

CHAPTER III.

ROUTE TO NICOSIA.

HAVING proved that any further progress west was quite impracticable by vans, I returned to the new main road from Larnaca, and carefully avoiding it, we kept upon the natural surface by the side drain, and travelled towards Dali, the ancient Idalium.

The thermometer at 8 A.M. showed 37° , and the wind was keen. The road lay through a most desolate country of chalk hills completely barren, diversified occasionally by the ice-like crystals of gypsum cropping out in huge masses. In one of the most dreary spots that can be imagined the eye was relieved by a little flat-topped hut on the right hand, which exhibited a sign, "The Dewdrop Inn." The name was hardly appropriate, as the earth appeared as though neither dew nor rain had blessed the surface; but I believe that whisky was represented by the "Dewdrop," and that the word was intended to imply an invitation, "Do-drop-in." Of course we dropped in, being about an hour in advance of our vans, and I found the landlord most obliging, and a bottle of Bass's pale ale most refreshing in this horrible-looking desert of chalk and thistles that had become a quasi-British colony. This unfortunate man and one or two partners were among