

found his hopes, believing that he carries his fortune in his own right hand. This is the part of men truly strong and brave. Immense are the examples which show us how valour and firmness have overcome difficulties which looked insuperable. But besides the confidence which rests on mere human resolve, we have a greater, a livelier, hope of deliverance and victory, in that we are defending a just and pious cause against impious and treacherous foes, to whom God's providence has so far allowed some measure of success, so that with a change in the fortune of war their victory may be the greater. We have then every argument, human and divine, to persuade us to drive fear from our breasts, and to hope for a good and prosperous issue to our efforts."

Loud and cheery shouts from all present greeted these words: everyone wished to show his own steadfastness, and to encourage the rest to bear readily the toils and perils before them. The Captains then, to inflame the troops by example as well as by words, made the best possible distribution of the posts, and determined to have their own quarters on the ramparts, just below the platform, so as to be ready at any moment for a call to arms, and to share in the daily work and risk. May was nearly half passed, the preparations were everywhere complete, and the spirits of the soldiers, countrymen and townsmen alike, were wonderfully ready to make or take the attack, when one morning at sunrise they saw from the walls all the enemy's forts and trenches full of innumerable flags and lances, and heard a roar of men and of drums and other instruments. A little later the Turks began a furious discharge of muskets and cannon, which they kept up throughout the day, hoping that their fury would inspire their own troops with courage, and ours with fear. From the first the plan of the enemy was to break down the city's defences: their shots were aimed at the parapets, but the besieged with wonderful speed repaired and strengthened them, using earth wetted and stamped into boxes and casks, with excellent results. Gradually however the Turks took lower aim, and did great damage to the walls. It became necessary to carry into the city by night the stones dislodged during the day, a work of incredible toil, but which was kept up until the Turks entered the fosse. For they had already driven their trenches up to the counterscarp, and while they threw earth into the ditch in front of them on one side, and on the other from a small platform, they pierced the wall of the counterscarp and made a safe entrance into the ditch, and right up to the walls, keeping out of reach the cannon of the demi-lunes, which fired sideways, and exposed only to the slightest fire the platforms. In the city powder was beginning to fall short, and had to be used with care, so that the gunners were forbidden to fire without express orders from their commander and these were only given when absolutely necessary. The chief means of harassing the enemy lay in the fireworks, which were hurled down on them from the walls, throwing them into disorder and killing many. Iron balls too were used, full of very fine powder, which burst and killed many persons at once.

Yet all these devices could not keep the enemy away from the walls, which they began to undermine in several places, especially near the Arsenal. Some of these mines were discovered by the besieged: the powder supplied their needs most opportunely, and what was laid for their ruin helped their defence. But the Turks had already posted large bodies of men in the ditch, where they were lodged comfortably in their tents, secured from attack by the vigilant watch of those who manned the nearest trenches, who were so careful to observe the slightest movement of any of our soldiers, that not a man could appear on the walls but he was immediately marked down and killed by a musket ball. They did not neglect their mines, one of which under the demi-lune of the Arsenal did fatal damage, while it showed signally the steadiness of our soldiers, or rather their pitiable situation.