

heads were piled high as the wall, was called the "Place of Heads." A deep hole in the ground near by bears the significant name of "The Well of Blood." There was also a wall built by human bones raised as high as the wall of the fortress. These grim fortifications bring vividly before our minds the final conflict between the Crescent and the Cross for the possession of Byzantium.

"Through more than a thousand years," says Professor Grosvenor, "these walls were watched with scrupulous and unremitting care. Now they are venerable ruins, sublime and awful in their utter desolation and decay. Throughout their entire length lies the white line of Justinian's once well-paved Triumphal Way. At its side spreads to the west the continuous cemetery, sombre with its thousands of mournful cypresses and plane-trees. Nowhere in the world is there a promenade so pathetic, so dreary, so supremely sad, as this imperial broken highway, which reaches on mile after mile between ruins and a cemetery. Even the dust that stifles in the hot winds of summer, and mixes in deep, muddy sloughs all the winter through, is the dust of the dead. And yet the beauty of the scene, in the sunshine and amid the bursting life of spring, beheld through the transparent air, and under a sky of Ionian blue, is equal to its austere magnificence."

A chapter of weird interest is devoted to the mysteries and massacres of the Seraglio—"Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand the downward slope to death."

The historic associations of this ancient palace and treasure-house are thus described:

"All is at first silence and shade; empty desolate courts, where grass is growing between disused flag-stones, overshadowed by great trees centuries old, contemporaries

of the mighty Sultans of other days: black cypresses, as lofty as towers, plane-trees which have assumed weird forms, all distorted as they are with age, are still upheld merely by huge fragments of bark, and stoop forward like old men.

"Then come the galleries; colonnades in the antique Turkish style; the verandas, still retaining their quaint frescoes, in which the Sultan deigned to receive the ambassadors of Europe. This spot, fortunately, is not open to profane visitors, it is not yet haunted by idle tourists, and behind its lofty walls it retains a mysterious peace. It is still stamped with the impress of bygone glories.

"Crossing the first courts we leave on the right impenetrably-closed gardens, from which emerge amongst groves of cypress, ancient kiosks, with closed windows, the residences of imperial widows, of aged princesses, who are to end their days in a secluded retreat on one of the most beautiful sites in the whole world.

"All round about us are ancient white buildings, which contain all the rarest, the most valuable treasures of Turkey—first, the kiosk, closed even to the faithful, in which the mantle of the prophet is preserved in a case studded with precious stones: then the kiosk of Bagdad, lined with Persian porcelains, now of priceless value; then the Imperial treasury, also of gleaming whiteness, with grated windows like those of a prison, the iron gates of which will presently be opened to allow me to enter.

"No cave of Ali Baba ever contained such riches! For eight centuries matchless precious stones and priceless marvels of art have been hoarded up here. Here are weapons of every period, from that of Yenghis Khan to that of Mohammed, weapons of silver and weapons of gold, loaded with precious stones; collections of golden