

fathomable shadow, was large enough to have swallowed the entire castle at a gulp.

This scene took such hold of my imagination that I began seriously to contemplate altering my winter plans so as to visit it; and the more I dwelt on the scheme the more attractive and practicable it appeared to me. Another castle between Trieste and Venice, which I had long thought of as a place of possible pilgrimage, came back to my mind; I reflected that I might take it on my way: and my original prospect of a winter and a spring on the Riviera began to undergo a change, like a transformation scene at a pantomime. Presently, all of a sudden, another idea struck me, which at once joined itself to the others, giving them an illuminated background. This was the idea of Cyprus, with its quarries of virgin marble. I had a general impression that one could go by steamer from Trieste to it; and at Trieste I should be already half-way on my journey. I resolved, therefore, that I would add Cyprus to my programme; and that its possible treasures, which had for weeks been amusing my fancy, should in sober earnest be examined, and perhaps exploited, by myself.

I immediately wrote two letters—one to a friend who had lived for years at Venice, and could tell me much about the neighbouring regions east of it; the other to the distinguished traveller who had shown me the green specimen, asking him for a description of the exact spot where he had found it, and also for