

As I have described in many portions of our journey through Cyprus, the simple action of an insignificant stream, or of a solitary cattle-wheel, forms an oasis in the rainless desert of the Messaria, and the eye that has been wearied with the barren aspect of a treeless surface is gladdened by the relief of a sudden appearance of groves of oranges, lemons, and other shady trees, the result of a supply of water. Whenever such welcome spots are met with upon the miserable plain, the question invariably arises, "Why should such fruitful and delightful positions be so rare? The soil is fertile, the climate is favourable, all that is required is water, and energy."

If a Cypriote is asked the question, he invariably replies "that during the Turkish administration the fruit-trees increased their troubles, owing to the vexatious and extortionate taxation of the crops, therefore they were glad to be quit of them altogether." Your question No. 2 follows, "Why do you not plant trees now that the English have occupied the country?" The reply is stereotyped, "We are not sure that you will remain here permanently, and if you abandon the island the Turks will resume the old system with even greater oppression than before." This is an unanswerable dilemma, which no doubt retards improvements; but there is a third difficulty which is invariably brought prominently forward when any suggestions are made for an extension of agricultural enterprise: "We have no money." This is absolutely true, although I have heard the assertion contested by certain authorities. The people as a rule are miserably poor, and cannot afford to run the risks of experiments, especially during the present uncertainty connected with the British occupation.