

moment later he said, 'Once, sir, I been at Glasgow. That why they call me Scotty. Abdullah Scotty, that my name, sir. This coat, these trousers, I get him both in Glasgow. I think, sir,' he added, 'if we go now, they ready by this time at the custom house.'

This proved to be true. A dapper Maltese, in a check shooting-coat, did what was necessary in the way of inspecting my luggage; and whilst waiting for the carriage, which Scotty told me he had ordered, I wandered about in an open space close by and tried to realise my first impressions of the island. I found them delightful to a degree which I could hardly account for, and which must have been mainly due, at this time, to the sunshine and the enchanting air. I, who a week ago had been shivering in the gloom of Europe, was here moving under a sky of the softest turquoise. The sunlight was penetrating soul and body at once; and my nostrils were touched by the smells of aromatic leafage. On three sides of me were low Government buildings, as raw and new as mortar and red tiles could make them; but they were half hidden by a whispering fringe of pepper trees; and on the other side was the town I had just left, with its white flat-roofed houses, the plumes of its feathery date-palms, and, blue above these, the crags of some distant inland mountains.

Presently, turning round at the end of my beat, I could hardly restrain a laugh at an object I saw be-