When mass was over the Grand Master, followed by the Captain of the Rod, with his wand of office, left the Cathedral and, after visiting the Monastery of St. Benedict and that of the Minor Observants, went to the Grotto of St. Paul where, taking off his Magisterial robes, he put on his ordinary habiliments. Entering his carriage he drove to the Boschetto where he was received by the soldiery to whom he gave 12 zecchini.

To repay the compliment, the 1st jurat gave twelve scudi to the Grand Master’s footmen.

A sumptuous repast, to which all the leading citizens were invited, was laid out at the Boschetto. The Secreto and the Master of the Horse shared the honour of entertaining the guests. The Captain of the Rod, Baron Inguanez, Sigfr. Francesco Maundaca, Don Enrico Testaferrata and Sigfr. Baldassare Bonici sat at the table of the Master of the Horse, the rest at that of the Secreto. This arrangement was only arrived at after some trouble.

When dinner was over and due thanks were rendered to the Grand Master, the distinguished party repaired to Notabile where at 3 p.m. the races were held. The Grand Master, after distributing the Iucullian present received from the City, honoured the races by his presence. The Captain of the Rod distributed sweets and delicacies to the circle around H. S. H. and threw the rest to the enthusiastic crowd.

Thus ended the pageant; the great event in Zonadari’s life was over; he returned to Valletta and the crowd dispersed...

The document from which I have culled the above details of the Public Entry of Zonadari into Notabile, ends abruptly. There is no prayer for long life and happiness but merely an account of the expenses incurred by the Università.—833 scudi, 10 tari and 12 grana in all, undoubtedly a noteworthy amount for that time. My paper must consequently end here; but before I conclude, I feel impelled to express a wish that someone, with more ability than myself and with more time at his disposal, will see his way towards examining the thousands of documents now hallowed by age and rendered sacred by the very love of our country.

Malta’s history is a field wherein the reaper is rewarded with many a sheaf.

ALB. V. LAFERLA.

On the Similarity between certain Names of Places in Western Palestine and in Malta.

(Paper read by Prof. N. Tagliaferro on the 13th May 1912.)

WHILST perusing, last summer, an important work on the Survey of Western Palestine, I was struck by the great similarity and, in a considerable number of cases, the absolute identity of certain names of places in that country and in Malta. Considering that the names of places, under certain conditions, notwithstanding the lapse of time and the changes of populations and governments, are invariable, or at least subject to very slight changes, and that their origin may consequently very often be traced back to thousands of years, it occurred to me that it might interest the members of this Society if their attention were drawn to this subject. The short note which I was invited to draw up may, I confidently hope, induce some one to take up the matter and devote a part of his or her time to the thorough study of the subject. The trouble taken would be amply repaid by the importance, both historical and philological, of the results likely to be obtained.

It is, perhaps, as well to dispose at once of an objection which presents itself “prima facie”. It is in fact only too natural that the names of places, which in a large number of cases reflect the natural features of the locality they represent, should be expressed by the same words in two different countries once that the language is the same in those places. Thus much may be easily granted: but that is precisely the point we wish to prove; the identity, or at least the close relation of the languages in both localities. But what languages? Certainly not the languages spoken at the present day, but those of the peoples who origi-
nally gave those names to the places. Now, it is beyond doubt that owing to the tenacity of the names of places, which, as already stated, very often defies the action of time, it is not to be presumed that the various localities in Malta had no name at all, or that they should have lost their original ones in consequence of the Arab invasion in the ninth century. Consequently, although most of those present names are evidently Arabic, excluding of course those which are obviously of European origin, it is safe to infer that they were used long before the Arabic invasion.

As the same argument is applicable to Palestine, the only permissible inference is that the ancient language of Malta, long before the Arabic invasion in the ninth century, was closely related to if not quite identical with, that of Western Palestine. It is, however, to be understood that this conclusion will hold good only when it is proved that the same comparison between the names of places in Malta and in the various countries in North Africa leads to negative results.

If we do not confine our research to the ascertainment of the more or less evident similarity of names, but we also wish to determine the exact meaning of the topographical names in Western Palestine, we soon find that that determination, as justly remarked by Mr. Palmer in the preface of the valuable work mentioned above, is by no means easy. In fact, some of the names are descriptive of natural features, but even these are often either obsolete or distorted words. Others are derived from long since forgotten incidents, or from owners whose memory has passed away. Others again are survivors of older names, Nabathean, Hebrew, or Canaanite, and others quite meaningless in Arabic or have a form in which the original sound is perhaps more or less preserved, but the sense entirely lost. Add to this the facility with which the vulgar language (Arabic), ordinarily so tenacious in preserving an ancient name, deforms it to avoid a difficulty in articulation, or to obtain what appears to be a more logical meaning.

Moreover, as the vocalization of words is peculiar in each of the Arabic dialects, a slight difference in the transliteration and consequent pronunciation will be observed in several cases in the subjoined list, but that difference is never such as to present serious difficulties in the determination of the identity of the words concerned. Had I more time at my disposal in drawing up this note I might perhaps have been able to produce a longer list of a complete list, but simply to draw the attention of members to what I consider an important subject.

A peculiar feature of the Topographical names in Western Palestine is the extraordinarily large number of names of ruins—herbet (constructed form of herba) as they are called. I have counted upwards of 1000 in the lists given in Mr. Palmer’s work already quoted. This peculiarity, characteristic of that country, is due to the long wars and many invasions by which the country was devastated.

From that number I have selected only a few names sufficient to convey an idea of the correspondence between the names of places of Palestine and Malta. It is needless to remark that the Maltese name is not qualified by the appellation “Herba.”

Thus, Herbet: el Maghlak \( \rightarrow \) II Maghlak
     .. el Hemsija \( \rightarrow \) Hemsija, where chick-peas are grown
     .. ex-Xlendi \( \rightarrow \) Ix-Xlendi
     .. el Mewwija \( \rightarrow \) II mewiwja (Place of shelter)
     .. Chemnuna \( \rightarrow \) Chemnuna
     .. ed-dwejra \( \rightarrow \) Id-dwejra
     .. el Ghafia \( \rightarrow \) Tal Ghafia
     .. es-Sanora \( \rightarrow \) Tas-Sanora
     .. el matnura \( \rightarrow \) II matmura, undergrown granary
     .. el Mnazel \( \rightarrow \) II Minzel

Although in a less degree, the names of Wadi (W[3o]d[3o] = valley) and Ghajn (source), are also very common in Palestine, but I have limited the choice to the following:—

Wadi: el Gham
     .. el Ghasek
     .. el Ghamek
     .. el Hanzar
     .. ex-Zarejk
     .. ed-dalam
     .. Ghammar
     .. ex-Sir
     .. el Ballew
But let us resume our list and point out the topographical names consisting of one word.

- El borg
- Es-sarg
- El-merg
- Er-rimal
- El ghakba
- El Kalgha
- El Kleigha
- El Wilga
- El Mellieha
- El Fawwara
- El Menkgha
- El Ghemejra
- El Hemb
- El Mesija
- Ex-xemxija
- Ex-xewchia
- Ez-zaghrira
- El Hemsija
- El Fullja
- El Wardja
- Es-safisa
- El Gharghar
- El-balta
- El bura
- Ed-dura
- El Mnaitra
- El Pokani
- El Sumat
- El Gouda
- El Qarda
- tower
- saddle
- meadow
- sandy place
- steep ascent
- cattle
- small cattle
- flat land or the bosom of the hill
- place whence salt is extracted
- fountain
- swamp
- ghlemieri, perpetual source
- ruin
- forgotten one
- sunny place
- thorny
- thyme
- chick peas
- beans
- flowers
- osier willow
- juniper tree
- il blata, rock
- bur, waste land
- Gozo, circular enclosure
- Mnaidra, the small watch tower
- Il bakkanija
- Sumat
- bare ground, Ta Gorda near Ghazak

This list, although imperfect and incomplete, will, I hope, convey an idea of the importance of the comparative study of the names of places or comparative Toponymy, as it is called. This study, if thoroughly pursued, will throw much light on the ancient history of the Maltese Islands. It should not, however, be limited to Palestine, but extended to Arabia and all the countries of North Africa from Egypt to Morocco perhaps also to Sicily, Sardinia and Pantelleria. To the pursuance of these studies a favourable opportunity is offered at present by the beneficial influence of European civilization all over the countries in North Africa bordering on the Mediterranean.

But the study of Comparative Toponymy should be based on a thorough study of local topographical names which is still a desideratum. If we except the lists given...
The Inhabitants of the Maltese Islands.

(A paper read by Dr. T. Zammit, on the 5th June, 1912.)

What kind of people are the inhabitants of the Maltese Islands? This plain question has been answered differently every time it has been set but the prevailing opinion, accepted in the manuals of our history, is that the Maltese people is a strange admixture of races, a kind of mosaic, worked up gradually in various epochs when different people came to colonize these islands. This strange people is likewise credited with a language which is a kind of gibberish, a patchwork of European and African dialects.

By dint of hearing these theories, repeated by different authors, we came, practically, to acquiesce in them although many of us feel that both ethnographically and linguistically they are wrong.

I wish to put on record before this Society, which is so deeply concerned with our history, my view about our people which appears to me as one exceptionally free from foreign elements. The Maltese have, I believe, preserved a historical line of ancestors which very few people can show and they have likewise preserved an old and most interesting language of which the pedigree, obscured by various causes, is still patent to the student.

Several writers of the eighteenth century seemed convinced that the Roman occupation of these Islands was so long that the Latin element prevailed on the natives who were finally absorbed and assimilated.

Other writers, of a classical turn of mind, believed that the Greeks formed, at one time, the bulk of our population. Homer himself; they say, has sung about the island of Malta or Iperia populated by the giants called Phaeacians.

Without questioning the geographical knowledge of Homer, it is safer to tread on firmer ground and consult writers nearer to our time. The first reliable information we obtain is that between the 1st and the 12th century B.C. the Phoenicians colonized these Islands. The Phoenicians appear to have originated in that part of Arabia bordering on the Persian...