

**THE COMPLETE CONTENTS OF "THE MEDITERRANEAN NATURALIST",
A PERIODICAL PUBLISHED IN MALTA BETWEEN 1891 AND 1893.**

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ABSTRACT

An account is given of the journal "*The Mediterranean Naturalist*", edited and published by John Henry Cooke (1862-1933) towards the end of the nineteenth century. The complete contents of the twenty-seven issues in three volumes are listed, with an indication of those articles concerning Malta or with a Maltese connotation.

INTRODUCTION

Between 1891 and 1893, John Henry Cooke (1862-1933), a teacher of English at the then Malta Lyceum in Valletta, founded, edited and published a journal entitled '*The Mediterranean Naturalist*'. Cooke was a keen naturalist who became particularly interested in the geology and palaeontology of the Maltese Islands and published numerous papers and articles on these subjects. A biography of Cooke, focusing especially on his activities in Malta, has been given by Zammit Maempel (1989).

The aims of '*The Mediterranean Naturalist*' were set out by Cooke in the first issue under the heading 'Programme'. In this Cooke wrote: "*The principal object, that we have in view in thus adding another publication to the already long list of periodical literature, is to provide naturalists with a paper that shall be devoted to the natural history of the Mediterranean and of its islands and shores.*" Cooke then continued to give an outline of the sort of material the journal would publish. This included original articles on Mediterranean natural history as well as reports on important results published elsewhere. Additionally the journal would include notes, discussion of scientific questions of current interest, reviews of the scientific literature, and summaries of important papers.

The first issue of '*The Mediterranean Naturalist*' was dated 1st June 1891 and the journal continued to appear until the 27th issue dated 1st December 1893. The journal seems to have been published privately by Cooke from his St. Julians residence, however, according to the title page for Volume 1, it was distributed in Malta by G. Muscat (Valletta), in Britain by W.P. Collins (London), and in the United States by B. Westermann & Co. (New York). The National Library of Malta holds a complete set of this publication (Sapienza, 1977).

At the time, this was the only local journal devoted to natural history and as such it attracted numerous papers on all aspects of Maltese natural history from a large number of naturalists, both Maltese and non-Maltese. Some of these papers are well known to present students of local natural history, however others are less so. The journal also included a vast number of short notes on local natural history, and these are virtually unknown since they are rarely, if ever, quoted. Additionally, the reports on then current research, summaries of important papers on Mediterranean natural history, correspondence, and miscellaneous other information included in the journal, provide an interesting glimpse into scientific endeavour and thinking at the time and as such are of interest to historians of natural science. In an effort to bring this important contribution to the attention of a wider audience, the present work gives the complete contents of '*The Mediterranean Naturalist*' with an indication of those items which concern local natural history.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CONTENTS LIST

In the contents list that follows, the following conventions are adopted. For each issue, the volume and number of the issue and the date are given as published, followed by the pagination for that issue. The contents of the issue are then listed in the order in which they appear, giving the author (where an article is signed) and the title, followed by the pagination. My own comments and explanations are given in square brackets. The following abbreviations are used:

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| Ed. | editor (that is, J.H. COOKE) |
| u.s. | unsigned but attributed to the editor |
| abs | abstract of scientific paper published elsewhere |
| bk. rev. | book review |
| rep | report either from another journal, or compiled from various sources, probably by the editor. |

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Items relating to Malta are identified by the designation [Mlt] or **Malta** in bold. Where many short notes appear together without individual titles, individual items are not identified unless they pertain directly to Malta.

THE MEDITERRANEAN NATURALIST

– a monthly journal of natural science

As of issue 24 (Vol 3), the journal was published bimonthly and its title changed to *The Mediterranean Naturalist - a review of natural science*.

CONTENTS

VOL 1 No. 1 – June 1st, 1891 (pp 1-12)

Ed. [J.H. COOKE] Programme 1-2
CAPELLINI, G. A short history of the study of Foraminifera in Italy 2-4
u.s. A new Maltese chelonian *Trionyx melitensis* 4-5 [abs] [Mlt]
u.s. Manganese nodules 5 [abs + comment on **Malta**]
u.s. The subterranean treasures of Italy 5-6 [bk. rev.]
u.s. African earthworms 6 [abs]
u.s. Deep sea exploration in the Mediterranean 6-7 [rep - reference to **Malta**]
u.s. Formation of coral reefs in recent seas 7 [abs]
COOKE, J.H. Notes on the discovery of a "Pleistocene Bed" at Gozo 7-12 [Mlt]
u.s. Notes and news 12 [several items]
u.s. Exchange column 12

VOL 1 No. 2 – July 1st, 1891 (pp 13-28)

JERVIS, W. A. retrospective periplus of the Mediterranean Sea 13-17
u.s. The locust plague in Egypt and Algeria 17 [rep]
u.s. Recent researches of G.B. Schiaparelli made at Milan University 17-18 [rep]
u.s. Natural science in Tunis 18-19 [rep]
u.s. The oxycephalids of Carl Bovallius 19 [bk. rev.]
DRUCE, G.D. Preservation of the colour of plants 19
u.s. Phosphate beds around London 20 [rep]
u.s. Discovery of caves in Corsica 20 [rep]
u.s. The Gozo Pleistocene bed 20 [Mlt] [determination of fossil terrestrial shells from bed described in Vol. 1. No. 1 10]
u.s. News of the month 20-21 [several items including notice of a series of papers by Caruana Gatto on **Maltese Lepidoptera**]
JOHNSTON-LAVIS, H.J. The eruption of Vesuvius of June 7th 1891 21-22
COOKE, J.H. Observations on the geology of the Maltese islands 22-27 [part I] [Mlt]
u.s. Science notes 27-28 [several items]
BAKER, F. [letter] 28
u.s. Exchange column 28

VOL 1 No. 3 – August 1st, 1891 (pp 29-44)

BIDDULPH, R. Cyprus 29-33 [pt. I]
MASSEY, W.F. The culture of figs 33-34
u.s. Dr John Murray on the origin and character of the Sahara 34-36 [abs]
u.s. Notes and news 36 [several items including one on **Maltese honey**]

COOKE, J.H. Observations on the geology of the Maltese Islands 37-42 [part II] [Mlt]
u.s. Discovery of fossil remains at Arpino 42 [rep]
u.s. Insect plagues around the Mediterranean 43 [rep]
u.s. News of the month 43-44 [several items including one on meteorology of **Maltese Islands**]
u.s. Exchange column 44

VOL 1 No. 4 – September 1st, 1891 (pp 45-60)

MELLARD READE, T. Theories of mountain formation. Part I 45-48
COOKE, J.H. Observations on the geology of the Maltese Islands 48-50 [part III] [Mlt]
BIDDULPH, R. Cyprus 51-52 [part II]
CARUANA GATTO, A. Rare occurrence of *Ophrys apifera* in Malta 52-53 [Mlt]
u.s. Science gossip 53-54 [several items including SPCA in **Malta**]
JOHNSTON-LAVIS, H.J. The eruption of Vesuvius of June 7th, 1891 54-57 [see Vol 1 No. 2 21-22]
EARLAND, E.A. & COOKE, J.H. Notes on the Recent Foraminifera of Malta. 57-59 [Mlt]
u.s. News of the month 59-60
u.s. Books etc. received 60
u.s. Exchange column 60

VOL 1 No. 5 – October 1st, 1891 (pp 61-76)

HENSLOW, G. The natural history of Malta 61-63 [Mlt]
VAN BENEDEN, P.J. Note on "*Dioplodon farnesinoe*" 63
T.M. [?] The climate of Cephalonia 63-64 [abs]
MILLARD READ, T. Theories of mountain building. Part II 64-67
WALMSEY, W.H. Preservation of algae 67
u.s. Sir Warrington, W. Smyth, M.A., F.R.S. 67-68 [obituary of Governor of Malta]
BRUN, H.E. Vine and olive culture in Algeria 69
u.s. Deforestation of Servia 69 [rep]
FOSTER, W.G. Remarkable natural phenomenon near Cephalonia 69
COOKE, J.H. Observations on the geology of the Maltese Islands 70-73 [pt. IV] [Mlt]
HARTING, J.E. The Syrian greyhound 73-75
u.s. Science gossip 75-76

VOL 1 No. 6 – November 1st, 1891 (pp 77-92)

MARRAT, F.P. Notes on some natural resemblances 77-79
u.s. The mineral springs of Roumania 79 [rep]
COOKE, J.H. Diseases of the Mediterranean orange 79-82 [Mlt]
TAYLOR, J.E. A coral island on the Great Barrier Reef 82-83 [extract from letter]
BIDDULPH, R. Cyprus 83-85 [part III]
CARUANA GATTO, A. Notes on the Lepidoptera of Malta 85-88 [part I] [Mlt]
u.s. The salt mountain of Palestine 88 [rep]
COOKE, J.H. Observations on the geology of the Maltese Islands 88-90 [part V] [Mlt]
u.s. Science gossip 90-92
'A VISITOR' Correspondence: Our birds 92 [letter] [Mlt]
u.s. Exchange column 92

VOL 1 No. 7 – December 1st, 1891 (pp 93-108)

JERVIS, G. Sketch of the geology of Pantelleria, importance of its thermal springs to the Maltese 93-96 [Mlt]

- HENSLow, [G.] The botany and geology of Egypt 97-99 [part I]
 u.s. Military pigeons 99 [rep]
 MELLARD READE, T. Theories of mountain formation. Part III 99-102
 COOKE, J.H. The climate of the Maltese Islands 102-106 [Mlt]
 CARUANA GATTO, A. Notes on the Lepidoptera of Malta 106-107 [part II] [Mlt]
 u.s. Science gossip 107-108 [including item on Maltese climate]
- VOL 1 No. 8 -- January 1st, 1892 (pp 109-124)**
 SMITH, E. Remarks on the relationship of the molluscan fauna of the Red Sea and Mediterranean 109-111
 u.s. The Geological Photographs Committee of the British Association and its work 111-112 [rep]
 WALKER, J.J. Notes on ant's-nest beetles in Gibraltar and Tangier; with special reference to the Histeridae 112-113 [part I]
 u.s. The latest theory of volcanoes 113-114 [abs]
 BIDDULPH, R. Cyprus 114-116 [part IV]
 u.s. The Samos fossil mammals 116-118 [abs]
 J.H.C. [=J.H. COOKE ?] Occurrence of "*Chrysophrys*" in the Malta Miocene 118 [Mlt]
 COOKE, J.H. Observations on the geology of the Maltese Islands 118-122 [part VI] [Mlt]
 u.s. Notes and news 122-124 [several items including notice of paper by J.H. COOKE on *Stereodon melitensis* (122), on Golden Plover in Malta (122), earthquake in Malta (122); sulla and wheat in Malta (122); Maltese Pleistocene fauna (123);]
 u.s. Discovery of the remains of a fossil whale near Citta' Vecchia 124 [Mlt]
- VOL 1 No. 9 -- February 1892 (pp 125-140)**
 HENSLow, [G.] The botany and geology of Egypt 125-127 [part II]
 CARUANA GATTO, A. The "fungus melitensis" 127-129 [Mlt]
 COOKE, J.H. Observations on the geology of the Maltese Islands 129-133 [part VII] [Mlt]
 DE LA GARDE, Mediterranean Lepidoptera 133-135 [part I] [Mlt]
 MELLARD READE, T. Theories of mountain formation. Part IV 135-138
 u.s. Science gossip 138-140 [including Maltese Miocene echinoids (138), introduction of Olive into Malta (139) errata (on Malta) (140); notice of paper by COOKE on the Scirocco wind in Malta (140); Golden Plover in Malta (p140); [Mlt 139-140]
- VOL 1 No. 10 -- March 1st, 1892 (pp 141-156)**
 LAMBERT PLAYFAIR, R. Description of Corsica 141-143
 u.s. The fossil whale from Citta Vecchia 143 [Mlt]
 COOKE, J.H. Lampedusa and its sponge fisheries 143-146 [Mlt]
 u.s. The poppy, its cultivation and uses 146 [rep]
 DE LA GARDE, P. Mediterranean Lepidoptera 147-148 [part II]
 J.E.S. Aetna and its lava streams 148
 CARUANA GATTO, A. New Clausilidae from Malta 148-149 [Mlt]
 WALKER, J.J. Notes on ant's-nest beetles at Gibraltar and Tangier; with special reference to the Histeridae 150-151 [part II]
 u.s. A contribution to the moss flora of Malta 151-152 [Mlt]
 COOKE, J.H. Observations on the geology of the Maltese Islands 152-154 (part VIII) [Mlt]
 u.s. Notes and news 154-156 [including one item on Mediterranean weather signed "F.M."]
- VOL 1 No. 11 -- April 1st, 1892 (pp 157-172)**
 COOKE, J.H. The Scirocco as a disintegrating agent, with special reference to its effect on the strata of the Maltese Islands 157-159 [Mlt]
 u.s. Deep-sea exploration in the Eastern Mediterranean 159-160 [abs]
 TOGETTI, T. Diseases of the Malta orange 160-161 [Mlt]
 MELLARD READE, T. Theories of mountain formation. Part V 161-164
 u.s. The soil of the Maltese Islands 164-165 [Mlt]
 CARUANA GATTO, A. Disappearance of *Spondylus gaederopus* L. and other species from Maltese waters 165 [Mlt]
 u.s. Science gossip 165-167
 u.s. The Tunisian locust plague 167 [abs]
 u.s. Samos. Its fossils and their age 167-168 [abs]
 u.s. The meteorology of the Maltese Islands 168-169 [rep] [Mlt]
 u.s. The Maltese fossil Echinoidea 169-171 [abs of paper by GREGORY] [Mlt]
 u.s. Mummy wheat 171 [rep]
 u.s. Notes and news 171-172 [including errata to p95 [Mlt]; Maltese climate;] [Mlt 171-172]
 u.s. Books etc. received 172
- VOL 1 No. 12 -- May 1st, 1892 (pp 173-184)**
 TAGLIAFERRO, C. Diseases of the Malta orange 173-175
 J.H.C. [=J.H. COOKE ?] Fish remains in the Upper Limestone of Malta 176 [Mlt]
 u.s. Maltese mosses 176 [Mlt] [addition to list (pp 151-152)]
 u.s. Estivation 176 [rep]
 COOKE, J.H. Notes on *Stereodon melitensis*, Owen 176-177 [abs] [Mlt]
 u.s. Some strange plants 177-178 [rep]
 u.s. The new star 178 [rep]
 FLINDERS PETRIE, W.M. Wind-action in Egypt 178-180 [abs]
 u.s. Exploration in the Black Sea 181 [abs]
 u.s. Notes and news 181-184 [including donation of Maltese fossil Echinoidea to University Museum] [Mlt 182]
 u.s. Notes on books, etc. 184
 Index to Vol 1 (185-186)
- VOL 2 No. 13 -- June 1st, 1892 (pp 187-202)**
 WALKER, J.J. A year's insect-hunting in Gibraltar 187-189 [part I]
 u.s. Why we should teach geology 189-190 [abs]
 u.s. The sulphur mines of Sicily 190 [rep]
 JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 190-194 [part I]
 u.s. Subterranean waters in the Sahara 194 [rep]

- J.H.C. [=J.H. COOKE ?] The Malta potato disease 194-195 [Mlt]
- MOORE, R. On the meadow of Nysa in Asia Minor 195-197 [part I]
- u.s. Vanishing forms 197 [rep]
- u.s. Algerian oases 197-198 [rep]
- u.s. Prehistoric man in the Mediterranean 198-199 [rep]
- u.s. Fossil birds of Corsica and Sardinia 199 [bk. rev. of LYDEKKER's monograph]
- u.s. Notes and news 200-202 [including spring migration in Malta; gloves made from *Pinna byssus*] [Mlt 201-202]
- VOL 2 No. 14 -- July 1st, 1892 (pp 203-218)**
- BRYAN, G.H. The recent discovery of skeletons in the caves at Mentone 203-205
- COOKE, J.H. The phosphate beds of the Maltese Islands and their possibilities 205-209 [Mlt]
- u.s. Changing climate 210 [rep]
- u.s. The hope of France 210 [rep]
- u.s. Prehistoric man in Italy 210-211 [bk. rev.]
- u.s. The fathomed depths of the ocean 211 [rep]
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 211-213 [part II]
- u.s. The great African cataract 213 [rep]
- u.s. The tunny fishery in Sicily and Sardinia 214-215 [abs]
- TWELVES, H. The vine diseases in Sicily 215-216 [letter and note]
- u.s. Notes and news 216-218 [including diseases of Maltese vines] [Mlt 218]
- VOL 2 No. 15 -- August 1st, 1892 (pp 219-234)**
- COOKE, J.H. Eruption of Etna 219-221
- u.s. The sponges of Tripoli 211 [rep]
- MOORE, R. On the meadow of Nysa in Asia Minor. II 221-223
- u.s. An ancient birdland 223-225 [rep]
- u.s. Geology of the Nile Valley 224 [abs]
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 224-226 [part III]
- u.s. Tools of the pyramid-builders 226 [rep]
- CARUANA GATTO, A. Maltese Caecilianellae. A contribution to the study of Maltese land shells 226-227 [Mlt]
- u.s. The Sahara 228 [rep]
- WALKER, J.J. A year's insect-hunting at Gibraltar. II. 228-230
- CAMERANO, L. The serpents and chelonians of Italy. 230-232
- BEYNON, R. The depths of the Mediterranean and Black Sea. part I. 231-232
- u.s. Notes and news 232-234 [including diseases of Maltese vines; earthquake felt in Malta] [Mlt 232]
- VOL 2 No. 16 -- September 1st, 1892 (pp 235-250)**
- HENSLOW, G. Phosphate nodules 235-239
- CARUANA GATTO, A. On the extraordinary abundance of *Deiopeia pulchella* Beis in Malta. 239 [Mlt]
- J.H.C. [=J.H. COOKE ?] The eruption of Etna 239-240 [rep]
- u.s. A marketable commodity 240-241 [abs]
- COOKE, J.H. The *Peronospora* among the Malta vines 241-244 [Mlt]
- MOORE, R. The meadow of Nysa in Asia Minor 244-245 [pt. III]
- CARUANA GATTO, A. *Assiminea littorina* Delle Chiaie in Malta 245 [Mlt]
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 245-248 [part IV]
- WALKER, J.J. A year's insect-hunting in Gibraltar. Part IV 248-249
- u.s. Notes and news 249-250 [including thunderstorms in Malta; introduction of tobacco and *Opuntia* into Malta] [Mlt 250]
- VOL 2 No. 17 -- October 1st, 1892 (pp 251-266)**
- JERVIS, G. Supposed Quaternary and since submerged volcano of Mergellina, at Naples 251-253
- u.s. On *Tryonx ragusensis* and *T. melitensis* 253 [abs] [Mlt]
- u.s. The Phoenicians in the Mediterranean 254-255 [rep]
- COOKE, J.H. On the occurrence of a black limestone in the strata of the Maltese Islands 255-257 [Mlt]
- u.s. Fighting mice with a bacillus 257 [abs]
- u.s. Teeth food 257 [abs]
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 257-259 [part V]
- u.s. A strange march to the sea 259-260 [rep]
- u.s. "Left handed" snails 260 [rep]
- BEYNON, R. The depths of the Mediterranean and Black Seas 260-263 [part II]
- u.s. Prehistoric items 263-264 [rep]
- u.s. Notes and news 264-266 [including notice of a paper on Malta by COOKE; representation of Malta at Botanical Congress; correspondence in Maltese newspaper on birds and insects; figs in Malta] [Mlt 264-266]
- HUGHES, W.L. [letter] 266
- VOL 2 No. 18 -- November 1st, 1892 (pp 267-282)**
- COOKE, J.H. On the occurrence of *Ursus arctos* in the Malta Pleistocene 267-269 [Mlt]
- u.s. The silkworm in Malta 269 [rep] [Mlt]
- u.s. Mantidae 269-270 [rep]
- u.s. An under valued product 271 [rep]
- HUGHES, [W.L.] Insects in biscuits 271-272 [Mlt]
- TCHERAZ, M. Armenia 272-273
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 273-276 [part VI]
- CARUANA GATTO, A. Albinism and colour variation in Maltese wild flowers 276-277 [Mlt]
- u.s. Exploration of the Black Sea 277-278 [abs]
- J.H.C. [=J.H. COOKE ?] On the vine and potato disease in Malta 278-279 [Mlt]
- WALKER, J.J. A year's insect-hunting at Gibraltar. IV 279-281
- u.s. Notes and news 281-282 [including notice of paper by CARUANA GATTO] [Mlt 281]
- VOL 2 No. 19 -- December 1st, 1892 (pp 283-298)**
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 283-285 [part VII]
- u.s. The birds of Malta 285-286 [rep] [Mlt]
- u.s. The late eruption of Pantelleria 286-287 [rep]

- A.C.G. [= A. CARUANA GATTO ?] Entomological notes 287 [Mlt]
- u.s. Science gossip 287-291 [including Maltese fossil echinoids; marine biological station in Malta] [Mlt 290-291]
- R.N.C.[?] The Italian Geographical Congress of 1892 295-296 [rep]
- GODFREY, M.J. Botanical notes 296-297 [Mlt]
- u.s. Notes and news 297-298 [including diseases of tomatoes in Malta; vine diseases in Malta; protection of Maltese fisheries; notice of paper by COOKE; marine biological station in Malta; correspondence on birds and insects in Maltese newspapers] [Mlt 297-298]
- JERVIS, A. Birds v. insects 298 [letter]
- VOL 2 No. 20 -- January 1st, 1892 [sic! = 1893] (pp 299-314)**
- HUGHES, M.L. The natural history of certain fevers occurring in the Mediterranean 299-300 [part I] [Mlt]
- WELSCH, J. On the Miocene beds of Western Algeria 301-302
- J.H.C. [=J.H. COOKE ?] A ramble through Emtahleb 302-205 [Mlt]
- u.s. The flora of Northern Germany during the Middle Ages 305 [abs]
- u.s. Science echoes 305-309 [items subtitled]
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 309-311 [part VIII]
- HALKYARD, E. The collection and preparation of Foraminifera 311-312 [part I]
- PLATANIA, G. Geological notes of Acireale 312-313 [part I]
- u.s. Notes and news 313-314 [including setting up a commission on the "Bird Question" in Malta; disease of sulla in Malta; fishing industry in Malta] [Mlt 313-314]
- VOL 2 No. 21 -- February 1st, 1892 [sic! = 1893] (pp 315-330)**
- COOKE, J.H. Some evidence of the occupation of the Maltese Islands by prehistoric man 315-320 [Mlt]
- u.s. The Malta Potato Disease 320 [abs; not clear if work reported was done in Malta]
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 320-322 [part IX]
- A.C.G. [= A. CARUANA GATTO ?] Notes for the month: Botany [pp 322-323]; Conchology [p 323] [Mlt]
- HALKYARD, E. The collection and preparation of Foraminifera 323-325 [part II]
- HUGHES, M.L. The natural history of certain fevers occurring in the Mediterranean 325-327 [part II] [Mlt]
- u.s. Science gleanings 327-329 [including census of cultivated land in the Maltese Islands; Maltese lace and filigree; archaeological discoveries in Malta] [Mlt 328-329]
- SCIORTINO, J.C. Maltese Lepidoptera 329-330 [letter] [Mlt] [with comments by "A.C.G." (= Alfredo Caruana Gatto) 330]
- VOL 2 No. 22 -- March 1st, 1893 (pp 331-346)**
- JERVIS, G. The fourth allotropic form of carbon 331-332
- HUGHES, M.L. The natural history of certain fevers occurring in the Mediterranean 332-334 [part III] [Mlt]
- u.s. The latest from Mars 334 [rep]
- u.s. Meteorological report for 1892 334-335 [rep] Mlt
- PLATANIA, G. Geological notes of Acireale 335-336 [part II]
- u.s. Animal plagues 336 [rep]
- u.s. Notes and news 337 [including capture of shark off Gozo] [Mlt 337]
- JOHNSTON LAVIS, H.J. The relationship of the structure of rocks to the conditions of their formation 337-340 [part X]
- u.s. The lands of volcanoes 340 [rep]
- u.s. The geology of Arabia Petrea and Palestine 340-341 [abs]
- CARUANA GATTO, A. The vegetation of the house terraces of Malta 341-342 [Mlt]
- u.s. Science gossip 342-345 [including fibres from Pinna in Malta] [Mlt 344]
- SCOLES, J. Meteorological report. St. Ignatius' College Malta, January 1893 345-346 [Mlt]
- VOL 2 No. 23 -- April 1st, 1893 (pp 347-362)**
- FORSTER, W.G. The recent earthquakes in Zante 347-354
- u.s. The future of the races 354 [rep]
- u.s. Variation in skin colour 354 [rep]
- COOKE, J.H. The marls and clays of the Maltese Islands 355-357 [part I] [Mlt]
- u.s. Science gossip 358-360 [including note on changes in the *Mediterranean Naturalist*; damage by Maltese snails; bees, sulla and rheumatism in Malta; species of fig in Malta; trade in archaeological items, lace, filigree and dogs; Maltese dog] [Mlt 358-359]
- TOPLEY, W. The Sandgate landslip 360-362
- SCOLES, J. Meteorological report. St. Ignatius' College, Malta. February, 1893 362 [Mlt]
- VOL 3 No. 24 -- June 1st, 1893 (pp 363-386)**
- AYSCOGHE FLOYER, E. La botanique du Nord-Etbaï 363-366
- TAGLIAFERRO, N. "*Falco punicus*" in Malta 366 [Mlt]
- u.s. Animal plagues 367 [rep]
- u.s. The Malta potato disease 367-368 [rep] [Mlt]
- BURNS, G.J. [with a note by COOKE, J.H.] The effect of pressure in causing a thinning in soft strata 368-369 [Mlt]
- u.s. The world's coal supply 369-370 [rep]
- CARUANA GATTO, A. The street of duels 373-374 [Mlt] [rep]
- u.s. Diamond making 374 [rep]
- COOKE, J.H. The marls and clays of the Maltese Island 374-378 [part II] [Mlt]
- u.s. City dust 378-379 [rep]
- PLATANIA, G. Geological notes of Acireale. part III 379-380
- u.s. The "Pola" deep-sea explorations 380 [rep]
- TAGLIAFERRO, N. On the occurrence of lignite in the Globigerina bed of Malta 380-381 [Mlt]
- u.s. Science gossip 381-385 [including *Peronospora* in Malta; aphids in Malta; ladybirds in Malta; archaeological site at M'Xlokk; earthquakes in Malta;] [Mlt 382-383]
- SCOLES, J. Meteorological report. St. Ignatius' College Malta 1893 386 [March & April 1893] [Mlt]
- VOL 3 No. 25 -- August 1st, 1893 (pp 387-410)**
- u.s. A museum for Malta 387-389 [Mlt]
- u.s. Artificially coloured flowers 389 [rep]

- u.s. Petroleum theories 389 [rep]
 BALBI, E. & CARUANA GATTO, A. Resoconto di una escursione fatta alle grotte di Isoverde in Liguria 389-391 [written by a **Maltese Naturalist**]
 TAGLIAFERRO, N. On *Fuligula rufina* in Malta 391-392 [Mlt]
 u.s. City dust 392 [rep]
 AYSCOGHE FLOYER, E. La botanique du Nord-Etbai. part II 392-394
 BAIRSTOW, S.D. The orange diseases in Cape Colony 394-399 [part I]
 u.s. Colours of ancient Egypt 399-400 [rep]
 COOKE, M. [= Minnie COOKE] A modern Golgotha 400-401 [Mlt]
 HALKYARD, E. The collection and preparation of Foraminifera. part III 401-402
 u.s. Deep sea explorations in the Eastern Mediterranean 402-403 [abs]
 COOKE, J.H. On the occurrence of concretionary masses of flint and chert in the Maltese limestones 403-405 [Mlt]
 u.s. Notes and news 405-409 [including on the museum of the **Malta University**] [Mlt 406]
 SCOLES, J. Meteorological report. St. Ignatius' College Malta, 1893 410 [March & April 1893] [Mlt]
VOL 3 No. 26 -- October 1st, 1893 (pp 411-434)
 COOKE, J.H. The utilization of the waste lands of Malta. A new industry for the Maltese - a suggestion 411-414 [Mlt]
 u.s. Plant extremes 414-415 [rep]
 u.s. Egyptian horses 415 [rep]
 OYSCOGHE FLOYER, E. Notes sur la geologie de l'Etbai nord ou desert Est Egyptian 415-417 [part I]
 u.s. The mystery of the moon 417 [rep]
 A.C.G. [= A. CARUANA GATTO ?] Local notes 418-419 [various items on **Maltese natural history**] [Mlt]
 WALKER, A. Starlings 419-421
 TAGLIAFERRO, N. On the occurrence of *Echeneis naucrates* in Maltese waters 421 [Mlt]
 u.s. A novel industry 421-422 [rep]
 POLLONERA, C. Sui limacidi dell'Algeria 422-425
 u.s. Method of taking plaster casts of objects of natural history 425 [rep]
 BAIRSTOW, S.D. The orange disease of Cape Colony 425-428 [part II]
 u.s. Hints for young collectors 428-429 [rep]
 u.s. Notes and news 429-433 [including grape harvest in **Malta**; Medlycott's drawings of **Maltese birds and fishes**; archaeological remains in **Malta**; **Maltese agriculture**; **Maltese snakes**; tapeworms in **Malta**; cultivation of sulla in **Malta**] [Mlt 430-432]
 SCOLES, J. & DOBSON, J.F. Meteorological report. St. Ignatius' College Malta, 1893. 434 [August & September 1893] [Mlt]
VOL 3 No. 27 -- December 1st, 1893 (pp 435-458)
 W.K.R.B. [?] The tapestries of St. John's Church Valletta. 435-438 [Mlt]
 A.C.G. [= A. CARUANA GATTO ?] On the orange fly in Malta 438 [Mlt]
 u.s. Recent exploration of the Maltese and Sicilian caverns 438-440 [unsigned but reprinted from "Natural Science Dec. 1893"] [Mlt]
 HEY, W.C. Stray notes on the natural history of Spain 440-441
 COOKE, J.H. Vestiges of the Phoenicians in the Maltese Islands 441-446 [Mlt]
 u.s. Stray thoughts 446-447 [a collection of quotations]
 CARUANA GATTO, A. Common beetles of the Maltese Islands 447-451 [Mlt]
 J.H.C. [= J.H. COOKE ?] The Victoria Cavern 451-453 [Mlt]
 BAIRSTOW, S.D. The orange disease in Cape Colony 453-455 [part III - "to be continued"]
 COOKE, J.H. The utilization of the waste lands in Malta and Gozo 455-458 [Mlt]
 u.s. Notes and news 458

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