials, and began to govern in strict accordance with the constitution. He treated Cangrande's relatives, his wife, mother, and brother, with marked respect and consideration. Amongst the adherents of the new government were many old Scaligeri servants, Pietro dal Verme and his four sons, Guglielmo da Pastrengo, a secretary of Cangrande's, and a captain of his infantry, in fact, Fregnano seems to have begun his reign well, and to have won the support of all classes.

Nevertheless it was not long before suspicions began to arise about the stability of the new *regime*. The loyalty of Azzo da Correggio was doubted. It was rumoured that the Gonzaghi were using Fregnano as a cat's-paw and meant eventually to seize the rule themselves. Bernabo Visconti had brought his troops up to within a few miles of the city without giving any signs of what his intentions were. Was he in collusion with Fregnano? Did he wish to recover the city for his brother-in-law, or to take it for himself? No one knew. Fregnano gave out publicly that Bernabo was coming to his aid, but sent in secret to implore him to come no farther; and when in spite of this the Milanese still continued to advance, closed the gates and manned the walls.

On the 24th Bernabo arrived outside the city, and attacked one of the western gates all day. Fregnano repelled this assault without much difficulty, but next morning found himself confronted by a more serious danger. Another body of troops had appeared outside the city, but this time on its eastern side, and under the leadership of the rightful lord of Verona. Cangrande on this occasion had displayed the most unexpected energy and resource. He had learnt of the rebellion while still on his way to Botzen, and had at once struck off across the mountains to Vicenza, whose loyal governor, Giovanni della Scala, had sent word of what was going on at Verona, and meanwhile had collected troops from Padua and Venice. Cangrande reached Vicenza on the 24th, and the same evening started off with the foreign soldiers and the Vicentine troops for Verona, where he arrived early on the morning of the 25th. The Adige being unusually low, he was able to get a messenger into the city by a branch of the stream, and so warn some of his friends of his arrival. He then attacked the Porta di Campo Marzo (now the Porta Vittoria), which yielded very quickly. Once inside the walls he flung his vizor up that men might know that their lawful ruler had returned, and was quickly joined by many of those dwelling on the east bank of the Adige. Fregnano, however, still held the heart of Verona, and all the bridges. If only he could hold the line of the river he might yet triumph. The struggle centred round the Ponte delle Navi. Three times Cangrande strove to carry it, three times Fregnano drove him back, once as far as the gate by which he had entered. But every time Cangrande rallied his men, and his fourth charge gave him the bridge. After this, further resistance was useless, and the rebels fled, Fregnano, who up till now had

performed miracles of valour, himself setting the example. He entered a small boat to escape down the river, but was slain before he could get away, and his body hurled into the stream.

Cangrande revenged himself on all who had been actively concerned in this rebellion with barbarous savagery. For three days the executions never ceased. A few who were knights were beheaded out of consideration for their knighthood, amongst them the aged Pietro dal Verme who had never failed the Scaligeri till now, but the majority were hung with every circumstance of ignominy. The Tribuna was crowned with a horrible wreath of corpses. Fregnano's body was recovered, stripped of armour and clothing, and hung up stark naked in the Piazza. The Gonzaghi and all their troops were thrown into prison, and in his wrath Cangrande at first swore to starve every man of them to death, but afterwards relented, and allowed them to ransom themselves. A few of the rebels got away. Azzo da Correggio at the first hint of trouble had fled to Ferrara. A certain number seized the castle at Ostiglia, and held out there some time. At last Cangrande induced them to surrender by promising to spare their lives, and when they did, had them massacred on the spot. To the mass of the citizens Cangrande, however, showed himself extraordinarily lenient. After a thorough investigation he came to the conclusion that the evidence for his death was enough to deceive the most loyal, so he exacted no penalty from them, not even a fine, but to guard against future rebellion he built a strong castle on the southern bank of the Adige, a little way below where it enters the town, and threw a fortified bridge across to the other side.

Fregnano's rebellion was a turning-point in Cangrande's life. The energy and courage it called forth were transient, but the cruelty and vindictiveness which had shown themselves also for the first time, became for the future his most salient characteristics. Marzagaia says that, after spending three days in a state of ungovernable rage, he went completely out of his mind for a while. When he recovered, the frivolous and pleasure-loving youth had become a gloomy and suspicious tyrant, while the contempt felt previously for him by his subjects turned to hatred, which grew fiercer and fiercer with years of repression till at his death it vented itself in open rejoicing.

In foreign politics the effect of the rebellion was to throw Cangrande once more into the arms of the Visconti, for on 28th February Bernabo had visited Verona, and given out that his attack of the 24th had been made with the object of protecting Cangrande's interests. The revived friendship between Verona and Milan lasted, however, less than six weeks. Even desire for revenge could not keep Cangrande to one line of policy for long together. In March he was preparing to attack Mantua, and take vengeance on the Gonzaghi. But in April the Venetians, who were more determined than ever to thwart Milanese ambition, persuaded Cangrande to give up the Mantuan expedition, and on 12th April he joined the anti-Visconti league again, though the Gonzaghi had been admitted to it only two days before. The allies now consisted of Venice, the Carraresi, the Estensi, the Manfredi, the Gonzaghi, Cangrande and the Emperor, and were in a position to take the offensive. Hostilities, however, were not carried on with much vigour, except at sea. On land the allies hardly ever took the field in person, but left the fighting to their hired *condottiere*, the Count of Landen. Charles, who had promised to be in Italy in May, continually delayed his coming, and did not cross the Alps till the autumn. Before he reached Italy the *raison d'être* of the league had come to an end with the death of Archbishop Giovanni on 3rd October. Venice continued the war for some months, but the rest of the allies ceased hostilities at once.

Charles proceeded but slowly on his way to be crowned. On 4th November he had got no farther than Padua. On the 8th he reached Legnago, where he was met by Cangrande, who,

however, refused to receive him in Verona, escorting him with scant show of honour across the southern part of the district to Mantua. Here Charles stayed for several weeks, trying to arrange a permanent peace amongst the Lombards, not that he cared anything for their quarrels, but he wished to secure a safe journey to Rome. On 6th January, 1355, he was crowned at Milan, and three days later he announced that a truce for four months had been arranged between himself, Milan, Venice, Verona, Padua and Mantua. To achieve this Charles had been obliged to recognize the various rulers as Imperial Vicars, so that the Scaligeri once more held the Vicariate of Verona from the Empire, not the Papacy. Peace thus secured, Charles set out for Rome, where he was crowned on 8th April.

Very few details are recorded of Cangrande's internal administration, but he is known to have made an attempt to broaden the basis of taxation by introducing a land-tax of four *soldi* on the *campo*. The new impost, however, proved exceedingly unpopular, partly because a land-tax was a complete innovation in the Scaligeri domains, partly because its inelasticity made its weight fall unequally on the occupiers of land, for the *campo*, though it was the unit of measurement, seems, like the English hide, to have varied considerably in size and productiveness.

To the clergy Cangrande was very generous. He completed the church of S. Dionigi in Verona, contributed largely to one dedicated to S. Agostino, which was being built outside Vicenza, and gave land in the Campo Marzo to the Poor Clares. In his will he left sums to numerous churches, and a thousand *lire* each to S. Maria Antica, S. Dionigi, and a church dedicated to the Virgin and S. George, which he founded in memory of his victory over Fregnano. This church, often called S. Maria della Vittoria, lies on the east bank of the Adige, close to the Porta di Campo Marzo, and is now desecrated, and used by the military. It does not display any architectural features of interest, being small and plain. Cangrande completed the *Serraglio* begun by Mastino II, and built a castle at Montecchio, but his most remarkable achievement in military architecture was the erection of the castle and bridge at Verona. The former, now known as the Castelvecchio, but originally called the Castel di S. Martin Aquario, is a gloomy but impressive building of dark red brick. The bridge leads straight from it, and is also of brick, excepting the ribs of the arches and the foundations of the piers, which are of stone. It is strengthened by turrets, and has the usual forked battlements of the Scaligeri, while it has three peculiarities which make it one of the marvels of engineering. Its three arches, beginning with that on the south, decrease gradually both in span and height, so that the whole bridge slopes slightly down to the northern end; it does not cross the river at right angles; and the plane of the cross section is slightly out of the horizontal. The span of the southern arch was long the widest in Italy. The bridge is in an excellent state of preservation, having been restored by the Austrians in 1824.

PONTE DEGLI SCALIGERI, OR DEL CASTELVECCHIO



On the completion of the castle in 1356, Cangrande took up his abode there. His mother and brothers, on the other hand, he compelled to go on living in his old palace, treating them with the most galling petty tyranny. He allowed them to keep no sort of state, would let no one attend them when they went out, and even refused to let them have horses. Cansignorio, and Paolo Alboino's names were sometimes inserted as a matter of form in the more important state documents, but, nevertheless, Cansignorio, who was of age, was admitted to no share in the government. His own wife, the beautiful Elisabeth of Bavaria, Cangrande neglected scandalously, being entirely under the control of low-born mistresses. He had no legitimate children, but three natural sons, named Guglielmo, Tebaldo and Fregnano, of whom he was excessively fond. He wished to make them his successors, though it had never yet been suggested at Verona that the rule should go to a bastard. In 1355 and again in 1357, with this object in view, he made all his mercenaries take the oath of allegiance to them. He deposited 200,000 florins in their name at Venice. As time went on, however, Cangrande seems to have given up the idea of forcing his bastards on an unwilling people, for in 1358 he had two of them, Guglielmo and Tebaldo, elected Canons of the Cathedral, a position not usually sought for by future rulers; and in his will, which is dated 24th November, 1359, he appointed his brothers his successors.

Nothing was known of this at the time, however, and in the autumn of this year a report spread that Cansignorio and Paolo Alboino were to be made away with, to ensure the succession to Cangrande's sons. Long hatred and new terror rendered Cansignorio desperate, and he determined to be the first to strike. It was Cangrande's habit to leave his castle at sundown, and ride unarmed and with only one or two followers, to visit one of his mistresses who lived near S. Eufemia. On the evening of 14th December, 1359, Cansignorio, with two squires whom he could trust, lay in wait for his brother close to the church. Since Cansignorio had no good horses of his own, he had taken three very fast ones from Cangrande's stables. Directly

the brothers met words arose between them on the subject, and Cansignorio crying out, “Good! so you grudge me even a horse”, struck Cangrande on the head, and hurled him from the saddle. Cangrande tried to get away on foot, but his assailants showered blows upon him, till he was mortally wounded, and fell down unconscious, whereupon Cansignorio galloped off to Padua.

This flight was quite unnecessary. No one dreamt of drawing sword in defence of Cangrande, or pursuing his murderers. His followers had made off as soon as the attack began, and it was some time before any one troubled to lift him from where he lay. When he was at last taken up, he died in a few minutes without recovering consciousness. The news of his death was hailed with open rejoicing throughout the city. True, he was given a magnificent funeral, but this was purely out of regard for his station, and none made any pretence of mourning, even during the ceremony. His slayer, on the other hand, had become in a moment the people’s hero, the champion of the oppressed. The Concio met hastily, and voted unanimously to send envoys to offer him the rule, and meanwhile the rod of office was conferred on his younger brother Paolo Alboino, who was still a minor.

Cansignorio, on arriving at Padua, had been overcome with remorse and distress, so much so that at first he thought of refusing the offer of the Veronese, but by the counsel of the wise and kindly lord of Padua, Francesco da Carrara, he decided to accept it, and returned to Verona on 17th December. The citizens welcomed him with great delight, and that very day elected him and Paolo Alboino lords of Verona for life. Nor was this all, but a clause was inserted in their title which settled the succession on their heirs for ever, so that at last the dynasty was hereditary in law as well as in fact. On this occasion the Veronese—perhaps for the first time since the election of Alberto I—exercised an absolutely free choice, and nothing shows the depth of the people’s affection for the Scaligeri better than the fact that there was no suggestion of the establishment of a republic, but that the only desire of the citizens was to secure a member of the adored family as their ruler, and ensure the succession to his heirs. Matteo Villani can find no reproaches severe enough for the cowardice and servility of the Veronese in not casting off the yoke of their tyrants at this juncture,¹ but their action was not so foolish after all. Apart from Venice and Florence, all the more flourishing Italian states were by this time autocracies. The Veronese had long ago lost all habit of self-government, nor could they hope without the strong hand of the Scaligeri to hold Vicenza, or even the whole of their own district, and what chance would they have had as a small republic against the Visconti, Carraresi, or even the Gonzaghi?

Moreover, though quite unwittingly, in Cansignorio the Veronese had chosen perhaps the best ruler they ever had, as far as the material prosperity of the citizens went. He beautified and improved Verona itself, and many of the subject towns. He encouraged the Arts. He kept taxation low, but provided abundant employment for the labouring classes by the amount of building he did. When famine came he sold corn below market price to the poor. He left 10,000 *lire* in his will to provide a hundred portionless maidens with dowries. His personal character, however, was a strange mixture. Kindly and generous to his loyal subjects, he stamped out rebellion with ruthless severity. He was passionately devoted to his wife, yet unfaithful to her. He was an excellent father, but he began his reign by slaying one brother with his own hand, and ended it by having the other strangled in the prison where he had kept him many years. He was genuinely devout. He heard mass every day, made a special cult of St. Anthony of Padua, left money to every church in Verona, and was always on excellent terms with the local clergy and generally with the Pope. Yet he made vast sums out of the Veronese Church, which, by a curious and perhaps unique arrangement, he farmed from the

Papacy. It is possible that the greater monasteries and the Franciscans and Dominicans were not included in this agreement, but the possessions of the Veronese canons and of the majority of churches in the city and district came under its operation, and in these Cansignorio had the right of appointing to the benefices and receiving all tithes. In return he paid the Papacy a rent varying between 10,000 and 12,000 florins a year, and provided a priest at a salary stipulated beforehand, generally 100 lire a year, to serve every church under his control. That Cansignorio could pay such a rent, provide a priest for every church, and yet make a large profit, shows how rich the Veronese Church was, and incidentally how prosperous the rural districts had become again, for most ecclesiastical incomes were derived from land and agricultural produce. It was an interesting attempt to solve the problem of how to prevent too much of the nation's wealth from accumulating in the hands of the clergy, but it was only temporary, apparently ending at Cansignorio's death. Afterwards it led to a singular little episode. The arrangement seems always to have worked smoothly, and there were never any difficulties with the Papacy about it. Still after Cansignorio's death it was felt that he could not have carried it on for so long, without falling in some way or other into serious sin. Inquiries were made, and it was discovered that the friars who had received Cansignorio's dying confession had not absolved him from any sins committed in this connexion. So the bishops of Verona and Vicenza summoned their clergy to the little churchyard of S. Maria Antica, and after reading mass, ascended upon Cansignorio's tomb, sprinkled the sarcophagus with holy water, and solemnly pronounced him to be absolved from all guilt he might have incurred in receiving the revenues of the Veronese Church.

Cansignorio married in 1363. At the beginning of his reign, or possibly even earlier, he fell violently in love with his sister-in-law, Elisabeth of Bavaria, and obtained the dispensation necessary for the marriage. But though Elisabeth had been so shamelessly neglected by Cangrande, she refused to have anything to do with the man who had killed him, and asked to be allowed to return to her brother, Louis of Brandenburg. But this the love-sick Cansignorio would not allow, and for many months he virtually kept his sister-in-law a prisoner, in the hope that she would relent. Finally he was obliged to let her go, because Louis threatened to go to war if she were not released. It took Cansignorio some years to get over this passion, and it was not till the spring of 1363 that he turned his thoughts again to marriage. Then he made an offer for the hand of Agnes of Durazzo (of the Neapolitan House of Anjou), and wedded her at Verona on 5th June, 1363. Agnes never bore Cansignorio a child, but she succeeded in arousing an intense devotion in him, and retaining it till the end of his life.

Early in 1365 a plot to kill Cansignorio was discovered at Verona. The ringleaders, including the Prior of the Dominicans, were publicly beheaded in the amphitheatre. Paolo Alboino seems to have been implicated in the plot, either as its instigator or as the tool of others, for Cansignorio had him arrested and imprisoned at Peschiera. It would have been small wonder if Paolo Alboino had aimed at seizing the rule, for though he had twice been elected lord of Verona, and was now approaching manhood, he had never been given any position of authority. The remainder of his life was horrible. He spent fourteen years in the gloomy dungeons of Peschiera, laden with fetters, and in an indescribable state of filth, only to be released from his sufferings by a violent death.

In general politics Verona played a still more insignificant part under Cansignorio than in the preceding reign. Almost as averse to fighting as Cangrande, Cansignorio was even more incapable of a settled foreign policy. He had no initiative, and on the rare occasions when he went to war it was as the reluctant supporter of some ambitious ally. In the first part

of his reign he fell under the influence of Nicolo d' Este, who induced him in April, 1362, to join the league formed to protect Bologna from Bernabo Visconti. But after some months' desultory fighting, the defeat of the Scaligeri fleet on Lake Garda, consisting of fifty fast vessels, quite destroyed what little martial zeal Cansignorio had ever had, and he made a separate peace with Bernabo. The next time Cansignorio went to war it was to help Milan, against whom another league, headed by the Pope, had been formed. The Scaligeri troops took the field in April, 1368, but effected little, and when a crusade was preached publicly against Bernabo Visconti, and Cansignorio as his ally, and Charles IV. supported the league, and harried the Veronese district, Cansignorio once more left his ally in the lurch and made a separate peace with the enemy, in August, 1368.

After this Cansignorio firmly refused to be dragged into the wars which raged constantly all round his frontiers. Peace, indeed, was an absolute necessity for Verona at this time. For seven years on end the land was devastated by natural calamities, flood and famine, earthquake and pestilence. From 1369 to 1371 there was a dearth. Wheat rose from 27 *soldi* the bushel to 55, a bushel of millet fetched 30 *soldi*, maize 24. Vegetables rose in proportion. Hay was trebled or quadrupled in price, and men ate food that was generally given to pigs. From 1370 to 1372 there was a scarcity of wine, oil, and meat. Oil rose to 71 *lire* the measure, the ordinary wines fetched 35 *lire* the waggon, and the finer kinds anything up to 64 *lire*. What this meant to a wine- and oil-loving people like the Veronese may be guessed, when it is remembered that 100 *lire* was still considered a fair professional income. The lack of meat in these years was fortunately mitigated by an extraordinary abundance of fish, especially crabs, which were eagerly eaten by all classes on non-fasting and fasting days alike. In 1373 much damage was done by two earthquakes, and they were followed by an outbreak of pestilence, which, though not so severe in the country districts, raged furiously in the towns, especially Verona, which between the disease and the consequent flight of the citizens was at one time almost depopulated. In the winter of 1373-74 there was so much rain and frost that next summer the corn crop failed entirely, and there was great scarcity of all other provisions, even of fish. Had it not been for Cansignorio the poorer classes would have starved, but he had already stored up great quantities of corn, which he now retailed to the populace at a low price, though not so low as to prevent his making a profit. For immense though Cansignorio's private fortune was—he was probably the richest of the Scaligeri, the income he drew from his lands alone being equal to the revenue of the state—he did not disdain to add to it by trade. He was in the habit of advancing loans to the Arts, and once before he had made money out of wheat, by procuring a large quantity for the Venetians when they were in want of it. After the famine of 1374 he began to pull down a great number of houses both in Verona and Vicenza, to create sites for new and larger granaries in preparation for another dearth, but he died before they could be completed.

Building, however, was Cansignorio's ruling passion. He was economical, not to say avaricious, by disposition, but nevertheless he was wont to say that building was "a pleasant path to poverty". He enlarged and improved his palace, employed two of the finest Veronese artists, Altichiero da Zevio and Avanzo, to decorate the interior with frescoes, and made a pleasure-garden. He erected the tower in the Piazza Erbe known as the Torre del Gardello, and placed a clock there. Between 1373 and 1375 he had the Ponte delle Navi entirely rebuilt of stone with a tower in the middle, at the cost of 30,000 florins. Unfortunately this bridge was swept away by a flood in the eighteenth century.

Cansignorio's building was by no means confined to Verona. In Vicenza he bridged the river, and built a church and monastery for the Carmelites. He cleared out the southern arm of

the Bacchiglione below Longare, which recently had silted up. Saraina asserts that in every important town he put up a large building for the collection of tithe paid in kind, of which he received three-quarters throughout his dominions, and the Communal buildings at Riva and Soave still bear contemporaiy inscriptions stating that they were erected by Cansignorio. He turned the small frontier town of Marostica, lying at the foot of the mountains, a few miles from Bassano, into a first-class fortress, building one castle down in the town, and another some hundreds of feet up the hill-side, and connecting the two by high walls up very steep gradients. But his most remarkable enterprise was bringing a supply of pure spring-water across the river to the densely populated quarters on the south and west banks of the Adige, which hitherto had had to rely on wells for their water. A stone conduit was made from an excellent spring at Avesa, a couple of miles north of the Adige, to the monastery garden of S. Giorgio in Braida. Here the water was collected in a tank, purified, and then taken across the river in leaden pipes. It was brought first to Cansignorio's palace and garden, and from there to the fountain which he erected for the purpose in the Piazza Erbe, and to other public places, and is even said to have been supplied to a certain number of private houses.

As time went on and Agnes of Durazzo remained childless, it became clear that on Cansignorio's death the succession would pass to Paolo Alboino, and failing him to the sons of Beatrice della Scala. Cansignorio, however, had two natural sons, named Bartolomeo and Antonio, to whom he was passionately devoted, and who, he was resolved, should succeed him. Now it seemed by no means improbable, that if Paolo Alboino were out of the way the Veronese might accept two males, even though illegitimate, of the direct line, in preference to letting the rule pass through a woman to the Visconti. So Cansignorio determined that on no account should Paolo Alboino survive him. In August, 1375, Cansignorio was taken ill. Always delicate, he was unable to throw off the illness, and by October all hope was given up. In the middle of the month, realizing that he could not live much longer, he sent to Peschiera, and had Paolo Alboino strangled. At the same time he had his sons elected lords of Verona and Vicenza, and apparently legitimized in some way, for in his will, which is dated 17th October, 1375, and in which he appoints them his successors and heirs to nearly all his wealth, they are referred to as his "legitimate and natural sons".

Beyond the fact that in this will Bartolomeo and Antonio are styled *Veronae et Vicentiae Domini Generales* no record of their election at Verona has been preserved, but the Vicentine chronicler Conforto Pulice has left a full account of the methods by which it was brought about at Vicenza. On 15th October, seventy of the leading citizens were summoned to the Podesta's palace. Here they were taken into the dining-hall and kept waiting an hour or more, in fear and trembling as to what might be about to befall them. At last the Podesta and the Captain of the troops entered, and read letters announcing Cansignorio's illness, and ordering the Greater Council and people of Vicenza to elect Bartolomeo and Antonio lords of the city. All present were compelled to swear allegiance to the Podesta, as representative of Cansignorio and his sons, and then dismissed. No one had ventured to refuse to take the oath, and the Greater Council proved equally compliant, electing Bartolomeo and Antonio without a dissentient voice. Next day, by orders from Verona, several taxes were remitted, including half the duty on milling, always an unpopular impost. Doubtless Cansignorio hoped thus to bribe the citizens into accepting his sons after his death, possibly also to propitiate Heaven, for at the same time the prisons were all opened, the prisoners marched in military order to the churches to pray for their ruler's recovery, and then set free. These prayers, however, remained unanswered; on the following day, the 17th, Cansignorio became unconscious, and on the 19th he died.

THE OLD PONTE DELLE NAVI



CHAPTER XIV

THE END OF THE SCALIGERI

CANSIGNORIO'S two sons were half-brothers, and exceedingly unlike. Bartolomeo, the elder by five years, was the son of a Piacentine woman, and resembled his father both in face and figure. Modest, devout and brave, and of great personal charm, he made friends everywhere. Of Antonio's mother nothing is known, but he was so unlike Cansignorio in face that it was thought he could not be his son. His character was peculiarly unpleasant. He was effeminate and arrogant, obstinate and credulous, ambitious and domineering, yet completely lacking in both administrative capacity and military talent. This last defect mattered less at a time when it was becoming more and more rare for Italian rulers to lead their own troops, but Antonio was also incapable of selecting good generals, or forming an efficient army, and this in the end was his undoing.

Although Bartolomeo and Antonio had just been elected Captains-General of Verona and Vicenza they did not obtain possession of the supreme rule without some difficulty. It was still an almost unheard of thing for a bastard to succeed his father, and the Veronese at first refused to submit to two youths who had certainly been born out of wedlock, even if, which is doubtful, they had been legitimized since. The populace demanded that Paolo Alboino should be brought out of his prison and made lord of Verona, and would give no credence to the reports of his death, till his body was publicly exhibited in the Piazza. Even then the general attitude towards Bartolomeo and Antonio was so doubtful that it was considered best to have a fresh election, and the Concio met and chose them lords of Verona once more by acclamation.

Bartolomeo must have been sixteen or seventeen at this time, and Antonio eleven or twelve, for a document of 14th May, 1379, states that in this latter year they were respectively twenty and fifteen, and both of age. Bartolomeo, therefore, was not a minor in 1375, but nevertheless, for the first few years of his reign (probably till Antonio came of age) the Government was carried on by a Council of Four, presided over by Guglielmo Bevilacqua, whom Gansignorio had appointed his sons' guardians and advisers. Under their wise rule the best traditions of the preceding reign were continued. Charles IV was induced to confirm the new rulers in the Vicariate of Verona and Vicenza, on 23rd February, 1376. A new coinage was issued. All over-hanging projections of wood were removed from houses, and the city was improved in various ways. The statutes were thoroughly revised and many additions and alterations made. The most important reforms were directed against the accumulation of large tracts of land by ecclesiastical bodies. Power to alienate and dispose of their property by testament was given to the tenants of church property, and the new occupier was protected against the exaction of a fee on entering into possession. Eviction was not permitted unless the tenant had failed to pay rent for six years. Doubtless this legislation was primarily intended to benefit the Scaligeri, who held many of their estates from monasteries and other ecclesiastical owners, but it must have proved of great advantage to the growing class of small tenants holding land by rent.

The Council of Four pursued a consistently non-aggressive policy, till in 1378 they

were forced into war by Bernabò Visconti, who, on the ground that bastards could not inherit, claimed that his wife, Beatrice, was heir to both Cansignorio's dominions and his private fortune. This war, which lasted from April, 1378, to the following February, consisted of nothing but plundering expeditions in the open country by both sides. Eventually Bernabò consented to give up his claims to Verona for an annual payment of 40,000 ducats for eleven years, and 10,000 a year for the rest of his life. Matters were not finally settled till 14th May, when peace was publicly proclaimed, to the intense delight of the peasants and the dwellers in unwall'd towns, who had suffered much more from this war than from many that were far more costly and perilous for the state.

A period of peace and great prosperity now began for the Veronese. A succession of good harvests enabled the rural districts to recover from the ravages of the war with marvellous rapidity, and provisions became very cheap, wine, for instance, falling to six *lire* the waggon. The social life of the city recalled, though in fainter hues, the magnificence of the earlier part of the century. The two young rulers held open court every day, a custom which had long fallen into disuse, and gathered round them a band of poets and scholars, who, while not to be compared with such giants as Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, possessed talent and originality and a genuine love of learning. Antonio da Legnago, who had been one of the Council of Four, was famous as a grammarian and lover of the classics. The humanist, Antonio Loschi, and the lawyer, Leonardo da Quinto, one of the most cultured men of his age, were both constantly employed in the Scaligeri service. The poet Gidino da Sommacampagna was welcomed at court and wrote a singular composite ballad in praise of the "Joyous Scaligeri". The two rulers themselves were accomplished and cultivated. Bartolomeo was a fine performer on the lute, and both he and Antonio had been well grounded in such classical literature as was then known, by their tutor, the learned Maestro Marzagaia. Marzagaia had two ruling passions, devotion to the Scaligeri family and reverence for the ancients. He was never weary of explaining to his pupils the Roman principles of government as enunciated by his favourite author, Valerius Maximus. He remained in their service after they had grown to manhood, and, though by no means blind to Antonio's faults, followed him faithfully into exile. After Antonio's death Marzagaia returned to Verona, and spent his remaining years in the composition of two Latin works mainly directed to the glorification of the Scaligeri, the *De Modernis Gestis* which is arranged in the same manner as Valerius's *Book of Memorable Deeds*, and a treatise on the Scaligeri, in which Marzagaia alternately boasts of their earlier heroism and glory, and bewails their later crimes and ill-fortune, with such countless exclamations and superlatives, in such intricate and wordy style as to become almost incomprehensible in parts.

As time went on, and Antonio approached manhood, the divergence between him and Bartolomeo became more marked, and the latter found his position growing almost untenable. Year by year Antonio grew more overbearing and covetous of a rule, till at last he absorbed nearly all the power into his own hands, and thrust his elder brother into the background. Nevertheless he was insanely jealous of him, because, while he himself was unpopular, Bartolomeo was beloved by every one, the lower classes especially idolising him for his gentleness and goodness of heart. In the summer of 1380 Charles of Durazzo spent three weeks in Verona on his way to attack the notorious Joanna of Naples, and a warm friendship sprang up between him and Bartolomeo. There seems to have been a special affinity between these two young princes, who in so many ways were alike, both gracious, pure-hearted and valiant, both fated to die an early death; and after this visit Bartolomeo, partly owing to the difficulties of his position, partly to the fascination exercised over him by Charles, began

seriously to consider whether he should not abdicate, go to Naples, and enter Charles's service.

But to Naples Bartolomeo never went. In the early morning of 12th July, 1381, he and one of his followers, a mere lad, were found lying dead in the street outside the house of the da Nogarola. The whole city was convulsed with horror and pity. Antonio made a great show of grief, buried his brother with much pomp, and arrested the da Nogarola, alleging that they had murdered Bartolomeo because he had loved one of the women of the family. The accused were examined under torture, but though some were hung and others imprisoned, no evidence incriminating any of the family was produced. Soon ugly rumours began to spread. It came out that Bartolomeo had not been killed on the spot where he was found, but in his own chamber in the Scaligeri palace, and that afterwards his body had been carried into the street. Then it was whispered that certain of Antonio's generals, Giovanni da Isola, and Cortesia da Sarego, were implicated in the matter, and soon men said quite openly that the real criminal was Antonio himself. When Antonio sent to inform the Carraresi officially of the tragedy Francesco da Carrara told the envoy bluntly that he knew Antonio was guilty of his brother's death, and that he would never befriend him again, for he had loved Bartolomeo as a son. Early in 1382 Antonio made one more effort to fix the blame elsewhere. He banished two of the Malaspina, Leonardo and Spineta, on the ground that they had committed the murder, because Spineta had loved Bartolomeo's mistress. There was no trial, however, and Antonio produced no proof of the exiles' guilt; so, far from deceiving any one, this action only added two more to those who were waiting to avenge their wrongs when the time should come.

Though Bartolomeo had taken little part in public affairs, there was a marked change for the worse after his death in the administration of the state. Before, officials accused of malpractices were tried, and punished if guilty. Afterwards, it was impossible to get redress for any injustice, however flagrant, for Antonio trusted his subordinates blindly, and would listen to no complaints. In June, 1382, he married, and now matters went from bad to worse. His bride, Samaritana da Polenta, the lord of Ravenna's daughter, was lovely, but haughty, extravagant and meddling. The wedding was celebrated with a splendour that had not been seen in Verona since the marriage of Mastino II, but nevertheless Antonio's general unpopularity was so great that no strangers except the Ravennese would consent to come. Samaritana introduced a hitherto unknown luxury and ostentation to the Veronese court. Every garment she wore had a crown woven in it. She sent at great expense to Ostiglia to procure the lotions that produced the special golden hue she affected for her hair. The Scaligeri treasury was ransacked for jewels for her, her very slippers being studded with gems. Yet she upbraided the Veronese matrons, who came to do her obeisance, with their extravagance in dress, pushing them rudely from her, and threatening that she would have sumptuary laws passed. For her influence over Antonio was boundless, and she interfered continually in the government with disastrous results. To satisfy her endless wants she urged him to increase the taxes, while she sold her favour to those petitioning for help. For her Ravennese favourites she secured well-paid posts. She prevented complaints from reaching her husband's ears. She alienated him from many of his oldest friends. Any one to whom she took a dislike was banished. In this way she exiled Guglielmo Bevilacqua, at one time head of the Council of Four, and ever since one of Antonio's most faithful and prudent counsellors. Nor was she content with this, but she had Guglielmo's estates confiscated, and when both the Venetians and the Visconti interceded in his behalf, Antonio, at her bidding, gave a point-blank refusal. In the end Guglielmo had his revenge on Samaritana for this persecution. He entered the Visconti service, and it was mainly through him that the Milanese won Verona,

and drove Antonio out.

For some years after Bartolomeo's death Antonio maintained the pacific foreign policy which had helped so largely to restore Verona to prosperity. After a while, however, his ambition and cupidity, skilfully played upon by the Venetians, led him to interfere in a quarrel which had broken out in the Friuli, the district lying to the east of Treviso, of which the two chief towns were Cividale and Udine. On 1st January, 1381, the Patriarch of Aquileia died, and a month later Urban V. appointed the Cardinal Philip d'Alencon to the vacant see. Now the importance of this appointment lay in the fact that the Patriarch of Aquileia was *ex officio* temporal ruler of the Friuli. Alencon was unpopular, because it was feared that being a cardinal he would live outside the Patriarchate, while absorbing its revenues, so though Cividale accepted him, Udine and at least half the district refused to do so. This state of things continued for three years without leading to active hostilities, but early in 1384 Urban VI precipitated a crisis by appealing to Francesco da Carrara to intervene. Francesco induced both parties to submit to his arbitration, and in July pronounced in favour of Alencon, with the proviso that his opponents were to receive a free pardon. The Udinese at first acquiesced in this arrangement. Soon, however, it became clear that Francesco wanted the Friuli for himself. He had lately advanced his frontier to theirs by buying Treviso from Leopold of Austria. He now persuaded Alencon to make him Advocate of the Church of Aquileia, and even took upon himself to send officials to rule Udine. The Udinese took alarm at this, and once more refused to acknowledge the Cardinal. They found willing supporters in the Venetians, who, alarmed, too, by Francesco's aggression, but not wishing to go to war themselves, were on the look-out for allies to subsidize to do the actual fighting. In February, 1385, they made a league with the Udinese, and undertook to provide them with pay for 4,000 troops. Then they made approaches to Verona. Nothing was easier than to rouse Antonio's cupidity. In the course of the negotiations the Venetians let it slip out that they fully expected he would conquer both Padua and Treviso, and on 1st May, 1385, he allied himself with Venice for nine years on the following terms. If either state was attacked by Padua, its ally was to pay it 600 ducats a month, to be raised to 5,000 should the party attacked take the offensive. All conquered territory, excepting a few castles in the north-east of the Paduan district, was to go to Verona.³ It was decided to keep the agreement secret for a time, and meanwhile both allies did their best to throw dust in the Paduans' eyes. Antonio wrote to Francesco that he should always regard him as a father because of the help the Paduans sent Verona at the time of Fregnano's rebellion, and later, when Bemabdi Visconti made his attack. The Venetians passed a resolution to the effect that Francesco was their *amico intimo*, and that every effort must be made to preserve his friendship. Till almost the end of July they constantly urged both him and Alencon to join their league with Udine. Then on the 26th they suddenly threw off all disguise and appointed a commission of five to manage the spiritual affairs of the Patriarchate.

This was the signal for civil war in the Friuli, which was quickly followed by armed intervention by the Paduans. Francesco attacked Alencon's foes, the Udinese, but soon showed his hand, by intriguing to get his natural son, Conte, appointed Patriarch. Meanwhile, Antonio did nothing, though the Venetians did their utmost to embroil him with Padua. At last, however, they prevailed on him to promise to send help to the Udinese. He collected a force at Marostica, close to the Paduan frontier, and requested Francesco for leave to send his troops through the Paduan district. Francesco, of course, refused, and added that after Antonio's recent assurances of friendship he could only regard his action as a breach of faith. He then massed troops on his own frontier opposite Marostica, and so for a while the two

armies stood facing each other. It seemed as though a battle could not be avoided, when the question was unexpectedly solved by a heavy fall of rain which flooded the rivers, and made it impossible to move large bodies of troops.

Antonio, however, now began to prepare in earnest for war. At S. Bonifacio he made a deep fosse, which by continuing the due north-and south line of the Alpone and Adige, would he hoped protect all the western half of his territories from invasion. In the late autumn, without any declaration of war, he sent troops to ravage the south-west part of the Paduan district, and when Francesco remonstrated, replied that he had hired out his men to the Venetians, and was not responsible for what they did. Francesco neatly revenged himself by burning Quartesolo, and alleging as excuse that the troops who did it were in the pay of Alengon. Nevertheless he was genuinely desirous for peace with Verona (partly doubtless because he had as much on his hands elsewhere as he could manage) and made one last effort to secure it. He wrote to Antonio, pointing out that war between Padua and Verona must inevitably lead to the ruin of both—which was only too true—and offering to make an alliance for thirty years and pay all expenses. Antonio, however, seemed set on his own destruction. He had never been engaged in a serious war, and had not the slightest doubt that he would easily beat the Paduans. He answered Francesco's friendly messages with an insolent refusal. "A young dog", he boasted "would drive the old vixen from her lair".

War was now inevitable. On 28th December, 1385, the league between Venice and Verona was renewed. Antonio set to work to form an army and quickly collected a large but ill-trained force, which he put under the command of Ostasio da Polenta, Giovanni degli Ordelaiffi, and Cortesia da Sarego. He cut the water off from the eastern branch of the Bacchiglione, and so stopped all the Paduan mills. He even sent to challenge Francesco da Carrara to personal combat. When the message was delivered in the Council at Padua, Francesco's eldest son, (known as Francesco Novello) leapt to his feet, eager to accept it in his father's stead, but the shrewd old dynast refused to allow it, remarking with a quiet smile that it would ill become a Carrarese to measure swords with a bastard. In April a detachment of Veronese troops got through to the Friuli, but achieved nothing of any importance, and after a month returned home again. Hereupon Antonio proceeded to fortify Rovolone, in the north of the Euganean hills, as the base for an attack on Padua. Meanwhile the main Veronese army made a series of attempts to get across the continuous line of waterways, the Brenta, the artificial channel known as the Brentelle, the Bacchiglione, and the Canale di Battaglia, which so effectively protected Padua from an attack from the west. The Veronese under Cortesia da Sarego first tried to pass the Brenta at Curtarola, but were repulsed from there by Giovanni d' Azzo degli Ubaldini, the Paduan Commander-in-chief. Cortesia then went down to besiege Montagnana, but being driven off by Francesco Novello, returned to the attack on the rivers. He found that Giovanni d'Azzo had taken up a strong position at Tencarola, where the Brentelle joins the Bacchiglione, while the chief ford over the latter river was held by Giacomo da Carrara, a natural son of Francesco's. Cortesia therefore spread a report that he was going to try and cross the Brentelle farther up, and when Giovanni d' Azzo marched north to oppose him, slipped past Tencarola, found a ford over the Bacchiglione at Brusegana, and got his army safely across on 23rd June.

Cortesia was much elated by this success and wrote off to Antonio post-haste to tell him that he had penetrated to Padua itself. Instead, however, of attacking at once, and so taking the city by surprise, Cortesia retired at night to the Bacchiglione, and remained completely inactive for two days. In the interval the main Paduan army under Giovanni d' Azzo had been recalled, and posted outside the walls at the point nearest the enemy, while the

Paduan fleet had been brought up the Brenta. On 25th June, a brilliantly sunny day, as the chroniclers note, the two armies met in a pitched battle. It opened with all the due formalities, the sending and acceptance of the challenge, the drawing-up of the troops in correct battle array, the blowing of trumpets, the beating of drums. At first everything went in favour of the Veronese. Cortesia sent some of his horse to attack a large body of Paduan peasants who were stationed on one side of the battlefield. This led to a general *melée* in that part, ending in the sudden flight of the peasants, who were chased by the Veronese cavalry to the very gates of the city. The jubilant Cortesia at once sent messengers to tell Antonio, who was at Vicenza, that a great victory had been won. Antonio ordered public rejoicings in celebration of the event, and rode off with all possible speed to enter Padua with his triumphant army. But half-way he met other messengers who told a very different tale. Cortesia's good news had again been premature. Giovanni d' Azzo, on seeing the rout of the peasants, had detached a body of horse to pursue the pursuers.

Then he hurled the rest of his men at the main body of the Veronese army, which, already somewhat demoralized by its easily won victory, was moving down on Padua at leisure. The unexpected onslaught threw the whole mass into confusion. The standard-bearer went down at the first shock, and the banner itself was torn into fragments, which were carried off in triumph to Padua. The Veronese now turned to flee, but in their bewilderment could find no way of escape, and were captured almost to a man. Not a single one of the leaders got away. The prisoners were found to number 8,000, the dead close on 800. Over 6,000 horses were taken, 38 bombards, and 250 carts of ammunition. The Scaligeri army had been wiped out.

It is not easy to account for the complete collapse of the Veronese either at the battle of the Brentelle, as it is called, or at their subsequent defeat at Castagnaro. On both occasions they outnumbered the Paduans considerably. Perhaps the right explanation is that suggested by Giuseppe de' Stefani, who notes that Antonio always collected troops in great haste, and with regard rather to quantity than quality, and so often got second-rate leaders and ill-trained men, while the Carraresi, going to work more deliberately, obtained a smaller, but more efficient force.

The defeat of the Brentelle caused great consternation at Verona. The mass of the citizens and the greater part of Antonio's councillors were anxious to have peace made at once. But no argument could move Antonio, especially as the Venetians had adroitly sent him 60,000 ducats just at this juncture. So contemptuously rejecting Francesco's renewed offer of peace, he set to work to form another army. He hired troops from Venice and the Friuli, and took the Count of Landen into his pay, making him, with supreme fatuity, commander-in-chief, though the Italian troops hated both the Count and his men, and nearly mutinied in consequence.

For the rest of the year a desultory warfare was kept up, both in the Friuli and the Veronese district. On the whole fortune was with the Paduans. They destroyed the fortress at Rovolone, and took the weir at Longare.. Later Francesco bribed the Count of Landen into deserting to him. Antonio, though aware of the intrigue, seems to have made no effort to stop it, possibly because of the Count's unpopularity. Francesco also took into his service the famous English *condottiere*, John Hawkwood, or Giovanni Aguto, as the Italians called him, and in February, 1387, Hawkwood and Francesco Novello crossed the Lower Adige by a ford shown them by the Marquis of Este, and spent some weeks ravaging the Veronese district. By the end of the month, however, their provisions ran short, and they were reduced to living on

horse-flesh and roots, so, early in March. Francesco Novello yielded to the representations of the other generals, and fell back towards Castelbaldo, where there was abundance of supplies of all kinds.

All this time Antonio had never once attempted to drive the invaders off. All his energies were concentrated on preparing one supreme blow which should crush the enemy for good and all. He had collected from various sources an army containing 9,400 horse, 1,600 archers and 17,000 foot. This immense force, however, was not so formidable as it sounds, for the infantry were chiefly untrained peasants armed only with iron maces. To his artillery, on the other hand, Antonio had devoted much care. There were many bombards, countless crossbows, and three wondrous new machines, which may in some sort be regarded as the ancestors of the quick-firing gun. On a large square waggon was mounted a structure of four beams, each of which bore twelve bombards, all pointing outwards, and throwing balls of the size of a hen's egg. When a rope was pulled all the bombards on one beam went off together, and when a lever was turned a second beam was brought into position, and fired, and so on till all forty-eight bombards were discharged. These machines were intended to break the enemy's ranks in preparation for a cavalry charge, but they could only do this at close quarters, and on the solitary occasion when an attempt was made to use them, circumstances prevented their being brought near enough to the enemy, so there is no means of judging what effect they would have had.

The command of this vast but unwieldy host was entrusted to Giovanni degli Ordelaffi, who, when he learnt that the Paduans were retiring, started in pursuit. His progress, however, was hindered by his immense supplies of ammunition, provisions and other impedimenta—the maces for the peasants alone filled ten waggons—and he did not come up with the enemy till they had nearly reached the frontier, and were preparing to cross the Adige at Castagnaro. The Paduan army was much smaller than the Veronese. They had, it is true, close on 7,000 horse, and 1,000 archers, but only 1,000 foot. They were not hampered, however, by much baggage, nor by the presence of large numbers of unreliable peasants, while their small body of foot was the highly-trained company of the famous infantry *condottiere*, Cermisone da Parma. The other leaders, too, were all men of proved capacity, Francesco Novello, and his half-brother Conte, Giovanni d' Azzo, Ugolotto Biancardo, and John Hawkwood, who was in command of the whole army.

There was first a discussion among the Paduans as to whether it would be wiser to cross the river before giving battle, or await the enemy's attack on the south side, but eventually by the advice of Hawkwood they decided on the latter course. Hawk wood, in fact, had discovered on that side of the river an almost impregnable position in which to receive the enemy's attack. Immediately to the east of the Paduan camp a broad ditch ran from the Adige on the north to a marsh on the south, while farther east again the marsh curved upwards till it met the river, thus forming a triangle enclosed on all sides by water, from which, however, a ford over the Adige provided a way of escape to the north. Hawkwood had part of the ditch filled up, and on the morning of nth March, hurried his whole army across, leaving the crossbowmen and Cermisone da Parma to guard the way over. Then he divided his cavalry into three parts, spread the first out on foot along the whole line of the ditch, placed the second, also on foot, a short distance behind as a support, and stationed the third in reserve in the rear. This arrangement had hardly been carried out before the whole Veronese army charged down upon the Paduans with terrific shouts of "Scala, Scala, Carne, Carne". Giovanni degli Ordelaffi having given orders that no quarter was to be given. The charge, however, was an absolute failure. The Veronese had done no reconnoitring, and knew nothing of the

existence of the ditch till the cavalry and the three bombard machines were brought up short by it. These latter were thus unable to be used, but the horsemen dismounted, and tried to get over the ditch on foot, and a hand to hand struggle was soon in full progress all along the line. It was fiercest at the point where Francesco Novello, in spite of his generals' remonstrances, had taken up his position in the fore-front of the battle. Urged on by the hope of capturing the heir to Padua, the Veronese flung themselves time after time into the water, only to be hewn down by the axes of Francesco's body-guard before they could scramble up the bank. At last Giovanni degli Ordelaifi got across with a few companions, and was in the very act of taking Francesco, when a general shout of victory rose up from the Paduans. Hawk wood's keen eye had noted that the Veronese centre had fallen into disorder. With 500 horse and all his crossbowmen he hastily repassed the ditch and charged. The Scaligeri standard was taken at once, and in a moment the Veronese were fleeing in all directions. Most of the cavalry were unable to find their horses, and were captured. Francesco Novello turned the tables on his assailants, and made Giovanni degli Ordelaifi and Ostasio da Polenta prisoners. By sunset the whole Veronese army had been routed, excepting 4,000 of the peasants who had entrenched themselves amongst some ditches, and held out there for some hours.

Next day the prisoners were counted and found to number 4,620 horse and 840 foot. Of dead bodies only 700 were discovered, so that more than three-quarters of the Veronese army must have got safely away. The Paduans, moreover, had suffered quite as severely in proportion. A few more such victories, and there would no longer be a Paduan army. Francesco, therefore, left no stone unturned to procure peace. He sent some troops across the fosse of S. Bonifacio to plunder the country round Verona, in hopes that this would terrify Antonio into surrender. At the same time he offered to make peace on exceedingly favourable terms for Verona, and when Antonio flouted his proposals, appealed to the Emperor Wenzel to intervene, assuring him that he was willing to make any sacrifice to secure a lasting settlement. Wenzel eagerly snatched at the opportunity of exercising any authority in Italy, and despatched two envoys to Verona to preside over a conference to discuss peace, but the Veronese representatives raised such palpably trumped-up objections to every proposal, that the Imperial envoys gave up the affair in disgust, and returned to Germany.

The truth was that the Venetians were still secretly urging Antonio on to fight. As soon as they heard of the defeat of Castagnaro they sent him 40,000 ducats, and a little later another 100,000, and with this money he was again collecting troops with his usual haste and inefficiency. Unfortunately for himself he did not follow the rest of the Venetians' advice, and seize the opportunity, which now offered, of allying himself with Milan. In the spring of 1385 the alliance between Milan and Verona had been brought to an end by a revolution in the former city, Bernabo Visconti having been dethroned and imprisoned by his nephew and son-in-law Gian Galeazzo. Antonio had taken up Bernabo's cause warmly, had sent troops to his partisans, and ordered the Veronese court to wear mourning when in the following December Bernabo died in prison. Since then a coolness had prevailed between the Scaligeri and Visconti, but after Castagnaro, Gian Galeazzo, with his usual cunning, made approaches to both parties at once, with the object of selling his friendship to the highest bidder. Antonio, however, refused to give any answer at all to the Milanese envoys, so on 19th April Gian Galeazzo made an offensive alliance with the Carraresi, with the understanding that if the Scaligeri dominions were conquered Verona was to go to Padua, and Vicenza to Milan. On the same day Gian Galeazzo sent a formal declaration of war to Verona, and this at last opened Antonio's eyes. He sent in frantic haste to Padua, offering to make peace on whatever terms Francesco might choose, but the only answer he received was that Francesco was

already allied with Gian Galeazzo, and could not make peace without the latter's consent.

Antonio's downfall was now only a question of time, for Verona lay between Padua and Milan like a nut in a pair of crackers. It was some time before the Milanese moved, but in May the Paduans attacked Vicenza, bombarding it with red-hot stones, and when they found that they were unable to carry it by storm, sitting down to blockade it. In June the Veronese succeeded in throwing in reinforcements, whereupon the besiegers changed their tactics. They proclaimed a truce for two days, and invited the Vicentines to visit their camp. Crowds, both of the nobles and of the middle classes, came out and were entertained with friendly hospitality, and at the end of the two days the Paduan generals and the leading citizens came to an amicable agreement, the latter swearing to yield the town to the Carraresi, if Antonio were driven from Verona, the former pledging themselves to raise the siege at once, and not to attack the city again during the war.

After this the Scaligeri arms met with nothing but misfortune. At the end of July the Paduans took Montegalda, and in the middle of August recaptured the fort at Longare, which Antonio had won back earlier in the year. Antonio was reduced to such a pitch of despair that he abandoned Quartesolo, destroying its fortifications lest the enemy should use it as the base for an attack on Vicenza. Meanwhile the Milanese troops were pressing on from the west. First Peschiera fell, then Lazise and Garda, till by the end of September all the Gardasone, the district between Lake Garda and the Upper Adige, was in the hands of the invaders. Antonio at intervals renewed his appeals for peace to Francesco, but all in vain. He then turned to the Emperor, but all Wenzel could do was to send back the same envoys who had already failed to achieve anything in the spring. The Venetians would not stir a finger to succour their ally. He had served their purpose by checking the expansion of Padua eastwards, and now that they could not save him without putting an army into the field, they decided to abandon him to his fate.

The final act of the tragedy was quickly played. In October Guglielmo Bevilacqua, who with Leonardo and Spineta Malaspina, and other Veronese exiles, was with the Milanese army, opened negotiations with his friends in Verona. It was arranged that the Porta di S. Massimo, in the south-west outer line of walls, should be taken by a stratagem. On 18th October, a party of exiles arrived outside the gate, feigning to be citizens fleeing from the Milanese. Their friends had the doors opened, whereupon the pretended fugitives blocked the portcullis with stones so that it could not be lowered, and almost at once the Milanese troops came up and entered. Antonio, however, on hearing of the commotion, had the gates of the inner walls closed, so that the enemy could not get into the heart of the city. Then, clad in full panoply of armour, he rode into the Piazza, and called upon his people to defend him. But the day of reckoning had come. The hatred which had been smouldering for years suddenly burst into flame. Angry cries arose from the crowd, and it was not the Milanese they threatened, but Antonio. Cowed and mortified, he had barely time to flee to his stronghold by the river, before the storm broke. The public offices were sacked, and many of the archives burnt, the statutes themselves only escaping destruction through the prompt action of their custodian, Rizardo Figaserbo, who hid them as soon as the disturbance began. Antonio did nothing to protect the city from citizen or foreigner. He made one attempt to avert his overthrow by imploring Guglielmo Bevilacqua to use his influence with Gian Galeazzo to make peace. But Guglielmo had not forgotten Samaritana's treatment of him, and would do nothing. So Antonio pusillanimously resigned himself to the loss of his dominions. His life and his treasure, on the other hand, he was resolved to save. He spent the rest of the day seeing his money and jewels placed in boats. Then hastily resigning Verona and Vicenza into the hands

of the Imperial envoy, he took ship with his wife and children, and at nightfall went off down the Adige to Legnago and so to Venice, and with this ignominious flight the Scaligeri dynasty came to an end.

Antonio survived his downfall less than a year. He spent the winter of 1387-88 at Venice, and the spring wandering through Lombardy and Tuscany, in the vain hope that he might induce some of his former friends to fight for him. In this way he dissipated what fortune he had left, the treasure he had brought away with him from Verona, and a sum of 3,000 ducats he had previously deposited at Venice. The greater part went across the Alps to the German princes, who took his money, and did nothing in return. Antonio would have been reduced at last to utter penury if the Venetians had not granted him a pension of 100 ducats a month. Only two of his courtiers followed him into exile, the ever-faithful Marzagaia, and one of his generals, Filippino dal Verme, son of the Pietro dal Verme who was beheaded in 1354. Filippino seconded Antonio's attempts to buy help so zealously, that Marzagaia accuses him of seeking to avenge his father's death by stripping the last of the Scaligeri of all his possessions, but this was probably only one of the unfounded suspicions with which the old scholar's brain was always teeming. In July Antonio went to Perugia, and besought Urban VI. to intervene in his behalf, but the Pope was preparing to attack the Angevins at Naples, and would do nothing for him. So Antonio turned north again, to ask the Florentines for help, but only to meet with another rebuff. He then set out to join his wife and children, but on his way across the Apennines he suddenly fell ill, and was forced to shelter in a wretched hut at Tredozio, near Modigliana. Here, lying on a heap of chaff, with rain dripping on to him from the leaky roof, he died on 5th August, 1388. His death was, of course, attributed to poison, some accusing Gian Galeazzo Visconti, others Francesco da Carrara, of the crime. But the real cause was probably some form of heart disease, for Marzagaia says that the body was opened after death, and the heart found to be unusually large and soft. Antonio is said to have been buried at Ravenna by his brother-in-law Bernardino da Polenta, but no trace of his tomb is to be found. Samaritana and her children were left penniless, but the Venetians had compassion on them, and gave them a pension. They seemed to have settled at Ravenna, for Canfrancesco, Antonio's only son, died there in 1399, poisoned, it was said, by order of Gian Galeazzo. Of the fate of Antonio's three daughters nothing is known.

CHAPTER XV

VERONA UNDER THE VISCONTI AND CARRARESI

WITH Antonio's flight Verona ceased for ever to be an independent state, and sank to the inferior position of a subject city lying on the outer ring of a foreign ruler's territories. It is true that in the next twenty years her citizens exercised their ancient right of electing their lord no less than three times, but twice the rulers, though of Scaligeri blood, were puppets in the hands of a victorious stranger, and the third time the citizens had no choice but to elect that stranger himself.

To Gian Galeazzo, on the other hand, the Veronese surrendered less of necessity than of their own free will. In the end it had been they, and not the Milanese, who had driven out Antonio. There is no record of Gian Galeazzo's election by the Concio, but it is quite possible that this took place, and probably either the Concio or the Greater Council drew up the conditions on which the city consented to accept his rule, for these are exceedingly favourable, and not at all such as would be imposed by a conqueror on a city lying at his mercy. Gian Galeazzo swore to respect the lives, liberties and possessions of the citizens, to reinstate all exiles, to impose no taxes for the next ten years, except those needed to provide the salaries of the officials, to confirm all recent sales of land by the Scaligeri, and to redress all wrongs committed by Antonio. In addition he promised to take Vicenza. This last clause was inserted, it is stated, at the special request of the Veronese, who had probably been prompted by some of the Vicentines, since they were able to add the information that if a couple of thousand lances were despatched to Vicenza the city would fall at once. As a matter of fact it was not necessary to use force. Duplicates of the Vicentine keys had been found in the Castelveccchio, and when Guglielmo Bevilacqua, armed with these, arrived outside Vicenza, the inhabitants admitted him immediately—no objection being raised even by Ugolotto Biancardo, who happened to be present in command of a few Paduan troops—and the formal ceremony of submission took place on 21st October.

Francesco da Carrara's wrath at this breach of the compact of the previous May knew no bounds. But Gian Galeazzo's resolve to keep Vicenza was inflexible. In reply to Francesco's complaints he pointed out that the settlement of May did not apply unless Vicenza was taken by force, that the citizens had submitted to the Milanese of their own free will, and that, moreover, their submission had been made not to him, but to his wife Caterina, who, as daughter of Beatrice della Scala, was the lawful heir of the Scaligeri dominions. The first and last of these statements, as Gian Galeazzo himself knew, were nothing but technical quibbles, but the second was perfectly true. The Vicentines, heedless of the compact they had made with Francesco Novello in June, were determined never to submit to the Carraresi; there can be little doubt that they had suggested the clause about Vicenza in the agreement between Verona and Milan, and they had told Guglielmo Bevilacqua on his arrival that if Gian Galeazzo would not accept the city they would found a republic. In conclusion Gian Galeazzo offered to help Francesco in his attack on the Friuli, in return for a formal release from his pledge about Vicenza, but this proposal Francesco refused to consider for a moment, and war in consequence broke out between Milan and Padua. In the early summer of 1388 Francesco made advances to the Venetians, only to receive the mortifying reply that they had just allied themselves with his foe. The Carraresi soon discovered how unwise they had been to allow Gian Galeazzo to drag them into war before they had made sure of the friendship, or at any

rate the neutrality, of their neighbour on the east. It was now Padua's turn to be the nut between the crackers. In hopes of conciliating the Venetians, whose enmity he believed to be purely personal to himself, Francesco abdicated on 29th June, 1388, in favour of his eldest son. But this step was quite useless. Both Venice and Milan carried on the war with the utmost vigour, till on 21st November Francesco II. yielded his dominions to Gian Galeazzo, who, in spite of having promised him life and liberty, made him and his father prisoners a few days later.

Francesco the Elder remained in prison till his death in October, 1393, but Francesco II escaped, and travelled half over Europe, collecting men and money to recover his dominions. At Munich Francesco met Guglielmo della Scala, the sole surviving son of Cangrande II. Guglielmo, though illegitimate, had inherited all the valour and charm of his great ancestors, and persuaded Francesco to try and drive the Visconti from Verona as well as from Padua. By June, 1390, Francesco had collected a considerable force, and accordingly returned to Italy. Hardly had he crossed the frontier before he was met by envoys from Samaritana da Polenta imploring him to recover Verona for her little son Canfrancesco, and at her request he displayed the Scaligeri banner. Padua he surprised without any difficulty on 19th June, and a few days later the whole district was cleared of the Milanese.

All plans for the liberation of Verona, however, were stultified by the precipitate action of the Veronese themselves. On 22nd June, elated by Francesco's success at Padua, they rose, and seized the whole city, with the exception of the citadel which Gian Galeazzo had built. But dissensions at once broke out among the rebels. The nobles wanted to found a republic, the populace, fearing that this would mean an oligarchy, preferred a despot. The two parties came to blows, the people won, and sent to fetch Antonio's little son, Canfrancesco. Meanwhile Ugoletto Biancardo, who had recently entered the Visconti service, and was hurrying up from Bologna to attack Padua, heard of the revolt at Verona, and at once turned aside to that city. On the evening of the 25th he entered the citadel without any of the rebels being aware of his arrival. Next morning he swooped down on the unsuspecting citizens. There was no time to organize any resistance. For three days the Milanese slew and violated, robbed and burnt to their hearts' content. No distinction was made between friend or foe, native or foreigner. By the end of the three days 1,500 had been killed, many more clapped into prison, and still more had fled. Those who remained were ruined. In all her history Verona never suffered a calamity to compare with this sack.

The Veronese never again dared to rebel against Gian Galeazzo. They did not move when, a few weeks later, Stephen of Bavaria arrived in Padua, with the avowed object of helping Francesco da Carrara to liberate Verona. They took no part in the league formed against Milan in November by Padua, Florence, Bologna, Ferrara and Mantua. When in January, 1391, Francesco led an army up to the walls of Verona, they made no sign, though the Paduans raised the cry of "Scala" and Samaritana da Polenta, clad in knight's armour, rode at Francesco's side. Ugoletto Biancardo was still in Verona, and the citizens had far too vivid a remembrance of his drastic methods of vengeance to move a finger to help their would-be deliverers. So the Paduans withdrew, and though the war lasted another year, the troops of the allies never again came within striking distance of Verona.

Apart from the sack of 1390 Gian Galeazzo proved himself a beneficent despot, and the Veronese seem soon to have reconciled themselves to his rule. Many of the leading citizens entered his service and won fame for themselves. After Antonio's death even Marzagaia returned to his native city. The statutes of Cangrande I were still the law of the land. In

occupying Verona, Gian Galeazzo had regarded himself as succeeding not merely to the rule, but to the Scaligeri estates as well, and had forced the bishop and the other great ecclesiastical owners to enfeoff him with their lands. He was an excellent landlord, confirming all the privileges his tenants had formerly enjoyed, and in cases of great poverty granting them new ones, *e.g.*, in 1394 he exempted the charcoal burners of the Lessine Alps from a recent addition to the quantity of salt each householder was bound to buy annually, which till then had been two bushels a house, and half a bushel extra for every pig kept.

Gian Galeazzo, being rarely present in Verona, governed it through four officials nominated by himself, the Podesta, Captain, Vicar-General, and a *Magister Intratarum* who superintended finance, and corresponded more or less to the factors of the Scaligeri. In 1392 he created a new Council at Verona, consisting of these four officials, and two others nominated by himself. The primary object of this Council, whose functions were purely executive, was to lighten the labours of the central government, but incidentally it was a great boon to the Veronese, who were thus saved many a wearisome journey to Milan. Another of Gian Galeazzo's decrees was, however, indirectly injurious to Verona. To help the newly founded University at Pavia Gian Galeazzo ordered in September, 1392, that any of his subjects who wished to take the degree of doctor must do so there. This was a death-blow to the University of Verona as a degree-conferring body, though the seven professorships continued to be maintained by the State.

In 1393 a new manuscript of the statutes was drawn up, and promulgated in the Concio. There were hardly any changes, except that Gian Galeazzo's name was substituted for that of the Scaligeri in a few statutes, and that the sixth book, treating of the military, was omitted, since military affairs were now regulated from Milan. The Concio, the Greater Council, the Anziani and the Gastaldi still, therefore, existed as under the Scaligeri, and probably with but slightly diminished powers; but the extinction of the Veronese army as a separate entity marked in a very definite way the loss of Veronese independence.

All the building that went on at Verona under Gian Galeazzo was purely military. In 1389 he constructed an immensely strong citadel by building two new walls between the outer and inner fortifications, one from where the Porta Nuova now stands, to the Portoni, the other along the right bank of the lower Adige. He further rebuilt the inner south-west wall from end to end, with an interior passage which led into the Castelvecchio, and replaced the Porta Bra by two great arches, known as the Portoni, one of which crossed the moat, while the other was used as a gate-way. In 1392 the Porta di S. Massimo, the northernmost of Cangrande's gates, was walled up, and a new gate opened nearer the river, possibly where the Porta di S. Zeno now stands. Next year saw the rebuilding of the Castel di S. Pietro, long a complete ruin, and the commencement of one of those grandiose feats of engineering of which the later Italian rulers were so fond. Gian Galeazzo had long aimed at the conquest of Mantua, and finding the city impregnable by all ordinary means on account of the two shallow lakes which almost surround it, conceived the idea of diverting the Mincio, the river which feeds these lakes, from its course, so that they might dry up, and the miasma from the mud poison the inhabitants. With this object in view he built an embankment across the shallow moraine valley of the Mincio, at Borghetto, close to the end of Mastino II's *Serraglio* at Valeggio. The embankment was half a mile long and fifty feet broad, was faced by battlemented walls, and strengthened by three towers, one at each end, and one towards the eastern side, where the embankment became a bridge, through which the Mincio was to flow, till a cutting had been made in the hills to the east of the valley, and the original channel blocked by strong sluice-gates. The project was, however, never completed, for it was found impossible to build sluice-

gates strong enough to resist the strong current of the Mincio, and the cutting in the hills was only carried a short way. The arches of the bridge have long ago fallen in, destroyed either by flood or earthquake, but the embankment and its towers still stand, and form an unusual and picturesque ruin, with vines growing on the broad causeway above, and gloomy guardrooms below, and below all the swift-flowing stream, blue as turquoise, and translucent as crystal.

Gian Galeazzo died on 3rd September, 1402, leaving his dominions between his two sons, Filippo Maria, who received Pavia, Verona, Vicenza, Bassano, Feltre, and Belluno, and Gian Maria, to whose share fell Milan and the rest of the Visconti territories. As both were minors, the Government was carried on by Gian Galeazzo's widow, Caterina, and a Council of Regency. At the time of his death Gian Galeazzo had been engaged in a struggle with Padua over Belluno, Feltre and Bassano, but Caterina found herself unable to hold the three towns, and in December, 1402, she made peace with Francesco da Carrara, and promised to cede them to him. But in the following August they were still in the hands of the Visconti, so Francesco declared war again on Milan, and marched on Verona. Canfrancesco, Antonio's son, was already dead, but Guglielmo della Scala had returned to Italy and was living at Padua, so Francesco could once more pose as the champion of the Scaligeri. Nevertheless none of the Veronese went over to his side, and he was repulsed first from Verona, and then from Brescia, while two of Guglielmo's sons, Brunoro and Antonio, who got into Legnago, were driven out again in a few days.

BRIDGE BUILT BY GIAN GALEAZZO



Next year, however, Francesco was more successful. In January, 1404, he went plundering and burning up to Verona, and when the Vicentines raided Paduan territory in

return, defeated them with great slaughter. Caterina sent reinforcements to Verona, but they never entered the city, as Francesco bribed their leader to take his men elsewhere. At last Caterina, in despair of being able to hold them, offered both Verona and Vicenza to Venice, in return for help against Padua. Before the Venetians, however, had made up their mind to accept the offer, Verona was lost to the Visconti. Guglielmo della Scala had been in Venice, and on learning of the negotiations hurried back to Padua, and on 20th March, proposed to Francesco that the latter should help him to recover the Scaligeri dominions, in return for Vicenza. Guglielmo himself could contribute nothing to the expenses of the expedition, for he possessed only a couple of thousand ducats in the world, and had for some years been driven to support himself by occupying Podestaships and other official posts in the various Carraresi cities, but he was in touch with many of the Veronese and had formed quite a large party, who were ready to rise if he should attack. Francesco took several days to consider the proposal, but ended by accepting it, and on 26th March, the following compact was signed. Francesco was to help Guglielmo win Verona; when this was accomplished Guglielmo was to give Legnago to Francesco, and in his turn to help the Paduans take Vicenza, and till this was done Guglielmo's two sons, Brunoro and Antonio, were to accompany the Paduan army wherever it went.

On the 30th, Francesco and Guglielmo led a large force out of Padua. They went by way of Cologne which they tried to take, but without success. Late in the evening of 7th April, they arrived outside Verona without the Milanese garrison being aware of it, and during the night succeeded in surprising some sentinels and scaling the wall by the Campo Marzo. By daybreak all the city east of the Adige was in their hands, and as the inhabitants were on their side they had no difficulty in repulsing Ugoletto Biancardo when he crossed the river to attack them. For two days, however, the Milanese succeeded in holding the bridges, till, on the morning of the 10th, the Paduans carried the Ponte delle Navi, whereupon Ugoletto Biancardo retired to the citadel, and abandoned everything else to the invaders. The Veronese welcomed their liberators with the greatest delight. The crowd loudly demanded that the Scaligeri should be restored to power, and amidst scenes of wild rejoicing Guglielmo was taken to the Tribuna, acclaimed lord of Verona, and presented with the standard of the Commune and the rod of office.

Eight days later Guglielmo died. With one exception the chroniclers accuse Francesco of having had him poisoned, but all the evidence points in the other direction. Guglielmo himself had no doubts of Francesco's loyalty, for on his death-bed he recommended his sons to his care, and far from putting difficulties in the way of Brunoro and Antonio's succession, Francesco had them elected lords of Verona at once. One chronicler, Andrea Gataro, attributes Guglielmo's death to illness, and corroborates his statement by so many graphic touches scattered throughout his account, that it is impossible to believe they can have been invented, professed eulogist of the Carraresi though Gataro was. He notes, to begin with, that Guglielmo was already suffering from fever when he returned to Padua from Venice. A little later he states that the expedition was delayed three days in starting because Guglielmo was ill, that on the march he could not ride, but was carried in a cart, that he was indeed able to mount a horse to make his triumphal entry, but that he was in a high fever at the time, and was only buoyed up by excitement, and that finally he had to be carried from his horse to the Tribuna. If all this is true, the only wonder is, not that Guglielmo died, but that he survived his election so long as a week.

As no help came from Milan, Ugoletto Biancardo surrendered in a fortnight. The attack on Vicenza, however, ended in complete failure. The Vicentines were still determined to have

nothing to do with the Carraresi. When Francesco's eldest son, called Francesco like his father and grandfather, seized one of the suburbs on 22nd April, and summoned the citizens to surrender, they returned an indignant refusal, and offered the city to Venice. On the 28th, the Venetian representative arrived, took possession of the city, and hoisted the banner of the Republic. Great was the wrath of the Paduans at this unfriendly act of a power with whom they were at peace, but as they could not face war with both Venice and Milan, they raised the siege.

Francesco II had by this time returned to Padua, but he left a large body of troops behind him in Verona under his second son Giacomo. This arrangement was most displeasing to the city's nominal rulers, Brunoro and Antonio, but though they had begun to doubt Francesco's good faith, they did not venture on open remonstrance. Instead they sent secretly to ask the Venetians to help them drive the Paduans out. This was a fatal mistake on the part of the Scaligeri, for, once it became known, it was bound to furnish Francesco with a pretext for overthrowing them. As luck would have it one of the Veronese envoys could not hold his tongue, and let out to some Paduans in Venice what his errand was. Francesco was already annoyed with Brunoro and Antonio, because they had refused to accompany the Paduan army in its attack on Vicenza. He now made up his mind to get rid of them altogether and take Verona for himself. It was easier to accomplish this plan by treachery than by force. On 18th May, the two princes, nothing doubting, went to sup with Giacomo da Carrara in the Castelvechio. After supper Giacomo led them into a room apart, and told them that his father wished to see them. They were at once seized, and despatched the same night by water to Padua, before any one in the city knew what had occurred. Next day they were brought before Francesco, who reproached them bitterly with having broken faith with him, and then told them that he knew of their negotiations with Venice. After this it was useless to feign innocence, Brunoro therefore acknowledged everything, and humbled himself to the dust in the hopes of turning Francesco's wrath aside, asking pardon for what he had done amiss, and acknowledging that he and Antonio owed all they had to the generosity of the Carraresi. Francesco, however, was set on taking Verona, and Brunoro's servility had no effect upon him. He cut the interview short, and sent the two brothers off to prison.

It is the custom to denounce Francesco for having betrayed Brunoro and Antonio, and undoubtedly the actual manner in which he effected their capture was treacherous. But it must be remembered that he had every reason for regarding them as his enemies. They had broken the compact of 26th March, both by refusing to help him against Vicenza, and by keeping Legnago for themselves, while the negotiations with Venice could only be looked upon as preliminary to an open rupture. To his credit, too, it must be said that, once he had the two princes in his power, he did them no hurt, but deported them to Germany, where they were set at liberty. On the other hand he had given Brunoro and Antonio just cause for suspicion by keeping troops at Verona without their consent, and there can be no doubt that from the very first he had meant to use the Scaligeri as his tools, and that when he found them not so obedient as he wished he resolved to remove them.

On 21st May Francesco went to Verona. He received an enthusiastic welcome, for he had already won over the populace by importing large supplies of corn, of which they were badly in need, while he had gained supporters amongst the nobles by knighting several on the occasion of the taking of the Ponte delle Navi. On the 22nd the Concio acclaimed him lord of Verona, and the citizens bore him on their shoulders to the palace, amidst general shouts of "Carro, Carro". After the election Francesco continued the same policy of conciliation as before. He confirmed most of the officials. He dismantled the citadel. Though in urgent need

of money, he put on no fresh taxes, but sold the Scaligeri estates, which on his election he had “inherited,” as Gian Galeazzo had before him. He placed several of the nobles on his Council, and his wife Taddea became so friendly with the Veronese ladies that many of them accompanied her back to Padua.

The Carraresi, however, soon began to find their new acquisition more trouble than profit. It aroused the jealousy of their neighbours, who, moreover, as the Paduan army was not large enough to guard their extended frontier, quickly began to encroach. The Gonzaghi seized Ostiglia and Peschiera. The bishop of Trent quietly possessed himself of Riva. But the most serious menace came from Venice. In April Caterina Visconti had voluntarily ceded Feltre, Belluno and Bassano to Venice rather than let them fall into the hands of the Paduans. The Guelph party, however, predominated in all these three cities, and, as Francesco was the head of the Guelph party in East Lombardy, they drove out their Venetian garrisons in June and gave themselves to him. Impossible that this should not lead to war between Venice and Padua. The Venetians demanded Cologne and 30,000 ducats in compensation. Francesco, though wrongly, regarded Cologne as the key of both Padua and Verona, and could not make up his mind to part with it. So on 23rd June he sent a formal challenge to the Venetians, and entered their territory. The Venetians replied by an alliance with the Gonzaghi.

From the first the war went against the Carraresi. The Venetian army was divided into two parts, one of which attacked Padua, the other Verona. The latter took up its quarters in the fertile Vai Pollicella, to the north-west of Verona, and burnt and ravaged everywhere systematically for months on end. By May, 1405, this harrying had reduced the city to great straits. Then in June the Venetians marched in a great half-circle from the west to the east of Verona, leaving blackened villages and bare fields everywhere in their wake, and dearth became famine. The Paduans could do nothing to drive them off, for Francesco had the greatest difficulty in defending Padua itself from the other branch of the Venetian army. The Veronese were starving, so when, on 22nd June, 400 Venetian horse appeared outside the walls, and summoned the city to surrender, the inhabitants rose, barricaded the streets, seized the bridges, and drove the Paduan garrison into the castle. Then they proceeded to organize a temporary government by reviving the ancient office of the Captain of the People, and sent to offer the city to the Venetians. Next day the Venetian Provveditor entered Verona and was presented with the keys and rod of office. Giacomo da Carrara held out in the Castelveccchio till the 28th, and then escaped by being let down in a basket from the walls.

The tragic fate of the Carraresi can only be recounted very briefly here. The war ended in the following November in their complete defeat, and they yielded up Padua to Venice on condition that their lives and liberty should be untouched. Nevertheless Francesco II and both his sons, Francesco and Giacomo, were thrown into prison, and in January, 1406, they were all slain in their dungeons, the elder Francesco, his spirit still unbroken, fighting the executioners to the very last with a wooden stool. The Veronese regarded his death as a judgment from Heaven for his treachery to Brunoro and Antonio, but however much Francesco may have wronged the Scaligeri, it must be confessed that he was far more deeply sinned against by the Venetians.

Brunoro and Antonio found after their deportation a safe refuge in Bavaria with the rest of their brothers. It was many years before Brunoro gave up all hope of regaining Verona. He became a hanger-on at the court of the Emperor Sigismund, and from there constantly fomented intrigues among the Veronese, though without any success. Never again did he set foot on Veronese territory, nor was he apparently connected in any way with a rebellion

which broke out in the city in 1413, when Sigismund was in the Trevisan district. This rebellion was headed by two brothers of the da Quinto family, who with eighty followers seized the tower of the Ponte delle Navi. But though they raised the cry of Scala, none of the better-class citizens joined them, and the rising was easily crushed. It was followed by a large number of executions, and many of the victims were accused of having intrigued with Brunoro, but no evidence in support of the accusation was forthcoming. Brunoro's machinations, however, kept the Venetians in a constant state of uneasiness, and they offered 4,000 ducats to any one who would slay him, or 3,000 if he were taken alive. In 1412 Sigismund created him Imperial Vicar of Verona and Vicenza, and he appears to have used the title all his life, at any rate he is to be found doing so in May, 1437; and some negotiations, which the Venetians opened later in this year with the object of getting him to give up his claims, failed because they did not offer a sufficiently high price. But with the death of Sigismund in December, 1437, Brunoro lost his only possible supporter and ceased to be an anxiety to Venice. Brunoro left one son, and a family of Scaligeri, descended either from him or Antonio, is known to have existed in Bavaria as late as 1544. Since then, however, the male line seems to have died out completely, for the Scaligeri, who became so famous in the sixteenth century as humanists, were not in any way connected with the Veronese dynasty, but assumed the name, as did the so-called Bartolomeo della Scala, who headed a rebellion in 1522, in the vain hope of driving the Venetians out.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LATER HISTORY OF VERONA

AFTER 1405 Verona ceased to have a history of her own, and till the Napoleonic wars shared, first the prosperity, and then the decadence of Venice. The citizens had no voice in the higher branches of government, though they were freely admitted to the lower offices. Immediately after the submission the Doge had issued a decree known as the Golden Bull, which guaranteed to the Veronese the right to be governed according to their own laws, and reserved to them all offices except the Podestaship, which the Venetians retained in their own hands. But before July was out, considerable modifications were made in the Constitution, and the Golden Bull became a dead letter. The Greater Council was reduced from 500 to 50, and it was decreed that these should be elected every six months by lot from the citizens, by the Council of Twelve *ad Utilia*. This is the earliest notice on record of the Council of Twelve, but as it is referred to as already in existence, some have thought that it was not created by the Venetians, but had existed under the Visconti and Carraresi, and possibly under the later Scaligeri. It seems, however, impossible to connect it, as Cipolla suggests, with the *savi*, who in 1376 together with the Anziani and Gastaldi passed the reforms about land, or with either Gian Galeazza's Council of Six, or the more fluid Council of the Carraresi, and the probabilities are that it was founded by the Venetians between the submission of the city on 5th July, and 31st July, the date of the document in which it is first mentioned. Whatever its origin, however, it rapidly developed into a characteristic Venetian institution, becoming the executive Council of the Rectors. These latter, the Podesta and the Captain, were invariably appointed by the Venetians, and were responsible for the whole machinery of government, judicial, administrative and military, but the lower offices were held by natives, and the Venetians did their utmost to foster Veronese commerce and industry, especially the wool-trade, which flourished greatly during the early centuries of the Venetian rule.

The war of 1437-41 between Venice, Florence and the Pope on one side, and Milan and Mantua on the other, is famous for the daring exploits of the *condottieri*, Gattamelata, Sforza, and Piccinino, and also for a marvellous engineering feat in the winter of 1439-40, when the Venetians transported a fleet from the Upper Adige to Lake Garda across the northern slopes of Monte Baldo. The Milanese were pressing Brescia hard, and the Venetians wished to throw supplies into the city by way of the Lake, but were unable to bring vessels up the Mincio as usual, because the Mantuans had taken Peschiera. The appeals from Brescia became more and more urgent, till at last the Venetian government accepted the constantly repeated proposal of a native of Candia, named Nicolo Sorbolo, to transport a fleet overland to Lake Garda. Six large galleys and twenty-five boats were collected at Verona, and towed up the river to Mori, from where there is a comparatively easy track to the Lake, first up a broad and gently-rising valley to the beautiful little twin Lakes of Loppio, from there up a steeper gradient to the highest point of the pass, and finally down a still steeper, but not actually precipitous face of rock to the harbour of Torbole. At Mori a regular army of sappers, engineers, and other workmen had been collected, and over 2,000 oxen. The smaller boats were placed on waggons and so transported without great difficulty as far as the road went, but no waggon could hold one of the galleys. They were therefore, incredible as it sounds, each harnessed to 120 pair of oxen, and dragged along the road over logs which acted as rollers. How they were kept upright during this process the account does not relate. At the Lakes of Loppio, however, the road came to an end. Undeterred by this. Sorbolo had filled up the bed of a torrent with rocks,

logs, and earth, and up this the vessels were hauled one after the other with immense labour to the summit. The hardest feat of all, however,—lowering the ships down the steep rock-face to Torbole—still remained to be accomplished. Any one who has crossed from Mori to Riva by the little mountain railway, and suddenly seen Lake Garda appear hundreds of feet below, will realize the difficulties of the undertaking. It was impossible to drag the vessels down the slope, so stout hawsers were made fast to trees and rocks, and with the utmost caution first the boats, and then the galleys, were let down one by one to the water, till the whole fleet, greatly to Sorbolo's credit, rode safely on the Lake. The transit from Mori to Torbole had been accomplished in the wonderfully short time of fifteen days, and cost as many thousand ducats, exclusive of the hire of the oxen. The fleet failed to get supplies into Brescia, but remained on the Lake for the rest of the war, and Brescia was relieved after a heroic resistance in 1440.

During the wars of the League of Cambrai, Verona went over to the Allies, and was under the rule of the Emperor Maximilian for a few years. It appears, however, that this was not so much due to the inclination of the Veronese, as to the supineness of the Venetian authorities. The Venetians had prepared to hold the line of the Mincio, they had collected troops and corn at Verona, they had fortified Peschiera and Legnago, and made arrangements for flooding the marshes in the south of the district. But after the defeat of Agnadello (14th May, 1409) the Senate at once resigned themselves to losing their mainland possessions, and the Rectors in the subject cities displayed in consequence great indecision and incapacity. Especially was this the case at Verona, where, in the absence of definite orders from Venice, they could not make up their minds either to leave the city or defend it. At last the Veronese upper classes, terrified by the approach of the French King with 30,000 men, took matters into their own hands, appointed a provisional government, asked the Rectors to depart, lest their presence should give the enemy an excuse for a sack, and sent to offer the city to Louis. Louis, however, refused to accept it, as by the terms of the League all the land east of the Mincio was to go to the Emperor. The Veronese, therefore, offered themselves to Maximilian, who, after some delay, sent George of Neideck, bishop of Trent, to govern the city, but did not come himself till the following October. This arrangement seems to have coincided with the wishes of the Venetians, who, while they did not, as has been asserted, issue a decree authorizing it, preferred to see their cities in the weak hands of Maximilian, rather than under the powerful French King. The nobles and richer citizens generally became fervent Imperialists, but the lower classes, especially in the district, regretted the change from the very first, and there can be little doubt that if the Rectors had shown some firmness they would have been able, with the help of the populace, to hold the city.

The allies, like the Venetians, made Verona a mustering-place for their troops, and a great deal of skirmishing went on up and down the road to Vicenza. The city was besieged three times, in 1510, 1513, and 1516, and it was ravaged by pestilence and famine, while all the time the allies' troops pillaged and robbed as though they were in an enemy's country. By the peace of Brussels in 1516, it was arranged that Verona should be restored to Venice, but to save Maximilian's pride this was effected in a circuitous way. The Emperor gave the city to his nephew, Charles of Spain; after holding it six weeks, Charles gave it to Francis I. of France, and he, three days later, handed it over to the Venetians. The King of France, it is said, was strongly tempted to keep so fair a city for himself, and insisted on receiving 36,000 florins in compensation. The Venetians entered on 18th January, 1517, and were received by the populace with extraordinary manifestations of joy; bells were rung, fireworks discharged, the streets were so full that it was almost impossible to move, and two winged stone lions of S. Mark, which had been buried when the Emperor entered, were dug up again and carried

about the city in triumph. The Venetians did not punish the Veronese in any way for their defection, but they destroyed the Visconti citadel, practically rebuilt the whole outer ring of fortifications, and made a *spianata* at least a mile wide all round the city, traces of which can still be seen.

The Veronese, of course, suffered in the various mainland wars in which Venice took part from time to time, but they suffered still more from a pestilence which broke out in January, 1630, and raged till October, 1631. The Venetians issued and enforced an order completely isolating Verona, forbidding any one to leave the city till the plague had worn itself out. For twenty months the Veronese were shut up with the horror, and by the end of the time only two out of every five of the inhabitants remained alive. In 1627, they had numbered 53,000, by the end of 1631 they were only just over 20,000. It took more than a century to repair the ravages of this plague, for by 1730 the population had only reached 48,000—5,000 short of what it had been ninety-nine years before.

On 1st June, 1796, the French army under Napoleon surprised Verona. It must be noted, however, that the French occupation was at first a purely military one, and that the Venetians continued for nearly a year to carry on the administration. On 30th July the Austrians took the city, but were driven out again in a week's time by the French.

In the following spring the Veronese rose against the French, and succeeded in taking the city, and holding it from 17th April to the 20th, but were then crushed by superior numbers. Much has been written about the Veronese *Pasque*, as this rising is called; it has been compared to the Sicilian Vespers, and the Veronese have been accused of committing many atrocities, including the butchery of civilians and of the wounded. But, as a matter of fact, they only attacked the military, and though one hospital was fired on by mistake, the French wounded as a whole were tended with great care by their enemies. After the rising, the Venetians, realizing that they could no longer hope to recover the city, ceded it formally to the French. In 1798 the see-saw of war gave Verona once more to the Austrians, but the peace of Luneville two years later cut the city into two parts ruled by different nationalities, the right bank of the Adige remaining Austrian, the left going to the French, while the bridges remained neutral territory, guarded at each end by sentries. This singular arrangement lasted till 1805, when the French regained the whole city, to hold it till 1814. During this period they governed excellently, introducing the Napoleonic code, and doing much to improve the health of the city, though the constant drain of conscripts for the wars was bitterly resented.

After this Verona once more became Austrian and remained so till 1866. Carlo Alberto's gallant attempt to liberate the city, in the spring of 1848, failed completely, and the Austrians then established the famous Quadrilateral, consisting of four first-class fortresses, Verona and Legnago on the Adige, Peschiera and Mantua on the Mincio. Nevertheless the victory of Solferino in 1859 would have set Verona free, had not Napoleon III been cowed by the threat of Prussian intervention on the Rhine. The Austrians' victory at Custozza on 24th June, 1866, seemed as though it would settle their yoke for ever on the necks of the Veronese, but the battle of Sadowa a few days later reversed the verdict of Custozza, and by the Treaty of Vienna, on 3rd October 1866, Verona was at last united to the Kingdom of Italy. The national army entered the city on the 16th, and a few days later a *plebiscite* of city and province resulted in 88,864 votes in favour of the Union, and scarcely a single one against.

It was some years, however, before Verona recovered from the effects of this change, indeed for a time it seemed as though she were to be less prosperous as part of Italy than when

under foreign rulers. But of late years she has won back more than she lost, and is now one of the most flourishing cities in North Italy. The population is close on 74,000. Manufactures and trade are increasing. A picturesque market is still held daily in the Piazza Erbe. Electric trams have just been introduced. Though there is no University there is much intellectual life. The *Biblioteca Capitolare* is one of the richest in manuscripts in Italy, and the *Biblioteca Comunale* has a splendid collection of documents and printed works connected with the history of the city. The public health was much improved by the erection after the great flood of 1882 of the *muraglioni*, the great embankments which now border the Adige on both sides almost throughout the city. Besides preventing floods these *muraglioni*, with their broad roadways on the top, form a fine lung for the densest parts of the town, and afford delightful views of the surrounding hills, and many of the churches and other beautiful buildings. And it must be counted unto the later Veronese for righteousness that, while producing no architect of the first rank, they have done their utmost to preserve the work of past ages. S. Zeno, S. Anastasia, S. Lorenzo and S. Maria Antica have all been restored of late years. The Loggia of the Palazzo del Consiglio was restored in 1873, and five years later the Casa dei Mercanti was rebuilt as far as possible on the original lines. The amphitheatre, one of the best preserved in the world, was carefully restored about 1820, and the Roman theatre, which is now (1909) being excavated, gives every sign of being exceptionally perfect, while all classical sculpture which is discovered anywhere in the city or the country round is removed to the *Museo Civico*.

CHAPTER XVII

THE VERONESE SCHOOL OF PAINTING

COMPARATIVELY few people realize that a very distinct school of painting once existed at Verona, yet painting developed there earlier than almost anywhere else, and for a century and more the Veronese led the rest of Italy in art. Several causes have combined to keep this unknown. To begin with, the greatest Veronese artists, Altichiero da Zevio, Avanzo, Pisanello, and Paolo Caliari, usually called Veronese, did their best work outside Verona, so that their names came to be connected with other cities, indeed Caliari cannot be included in the Veronese school at all, so completely was he absorbed by Venice and the Venetian tradition. On the other hand, many of the lesser painters whose work, if not of the first order, is still extraordinarily fascinating, can only be studied in Verona itself. Finally, with the exception of Caliari, Verona produced no painter of genius in the sixteenth century, hence while that century was regarded as the golden age of art, to the exclusion of all that went before, it was not unnatural that the Veronese school was neglected. Of late, however, the writings of Gruyer, von Schlosser, Schubring, and Hill, have done much to restore it to its rightful position. These critics have shown, that while the fourteenth century Veronese artists may have owed something to Giotto, their style progressed along lines peculiarly its own, and that working almost entirely on empirical methods, they grappled successfully with problems which he had left unsolved, so that Verona took the lead in the development of painting for a hundred years after his death.

The oldest frescoes in Verona date from 996 A.D., according to an inscription in contemporary character. They represent Christ in glory with four saints, and were discovered in the Church of S. Nazaro under a later series of the same subject, which is certainly not later than the twelfth century, and may even date from the eleventh. From this time on to the sixteenth century painting flourished without a break at Verona. To the twelfth century belongs the rude Crucifixion in the lower Church of S. Pietro in Carnario, to the thirteenth some of the frescoes in S. Zeno,—three saints over the door into the sacristy, the gigantic figure of S. Christopher, the Baptism of Christ, and the naive Raising of Lazarus. The Colossal Madonna on one of the pillars in the crypt, it is, however, not easy to date. This frowning, not to say ferocious Virgin is markedly Byzantine, and therefore outside the regular development of Veronese art, which was strangely unaffected by the Byzantine school. All these early paintings are by unknown artists. The first Veronese professional painter whose name has come down to us, is a certain Ognibene described as *pictor* in a document of 1263. Ognibene's period of activity must have lain in the first half of the thirteenth century, for it is stated that he is dead, and his grandson appears as witness to the document. As far as is known none of his work survives, nor does that of another professional painter of the same century, Poja, who is mentioned in a document of 1298. Of fourteenth century painting, however, many examples remain. To the first half of this century belong a fine painting of Guglielmo da Castelbarco in S. Fermo and most of the frescoes in S. Zeno,—the Presentation in the Temple, the Descent from the Cross, the Burial of S. Zeno, the figures of S. Caterina and S. Alb on two pillars in the nave, and the scenes from the lives of S. Nicholas, S. George and Tobias. These, according to Bernasconi, are all by the same hand, and while the stiffness of outline shows that they are not, as has been asserted, by Giotto, his influence may be traced

in the composition, the graceful and finished drawing of the heads, and the tender and reverent feeling which breathes through the whole painting.

So Bernasconi, but many others doubt if Giotto exercised any influence at all over the early Veronese school. No authentic evidence remains of his ever having visited Verona. True, Vasari states that he decorated the Scaligeri palace there, but no trace of these paintings is left, and as Vasari makes no mention of the celebrated frescoes in the Arena Chapel at Padua, which Giotto painted in 1306, but represents him as first coming to that city after 1316, at the invitation of the Scaligeri, and then going to Ravenna to visit Dante—Dante, who died seven years before Cangrande won Padua—it is clear that Vasari is quite untrustworthy as far as Giotto's travels in East Lombardy are concerned. The Veronese artists must have had many opportunities of studying Giotto's works in Padua, especially during the ten years of the Scaligeri domination, yet, apart from the S. Zeno frescoes, no traces of his influence are to be found in Veronese art. The few paintings that remain of the middle of the fourteenth century, a fresco over the door of S. Maria della Vittoria, two Madonnas with portraits of Mastino II., one in S. Anastasia, one in S. Maria della Scala, and a crucifix by Turone, are of little artistic value, and when in the last thirty years of the century Veronese art suddenly sprang into the first rank with the work of Altichiero da Zevio and Avanzo it developed quite differently from the Tuscan school.

Much of this dissimilarity arose from the different development in Tuscany and Lombardy of the sister art of sculpture. In Lombardy sculpture remained subordinate to architecture till the fifteenth century; in Tuscany, mainly owing to the genius of one man, Niccola Pisano, it was early regarded as an end in itself, and reached its zenith while painting was still immature. Hence the Tuscan painters long imitated the sculptor as far as possible, and nothing is more marked than the plastic quality of Giotto's art, especially in the Paduan frescoes. Here the human figures, viewed as individuals, form the principal interest of the picture; they are generally half the height of the whole scene, and out of all proportion to the buildings, which, like the natural features, trees, rocks, etc., are treated conventionally as flat ornament. Very different is Altichiero's and Avanzo's handling of a scene. They look on figures as members of a group and not individuals. They attempt to preserve the right proportion between them and the other parts of the picture, and the figures and the framework of architecture are often brought into closer relation by the device of placing pillars in the foreground, introducing *loggie* and arbours. While Giotto regarded a picture more as a symbol than a representation of an actual scene, and eliminated all but the most essential points, the Veronese were frankly realistic, delighting to reproduce everyday sights, and not fearing to put touches of humour in the most solemn subjects. Their figures, especially the women, are drawn from the human beings round them. Giotto's might be copied from statues. In several technical problems, too, the Veronese artists show a great advance upon the Tuscans. Their colouring is richer and more harmonious, they do not yet understand altogether how to manage the lighting of a picture, but they look upon it as a whole, and while linear perspective still presents difficulties, aerial perspective has been mastered to a great extent.

It is not surprising that so much technical progress should have been made between the painting of the Chapel of the Arena and that of Altichiero's and Avanzo's masterpiece, the frescoes in the chapel of S. Felice in S. Antonio at Padua, for the former dates from 1306, while the latter was not begun till 1372; but it is difficult to know what artist bridged the long interval. Pupil of Giotto Altichiero he cannot have been, apart from the difference of style, for he was born in 1330, only six years before the Tuscan master's death. The date of Avanzo's birth is not known, but as he worked in conjunction with Altichiero from 1364 to 1384, it may

be concluded that he was not much older. At this time the Veronese school seems to have been quite independent of the neighbouring schools of Venice and Treviso. Possibly the link may have been the Paduan Guariento, whose *Paradiso* in the Doge's palace has recently been brought to light again, possibly it was the nameless painter of the S. Zeno frescoes, possibly another nameless artist who, Schubring suggests, assisted Altichiero and Avanzo in decorating the Chapel of S. Felice. The frescoes in this chapel, a life-size Crucifixion, and scenes from the life of S. James, are amongst the most beautiful in the world, and are almost equalled by those setting forth the deeds of S. George and S. Lucy in the Chapel of S. George close by. Indeed much of Altichiero's and Avanzo's best work is at Padua, though some of it, such as the decorations of the Carraresi palace, has completely disappeared. Gone, too, are the portraits they painted in the palace of the Sereghi at Verona, and the frescoes in the great hall of Cansignorio's castle. Vasari relates that Altichiero adorned all four walls of this hall with scenes from Josephus's history of Jerusalem. Above them were medallions containing portraits of the Scaligeri, Petrarch, and other great men, surrounded by a flowing ornament; beneath, Avanzo painted two of the triumphal processions so dear to the mediaeval Italian, with such ingenuity of design and surpassing excellence of execution that it drew forth enthusiastic praise from Mantegna himself. But of this splendour no trace now remains. In all Verona today only one painting is to be found which it is certain is the work of one of these great artists, and that is a fresco by Altichiero in S. Anastasia, above the monument of Federigo de' Cavalli, who died in 1390. The subject is the presentation of three knights of the Cavalli family to the Virgin by their patron saints, S. George, S. Martin, and S. James. The composition is simple but dignified. Note the fine rhythmic effect produced by the action of S. George in turning back towards the knights behind him; note, too, the curious helmets of the knights fashioned like horses' heads, in allusion to the family name, as those of the Scaligeri were fashioned like dogs. The colour is soft, yet glowing, and singularly harmonious, and the characterization of the heads very fine; the knights are the best type of noble, the Virgin gracious and serene, while each little attendant angel has her own individual expression and gesture. Altogether this is one of the greatest works of art in Verona both in nobility of conception and beauty of execution.

ALTICHIERO DA ZEVIO

(S. Anastasia)



Bernasconi ascribes to Altichiero two Madonnas in S. Zeno, and to Avanzo a fresco above the arch of the nave, in which six friars are being presented to the Virgin, but he produces no contemporary evidence in support of his assertion, and there is nothing to bear it out in the paintings themselves. Over the west door of S. Fermo, however, is a Crucifixion, which may well be an early work of one or both of these artists, in so many respects does it resemble that in the Chapel of S. Felice. It is true that the drawing is weaker than in the Paduan fresco, that the background is black, and the grouping schematic, the heads of the spectators on foot forming one horizontal line, those of the mounted men another. But the colouring, the vigour and individuality of the faces, the expression in the backs, the drapery, the curious long peaks to the soldiers' caps, are all so strongly reminiscent of the S. Felice Crucifixion that it is impossible not to believe that the two frescoes are the work of the same hand.

Altichiero and Avanzo seem to have had no direct followers, but some twenty years later a still greater Veronese painter took up art at the point where they had left it, and carried it a step nearer perfection. Vittor Pisano, or Pisanello, as he is generally called, was a native of the Veronese district, though neither the date or place of his birth is known, the idea that he was born at S. Vito or S. Vigilio being an error, derived from a forged signature. He was born between 1380 and 1390, probably rather later than earlier. He cannot, therefore, have been a pupil of Altichiero, seeing that the latter died before 1400, but he reproduces many of the earlier artist's characteristics, "his curious liking for unexpected attitudes, his recognition of the possibility of expressing character in a back view of a figure, his audacity in foreshortening, his passion for bizarre costume, his fondness of animals and of *genre motifs*".

Pisanello was greatest in designing medals, in which branch of art he is supreme. Unfortunately he lived just too late to work for the Scaligeri, but he made medals for many of the other Lombard rulers. The most numerous are those of his lifelong patron, Leonello d'Este, lord of Ferrara, but he worked for many others of the great men of his day, Sigismondo Malatesta, Filippo Maria Visconti, the *condottiere* Nicolo Piccinino, the Emperor John Palaeologus, and several of the Gonzaghi, the medal of Cecilia, daughter of Gianfrancesco Gonzaga, being perhaps the most beautiful of all. In painting, Pisanello was not nearly so prolific; his surviving pictures can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. Of easel pictures there are four, two of which, the Vision of S. Eustace, and the Madonna with S. Anthony and S. George, are in the National Gallery, while at Bergamo there is a portrait of Leonello d'Este, and in the Louvre a charming head of a nameless girl whom Hill identifies as Ginevra d'Este. Only two frescoes are known, and both of these are in Verona, an Annunciation in S. Fermo, and a scene from the story of S. George and the Dragon in S. Anastasia. The former dates from between 1424 and 1428, and is on the wall above the Brenzoni monument, whose sharply pointed apex, surmounted by the figure of a prophet, cuts the picture almost completely in half. Pisanello, however, grappled successfully with the problem of how to fill the awkwardly shaped space. Against a background of star-filled sky he painted a building of fantastic and somewhat debased Gothic, the central canopy overarching the sculptured figure on the tomb. The Virgin and Angel he placed one on each side of the pinnacle, and filled in the two triangular spaces at the bottom with birds, stones and flowers. The fresco is unfortunately very badly preserved, but it is still possible to make out something of the Virgin, and the magnificent sweep of the wings and raiment of the Angel, as he alights before her on one knee. The Virgin is not strictly beautiful, but there is a subtle and delicate grace about her drooping head, and every line of her figure expresses humility and meditation. She sits under a canopy of architecture with hands folded as if in prayer, behind, two carpeted steps lead up to a bed in a recess, and below stands her little dog.

The S. Anastasia fresco, which is above the arch leading into the Pellegrini chapel, displays much greater technical mastery, and must have been painted some years later, though hardly after 1438, as in that year Pisanello was banished from Verona by the Venetians, for siding with Milan, with whom they were then at war, and even if, as some think, he cleared himself and returned to Verona in 1442, he never stayed there afterwards for any length of time. According to Vasari he painted two other frescoes inside the Pellegrini chapel, one of the actual slaying of the dragon, the other of S. Eustace with a dog, but these have now entirely disappeared. The fresco outside is universally considered Pisanello's masterpiece in painting. At first sight it is a little disappointing, as the colour has faded till, from a distance, it looks almost like a monochrome on a yellowish surface, while the scale is much smaller than might be expected from reproductions. Closer inspection, however, soon reveals its great beauties, the exquisite line, the superb modelling, especially of the foreshortened horses, the fine grouping and the variety of character in the individual heads. The space available is divided by the point of the arch into two unequal halves, which Pisanello connected by painting a branch of the sea above the arch, with a background of level land and blue sky. The smaller space, that on the left, is filled with the dragon and the animals it has slain. On the right S. George is represented departing to do battle with the monster. He stands looking straight out of the picture, his left foot in the stirrup, and his right hand on the saddle. His horse turns its powerful hind-quarters to the spectator, and on its further side stands the princess, with the fashionable high forehead of the period, a truly marvellous head-dress, and rich sweeping robes trimmed with peacocks' feathers. Beyond her again sits the saint's squire on another admirably foreshortened horse, facing the spectator. To the left of S. George is a

little knot of horsemen, half hidden behind a rock. Each wears a different and fantastic costume, and each head in the group, whether human or equine, is intensely individual. In front are two dogs and a ram, and in the background a city full of curiously ornate towers rises on a hill, with—grim, yet characteristic touch—two corpses swinging on a gallows outside the gate.

Contemporary with Pisanello, and a native of the same little town as Altichiero, is another Veronese artist, not so well known as he should be, Stefano da Zevio. Stefano was born in 1393 and died in 1450. Brought up as an illuminator, he shows traces of his early training in a certain timidity and lack of breadth. According to Vasari his first work was done in the Church of S. Antonio at Verona and later he painted frescoes in S. Nicolo and S. Eufemia. The only one of these paintings that survives is a fresco of S. Augustine and two prophets, on the outside of S. Eufemia, and this, perhaps owing to the exposure it has suffered, does not now deserve the praise Vasari gives it.

THE VIRGIN AND S. CATHERINE IN A GARDEN

STEFANO DA ZEVIO (Pinacoteca, Verona)



The few easel pictures that Stefano has left are, however, much more beautiful. In the Brera at Milan there is a signed Adoration of the Magi, and in the Pinacoteca at Verona are two delightful little Madonnas, which, originally attributed to Pisanello, are now held to be Stefano's handiwork. One represents the Virgin and Child sitting in a garden full of flowers and birds with S. Catherine and her wheel. The background is gold, and the painting is clearly the work of one trained as an illuminator. S. Catherine is making a garland of roses plucked from the surrounding hedge and brought to her in baskets by little angels, whose feet are wrapped in the cloud-like draperies which Vasari notes as a characteristic of Stefano's. Behind sits the peacock which Stefano is said to have almost invariably introduced into his paintings. The whole picture is full of a tender grace and peace, which no reproduction can give. The other painting is a three-quarter length figure against a gold background with a close fine pattern. Two small angels hold a crown above the Virgin's head, and below, glimpses are seen of a hedge on which a goldfinch sits. The drooping head of the Virgin, her flowing hair, and the sweep of her mantle all form one long exquisite curve, a curve repeated with a slight variation in the Child, as he clings to his mother and looks down over his left shoulder. Both these Virgins are strongly reminiscent of the one in the S. Fermo Annunciation, and show that Stefano was influenced by Pisanello, but the technical mastery and the breadth of modelling of his great fellow-countryman were beyond his reach.

The dull frescoes round the pulpit in S. Fermo, of the heads of prophets, and scenes from the life of Elijah, were once wrongly ascribed to Stefano da Zevio, but it is now known that they were the work of another Veronese, named Martino, who died between 1409 and 1418. Several other artists were painting about this time, Giovanni Oriolo, Girolamo and Francesco Benaglio, and Giovanni Badile, but none of them left works of any importance, though there is a good portrait of Leonello d' Este in the National Gallery by Oriolo, who was to some extent a follower of Pisanello.

The Pisanello tradition was continued with more success by Domenico Morone, called Pellacane (*i.e.* dog-skinner). Domenico, who was born in 1442, was no genius, but he possessed dramatic power, and his colour is extraordinarily luminous. There is a striking fresco by him in the library of S. Bernardino at Verona, of the Virgin enthroned amid a throng of Franciscan saints and dignitaries, which, though in a bad state of preservation, still gives a wonderful impression of space and lovely landscape. A better-preserved Virgin and Child in the Berlin Gallery, two pieces of a *cassone* in the National Gallery, and a picture representing the overthrow of the Bonaccolsi by the Gonzaghi in 1328¹ complete the list of Domenico's extant works. Domenico, however, had a greater son named Francesco (1473-1529), who though born so late preserved many of the best merits of the first half of the *quattrocento*. His character was distinguished by great sweetness and simplicity, and the same qualities appear in his painting. A Virgin and Child by him is in the National Gallery, but the mass of his work is in Verona itself, his masterpieces being at S. Maria in Organo. In the church is a lovely Madonna with S. Augustine and S. Martin, which was painted in 1503. In the sacristy Francesco painted a series of frescoes of the Benedictine monks. The lunettes above contain portraits of the brothers who became Popes, the fourteen square compartments below, those of the secular dignitaries, Emperors, Kings and nobles, who entered the order. With characteristic *naivete* Francesco made no attempt to produce likenesses of dead Pope or Emperor, but took as his models the monks who were living in Verona at the time. These frescoes, with their deliciously cool blues and whites, and the marvellous intarsia work and wood-carving of Fra Giovanni, justify Vasari's enthusiastic praises of this sacristy as the most beautiful in the world.

After the middle of the fifteenth century a change came over Italian painting. The technical problems of drawing and modelling, perspective, foreshortening, and anatomy, were being rapidly solved; oil painting had become a recognized medium ; the study of the antique was growing general. The results of this were eventually everywhere disastrous, ending in a fatal facility in drawing, the perversion of colour, and, worst of all, in a tendency to see things through other men's eyes, so that art lost all sincerity and became second-hand. In many parts the change at first only heralded the appearance of the greatest geniuses, Bellini, Giorgione, Tintoret, Titian, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Da Vinci, but the effect on the Veronese school was pernicious from the very beginning, and painting therefore sank into decadence at Verona earlier than elsewhere. The first Veronese artist to show traces of the new style was Liberale (1451-c. 1530), so called from his original profession of illuminator of books. Later, Liberale came under the influence of Mantegna, changed his manner, and produced an immense number of semi-classical paintings. Many of the Veronese churches possess pictures by Liberale, and others are to be found in Milan, Berlin and London. The National Gallery contains two, the Death of Dido, and a Madonna, while his masterpiece, S. Sebastian, is in the Brera. Liberale was of great repute as a teacher; among his more distinguished pupils may be mentioned Bonsignori, Giovanfrancesco Caroto, Falconetto, Nicolo and Paolo Giolfino, and Torbido, none of whom, however, with the exception of the last-named, even reach the second rank.

Francesco Torbido (1486-1545), nick-named "Il Moro," was Liberale's most distinguished pupil. Vasari recounts that he first studied painting at Venice under Giorgione, but that, after a quarrel which ended in blows, he was obliged to leave Venice, and for a time gave up art. But later he returned to it owing to the influence of Liberale, who became exceedingly fond of him, and made him his heir. In most of his pictures Torbido follows Liberale's mannerisms, but in several of his portraits he displays Venetian, not to say Giorgionesque elements. Very fine are the portraits of a grey-headed man at Naples, of the man in yellow silk in Lord Warwick's collection, and of the flute-player, bearing a forged signature of Giorgione, at Padua, but finest of all is the picture in the Uffizi, sometimes known simply as "A Knight," sometimes as "Gattamelata with his Esquire". This was long attributed to Giorgione, and indeed is not unworthy of that master. It has been ascribed by later writers to Caroto and also to Michele da Verona, but there seems now to be little doubt that Crowe and Cavalcaselle are right in attributing it to Torbido.

There was, however, one painter of the *cinquecento* who restored Veronese art almost to its old pre-eminence. Girolamo dai Libri was born in 1474 and died in 1556, and undoubtedly came under Liberale's influence, but was saved from the conventionalizing effects of the classical revival by his sincerity and devotion to nature. Originally trained to illuminate manuscripts by his father, Francesco dai Libri, it was to this training that many of his merits are due, the unity of design, the harmony of rich colour, the loving care for detail. While assimilating the technical knowledge of his contemporaries Girolamo retained the earnest simplicity of an earlier age. It must be owned that he never reaches the greatest heights of religious feeling, or displays the intellectual force of the giants of art, that his Virgins are nothing but Veronese women, his angels lovely children, but there is a serenity, a warmth of motherhood in his Madonnas that is unequalled, and the faces of his saints are often full of the noblest spiritual dignity, *e.g.*, the bishop on the spectator's left in the altar-piece of S. Giorgio at Verona. His backgrounds of hilly landscape and battlemen ted towns are fascinating, and he knew how to employ trees—lemons with great golden fruits, and laurels were his favourites—with exquisite decorative effect He paints the less important parts of the picture, dogs and

rabbits, festoons of flowers and fruit, with the minute detail of the lover of nature.

THE VIRGIN WITH S. ZENO AND S LORENZO GIUSTINIANI GIROLAMO DAI
LIBRI

(S. Giorgio in Braida)



Of all his pictures the loveliest is the altar-piece, in S. Giorgio, of the Virgin and Child with S. Zeno and S. Lorenzo Giustiniani. The almost equally lovely picture in the Pinacoteca, of the Virgin with S. Joseph, Tobias and the Archangel Raphael, is marred by a slight tendency to sentimentalism. There are two other Madonnas by Girolamo in the Pinacoteca, a very beautiful one in S. Anastasia, a S. Anne and the Virgin in S. Paolo, and an altar-piece in S. Tommaso, which by some is considered his masterpiece. The National Gallery has a picture by him representing S. Anne and the Virgin and Child seated under a lemon-tree, but this has been repainted till the original beauty of the colouring has been lost, though the decorative charm of the design still remains.

Girolamo dai Libri was the last great artist of the Veronese school. After him it very quickly degenerated. Paolo Cavazzola, often called Moranda, who was born in 1486, only twelve years later than Girolamo, and died in 1522, already shows some of the worst faults of sixteenth-century art. He is not without some great qualities, possessing strong individuality and an earnestness which at times rises to nobleness, while his drawing is good, and his sense of proportion accurate. But his colouring is harsh and unpleasing, with abrupt contrasts and cold ashen shadows, and he appears to have had poor models, for his figures are short and ill-built. A series of five pictures of the Passion is generally considered his masterpiece, but to my mind it is inferior to the painting of the Virgin and Child in glory, with six saints below of great dignity and individuality. Cavazzola must be studied in Verona, for only two of his pictures are to be found elsewhere, S. Roch with the Angel, and the Madonna with S. John the Baptist, both late works and both in the National Gallery.

Michele da Verona, to whom, as already said, the Uffizi picture of "Gattamelata and his Esquire" was attributed by Morelli, was the assistant of Cavazzola, and much inferior to his master. Antonio Badile (1518-60) was a painter of little merit, but he is of interest as forming the link between those who continued the traditions of Liberato, and Paolo Caliari, who was Badile's nephew.

The style and principal works of Paolo are too well known to need any description here, all the more that, as already stated, he belongs almost entirely to the Venetian School. Still a sketch, however brief, of Veronese painting would be incomplete without some reference to him, for his early work was all done in Verona, and had already won him renown before he went to Venice. Son of a Veronese sculptor named Gabriele Caliari, Paolo was born in 1528, and brought up as a painter, his first teacher being his uncle, Antonio Badile. His earliest paintings were done for the churches of S. Fermo and S. Bernardino. A Madonna with Saints from the former is now in the Pinacoteca, where there is also a Descent from the Cross by him, and a good portrait of one of the Guariento family. But the finest picture by Paolo in Verona is unquestionably the Martyrdom of S. George, in S. Giorgio. It displays at once the painter's greatest excellence, the power of portraying well-built, healthy, handsome men and women, in a word, the perfect human animal, and his worst defect, a complete lack of religious feeling and all the subtler emotions. The influence of Venetian art can already be traced in it, and soon after it was finished Paolo left Verona, and made his permanent home in Venice, where he rapidly became absorbed by the art of his adopted city, while Veronese painting, bereft of its one belated genius, as rapidly sank into decay.

CHAPTER XVIII

SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

AT Verona sculpture, as has been already said, always remained subordinate to architecture, that is, it was not regarded as an end in itself, but used for decorative purposes, on doors, arches and windows, on fountains and altars and—where it reached its culminating glory—on tombs. The tomb, indeed, underwent a special and very beautiful development at Verona. Beginning as a penthouse canopy against a wall, it gradually evolved into an independent architectural group, complete in itself. Separate figures were added, and sometimes equestrian statues, but these were always kept in proper relation to the whole. Hence the Veronese tombs are among the most beautiful in the world, two especially, those of Guglielmo da Castelbarco, and of Mastino II., reaching absolute perfection, both structurally and in their detail. Strangely enough, however, these tombs were not the work of Veronese artists, for while there was a native school of sculpture at Verona in the thirteenth century, in the fourteenth, when the finest tombs were erected, the sculptors came from other cities. But these strangers were so completely dominated by the Veronese spirit that their works must be included in the Veronese School.

The earliest specimen of Veronese carving dates from Lombard times. It is a pyx in the Church of S. Giovanni Ingannapoltron, outside Verona, and according to the inscription on it, was carved in 712 A.D., by three men named Orso, Giovenzio, and Gioviano. There is a gap of three centuries between this and the next surviving example of early sculpture, the bronze bas-reliefs on the great west doors of S. Zeno. The original doors appear to have been made about 1000 A.D., but when the facade was finished in the twelfth century they were enlarged, new bas-reliefs were added, and strips of bronze nailed on to the old ones to make them equal in size to the others. Roughly speaking the old bas-reliefs are on the left-hand door and the later ones on the right, but the arrangement is hopelessly confused, and three subjects are represented twice, the expulsion from Eden, the Ark on Mount Ararat, and the sacrifice of Isaac. The names of the sculptors are unknown, but there is no difficulty in distinguishing between their work. The earlier carvings are exceedingly primitive, the artist had not learnt how to balance his figures, and their low-browed, long-chinned round heads protrude with often ludicrous effect. The draperies are simple to bareness, the folds being usually indicated by a few scratches, buildings and trees are hardly more than symbols, three groups of three large leaves on a straight stalk sometimes doing duty for the latter, yet there is a wonderful vigour and dramatic effect about the scenes as a whole. The work of the other sculptor shows great technical advance. Trees and buildings, though still conventional, are treated with great mastery, the drapery is graceful, the heads are well modelled, and the men with their beards and long hair parted in the middle anticipate Giotto's patriarchs most strikingly.

These later bas-reliefs must be contemporary with the rich stone carvings on the western facade of the Abbey, which were executed in the twelfth century by a certain Guglielmo and Nicolo, as a contemporary inscription records. These artists were probably natives of the Po Valley, for their work is to be found throughout Lombardy and Emilia, but their actual birthplace is unknown. At S. Zeno they carved the bas-reliefs on each side of the portal, the pillars resting on red marble lions which support the porch, and the interesting

carvings on the canopy and tympanum. On the last is a large figure of S. Zeno standing on the dragon, with a group of Veronese soldiers on a much smaller scale on each side of the saint, archers and foot on the left, horsemen on the right. The banners of the footmen and the shields of the riders display the arms of the city, a yellow cross on a blue field, and remains of the original colouring can still be made out. The Wheel of Fortune surrounding the rose window above the porch was not the work of Guglielmo and Nicolo, but of an earlier sculptor named Brioretto.

Inside the church are the oldest separate statues produced by Veronese art, Christ and the Twelve Apostles on the balustrade between nave and chancel, and a more than life-sized figure of S. Zeno. The last is exceedingly ill-proportioned and rude in workmanship, with black and expressionless face, and stupid staring eyes. The statues on the balustrade are the work of a better-trained hand, but are still far from perfect; the heads are too large, the legs too short below the knee, while the stiffness of the drapery points to Northern influence.

The carving on the capitals of the pillars in the crypt, no two of which, it is said, are alike, are the work of a certain Adamino di S. Giorgio. By Adamino, too, are the lovely decorations in low relief running round the arches of the entrance into the crypt. Most of these carvings are purely conventional, but the outermost rim of the centre arch has a series of quaint and humorous scenes, taken partly from real life, partly from fable.

“Two cocks carrying on their shoulders a long staff, to which a fox (?) is tied by the legs, hanging down between them: the strut of the foremost cock, lifting one leg at right angles to the other, is delicious. Then a stag hunt, with a centaur horseman drawing a bow; the arrow has gone clean through the stag’s throat, and is sticking there. Several capital hunts with dogs, with fruit trees between, and birds in them; the leaves, considering the early time, singularly well set, with the edges outwards, sharp, and deep cut: snails and frogs filling up the intervals, as if suspended in the air, with some saucy puppies on their hind legs, two or three nondescript beasts; and, finally, on the centre of one of the arches on the south side, an elephant and castle,—a very strange elephant, yet cut as if the carver had seen one.”

Adamino was a contemporary of Nicolo and Guglielmo, the sculptors of the west facade of S. Zeno, and he and Nicolo are responsible for most of the carving on the exterior of the Duomo. The griffins of the west porch, the statues of eight prophets in the door-way and the quaint figures of Roland and Oliver are Nicolo’s work. To Adamino are attributed the grotesque, but spirited, and altogether delightful bas-reliefs of animals and hunting-scenes on the capitals and archivolts of both the west and south doors, and the exquisite arabesques which outline the apse horizontally. Of these carvings Ruskin writes: “Comparing the arabesque and sculpture of the Duomo here with S. Mark’s, the first thing that strikes one is the low relief, the second the greater motion and spirit, with infinitely less grace and science. With the Byzantines, however rude the cutting, every line is lovely, and the animals or men are placed in any attitudes which secure ornamental effect, sometimes impossible ones, always severe, restrained, or languid. With the Romanesque workmen all the figures show the effort (often successful) to express energetic action; hunting chiefly, much fighting, and both spirited; some of the dogs running capitolly, straining to it, and the knights hitting hard, while yet the faces and drawing are in the last degree barbarous.”

In the first half of the thirteenth century, a little band of sculptors is to be found doing excellent work at Verona. They seem to have worked almost as a corporate body, for the names of none of the individuals have survived, and their style is remarkably uniform. The

masterpiece of this group is the red marble font in the baptistery of the Duomo, S. Giovanni in Fonte. The font is octagonal in shape, and hewn out of one block of marble, though it is very large, thirty-one feet in circumference, and is decorated on the outside with scenes from the early life of Christ. Venturi attributes these bas-reliefs to the years 1227-30, and regards them as the “flower of Veronese Romanesque Art”. The figures are not yet quite correct anatomically, and some of the attitudes are grotesque, but there is marked technical advance on the carvings of S. Zeno and the Duomo; the draperies are better, the heads well cut and full of individuality, and the action is dramatic, while overcrowding, the great snare of the sculptor in low relief, is entirely avoided. These artists worked not only in Verona but in several of the surrounding cities.

By the end of the thirteenth century, the school founded by these sculptors seems to have died out, though possibly the tomb of Alberto I, which is strongly Romanesque in character, may be from the hand of one of the younger members. With the advent of the golden age of the monument, and its development into a separate architectural group, it apparently became necessary to import sculptors into Verona. The evolution of the canopied tomb began with that of Guinicello de' Principi of Bologna (f. 1273) in the churchyard of S. Pietro Martire (close to S. Anastasia) and proceeded so quickly that by 1320 one of the finest tombs of this form was produced, that erected over the gate into the churchyard to Guglielmo da Castelbarco, Podesta of Verona in 1285 and 1288, and all his life the loyal servant of the Scaligeri. This tomb is a separate group, but consists of nothing but the sarcophagus and a protecting canopy resting on four pillars. On the sarcophagus lies Guglielmo, life-size, in ordinary civil dress, his head, ugly but full of character, inclined to the right. In front, a relief shows him kneeling before the Virgin and Child. The arches of the canopy are so slightly pointed as to be almost round, and have on each side one cusp of exquisite proportions, both as regards the decorative effect and the support it has to supply, cusp and archivolt being adorned with simple but lovely patterns. Above each arch is a low-pitched gable, with an arcading beneath. To prevent the pillars spreading outwards, they are connected at the top by a thin iron bar, with a delicate tracery running along it.

The monument to Cangrande I is a more elaborate version of the same form, the canopy in this case being heightened till it forms a truncated pyramid, on the top of which stands an equestrian statue of Cangrande, horse and man in full armour. The tomb is placed over the door of the little Church of S. Maria Antica, and hence is backed by a wall, but nevertheless is in essence as much a detached architectural group as the tombs of Mastino II and Cansignorio. It is so admirably described in one of Ruskin's best-known passages that it is unnecessary to give any detailed account of it here. The two figures in it are the only authentic representations of Cangrande I. In the equestrian statue only a portion of the face is uncovered, and that wears a strange mirthless smile, which, however, was doubtless intended to represent Cangrande's renowned *allegria*. The recumbent figure is probably a better likeness, but does not give the impression of the great personal beauty the chroniclers and poets write of. The cheeks are high and rounded, the chin full and beardless, the hair falls to the shoulders. The exact date of the tomb is not known, nor the name of the sculptor. Recent research points to its being a follower of Giovanni di Balduccio of Pisa, whose influence on Lombard art was so great in the fifteenth century, possibly one of the great Milanese family of the Campionesi, about this time the foremost exponents of Giovanni's teaching.

But of all the beautiful tombs in Verona the one that is nearest absolute perfection is that of Mastino II. It is on the very crest of the wave of art, coming just as sculpture had lost the last traces of the primitive and clumsy, and before the mastery of technical means had

begun to lead to over-elaboration and facile smoothness. Ruskin says of it:—

“ It is altogether exquisite as a work of art. ... It consists ... of the raised sarcophagus, bearing the recumbent statue, protected by a noble four-square canopy, sculptured with ancient Scripture history. On one side of the sarcophagus is Christ enthroned, with Can Mastino kneeling before him; on the other, Christ is represented in the mystical form, half-rising from the tomb, meant, I believe, to be at once typical of his passion and resurrection. The lateral panels are occupied by statues of saints. At one extremity of the sarcophagus is the Crucifixion; at the other, a noble statue of Fortitude, with a lion's skin thrown over her shoulders, its head forming a shield upon her breast, her flowing hair bound with a narrow fillet, and a three-edged sword in her gauntleted right hand, drawn back sternly behind her thigh, while, in her left, she bears high the shield of the Scalas.”

Above each arch of the canopy is a very high-pitched gable, and on the four spaces enclosed by these gables and the archivolts below, are carved scenes from the Old Testament, which are perhaps the loveliest things in all this lovely tomb. They represent Adam and Eve, with the Tree of Good and Evil; Adam working after the expulsion from Eden, and Eve with a child; the death of Cain; and Noah and his sons. The decorative treatment of the trees should be specially noted. Note, too, the four little pinnacles at each corner of the canopy, containing figures of the Virgin, S. Peter, S. Paul and the Archangel Gabriel, and the fine effect produced by keeping the main surface of each side unpierced and in broad light, relieved by “one broad mass of shadow, boldly shaped into the trefoil in its bearing arch”.

No inscription or document records the name of the sculptor of Mastino's monument, and it has therefore been attributed to various artists, Perino of Milan, Giovanni di Balduccio, Giovanni da Campione, and finally, by Venturi, to a Venetian follower of Campione, Andriolo de Sanctis. Venturi notes the difference between the treatment of drapery by the Campionesi school, and by this unknown sculptor, and insists that only a Venetian could have made the figures on the sarcophagus stand out as they do against the draped background, which resembles cloth of gold.¹ Nevertheless it is highly improbable that Andriolo can have been the sculptor, for one of the most characteristic features of his work is entirely wanting, viz., the shell-formed canopy above the figures at the centre or the corners of a sarcophagus, which is almost invariably to be found in the monuments known to be by him or his followers, as, for instance, the Carraresi tombs in the *Eremitani* Church at Padua. Now, the carvings of this period which are most akin to Mastino's tomb, are undoubtedly the monument of Cangrande I., and that to S. Agata in the Duomo, and it is therefore only reasonable to conclude that all three were the work of the same school, if not of the same man. And if the treatment of the drapery in Mastino's tomb forbids us to attribute it to one of the Campionesi themselves, is it not possible that the sculptor of all three tombs was some follower of the Campionesi, perhaps even a Veronese, who in later life came under the influence of Venetian art? On the other hand the tomb of Giovanni della Scala (f. 1359), formerly in S. Fermo, and now on the outer wall of S. Maria Antica, and that of Bernabo Morani, in S. Fermo, are most probably by Andriolo's school, for both display the shell-like canopy. Possibly, too, as Venturi suggests, it was Andriolo's followers who executed some exceedingly lovely carvings now in the crypt of S. Maria in Organo, a Virgin and four saints on an altar-front, and two fragments of a Crucifixion and an Annunciation.

There is no doubt as to the sculptor of Cansignorio's tomb, for an inscription records that it was the work of Bonino da Campione. Cansignorio had the tomb designed in his own lifetime, intending it to be the most magnificent of all. Every possible means of glorifying his

memory were employed, the monument is hexagonal, six warrior saints guard the sarcophagus, six virtues surround the canopy, the roof of which is ablaze with gold stars on a blue ground, and the pillars and other integral parts are adorned with the utmost richness of carving. But already the approaching decadence of sculpture makes itself felt. The equestrian statue of Cansignorio at the summit is stiff and uninteresting; the form of the whole group is infinitely inferior to the four-square simplicity of the earlier monuments; the detail is over-elaborate; there are no masses of plain surface to rest the eye, and debased features, such as twisted pillars, are introduced. After Cansignorio, no member of the Scaligeri race was buried at S. Maria Antica, except the murdered Bartolomeo, to whom, as to Cansignorio's murdered predecessor Cangrande II., no monument was ever raised. One interesting feature of the churchyard, however, remains to be mentioned, the fine ironwork railing. It is hand-wrought, the separate links being joined in such a way that the whole is pliable, but unbreakable, while the Scaligeri five-runged ladder appears in the centre of each plaque, except in the pieces actually adjoining the church, which are probably later than the rest. It must have been added in the late fourteenth century, after the erection of Cansignorio's tomb, and before the overthrow of Antonio.

Other fine tombs are to be found elsewhere in Verona, notably those of Francesco Bevilacqua (f. 1368) in S. Teuteria, and of Aventoro Fracastoro (f. 1350), physician to Cangrande I, outside the west door of S. Fermo. On the other side of this door is a smaller elaborately carved canopy, which may have been intended to shelter a tomb, or the figure of a saint. Of less artistic value, but interesting as an illustration of contemporary life, is the tomb of a lawyer called Pellacani in the cloisters of S. Fermo, where the dead man is shown seated at his desk with three pupils in front of him. Scenes of this description were in great favour at this time, and several Veronese tombs are to be found showing teachers and scholars at work, though, as a rule, the rough execution points to their having been carved by stone-masons rather than by artists.

After the fall of the Scaligeri, sculpture declined very rapidly in Verona. The decadence apparent in Cansignorio's monument is still more evident in the tomb of Cortesia da Sarego, Antonio della Scala's general, to whom his son built a monument in S. Anastasia between 1424 and 1432. The equestrian statue of Cortesia himself is extremely fine, but the heavy folds of drapery representing a tent which serve as a canopy, mark the beginning of the fatal introduction of realistic surroundings into sculpture. Even more debased are the terra cotta decorations of the Pellegrini Chapel in S. Anastasia, and the tomb of the Brenzoni in S. Fermo, which was carved about the same time by Giovanni di Bartolo. There is no need to trace the decline of sculpture at Verona any further, for it followed very much the same course as it did at Venice. One or two works of the later school, however, rise above the usual level, and deserve some mention. To the right of the great door of S. Anastasia are two scenes from the life of S. Peter Martyr, the work of an unknown hand, one representing the saint preaching, the other his martyrdom. They were intended to be part of a series of eight, but only these two were ever executed. They date from 1522, but in vigour, single-mindedness, and grace resemble the best work of the fourteenth century, indeed the congregation with their simply-treated draperies, expressive backs, and intense absorption in the sermon, might be modelled on the figures of Altichiero himself. The Renaissance pattern running round the border of the two reliefs is exceptionally light and graceful. The two well-known *gobbi* inside the church supporting holy-water basins are masterpieces in their way, being so realistic as to the positively painful. The one to the left on entering was carved in 1491 by Gabriele Caliarì, father of Paolo Veronese, the other dates from exactly a hundred years later, and is generally

attributed to Alessandrino Rossi, father of the hunchbacked painter known as the *Gobbino*,

In conclusion a few words must be said about Veronese architecture, though it is impossible here to do more than touch the fringe of this vast subject. At Verona, which was the meeting-place of so many great roads, many styles of building met, too, and mingled, and from them the Veronese evolved a characteristic architecture of their own. From Pisan Gothic they took form and proportion, from the Lombard Romanesque, surface ornament, from the Venetian Byzantine grace, and from the rugged Northern art, whose influence made itself felt all down the Brenner Pass, vigour and spirited action. But one of the most distinctive features of Veronese building was of native growth, and that is the excellence of their masonry, which is of exquisite neatness and precision, every joint being fitted with the utmost care, with the result that scarcely any of the mediaeval buildings have fallen into decay, and most are as good to-day as when they were first put up. The effect of artistic completeness produced by this excellence of work is hardly to be realized by any one who has not visited Verona. It is specially noticeable in the brickwork, which is often moulded by hand into fine ornament and used in a plastic manner rarely seen elsewhere.

Beside brick, red and yellow, the Veronese builders worked in *tuffo*, a light brown stone found in the district, and in the celebrated “peach-blossom” marble, which, however, is redder than this name would imply, being nearer akin to salmon-colour. Brick and marble were often employed in alternate layers, either horizontally as in the Palace of the Commune, and at S. Zeno, or else to outline arches, both round and pointed. The practice, so general in other parts of Italy, of veiling the walls of churches, both inside and out, with thin sheets of the finer marbles is hardly to be met with in Verona. True, the façade of S. Anastasia was prepared for this form of decoration, and the work of covering it with marble, red, black and white was actually begun in 1445, but it never got very far, and to this day the bare grooved brickwork remains an eyesore.

The good period of ecclesiastical building lasted at Verona from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. The best examples are the churches of S. Zeno, the Duomo, S. Fermo and S. Anastasia. All have spacious interiors, with unusually fine proportions and high roofs supported on massive pillars. The noblest interior of all is that of S. Zeno. The first view of the nave, as one enters through the great west portal, makes an impression that can never be forgotten. The faultless proportions, the four great rows of columns whose capitals are not copied from, but inspired by classical art, the raised chancel above the entrance to the crypt, its low arches crowned by a graceful balustrade, the feeling of boundless space and height, all combine to create an almost overwhelming impression, which is only heightened by the fact that the pavement is several feet below the level of the ground outside.

The towers of Verona, whether secular or ecclesiastical, are very numerous. Some are very fine and of unusual shape, notably that of the Palace of the Commune with its light six-sided upper stories crowning the square lower structure. But towers, and very beautiful ones, are to be seen in most Italian cities. Veronese Gothic has, however, several characteristics almost peculiar to itself. Chief of these is the moulded brickwork, already referred to, the finest example of which is the apse of S. Fermo, though it is frequently to be seen elsewhere, especially in small arcadings or exteriors of churches: the forked battlements on castles and ramparts: the fretted small stone columns, which were the sign of a market-place: the tiled pinnacles on the roofs of the older churches, as at S. Lorenzo, S. Maria Antica, and S. Eufemia: the tiles themselves, of an unusually rich reddish-brown, which are still used throughout the city, and were so valuable in mediaeval times that the statutes contained

special penalties for those who broke them: finally, the great canopied porches, sometimes of two stories, which are to be found at the doors of many churches, the finest being at S. Zeno, the Duomo, and S. Fermo.

The beautiful western doorway of S. Anastasia is of a different kind, and shows traces of the influence of Venetian architecture, which is not surprising, as it was built during the Venetian domination between 1428 and 1462. It consists of a great pointed portal, divided into two lesser arches, also pointed, by a twisted column, and bordered by slender pilasters and mouldings of coloured marble. The three lunettes, two small ones below and a large one above, are painted with frescoes, and the flat architrave is carved in low relief, the whole forming a harmony of delicate colouring and line such as is seldom seen. Apart from this door, the Byzantine style of Venice seems to have had little effect on the ecclesiastical architecture of Verona. On domestic architecture, however, its influence was more marked. In the houses and palaces of the fifteenth century pointed windows, chiefly of the fourth period, are frequent, and the whole city is full of lovely balconies, some in marble, some in hand-wrought iron, which are to be attributed to Venetian influence. Very Venetian, too, in feeling are some of the many well-heads scattered throughout the city, one or two, especially that in the Via Mazzanti, being beautiful examples of the so-called Renaissance style, for which the Veronese abandoned their special development of Gothic about the middle of the fifteenth century. After this Verona ceased to have any school of architecture of its own, for the neo-classical style, whatever its merits and defects, is very much the same throughout Italy. It enriched Verona with two very lovely buildings, the Loggia of the Palazzo del Consiglio, and the Capella Pellegrini at S. Bernardino. The former, one of the most graceful examples of Renaissance architecture in the world, was built in 1447, and is attributed by some to Fra Giocondo of Verona, by others to Antonio Riccio or Rizzo, also a Veronese. The Capella Pellegrini, though small, is perfect of its kind, its proportions exquisite, its dome without a flaw, its interior decorated with the most delicate mouldings. It was built about the middle of the sixteenth century by Michele Sammicheli, who was the first Veronese architect to use the dome. Sammicheli is most famous as the designer of the present outer ring of the Veronese fortifications, which the Venetians erected after the wars of the League of Cambrai. The walls have since been altered and strengthened by the Austrians, but the gateways, the Porta di S. Zeno, the Porta Nuova, the Porta del Palio, and the Porta del Vescovo, remain untouched, and are celebrated for their combination of strength and classical elegance. But Sammicheli was more than a military architect. He built two other domes besides that of the Pellegrini chapel, one in the Church of the Madonna at his birthplace, Sammicheli, the other in S. Giorgio in Brai'da, and designed many palaces for the Veronese nobles. These are to be distinguished by the rustic work in the lower story and the rows of arched windows alternating with pillars above. The finest is the Palazzo Pompei, now the Pinacoteca, but all are marked by excellence of construction, simplicity and dignity, and a fine feeling for the relation of spaces.

