

Pedens, which flows past Leucissia, the Lycus which descends from Olympus, and the Tenus. When these are in flood the water is drawn off with wheels to water the adjacent farms and fields. The crops have often failed for want of water, especially in the days of Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine the Great, when as a popular tradition avers, the island was left uninhabited for more than thirty years. For the springs were dry, the earth gaped with the heat, and the soil was so parched that the natives could not till it, and went forth in a body to some other place. At length Helena, who landed in Cyprus on her return from Jerusalem, inquired the cause of its desolation, and touched to the heart with compassion obtained from God by prayer that rain should fall, the old sources be filled, that its inhabitants should return from the continent, and the island resume its former populousness and well-being.

Cyprus suffers yet another plague, that now and then a certain insect infests it. About every third year, if the seasons are dry, they grow slowly in the likeness of locusts, and in March, being now winged and as thick as a finger, with long legs, they begin to fly. At once they come down like hail from heaven, eat everything voraciously, and are driven before the wind in such huge flights that they seem dense clouds. They devour every green herb, and dying at last of hunger leave behind them a terrible stench, which infects the air and the soil and breeds a fearful plague. The natives seek out their eggs diligently, and destroy them with their nests and lurking places. Unless they did so the insects would increase in that torrid soil beyond all reckoning or belief.

But although it is infested with these creatures, and suffers from scorching heat, and in some places from a certain unhealthiness of the air, yet in richness of soil, in beauty of scenery and natural wealth the island is self-sufficing and blessed. Witness Ammianus Marcellinus, "So rich and various is the fertility of Cyprus that without the help of strangers it can build a cargo-boat from keel to truck from its own resources, and send it fully fitted with sails and gear to sea." Not undeservedly was it called of old *Macæria* or the *Blest*. So rich was it, so fruitful and luxurious, that here one might see, possess and enjoy all that could be imagined to gratify every desire. Lucius Florus writes of its vast riches, "The wealth of Cyprus brought by Porcius Cato in Liburnian ships to the mouth of the Tiber filled a larger room in the treasury of Rome than any triumph had ever done." The present condition and appearance of the island is far different, oppressed by barbarian rule and stripped of its old grace and glory much of it is uncultivated, neglected, deserted. Cities once famous and populous, and full of stately buildings, are now ruinous, squalid and thinly peopled: towns and villages lie desolate and forsaken, for it is the way of the Turks to lay waste city and field, to destroy ancient splendour. So much for the description of Cyprus.