

doubt, it was just what might be heard any day in the outskirts of any provincial town in England; but the names of the places mentioned and certain pieces of slang, as if in a mad dream, were all of them metamorphosed into Greek. It was like a dialogue from Homer entangled with a dialogue from Miss Austen's novels. There was something inexpressibly grotesque in the idea of a curate who had lost his copy of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' at Paphos, and in hearing a young lady date some delightful memory as 'the time when Mr. Button was so ridiculous on Olympus.'

Amused as I was, I confess I was somehow mortified at the thought of Mr. Button profaning these august localities. I felt that his presence would act on the ghosts of the gorgeous past, as a cross-handled sword is supposed to act on the devil. But as soon as his friends were gone he slipped away from my memory; and a sense of surrounding strangeness once more took possession of me. Now that the room was quiet, I was introduced to my hostess's daughter, and before long her father, Colonel Falkland, entered. I learnt presently that I was not the only guest, but that a young professor from Cambridge, with his wife from Girton, were also staying in the house, being in Cyprus to superintend some excavations. They had just come in, having been out at their work all day, and I did not see them till dinner time. We assembled at eight o'clock, and our conventional evening coats showed