

tained a number of gold balls equal to that of the offices to be filled; those who drew the gold balls took their seats beside the Count and Minor Council, and ordered the Secretary to nominate three Councillors for each office. As each name was called out the Councillor in question and his nearest relatives left the hall and waited outside. Then all the remaining Councillors were given linen balls, which they were to drop into another urn divided into two sections, one for the ayes and one for the noes. If none of the three candidates received more than half the votes recorded, the election was repeated. No one might refuse the office thus conferred upon him, save a small number of persons who could obtain a dispensation by paying a small fine.¹

The Grand Council ratified all the laws of the Republic; it gave the final decision for peace or war, although the diplomatic function was reserved to the Senate; it could recall exiles, it received petitions, and it managed many of the daily affairs of the city. Sixty members (including the Count and the Minor Council) formed a quorum.

Besides the three Councils, there were a number of special bodies appointed for different purposes. Thus there was the *Corte Maggiores* or *Major Curia*, already alluded to, whose sentences in civil matters were without appeal until 1440; the *Minor Curia* or Lower Court, with special advocates attached to each; the *Advocatores*

¹ This account is based on that given in Luccari, save for such changes as occurred between the Venetian period and the early seventeenth century, when Luccari's book was published.