

the ten miles of sea-walls. But on several occasions, the Greeks, sailor-born, brought small vessels through the fleet in safety to themselves, and with much damage to their enemies.

So uniform was the success of the Greeks, and so disastrous the failures that met all Turkish efforts to assault the city, that the fiery spirit of Mahomet was quenched, and on the advice of his staff he was about to turn aside from further attack, and with that thought in mind, a council of war was held on Thursday evening, May 28th, which resulted through a strong plea of one of his generals in the decision to make one last assault the following morning at daybreak.

During that night Constantine rode on his white charger the entire length of the walls, encouraging the men on different towers, and especially those who were buttressing up the shattered side-towers of the Gate of St. Romanus, where the brunt of the continued attacks had taken most effect. He attended mass and received the Holy Communion in St. Sophia, pleading there for unity and determined effort on the part of the Greeks. "I pray you," he said, "be of one mind and work together. Is it not enough of misery that we have to fight against such fearful odds outside the walls?" And on being urged to accept refuge in flight to Athens by a ship already waiting, he said "I pray, do not say anything to me but, 'Nay sire, do not leave.' Never, never will I leave you; I am resolved to die here with you."

The day dawned, and with the breaking light, an impetuous host burst upon the weakened defences of the Gate of St. Romanus. The fierce fatalism of the Moslem janissary was being matched against the steady courage and skill of the Christian soldier. One huge janissary gained a footing on the ruins and cried, "Charge! Charge!" The next instant he was cut down. The struggle which followed was short and decisive, and Constantine was found under a heap of dead, and identified by the golden Byzantine eagles embroidered on his shoes. His head was struck from his body and carried through the city to the terror of the skulking citizens. The Turkish soldiers spread quickly making slaves of men and women, and stripping everything of value from public and private buildings, and destroying in their fanatic zeal, innumerable relics of the past.

Thousands of citizens in despair thronged the Holy church which they had cursed only a few weeks before, in superstitious hope that the angel of God would put a detaining hand on the advancing conqueror. But that morning saw the young Sultan ride through the brazen portals of the church over which is still engraved, "I am the door, by Me if any man enter he shall be saved." Advancing over the marble floor, amid columns of rare beauty and antiquity which had been gathered by the zealous hand of Justinian, a thousand years before, from heathen temples in all parts of the Roman empire to grace this most wonderful