

The return ride down the mountain side was, if possible, more beautiful than the ascent, as the lights and shadows were rendered acute by dark but quickly passing clouds; occasional light mists curled round the highest peaks like veils of gauze and then dissolved in the clear air. These atmospherical changes intensified the colouring and brought out the varying tints of grey and purple rocks into a strange prominence, while every wild flower appeared to thrust itself suddenly into observation: the purple cistus seemed magnified to the size of roses, and a bright gleam of gold from the masses of prickly bloom now in fullest blaze mingled with the general green surface of mastic and arbutus. As we neared the base of the mountains the dark green rounded tops of a forest of caroub-trees were occasionally broken by the white bloom of sweet-scented hawthorns; and to the delight of my ear, the first notes of the cuckoo that I had heard in Cyprus recalled the spring of England! It is a curious arrangement of our nervous system, that a sound so simple in itself should invest the scene with a tenfold pleasure, and should conjure up uncalled-for recollections of places, friends, and a life of years long past: but so it was; and for the moment I longed to be at home. . . .

The mules and camels were ready to start on the 10th April. I had engaged a well-known fine-looking muleteer named Katarjii Iiani, who had contracted, for twenty-nine shillings a day, to supply the riding mules and baggage animals sufficient for our party from Kyrenia to any portion of the island I might wish to visit. My plan was arranged, to include a circuit of the north and west to Baffo; thence to Limasol; by which time the hot weather would be