

dinner-time when I reached Government House, and having been living amongst ruins till they seemed to have become a part of me, I hardly knew where I was when through several modern reception rooms I presently went to dinner with Sir Robert and his two aides-de-camp. The following morning I woke with a gathering sense of sadness. In a few days my present life would be ended, and no further event, no further expedition, intervened now, so as to hide the end from my view. And yet this state of things brought with it its own compensation. It suddenly opened my eyes to new beauties which I had not remarked when I felt they would greet me every morning. I remarked them now—configurations of rocks near me, and shades of colour on the mountains far away. I remarked them now as I felt them say good-bye to me.

Not only the landscape but Government House itself assumed a charm which I could never have suspected it of possessing, though this, perhaps, may have been simply due to the fact that I had by this time come to associate them with the companionship of my host, Sir Robert. Anyhow, such was the fact, and often as I stood at the window by a writing-table, well provided with the inkstands and the paperknives, and the ormulu candlesticks of London, and through the plate-glass of civilisation looked out upon savagery, nothing, I said to myself, is so charming as a simple life, provided only that one is not asked to live it.