

**A TREATISE ON THE
PETROLEUM
ZONES OF ITALY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649353125

A treatise on the Petroleum Zones of Italy by E. St. John Fairman

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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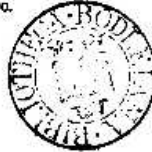
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E. ST. JOHN FAIRMAN

**A TREATISE ON THE
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ZONES OF ITALY**

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ON THE
PETROLEUM ZONES OF ITALY.

BY
E. ST. JOHN FAIRMAN, F.G.S., F.R.G.S.,
FELLOW OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF FRANCE AND THE SOCIETY OF NATURAL
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ETC., ETC., ETC.



LONDON:
E. & F. N. SPON, 48, CHARING CROSS.
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1868.

188. e. 24.

TO

JOHN PHILLIPS, Esq., M.A., LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.S., ETC.,
Professor of Geology in the University of Oxford,

AND

DAVID THOMAS ANSTED, Esq., M.A., F.R.S., ETC.,
Late Professor of Geology in King's College, London,

WHO WERE THE FIRST TO GIVE A PRACTICAL IMPULSE TO THE ARDENT
DESIRE WHICH I ALREADY ENTERTAINED FOR THE STUDY OF GEOLOGY,
ESPECIALLY IN ITALY, SO RICH IN MINERAL WEALTH,

This Small Volume,

AS A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE, ESTEEM, AND ADMIRATION,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PISA, ITALY, 1st June, 1867.

P R E F A C E.

In the fall of the year 1865, being deeply impressed with the important results that might be obtained for Italy by the development of her mineral riches, I undertook a geological tour through a large district of this fine country. In my explorations my attention was more particularly directed to Petroleum; and I became fully convinced of the very distinct indications which presented themselves in various places, more especially in the provinces of Modena and Reggio.

These indications appeared to me to be identical with those of America, and, in some spots, even much more favourable; in this opinion I am fully borne out by many scientific gentlemen who have lately visited those localities, and some of whom have published their ideas on the subject, *viz.*, Professors Stoppani, Canestrini, Manzini, Calegari, &c., &c.

We know from the testimony of the most ancient writers that Petroleum has been known to exist in the spots I have indicated from time immemorial. Herodotus, Pliny, Spallanzani, Valisneri, Humboldt, &c., &c., all speak of the Salse of Querzuola and of Sassuolo, and bear testimony to the fact of oil being collected by the peasantry from the surface of the oil springs for household purposes.

In considering the enormous revenue obtained in

America from this precious material, and the almost fabulous fortunes made by private individuals thereby in an incredibly short space of time, I have been led to believe most sincerely that the like splendid results would be obtained in Italy, were it possible to induce either the Italians themselves or foreign capitalists to engage in an enterprise which offers such fair hopes of a successful issue.

I have explored the Petroleum zones in that stretch of country which extends from the south of Milan to the south of Bologna, and along the confines of Modena commencing at Pavullo, and in several places I have detected the undoubted presence of Petroleum; and in those spots more particularly described in this work, the indications are very strong.

On the ascending or northern slope of Monte Gibbio, where there is a gas-spring, on Monte Baranzone, and on other mountains, I detached pieces of the sandstone of which they are chiefly composed, and I found them to be strongly impregnated with oil; and even now, after preserving them for nearly two years, exposed to the action of the air, these pieces, when broken, give forth a very strong smell of Petroleum.

I have studied this subject for two years, I have devoted time, money, and the little talents I possess to it, I have travelled over mountains and valleys at all hours, and under very difficult circumstances in the prosecution of this inquiry; and I may now say with

a clear conscience, that I firmly believe in the feasibility of developing the Petroleum question in Italy, and that it will yet turn out to be the most fruitful source of revenue to this country that was ever yet conceived, and that the fortunate individuals who first enter the field will be rewarded beyond their most sanguine hopes.

Should this little volume (which pretends to no literary or scientific merit) be the means of drawing the attention of capitalists to the subject of which it treats, and thereby benefit a country which I love, in common with all well wishers of free and united Italy and her heroic King, I shall consider the labours that I have hitherto undergone amply repaid.

PISA, ITALY, 1st June, 1867.

