

Despot George was forced to fly, and took refuge at Ragusa with his treasure. The following year the Sultan, Isak Beg, and the Pasha of Romania all sent to demand the surrender of the Despot; offering the Republic his treasure and an increase of territory between Cattaro and the Drina as a bribe. The citizens refused to violate the laws of hospitality,<sup>1</sup> but at the same time, as George was an inconvenient guest, it was hinted to him that he had better leave the city. He agreed, and suggested going to Constantinople; but the Senate dissuaded him from doing so owing to the parlous condition of the Eastern Empire. So he went to Hungary instead on a Ragusan galley.<sup>2</sup> Murad determined to punish the Republic for this refusal, and arrested all the Ragusans in his dominions, the ambassadors themselves escaping with difficulty to Constantinople. He then prepared to attack the city by land and sea, and the citizens strengthened their defences, increased their military forces, enlisted foreign mercenaries, and secured the services of an Italian engineer. The Turkish menace was notified to the Pope and to the King of Bosnia, while at the same time the Senate tried to bribe the Sultan by offering to raise the tribute to 1400 ducats. According to local historians, Murad desisted from his proposals out of admiration for the magnanimity of the

<sup>1</sup> It is reported by the author of the Anonymous Chronicle that when the Sultan tried to induce the Ragusans by threats and bribes to give up George, they replied: "We should rather give up our city, our wives, and our children than George or his family, for we have nothing but our good faith; and we should do the same with you if you came here under our safe-conduct."

<sup>2</sup> Resti, 1440 and 1441.