L'accesso ai camminetti, ha poi tutto il sapore di un'ignoranza anche se modesta curiosità storica. Il camminetto non era ignoto a Rodi; sappiamo per esempio, di uno monumentale che troneggia nella Cornia maggiore dell'Infermeria, portato via nel 1845, dal console inglese di Beirut (6); a Malta, però, è molto probabile che questo comforto fosse ignoto prima dell'avvento dell'Ordine; e qui mi pare di cogliere la notizia della prima apparizione, sotto i tetti matthesi della linea e del calore intimo del camminetto.

Sul Flavari abbiamo poi un altro documento, l'ultimo; e non è meno triste del primo: quello che ci presenta il nostro Protomagistro vecchio, imperioso, deciso. Nel 1555 l'Ordine assume un altro architetto; il maestro Nicola Belavante (7). Il Flavari, come apprendiamo dallo stesso decreto che fissa lo stipendio del nuovo architetto, è messo a riposo, e gli concedono, nel suo sostentamento, quattro soldi al mese!

Questo Nicola Belavante, sul quale non abbiamo altre notizie, e che sarebbe il secondo Protomagistro dell'Ordine a Malta, non era, fino ad oggi incluso nelle liste che hanno operato nell'Isola; la sua presenza qui, però, deve essere stata molto breve: perché soli due anni dopo, l'Ordine già cercava un altro architetto, infatti il Cav. Fr. Cesare Vincenzi, inviato a Roma per comunicare a quella Corte l'elezione al Gran Maestro di Fr. Giovanni de la Valette, ha per incarico di cercare di procurarsi un buon architetto "a Milano o a Firenze alcuno con buona et pratico "el studio nell'arte sua et tale a cui possemero fider tanto li edificii et forti esse ince"municato quanto quello che si hanno da far." (8) E l'architetto scelto, questa volta, contento a sovrani et principi, fu altresì "buono pratico et savio nell'arte sua", perché si chiamava Bartolomeo Genga.

Abbiamo dunque, sul Flavari, delle notizie e delle date finite e sicure; sono però tali da consentirci una rapida delineazione della sua figura artistica, e sufficienti per poter attribuirgli, con certezza assoluta, le opere sorte nei primi tre lustri dell'era Giovannina a Malta? A me pare che queste opere abbiano una linea abbastanza unitaria di svolgimento e che s'integrasino in un solo momento artistico; ma queste non possono essere chiare completamente in una semplice nota come la presente. Comunque le notizie che oggi possediamo, sono così ricche di possibilità di sviluppi, che non mi dispiace davvero di averle disappelte.
to them by their permanent officials. And if dependent upon these officials for advice on the immediate problems, how much greater was their dependence upon them for policy with regard to Malta.

The permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1832-1836, was Robert Hay; and from 1836-1839 it was Sir James Stephen. Little has been published about Robert Hay: a colleague of his, hardly a friend, applied to him the proverb "mettle is dangerous in a blind horse", and criticized him for his ability to go straight to a decision whether right or wrong. On the despatches from Malta, Robert Hay maintained a regular and careful consideration and drafted precise instructions in reply. Sometimes proposals from the Governor did not get beyond the Under-Secretary of State, but it would be unjust to criticize Hay for blocking progress in the development of policy for Malta, for on all important points he reflected most accurately the opinion and policy of the Secretary of State whether he was a Whig or a Tory.

Much more is known of Sir James Stephen. He has been referred to as "Mr. Grey's Secretary Stephen"; as a man possessing a "positive for work"; indeed, nothing less would have sufficed for Stephen allowed not one thing to pass in the Colonial Office without his knowledge. There was in this Under-Secretary a genuine sympathy for the Maltese people which led him on one occasion to criticize the conduct of the English Garrison towards the Maltese. But his sympathy was limited and did not extend to advocating political advancement for the Maltese in the first half of the 19th century. Stephen believed it would be impracticable to give the Maltese a representative government, and went so far in a memorandum to Earl Grey to say that he considered such a proposition as "absurd" in 1847.

Besides the power of the permanent officials there was another important factor affecting the development of Colonial affairs, that was the practice of referring despatches from the Colonies to other Departments of State to the Colonial Office or the War Office, or the Board of Trade and so on. This affected policy not only by the delays which ensued but by the conflicting opinions and instructions which emanated from the various departments and which revealed a lack of co-ordination among them. With respect to the development of policy for Malta, in questions which involved strategy or finance, the decision given by the Foreign Office or War Office or Treasury usually took precedence over that of the Colonial Office. Of all the departments it was perhaps the Treasury which indirectly wielded the most intensive control over Colonial affairs.

It is against this background, therefore, that the constitution provided for Malta in 1818 persisted without change until 1831. The constitution was based solely on the conception of the island as a strategic fortress. "It must be a basic principle," said the Colonial Secretary, Lord Liverpool, in May 1812, "that the military authority should be free from all restraint in superseding the civil power, whenever the security of the island appeared to demand it." The Commissioners of Inquiry of 1824 in obedience to such instructions, recommended that complete authority, both civil and military, should be vested in the Governor; though they did suggest the establishment of an advisory Council of English and Maltese members to be nominated by the Governor. But on the recommendation, however, was not in the least the liking of Sir Thomas Maitland, who was appointed Governor in July 1823 and who ruled the island with remarkable efficiency, but with a despotic military authority which made him so much hated by the Maltese.

On the appointment of his successor, the Marquis of Hastings in 1824 and Major-General Sir Frederick Ponsonby in 1826, the Colonial Office saw no reason to alter in the slightest degree the original constitution for the governance of Malta to accommodate the interests of the colony. The question was not discussed; the initial instructions to the Governor were automatically confirmed.

Yet within a few years, by 1831-2, there is evidence of a restrained yet growing restlessness within the political situation. Lord Goderich, the Secretary of State, was of the opinion in 1831 that if he demanded for a Legislative Council for Malta, it would be most unwise to have the opinion of a group of Englishmen to advise him, yet he felt a Council would cause great inconvenience to Britain when the wishes of the mother-country and the interests of the colony were in conflict. He predicted that this would come on financial questions. He wrote in a letter to Hay dated 28th July 1832 as follows: "...Liberal people in England are anxious to get as much as possible out of Malta, and liberal people here will be inclined to get as much as possible out of England. I see no harm in a Council if I felt that it would be possible to correct or keep in proper bounds this very natural diversity of opinion."

Indeed, when Ponsonby saw the plan of constitutional reform presented to him by the Maltese liberals under their leader Camillo Sciberras, he was even more convinced of its impracticability. The Maltese liberals in 1832 petitioned for the establishment of an Assembly of 30 members to be freely elected by a wide franchise and to have the power of "inducing" legislation. Such a political privilege was far in advance of anything which had yet been granted to the British Colonies. It was not until 1845 that a new development in general colonial policy can be seen by the grant of a partly elected Legislative Council to the colony of New South Wales.

On the Maltese petition, the Governor reported that such an Assembly "would be found totally unfit for the purposes of legislation and that the result of such a step would be extremely injurious to the real interests of the people". The Colonial Office were certainly of the same opinion. Yet, despite his preliminary caution and criticism, Ponsonby formulated his own plan for a Legislative Council which gave evidence of his calculated attitude towards the Maltese people: for although he ruled the practicality of an elected Council, he argued strongly for a nominated Council on which there should be a majority of Maltese members. He thought any less comprehensive measure would not be attended with any advantage. From his knowledge of the Maltese people, Ponsonby realized that they would not be satisfied by palliatives and he wished to avoid the unhappy task of having to govern an unacquainted people. Ponsonby seems to have assumed that he would be able to manage a Maltese majority on his nominated Council, and probably he would have succeeded, being possessed of a mild temperament and a patient, tactful character. The Colonial Office, however, was in no way disposed to press the Governor of Malta with a problem which had not yet been faced or experienced in any other colony. When he received the Governor's plan for a nominated Council, Robert Hay spoke of it as the worst scheme he had ever seen, and even after two
De Piro and Portelli, Camillo Scoberras had on the 20th May 1835 informed the Secretary of State that the grievances complained of in the Petitions of 1832 were in no way remedied but had rather been increased by the Proclamation of 1st May 1835. Scoberras recommended the Petitions yet again to the attention of the new Secretary of State, Lord Glenelg, pleading that: "they do not appear to have been taken into a full consideration by H. M.'s former Colonial Ministers on the grounds which they appear to have merited". This letter from Scoberras to Glenelg was delivered in London by Giorgio Mitrovich, who was commissioned by the Maltese liberals to represent their cause personally at the Colonial Office. He was instructed to give the Minister first-hand information on the issues arising from the letter and from the Petitions of 1832.

Mitrovich proved himself an obedient, and at this time a successful agent of the Maltese liberals. He had served no apprenticeship in politics, but had been employed as a clerk in two English commercial houses in Malta before setting up in business unsuccessfully himself. Yet he had the ability to convince others of the justice of his cause and to enlist their help in his struggle to bring under the notice of the Colonial Office, the English people and their Parliament the grievances under which the Maltese suffered.

By August 1835, Mitrovich had contacted several influential men who promised him their support. William Ewart, the friend of Huskisson. Ewart was member of Parliament for Liverpool. He was known in the House of Commons as an advanced liberal, as a speaker for the repeal of the Corn Laws and as a protagonist of popular causes. He gave Mitrovich immediate assistance by transmitting copies of his pamphlet to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir George Grey, and also to Lord Glenelg. He arranged an interview for Mitrovich at the Colonial Office, and supervised all his correspondence with the Secretary of State.

Yet it was by his pamphlets that Mitrovich won his success; particularly by the two published in London in July and November 1835, "The Claims of the Maltese founded on the principles of Justice", and "Indiezzo al Maltesi". In these pamphlets, Mitrovich developed in some detail the historical basis for the regaining of a Colonial Pulpit. According to his argument, a "Consilio Pulpit" had been established in 1695 by Count Roger of Normandy and had been composed of representatives of the clergy, the nobility and the people; Mitrovich claimed for it the sovereign right of legislation. Mitrovich further maintained that the Congresso of 1793 was a revival of the Consilio Pulpit, and like its predecessor possessed legislative power, and that in suppressing the Congresso Britain had broken all her solemn pledges to the Maltese.

The importance of these pamphlets lies mainly in their attack against the national honour of Great Britain, and in the circumstance of them being released publication in Malta, by which the whole question of the freedom of the press was brought into high relief. Both the principles involved were dear to, and of interest in the House of Commons: the pamphlets thus provided a climate of opinion in the House and prepared the way for the presentation of a Petition to the Commons which was already being formulated in Malta in September 1835.

The Maltese had striven to bring their cause under the notice of ordinary Englishmen and their representatives in Parliament, feeling assured that by this
and two personal petitions were presented by Hume. It is at this point that the close connection between commerce and politics in Malta, which can be detected in various ways throughout the period, is made obvious. It was not simple coincidence that the commercial house with which Mitrovich was formerly connected was the Liverpool merchant; that Jameson Hunter, who assisted in financing his mission to London, was one of the most important merchants in Malta, and that Ewart represented a constituency whose main livelihood was trade. Malta undoubtedly owed much to the merchants, British and Maltese, who, by combating the restrictions on trade, undermined the political system of which they were part.

The presentation of the Petitions in the House of Commons, besides giving precise information to the House on conditions in Malta, provided the final impetus to the plan of sending a Royal Commission to Malta, a Commission which would eventually report to the House of Commons. Carmillo Scoberras, however, was not satisfied that this should be the method of proceeding; he wanted no inquiries; the Maltese hoped for immediate reforms; the grievances under which they suffered were obvious to them without further investigation. When he received news of this attitude, Ewart was forced to admit to Mitrovich that 'If the gentlemen who represent the Maltese are unwilling to admit the expediency of sending a Commission to Malta, I shall not feel myself perplexed by their decision.' As yet there was only this small difference of opinion between Ewart and Scoberras; later, the activity and actual recommendations of the Commission were to prove an irremovable stumbling-block to the good relations between the two men. Ewart had the fullest confidence in the judgment of the Commissioners while Scoberras hoped they would accept his formula as the only possible solution for Malta's problems.

The appointment of the Commissioners, John Austin and George Cornewall Lewis, precipitated the under-taking of a plan which had long been maturing in his mind; it was the plan that a Consiglio Popolare should be organized without delay and be in session when the Commissioners arrived in Malta. Scoberras quickly saw the advantage of this step, and the convenience of a system which might alleviate their sufferings. It was essential that reference be made to the Council of Government and its executive authority to meet the needs of the people.

By February 1846, the Colonial Office was informed of the preparation of the Petition on the island and received a copy of it from the Acting-Governor. It revealed a marked development in the political outlook of the Maltese for which Ewart, with his advice, was probably responsible. In it, emphasis was laid on the absence of any free means of representation and the people's right to free expression of opinion, whether in a newspaper or by municipal bodies; the insufficiency of education was given a prominent position in the list of grievances; the restriction of the vote and thus the perpetuation of the 1832 and the September of that year, and enlisted their support for his new scheme. Under this enthusiastic and devoted leadership and with the co-operation of the two committees, which had been elected from among the professional groups in the island and from these committees two or three deputies were again elected to represent the professions in a General Assembly which was called the Comitato Generale. The Comitato Generale continued in addition representatives of the clergy and the nobility, and deputies elected by the heads of families in the towns and villages. There were no franchise regulations except the customary bar against women and minors; no secret ballot or formal ballot papers. The electors were not sure of the aim and purpose of this political activity; many thought it necessary to the presentation of yet another petition to the House of Commons. By the close of 1845 the Comitato Generale numbered, besides the inner committee of 12, about 90 deputies.

Unquestionably the whole organisation was accepted as the revival of the Consiglio Popolare and in essence it probably resembled very much its ancient predecessor for the nucleus of the whole was still the same. This is evident from the fact that the original group led by Scoberras was never limited in any way. The men who had organized the petitions to the House of Commons, who formed
the inner-committee of the Comitato Generale before any elections took place, were in November 1836 accepted automatically by the people of Valletta as their representatives. To their number were added other deputies from Valletta invested solely with the power of confirming decisions already taken by this committee.

Although the Comitato Generale was illegal according to the law of the Island, the Governor Bovet allowed it to proceed unhindered. And in answer to a question from the Colonial Office he reported the presence of only 9 Italian refugees in Malta, of whom only three were without passports. This substantiates an impression derived from the documents available, that at this period 1835-1836 the political activities of the Maltese, though perhaps influenced by the example of efforts in Italy, were not organised or encouraged by political exiles in Malta. Such a development came later and may be dated from about 1844.

Scarsmore hoped that the Commissioners would be so impressed with the Comitato Generale that they would recommend its formal establishment to the Colonial Office. G. C. Lewis reported that the Maltese seemed to be under the impression that he and Austin had come to Malta with a "Maltese Magna Carta" in their pockets. This was precisely what they hadn't got.

Although Gennel had instructed them as their first duty to investigate the claim for a Consiglio Popolare, the Commissioners thought it wiser to inquire first into the several branches of the administration before forming an opinion as to the expediency of popular institutions for the Island. This latter task occupied their time from their arrival in October 1836 until their departure in June 1838. It was not until May 1837 that Austin and Lewis communicated their opinions on the Consiglio Popolare to the Secretary of State, and how near this opinion was to the hopes of Scarsmore was never known in Malta for the despatch was not published.

The Commissioners agreed with the opinion expressed by Gennel in his instructions to them in September 1836, that the grant of a Consiglio Popolare, invested with extensive power, would not be in the best interests of the security of the Island; it would serve neither the interests of the Empire nor those of Malta herself. Nevertheless they were convinced that some reform was necessary and recommended the introduction of a representative Council of Malta to be elected by holders of property and the educated classes in Malta, and to be invested with the functions, purely consultative, of the existing Council of Government. The Commissioners maintained that such a Council as they proposed would be an exponent of the opinions and wishes of the intelligent classes, and would give the Maltese efficient security against any attempted mimic. The Commissioners hesitated to make a formal report on this subject for they were convinced that their recommendation would not be acceptable to either party. The Maltese, they argued, would resent their refusal to recommend the establishment of a Consiglio Popolare, since in proving the inexpediency of such an Assembly they would have to insist on the imprudent and disastrous war which would probably be made of its powers. While on the other hand, what they considered as a moderate and sufficient concession would most certainly be refused by Great Britain. The Commissioners, were correct in both their assumptions. In the Colonial Office, Sir John Rose, the Secretary of State, thought the proposal inexpedient and declined to request a formal report on the subject. Yet within nine years, both this recommendation of the Commissioners for the recognition of elected Maltese representatives, and the other they made for the appointment of a Civil Governor, were enacted.

But by that time, by 1849, several vital changes had taken place. The first in point of time was the emergence in office of the third Earl Grey as Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs in July 1846. He was a politician of independent ideas with the courage to enforce them when he had the opportunity, and within a few months "Sir Over-Secretary Stephen" was forced to resign; his successor adopted a more conventional interpretation at his duties as permanent Under-Secretary. Again from his first moments in office, Earl Grey was aware that all was not well with Malta. The more he considered the problem, and from his conviction that the appointment of a Civil Governor was a sound and necessary policy. He went even further and overcame the many obstacles raised to appoint a Governor who was also a Roman Catholic. Richard More O'Ferrall became Governor of Malta in November 1847. O'Ferrall was an experienced and capable administrator who had merited praise for his work in the Treasury and as Secretary to the Board of Admiralty. He became convinced, within a few months, that the support and co-operation of the Maltese in the government of the island would not be secured without some reform of the existing Council of Government.

In his first project of reform, More O'Ferrall proposed the amendment of the Council by the inclusion of a greater number of nominated Maltese members; and he intended to choose men whom he thought would receive the popular vote if elected. Among the 15 men whom he considered for nomination were A. Pucillino, P. Scirretta, Count Gatto, and M. Cachia Castagna who had originally been members of the Comitato Generale and who had continued their political activities in Malta. The Governor thought it wise to nominate such men, maintaining that their distrust was due to ignorance rather than malice or dishonesty, and that if better informed they would support the Government. When the proposal was received in London, Earl Grey expressed himself entirely disposed to promote the Governor's wishes: it seems probable that the possibility of an amendment of the Council had been discussed with More O'Ferrall before the Governor's departure for Malta. But Earl Grey was not prepared that all 15 men mentioned by the Governor should be nominated: he thought it a necessity from the strategic importance of the Island that the Executive authority should be preserved and strengthened by every fair means and especially by a majority of official members in the Council of Government. Grey's fears were unfounded for More O'Ferrall had not envisaged a Council of with either the number or power to dictate a policy to the Governor. In July 1848, he presented a further precise plan of reform by which the Council was to consist of 10 official and 8 unofficial members: 'but now the Governor went beyond his Instructions which had emphasized that the peculiar circumstances distinguishing Malta from the other possessions of the Crown would preclude...', the Maltese from enjoying representative institutions. If Grey had discussed an amendment of the Council he had not provided for the inclusion of elected Maltese members; in fact, in March 1847, Grey considered representative government for Malta to be altogether out of the question. It was therefore with great care and much justification that
More O’Ferrall now proposed that this in fact should be the method of extending the Council, that it should be enlarged by right of popular vote. He argued gently that events in Europe in 1838 justified a reconsideration of the policy to be adopted towards Malta; that until that year, the contrast between the government of Malta and the governments in Sicily and other Italian states was strongly in favour of Malta, but since the acquisition of political rights in Sicily, the feeling in Malta in favour of representation of some kind had greatly increased. He had indeed considered establishing elected municipal institutions for the island, but had finally decided against them. He reported that those who desired an elected Legislative Council regarded municipal institutions with indifference; some were even hostile at the suggestion of a substitute. The Governor’s own opinion was that the grant of municipal institutions without an elected Assembly would not satisfy the Maltese people, and the erection of such institutions would in itself be attended by many difficulties. Since no direct taxation of any kind was levied, the new corporations would have either to levy a rate, a departure which would cause universal dissatisfaction, or be granted a portion of the general revenue to defray the charge of the duties entrusted to them. It would be extremely difficult to fix a franchise for the country as a whole. Moreover, the Governor was strongly opposed to subjecting this section of the inhabitants, whose attachment to Britain was strong, to what he called the “deteriorating influence of political excitement”. He considered that from their lack of education they would be weak against the influence of ambitious and designing men who would seek to destroy Britain’s hold on their affections. These arguments convinced Earl Grey; he approved at the same time the alternative to municipal institutions proposed by the Governor which he considered an ingenious plan. More O’Ferrall maintained that the legislative duties of his Council would occupy only a few days in the year; he therefore proposed its subdivision into committees which were to be charged with municipal duties and with the supervision of a certain portion of money voted in Council.

This entire scheme, however, was based on the project that the 8 unofficial members of the Council were to be elected, and that each of the three committees of the Council, that of Public Charities, that of the University and Primary Instruction, and of Public Works, were to consist of three elected and two official members. More O’Ferrall pointed out that Britain would not be endangering the security of the fortress by thus granting a limited right of representation; his plan, he said, gave an added power to popular bodies and could be suspended in time of war. He frankly believed that the existing system of government was better adapted to the needs of the people and to the position of Malta as a fortress, and in making the proposed change he changed as much as possible to that which had been proved in practice; but he was convinced that, although the Local Government would always secure the rights and liberties of the people, it was impossible “to inspire the Maltese with that truth”. It was also preferable to put that popular support which the Maltese leaders claimed they possessed to the test of a free election than to nominate such persons to the Council making “advancement the reward of ability and character” more than this he expected few Benefits to be derived exclusively from the establishment of representative institutions; he confessed that his recommendation for them was founded on “extraordinary causes which operate on opinion at Malta”.

MRS MILDA L. LEW

The essential point of the plan for a partly elected Legislative Council which has been transmitted to the Colonial Office in the confidential despatch of 10 July 1838 were enacted in Malta by Letters Patent of 11 May 1859. The details of the Letters Patent are well known. The right to vote was given to all men over 21 years of age who possessed land or property of an annual value of 100 scudi (18. 6. 8.) or who occupied as a tenant a dwelling valued at 50 scudi, or who was a partner in a mercantile firm with a person having the necessary qualifications: clergyman, practising advocate, surgeon and physicians possessing such qualifications were to be included in the electoral lists. On this basis an electorate of 3,486 in Malta and 287 in Gozo was established. The voters were to elect 7 representatives for Malta and 1 for Gozo; these eight members together with the nominated official members, of whom 5 were to be Maltese, were to form the new Legislative Council. By the Letters Patent of May 1849, therefore, both the recommendation of taxation for Malta and that of the Commissioners of Inquest for elective representation were promulgated.

In the excitement of those first elections, the majority of those entitled to vote availed themselves of their newly won privilege; 3,050 voted in Malta and 259 in Gozo. Among the eight successful candidates were two members of the original Comitato Generale, A. Publico and G. B. Vella. G. Publico Montebello, the chairman of the committee of Maltese merchants and an active member of the Popular Committee was also elected; three priests were chosen and with M. Scorré completed the number of representatives for Malta: the member elected by the Garzanti was Adrian Dingli who was to have a remarkably brilliant career and eventually to be appointed Chief Justice of Malta.

The new Legislative Council, which formally assembled on the 8th January 1865, was invested with important powers, but the crucial question was to be the manner in which the Governor used the official majority, whether despite the 3 Maltese members he compelled them to vote as a government bloc. But this point, with the study of the political discipline of the elected Maltese members and the activity of men like Fortunato Mizzi and Lord Strickland, provide the core of the constitutional history of Malta in the later half of the 19th century and are outside the province of this paper.

In conclusion, therefore, it is clear that the period from 1823 to 1859 was one of slow but significant development. The military despotism of Sir Thomas Maitland had been entirely removed. The benevolent despotic Sir Frederick Ponsonby brought no real contentment to the Maltese. The important economic and social reforms enacted on the recommendations of the Commissioners of Inquiry 1836-38 were desired to adhere to the line of the famous “code” of the Maltese constitution. Of all their grievances, it was the lack of political representation in the councils of the government which provided the dynamic motive for the efforts of Cassiano Societti and his friends. When his work is compared with that of Ponsonby, Ewart, Grey and More O’Ferrall, it can be seen that those men possessed much in common; they all had a very deep love of this Island, a clear appreciation of its many problems, a tremendous sense of responsibility and devotion to the tasks which confronted them and a profound desire to foster the good government and prosperity of the people. Without the work of these men, Maltese and English, the development of the constitution would have long been postponed.
Maltese Medical Journals 1838-1952

BY

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Origin of medical journals

Medical journalism originated in France in the seventeenth century when the first medical journal—"Vieilles Découvertes sur toutes les Parties de Medicine"—was published in 1679 by Nicolas De Bligny (1639-1722), who later became surgeon to Louis XIV. (1) Its publication was followed by the issue of the first Dutch medical journal in 1680, and, later on, by the first British medical periodical—the "Medicina Curiosa"—in 1684. German, Spanish, Italian, Russian and American medical journals were published initially in 1717, 1734, 1792, 1765 and 1799 respectively, so that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the medical journal as we know it to-day—a medium for the publication of original papers and for the diffusion of reviews and abstracts of current medical literature—had become firmly established.

L' Apo Medico

The pioneer Maltese medical periodical made its appearance later in the day, when Dr. G. G. Schinas published his L'Ape Medico—Gioranale di Medicina in the last quarter of 1838. His declared aim was to compile a journal that would appeal not only to the newly educated doctor but also to the mature and experienced physician. All the articles, extracts and reviews were either written or translated by Schinas himself, so that the Gioranale di Medicina cannot be said to be representative of the knowledge, views and experiences of the Maltese medical profession of the time. However, in spite of this personal bias, its contents furnish valuable material to the medical historian on the status of medicine and surgery of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, both in Malta and abroad. The Apo is wholly written in Italian but considering the number and length of the abstracts and reviews of foreign medical publications, which form the bulk of its four numbers, it appears that Schinas was equally familiar with the English, French and German languages. He must have had a good grasp of contemporary medical literature for the principal medical journals of Europe, such as Guy's Hospital...