

BOOK REVIEW

SAID Malta Stamp and Coin Catalogue 1979. E. Said Publishers, Malta.
14.2 x 20.5cm, Linen soft cover, 392 pages, 652 illustrations, 13.X.1978,
£M2 (£4, \$8 overseas airmail).

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new"

TENNYSON

The tenth edition of this catalogue has been published and the publishers celebrated in style with a marvellous new production that is a great contribution towards Maltese philately. For this Anniversary edition proposes several new innovations and additions to the general reference work of local philately.

In the first place a look at what the new edition proposes as the principal changes: (1) listing in strict chronological order, an absolute necessity; (2) a revised classification of the Q.V. ½d Yellows, a straightforward list; (3) the elimination of previous gaps, a sensible solution; (4) the numbering of triptych sets, a reasonable innovation; (5) separate listing for airmail stamps, souvenir and miniature sheets, and sheetlets, a debatable proposition.

No sensible student of philately would argue against the "strictness" of listing stamps in their chronological order. But if we are to accept and respect the true perspective in history, I see no reason why airmail stamps should be divorced from their true chronological sequence, and positioned separately; after all, airmails are no more distinct than definitive or regular stamps. By the same reason as suggested in the edition in hand, definitive stamps, commemorative and special stamps, as well as airmails should be classified under three distinct groups or sections.

The Q.V. ½d Yellows continue to generate a fund of debate. Stanley Gibbons have just added a few notes explaining the various printings as a result of Dr. Bonnici's serialised study in the P.S.M. Magazine. The Catalogue proposes a straightforward classification based on a number of criteria as clearly spelled out in the Editor's foreword. Hopefully we will be able to have at hand a specialized section covering the ½d Yellows in "a future edition" as promised by Editor, Mr. Godwin Said.

The allotment of a number of triptychs is also welcome, since these are on sale at post office counters as a unit. By the same argument Miniature and/or Souvenir Sheets are bound to earn a number, though whether they are listed separately as a distinct section or following up the respective issue makes little difference.

For several years, we have relied on Gibbons for the stamps of Great Britain used in Malta (1841-1885), but over the years, new discoveries and studies have raised doubts in collectors' minds. Now, for the first time the Said Malta Stamp and Coin Catalogue 1979 comprises a new section (7 pages) devoted to this

fascinating and important aspect in Maltese philately. Thanks to meticulous research of a well-known local philatelist, this phase is painstakingly covered offering a true picture coupled with the various types of Maltese cancellations known to have been used over definite periods of time.

Two other new sections in the edition under review cover "Proofs and Colour Trials" and "Postage Due Handstamps". No less than 14 pages are devoted to the section listing Proofs based mostly on studies of the De La Rue archives, though it seems, research in this field is still in progress. Prices of course reflect recent realisations at international and other auctions. Another contribution to the catalogue is the section covering the various types of charge and postage due marks, prices of which are fantastically high, though this is no surprise, considering that recent demand for such material has pushed prices.

The Pre-adhesive markings have undergone a general revision and we have full details and illustrations of a number of varieties hitherto unlisted. Also revised and sufficiently illustrated are the popular Postmen's Personal Handstamps, which still remain within everybody's reach.

Besides the various sections, that have been referred to above, the 1979 Tenth Anniversary Edition of the Said Catalogue provides a complete service to collectors in the form of lists and sections covering Village Postmarks, Official Postal Stationery (listing also the obliterated Q.E.II registration envelope of the 23rd February 1978), Specimen Stamps, Disinfection markings and cancels, special Handstamp, as well as machine slogan cancels, and Censorship Mail (W.W.I.). The Glossary of illustrations should prove beneficial to the thematic collector, while for Continental collectors the Said/Gibbons/Yvert conversion table should be very useful, (as well as to the rest of the collectors now that "the old order changeth")

The "Said Malta Stamp and Coin Catalogue 1979" covers also the issues of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, including coins, while in the same numismatic section, coins of the Republic of Malta and Paper currency are also covered.

Advanced collector seeks exchange partners on wants list basis, for used stamps from Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, Australia etc. Also offered Africa, Asia, Middle and South America.

Hans Palstra, Distelstr. 9,
3222 XB Hellevoetsluis, Holland

When replying to advertisements please mention the P.S.M. Magazine.