

concerned that the stamps will come out at a reasonable time before the open of the Fair. There is no point in issuing the set when the event to be commemorated will have already commenced.

3. The 3rd set will most probably be issued in the latter half of August, and will commemorate the 4th. **CENTENARY OF THE DEATH OF LA VALETTE.** Malta owes much to this heroic Grand Master, who led the Knights and the Maltese to victory against a much outnumbering force of Ottoman Infidel in 1565. Surely La Vallette deserves a place all by himself in the white and red pages of Malta's History.

It is rumoured that the La Valette set will consist of some really special designs suitable to the occasion — Chev. Cremona does not lack ideas or other forms of originality.

4. **THE CHRISTMAS SET** — 5th. of the series — will be issued in the first week of October as is usually the case. Even here it is again expected, that something special, worthy of the artist, will characterise the issue, dignifying Maltese philately.

## OLD PHILATELIC PERIODICALS

By CHAS. G. CASSAR, M.D., M.R.C.G.P. (Lond.)

Before reproducing the continuation of Rizzo's article which appeared in the Melita Philatelic Chronicle and Advertiser of Feb. 1st. 1899, here are a few interesting points worth noting.

**Watermarks:** a stumbling block to beginners. Easily detected if stamps are looked at with the face turned against a good light. Bezene may also be employed to decipher in case of difficult cases; this will not harm the gum if any.

Watermarks first appeared on stamps of Great Britain; the old Roman letters CA and CC found on stamps of British Colonies mean CROWN AGENTS and CROWN COLONIES. Even early Malta stamps (the ½d Yellows) bore the CC and CA watermarks in block type.

**Postmarks:** through these, one can deduce the age of the stamp. In a place like Malta where the number of Post Offices is limited (both in the past and at the present day), such markings are of utmost value to collectors and particularly to those who indulge in collecting Covers.

**Wove or Laid paper:** the former is of plain and even texture as that used for books, whereas the latter shows a series of lines close together, intersected by others as in 'cream laid' writing paper.

## STAMPS OF MALTA (continued)

By EDMUND RIZZO

Although the design of the stamp in question has always remained the same, yet by referring to the catalogue we find that there are seven varieties of the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d Yellow stamp of Malta viz:

CC. — 1863:	$\frac{1}{2}$ d buff perforated	14
— 1864:	$\frac{1}{2}$ d buff perforated	12 $\frac{1}{2}$
	$\frac{1}{2}$ d yellow-buff perforated	12 $\frac{1}{2}$
— 1871/75:	$\frac{1}{2}$ d yellow-buff perforated	14
	$\frac{1}{2}$ d golden-yellow perf.	14
	$\frac{1}{2}$ d yellow-buff perforated	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 14
CA. — 1882:	$\frac{1}{2}$ d yellow-buff perforated	14

Arguing from the limited number of stamps that was then used for local purposes we can easily conclude that all the six varieties were not printed in different epochs, so close to each other as for example the first and the second variety. It is ascertained that all the commissions sent to the Crown Agents were of £40 worth of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d stamps; these were sold by the Post Office in Malta in such a short space of time for local requirements. It is undeniable that the varieties exist, but such varieties have not all been printed in different epochs.

From what we can see, the varieties of this stamp consist in either the perforation or the scale of colour. The latter arises certainly from some chemical combination in the colouring of the dies, in fact you meet with stamps of different yellow although printed and used at one and the same time. The former is undoubtedly due to the difference of perforating machines used for stamps.

The watermark of almost all the stamps of the British Colonies were, between the year 1881 and 1882, changed from Crown and CC to Crown and CA. The stamps of Malta underwent this change towards the close of 1882. In 1885 the Post Office Administration passed from the hands of the Imperial Government to those of the local Government. The stamps of Great Britain which were then used for letters sent abroad were supplanted by the present set of Malta. The  $\frac{1}{2}$ d yellow stamp besides changing its colour into green has also changed its use and began to travel on letters sent abroad.

The Postmaster General who was in charge in Malta at the time, of the transfer, knowing that by this transfer the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d yellow was about to cease to exist and foreseeing that it would be a good speculation to keep for himself the whole stock remaining, bought the whole lot, and carried it with him to England. This is the reason why the Crown CA  $\frac{1}{2}$ d yellow is not so easily met with in Malta as the Crown and CC.

(to be continued)

*N.B. The views expressed in this article which was first published in 1889, are not necessarily those of the Editor.*

THE EDITOR.