

and Mayfair seemed to enter the room with him ; whilst one of his two aides-de-camp, having been absent on leave for a month or two, had only returned the night before my arrival, and had brought with him news which generally evaporates in crossing the Channel, of balls, beauties and marriages, and of one or two of those characteristic absurdities by which some people well known in society, so often endear themselves to their acquaintances. There was also staying in the house a smart young officer from a regiment quartered at Limasol, with his pretty Canadian wife. They had lately been in Egypt and were full of the gossip of Cairo. It all disturbed my sense of visionary seclusion. Finally, the dining-room and the dinner—English in every particular, excepting the presence of two Oriental footmen—came like a veil between me and the city of minarets, and the myrtle-scented mountains whose breath I had been breathing above Kyrenia.

But the following day Cyprus reasserted itself, still looking strange and remote, though seen across London sofas, and touching the mind with a subtle change of aspect. That morning I enjoyed a new experience. About a mile off on the plain, amongst a grove of cypresses and sycamores, stood a Greek monastery, which I had often wished to visit. I happened to mention my wish to the pretty Canadian lady. The idea of it delighted her ; she said she would come with me ; and for the first time since I had been in the island I found myself setting forth,