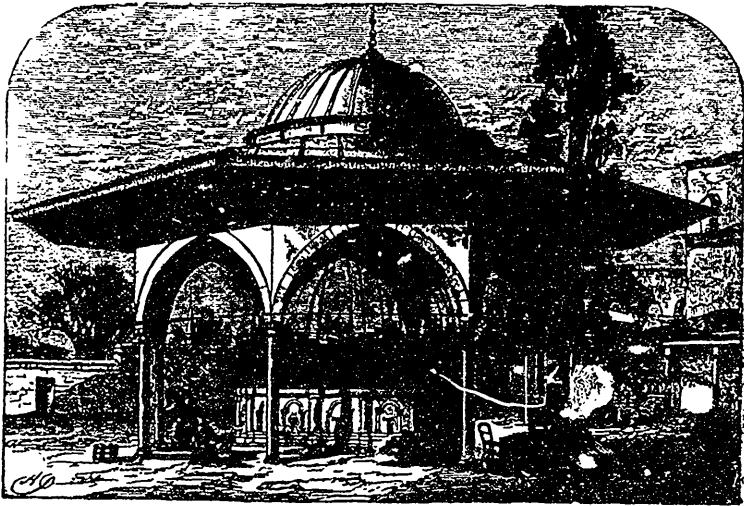


outpost and bulwark for centuries against the Ottoman power, around whose walls waged the "long debate" of the Crescent and the Cross; the city, which after heroic defence, was deluged in its own blood; the city of the barbaric splendour of the Caliphate, of splendid pomp, of dark crime, of brooding mystery, lay before me.

It was rather a disenchantment to come down from these historic musings to the prosaic details of debarkation. We scrambled down the ship's side into one of the many crowding and crowded boats, and prepared to undergo the dreaded ordeal of the customs, for had we not a lot of Oriental curios, photos, and guide-books, often thought to be contraband? But to the credit of the Sultan's



FOUNTAIN OF ST. SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE.

civil servants, be it said, not only was the proffered backsheesh declined, but with the greatest courtesy and promptness our valises were briefly examined and passed. We saw, however, a stack of confiscated contraband books, and also saw an officer examining very minutely a lot of Oriental photos, as though they contained something very treasonable.

It was quite a disillusion to make our way up the steep and stony streets of Galata, past dingy and dirty wooden houses to our hotel on the heights of Pera. Here we made the acquaintance of the ubiquitous *Hamal*, the sturdy Turkish porter, shown in the cut on page 420. With a sort of pack-saddle on their backs they will carry enormous loads up, and what is worse, down these narrow streets. I was continually haunted with a feeling of reproach for thus making a pack-animal of a human being.