

scendants of the original Latin refugees from Epidaurum and Salona, or those among the newcomers who were of noble birth; the middle class, consisting of non-noble burghers, the stewards, and chief retainers of the nobles, and the men of small property; the third class, which was composed of serfs and of the poorest citizens. Over the general assembly presided the head of the State, the Byzantine Duke, Prior, or Præses. After Ragusa had made submission to Venice in 998 we find Venetian counts instead.¹ During the intervals when the city was independent, and no foreign rulers were appointed, the head of the Government was chosen by the Council, as it was in after times. But even when sent from Venice or Constantinople he does not seem to have exercised much direct influence on the internal affairs of the Republic.

Besides the Count and the General Council, there was the assembly of the people, or *laudo populi*, to whom the decisions of the Council in all the more important cases had to be submitted. Lampredius, præses of Ragusa in 1023, sanctioned a decree "*una cum omnibus ejusdem civitatis nobiles*," "*temporibus Sanctorum Imperatorum Basilii et Constantini*." Petrus Slabba, prior in 1044, issued another decree, "*temporibus piissimi Augusti Constantini scilicet Monomacho . . . cum pariter nobiles atque ignobiles*."² Thus we have the aristocratic principle represented by the council of nobles, and the democratic principle by the assembly of the people, who were summoned "*cum sonitu cam-*

¹ The first of these was Otho Ursus or Ottone Orseolo.

² Quoted by Gelcich, *op. cit.*, p. 9.