

I heard it said that a noble Cypriot lady set fire to the powder: but it is true that this galleon contained a large number of very handsome youths and lovely women, set aside as an offering to the Sultan, to Mehmed Pasha, and Murad the Sultan's son. On the sixth the naval commanders sailed for Constantinople, leaving eight galleys and a few other craft. Arrived at Castel Ruso, they made sure that the Christian fleet had touched there, and when we reached Rhodes they knew that the Western Squadron had parted from that of Venice. To be quite certain they sent some galliots to Cape Columna for news, and at the same time the Pashas left behind the spoil, the children and women, moving the whole fleet to Stambalia, whence other galliots were despatched for news. Their purpose was to attack the Venetian ships, but God, whom the winds and seas obey, willed that the presumption of this dog should be laid low, and stirred a storm, so that they could scarcely make the harbour. The Pashas finding that but few ships followed them dismissed several captains. On returning to Rhodes they re-embarked all they had left. Here another large vessel was burnt, and a galley broke up as it was leaving the harbour. They arrived at Suassara, and began to block the harbour mouth with fascines, with the idea of wintering there, but finally resolved to return to Constantinople. Then leaving ships to guard the Archipelago and Scio, on December 14 they anchored before Constantinople, with great rejoicing and many salutes, to which the Scrai, the Topkhane and Arsenal replied: the Christian flags were dragged along the water, and so many boats crowded round, just as on Ascension Day at Venice.

I must not fail, as one ungrateful and heedless of the rare and precious blessings, and tender love of our Lord Jesus Christ towards me, to say with Jacob, "I am not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies" (Genesis xxxii. 10), and to tell how I was saved from so many musket shots, guarded in so many perils, preserved from so many swords: how I was taken prisoner by a *talisman* or Turkish monk, and sold to Osman Chelibi, the Rais or Captain of a galley; how the mercy and loving kindness of our God made me at once to find favour with this fierce dog, and when I was fearing to be chained to the oar, as happened to other nobles and persons of every condition, he first left me at liberty, at my prayer bought my two sisters, bid everyone be gentle with me, and made his own pages bring me food from his own table; often for his amusement he made me eat with him, allotted to me and my sisters an excellent place under cover wherein to sleep, gave us slave-girls and coverlets, and at last after setting a big price upon me was satisfied with four thousand five hundred *aspers*, though I had first to pay twenty-five sequins to his *Kiaya* or steward, a renegade. These sums were paid out of the four hundred scudi, the noble present sent me by Pope Pius V., of happy memory, through the pious hands of my General, M. Serafino Cavalli, my most tender father and author of the ransom of myself and my companions, so that on January 8 of the following year I was absolutely free. Nevertheless on February 3 of 1572 I was put into the savage hands of Uluj Ali as a Papal spy, and thrown into the Grand Turk's prison, loaded with chains, and destined to the torture. And straightway our good God stirred to fire the charity of my noble friends of Ragusa, who helped me, openly with gifts, and secretly with large sums of money, partly given me, partly lent, so that on the third day, by the help of Ababamach, the new king of Algiers, I was freed without further suffering, and at last received leave to depart, by the help and singular favour of Signor Jacomo Malatesta, and my most worthy patron the Right Reverend Monsignor d'Aquis, Ambassador of the most Christian King, who, so difficult was it to obtain this leave, thrice had speech of Mehmed Pasha, Vazir of the Empire. And so with all reason can I say, "Now I know of truth that the Lord hath sent forth His angel and delivered me out of the hand of Uluj Ali, and from all the expectation of the people of the Turks"; wherefore, "unto the King eternal,