

Adriatic and a basis for operations against Venice and Italy. While processions and prayers of intercession were being held in the town, a messenger arrived from the Beglerbeg of Rumelia ordering the Republic to do homage to Mohammed. This was done; but the Sultan demanded that the citizens should give up all their territory to him, and that the ambassadors should follow him to Thrace as hostages. The Senate was filled with consternation, as the surrender of the territory would be but a preliminary to the capture of the city itself. But one of the Senators, Serafino Bona, proposed that a reply should be drafted to the effect that while the Republic was ready to give up its territory to the Turks, it would place the city itself under the direct protection of Hungary and admit a Hungarian garrison. This diplomatic answer saved the situation, for the Sultan, who had heard of the great preparations which were being made in Hungary, had no mind to be attacked by the enemy from the south-west as well as from the north. Moreover, his troops were being severely handled in the rocky gorges of the Herzegovina by Kosača and his mountaineers; so he abandoned the enterprise for the time being.¹

In the south a vigorous resistance was maintained by Skanderbeg,² the only Christian leader worthy of

¹ Engel, § 40. According to the legend, while Mohammed was riding towards Ragusa with hostile intentions he was stopped by the appearance of a venerable old man, and his horse refused to go forward; the Sultan was frightened by the omen and abandoned the enterprise. The city's saviour was, of course, San Biagio.

² The name is a Turkish form of Alexander, with the designation *beg* added.