

rally, and to force their assailants into hurried flight, which their eagerness to secure their booty had almost made an utter rout. Piovene, however, with a handful of men, held the fort he had taken, and begged for support from the city, but the Count of Tripoli, who was selected to help him, fearing that the Turks would attack (as they did) the Costanzo bastion, kept his troops with him, and Piovene, with his comrades, was cut in pieces. The attempt had no other result than to increase the watchfulness of the enemy, who harassed the town by night and day.

The besieged gave up all idea of further sallies, and devoted themselves to the repair of the parapets of the bastions, which were in many places destroyed by the enemy's guns, to completing their shelters, and devising defences within. The works advanced but slowly: the pioneers overcome with fatigue and suffering were no longer fit for continuous labour. Yet soldiers and citizens showed the same determination to resist to the end. The reports of the generals and the hope of coming aid armed their courage, and their chiefs skilfully spread rumours of a letter received through a renegade, a fugitive from the Turkish camps, which assured them of the near approach of the Christian fleet. And while they continued promptly and vigorously to repulse assaults and to harass the enemy, Mustafa began to fear for the success of his enterprise, and after shooting into the city darts to which were bound letters full of rumours and threats addressed to the chiefs and nobles, he signalled to the guard of the Costanzo bastion to come to a parley. Hostilities were suspended for two hours, while he caused notice to be given—"that he saw with surprise that no reply was given to his letters, as he desired the safety of the inhabitants and the troops: that no one must flatter himself that he would see the Sultan's invincible host retire from the walls before the city surrendered: he knew well that the best soldiers of the defending force had perished, and that the few survivors, as well as the populace, nourished the vain hope that the Christian fleets were soon to appear in their waters, while in truth that of the Venetians was melting away from sickness and death, while they lingered idly in the port of Zara expecting to meet their Spanish allies, who had no intention of fitting out their galleys, so that in this campaign the Turks had no fear of being molested by sea: that this delay in surrendering could in no wise affect the unhappy inhabitants except by increasing the misery of their condition: that if forthwith they threw themselves on the mercy of the Sultan he offered them honourable conditions, and security of life and property: if they persisted in their obstinacy and continued the defence they must expect severe punishment." The besieged after debate replied:—"that the garrison and people of Nicosia were faithful to their Prince, and wished to preserve to their latest breath their allegiance to their lawful Sovereign: they were certain that while fighting in so just a cause they should not be abandoned by God, but even though He had willed it otherwise, they chose rather to die gloriously than to live on in infamy."

The Turks gave up the hope of a voluntary surrender of the city, and set themselves with all their might to reduce it by force. They kept their cannon incessantly at work, and day by day made fresh attacks. In one of these Giacomo di Norea, Count of Tripoli, fell in the Costanzo bastion; his brother Francesco Maria succeeded to his command.

As the season was advancing, Mustafa determined to take the city by an attack of all arms, while closely investing four bastions, Podocataro, Costanzo, Davila and Tripoli; but so strong was the faith of the besieged in the approach of help, that they ascribed the last attempt of the Turks to despair, and on every side withstood with wonderful courage the assaults of the enemy, whom they repulsed with alarm and loss. Mustafa feared no less than the firmness and bravery of the besieged the hesitation of his own troops, and specially the Janissaries, to renew the attack, but he encouraged them with the hope of rewards, and