

LETTER EXTRACTS

A very interesting article came into the hands of Dr. C. Cassar (himself a keen philatelist), which throws much light on the early Postal arrangements of our Island. All those who are after the historical development of Malta's Postal Services in their infancy, should very well peruse the contents of the letter and remember them for any future references.

Dr. Cassar writes:

Our Island, a speck in the Mediterranean came often and still comes in the way of passers. It is hence that many historical informations about Malta were left to us when travellers going to the East landed on our shores either as birds of passage or stayed here as settlers for some years.

One of these men was Mr. E. Blaquiere who in his "letters from the Mediterranean" in 1812 wrote some observations on our Postal Services:

"There are two Postal Offices in Malta, whereas one properly administered would answer the purpose of distributing letters much better than both these, and save an expensive establishment to the revenues of the Island. The agent for packets, or in other words the English Postmaster, is, by a highly improper arrangement, a merchant having very extensive concerns; the facility with which such a person, if so inclined, might considerably hurt the interests of his contemporaries, is very great; this is happily not the case at present, although the circumstance of his appointment is far from being agreeable to any of the trading people here. To the other numerous objections of the public to this place being in charge of a mercantile man, it might be added that his own avocations prevent him from paying the least attention to sorting letters and forwarding them to individuals." (Blaquiere E. Esq.)

Editorial Comment: *Though Mr. Blaquiere's Letter is rather humorous it is very true indeed, and reflects the contemporary mentality of the 'get rich quick' entrepreneurs.*