**44. some of the things from the ship**] pro-  
bably, as A. V., **broken pieces of the ship** :  
—some of the parts of the ship: the others  
mentioned being **whole planks**, perhaps of  
the decks.

**XXVIII. 1. Melita**] The  
whole course of the narrative has gone to  
shew that this *can be no other than* MALTA.  
The idea that it is not MALTA, but *Meleda*,  
an island off the Illyrian coast in the Gulf  
of Venice, seems to be first found in

Constantine Porphyrogenitus. It has been  
adopted by our own countrymen, Bryant  
and Dr. Falconer, and abroad by some  
commentators. It rests principally on  
three mistakes:—1. the meaning of the  
name Adria (see above on ch. xxvii. 27),—  
2. the fancy that there are no poisonous  
serpents in Malta (ver. 3),—3. the notion  
that the Maltese would not have been called  
Barbarians.—The idea itself, when compared

with the facts, is preposterous enough.  
Its supporters are obliged to place Fair  
Havens on the *north side of Crete*,—and  
to suppose the wind to have been the hot  
*Sirocco* (comp. ver. 2).—Further notices of  
this question, and of the state of Malta at  
the time, will be found in the notes on the  
following verses.

**2. the barbarians**]  
A term implying very much what our word  
**natives** does, when speaking of any little-  
known or new place. They were not Greek  
colonists, therefore they were barbarians  
(Rom. i. 14). If it be necessary strictly  
to vindicate the term, see the two citations  
given in my Greek Test. where the Phœnicians

are called barbarians, and Malta  
  
is said to be a colony of the Phœnicians.

**received us**] not *to their fire*, but  
to hospitality.

**the present rain**]  
which commonly follows on great tempests.

**the cold**] This is decisive against  
the Sirocco, which is a hot and sultry  
wind, even so late as the month of November,

and moreover seldom lasts more  
than three days.

**3. when Paul had  
gathered a bundle of sticks**] “ We find the  
Apostle doing the office of a prisoner,  
serving the wants of others.” Bengel.  
From the circumstance of the concealed  
viper, these sticks were probably heaps  
of neglected wood gathered in the forest.  
The difficulty here is, that there are *now  
no venomous serpents* in Malta. But as  
Mr. Smith observes, “no person who has  
studied the changes which the operations  
of man have produced on the animals of  
any country, will be surprised that a

particular species of reptiles should have

disappeared from Malta. My friend the Rev.  
Mr. Landsborough, in his interesting  
excursions in Arran, has repeatedly noticed  
the gradual disappearance of the viper  
from the island since it has become more  
frequented. Perhaps there is nowhere a  
surface of equal extent in so artificial a  
state as that of Malta at the present day,  
—and nowhere has the aboriginal forest  
been more completely cleared. We need  
not therefore be surprised that, with the  
disappearance of the woods, the noxious  
reptiles which infested them should also  
have disappeared” (pp. 111, 112). St.