



CHAPTER IX

A CHARMED LIFE

I NOW realised, with regard to the precious marble, that to find a nameless spot on a range of unfrequented mountains was not so easy a task as I had first fondly imagined it. I resolved, therefore, that, before making any more expeditions myself, I would send Scotty, with some villager of Kythrea, to reconnoitre, and find, if he could, the group of objects that had been described to me—the ruined church, the cave, the spring, and the cypress tree. It was some days, however, before I put my plan into execution. The strangeness of the life around me, I confess, I found far more interesting than thoughts of the most lucrative business; and I gave myself up for a time to the pleasures of exploring Nicosia, and to quiet cloistral mornings in Colonel Falkland's garden.

Day by day, hour by hour, the charm of the place sank deeper and deeper into me, like warmth into cold limbs, or the approaches of sleep into tired