

THE Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly AND INTERNATIONAL STAMP ADVERTISER.

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The Dante Centenary Stamps.



FROM *Il Giornale d'Italia*, September 15th, 1921, kindly forwarded to us by our esteemed colleague, Dr. Emilio Diena, we get our first glimpse of the designs for the stamps issued to commemorate the Sixth Centenary of the death of Dante Alighieri, Italy's greatest poet, and the exalted creator of the "Commedia" to which the world has added the "Divina" in token of its sublime grandeur.

"To-day," states *Il Giornale*, "the Ministry of Posts issue the new stamps dedicated to the Dante Centenary. It is the first time that the Italian government has interposed such an issue among its postage stamps, but Dante is worthy of such an exception.

"The series comprises three stamps, 15, 25 and 40 centesimi. All three are examples of the beautiful work of the gifted artist of Rome, Giuseppe Cellini. One was engraved by Proia, and the others owing to the death of Proia, by Grimaldi. They were printed at the establishment of Petiti in Rome.

"The 15 centesimi shows the eagle, bearing the open book of the 'Commedia', and around the verse *Che sopra gli altri com' aquila vola*—(He who is above others as the eagle flies).

"The second, 25 centesimi, depicts Italy seated on a throne,

crowned with a laurel wreath, holding up in one arm the sacred poem. Motto: *Onorate pallissimo poeta*—(Honoured be the most exalted poet).

"The third stamp, 40 centesimi has a picture of the poet to the middle of the bust, within a pulpit in the act of expounding his own book. Motto: *Mostrò cio che potea la lingua nostra*—(He shows that of which our tongue is capable).

"All bear the initials S.N.D.A. (Società Nazionale Dante Alighieri) for the issue is made for the benefit of that patriotic and deserving society for the protection and guardianship of the Italian abroad and at home. Thus it was petitioned at the Congress at Trieste, and so it will be followed by the Congress at Trente on September 17th.

"The stamps are valuable works of art and the stamps are evidently sought after by philatelists.

"For a short period they will be sold for the regular franking of correspondence. And the few that remain unsold will be sought after by the collectors now so numerous throughout the world."

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We learn from *Il Corriere Filatelico* that 400,000 sets of the Dante issue have been printed.