

Its long, grey walls lay like a gleaming girdle clasped round a sleeping forest of minarets, palms, and cypresses, with some low domes amongst them, white as wood-anemones, and, looming over all, the bulk of the great cathedral. This was not a time for thinking about architectural details; and the sight produced on me one impression only—that Nicosia was exactly like a picture of Damascus—Damascus, the city old in the days of Abraham, and therefore no anachronism on these patriarchal plains.

As I rode on, under the influence of the scene and hour, paralysed capacities for pleasure tingled and came to life again. Hopes, associations, and illusions which had long littered my mind, dead and motionless as fallen leaves in November, began to stir and rustle like the bones in Ezekiel's valley; and I laughed as I caught myself actually muttering to the air, 'Breathe, oh, breathe upon these slain, that they may live!'

The air, which I thus apostrophised, though it lost none of its freshness, was meanwhile growing warmer, and the distances more clear; and our eyes fixed themselves on the wall of mountains to which, in a slant direction, we were now gradually approaching. Detail after detail of pinnacle, crag, and precipice swam into sight, as if fashioned out of oxidised silver, whilst here and there a cloud-shadow made a blue moving stain on them, or a flock of milk-white clouds settled on some ærial peak. One such peak specially caught my attention from its great height,