

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

P. CASSAR, *The Maltese Corsairs and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem*, Reprinted from "The Catholic Historical Review", Vol. XLVI, No. 2, July 1960 (U.S.A.) pp. 137-156.

In this masterly study Dr. P. Cassar traces the progress of Maltese piracy from the period of Arab domination in the 9th Century to the setting up of the Court of Oyer and Terminer by the British in October, 1815. The important role of privateering activities in the economic life of Malta since the Middle Ages is aptly stressed. The author gives the names of various Maltese sea-captains. One of them, the 15th Century Michele da Malta, is the subject of an unpublished study by Professor L. Butler who has been carrying out research in the Maltese Archives for several years.

Dr. Cassar's study follows right upon two articles in last year's "Melita Historica" on similar or related topics, i.e. R. Cavaliero's *The Decline of the Maltese Corso in the 18th Century*, and G. Wettinger's *Coron Captives in Malta*. Cavaliero's article deals more fully with Maltese piracy in the 18th Century in its international diplomatic setting; Cassar's covers the pre-Order period as well, and the organisation and control of privateering in Malta are perhaps better explained. The two studies, however, are complementary, and should in fact be read as two aspects of the same subject.

Dr. Cassar uses his sources well, and there is little one should add beyond expressing the hope that he will give us more scholarly articles like the one under review.

J.C.P.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS (continued from page 73)

GALEA, Joseph, *The French Occupation of Malta: a study in bibliography*.  
Geneve, Librairie Droz. 1959. 30 p. (Cahier de Compesieres No. 2).

This list of 144 items useful for the study "of the last phase of the Order of St. John, the French Occupation of Malta, and the cession of the Maltese Islands to Great Britain" fills a long-felt need and provides an important bibliographical tool.

The author had already given a list of publications on the French Occupation of Malta, scattered through the pages of his *Il-Hakma Franċiża f'Malta* (1948). The present list, however, is more comprehensive in scope and contains far more entries than the original one. All publications mentioned in *Il-Hakma Franċiża f'Malta* are included here, with the exception of the anonymous *Lettre de M. Le Commandeur de T. a M. Depute a l'Assemblée Nationale sur l'Ordre de Malte*, s.l., 1790.

Ten of the items included in Galea's bibliography were listed in 1805 in Boisgelin's Supplement to the Catalogue of works written on Malta under the heading *Pamphlets published on Malta during the Assembly of "Les Etats Generaux"*... ("Ancient and Modern Malta," London, Vol. 1, pp. xlii-xlvi). A reference to Boisgelin's pioneer effort in the same field would not have been out of place in this bibliography.

The list is carefully drawn up in accordance with the rules of bibliography. Students of Maltese History should feel grateful to Mr. Galea, who has produced a really valuable instrument of research.

J.C.P.

- A. LUTTRELL, *Interessi fiorentini nell'economia e nella politica dei Cavalieri Ospedalieri di Rodi nel Trecento*. In "Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa: Lettere, Storia e Filosofia" — Serie II, Vol. XXVIII (1959), Fasc. III-IV, pp. 317-326.

This study deals with an insufficiently explored aspect of the Order's economic history. It is based, as Mr. Luttrell says in a footnote, on the documents of the Order preserved in Malta. This specialised topic, i.e. the influence of Florentine and other bankers on the Order's policy and activities in the 14th Century, is well handled by the author and there is a wealth of bibliographical references for those interested in the wider aspects of the subject. Two important related problems, which the author mentions in his last footnote, remain unanswered, and Mr. Luttrell suggests that, rather than in the Malta Archives, their solution has to be sought in Florentine sources.

Mr. Luttrell, who contributes an interesting study on *The Venetians at Medieval Malta* in the present issue of "Melita Historica", has published various articles on the Order of St. John in the 14th Century. As they are not easy to trace, the following titles are given here as an addition to the known bibliography of the Order, i.e. *Actividades económicas de los Hospitalarios de Rodas en el Mediterraneo occidental durante el siglo XIV*, in 'Actas del VI Congreso de la Historia de la Corona de Aragón' (Barcellona, 1960); *Venice and the Knights Hospitallers of Rhodes in the Fourteenth Century*, in "Papers of the British School at Rome" XXVI (1958), pp. 198-201; *A Fourteenth Century List of the Barons of Achaea (1377?)*, in "Byzantinische Zeitschrift", LI, (1958).

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS (cont. from page 4)

E. SAMMUT, *The Monuments of Mdina: The Ancient Capital of Malta and its Treasures*. Malta, Progress Press, 1960. pp.46.

Dr. Sammut's latest publication is a welcome addition to his series of pamphlets on Malta's artistic heritage. As its sub-title implies, *The Monuments of Mdina* is something more than a guidebook to the ancient capital of Malta. The palaces, churches and paintings are briefly described and evaluated as to their artistic merit, and the old capital itself is presented against the wider canvas of Maltese events from prehistoric times.

A lot of reading and personal observation has gone into the making of this booklet, but the facts are clearly presented, in a style devoid of all pedantry. The chapters on the Cathedral Museum and the Norman Houses show the author at his best. The booklet contains 19 illustrations. The lists of Grand Masters and of Bishops since 1530, given as Appendices, add to the usefulness of this publication.

Dr. Sammut is known to have carried out deep researches in the History of Art in Malta and one hopes that he will find time to publish the fruits of this research and thus make a more lasting contribution to the subject.

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