

granting a charter to the town and fostering it as a convenient point of concentration for the purpose of harrying friend and foe alike ; for his protégés, the Almissaners, took to piracy at once, the *opportunitas loci*, the invitation and suitability of the site, being irresistible. The Almissaners, however, became such a nuisance to their near neighbours of Spalato, Sebenico and Cattaro, and their more distant neighbour, the powerful Venetian Republic, that frequent expeditions were despatched to reduce the sea-robbers' nest, but all in vain ; for the Almissaners enjoyed the powerful protection of the Counts of Bribir, with whom they shared the fruits of their piracy. At last on the downfall of Count Mladen II., the people of Traù and Spalato sacked and burned Almissa, while the people of Sebenico served Scardona in like fashion, firing out those two wasp-binks in 1322. In 1420 Pietro Loredan, Captain of the Gulf, reduced Almissa, Brazza, Lesina and Curzola, in pursuit of Venetian efforts to clear the Adriatic of pirates, and to render the commercial approach to Venice safe for her merchants ; finally, in 1444, Venice induced the Almissaners to submit to the Republic, to drop their pestilent piratical ways, and to live in decent quiet for the future.