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John Davy

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The English doctor John Davy (1790–1868) was the younger brother of the chemist Sir Humphry Davy, of whom he wrote a memoir, also reissued in this series. After graduating from Edinburgh University, he entered the Army as a surgeon and was posted overseas. From 1824 to 1835 he was stationed in the Mediterranean, and later at Constantinople. Davy took detailed notes of the places he visited and the people he met, and turned some of these writings into books; his scientific observations led to him being made a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1834. Davy's account of his time in the Mediterranean was published in two volumes in 1842. Volume 1 begins with an overview of the respective histories of the Ionian Islands and Malta, and then discusses at length the geological and climatic aspects of the islands, examining their mineralogy, seasons, water temperature, and soil composition.

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John Davy

Frontmatter

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John Davy

Frontmatter

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# Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta

*With Some Remarks on Constantinople  
and Turkey, and on the System  
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VOLUME 1

JOHN DAVY



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John Davy

Frontmatter

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Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

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978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



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**TOWN & CITADEL OF CORFU.  
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John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

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IONIAN ISLANDS AND MALTA:

WITH SOME REMARKS ON

CONSTANTINOPLE AND TURKEY,

AND ON

THE SYSTEM OF QUARANTINE AS AT PRESENT CONDUCTED.

BY

JOHN DAVY, M.D., F.R.SS., L. & E.

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF ARMY-HOSPITALS, L. R.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present  
Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---



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978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## PREFACE.

---

AMONGST the advantages enjoyed by the Medical Officers of the army, the opportunity which the service affords of visiting distant countries may justly be ranked as one of the most considerable, combining the pleasure and profit of travel with professional duties and culture, so that individuals, if intent on self-improvement, may derive at the same time a double benefit.

This advantage, I believe, has been duly appreciated and turned to good account: but too frequently it has happened that the individuals themselves only have profited.

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John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

6

PREFACE.

During a period of twenty-six years of almost universal peace, when many hundred well educated and intelligent medical officers have been employed in our extensive colonies, how little has been contributed by them to the general stock of knowledge, that is to say, in proportion to their means and abilities. This has always appeared to me a matter of deep regret, especially as regards the extension of knowledge: the editor of a respectable and useful Medical Journal published in India,\* has judiciously chosen for his motto,

“Nihil est aliud magnum quam multa minuta.”

If medical officers considered it a duty which they owe to the public to communicate such information, as they may have had it in their power to collect, relative to the countries in which they have been stationed, how many doubtful points would have been cleared up,—how many errors corrected,—how much

\* Madras Quarterly Medical Journal.

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John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

7

more perfect would the histories of those countries have been rendered.

A persuasion of this kind has induced me to put together the notes and observations which I made during a period of eleven years that I was employed on the Medical Staff of the army in the Mediterranean, viz. from 1824 to 1835—with such additional information as I have since been able to procure.

The work resulting, is far more imperfect than I could wish; it has, indeed, required some resolution on my part to persevere in it, supported by a feeling of duty, such as that alluded to above; and I shall be well pleased if it should be considered by others as not altogether a failure in the way of example. I may add, in justice to myself, that the greater part of it has been composed, not in the enjoyment of literary leisure, but in the midst of the pressure of business, and that al-

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John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

8

PREFACE.

most uninterrupted, connected with the charge of the General Hospital establishment at Fort Pitt, which I held from May 1835 to October 1840, when I was sent by Her Majesty's Government to Constantinople, on particular service, under the Foreign Office, for the purpose of aiding to form a Medical Department for the Turkish army, lamentably in want of such a department, and to organize their Military Hospitals, almost equally in want of organization,—an occasion which enabled me to collect the information given in the two last chapters of the second volume.

The map attached to the work has been formed expressly for it by Mr Arrowsmith: parts of it are from actual survey, as Corfu, and Zante, and Malta, and the whole of the coast lines; and the remainder from different plans and charts, either belonging to Mr Arrowsmith, or to which he has been liberally allowed access, especially by the Librarian

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John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

PREFACE.

9

in the Colonial Office, Mr Mayer, to whom also I have to express my obligations for the facilities he has afforded me, in the kindest manner, of consulting many valuable documents respecting the Ionian Islands, deposited in his charge.

J. D.

MURRAYFIELD HOUSE, NEAR EDINBURGH,

*June 4, 1842.*

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Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present  
Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## CONTENTS.

Page

## CHAPTER I.

## HISTORICAL NOTICES OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS AND MALTA.

Features of Difference between the Ionian Islands and Malta. Points of Resemblance in their History. Early flourishing Condition of the Ionian Islands in the Homeric Age. Their subsequent Fluctuations, and Subordination to Greece and Rome. Their further Degradation and Subjection in the Middle Ages. Form of Government when subject to Venice. Changes undergone before coming under the Protection of Great Britain. Obscurity of the Early, and imperfection of the Later, History of Malta, extending from the Fabulous Period to the 16th Century, when ceded to the Knights of St John. Condition of the Island under the Rule of the Order. Particulars in Illustration. Surrender of the Island to the French. Flourishing Condition under the Protection of Great Britain, as a great Commercial Entrepot. The Plague of 1813. Its Consequences; with the Opening of the Ports of Europe on the Cessation of War in 1814, . . . . . 17

## CHAPTER II.

## ON THE GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

Prevailing Rocks. Their Connexion with Scenery. Remarkable Caverns. Basin-like Valleys. Peculiarities of Stratification. Uses of certain Rocks. Notice of the few Minerals hitherto discovered. Remarkable Mineralizing Process, as exhibited in Ancient Coins, &c., . . . . . 47

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

12

## CONTENTS.

Page

## CHAPTER III.

## ON THE GEOLOGY OF MALTA AND GOZO.

Points of Difference in the Rock-Formations of these and of the Ionian Islands. Prevailing Rocks. Connexion with Character of Scenery and Vegetation. Peculiarities of Ground indicative of a great Catastrophe, associated with Traces of Human Art. Effects of Vegetation on Calcareous Freestone. Uses of this Stone. Paucity of Mineral Substances, . . . . . 102

## CHAPTER IV.

## ON THE SPRINGS OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

Distribution of Springs, in connexion with Geological Structure. Division into Common and Mineral. Examples of the former. Aqueducts. Jubilee in Corfu on opening the Aqueduct supplying the Town. Cisterns. Quality of Water preserved in them. Saline Springs. Sulphuretted Springs. That called the "Grease Spring" in Zante described. Bituminous Springs. Description of the Pitch Wells in Zante. Springs with Peculiar Qualities. Anomalous Instances of Sea-Currents flowing into the Land, . . . . . 123

## CHAPTER V.

## ON THE SPRINGS OF MALTA.

Situation of Springs. Scanty Supply of Spring-Water. Dependence of most Parts of the Island on Tanks, even for Agricultural Purposes. How Made and Managed. Aqueduct Supplying the Town of Valetta. Notice of its Opening. Saline Spring of Missida. Incidental Notice of the Medicinal Waters of Alexandria Troas, . . . . . 167

## CHAPTER VI.

## ON THE EARTHQUAKES OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

Great Obscurity of the Subject. The Different Islands, and Parts of the same Island unequally affected by Earthquakes. Apparent



Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## CONTENTS.

13

	Page
Relation between Liability to Shocks and Geological Structure.	
Irregularity of Occurrence Illustrated by the Record of Observations, Phenomena, and Effects of Earthquakes. Notice of some Remarkable Shocks. Consideration of some of the Causes on which they have been supposed to depend. Conjectures on the Subject,	175

## CHAPTER VII.

## ON THE TEMPERATURE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA, AND ON THE SPECIFIC GRAVITY OF ITS WATER.

Many Peculiarities of the Mediterranean, opening a wide field for Research. Results of Experiments on the Specific Gravity of its Water. Observations on its Temperature at different Seasons. Conjecture relative to the use of the Thermometer for determining its Currents. Observations on the Degree of Moisture of its Atmosphere. Reflections on the Proportional Saltness of this Sea. Conjectures on the same, . . . . . 195

## CHAPTER VIII.

## ON THE CLIMATE OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

General Character of Climate, as regards the Seasons. Yearly Range and Mean Annual Temperature. Temperature of Springs. Monthly Temperature. Observations on Rain. Thunder Storms. Range of Barometer. Dryness and Humidity of Atmosphere. Variable Condition in relation to Atmospheric Transparency, and Production of Dew. Observations on prevailing Winds. Peculiarities of Climate in connexion with Elevation. Observations on the Temperature of particular spots in Mountainous and Hilly situations, suitable for Summer Residence. Points of Difference in the Climate of the different Islands. Special observations on the Climate of Cerigo. Incidental notice of the fall of Rain at Gibraltar, illustrated by Tables, . . . . . 225

## CHAPTER IX.

## ON THE CLIMATE OF MALTA.

Points of Difference in the Climate of Malta and of the Ionian Islands. Marked Difference of Temperature between the town of Valetta and Malta generally, illustrated by Tables. Prevailing Winds, and

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

	Page
their Character. Sirocco Wind. Opinions and Remarks on its Peculiarities. Conjectures on its Origin, in connexion with its Qualities. Gales. Proportion of Cloudless and Cloudy Days. Observation on the Radiation of Heat. Suggestions for making Cool Sleeping Apartments. Observations on Freezing at a Temperature of Atmosphere above 32° Remarks on Dew. Question of its Influence in Bleaching considered. Notice of Experiments on the Light of the Moon. Observations on Rain. Description of a Shower of Dust of remarkable extent. Barometrical Observations. Notice of Thunder and Hail-Storms. Brief mention of the Climate of Gozo, . . . . .	257

## CHAPTER X.

ON THE SOILS, AND ON THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE  
IN THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

Principal Varieties of Soils, and their Capacities. Present rude State of Agriculture. Circumstances which may have conducted to it. Tables of Produce. Implements of Husbandry. Culture of Wheat—Maize—the Common Vine. Wine-making, and Varieties of Wine. Currant-Vine, and its Fruit. Culture of the Olive and the Making of Oil. Cotton. The Potato. Tobacco. Rice. Question of the Effect of Rice-Fields on the Salubrity of the Air. Culture of Vegetables and Fruit-Trees. Modes of Propagating the latter. Caprification. Pasture Lands. Flocks. Pastoral Life. Musical Instruments. Field Labour. Wages of Labourers. Land Tenures. Remarks on the Neglect of Manuring and Planting. Proportion of Cultivated and Waste Land. Examples in Zante and Cerigo, . . . . .	313
---	-----

## CHAPTER XI

## ON THE SOILS, AND STATE OF AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE IN MALTA.

Description of the principal varieties of Soil. Manner of bringing Ground into Cultivation, and forming " <i>Campi artificiali</i> ." Proofs of extraordinary labour. Points of difference between the Agri-	
--	--

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## CONTENTS.

15

	Page
culture of Malta and of the Ionian Islands. Superiority of the former, and the Circumstances conducive to it. Principal Productions. Tables in illustration. Rotation of Crops. Manner of cultivating Cotton. Wheat. Table showing the Quantity grown and imported, and the Price of Bread. Sulla. Particulars relative to Farms, Rent, Labour, and Labourers. Implements of Husbandry. Manner of using Manure. Horticulture. Its imperfect State. Hints for its Improvement. Brief Notice of the Soils and Agriculture of Gozo, and of the Condition of its Agricultural Population, . . . . .	389

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some  
Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present  
Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

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978-1-108-04235-2 - Notes and Observations on the Ionian Islands and Malta: With Some Remarks on Constantinople and Turkey, and on the System of Quarantine as at Present Conducted: Volume 1

John Davy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## LIST OF EMBELLISHMENTS.

## VOL. I.

View of the Town and Citadel of Corfu . . .	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
Fountain of Arethusa, Ithaca. — Islet of Drakea, off the Coast of Corfu; and San Georgio, Malta . . .	<i>To face page</i> 77
Meteorological Table . . . . .	308
Agricultural Implements in use in the Ionian Islands and Malta . . . . .	330
Map of the Ionian Islands and Malta . . . . .	436

## VOL. II.

View of the Village of Calafationes, Corfu . . .	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
Olive Press and Corn Mill, &c. in use in the Ionian Islands . . . . .	<i>To face page</i> 37
Domestic Implements, &c. in use in the Ionian Islands . . .	53
Prize Ionian University Medal, founded by Sir Howard Douglas, Bart. . . . .	116