

continued to the present day. It may therefore be acknowledged that no custom has been so universal and continuous as the drinking of wine from the earliest period of human existence. The vine is a mysterious plant; it is so peculiarly sensitive that, like a musical instrument which produces harmony or discord at the hands of different performers, the produce of the same variety is affected by the soil upon which the plants are grown. Thus ten thousand young vines may be planted upon one mountain, all of the same stock; but various qualities of wine will be produced, each with a special peculiarity of flavour, according to the peculiarities of soil. The same estate, planted with the same vines, may produce high class wines and others that would hardly command a market, if the soil varies according to the degrees of certain localities. It would now be impossible to produce Madeira wine in Cyprus, although the plants might be imported and cultivated with the greatest attention. When the vines were shipped from Cyprus and planted in Madeira during the rule of the Venetians, it must not be supposed that those vines had ever produced wine of the well-known Madeira flavour and quality; that flavour was the result of some peculiarity in the soil of the new country to which the vines had been transplanted, and there can be little doubt that the rich and extremely luscious variety known in Cyprus as "Commanderia" was the parent vine of the Madeira vineyards.

It is well known that the costly experiments of a century at the Cape of Good Hope have verified the fact that the vine is the slave of certain conditions of soil, which impart to this extremely delicate and sensitive plant a special flavour that is incorporated with the wine, and can never be eradicated. The vines of