

But now the French General Lauriston came on the scene, and prepared to advance; he concentrated a force at Makarska, and then moved on to Slano in Ragusan territory. The Senators were at their wits' end; the old diplomacy had broken down in the clash of the Napoleonic wars; they could no longer temporise, and were under the necessity of calling in either the French or the Russians. The latter seemed the more dangerous, especially on account of their allies, the Montenegrins. Moreover, the French consul had made many friends, while his Russian colleague was deservedly hated. Count Caboga's proposal that the population should emigrate *en masse* to Corfu or Turkish territory was rejected, and the majority decided in favour of the French. On the evening of May 27 Lauriston, with 800 men, reached Ragusa after a forced march of twenty hours. He found the gates closed and the drawbridge up; two Senators met him and requested him not to enter the town, but this was a mere formality. He repaired to the Palace, where the Minor Council was assembled, and declared that his orders were to occupy the fortified points of the State of Ragusa, but to respect the liberty of the Republic and the persons and property of the inhabitants. He offered them the protection of Napoleon, and said that as the Austrian Emperor had closed all his ports to the Anglo-Russian fleets, it was important that Ragusa should not remain the only harbour in the Adriatic open to the enemies of France. Meanwhile Colonel Teste with the troops had entered the town and seized the forts: Ragusa was thus occupied for the first time in her history by uninvited foreign troops. Great